



CAPRICORN
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Other resources in step 4C:

- Educate your customers – the full story
- Templates

Educating your customers about your full range of services

There is a saying in business that you need to go after wallet share and not market share. What this means is that you need to focus on getting as much out of each customer rather than trying to win every customer in your market. In effect you are trying to get more with less.

There are many different techniques to help you achieve this. One that is critical but often neglected is educating your customers on all of the services and repairs you offer. If they don't know about everything you can do there is a fair chance they will be getting it done elsewhere.

If you're a mechanic it follows that whenever a customer's car needs a service or the car is running rough they will call you. However, if they get a flat tyre or need a new battery do they think of you straight away?

What if they want the bearings changed on their trailer? Does your workshop spring to mind?

There might be a whole lot of other thing that you do that your customers don't know about.

To further illustrate the point here are some of the services the modern auto electrician might perform:

- Battery sales and service
- Auto electrical repairs
- Supply and install dual battery systems
- Supply and install automotive solar systems
- Supply and install car and truck audio
- Starters and alternator repair – new and exchange
- Supply and install cruise control
- Supply and install reverse camera systems
- Electric windows repair and install
- Installation, repair or servicing of automotive air conditioning systems on cars, trucks, tractors, earthmoving equipment
- Engine management system diagnosis and repair
- Break down service
- Supply and install driving lights
- Golf buggy servicing and repairs

Most retail customers would have no idea that an auto electrician could do all that.

Here's a simple test – at your next dinner party or barbeque, ask your guests what they think an auto electrician does. Don't be surprised if most people who aren't involved in the auto industry say that they didn't know there was a difference between an auto electrician and a mechanic.

If this is the majority answer you get, it would tend to indicate that auto electricians, more so than mechanics need to work hard to educate their customers on their full range of services.

Educating your customers is just a form of marketing and it's an ongoing process that is never complete. Some proven strategies include:

1. **Menu board** – If you have walked into a franchise or a dealership lately you would probably have seen some form of menu board. It's no different to a menu board in a food shop. The idea is that your customers are instantly reminded of what you can do. If they take notice they may start asking questions and that's exactly what you want. Ensure your information is presented professionally because this is another face of your business. Don't overload it with too much information because customers will just be overwhelmed and they won't read past the first couple of lines. It should list what you do, not how you do it. Where you put the menu board is critical. It must be clearly visible when a customer approaches the front counter.
2. **Business brochures** – Another option is to give each customer a DL size brochure listing what you do. This could either be handed to the customer or left hanging on their rear vision window.

3. **Tech talk cards** – These simple but effective cards provide some detail on common services and repairs you can perform. It can work hand in hand with a menu board. For example, you might have a customer that notices you service air conditioners. You can then hand them a tech talk card describing the benefits of servicing your air conditioner with your logo and contact details on it. This can only increase your chances of servicing or repairing their air conditioner when it plays up. A full range of tech talk cards are available from www.orangedog.com.au
4. **Branding material** – We discussed this topic in detail in September 2011. A copy of the article is available on our website. Your branding material such as battery or spare tyre stickers can be used to educate your customers that you sell these products. For example, when someone pulls out the spare tyre because they have a flat and they see your sticker on it, you're only increasing your chances of repairing or replacing the flat one.
5. **External signage** – Just about every workshop has signage on their building listing what they do. If you have high traffic exposure you might be well worthwhile introducing changeable signage that just illustrates one simple point, such as air conditioning, tyres or batteries. It's the simplicity and direct nature of these signs that's effective. Changing it every couple of weeks does grab attention.
6. **Mailouts** – Mailouts could be a quarterly newsletter or special that focuses on one type of service or repair. Try and align it with the season. Workshops have had great success after sending out a special on air conditioning in November or December when the first hot weather strikes.

Don't make the mistake of assuming your customers know everything you do.

The reality is that many of your customers will know very little about what goes on in your workshop.

To help even further, the Capricorn Approved Supplier, Orange Dog, specialist printers and marketing providers to the automotive repair industry, has developed a full range of templates for point of sale materials which they can adapt to your chosen brand image. Check out their website at www.orangedog.co.nz. You'll find a complete kit of matching point of sale materials to assist in your customer education campaigns.

So here's the challenge. In the next four weeks, give yourself a target to develop your brand image and start assembling your distinctive point of sale materials to educate your customers on your full range of services.

The place to start is www.tatbiz.net.au/capricorn.

Just go for it!