9steps
to a better workshop

step 9 – Managing your time so everything gets done

- how to manage your activity so important tasks are getting done during work hours and low skill tasks are being delegated or outsourced

**step 9n
The power of a point of sale system**

TaT Biz
Training for better business

CAPRICORN
...it's just easier!

No other resources in step 9n:

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The power of a point of sale program

An efficient point of sale program or system has long been regarded as an indispensable tool and the epicentre of any size business, its data being used to make the most critical of decisions to allow the business to stay ahead of the competition.

However, TaT Biz research shows that automotive workshops have been a little slow on the uptake of point of sale programs, and many of those who have, aren't using them to their full potential.

Point of sale programs are not to be confused with the traditional accounting platforms such as MYOB, QuickBooks and Xero. They are all brilliant for accounting, but they don't have the focus that dedicated automotive software programs have.

Point of sale programs are designed to make managing a workshop easier and less time consuming – not to make life difficult. Those who say they are too complicated haven't really given them a fair go. They may be different to traditional accounting software, but they are not all that complicated.

Like time spent on learning any new machine designed to make life easier in the workshop, the time spent in learning how to use a point of sale program properly will pay handsome dividends for the business – you will soon be processing transactions with your eyes closed.

Workflow management
The hand-written systems once popular in every workshop in the land, such as booking diaries, job cards, service checklists and planning schedules work very well until someone forgets to fill them out or hand writing becomes illegible in the heat of the moment.

A dedicated point of sale program can handle all of these electronically. It can create a new booking, generate a job card, assign and order stock, create an invoice and send work updates to customers – all at the click of a button.

The days of double recording information on multiple documents are over. Administration time can be cut dramatically, and that has to be a good thing in these busy times.

Customer management
It is much more cost effective to hold on to existing customers than to try to win new customers.

Keeping in contact with service reminders, rego and Warrant of Fitness reminders, thank-you messages and specials can all be done with the click of a button. Most platforms give the option of mail, email and SMS and the frequency can be customised to match customer driving habits.

No more exporting a database into mail merge to send service reminders. Simply set the reminder date when processing the invoice and future reminders will automatically be sent on the selected date.

Integrations
Operating on one system and then closing it down to look at another system is just not feasible in a busy workshop. It doesn't matter how good a product is. If it slows a workshop down, it means the workshop is losing money.

Integrations into various marketing platforms, accounting platforms, banking platforms and supplier platforms have been created to make the transition from one platform to another seamless with no down time.

The range of integrations with other products will continue to grow. They can all be used as standalone platforms but when integrated with a point of sale, they bring a new level of efficiency and time saving into a workshop.

Staff management
Managing staff and their output are no doubt the greatest challenges in a workshop.

It's a common misconception that workshop owners think they know what everyone is doing every minute of every day. Eventually the workshop owner becomes the bottleneck as they try to micro manage. As a result, profitability starts to suffer even though it appears everyone is working hard.

If a point of sale system is used correctly, at the end of every day the workshop owner can see exactly what everyone has done and how profitable they have been. This information is invaluable and is the key to running a profitable workshop.

Stock management
Most mechanical workshops are holding less and less stock, so accurately monitoring stock holding levels is as important as ever.

In addition, integrations into supplier portals makes searching, ordering and applying stock to the job invoice much easier and less prone to error.

Most importantly, knowing what mark-up or margin you are applying to stock is critical. Every time you price a job you will instantly know what profit and margin you are making. With this information staring back at you there is much less chance of getting it wrong.

Management reporting
What gets analysed gets improved.

Having valuable business information at your fingertips is critical for decision making. Reports covering sales breakdown, job profitability, work in progress, productivity and marketing are available at the click of a button.

Manually trying to extract this information is too time-consuming, and that usually means it just won't get done.

The top point of sale platforms offer generous free trial periods along with many hours of video demonstrations. Do your due diligence and check them out. Check around other workshops to see what programs are popular and working well.

So if you haven't done so already, the best advice I can give is make the jump to a good point of sale program, but be prepared to make the time to operate it properly and you will never look back.

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

Just go for it