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FIRM MANAGEMENT

How to Market Your Firm to Auto Repair Businesses

With over 175,000 mechanical automotive repair shops in the U.S., of which 60 percent are family-owned businesses[1], it may be a good market to expand your firm's industry lines.

Becky Livingston • Mar. 14, 2019



One of the first things marketing professionals learn is to think like the customer. That too can be applied to accounting professionals looking to increase their book of business with auto repair shops.

With over 175,000 mechanical automotive repair shops in the U.S., of which 60 percent are family-owned businesses[1], it may be a good market to expand your firm's industry lines.

Here are five marketing tips to help you put the pedal to the metal and to connect with this target market.

1. **Step into their shoes.** When do auto repair shop owners have time to read, watch, interact, or simply digest information? More than likely in the early morning, at lunch, or in the evening when they are not working in their shop(s). Consider ways you can engage with them during those times, such as sending email campaigns, text messages, and video tips during those less-than-busy times.
2. **Content and Images.** Keep the content short, relevant, and easy to share. For example, you might share a blog post or video about travel or office expenses and mileage deductions they can and cannot claim. Images of the auto repair industry rather than corporate images will resonate more effectively.
3. **Video How-To's.** According to Omnicore[2], 62-percent of YouTube users are male and fewer than one percent of total certified automotive technicians are female[3], that means video is a great way to reach this market. Leverage humor and role playing in short, 15- to 30-second spots. Focus on one pain point per video to answer. Then, create a YouTube channel to house all your how-to videos for easy access by members of this market. QuickBooks and accounting software tips are good topics to help get you started. Once the video is created, tag it accordingly with automotive keywords; then share it on social media and in email or text campaigns for clients.
4. **Hashtags.** In addition to using common finance and accounting hashtags in your social media posts, leverage the ones in their industry, including #autorepair, #carrepair, #mechanic, #autoshop, #bodyshop, #collisionrepair, #automechanic, #autoservice, #autobody, #autobodyshop, #oilchange, and #mechaniclife.
5. **Non-Office Hours.** When part of owning a business is physically working in that business, it's hard to get away for a meeting. Consider ways you can have happy hours, breakfast meetings, or events that won't interfere with your clients' day-to-day activities. A good way to do that is to create a group of people in the same industry, with the same challenges, to meet monthly or quarterly to discuss pain points, software challenges, and business trends and tax changes they need to

know.

If you're stumped for content ideas, here are some common accounting topics for the auto repair shop industry:

- How to create an expense checklist or cash-flow budget
- Bookkeeping and payroll service tips or software
- Tax-planning strategies
- Business entity formation
- Vehicle and equipment financing
- Recession survival strategies
- Document retention
- Section 179 expensing
- Monitoring and controlling sub-contractor costs
- Capital gains considerations
- Seasonal, part-time, and full-time employee status
- Choosing the right accounting method
- Succession planning

By creating a valuable experience and content, your clients will look to you more as a business advisor than simply their accountant. But, creating that environment and building that trust takes time, effort, and energy.

Do you have what it takes to get this show on the road and to offer bumper-to-bumper service for these clients?

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[1] <https://www.infographicportal.com/automotive-repair-statistics/>

[2] <https://www.omnicoreagency.com/youtube-statistics/>

[3] <https://www.infographicportal.com/automotive-repair-statistics/>

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