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Treat customers like family

PROFESSIONAL DISTRIBUTOR

MARCH 2014 VOL. 22 NO. 2

The Distribution Network Connection

DEALER SETS THE STANDARD FOR THE YOUNGER GENERATION

A big part of Boyd Sutfin's game plan is to build a younger technician customer base.

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COVER STORY/DISTRIBUTOR PROFILE



Setting the standard for the next generation

Madison, Wis.-based Cornwell dealer Boyd Sutfin focuses on building his younger customer base to succeed.

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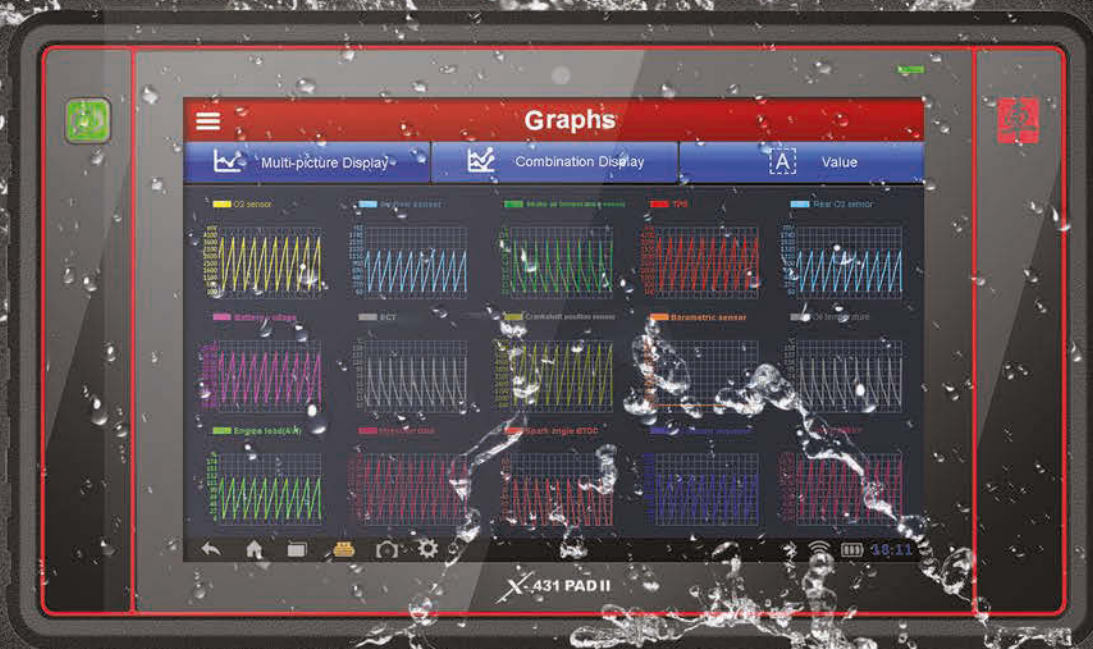
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Feeling *chilly*? Take extra steps to **WARM UP SALES**



BY ELLIOT MARAS

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This year's exceptionally cold winter has delivered a wake-up call to mobile distributors who have not bothered to create a contingency plan for temperature extremes. Most distributors adjust their product offerings for the different seasons, but this year's extreme winter weather interrupted normal activity in many regions and forced distributors to reschedule routes.

When winter arrives, distributors typically stock up on battery chargers, battery maintenance kits, electrical system analyzers and testers, clothing, boots and energy drinks. And since the post-Christmas period leaves customers strapped for cash, many distributors also think up creative promotions to entice them to spend money. But this winter has gone beyond the norm, temperature-wise, forcing many distributors to work harder to sustain sales.

Work demand varies

Distributors, like their repair shop customers, offered mixed reports on how the record cold has affected the demand for repair work. Some shops are seeing more work due to an increase in electrical failures and traffic accidents. Others claim the cold weather forces car owners to postpone repairs.

One thing most distributors agree on is that it takes more strength, mentally and physically, to be out on the roads in this weather. Mobile distributors must drive more slowly to avoid accidents.

Many say it has taken them twice as long to get from one stop to the next.

Whether the arctic chill has had a negative or positive effect on repair shop activity, there are things distributors can do to improve sales.

For starters (no pun intended), distributors need to make sure their own vehicles are capable of withstanding subzero temperatures. One distributor I know in Ohio got sidelined for a couple of days because his fuel filter froze, burning out his fuel pump. The tow and the repair

THE COLD TEMPERATURES REMIND MOBILE DISTRIBUTORS THAT THEY NEED TO BE PREPARED FOR THE UNEXPECTED.

cost him around \$800, not to mention the lost sales.

Secondly, be sure to "tote and promote" if it's not part of your routine. Most distributors know that customers are less likely to come out to the truck in the freezing cold, but this winter, the problem is especially severe. Based on the people I've spoken to, the distributors who tote and promote have been more successful than those who do not.

A tip from the frigid zone

Take it from Kraig Thoreson, a cold weather expert in the land of frozen lakes. "You can sell just about anything out of the tote tray," notes Thoreson, a Matco Tools distributor in Owatonna, MN. "Not all guys (customers) can make it out to the truck." Being in the Twin Cities, Thoreson is an old hand at dealing with subzero temperatures, so the arctic chill hasn't fazed him or his customers.

Repair shops in the Twin Cities

always get slammed with battery and starter issues in the winter, says Thoreson, a 27-year veteran distributor. And he wouldn't have it any other way. "I love the cold weather," he says. This season, he has done well with battery booster packs and electrical chargers. He has found great interest this year in a new handheld starter that is well made and competitively priced.

Thoreson has actually refined the art of "toting and promoting" in the cold weather months by adding a promotion shelf near the entrance of his truck. On this shelf, customers see tools that he carries into the shop along with other items he wants to draw special attention to.

Another cold weather expert, Chad Roskopf, a Cornwell Tools dealer in West Bend, WI, agrees promotions are more critical during extreme temperatures. He holds raffles to drum up interest in coming out to the truck.

A creative solution

One of the more creative solutions to this year's snow storms came from Scotty Smith, a Mac Tools distributor in Middletown, DE. Smith plows snow in the winter, and he claims it works out great since he keeps busy plowing snow on days when many of his repair shops are slow, if not closed.

Not many distributors agree that this as a viable option since snow plowing would interfere with route schedules. Smith's case is unique because he was plowing snow before he became a distributor and he established his tool business in conjunction with snow plowing.

The cold temperatures remind mobile distributors that they need to be prepared for the unexpected. They need to be ready to spend the extra time needed on the route and give customers more reasons to come out to the truck. ■

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Setting the standard for the next GENERATION

A Wisconsin Cornwell dealer succeeds by building a young customer base.

By Erica Schulz, Managing Editor

In less than two years, 31-year-old dealer Boyd Sutfin has managed to make it into Cornwell Quality Tools' Top 100 list.

The Madison, WI dealer has been able to use his youth to his advantage, allowing him to understand the needs of the new generation of technicians.

Sutfin's Madison route consists of mostly automotive dealerships and independent repair shops on the west side of Madison the first half of his

week, rounded out by heavy duty trucking and equipment shops north of the city on Thursdays and Fridays.

This former construction worker, who admittedly had little career direction as a young man, speaks to the opportunity mobile tool sales offers someone with a good work ethic and strong business instincts.

Growing up, Sutfin worked at his father's family-owned body shop repair business.

"I grew up in a body shop. I got all my knowledge about the tools and everything – I was a grunt there."

But after high school, he didn't have direction on what he wanted to do professionally. He ended up working for a pipeline construction company where he specialized in directional drilling.

"I had no idea what I wanted to do ... I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life at all," says Sutfin.

He gained more knowledge on

(Continued Page 10)



Once Sutfin sells out of the items he initially places in his tote, he continues to fill it with other items on his truck to bring into the shop.



Sutfin talks with a customer in a heavy duty service shop.



Sutfin made the Cornwell
Top 100 Dealers list less than
two years in the business.

*Sutfin kids around with one
of his customers, Scott Britz,
at a Madison shop.*

COVER STORY/DISTRIBUTOR PROFILE

Sutfin looks up pricing for a tool in one of his many catalogs.



If Sutfin needs to fill his tote with other items to sell, he may choose a tool like one of these hammers, to bring into the shop.

tools and equipment working for the construction company. But he was on the road more than he wanted to be, and he didn't find the job fulfilling. He then began working closer to home for Asplundh Tree Experts, trimming trees near power lines.

After seven years at the tree trimming firm, Sutfin was on the lookout for a career that would offer him the same financial opportunities but be less physically taxing on his body.

That's when he was introduced to Cornwell Quality Tools.

His father, John Sutfin, began to pursue a career as a Cornwell Tools dealer in the spring of 2012. Boyd happened to stop by his father's house on the day his dad was meeting with Cornwell representative and district manager, Ed Kuczynski, to learn about the opportunity. (John Sutfin also runs a route on the east side of Madison.)

"I just sat there and listened, and realized it might be a good idea," says Boyd Sutfin of becoming a Cornwell dealer. "We checked into it a bit more and it ended up being a deal."

He liked what Cornwell Tools had to offer: a long-standing history of the



Sutfin fills a cooler with two cases of Monster energy drinks each day. "This will be empty by the end of the day," says Sutfin.

brand (around since 1919) and the fact that the company manufactured its own line of products, including hardlines, in the U.S.

Now, after 18 months on the job, Sutfin says he definitely made the right decision, and he makes it a point to note Kuczynski's management and mentoring skills helped get him started.

"I love it. It was a really good move," says Sutfin. "And I can see the future."

During the 2014 Cornwell Tools Rally, Sutfin will receive his first ring, given to top Cornwell dealers in the country. In 2013, Sutfin placed 66th out of 100 dealers nationally. He will also take honors as the top dealer in Wisconsin.

(Continued Page 12)



Sutfin's wife helps with signage on the truck for things like beef jerky and other specials.



Sutfin prints a receipt for every transaction completed for a customer.



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COVER STORY/DISTRIBUTOR PROFILE

Sutfin shows an air tool from his tote to a technician in a heavy duty truck shop.



Approaching the younger generation

Sutfin appreciates all of his customers from young to veteran techs, but a big part of his game plan is to build a younger technician customer base.

He explains that he sees his age as an advantage, being only 31 years old himself.

"I'm young. And I (like to) joke with those guys a little," says Sutfin. "I'm not an old guy just getting into it. These younger guys, (they can start thinking) 'that's my dealer for the rest of my life.'"

And you can see how he relates to the younger techs in the shops.

At some stops, groups of younger technicians crowd around him to see the tools he carries in his tote. They appear just as eager to hear about the tools as Sutfin is to present them.

Sutfin has also been involved with his local high school by purchasing goods like cheese and beef sticks from FFA (Future Farmers of America) fundraisers that he gives back to customers as thank-you gifts. He hopes that just having that brand presence around these high school students will help him recruit future Cornwell customers.

"Those (students) are going to high school, and then I'll see them at the area technical college. Then I'll see them back at the dealerships. So they have that whole Cornwell idea in their head for the future."

He knows what they need

Sutfin has a passive sales approach. He's not pushy. He focuses more on being relatable with the customer, and doesn't like to pressure his customers into making a purchase.

"I get along with everybody, but the younger kids are more excited to buy. They need the tools," says Sutfin.

He says he enjoys trying to figure out strategies for how to sell to different customers, and by figuring out the tools his customers need.

"You have to remember what they need and what they don't need. What they already have. Stuff like that, so you don't keep bringing in the same thing."

(Continued Page 14)



Sutfin shows a customer a sheet hole metal cutter, one of the tools he is promoting from his tote.



Sutfin has four rows of shelving to store all of the tools on his truck.



Sutfin stresses the importance of keeping a clean truck. Not just for presentation, but for hygiene, too. "Everybody always comes in here, and they have some type of cold," says Sutfin. "And you're the person that always gets sick."

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COVER STORY/DISTRIBUTOR PROFILE

Sutfin makes it a point to tell customers about specials when he remembers a customer's want or need for a particular tool.

"The biggest thing is just being honest with them and trying to help them," says Sutfin about his customers. "I tell them, 'I'm here to help you out. I'm here to be your tool dealer for the rest of your career.'"

Sutfin finds the most opportunity with truck stops – which include anywhere from medium duty through Class 8 facilities, trailer equipment, construction and cold transportation (reefer) repair. In addition to the regular gamut of tools an auto repair tech might need, these heavy duty shops require a more extensive array of tools.

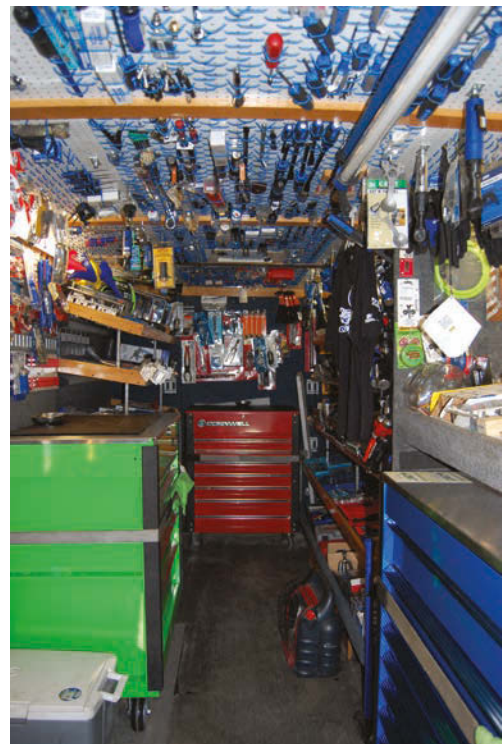
Of these stops, Sutfin says, "I like the truck shops more. They need everything, from the little screwdrivers to the two-inch tools. They've just got such a big box to build."

The diesel technicians and heavy duty customers, Sutfin says, "Do everything the car guy does. But the car guy doesn't need everything the truck guy does. (Truck guys) need everything from 1/4-inch to 3/4-inch, or one-inch impacts."

He also says heavy duty techs need larger wrench sets – in both metric and standard, as well as different sized tools like pry bars. "They need everything from

(Continued Page 16)

At the beginning of each month, Sutfin hands out Cornwell flyers to all of his customers.



Sutfin says there's more staying power at shops when he can sell a toolbox to a customer because it offers brand recognition for other potential sales in the shop.



Sutfin keeps his truck neat and clean, allowing him to stay in a good mood on the road.



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A customer checks out a toolbox on Sutfin's truck.



At this heavy duty truck stop, Sutfin has sold toolboxes to multiple customers.

a small pry bar to a six-footer."

"It seems like the bigger (the piece of equipment) they're working on, the bigger tool they need."

At heavy duty and automotive stops alike, Sutfin has adopted the approach to help younger technicians buy tools that the veteran techs have in their boxes.

"Most of the truck mechanics learn what the old guys have, so I bring that stuff in for the young kids."

Sutfin also looks to provide specialty tools when customers need them.

"Some guys have every tool out there. It's hard to sell those guys," says Sutfin. "But they will buy the specialty tools or new tools."

When customers need something from Sutfin, he readily communicates with them via phone calls and text messages using his smartphone. He also wears a Bluetooth headset to take calls while on the road.

Sutfin has a Wi-Fi-enabled computer to research products for customers and to keep track of customer transactions and orders. A laser printer on the truck allows him to provide every transaction with a receipt.

And after every single transaction

Sutfin makes? He says "thank-you" to every customer.

By the book

At the beginning of each month, Sutfin delivers flyers to all of his customers – either handing them directly to

the technician, or by placing them on any number of toolboxes throughout the shop.

One thing that's interesting about Sutfin's technique is his ability to have all the technicians at the shop approach him to see what deals he has in his tote for that day.

He totes and promotes at the majority of his stops, and his primary selling is done inside the shop. He places tools he has on special in the tote. And when he sells those products, he fills the tote with other items from his truck. At every stop, he presents each tool in the tote – including the name, features and price – for listening customers.

Sutfin tries to answer questions immediately. He'll make a call right at

(Continued Page 18)

Boyd Sutfin's Top 5 Tools:

- Cornwell CAT4150 1/2" Super Duty Impact
- Cornwell CAT2150 3/8" Super Duty Impact
- Streamlight Stylus Pro flashlight
- Cornwell CBSMTH62S 62-pc 1/4", 3/8" and 1/2" drive Master Deluxe Star/Hex Bit Set
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COVER STORY/DISTRIBUTOR PROFILE



Sutfin's route consists of more heavy duty shops later in the week, like this shop that services large equipment.



Sutfin uses the drawers of his toolboxes for sale on the truck as extra storage for beef jerky and other truck essentials.



Groups of technicians surround Sutfin as he shows off the products for sale in his tote.

the shop, or in his truck while he's still at the stop.

At one shop, the manager inquired about a new cover for a scan tool cart. Sutfin called his Cornwell contact to confirm what he could offer. At another shop, a lead tech asked if Sutfin could replace the covers of three creepers used by the entire staff at the shop. Sutfin made the call right then and there.

A knack for collections

Another key to Sutfin's success is his knack for collections. As soon as he walks into a shop, techs readily hand over cash, checks or their credit cards to make weekly payments.

When asked how he has trained his customers to provide payments so readily, he says his district manager had asked the same question – but it's just something he started when he got into the business.

Beyond ensuring his customer's weekly payments by running the physical credit card, Sutfin says there's another advantage: he can save money per transaction by running the actual card versus submitting an automatic payment with the customer's card number.

"I try to get their actual credit cards, because it's cheaper for me to push (the payment) through. Only by a few cents; but if you do that all week long, it adds up."

He does prefer cash or check, but credit cards "are the only way you can get your money sometimes."

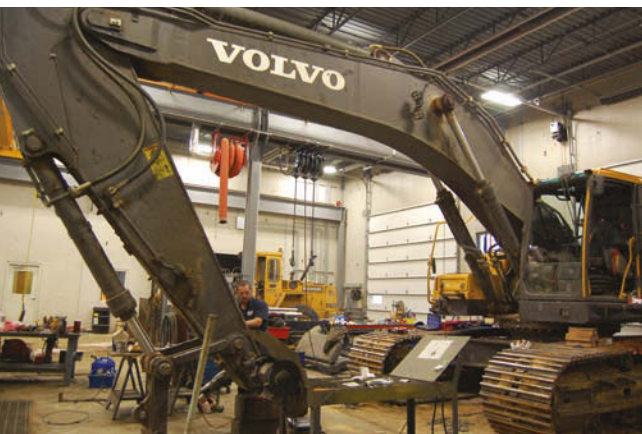
Looking to the future

When first starting out, Sutfin found he had to fine tune the balance between money on the street and the sales he was making. This requires comparing the amount of each customer's weekly payments to their balance when they make additional purchases.

His solution to handling this issue has been to continue to take payments from techs with higher balances, but he won't pitch products as aggressively to these customers.

That's not to say he won't sell to them.

COVER STORY/DISTRIBUTOR PROFILE



Sutfin says heavy duty shops, like this heavy duty equipment repair facility, provide him opportunity to sell light duty to heavy duty tools and equipment to customers.

If a technician is in need of a tool, Sutfin is still ready and willing to help out. But he makes it a point to not over extend his customers' balances, which he says is to their benefit, too.

For dealers just starting out, Sutfin offers this advice: "Watch your money when you start. Don't just buy everything that you think is cool just because you like it. That's what I did when I first started.

Then it sits on your truck forever." Of the tools he now stocks: "It's not what you want, it's what they want."

He also suggests preparing for two key seasons during the year: the holidays and the annual tool show.

Sutfin says it's important to reduce inventory on the truck before these two seasons.

"I would try not to order as much for the truck. You still have to order some stuff."

During the holiday season, not as many customers are buying. "Your customer count comes down. They say they don't have the money because of (buying) Christmas presents."

He also offers this advice when

purchasing before the annual tool rally:

"Don't buy anything for your truck about a month before. Unless you need to order something for somebody. The older dealers taught me that."

He now understands the importance of saving space for extra product because of the number of great manufacturer deals available during the tool rally: "I go to the tool rally to learn about new products and to learn new ways of doing things, and I pass those savings on to my customers."

When asked where he sees himself in five years, Sutfin says, "Hopefully in a bigger truck," smiling. He goes on to say he thanks Cornwell Tools for the company's help and support.

"It's a fun job. I like it," says Sutfin. But, he adds, "It's not easy."

"Some people just think that it'll be a cake walk." ■

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Want to stay connected? Some best practices



By Phil Sasso Contributing Editor

Phil Sasso is president of Sasso Marketing Inc. (sassomarketing.com), a technical marketing agency specializing in tools and equipment. Subscribe to his free marketing tips at philsasso.com/blog.

Q. Email is overwhelming me. I've got enough to do servicing customers and managing my business without juggling all this email. Any advice?

A. You're not alone. I feel email overload too. The other day I counted 207 emails in my mailbox – in one hour. A lot were unimportant or junk, but sorting them was a pain. (So, the following advice is for me as much as you!)

Technology can make our lives easier or harder. It's all in how we use it. Here are some tips for taming the electronic mail dragon:

 **Cornwell Tools Northeast-PA NJ NY**
January 28

Dealer Matt N helps his customers with some storage needs the past few days....looks like a cart finds a home at 5 star with Jeremiah and the 75 with generator ends up at Dickinson Fleet with Corey...thank you!



A dealer finds it helpful to spread the good news on Facebook when a customer buys a toolbox.

Divide and conquer. "I strongly suggest that you have separate business and personal email addresses," says Don Russell, Cornwell Tools' digital marketing manager. You don't want to deal with a crazy chainmail from your Aunt Gertrude when you're on the clock. This lets you push off personal email until the workday is over.

Check your email often. Check your business email several times a day, says Russell. He suggests at the beginning of your day, midday (if you take a break) and at the end of your day. It's quicker and easier to deal with fewer emails at one time.

"I can't emphasize enough the importance of checking your email regularly," says Russell. He says tool dealers often call him about missing a last-minute promotion simply because they didn't check their email for several days. You also don't want to miss a customer's order or urgent question.

Russell tells a story about an OEM recall that required a special adapter to fix. Cornwell dealers who read his email blast about the recall and adapter were able to get orders from their customers before competing dealers even knew about the opportunity.

Can the spam. The spam filter is the greatest invention since the TV remote. Use it!

Use filters. Most email applications allow you to create filters to sort your email into separate folders. The simplest, for example, would drop every email from your flag into one folder so you check it more often, says Russell. That's also faster than scanning your entire email box to find a new clearance promotion you got yesterday.

You can create sophisticated filter scripts, too. For example, you can have a filter drop emails with



 **Alex Griss**
Mobile Uploads · Yesterday at 7:53pm ·

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Customers are oftentimes flattered when a distributor posts their picture with a favorite toolbox on Facebook.

invoice attachments into a "bill" folder or emails with marketing information into a "promotions" folder. Don't want to deal with this? Ask a "techie" friend or young person for help. (My "go to" IT guys are a friend who works at IBM and my 14-year-old son.)

Russell says Thunderbird (www.mozilla.org/thunderbird) is a solid, free email application that has a lot of nice features and filtering tools. It's by Mozilla, the same folks who make the Firefox browser (www.mozilla.org). Try it.

Salute the flag. Want to put off, but not forget an email? Flag it. Just be sure you review your flagged email often or it's as good as forgotten.

Q. A customer called me with an order when I was driving. I couldn't write it down and I forgot it. What can I do to avoid that happening again?

A. I think vitamin B-12 is good for memory loss – or maybe that's for fatigue. I forget.

Seriously, it's not your memory, it's that you need to encourage customers to text or email you with orders or questions. If you prefer talking to customers, let their calls go to voicemail. In your greeting, ask customers to leave their order or question so you can get back to them with

an answer. (Russell does this.) That way, you can avoid interruptions and deal with texts, emails and voicemails more efficiently by tackling them all at once.

Remind your customer that anytime they need something they can call, email or text you. Remember your goal is to use technology to make their life easier as well as yours.

Q. A lot of my customers are showing up on Facebook. Should I friend them?

A. No! At least not on your personal Facebook account. Customers don't need to see the annoying cat pictures your cousin Millie posted on your wall. And your friends and family may start to avoid you if you start posting tool promotions on your personal page.

(Remember Russell's advice about keeping your business and personal life separate? That goes double here.). Set up a business Facebook account.

"I think Facebook is the best way for dealers to get in contact with their customers en masse," says Russell. "They only have to post it one place. It's very easy for dealers to get customers to follow them ... and personal and business accounts are both attached to the same login ID and use all the same tools."

Setting up and managing a business Facebook page is easy, says Russell. (Cornwell has a one-page handout on setting up a business Facebook page. Ask your flag for theirs.)

"Take a photo of a guy standing next to the toolbox you just delivered to him with a big, proud smile on his face and post it on Facebook," says Russell. There

are other customers just like him who could see themselves with a new toolbox – or who want to buy his old toolbox. And there are smartphone apps that will let you shoot and post photos in seconds. So it's worth the few moments to post photos every time you sell any big ticket item.

To do this with email, you'd have the headache of gathering addresses, maintaining the list, and putting together the email, says Russell. With Facebook, it's simple to put several posts a week on Facebook in literally a few minutes.

How do you get followers? Just post a sign on the truck telling customers to find you on Facebook. If you can, print it on your receipts or business cards. You have the toys. They'll want to follow you to see what's new and exciting.

Now if you'll excuse me, I need to check my reader email folder. ■

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The all-new **C-Reader IV+** is simply in a class of its own. No other code reader in its price point has the capability to view live data! The C-Reader IV+ is also internet updateable, so code libraries are always the most current! Features include read/clear codes, view readiness monitors, freeze frame data & VIN ID. **MSRP: \$49.95**

Yet another class leader - the **C-Reader V+** boasts a full color QVGA screen, the ability to graph 2 PIDs of data, along with blazing fast refresh rate for better graphing & live data readings - all for under \$100! Features include read/clear codes, view/graph live data, along with I/M readiness monitors, freeze frame data & VIN ID. **MSRP: \$69.95**

The **C-Reader VI+** boasts the capability of recording and storing up to 8 hours of data – crucial for diagnosing intermittent problems. The C-Reader VI+ also supports J-OB2, extending coverage to imported Japanese Domestic Market vehicles which are gaining popularity in both North and South America and the Caribbean. **MSRP: \$119.95**

The **C-Reader VII** integrates the award winning code reader capabilities of the C-Reader VI & the reset functions of the C-Resetter! Read & clear OBDII trouble codes, view, record & graph live data in full color, perform oil service light resets and more! The C-Reader VII is fast & ultra-portable, making it the perfect go-to code reader & reset tool for today's modern technician. **MSRP: \$179.95**

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MOST WANTED

Do YOU stock it?

The following products are among the most requested tools and equipment from recent issues of PD's sister publication, *Professional Tool & Equipment News (PTEN)*. Perhaps you've already received requests about some of these items. They are definitely products you should take a closer look at stocking for your customers.

Repair stripped or damaged threads



The Anglo American Tools Nes Thread Repair hand tools repair both external and internal stripped pipe threads and eliminate the need for an extensive collection of taps and dies. There is no need to determine bolt size, depth and pitch. The tools work with SAE or metric, and right- or left-hand threads. These tools can repair threads that are at the beginning of a nut or bolt, whereas taps and dies are not able to perform that function.

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Cut tubing in tight spaces



The Beta Tools Ratcheting Tube Cutter, No. 331, comes as a ratcheting tube cutter that allows the user to cut tubing that is located in tight spaces. Traditional tube

cutters require the user to spin the tool around the tubing, which can be nearly impossible when other mechanicals are in the way. With the No. 331, the user simply opens the end to place the tubing inside the tool, and then tighten the thumbscrew and ratchet.

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Prevent back strain when changing tires



Hoist Hanger provides an accessory for automotive lifts that allows wheels to be placed on and removed from vehicles at the same level the technician works, preventing the need to bend down to pick up or place a wheel. Each Hoist Hanger is an independent unit that is quickly and easily installed or removed. When the technician is allowed to hang the wheel off to the side, back strain is avoided entirely. The Hoist Hanger comes in several sizes and fits almost any two-post lift. Each unit folds "out of the way" against the lift arm when not in use.

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Tighten fasteners in odd places

The Eazypower FlexABit, FlexABit Plus and FlexAWrench tools all flex to a 90-degree angle. These flexible tool extensions do not permit the outer surface to rotate. The FlexABit can be used at any speed and has been rated at 3.5 ft/lbs of torque, while the FlexABit Plus can be used with heavy duty drills and has been rated at 13 ft/lbs of torque. The FlexAWrench can be used for drive sockets. They can be used with most screwdriver tips.

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Repair transmission cooling lines

The Mastercool TC 3/82 GM Transmission Cooling Line Die and Adapter Set, No. 71099, includes the 71099-06 adapter and 71099-16 die set. It can be used with the No. 71475 hydraulic pump assembly. This set makes repairing transmission coolers easier than ever, according to the company.

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Store tools and supplies

Craftline Storage Systems' 8-drawer service tray rack cabinet has heavy duty ball bearing drawer slides and solid steel drawer bottoms. With different configurations this heavy duty cabinet can store eight compartment tray boxes with the ability to support 100 lbs, for a total storage capacity of 800 lbs. The cabinet comes modular in design and can be used with all other Craftline products to create the perfect storage system. The cabinet comes with two heavy duty lockable catches and heavy duty carry handle. Cabinet dimensions: 20.5" width by 12.5" depth by 30" height.

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Test relays

Electronic Specialties' Shielded Relay Adapter Kit, No. 190-4, includes three relay adapters for use with the 190 Relay Buddy tester. These three adapters permit testing of shielded style relays, which could not be tested previously with the Relay Buddy. The adapter plugs into the Relay Buddy tester first, then the relay plugs into the adapter. From there, normal testing procedures can be followed.

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Mid-rise scissor lift for wheel service

The Dannmar Cadet 6000XL mid-rise scissor lift is a 6,000-lb capable lift, that is perfect for wheel service shops. An all-around upgrade from the company's Cadet 6000, the 6000XL has the same lifting capacity, higher-grade materials and is constructed with more steel. This lift won't take up an extra bay, and offers the ability to be moved out of the way when not in use.

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Ratchet in tighter spots

The GearWrench Gimbal Ratchet allows the ratchet head to rotate on two planes, providing easier access for the end user. The 72-tooth ratcheting mechanism provides a 5-degree swing arc and allows technicians to spin fasteners on and off in hard-to-reach areas where it's difficult to use a standard ratchet. It comes in 1/4" and 3/8" drive sizes. The anodized aluminum finish offers protection and makes the ratchet easy to clean.

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High-cutting capacity with little effort

The Knipex X-Cut Compact Diagonal Cutter, No. 73 02 160, provides users high-cutting capacity with very little effort thanks to the optimum coordination of a cutting edge angle and high-lever ratio. The innovative box joint design provides high stability while staying lightweight. A double-supported joint axis allows for heavy duty cutting of thicker cables, while still allowing precise cuts through fine copper wires. This tool requires 20 percent less effort than high-leverage diagonal cutters of the same length, according to the company. This tool features a forged, chrome vanadium, oil-hardened steel construction.

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Lifts, Jacks & Stands

All shops require some form of lifting equipment to work under vehicles. While this type of equipment can sometimes be a bit more difficult to sell, there is a demand for it. It takes knowing the right information about the products to share with customers. Check out the next several pages for product options that customers might be interested in.

SUV and service truck jack

The **Norco 3-1/2 ton heavy duty floor jack** has been designed for a variety of automotive shop uses including the added capacity and maximum lift height required to handle most SUV and 1-ton-plus service trucks. This jack features steel hydraulic block construction, a double-pump piston design that quickly raises the jack to the maximum height and a removable, two-piece handle with knurled hand grip for ease of use. The tool provides 4" low and 21-3/8" maximum lift heights (without a saddle adapter) and 7" low and 24"-3/8" maximum lift heights (with a saddle adapter). A safety bypass system protects the pressure cylinder, and a safety overload system prevents the jack from being used beyond its rated capacity.

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Secure an engine for work

The American-made **Hein-Werner 1,250-lb Engine Stand**, No. HW93778, combines strength and ease-of-operation. The head will lock into any position along its 360-degree rotation. The head is rotated by a long handle in the back of the stand making the rotation of the engine an easy task. It stands on a strong, sturdy frame built from heavy gauge welded square tubular steel atop an H-frame, with two fixed wheels at the front of the stand and two rear swivel casters for maneuverability.

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Lift vehicles more quickly

The **Mohawk System I 10,000-lb.capacity clear floor two-post lift** incorporates patented, hydraulic synchronization and is ideal for servicing all cars and light trucks. The System I features 3" and 6" truck frame adapters for hard-to-reach vehicle frames and a low 3-1/2" arm height to allow for easy access to low-riding sports cars. It also features a total clear floor design with adjustable height overhead hydraulic lines, all-position mechanical safety locks, internal hydraulic safeties and automatic locking arms.

This unit comes with a 25-year structural, 10-year mechanical, plus a limited lifetime hydraulic cylinder warranty.

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An additional foot between lift posts

The **Admiral 9000X** from **Dannmar Equipment** is the extended version of the Admiral 9000 two-post automotive lift, providing over a foot more in width between posts and drive-through clearance than the standard version. This floor-plate garage lift offers serious benefits that make it very desirable to both the service technician, business owner and the homeowner, according to the company. This vehicle lift is extra-wide for larger vehicles, and its extended arm reach will cover most vehicle lifting points. The Admiral 9000X has a low-profile design for shops and garages with height restrictions.

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Lift vehicles

The **WorkSafe USA No-Jack Lift** features an all-in-one design that is compact, lightweight and easy to store. Unlike service jacks, which have limitations such as requiring level or solid ground in order to lift a vehicle, this product lifts right from the wrecker itself. It has an overall height of 3" with a width of 6". It has a length of 36.5" while weighing only 34 lbs. This unit has a lifting capacity of 3,000 lbs.

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Hydraulic bottle jack and safety jack in one

The **Powerbuilt Xtra Low Profile Jack**, from **Alltrade Tools**, slips under bodies as low as 2-3/4" but rises all the way up to 15-1/2". Rated for vehicles up to 4,000 lbs, this jack features the patent-pending locking safety bar that holds the load without the need for jack stands. It is the perfect jack for subcompact, compact and modified cars; and for trucks, unibodies and body-on-frames.

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Lift engines

ARI-Hetra's Engine Hoist, No. AH09756, places a large emphasis on safety with a 9,000-lb lifting capacity, which can handle most

engine sizes. This maximum lifting capacity, combined with its collapsible frame, helps this tool exceed job performance standards and allow it to be easily stored away when unused. The hoist has a usable, effective and safe design, according to the company.

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Hold vehicles in place

Mac Tools' 6-ton Spring Assist Stands, No. JS6MJK, offer a fast lift for professional performance. Unlike other jack stands, these have a rack bar that quickly raises to its desired support point, due to spring loaded technology. Made with a heavy gauge steel frame, the construction helps prevent distortion and twisting. The stand has a counter-weighted pawl that locks the ratchet bar securely in place and reaches a maximum height of 24"-3/8". It weighs 35 lbs.

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Self-locking screw technology

SEFAC mobile column lifts feature self-locking screws to power the lifts. This technology has proven itself to be more robust than hydraulic lifts, according to the company. The self-locking screw system will not leak, does not rely on an independent lock (as it is self-locking) and is substantially maintenance-free. The entry level S1 series has a 12,000-lb capacity per column (48,000 lbs for a set of four). The top line lift available has a capacity of 18,000 lbs per column. These lifts feature electronic capability for fault finding, synchronization and user-friendly controls.

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Jack vehicles quicker, easier

PowerStation's NOS 3 Ton High Performance Aluminum Racing Jack has all aluminum construction and weighs less than 60 lbs. Traditional steel jacks can weigh almost twice that. In addition to being light and easy to maneuver, this jack has nylon wheels that prevent marring of shop floors. The dual piston power unit gets the jack up to the load in record time. The padded side handles make the jack easy to carry and the padded lift handle prevents injury to the vehicle during lifting. With a high height of 19.5" and a low height of 3.75" this jack can work on everything from low clearance sports cars to full size trucks. It includes jack stands and service jacks in capacities from 1.5 to 3 tons.

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Lift vehicles faster

Challenger Lifts' Quick Cycle technology has increased the rise and descent speed of its CL10V3 two-post and EV1020 in-ground lifts. Quick Cycle lifts have reduced lifting time from 48 seconds to 27 seconds, equating to a 42 percent time savings and a lowering speed to a constant 17 seconds

(approximately) regardless of the weight of the vehicle. Quick Cycle technology was engineered as a solution for the expanding need for quick service bays, and has proven to be a simple and inexpensive way to add express services to shops everywhere.

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Lift heavy duty vehicles

Stertil-Koni Freedom Lifts, Nos. SK 2.20, 2.26 and 2.30, have lifting capacities of 20,000 lbs, 26,000 lbs and 30,000 lbs, respectively. Designed to provide a combination of peak performance and safety through a symmetrical, open floor design that optimizes workspace in the shop, these lifts are similar to the recently introduced 16,000-lb capacity Freedom Lift. All of these lifts feature a clean, ergonomic design with wheels-free lifting, telescopic swing arms with a wide range of usability and a footprint that requires no mechanical structure overhead. The No. SK 2.20 can lift a vehicle within 58 seconds while the Nos. SK 2.26 and 2.30 require 95 seconds.

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Improve door clearance

Nussbaum Hydraulic two-post lifts, No. SPL 10000, come with a lifting capacity of up to 10,000 lbs, asymmetric arms which allow optimal door clearance and easy vehicle access for interior work. The lift's 124" width and extended height options help maximize valuable shop space, while hard-chromed cylinders prevent corrosion and wear. The lift gives users a no-worry, low-maintenance lift, according to the company. It features other technician-friendly details such as electronic lock releases and telescoping arms.

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Increase lift ease of use

BendPak's PCL-18 portable column lift system combines heavy duty capability with ease of use that reduces operator fatigue in the placement of the lift columns. Its 6" diameter Cush-Ride front wheels feature an adjustable active leaf spring design that provide variable up-front ground clearance for smooth traveling over uneven floors, deteriorating asphalt, expansion seams and thresholds. Intuitive touchpad controls allow the user to operate, view and change operation parameters directly from each individual touch-sensitive display.

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Lift heavy duty trucks

Forward Lift's FCH family of mobile column lifts offers 18,000 lbs of capacity per column in an affordable, portable package designed for independent repair facilities. Designed with small-to medium-sized shops in mind, the family's economical price allows the user to enter the heavy duty market. The fixed forks on FCH lifts fit most truck tires without the need for adjustment, enabling faster set-up. One end of the lift is always open, making it easy to pull vehicles in and out. Each lift has an 18,000-lb capacity, with a set of four capable of lifting 72,000 lbs.

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Six locking positions

The Sunex 1003AJ 3-ton Aluminum Jack Stand features pin-style locks, is constructed of 100-percent aluminum and weighs under 10 lbs. A heavy duty flanged base and ASME-PALD 2009 compliance ensure safety and stability while working. Six locking positions secure the load in multiple heights from 10.6" to 15.4".

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DRIVING SALES



Set up vehicles for lifting

The **Gray Manufacturing Wireless Portable Lifting System**, No. WPLS i3, offers the user an innovative touch-screen control system that will guide the tech to quickly and correctly set the columns for proper lifting. The patent pending control system allows the user to park the lifts, use the lifts in paired or single mode and has auto slow mode for vehicle placement on stands. The paired and single mode feature auto-return so the tech can easily re-engage the vehicle and remove the vehicle from stands.

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Service light duty pickups

The **Rotary Lift Mach series mobile columns and truck frame adapter kit** allow shops to affordably service popular light duty trucks. The 13,000-lb capacity columns are approximately 1' shorter and 150 lbs lighter than the company's other mobile column lifts, making them ideal for mobile distributors to trailer and demo. The columns are battery operated, so demos can be conveniently conducted anywhere in the shop, even in the parking lot outside. With a total capacity of 12,000 lbs, the truck frame adapter kit is able to service Class 2 and some Class 3 trucks.

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25.5"-wide runways

The **Kar Lift Equilibrium**, by Omer, is a true vertical platform pantograph lift. The Equilibrium is available in 12,000-lb, 16,000-lb and 18,000-lb capacities. The 25.5"-wide runways are available 17', 18' and 20' long. The Equilibrium lifts to 81.5" and with less floor obstruction than other scissor lifts, according to the company. Omer uses a patented volumetric control that maintains the coplanarity of the runways without any electronic sensors on the lift. The Equilibrium is available with the 9,000-lb capacity, integrated-runway, lifting tables or conventional jacking beams.

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412SS QUARTER STICK 33 PIECE SOCKET AND BIT SET

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- 1/4" Drive: 4" Extension bar
- 4S04: 72 tooth stubby combination bit and socket driver
- 4S12L: 72 tooth extra long combination bit and socket driver



Great for getting into tight spots, under dashboards, and bumpers.

Tools and equipment for automotive technicians and battery specialists

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Electronic Specialties

688 True RMS Low Current Clamp Meter

This tool helps techs deal with battery drains effectively and helps locate the drain quickly

The Electronic Specialties True RMS Low Current Clamp Meter, No. 688, features a 3/4" clamp opening, which allows clamping over heavy duty ground cables and some multiple ground cable systems. The larger clamp will permit a wider range of use across heavy duty vehicles. This clamp meter has improved the drift on DC amps readings, and it has a built-in full range digital multimeter for true RMS accuracy. The clamp meter measures DC/AC volts, ohms, frequency, capacitance, diodes, continuity and temperature in Fahrenheit and Celsius. Multimeter test leads, temperature probe and zippered carrying case are included.

Selling points

- Measures down to 1 mA accurately, for measuring and diagnosing parasitic battery drains.
- Large clamp size of 0.75" (19mm) clamps over larger heavy duty ground cables and some multiple ground cable systems.
- Much improved zero-stability allows higher confidence in low current readings.
- Full-function DMM is built into the 688, including temperature readings.

Features and benefits

The 688 is geared to help technicians deal with battery drains effectively and help locate the drain quickly. It all starts by clamping over the negative battery cable to read the residual currents in the system. From there, the technician can pull fuses to see which circuit is drawing the amps. The 688 also measures up to 80 amps, so there are many applications, such as verifying correct charging current in DC to DC converters on hybrids.

Application

The 688 can perform all types of electrical troubleshooting, from voltage and resistance issues to problems in which amperage readings are key to the diagnosis. Most importantly, this unit is geared to address the challenges of taking accurate low-current readings when battery drains persist.

Origin

The idea was derived completely from customer feedback. Users and dealers have been giving feedback on the earlier model low-current probe. The company took that feedback and designed a completely new clamp meter, which incorporates those requests.

One issue has been the clamp size. Clamping over the negative battery cable speeds up the diagnosis of battery drains. Our prior model could not clamp over some larger cables and some multiple cable systems. The 688 can now clamp over those and provide the readings needed to diagnose and locate the problem.

Manufacturing specs

The 688 measures currents from 1mA up to 80 amps. It also measures DC and AC voltage, ohms, frequency (Hz) capacitance, diodes, temperature and continuity. Other notable specifications include min/max, peak min/max, analog bargraph and a backlit 5,000-count LCD display. A zippered carrying case comes included.

Storage and display

The unit is packed in a full-color box suitable for display anywhere on the truck.

The ESI 688 True RMS Low Current Clamp Meter can perform all types of electrical troubleshooting, from voltage and resistance issues to problems in which amperage readings are key to the diagnosis.



Suggested retail price

\$315

For more information

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To watch a video
demonstration of this tool,
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Dent Fix AluSpot Deluxe Aluminum Repair Station

This unit performs maintenance on repairing dents and creases in aluminum panels.

The Dent Fix Equipment Aluspot Deluxe Aluminum Repair Station, No. DF-900DX, allows shops to start working on highly profitable aluminum repairs. The five steps for aluminum repair are covered by the tools included in this set: expose the bare aluminum, apply heat, weld pins, pull the dent and shape the dent. Unique features to this system include the locking doors and dust cover that ensures the tools are isolated from outside contaminants. The Aluspot includes a five-year warranty and is made in the U.S.A.

Selling points

- Not many shops are set up properly to accept aluminum repair work despite the increasing demand. Automotive Service Association Chairman Darrell Amberson estimated less than 10 percent of the independent repair shops in the U.S. meet certifications and equipment requirements necessary to work on aluminum vehicles. The Aluspot can instantly get a shop into the aluminum repair business, where repair rates can be up to three times higher than steel.
- From repair to proper storage, the DF-900DX is the most complete aluminum repair station on the market, according to the company.
- The Dent Fix DF-900DX Aluspot is approved by Ford to repair the vehicle manufacturer's 2015 aluminum-bodied F-150.
- Many other vehicles already use aluminum or are switching to the

lightweight material. Some vehicles include the Audi A8/R8; Tesla Model S; 2014 Mercedes C-Class; future Ford F-250 and 350, and Expedition.

Features and benefits

This system works very similar to that of a stud welder. It includes everything needed to address the five basic steps of working with aluminum: expose the bare aluminum, apply heat, weld pins, pull the dent and shape the dent.

Cross contamination of two unlike metals, like aluminum and steel, can cause galvanic corrosion, thus ruining the finish of the repaired panel. Isolating the tools for aluminum use only is controlled by the locking cabinet, three locking drawers and the dust cover. The drawers have die cut foam to keep the tools organized and accounted for.

Application

This unit performs maintenance on repairing dents and creases in aluminum panels.

The process and idea behind the service is similar to working with steel, but the difference is that aluminum behaves differently and has different characteristics, thus requiring a slightly different approach.

After the paint and other surface coatings are removed and the panel is heated to a specific temperature, a capacitor discharge welder is utilized to weld pins to the raw panel. These pins are then pulled using a series of pullers designated for that specific type of



The Dent Fix DF-900DX Aluspot is approved by Ford to repair the vehicle manufacturer's 2015 aluminum-bodied F-150.

pull. It does not weld aluminum cracks together. That is a different process altogether, the company notes.

Origin

Dent Fix Equipment stays current with manufacturing processes to ensure expertise on repairing the new materials before they become adopted as regular processes.

In 2005, the company noticed some vehicle manufacturers experimenting with boron steels and aluminum. The company immediately started putting together prototypes to come up with a solution.

For the last decade, Dent Fix has been working with aluminum and ultra-high strength steels. In that time, it has developed the tools needed to get the job done efficiently.

Manufacturing specs

The completed unit is made in the U.S.A. and comes with a five-year warranty.

Each station includes the following: a capacitor discharge welder utilizing a self-contained, weld gun with ground; Alu-Magnesium stud pins; hand T-puller; squeeze puller; lever puller; bridge puller; body file + 350mm blade; infrared temperature gauge; digital set temperature heat gun; pick/finishing hammer; curved pein/finishing hammer; 22mm soft face hammer; reverse-curve hammer; 35mm dead blow hammer; bolster-head nylon chisel; round-head nylon chisel; double-end nylon dolly; utility dolly; double-end dolly; thin-toe dolly; heel dolly; curved dolly; inline paint remover; stainless-steel shoe handle brush; stainless-steel tooth brush and dust cover.

Storage and display

The item is either sent via truck freight or shipped in individual boxes. Assembly is easy and handled by the purchaser. If displayed on a truck, it is displayed like any other toolbox. The wheels, doors and cabinet should be locked during transportation in a truck. The scissor top cabinet can be opened easily to display the welder. A DVD is available to play during demonstrations.

Seeing the AluSpot in person helps to drive home the quality of this unit. It shows the customer that aluminum tools are not that different than the steel tools they probably already own.

Customers understand the quality of the unit once they become familiar with the differences and common practices.

Suggested retail price

\$7,495

For more information

Erik Spitznagel

(800) 523-1751 ■

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SNEAK PEEK

Welcome to Sneak Peek! This product section features exclusive, recently introduced automotive tool and equipment products. In Sneak Peek, we'll show you new tools even before automotive technicians get to read about them in *PTEN (Professional Tool & Equipment News)* magazine. Sneak Peek products will help you stock your truck with the latest and greatest tools on the market.



Industrial-grade nozzle for cleaning filters

The Mikise Power Pic Pro allows users to clean reusable filters, which will prolong life and improve performance, according to the company. To use, attach the industrial-grade nozzle with ergonomic handle onto a standard hose to clean filters inside and out. The easy "on/off" valve allows users to select the pressure that's best for the filter media. The air/water agitation action then extracts built-up dirt that hinders product performance and shortens the life of filters. The Power Pic Pro can be used with all pre- and post-filter treatments.

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One-touch TPMS re-learn module

The ATEQ MitsuReset tool is a one-touch TPMS re-learn module for the Mitsubishi Lancer, Outlander and Mirage, which previously required the use of an expensive scan tool coupled with a TPMS trigger tool in order to reset a TPMS system. ATEQ's stand-alone MitsuReset allows technicians freedom to use any other TPMS trigger tools like the ATEQ VT55 diagnostic tool, the ATEQ VT30 or VT15 trigger tools. The MitsuReset tool is easy to use, fully updateable with a computer, and is compatible with all TPMS trigger tools capable of triggering Mitsubishi sensors.

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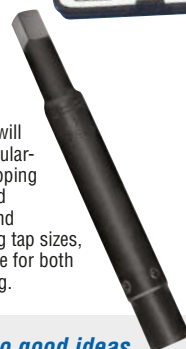
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I treat customers like family, AND YES, I sometimes get burned



By Bruce Henry

Bruce Henry operates Mule Creek Tool Co., an independent distributorship in Deming, N.M.

Since I became a mobile tool dealer 14 years ago, I've seen a lot of distributors in my market come and go. I've seen a lot of different ways of doing business. I've faced a lot of situations with customers that have tested my judgment, my kindness and my patience. I've compared notes with other distributors on how they do things.

When I came into this business, I had experience working as a technician, as a shop owner, as a car salesman, as an auto parts salesman, as a property owner and other things.

I mention my extensive experience in business because I realize that the way I do things is not typical for mobile distributors. The fact that I am successful driving my truck only four days a week nowadays tells me that my way of doing things, while not typical, works for me.

In reading *Professional Distributor* and talking with other mobile distributors over the years, I learned that one of the most unusual things about this business is how diverse our skills must be. This is a common belief among the people in this business, and I certainly share it.

When Elliot Maras, editor of this magazine, asked me what most surprised me about this business, I replied that I never realized running a tool truck would require me to be a pastor, a father, an uncle and a grandfather to many of my customers.

My peers don't all agree with me

I know that many of my peers in this business do not agree with me on this. I know that many distributors make it a point not to get too close to their customers personally, believing it is bad business. Many of my peers say it's not good to mix business and pleasure. But I cannot think this way.

Those who believe it is bad business are probably right; it's bad business for them. But I'm not them. I'm Bruce Henry.

For me, my customers are my family. There are some "relatives" I like more than others. Some of my "relatives" are characters. Sometimes they let me down. But like them or not, they are my family.

I can't approach the business any other way. In the interest of full disclo-

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sure, let me admit that I did not always have an easy time in my 65 years of life. Along the way, there were people who took an interest in helping me. Had it not been for them, I would not be where I am today.

I've counseled customers who have struggled with alcohol and drug problems. I have helped several of them get sober.

Recently, one recovering alcoholic admitted he had a beer this past New Year's Eve. I scolded him and said, "I don't want to hear that from you." I reminded him that he has a good job and a nice family to think about.

A few years ago, I caught a young technician stealing a knife on my truck. Instead of getting mad at him, I told him he could keep the knife. He has been a good customer ever since.

Yes, I do get burned

Things don't always work out for the better.

One day, I saw a technician weeping in my truck. When I asked him what the problem was, he said his wife had been arrested for not paying traffic fines. He didn't have the money to bail her out of jail. I offered to lend him the money. He said he didn't want to borrow money because his wife didn't deserve to be bailed out of jail. I asked him if he loved his wife and he said he did. Then he agreed to take the money.

That customer still owes me the money. He keeps telling me he'll pay me. He may eventually pay me and he may not. But I still feel that I did the right thing.

Don't get me wrong; there are times I do put my foot down with people. If I think I've given them a chance to pay their balance, I tell them the balance must be paid to keep my business running.

I think that by treating customers as family, they feel more responsible to return my goodwill and pay me what they owe me. It doesn't work with every customer, but it works with most of them.

At the end of the day, I've managed to outlive 16 distributors in my market that have come and gone over the last 14 years. ■

Have an interesting experience to share with your fellow mobile distributors? Contact Editor Elliot Maras by phone at 800-547-7377 ext. 1693 or by email at Elliot@VehicleServicePros.com.



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