

FIVE KEYS TO BUILDING BETTER CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS WITH WOMEN

Make a friend. Make a sale. Make her a lifelong customer.

Unfortunately, the auto repair business has a tainted past when it comes to taking advantage of women. It's just a fact. And there's still residual distrust that you need to be mindful of, and eliminate. Do your part by respectfully empowering women in making informed repair decisions. And while we don't recommend treating women any differently than men, we do have a few suggestions to help you improve your business to attract more female customers.



MAKE HER COMFORTABLE.

And her surroundings too. Small touches can have just as much impact as the bigger things. Treat her well and she will keep bringing her cars to your shop. Make her visit a good experience by considering these factors:

KEEP THINGS CLEAN

That means an immaculate waiting area with comfortable chairs, some women's magazines, and perhaps a few kid-friendly items. Keep things clean, uncluttered, kid-safe, and smelling as fresh as possible.

PROVIDE SOME REFRESHMENT OPTIONS

Consider adding tea, bottled waters, juices and low-fat, wholegrain snack bars. And decent coffee. Really, decent coffee.

CLEAN THOSE BATHROOMS

Scrub those toilets and sinks, wash the walls, or hire someone to do it right. Keep it well stocked with decent quality paper products as well as scented, moisturizing soap.

KEEP HER CONNECTED

There's a good chance she needs to get things done while waiting, so offer free Wi-Fi and a place to work. It doesn't have to be fancy, just adequate so she doesn't lose any more of her time.



COMMUNICATE WITH HER.

Open and transparent communication is essential for repeat business. Women need to feel that they can trust you. Speak to her with respect and listen with respect. Answer her questions. Address her concerns. Never talk down to her. Respect her smarts and help make her even smarter about her vehicle.



HOLD YOUR WORKERS TO THE SAME STANDARD

Train all workers to remember what their mother's always told them, "Mind your manners."

SPEAK HER LANGUAGE

Don't be aloof but don't be condescending either. While you don't want to get overly technical, don't assume she doesn't know cars. Make it comfortable for her to ask you what she wants to know and you'll be her friend.

FOLLOW UP

If you say you're going to do something, do it. Then send her an email or postcard to thank her for her business. When appropriate, make a short phone call to simply make sure the problem is gone for good. The fact that you were being thoughtful goes a long way.



SHARE THE EDUCATION.

You never know if that woman walking through the door is a strict 'I don't wanna know, just fix-it-for-me' type or a master mechanic type. What you should know is that she's always interested in being treated well and finding a shop that is willing to help her know more, make better decisions and keep her vehicle running better.

HOST CAR CLINICS FOR WOMEN

Cover topics ranging from simple oil changes to jump-starting a dead battery, to recognizing a failed alternator, etc. Make them an open forum where each woman will feel comfortable about asking questions and getting some hands-on experience.

CREATE AND PUBLISH

Provide tutorial videos on your website and social media channels. Let her know you want her to feel comfortable with the topics of 'car'. Moreover, she might share with her network of friends as well.

CREATE EDUCATIONAL BROCHURES AND EMAILS

Share some basics of car care. Use [MailChimp](#) or [ReachMail](#) to send her coupons/specials.

ADD AN ONLINE ESTIMATE TOOL TO YOUR WEBSITE

or link to tools like the [Autobytel Car Repair Estimate Calculator](#) or the [Service & Repair portal of Cars.com](#) to help her get helpful information.



PUT HER MIND AT EASE.

Your reputation can make or break you. Get good reviews and put her at ease by helping her know you're qualified & experienced. There's an old saying in marketing, "A brand is not what you say it is, it's what she says it is." And nowadays, she's talking, in social circles and on social media. Word gets around faster than ever before, good or bad. Make sure she's saying good things about your business.



GET CERTIFIED WITH ASKPATTY

The AskPatty.com Certified Female Friendly® program is designed for shops to attract, retain and increase loyalty with the female customer through online training, tools and ongoing support.

PROMINENTLY DISPLAY CERTIFICATIONS

accreditations and service guarantees in your shop and on your website are great little ads for your credibility.

ENCOURAGE HER TO LEAVE REVIEWS

On key websites like [Google+](#), [Yelp](#), [Angie's List](#) and [City Search](#) – but don't stop there. Respond when possible – even when there's a negative review. Let her know you've heard her and you'll make the problem right.



GET SOCIAL WITH HER.

Increasingly, we're all depending more on our social networks for information about products and services before we spend our hard-earned money. It's critical to be her helpful resource when she has a question and social media is a great way to establish, nurture, and maintain better customer relationships:

Think about speaking to her where she is in ways she prefers.

MAKE YOUR PRESENCE KNOWN

Be helpful in the social spaces she goes to. Read [Getting social to get sales](#).

BE RELEVANT

Provide a mixture of auto-related topics (i.e., commuting, safety when traveling, traffic, etc.) written from a fun and personable point of view.

INCLUDE PHOTOS AND VIDEOS

Share highlights of employees, putting faces to names, and bring a certain level of familiarity and comfort with your shop.

SHOWCASE FEMALE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Participate in fundraisers that cater to women.



Bottom Line: Make yourself her auto's friend.

Honesty, fairness, respect, communication, and transparency are key in creating trust and confidence with your female customer. It's just good business. Women are an audience you need to understand and appeal to if you really want to grow your shop's reputation. Do a few things right and you'll see your shop become a lot more attractive to women.