

AAR Shop Talk



Approved
Auto Repair

Volume 24 • Fall 2008

Top Shop: Platinum Auto Service

27 Commercial Street, South Yarmouth, Massachusetts

Jay Frazier and his wife, Bianca, have owned Platinum Auto Service, our Top Shop for the second quarter of 2008, for eight years. Just within the past year, the Fraziers aligned their family owned and operated shop with AAA. "Some customers had AAA newsletters and that sparked our interest," Jay said. "We contacted AAA about becoming approved and found that we already met the criteria."

The Fraziers are happy to be connected to AAA because they can tell that it gives their customers the confidence that everything will be handled properly. "We monitor our customers' needs because we want to know what works and what doesn't," Jay added. "We ask if they've been here before. If they haven't, we ask where they heard about us."

Since joining with AAA, Jay says that an average of a couple of customers come to

Platinum Auto Service every month after searching online for a quality shop.

After his initial contact with AAA, Jay found that Platinum Auto Service would be one of few AAA-approved shops in his area, so the look and feel of the shop took on greater importance. He said he feels that his shop is different from any others around. "We are a shop that has the professional atmosphere of a dealership but with corner garage-type service. We know that 60 percent of our customers are women (the men are do-it-yourselfers) and that they are concerned with comfort, safety, cleanliness and good service," he said.

With a staff of 11, a plan to expand the work area from five bays to nine, and a website about to be launched, business is good and the customers are obviously satisfied.

The team at Platinum Auto Service (l-r): George Prada, Brian Pickering, Eric York, Nick Bibeault, Alan Reardon, Brian Wilson, Jay Frazier, John Alemao, Bianca Frazier, Chris Hughes and Bill Arseneaux



Tech Tip: Staying Current

By Rich Iozzi, AAR Field Specialist

There always seems to be a tech who is up on everything. He knows the latest problem vehicle, latest vehicle recall, newest trends and legal requirements. Does he read a magnitude of trade publications, newspaper auto sections, spend hours on the Internet, or a bit of everything?

Not staying current in this industry may cost you money at some point, but how do you fit research time into your busy schedule? Below are just a few proven ways, one of which might work for you. Pick one reliable information source you're comfortable with and expand on it.

Start with the local newspaper, reading or scanning the automotive section as well as the business and world news sections. Then check out national publications like USA Today or the Wall Street Journal. To save money, check to see if your favorite newspapers offer online viewing.

Subscribe to a few trade magazines either in print or online. Scan for relevant information, separating the "need to know" information from the "nice to know."

The Internet is a vast source of information, but only after you learn to separate authors' personal opinions from the facts. Stay away from blogs, sticking to government websites like EPA.gov and NHTSA.gov. View official state sites for local regulations; trade sites like ASAshop.com, RMAhq.net and iATN.net; tool and equipment manufacturers; and sites for original equipment manufacturers and aftermarket companies.

Other good sources are people. Talk to other techs and ask what sources they use. Share your favorites, find out what works for you, and keep it interesting.