

ACUSTRIP VIK™ Provides an Ounce of Prevention

Ben Franklin wrote, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Though he was referring to fire safety at the time, this same axiom applies to the needs of our customer today.

Imagine the following scenario: It is family vacation time, the car is all packed up, with mom, the kids, the dog and every essential need to have a wonderful time creating family memories crammed inside. Those memories that will last a lifetime, should not start with dreaded breakdown in the middle of Nowhere, USA.

One can almost picture the scene. The summer sun beating down on a hot, non-functioning car loaded to the roof. **“But we just had the car in for an oil change? Shouldn’t the tech have seen something was wrong?”**

Of course, the repair industry has changed a lot over the last few years. Reliability has skyrocketed, service intervals are extended, and we have seen a huge technological shift in the way shops do business. But there are still opportunities to do better keeping in mind that High Tech requires a High Touch *Approach* as well.

Here are five ways a service provider can improve the effectiveness of selling preventive maintenance to help customers avoid uncomfortable roadside situations.

1. PERFORM DIGITAL VEHICLE INSPECTIONS (VIK™)

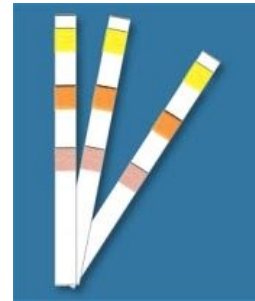


The advent of Digital Vehicle Inspections (DVI) has been a huge game-changer. A well-performed inspection with good pictures and annotations can assist the customer by showing them exactly what the technician is seeing. A quality picture is worth a thousand words! Treat your inspection process like any other fundamental process, one that needs training, feedback and monitoring for effectiveness. Always seek to improve efficiency and add value.

Keep in mind shops that are most successful in implementing digital inspection have the process built into their culture. If you or the leaders in your shop value and understand the impact the process will have, then the team will naturally follow your lead. Using the proven ACUSTRIP 30000 Vehicle Inspection Kit (VIK) will make inspection and leveraging high tech with a high tech approach a standard in the service operation that will provide superior results in sales, profits, repeat business and customer satisfaction.

2. USE VISUAL AIDS

Using a color-coded brake pad thickness gauge, tire tread gauge, belt tester, battery test, and fluid tests, that are part of the VIK, supported with photos or live video can help the customer make a better-informed decision. Testing the vehicle's conditions, including the state of the fluids, based on science provides a time proven process to evaluate the system's condition. Using objective (measurable) data gives both the advisor and customers solid ground to base their recommendations and subsequent buying decisions. In addition to the various test strips included in the ACUSTRIP 30000 VIK, ACUSTRIP provides various color-coded test strips for a wide array of special diagnostic applications including our innovative cabin bacteria and mold detection kit.



3. DO A WALK AROUND

Encourage customers to make a simple walk-around inspection as a part of their vehicle intake process. Though it is not always possible when the customer is present, a walk-around inspection can be especially impactful. Not only can you look at the car together, you also have an opportunity to hear directly from the customer any concerns they have.

You can gain additional insight about how the vehicle will be used in the coming months and with that information the service advisor can set up a plan to ensure the vehicle is in peak running condition based on the customer's driving habits. The inspection process documented with notes, ACUSTRIP dip and read tests and pictures goes a long way to enable the service decision makers to see what is needed.

4. ASK FOR THE SALE!

It might seem too simple but asking for the sale is one of the most important parts of the sales process. I have reviewed too many phone calls where the service advisor reports the technician's findings to the customer and then just stops. No estimate, no request to have the shop perform the required work, just dead air on the phone line.

The bewildered customer might ask a couple of clarifying questions but in most cases the only question the customer will ask is "When will my car be ready?" All the effort that the service advisor, the repair facility owner, and the vehicle owner put into the shop process; the technician's careful examination of the car and the advisor's time putting the details in the work order may be for nothing. Making a professional service recommendation will help the repair shop and the vehicle owner.

5. REMEMBER THAT YOU'RE THE PROFESSIONAL

Consider the shop to be the expert. The shop has made a significant commitment in training, tool acquisition, information systems and high-tech training to stay current on what is required to service and maintain today's complex vehicles. Customers come to you, the service provider, because of your knowledge and skill, as well as your passion for the trade and the customer. Customers are looking for the service provider to recommend the best course of action regarding maintenance processes and intervals. Do not be afraid to let them know what they need and trust and expect them to say yes!

The Bottom Line

Here is the bottom line: customers look for professional, and honest assessments. They trust you to take care of their automotive needs. They rely on you and your team to provide the best service value and experience; that includes the best cost of ownership, reliability and longevity of their vehicle. By reviewing and putting the VIK™ process into practice, you and your customers will benefit.

ACUSTRIP is here to help you improve your bottom line. Our complete line of diagnostic test strips allow you to provide proof positive of the need for your service recommendations. The use of our VIK™ process will aid you in providing your customers with preventative maintenance that will allow them to avoid expensive break-downs and repairs. The resulting customer satisfaction and loyalty is a win-win for all.

**Remember an ounce of preventative maintenance can return
pounds of good service and customer satisfaction.**