

Independents Versus Dealers

We Can Service New Vehicles

Why take your new car to an independent auto service shop?



JIM VOIGT

What type of shop are you? The article I refer to below deals with independent shops that cannot or pretend to be able to service newer vehicles. Does your shop strive to be profitable with resources to invest in new software or scanners needed to look after the new cars coming into your bays? Or are you the shop that fails the client and sends them to the dealer thinking that only the dealer can service their new car?

There is a perception out there that few independent service shops are equipped with the advanced tools and computer software needed to perform extensive diagnostics and repairs on today's vehicles, and that this degree of specialization is only found in new car dealerships.

Some vs. all

Yes, there are some independent shops that are not equipped to service and repair newer vehicles and, unfortunately, our trade's reputation still suffers from poor service provided by independent shops that don't keep current with technology and proper business systems. That said, not all new car dealerships excel at diagnostic work for their clients. My shop has had to properly diagnose and repair several vehicles the dealership didn't diagnose properly. Dealerships in my region seem to have significant technician turnover and it's a fallacy that the technician the dealer assigns to any vehicle is more skilled or knowledgeable than technicians in independent shops.

Many independent shops do stay current with technology and computer equipment in order to service and repair the majority of new vehicles from kilometre one.



Independent shops are equally capable of servicing newer and older vehicles

In general, new car dealerships charge more for repairs and service than most independent shops. They must cover the cost of a receptionist, sales staff and managers, service manager, service writers, and technicians as well as the owner of a dealership (who many times plays no role in the process except to receive an income from all operations). Due to these expenses, the dealership charges more per hour to perform service and repairs.

Warranty void?

Dealerships generally try to convince clients that service done at independent shops will void their warranty. This isn't true. Our shop and many other independents can perform maintenance on new vehicles and protect the warranty coverage.

New car dealerships are usually well run businesses with multiple departments and many employees focusing on making a profit for the owners and shareholders. Independent shops are

usually small businesses focusing primarily on personal relationships, often at the expense of profit. Because of the focus difference, independent shops excel at customer satisfaction. Over the last two years, independent shops filled seven of the top ten positions in the JD Power customer satisfaction survey in Canada.

Canadian motorists need both new car dealerships and independent service providers to keep the Canadian fleet safe and reliable. Without the independent shops, there aren't enough service bays to service the Canadian fleet properly.

Dealerships have their market share of clients. Independent shops also have their market share and share of clients. It would be great if both could serve their market without knocking each other and work together for the betterment of our trade. 🌐

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