



# August 2022 Bulletin

Please Share Me With Other Stations!

## ASSOCIATION CONTEST

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE JULY 2022 CONTEST WINNER, AUTO ACTION, HAWTHORNE, NY.** Please read through this bulletin for your chance to win!!! Call the office with the correct answer to the trivia question and you will be entered in the monthly drawing for a chance to receive a free month's dues; a value of \$45.00.

## ATTORNEY'S CORNER

### **WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF CURRENT GAS STATIONS AND REPAIR SHOPS?**

Is the future of current gas stations and repair shops likely to be as convenience stores? Older stations are often on small lots that will need to be expanded for profitable stores. Many stations often sit on corner lots at major intersections, making them prime retail spots.

It is estimated that there are now about a 100,000 gas stations in the U.S.A. majority are owned by operators with only one station, making them the quintessential small businesses. Do any of them actually make a lot of money selling gas? The real money is in the convenience store inside the gas station., selling gas is in large part just a way of getting people into the store.

Today, the primary business of fuel retailers consists of fueling and servicing vehicles—providing products and services such as gasoline and diesel fuel, automotive products, auto maintenance services, and car washes. At the same time, they sell coffee, snacks, and other products to consumers through their convenience store. Although these non-fuel offerings account for a sizable share of profits—and for many players outstrip the profits from fuel-related services—the fuel retail business is typically oriented to the vehicle, not to the person driving it.

### **WHAT CAN WE EXPECT BY 2035? LET'S CALL IT THE "FORCES OF DISRUPTION"**

According to BCG (Boston Consulting Group) there are many far-reaching trends that are disrupting the fuel retail market. Among the most powerful of these are the rise of alternative fuels (particularly electricity) for mobility, and the emergence of new models (depends upon affordability). The impetus for these disruptions comes from an array of powerful new digital technologies—everything from artificial intelligence (AI) to robotics to the Internet of Things (IoT).

The shifts will alter competitive advantage in the industry and require a fundamental transformation of the standard business model. Fuel retailers must develop a comprehensive response that adjusts the products and services they sell, adapt their network and business model, alter the layout of their service stations and convenience stores.

### **FUEL RETAILERS NEED TO TAKE ACTION IN THE FOLLOWING THREE AREAS.**

#### *FIRST*

They need to move from a vehicle-centric business model to a customer-centric one in order to capture new product and service opportunities. Making modest changes or tweaks to the business will not suffice. Instead, companies must fundamentally rethink their business and aggressively embrace innovation and new technology. Those that boldly seize the opportunity will find themselves in a winning position. Those that do not may be left behind. Retail customers—including those shopping in convenience stores—have become more demanding across the board. They are looking for high-quality, fresh, healthy food options; better value; and more attractive store formats. They also want more personalized products and services and a seamless, convenient experience through options such as self-service checkout.

#### *SECOND*

Retailers need to transform their network of service stations and assets. This process includes changing formats in some locations to meet customer demand, divesting locations that will not be profitable, and investing in assets that support the push into new products and services. As battery costs continue to decline, automotive OEMs are investing heavily in EVs. By 2030, more than a third of all new vehicles sold will be fully or partly electric. This development poses a major threat to fuel retailers, particularly those that operate numerous stations where fuel purchases account for a significant share of profits. By 2035 ( Brave New World with apologies to Aldous Huxley) one can expect that nearly 25% of new cars sold in 2035 will have the ability to drive themselves with no human involvement whatsoever—with most of those AVs likely to be electric. As autonomous vehicle systems replace human drivers, shared mobility services will become less and less expensive for customers, encouraging further growth of such services.

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## THIRD

They need to develop new capabilities—including digital expertise and, in some cases, capabilities related to entirely new areas that don't even exist at present. The implications for fuel retailers are significant because the refueling or recharging of shared-mobility-service AVs will commonly occur while the vehicles are empty of passengers, at dedicated AV parking areas located outside urban areas. The result will be a decline in customer traffic at service stations and lower fuel and convenience store sales.

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General Counsel Service Stations Dealers  
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## SIMPLE FIXES FOR BAD BATTERY CONNECTIONS

In this article we will discuss bad connections, starting with the battery and ending with, well, the battery. Seemingly every week, we at Certified Transmission get a vehicle in that has an issue at the battery terminals; and if it isn't causing an issue right now, it will sooner or later.

All the following cars in this article came into our shop with reported transmission problems. We seem to trace these "transmission problems" to battery issues more often of late. Our first example is a 2009 Honda Civic. The Civic came into our shop from another shop that couldn't figure out the problem. The root cause turned out to be something basic: the tech who first looked at it just skipped some of the most basic initial diagnostic steps and looked right past the real problem.

In this case, this customer came in with printed wiring diagrams and an Alldata diagnostic test. It had code P0966 (A-T clutch pressure control solenoid valve "B" open or short) in permanent memory. This was an immediate hard code that created a failsafe condition, so I did not even take it off the lot. While performing initial diagnostics, I opened the hood to see a nail in the negative battery cable post between the post and cable end. (See **Figure 1**).

Figure 1.



The cable ends must have either been really stretched out, or corrosion and previous cleaning had made them too large to fit tightly anymore. Since everything starts and ends at the battery, I got some post shims and cleaned up the battery cable to make the connections clean and tight.

I cleared the codes and went for a road test. No codes were set, and the transmission seemed to work correctly. As a side note, this transmission and the following example have their original transmissions in the car, and neither have been back to the shop since.

The next example was a 2014 Honda Pilot that was towed in by the customer. The customer's concerns were that the vehicle wouldn't move, the dash lights were on and the car would not shift out of Park. I did the normal preliminary evaluation then started the engine. I got it out of Park by using the hidden button in the console by the shifter and got it into the shop. I scanned the system to find a U0122 code (F CAN malfunction ECM / PCM-VSA control module unit) in permanent memory. There were multiple other codes stored in almost every module on the vehicle.

I opened the hood to start checking things out and saw that there was a new battery in the car. From the picture (**Figure 2**) it doesn't look like a new battery because of a very poor installation and a big plastic cover over the battery.



Figure 2.

If you look closely at the nut at the top of the cable, you can see that it was loose and that this was the cause of all the problems. Again, all I did was clean up the cable ends, tighten everything up then clear the codes. It then came out of Park normally, and I drove it for 20 miles, and everything worked normally. No codes came back, it came out of Park all the time, and the SUV never came back. Another simple success.

Our next example came from a shop that buys a lot of reman transmissions from us and refers a lot of customers to us. It was a 1999 Toyota 4Runner which had the dash light on. This was our transmission that was purchased about three weeks earlier, so I scanned it and there was a P0770 code (solenoid E electrical).

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I had also noted on the repair order that the battery cable ends needed to be addressed. The negative terminal was only put onto the post about halfway. (See **Figure 3**).

Figure 3.



Was this (**Figure 4**) an attempt at a fix?

Figure 4.



Figure four is not a permanent fix for cable ends at all, obviously. Just to be sure that the transmission was OK I checked the resistance of all three of the solenoids. (Side note: Remember back in the day when there were only 1-3 solenoids? Sigh.) They are all supposed to be between 11-15  $\Omega$  and these were all at 13  $\Omega$ , so for the fix we have permanent crimpable cable ends for the positive post. I cleaned and reinstalled the negative cable all the way onto the battery post. I cleared the codes and delivered the vehicle back to the customer. All of these issues were easily verified by a voltage drop test, which is about the simplest test you can do right at the start of a diagnosis to keep yourself from going down the wrong path.

One final example is one that came in very recently. It was a Hyundai diagnosed at another shop as having a bad TCM. A new TCM replacement was not available, so the customer showed up at our shop with a used TCM and just wanted us to install and program it. But wait for it... (**Figure 5**).



Figure 5.

Once again, I cleaned up battery terminals and problem was fixed. This really isn't rocket science; repair the obvious and then recheck.

There is an easy fix for bad battery terminals, and it is not the emergency "cheapo" cable repair ends with the two bolts that clamp a bare cable into like what was shown in figure four. Those were never meant to be a permanent fix, yet we see shops every day using them as if they were.

Hydraulic crimpers are available from multiple suppliers, and they are inexpensive yet very functional. I was skeptical at first, so I did a test. The replacement crimpable ends are zinc-coated copper and available at most auto parts supply stores in different sizes. I crimped one together and then cut it in half; the crimper applies so much pressure that the cable and terminal almost fuse together to form a solid piece of copper. (See **Figure 6**).

Figure 6



This, along with some double-wall shrink tubing, resulted in a permanent, reliable repair.

*This article was contributed by Mike Greer, who has been with Certified Transmission since 1996 and been in the industry since 1987. He is an ASE master technician and has served as a master builder for the company in the past.*

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## 5 TIPS TO DELIVER TOP-LEVEL CUSTOMER SERVICE

### 1. Plus 1.

Determine what your customers' needs and expectations are, then meet them and add something to it.

### 2. Under promise and over deliver.

Whether it's the price of the repairs, the time you commit to have the work done or the services you performed, always exceed the commitment. Customers love when you come in under budget or provide more than they expected. Good shops always make sure there is at least one no-charge item on the final invoice.

Replacing a failed bulb, greasing a door hinge or vacuuming the interior are a few examples of N/C items we do for customers.

Alas, in this day of time-conscious customers, having the car ready ahead of time is also a big plus.

### 3. Stay attentive — listening opens the door for a personal touch.

Listening to your customers during their initial visit or during subsequent phone calls will provide you with the opportunity to pick up on subtle details that will allow you to interact with them on a more personal level. Our customers light up when we ask about one of their sick children or how they played in last night's sporting event. Developing a personal connection strengthens the customer-vendor relationship.

### 4. Connect them to your team.

Every first-time customer at Vic's is offered a personal introduction to each employee, from the owner to the shop porter, during our facility tour. We find this has given us a two-fold advantage.

1. From the employees' perspective, they connect the customer with the vehicle they are servicing. This, in turn, improves the job quality and overall performance because now it's not just a car, it's Mrs. Clayton's Nissan that she uses for work each day.
2. But the greater advantage is, because we've taken the time to introduce the customer to the techs, we've created an additional personal connection to the human being who is working on their car.

It's much warmer to say during a call to the customer, "Charlie, the technician who is working on your vehicle, suggested that several of your fluids need to be serviced." In the customer's mind, it's not just some "guy" behind the wall of your shop. It was that person whom they greeted, who assured them that they were going to take care of their needs. We have found our close ratios improve and our customer retention increases as our customers get to know who all of us are on a more personal level.

### 5. Last, and most important, thank your customers.

Your loyal customers are *the* reason you are in business. Being thankful can take many forms. Some shops give gift cards, loyalty bucks or have a customer appreciation day. Sometimes, though, the simplest, least expensive method can have the greatest impact. A handwritten personal thank-you note has the best feedback from our customers. With the fast pace of today's lifestyle, think of the impact that a personal note from the service advisor or, better yet, the owner would have. When you send this type of communication to your customer it says, "We care about you and you matter to our shop."



Follow these tips and see how your shop will stand out from the rest of the crowd and how your customers will feel like royalty.  
*As seen on shopowner.com*

## Tech Tip

### Tape a Spare Fuse to your Meters



It's always a good idea to tape an extra fuse to the back of your multimeter so that it's handy if you blow one.

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## CLASSIFIEDS

**For Sale:** West. Cty NYS Insp. Mach. & Lic. including window tint meter. asking \$20,000 obo. Auto repair shop of over 30 years closing. All equipment & tools for sale call Ed at 914-659-0453.

**For Sale:** Various ½ “ & ¾” Drive Socket Sets, extensions, 1 Lincoln Grease Gun Cartridge (**BATTERY POWER**), misc. shop tools & supplies, 1 Ammco Combo Brake Lathe, Rotors & Drum & all adaptors, 1 Ammco Little Giant Brake Drum Lathe, 1 MGO Pump for Drum, 1 Elect Parts Washer, Portable Engine Crane, Engine Stand, 1 Hoppy Laser Headlight Aimer, Various Jack Stands Different Tonnage, 4 Floor Jacks Various Tonnage, 1 Snap-On EVAP Smoke Machine (**BRAND NEW**), 2012 Honda Rancher ES ATV w/ plow & Craftsman Ride On Lawn Mower. Contact: Tony Zeppieri at 914-494-8338 for pricing.

**For Sale:** You can be your own boss! Est. shop that specializes in trailer repair, snowplow and salter sales, parts and repair. We also offer vehicle up-fitting. We sell and install numerous truck bodies. The shop is geared towards landscapers and contractor's needs. Service center has an excellent reputation that repairs all makes and models of box trucks, utility trailers landscape and boat trailers. Welding and fabricating repairs/parts as needed. We have the ability to make hydraulic hoses that we make on site. The showroom that is fully stocked with inventory. The shop can fit 4 vehicles inside. Shop equip. includes: 2 post lifts, torches, welder, tire changer, balancer, band saw, drill press, work benches & more. There is also a private office. We are an authorized BOSS snowplow, Ramp Rack, Buyers and Woolwax dealer. Motivated to sell IMMEDIATELY due to relocating out of the area. Great opportunity to get in now during the snow season. Please call 845-590-5800 for more information.

**For Sale:** Powersports Dealership for sale, Motorcycles, ATVS, UTVS, Snowmobiles, Generators/power washers. Parts / Service dept. 8500 sq. ft. building on 8 acres. Rent or buy. Kawasaki and Arctic Cat, Kymco, Generac generators. We are located on the Newburgh/Marlboro NY, RT 9w. High traffic road. Check our website bigboyztoysny.com Call Tony 845-781-3082 cell.

**For Sale:** Three bay auto repair shop with parking lot and state inspection license. Located at 467 Central Park Ave, Yonkers, NY 10704. Please call 914-375-6150 and ask for Siaka.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

JK's Auto Service  
White Plains, NY

Wheel Tire Depot Express Corp II  
Mahopac Falls, NY

## REFERRALS

If you know of a station that needs our services and is interested in becoming a member, refer them to us and upon signing you will receive a \$50.00 Amazon gift card. If you know of someone interested, please contact our Sales Representative Bill Griese at 914-227-0144.

## TRIVIA QUESTION

What is this month's Tech Tip? Call the office with an answer for a chance to win a free month's dues.

I hope you enjoyed reading this month's bulletin. If you have any questions, feel free to call the association. We are here to help you and your industry.

Regards,

*Carla Obalde*

Operations Manager



Check out our  
Facebook page  
@ SSDGNY

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