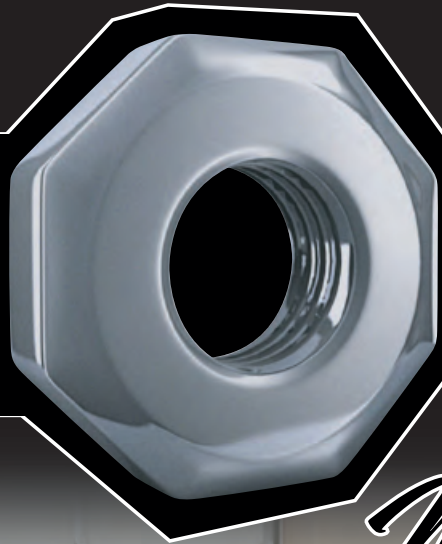


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# Winning Wayward Warranty Work

Computerized vehicle inspection equipment makes the most of declining service opportunities.

By Mitch Weller

**S**teady improvements in the quality of today's vehicles make great selling points for the sales staff and promote customer loyalty to the brand and the dealership. But with the good, comes the bad, especially for fixed ops departments who find that better vehicle performance translates to fewer problems and less warranty work coming through the door. The decline in the number of service opportunities

means finding and selling more work on less vehicles is necessary to maintain profitability.

So how do you find and sell more work? Sure, you can perform quick checks for minor repairs like lights, wiper blades and hoses, but these types of jobs fall well short of generating enough revenue to recoup profits lost because of a lower customer base. There are other more profitable jobs out there. How

about quickly finding and confidently selling brake, suspension and alignment work? It may be easier than you think with an investment in the right equipment and a marketing plan to use it.

## GOOD JOBS

Brake, suspension and alignment jobs are appealing, because these repairs are considered the most profitable. Unfortunately these types of services often go overlooked unless a thorough inspection is performed to find the problems.



The system automatically prints inspection results displayed in easy-to-read, color-coded graphics that can be shown to the customer to explain needed service.

Shops that have installed inspection equipment in the write-up area have found that customers are much more likely to authorize needed service.

“ The inspection equipment consists of three systems: a brake tester, suspension analyzer and sideslip meter. ”

As a solution, an increasing number of shops are investing in computerized vehicle inspection equipment. Computerized inspection equipment speeds and automates the inspection process, enabling shops to perform complete undercar inspections and find potential repair opportunities quickly and easily.



**An average of 25% of the vehicles tested on the sideslip meter will show indications of either alignment problems or worn parts. In most shops, alignment alone represents a minimum of \$80.00 in service revenue.**

Many shops have installed the equipment in write-ups areas to test vehicles as customers arrive. The high visibility of the inspection equipment and the ability to show customers the results of brake, suspension and alignment tests in minutes greatly increase the likelihood that customers will authorize additional service, particularly as they can see the tests being performed and view the results on-screen even before the service advisor makes any suggestions.

Computerized inspection equipment measures vehicle components as they would perform on the road, making the inspection easier to relate to customers experiences.

The inspection equipment operates from a PC-based console. The inspection software analyzes test data and displays results on-screen in easy-to-read, color-coded graphics that are automatically printed out to be shown to the customer as evidence of needed repairs. After the test, the system resets itself for the next vehicle without any input from an operator.

The inspection equipment consists of three systems: a brake tester, suspension analyzer and sideslip meter.

Each system can be used independently or together in a variety of combinations. The modular components can be configured to fit the most challenging space requirements or to match the service profile of virtually any shop.

The brake tester measures side-to-side brake balance, front-to-rear brake balance, brake force efficiency, deceleration, and vehicle weight at each wheel. With the capability to measure the brakes on each wheel independently and calculate weight shift when braking, the brake tester can show specific deficiencies that may cause the vehicle to spin or stop inefficiently in emergency situations.



**An average of 12 percent of vehicles tested on a brake tester show brake failure at one or more wheels. A typical four-wheel brake service job brings in \$180 in repair revenue.**

The suspension analyzer measures each corner of a vehicle's suspension for tire adhesion and damping. This test gauges if the tires are maintaining proper contact with the road for effective steering and braking. It also measures the vehicle's ability to control excessive suspension and vehicle body motion.

## MOVING PARTS

The sideslip meter measures each axle to determine the presence of tire scrub, an indicator of misalignment or worn suspension components.



**An average of 7% of vehicles tested on a suspension analyzer show suspension failure at one or more wheels. On average, shock or strut service increases a job ticket by \$130.00.**

“ With the increased revenue, the equipment has the potential to pay for itself in a year or less. ”

To perform an inspection, a porter simply drives the vehicle slowly onto the equipment and follows the step-by-step instructions displayed on the console screen. The entire test for brakes, suspension and alignment takes three minutes or less and is done without lifting the vehicle or removing the wheels. The most popular configuration is a brake tester and sideslip meter combination. This system checks the brakes and alignment of a vehicle and produces a printout in less than 45 seconds.

Shops that have implemented inspection equipment into their operations report alignment, brake and suspension service volume increases of 100% or more. With the increased revenue, the equipment has the potential to pay for itself in a year or less.

The opportunities of gaining additional service revenue through vehicle inspection exist, as long as you can find them efficiently and sell them confidently. With computerized

inspection equipment, shops now have a cost-effective tool that not only finds opportunities quickly and easily, but also helps sell the service and trustworthiness of your shop to the customer.



**Computerized inspection equipment performs complete vehicle undercar inspections in three minutes or less.**



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