



ASCCA

What You Need To Know Report

February

2006

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This is not a comprehensive list of all projects currently underway, but a snapshot of current, major updates. For more detailed information on these or any other topics, we encourage you to contact ASCCA staff at (800) 810-4272.

ASCCA GENERAL BUSINESS

March Team Weekend

MARCH 18-19, 2006

Embassy Suites Sacramento, Riverfront Promenade
100 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 326-5000

Please contact Elizabeth Hicks at ASCCA Headquarters for more information or to obtain a registration form at elizabeth@ascca.com or (800) 810-4272.

New ASCCA Administrative Assistant

Heather McHargue, our new ASCCA staff member, started on January 30th. Heather can be reached at heather@ascca.com or (916) 924-9054.

January Executive Director Chapter Visits

Executive Director, Shelly Nolder, visited Chapter 20—Mt. Diablo and Chapter 58—Bakersfield. She is due to visit Chapter 24—San Diego for a strategic planning session with their chapter board in February.

COMMITTEE SESSIONS

Education, Information and Training

No updates at this time.

Endorsements

No updates at this time.

Bylaws, Policies and Procedures

No updates at this time.

Membership

Potential New ASCCA Logo—Your Membership Committee is still reading/discussing your comments and suggestions regarding the possible new logo. The suggested new logo in all its forms will be available at the March Team Weekend for presentation to the Board of Directors and final decision on the logo. Visit our website at www.ascca.com to see one version of it. We'd love to get your input!

Government Affairs

- ◆ Bills on the Website—We will have our 2006 Legislative Bill File posted on our website. You can watch the bills we are watching and see correspondence that we send on issues on your behalf. Your chapters can link their websites to our bill file as well so your chapter members can have access to the file straight from your website. It's a great informational tool and we are providing access to you as a benefit of your membership in ASCCA.
- ◆ ASCCA Chosen as Member of NASTF Planning Committee—The National Automotive Service Task Force has appointed ASCCA to be on a planning group that is exploring the possibility of moving NASTF from a volunteer organization to a formal entity. Recently a meeting was held in Pittsburg and a second meeting is scheduled for March 1, 2006 in Dallas, TX. Please stay tuned for more information.



ASCCA thanks California Preferred Credit Union for being a valued endorsed vendor!
ASCCA members may contact Bobbie Adams at (916) 781-4344 x107
for more information about how California Preferred Credit Union can help you!

To be removed from the ASCCA faxlist, please call (877) 299-5117 anytime.

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Governance Task Force

This Task Force met on Monday, February 6, 2006 at 6:00 PM via conference call to discuss the draft report they are developing for presentation to the ASCCA Board of Directors in March. Copies of the draft report are available to any ASCCA member. Please contact ASCCA staff for information.

Licensing Task Force

President Fogle has selected Dan Biggs to serve as Chair of the Licensing Task Force. Mr. Biggs has asked Phil Fournier, Larry Moore and Jim O'Neill to serve with him to assist in the development of this program. Shelly Nolder will be the staff liaison for this Task Force.

ASC EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Scholarship Applications were mailed to the Foundation Trustees this week for scoring. The Scholarship winners are scheduled to be announced in late March.

OTHER INFORMATION

ASCCA Member Receives Award

The National Auto Body Council awarded **Brea Auto Body** in Brea, California its annual Pride Award. The shop, owned by the Pina family, has helped the Mount Tabor Orphanage in Tecate, Mexico, grow from a single RV to a ten-building community with over forty nuns and a priest in residence. The orphanage is a sanctuary for children who are victims of abuse, child prostitution and poverty. The Pina family continues to work to raise \$80,000 to run a dedicated water line from Tecate to the orphanage.

AAIA Automotive Factbook Available!

Purchase the AAIA *Automotive Factbook*. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the entire aftermarket industry and is filled with charts, tables, and analytical text.

This report is available to AAIA members for \$199. Order your copy today by calling (301) 654-6664 or visiting www.aftermarket.org.

Shop Management Software and Systems Survey

ASCCA Executive Director Shelly Nolder recently met with David Howe of Strategica, Inc. Mr. Howe is the Enforcement Monitor appointed by the Department of Consumer Affairs to evaluate the Bureau of Automotive Repair subsequent to their Sunset Review hearing.

One area Mr. Howe is currently investigating is the possibility that some shop management software may be out of compliance with current BAR regulations. He has asked if our members would be willing to tell him what companies they are using for their shop management systems.

Please fill in this brief survey and **fax back to ASCCA at (916) 924-6702**. This is one more opportunity for ASCCA to show that we are an active partner in the process.

Name: _____

Shop: _____

I use the following shop management software package: _____

My software does require occasional upgrades (please circle). Yes No

I get the upgrades (please circle): Frequently Occasionally Rarely Never

My shop management software is: A stand alone system Tied into other systems such as repair information

Comments: _____

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Quality Work = Quality Service? ~ Walt Samuelson, CustomerLink CEO

From a book by David H. Maister entitled: *Managing the Professional Service Firm*. In it is a chapter entitled: *Quality Work Doesn't Mean Quality Service*.

A. In a service business where the consumer is not the technical expert, quality service is possibly more critical to customer satisfaction than quality work. I'm certainly not advocating shoddy work here; but the principal is very interesting. The vast majority of our customers are not technically knowledgeable about automobiles and their computers and mechanical workings. They can't judge, from a technical perspective, the need for the services and component replacements we recommend. They can't judge whether the technician did their job well or exceptionally well.

What the consumer can evaluate is the level of service they received while the technical work was being completed. Mr. Maister's theory is that where a consumer lacks the ability to assess the technical proficiency of a supplier, they revert to their area of expertise – evaluating how they were treated.

To quote: *"Indeed, on most technical or professional matters outside my own area of expertise, I am as much shopping for trust, confidence, peace of mind and reassurance, as I am "cold" technical expertise. As all clients do, I consider style, manner, and, above all, attitude in choosing professional service providers."*

The point: Become a "professional service provider" and let your quality work back up your level of service, not vice versa.

B. Goods are consumed and services are experienced. Whoa! What a concept! Yes, we consume goods when we service the vehicle, but what we're providing is a service. Services are "experienced" and that experience can and must be managed by the service provider.

What do you manage? You manage the customer's expectations so their perception of the service experience has a good chance of being positive. If you're not sure what their expectations are, ask them! "What do you expect from us today?" You might be amazed by the answers.

You manage the correct balance of your technical expertise and your customer's ability to understand their need for service. You talk to your customers at their level of knowledge and leave the highly technical details for the service bay (unless you have an avid hobbyist as a customer). You involve the customer in decisions for additional service identified from inspections. You make sure your explanations are understood – even when explained at the most basic levels. You might ask, "Are you comfortable with what I'm recommending and why I'm recommending it? Notice I didn't say, "do you understand"? We're not asking whether they understand the technical explanations. We're not challenging their ability to understand the technical. We're asking whether they're comfortable with the recommendation – a big difference.

Consider that when you have a vehicle in for a failure repair, it's more of a "transaction" experience. You fix the problem and send the customer on their way. When you want to capture all the annual maintenance revenue on a vehicle it becomes a "relationship" experience. Practically anyone can provide ongoing maintenance; but the consumer will gravitate to where they have a relationship - if the service center provides the opportunity to build one.

1. Mr. Maisters quotes an old medical profession saw: "The three most important keys to success are: availability, affability, and ability." Think about this for your service center. What are your priorities? While we certainly have the ability to service today's vehicles, are we focusing enough on availability and affability? Are we focusing enough on managing the experience so we get a chance to use our ability?

Do customers go through your service center feeling they are just another oil change or repair to be completed, or do they feel individually special for having chosen your service center? Are they so pleased with their service experience that they're willing to recommend you to their friends and family?

2. Different clients want to be treated differently. Keep notes in your shop management system about how customers want to be treated and what their expectations are. It's the only way to jog your memory when customer number 1,652 comes in the door with their vehicle.

There are lots of ways to catalog a customer to help you serve them. The more you know about the person the more you can manage that person's experience. Some examples:

Employed or retired	Reasonable income or low/fixed income	Primary person responsible for the vehicle's servicing
Female head of the household	Technical wannabe	

3. Telling a client what not to do is as important as telling them what to do. This is reminding us to use our expertise to offer professional advice. Be sure to balance your suggestions between those that earn your shop money and save the customer money. Personally I tend to listen very closely when a service provider tells me what to do at a later date. I have more confidence and am more willing to approve today's work when I know that my service provider is looking beyond the current invoice.

In our service businesses we have an excellent opportunity to tell a client what not to do when we're recommending services for a later date. It tells them we're paying attention to their vehicle. It tells them we're respectful of their pocketbook. And if we present the future service in the right way we're helping them understand that properly timing a wear item replacement saves them money in the long run.

Every customer deserves to be told what not to do on every service visit! So, we're starting 2006. We have a full year to be better than we were in 2005. Will you be better because of the quality service you provide?

If you have comments, please call me at 916.774.1324 or email me: wsamuelson@customerlink.com.