

ShopTalk

www.autotraining.net

705 Digital Drive, Suite V, Linthicum, Md. 21090 • 1-888-471-5800

September 2017

ATI
Automotive
Training Institute

UPCOMING CLASSES

September

- 1 Service Advisor - Advanced Sales
- 6, 7, 8 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 7, 8 20 Group - 20 On The Top - Portland, OR
- 7, 8 20 Group - Rollin In Dough - ATI Headquarters
- 7, 8 Money Masters - Clarksville, TN
- 11, 12 20 Group - West Coast Originals - Los Angeles, CA
- 11, 12 20 Group - Game Changers - ATI Headquarters
- 11, 12 20 Group - The Buck Starts Here - Greenville, SC
- 13, 14, 15 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 13, 14, 15 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 14, 15 MasterMind - ATI Headquarters
- 14, 15 20 Group - Las Vegas - Las Vegas, NV
- 18, 19 Collision Production Course
- 18, 19 20 Group - Profit Force - Grove, IL
- 18, 19 20 Group - 20/20 Vision - ATI Headquarters
- 20, 21, 22 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 20, 21, 22 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 25, 26 20 Group - The High Mark - Reburg, ID
- 25, 26 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 28, 29 20 Group - 20 for the Money - ATI Headquarters
- 28, 29 20 Group - Back In Black - ATI Headquarters

October

- 2, 3 20 Group - Notin But Net - Sylvania, GA
- 2, 3 20 Group - Leading Ladies - ATI Headquarters
- 2, 3 20 Group - Phoenix Rising - Poway, CA
- 4, 5, 6 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 5, 6 20 Group - Score for More - ATI Headquarters
- 5, 6 20 Group - Best of the West - Sacramento, CA
- 5, 6 20 Group - Nor'Easter - Boston, MA
- 9, 10 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 9, 10 Collision Repair Estimating and Sales Course Part 1
- 11, 12, 13 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 11, 12, 13 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 12, 13 California Service Advisor Course Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 12, 13 20 Group - Dallas Top Twenty - Centennial, CO
- 12, 13 20 Group - CrashMasters - ATI Headquarters
- 16, 17 20 Group - Rising Tide - ATI Headquarters
- 16, 17, 18 Shop Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 16, 17, 18 Collision Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 18, 19, 20 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 18, 19, 20 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 19, 20 20 Group - Dollars And Sense - Ft. Collins, CO
- 19, 20 20 Group - European Imports - ATI Headquarters
- 23, 24 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 23, 24 20 Group - New Baltimore - ATI Headquarters
- 23, 24 20 Group - Atlanta - Atlanta, GA
- 23, 24 Peak Performers - tba

November

- 1, 2, 3 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 1, 2, 3 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 2, 3 California Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 6, 7 Shop Owner Course Part 4 - Staffing and Hiring
- 6, 7 Collision Owners Course Part 4 - Staffing and Hiring
- 6, 7 Collision Production Course
- 8, 9, 10 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 8, 9, 10 Collision Owners Course Part 1 - Keys to a Successful Collision Repair Business
- 13, 14 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 16, 17 Service Advisor - Service Manager
- 27, 28 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 29, 30 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 29, 30 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership



How to Crush Your Competition and Grow Your Car Count

By Eric M. Twiggs, ATI Coach

“**“Having no competition is a bad thing. Competition makes you try to improve yourself all the time.” -Shu Qi**”

Your competition doesn't want you to read this post. Stay with me and you'll understand why. I recently called three automotive repair shops at random expressing the following concern:

“I'm new to the area and looking for a good shop. I want to do business with you, but my wife wants to use your competitor. So, what makes your shop better?”

I called the first shop located in the **New York area** and **“Michelle”** answered. Here was her response: “Uhhh, can you please hold?” Before I could respond, I was patched through to a voice mail where I couldn't leave a message because the mailbox was full!

The second shop was in California. “Jack” answered the phone. Jack replied with a deep confident voice: “We've been in business for 20 years, have ASE certified technicians, and we have state of the art technology!”

This was brilliant compared to my last call, so I felt better as **I called the third shop located in Ohio and Brian answered.**

Without any hesitation, Brian said:

“We provide a vehicle pick-up and drop-off service that **allows you to keep working while we work on your car.** We perform a FREE 65-point courtesy check and will email you pictures of what we find that's good and of what needs to be addressed. We also offer a three-year 36,000-mile parts and labor warranty. This is the best warranty in the business, so **you'll be worry free with our guarantee!**”

Which shop would you have picked? **If you chose Michelle's shop, you probably won't be crushing your competition any time soon!** My guess is that you chose Brian's shop ahead of Jack's. What gave Brian the edge?

Unlike Michelle and Jack, Brian was listening to the same radio station that all of your customers listen to. Its **WIIFM** on your radio dial: What's In It For Me?

I have some bad news. **Your customers don't care about YOU, your 20 years in business, your state of the art technology, or your ASE certified technicians.** They DO care about the **specific BENEFITS** that will solve their problem.

The good news is that even if your competition has the same offerings, **you can sell your benefits and get the business. So how can you use these specifics to crush your competition and grow your car count?** Read on to get the answers.



Define Your Brand

When I mention the name McDonald's, what are the first words that come to mind? Words like consistency, convenience, are the typical answers. So if you're traveling late at night in an unfamiliar area and have to choose between McDonald's and “Eric's Burger Joint,” which would you choose?

Even though I make a great burger, have ASE certified cooks, and have been in business for 20 years, McDonald's

would be the safe choice because they have defined their brand. You know you will get a consistent convenient experience from McDonald's.

What words come to mind when I mention the name of your shop? Answering this question is important because customers are looking for the safe choice when searching for a shop.

To help define your brand I recommend studying your five-star internet reviews and looking for the common words that are used. For example, you may notice that multiple customers describe you as honest, fair, convenient, and friendly.

These are the first words that come to mind when they think of you. Your brand communicates the specific experience they will get and will make you the safe choice.



Dare To Be Different

I know what you're thinking: “But Eric, we have a clean shop, offer a courtesy shuttle, and have great reviews. Why should I dare to be different?” Well, **your customers expect these things and aren't wowed by what they expect.** As mentioned in a previous post, the “wowed” customer is twice as likely to come back, and three times as likely to refer you as one who is merely satisfied, **so daring to be different can improve your car count.**

Since the extra mile is a lonely road, you will stand out from your competition by creating the wow experience. For example, most shops offer a shuttle service. Brian's shop that was mentioned earlier, provides pick-up and drop-off service at the customer's workplace.

Most shops offer a one-year 12,000-mile warranty. Brian's shop offers the three-year 36,000-mile warranty. If you had a relative traveling in the Ohio area in need of auto repair, would you refer them to “most shops” or Brian's shop?

I challenge you to schedule a meeting with your team. Ask them to name the specific aspects of your service that wows the customer, and makes you different in your market. If the response you hear is **the sound of crickets**, take it as an opportunity to brainstorm specific offerings that can separate you from the competition.

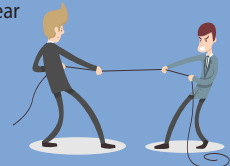
After creating your list of wow experiences, be sure to revisit what you came up with at your future meetings. This regular review will keep these benefits top of mind and easier to communicate to your customer.

Conclusion

So, there you have it. Defining your brand and daring to be different can help you crush your competition and grow your car count. When I call your shop and ask what makes you different, will I hear from you or the crickets?

Sincerely,

Eric M. Twiggs
The Accountability Coach
www.autotraining.net



Looking to create a wow experience, but don't know where to start? Email etwiggs@autotraining.net and I will send you a list of Seven Ideas That Can Differentiate You From Your Competition.



What Would Stella Say?

Sometimes things are so simple, they just hit you like a ton of bricks. I received an email from Al Sutherland of Al's Certified Auto Repair, asking me if his granddaughter was working for ATI or me. The email went on to say:


"I am at lunch with my five-year-old granddaughter Stella and my wife Sue. We are explaining to Stella that we need to eat quickly so that we can get back to shop so our service advisor John can go to lunch. She says 'Well why doesn't Daddy run the counter so John can go to lunch?' We explain that Daddy doesn't know how. She comes back and says 'You should write down everything you do so Daddy will know how!'"

First thing I did was offer Stella a job, and then I started laughing. After Stella's question sank in, I stopped laughing. It was then that I started wondering how did we stray so far from the basics. At what point did plain old common sense become such a thing of the past? *"You should write down everything you do so Daddy will know how!" I want you to read that again "You should write down everything you do so Daddy will know how!"*

How is it a five-year-old has more business sense than most shop owners? One of the biggest challenges I face as a coach is getting my team members to get everything out of their heads and on to paper.


**There are many reasons for SOPs.
Let's start with the obvious ones:**

1. If something unexpectedly incapacitated you — whether on a temporary or a permanent basis — for your business to survive, it would have to keep running.

 If there are things that only you do or you know, what type of burden are you leaving to the people left behind? Besides your family and employees having to deal with the emotions revolving around you being incapacitated or gone, they would simultaneously have to deal with the burden of keeping your business running. I have heard some of you comment that your spouse or children or X would just have to sell it. Well, someone has to keep the business viable until a buyer could be found. I can't think of anything more selfish to do to someone.




2. If you wanted to go on vacation, or SuperConference, or training.

 The most common reason I hear why you don't go on vacation or leave is that the business falls apart while you are gone. Until you get everything in writing and standards for everyone to follow, it will continue to fall apart. Some of you even boast to me that you can't even go to lunch without things falling apart. That, my friend, is NOTHING to brag about. No one is that important. It is not falling apart because you are that good, it's falling apart because you failed at setting the standards and putting them in writing and failed to train your internal customers properly.




3. If you were selling.

 If you ever decide to sell your business, you have to prove to the potential buyer that the business they are buying is viable without you. Not only do you have to prove that to the potential buyer, but you (or they) also have to prove that to whoever is financing them. Banks and other financiers for some crazy reason tend to frown upon lending money for a business that can't run without the previous owner.



4. Branding and a consistent customer experience.

 If you don't have standards in writing, your external customers are not all receiving the same experience. I was speaking with a Team Kim member the other day and they shared with me that they are now sending some of their customers' cars to the car wash. "Great!" I said, and then asked what the criteria/policy was for a customer to receive a car wash. My member didn't know. He said that he didn't have a policy and was just "leaving it up to his guys." I then asked what if one "guy" thinks that the customer should receive a car wash if they spend \$400 and another "guy" thinks it should be on tickets over \$1,000? What does that do for your branding and customer experience if they don't know what to expect, or if they get something different every time? What if another "guy" thinks the customer should get a car wash with every oil service? How much money is allocated for car washes in your budget? Do you have enough staff to get all those vehicles to the car wash? You can see where I am going with this! Even something as simple as getting a customer's car washed can have endless scenarios and should be in writing.

Do yourself a favor next time you are wondering if you have the time or energy to put your SOPs in writing: ask yourself **"What would Stella say?"**



Do yourself a favor next time you are wondering if you have the time or energy to put your SOPs in writing: ask yourself "What would Stella say?"

"Like all magnificent things, it's very simple."

—Natalie Babbitt, "Tuck Everlasting"

"Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."

—Clare Boothe Luce



SHOCKTOBER IS HERE!

by Kim Hickey, ATI Coach









Monroe's "Shocktober 2" event starts on September 1. What does this mean for you? It means that you have a great opportunity to create awareness and educate your customers about the safety factors surrounding suspension. Not only is this the perfect time to educate your external customers about suspension, but it is also a great time to educate your internal customers. Also, for those of you with advisors that have NOT been to all three service advisor classes and feel they can't sell shocks/struts because they are too expensive, the Monroe rebate promotion is a way to squash that.

I'm showing my age a little here, but years ago we were told that "As long as you didn't mind a bouncy ride, you didn't have to do anything with your suspension." We were told that suspension was strictly a comfort feature. In fact, we celebrated having a bouncy ride by putting dog and hula girl figurines on our dashes and watched how the head or skirt moved. Today we know better.

While I know better now and you know better now, do your internal and external customers know better? I wonder how many of your advisors do a good job explaining to your customers that shocks and struts performing at 50 percent efficiency can add 12 feet of stopping distance for a car traveling 60 mph? How many parents of teenage drivers know that number? Bob Crowe Auto Service created a letter explaining about suspension and included safety stats and attaches it to every invoice during Shocktober.

During the Shocktober event in the fall (and also during Monroe's spring promotion), I encourage you to have your advisors fill out a suspension log. The suspension log is used to record your vehicles that come in, their mileage, if the suspension is OE, and some other items. We all have selective attention, so the log helps to keep suspension in everyone's sights. It takes 30 days to form a habit, so after 60 days of filling out a suspension log, paying attention to suspension should become such a habit that your advisor and techs don't ever not pay attention again.

What should you be doing during Shocktober?

- 
-  Fill out suspension log
 -  Schedule your under car or Monroe rep to come in and have a class for your techs and advisors
 -  Schedule a ride and drive for your staff if there is one in your area
 -  Send an email blast to your customers
 -  Post videos and stats about suspension on all your social media
 -  Contact your vendor if you have not received your POS supply kit yet
 -  Look through your outstanding recommendations and find any regarding suspension — be sure to contact those customers and let them know about the promotion

If you don't sell Monroe products, ask your supplier what kind of promotion they can offer you. Even without any type of promotion, this is still a great time to bring suspension safety awareness to both your internal and external customers.

You can put something about back to school on your suspension promotion. School is back in session and there are a lot of teens driving themselves there. Safety is a powerful message for parents of teen drivers. Your headline could read something like "If your suspension is not up to factory specs, do you know that your teen driver will need an extra 15 feet of stopping distance?" I don't know about all of you, but the thought of my boys needing an extra 15 feet to stop scares me to death. What about the parents that drive their children to school, don't you think they want to be safe while driving their children and friends to school and events?

You can email me for a copy of the suspension log, Bob Crowe's letter, and / or suspension stats and visuals at khickey@autotraining.net

SuperConference in March 2018

March, the beginning of Spring. What are you doing in March? The average temperature for March in the United States is only 46.2 degrees. The average temperature in Florida in March is 79 degrees. Hmm, what to do, what to do? Ever get into a rut with your shop? Ever need a little boost of inspiration, education, with a touch of vacation?

How about getting all that, and that great Florida weather? Well then, the answer is simple. Come to ATI's SuperConference in March 2018! What could you learn from hanging out with the sharpest shop owners in North America? How about almost everything!!

We have great speakers brought from around the country to inspire you, challenge you and help you make a real difference in your life and your staff. Learning is a journey that never ends. You want your staff to keep getting better, faster and smarter. If that's true then you must do the same. You'll learn as much from the other shop owners as you will from the speakers.

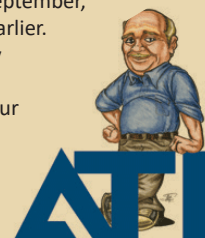
But, on top of that, we have the specially created training modules that are taught by our coaching staff, the Roundtables. Come and experience the sharing of knowledge that can only happen in this type of environment. There is a ton of information packed in this four-day event.

We also have the vendors that you need to speak with to help your business grow to the next level. They are available throughout the Conference but we have a special night just for you to be able to meet, greet and ask the questions to help your business.

Do we have some fun? Of course! We have the Welcome Reception and Dinner, the Awards Dinner and we can't forget the always popular SuperConference Olympics! The optional tours planned for Saturday are awesome and you don't want to miss them.

Seats are going fast! Last year we had a waiting list by September, this year it looks like the waiting list may happen even earlier. Don't miss out. Don't wait! Get signed up now with easy monthly payments and get out of the cold. Get into the warmth of great weather and your peers to help take your shop to the next level.

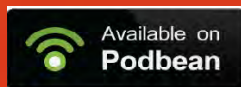
C.L. Frederick





**705 Digital Drive, Suite V
Linthicum, MD 21090**

PRST STD
AUTO
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ROSEVILLE, MI
PERMIT NO. 35



Hear shop owners talk about their AH-HA moments and tell their stories of change. Introducing the latest ATI innovation “Driving Change.” This is a podcast we created to improve our members’ experience and further assist with their growth. Each week I will be interviewing a client about something they are passionate about. We have a great start with several clients that have already stepped up and shared their stories. Will you be next? What wisdom and experience do you have to share? If you have a burning desire, and a great story to tell (and I know you do), we want you on the program. Please email me at podcast@autotraining.net to set up your personal interview.

Please go to <http://drivingchangeatati.podbean.com/> to listen to the podcasts already there. Be sure to download the app and subscribe so you will be notified when new podcasts are added. Don’t forget to leave a comment if you liked it. Share it with a fellow shop owner or just a friend.