

# ATI Shoptalk



Issue 5

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## Upcoming Courses:

### Shop Owners

October 7-9  
October 21-23  
October 26-27  
November 4-6  
November 18-20

### Service Managers

October 5-6  
October 12-13  
November 2-3  
November 9-10  
November 30 - Dec. 1

### Advanced Shop Owners

November 12-13

### Advanced Service Managers

October 1-2

### Alumni Class

November 16-17

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## Free Upgrade From Chubby!

By Chris Frederick



The mission of *Driving Profits and Dreams Home* to you is being made easier through a **New All Inclusive Alumni "20 Group" Elite Top Shop Program**. All active Re-Engineering Program clients and Alumni may apply to participate with the most forward thinking minds in the ATI client base. Many ATI clients after achieving their 2 to 1 return, focus their attention on achieving greatness in their second year and continue growing as an Alumni member. Many of these ATI clients develop modifications to our marketing & financial strategies that really work in their area. Many develop new strategies that evolve into major breakthroughs for our industry. You can wait for this information to trickle down to you or be a part of the evolution.

### Join a 20 GROUP!

The concept of 20 groups is to **organize 20 forward-thinking shop owners** to meet two times a year to discuss what's hot and what's not so we all continue to prosper. As you witnessed your first day of ATI training, there is nothing like being a live part of a live learning experience. We have proven

again and again, that our most successful clients spend the most days in training. Most baby boomers learn and grow faster surrounded by their peers who enjoy mentoring each other. Traditional 20 groups in our industry are made up of needy owners at many different knowledge levels. This creates conflict and insecurity plus you are taking advice from someone way below your level. ATI 20 group members are the best of the best and have learned the ATI financial system.

ATI 20 Group members share how they have been driving 10 new customers a week to their shop, holding a 54% GP for the last year and only working two days a week in the shop. Yes, we teach it but hearing how another shop owner does it every day will motivate you to try it again and again until you get it. Your peers will convince you that if they can do it, so can I. The power of networking & communicating with shop owners that have already achieved what you so desperately want is simply unbelievable.

### What Is A MASTERMIND?

Many years ago, Napoleon Hill, wrote a book titled *Think and Grow Rich*. "The book was all about how the most successful humans on earth became successful, nicknamed, "Masterminds". The answer was being mentored by people that had already achieved what you

wanted & learning to understand why your beliefs may be stopping you from achieving your goals. Most of us are not great at all aspects of our business but we can always learn how other owners with the same challenges were able to overcome and prosper. I have enjoyed participating in my Mastermind Group for years and I have learned from the 20 best of the best shop owners as well. Our Mastermind program is a bigger commitment than our 20 Groups with additional benefits and currently has a waiting list of applications. Our new 20 Group meets twice a year at ATI for two days & our West Coast 20 Group will meet up and down the West coast.

### Is It For YOU?

Ask your coach! If you have achieved your return on investment from our program but there are still goals you haven't achieved, this could be the catalyst to achieve all your dreams. Your investment is in yourself! Taking action is the only real power in business!

### FREE Alumni Program Upgrade!

Build and maintain the Top Shop lifestyle you deserve. For qualified clients, you can add to your long list of benefits TWO annual 2 day, 20G meetings held at ATI, plus an additional 20G only Superconference 1/2 day breakout meeting with


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other Top Shop members. In each meeting, you will learn from your peers, the strategies and processes that will become Mission Critical to your business. Each 20G meeting will have it's own theme...**Sales, Marketing and/or Profitability/ Expenses.**

1) 20G Members will have an opportunity to **demonstrate & explain** their best practices with the results to match. 2) Set goals for group accountability and celebration of accomplishment and 3) Learn from the most proactive and forward-thinking minds in the business.

**ATI 20 Groups are targeted to help ATI Top Shop clients continue to grow and prosper** in an ever changing automotive landscape and economy. Group members will benefit from the newest ideas in marketing, increasing gross profit and, of course, car count. You will be able to process ideas and challenges with other shop owners at your same level. Through active participation, you will learn how to stay the best shop in your market by utilizing strategies that the best shops in North America use every day. In a very comfortable learning environment, you can put to practice working on your business and not in it. 20G members will learn new implementation techniques for proven strategies taken directly from other members.

With a planned agenda, one of ATI's senior coaches will facilitate the meetings, starting with industry news and what's going on in your world. Then, on to a group discussion of your performance, focusing on the Key Performance Indicators that are crucial to your business and your bottom line. On day two, each 20G group member will bring their best performing marketing strategies, sales tools or profit strategies to the table, for you to add to your arsenal. **Don't delay, 20G Space is limited, so apply today!** 

## Catch The Wave. By George Zeeks



For many of us, the image of someone hunched over a keyboard, hurriedly typing what they did today, why

and with whom, brings to mind the average teenager. If you are over 45 and you are reading this, you will have a much different outlook on this information than someone 35 and younger. All of us have a different vision of reality and that reality is the box that our head fits in. Sometimes the box is too small. That person hunched over the keyboard is your customer and if they are not typing to you, they may be typing to your competition. It has been said to catch the wave of the future; this is the wave of the present.

We all know that word of mouth brings us our best customers. The problem is that it is not "word of mouth" anymore. It has been replaced by *Facebook*, *Twitter*, Texting and *LinkedIn*. Let's face it, people do not seem to talk to each other as much as they used to. Think about how many of your neighbors that you talk with on a daily or even weekly basis, probably not that many. People have changed the way that they interact with each other and we need to make sure that we are part of that new pattern. We call it Social Networking, Social Marketing or Viral Marketing, but for most people it is just everyday life.

To keep things simple, let's just deal with one medium for now, Facebook. If you do not have a Facebook page for your shop, you are missing the boat. It is that simple. Over 50% of the people on Facebook are over the age of 25 and that matches the demographics that we are

looking for in new customers for our shops. Your customers are on Facebook & their friends are there too. One of the key things in the Automotive business is customer retention. We try everything we can to keep our customers coming back to us, and for many it is a struggle.


Having a Facebook page for our shop allows us to invite the customers to become a member of our family and get to know us on a completely different level than just the people who fix their car or change the oil. We can celebrate with them the achievements of the staff or the things we do in the community that may otherwise go largely unnoticed. We have the opportunity to become real people to them and bond them closer to us and our business. We have the ability to educate them about their car with pictures and video, in a non-sales setting, which reinforces our image of knowledge and expertise. Heaven forbid that we can do all of the above and entertain them at the same time. We all know that people buy from people that they like; we have all heard that any number of times. What would happen to your retention percentage if you gave your customers the opportunity to get to know you and your shop better in an environment that they felt totally comfortable in? Remember that bringing your car in for a repair is about as much fun as a visit to the dentist for most of our customers. This can bypass that emotion.

However, you must be careful of what you put on that Facebook page. It will become your face to the public and must represent the things that you value. Think hard on your value system and how you want the customer to perceive you because inconsistencies will become obvious. This is



branding your organization on its most basic, & perhaps most efficient level. If you are a family owned and operated business and you believe in 'the family', then show it. If you constantly strive for excellence through training and it is part of your shop culture, then celebrate it. If you are true to your beliefs and you are compelling, then the benefits are there.

We all know that there are times when the automotive world slows down. September brings to many of us a "back to school" slowdown and we all love the week after Christmas, right? What would happen if we had built a following among our customers, shared with them that this is a normally slow week and offered them a savings if they come in THIS WEEK? It has already been proven that they will come in. All will not come in, but some will and that will help fill the schedule and the bays during an otherwise slower week. Go one step further and invite them to share the message and the savings with their friends. Some will share, new customers will come in and we then invite them to become part of our 'family'. We now have a car count button that we can push, occasionally. We also have a way to increase referred customers, the holy grail of any business.

Hopefully, the box that your head fits inside has grown larger. Hopefully, your version of reality has expanded & you will take advantage of the opportunity available. Did I mention the cost? There is no cost, it's **FREE!** The only cost to you is the time that you put into it. Working on your business instead of in it. That is really where you should be anyway. 

**ATTENTION SHOP OWNERS AND MANAGERS:**  
If you have something you would like to share,  
e-mail your coach or ATI at  
office@autotraining.net.

# Success Breeding Success.

By Rick Johnson



As a coach and a shop owner, I get to see and experience all of the elation and all of the heartburn

of making it all work. I wanted to share with you a significant success story that is well worth the read. I have found that I love stories; stories about history & success and survival against all odds. I believe that it is from these stories that we learn most of our lessons about life and paths to success. It is in the sharing of stories that I find I am best able to share success with my clients & from these examples, they often take hope that they too can have success and find ways to get better. What I am about to share with you is something that actually happened in my own shop, that too many might seem quite "normal" or "average" but as in most stories, there is more here than meets the eye.

It all started with a customer who came in this week with an oil change reminder and recommend service reminder card...she came in and told my SA that she had gotten the card and wanted to go ahead and get the work done. Seems simple enough...needs all flushes, struts and shocks. A very nice job to be sure, but I want to go back 3 months ago...when she first called the service advisor as a new customer and tell you how this all seemingly "normal" or expected job came about.

In March of this year, she called in and told my Service advisor that she had just gotten the oil changed at the dealer and they told her that her intake was leaking and that it would be \$700 to repair it & she wanted a second estimate. My advisor told her that she needed to

bring the car in so that we could look at it and make sure that it was the intake and not something else. He set a time for her to come in and when she did, he also explained that we were going to do a courtesy check to make sure the rest of the car was okay. We confirmed that the intake was leaking and found that she needed several flushes, struts and shocks. He spent 20 minutes going over all findings and took her to the car and showed her where the intake was leaking, and of course fluid samples as well. He made her an estimate and our estimate was for \$900, \$200 more than the dealer. He explained to her that when we do an intake we flush out the cooling system, replace the thermostat & put a 3 year 36,000 mile warranty on our repair and the dealer is 12 months 12,000 miles. He also made estimates for the flushes and struts and shocks. She said she needed to go home and think this over and would let him know. Within the hour she called and said let's do the intake now and the rest later. The next day the car came in and we made the repairs and delivered the car. Of course, 3 days later made a follow up call and she was happy. Then 3 months later we sent out oil change reminder & recommend service reminder & that brings us to today. The more I thought about this, the more I realized what all went into this and I realized it was just doing the basics. It was not reinventing the wheel, it was just sticking to what we have learned at ATI.

I will now list the things that went right; the things that after we did the flushes and the struts and the alignment that meant \$2600 in sales in 3 months.

- The service advisor did not give an estimate on the phone. He invited her in and was able to convince her to spend

\$200 more than the dealer did because he built a relationship and sold the value of the job. To me, this proves customers are not price conscious, they are value conscious.

- The service advisor made sure we did a courtesy check even though it was just at the dealer! Those damned courtesy checks; I will never ever quit harping on them. I have seen firsthand what they do if done consistently & thoroughly. There is nothing more simple and basic than the courtesy check.
- The service advisor took the time to build the relationship



with the customer and took her by the hand and showed her what her car needed and earned her trust.

- The service advisor sold her the value of \$200 more than the dealer *and* made her feel good about the value she was getting.
- The techs did a great job of repairing the vehicle & delivered the value that was sold.
- The service advisor did a great follow-up call 3 days later to make sure all was ok with the customer. What better way to say that we care!
- The service advisor did a great job of documenting further needed services so that we could remind the customer later & make that additional sale.
- The service advisor actually sent out the reminders; actually took the time to use the technology he had and send out the post cards!

Take any one of these important steps away and it all blows up. If he had told her on the phone without looking at the car \$200 more than the dealer and we never see the car! Treat her like a number and not a very important person when she comes in and she may not buy from us anyway. Don't do a courtesy check and we are not doing flushes and struts today! Don't do follow up calls and we are just like everyone else. Don't put recommended services in the computer and we have nothing to market to down the road. Don't send out reminders and she may not come in at all.

So this one customer, this one job done right = \$2600 to my shop. And what seems "normal" or expected is actually very complicated and yet at the same time quite simple. Stick to the basics, don't let things distract you or prevent you from what works. A lot of times we think or our customers think that it is the latest, slickest marketing campaign or the flashy new website or \$50,000 new tool that will fix all our problems. For me, that is crazy. For me we will continue to stick to the basics, continue with those damned courtesy checks, continue with no estimates on the phone, continue with building relationships and identifying buying personalities and follow up calls, continue with high quality repairs and the best warranties and sending out our reminders. I'm going to stay focused and boring and just stick to the basics because, I don't know about anyone else, but for me I can't afford to miss out on \$2600 worth of work from one screw up.

Funny how even in a "bad" economy the basics still work and in a good economy they work even better. Well that's my story and I'm sticking to it!



## Sam's Corner: ATI's Top Shop Quest For 2009!



By Chubby

Think of the honor of being recognized as ATI's best of the best and awarded one of the Top Shops among all 900 active clients...

### Announcing ATI's quest for the 12 Top Shops of 2009

Our coaches are currently working diligently to identify their individual top ten clients, yielding a list of 150 highly qualified contenders. Of these, our management team and review board will do close comparisons of how each shop stacks up in all aspects of the ATI program and overall business performance. From

the original coach picks, we will have three additional cuts (see schedule below) that will determine the top 25 finalists. Then, on December 28th we will announce our **top 12 winners** representing the very best ATI shops in North America.

We have always recognized high achievers at ATI, but it is now time to formalize the process and give high credit where credit is due & formally recognize our **elite shop owners** for their significant accomplishments. After the December 28th general announcement, we will conduct a formal awards ceremony at Superconference

2010 in March.

### Announcement Schedule:

**Top 150:** October 1st  
**Top 75:** November 1st  
**Top 50:** December 1st  
**Top 25 finalists:** December 15th  
**Top 12 Top Shop winners:** December 28th

### The ATI Top 12 shops will each receive:

- Top Shop Recognition on stage at Superconference 2010 in a special awards ceremony\*.
- Special colored Top Shop logo shirt to be proudly worn at Superconference 2010 in Marco Island, FL.\*

- A plaque representative of the top honor
- Notable mention in a formal ATI Press Release
- A short individual recognition video by Chubby suitable for placement on your website

\* *Must attend Superconference 2010.* We wish you the best in this competition and would be thrilled to celebrate with you next March in Marco Island, Florida. Crowning the ATI Top Shops for 2009 will be the highlight of Superconference 2010! Good luck to all.



## Seven At the Top, *Congratulations To All!*

### This Month's Winners are:

**Ed & Kim Bahr**  
Bahr Auto Repair  
1065 S Main St  
Torrington, CT 06790

**Bobby Caton**  
Caton's Auto Care Center  
2605 Caton Hill Rd  
Woodbridge Va 22192

**Mark Ogborn**  
Pinnacle Automotive  
1119 Catherine St  
Philadelphia PA 19147

**Frank McGroarty**  
Bedford Auto Care  
803 Broadway Avenue  
Bedford ,OH 44146

### Randy Hall, & Terri Lapenson

Hall's Automotive, Inc  
3062 1/2 E. Ave H6  
Lancaster, CA 93535

### Kevin Zebroski

Tire Country of Riverhead, Inc  
1165 E Main St  
Riverhead, NY 11901

### Ed Breitenstein

Ed's Auto Repair  
25 N 17th St  
Keokuk, IA 52632



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