

DETAILING MASTER CLASS

**STEP BY STEP
TO SEVEN FIGURES**

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Our Story

May 2019 my business partner and I had a discussion about a warehouse that we had rented which was primarily used for storage of summer vehicles and parking for one of our other business ventures.

We realized that we had a great space in a great location even though it had some drawbacks such as not being on the main street visible from the road. The space was quite large at 4000 sqft and we were already paying rent so we decided to find some business we could start as another venture to monetize the space. Keep in mind when reading my story, that even though we launched a physical shop for our detailing business, the exact same principals apply especially considering that we had a lot of points against us such as not even having a sign on the road to let people know where we were located. We overcame all obstacles with clever marketing, tools, and a few great ideas that you can implement for your business whether it is mobile or at a physical shop.

So in May 2019 we settled on a detailing business after discussing several different business ideas to utilize the space and we officially opened our doors. In the beginning we weren't even at the location all day; rather we booked appointments online and then showed up when it was time to get the job done. In this aspect we were similar to mobile operations so don't think that our strategies won't apply for you if you are mobile.

In the beginning we did a ton of research on products, chemicals, tools and methods for detailing. We didn't come from a background in detailing, cleaning or anything similar. We were simply two regular guys. We purchased every tool you can think of, filled up our racks with hundreds of chemicals and tried every method possible for removing stains, salt and debris. In the end we realized that we didn't need 90% of the stuff we purchased or the methods we learned. We barely made any money the first month and used the time to figure out the processes, products and chemicals/tools needed that would accelerate our growth. With this Detailing Master Class you can benefit from the money, time and effort we invested to setup your detailing business properly.

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Once we got the ball rolling we kept track of everything from how long it took to do just interiors vs a full clean to asking customers about their experience in great detail so we could improve everything.

The goal should be to do exceptional work in as little time as possible. We were pumping out stellar jobs but the time was still taking to long if we were to hire people and have them do the kind of volume we wanted to see so that became our focus. In doing so we also wrote down every step and created training material for our staff so that we could easily transmit our way of doing things into any new staff member - regardless of experience.

The months that followed were steadily increasing both in the volume of jobs as well as the revenue earned and at our third month mark we had hit our first milestones of \$1000 days and \$20,000 per month in revenue.

This was great but not without problems from having one staff member who got high at work and was subsequently fired to having a new manager we hired steal from the company and even ruin a customer's headliner. We let this guy go obviously and rectified things with the customer however this is to say that it wasn't smooth sailing to get things off the ground. There were many more issues but we prefer to focus on things that work and put our energies there and when issues arise we deal with them swiftly and keep it moving.

We continued to perfect our detailing process, customer intake processes and overhaul the entire customer experience. At the same time we tested several marketing strategies, sales funnels and print marketing to find out what yielded the highest return on investment and most importantly - something that was deliberate and effective. All of our advertising and marketing has been hyper focused on the exact customers we want to target. We do not run the same promotions in Google that we run on Facebook because they are different customers. We deep dive into this in later chapters so don't worry, you'll get the sauce!

In the following months we slowly added new services to include window tinting, ceramic coating, windshield replacement, vinyl wrapping and PPF. Each stage came with a new set of problems and successes.

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As we expanded our services, we were able to upsell and cross-sell more effectively to turn small ticket items into larger ones which increased our revenue substantially. Plus the systems and processes we now had in place were able to solve problems that arose from new services easily and quickly because they were universally applicable.

For example, we searched to find the right software for our business. We tried everything out there and nothing was a great fit. There were some software apps that came close but missed the mark in certain aspects or were too complicated and didn't have features we needed at a quick glance. Fortunately we own a software development company as well so we created our own, OrbisX (www.orbisx.ca). The software we created fueled our growth with other services and completely managed and automated so many tasks that we were now free to tackle important stuff like marketing, customer service and analyzing our business processes and systems more. Don't worry, you can learn more about this amazing software in a later chapter of the Master Class.

Our growth continued and we bought a Sprinter van for mobile work as well because our shop was literally booked to capacity for weeks on end. At the time of writing this we just celebrated our one year anniversary and average \$50-80k per month. Our expenses in the first few months were matching revenue almost exactly. We have now streamlined our shop and our expenses account for about 30-40% of the gross revenue. Each month we hit a new milestone and we have received death threats from other shops (taken as a complement) and even had some shops try to sully our name because they are terrified. They chose to put their energy into competing with us. We put our energy into growing our business as if they don't even exist.

Our shop name is Auto World. Our website is www.autoworldottawa.com. We are 12 months in and have a solid crew including detailers, tinters, wrap specialists and windshield replacement techs. We chose our business name carefully so as not to limit us to detailing. You are likely past the naming stage of your business but if you aren't, consider where you want the business to be instead of where it is right now.

No Sign. Now What?

When we launched our business we didn't have a sign at the road. In fact, we weren't able to get one at the road. To make matters worse, we were located behind a plaza in the lower level that most people didn't even know existed. The most common question we received used to be "where exactly is that?" or "i'm lost, how do I find you?". Now the most common question we receive is "can I get a deal if I bring two cars this week?" or "can I buy my friend a gift certificate for their birthday?" The answer is always yes to both by the way.

It is unlikely you are in this situation, however it brings up a valid point that you can overcome virtually any obstacle placed in front of you to make your business a success. Many told us that our shop would fail because of this or that and where they saw deal-breaking problems we only saw a minor situation requiring a solution or work-around. And that is exactly what we did.

What did we do? We drove to our shop from the nearest major intersections and filmed the drive. Then we edited the video, overlaid our logo and added some nice music. Once uploaded to YouTube, the link was automatically sent from our software to anyone who booked an appointment so they wouldn't get lost and could find our shop with ease. Guess what... it is rare that anyone doesn't find our shop and tons of people comment in their 5 star Google review with "what a hidden gem, highly recommend".

The purpose of this section is to A) show you that you can overcome any obstacle and B) show you that with the help of technology you can automate various parts of your business where you have pain points to streamline your operations and ensure that your customer experience is 5 stars from the initial contact to the post-service follow up and repeat visit.

Take some time to think about the pain points in your business. These are your hidden opportunities where you can really shine and make some minor improvements within your business that have lasting impacts!

Too Many Products and Tools

The detailing world is full of products and tools ready for sale with enticing offers and hopeful promises of being the perfect solution to your detailing headaches.

Be careful. Spend less and do more.

As mentioned in our story of how we started, we over-invested in products, chemicals, tools, equipment, gimmicks and more. We learned what works and what doesn't and what maybe works but likely isn't needed. This is a business. If we could clean a car to our customer's satisfaction with just a bottle of water we would. If you ask the detailing community about products and tools you will get various responses and I have seen it all. Everybody has the right way to do it with the right tool or chemical. This simply isn't true.

You are much better off to narrow down your chemicals and tools to as short a list as possible. It is okay to keep a few highly specialized chemicals on hand for specific situations but the goal should be less not more - always.

Our shop pumps out 5 star details in one hour and six minutes. That's right, full interior and exterior with shampoo, salt removal, tires, rims and the works in 1 h 06 mins on average. The time spent working on a customer's car does not in any way dictate the level of clean. If you do it in 5 hours, that's great. It's gonna be hard to scale that business in volume so hopefully you are making enough off of one car a day that you can scale that with employees too because the only way to increase will be with your number of staff not the number of cars unless you like 10-12 hour work days.

Keep in mind it used to take us a lot longer. Then we refined the process over time. Our shop can comfortably host 14 cars. 18 if we don't mind breathing the same air as each other. To handle the volume we have and keep a comfortable work environment, we had to make our detailing jobs more efficient. We accomplished this by streamlining the products, tools, equipment and chemicals used as well as the process from start to finish.

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So what do we use at our shop and what is our magic process that makes things so efficient. Well let's first look at what the customer expects and the service offered so that you understand running your detailing business as a business and not a passion for removing every molecule in an air vent for example.

One of the most critical errors to be made is not assessing the customer's expectations. If you fail to determine what the customer expects then you are at risk of making them unhappy or equally as bad, doing too much for what you are being paid to do for the customer and focusing on minor details they likely don't even care about. This can affect your bottom-line and ability to scale your business. The scoop for french fries at McDonalds is a specific size on purpose. It's because they have determined the appropriate number of french fries that their customers expect and they (as much as possible) avoid giving you more without charging extra for a larger size portion.

The first thing we ask every customer who shows up for a detailing appointment is this magic phrase:

Imagine I'm a genie. If I could snap my fingers and make 3 things better on your vehicle right now, what would they be?

Customers typically respond with things like "I just want my interior to be cleaner, remove the bird poop on the outside and see that stain right there on the passenger seat. I would love that to be shampooed out."

And that's the magic right there. You now know exactly what three things will make the customer happy and we reiterate to them something like this:

Ok great, we will give your car the interior & exterior promo package which does cover cleaning the interior and exterior and we will make sure that our focus is on removing the bird poop, making the inside clean and most importantly we will tackle that stain.

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You see, it may seem insignificant but this is crucial to managing your customer's expectations. We don't follow rigid package checklists where you have to spend 10 minutes per air vent and 5 minutes per cup holder etc. The goal is instead shifted to making sure that the customer's expectations are met and/or exceeded.

If something in the vehicle is already 90% clean then you only have to do the extra 10% on that area. Not everything is going to require using 2-3 chemicals or multiple passes when you could simply take some all-purpose cleaner and a micro fiber and get it done in two seconds.

Customers always have an expectation and they always have something about their vehicle that bothers them which is why they booked a detailing appointment in the first place. They won't usually open up about it because they came to you - the professional. Instead, pull it out of them and find out exactly what it will take to make them a happy customer. We have found that this method works 99% of the time. You will occasionally receive a customer who expects a brand new car for your basic cleaning package. This is unavoidable in the service industry and in these instances you need to circle back to your initial conversation with the customer to determine what their expectations are for the vehicle and the package they chose.

Ok so now on to the meat of this section where we discuss tools, chemicals and equipment.

Our shop is streamlined and simplified. We do have some specialized products that we use for certain circumstances or 6 figure vehicles that we don't employ in our regular detailing services however for the sake of not drowning you in information we will stick to our most common package which is our promotion we use for our Facebook ads etc.

Our most successful package is for an interior & exterior detailing including shampoo, salt removal, rims and tires, vacuum, interior wipe down, door jams, glass, mirrors and exterior wash and dry.

So what do we need to accomplish this package? Well we could order specialized leather cleaners, tire shine, wheel degreaser, vinyl renewer etc.

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When we first started that's exactly what we had on hand was over 200 different products, sprays, chemicals, powders you name it. This was a big mistake. For the weekend warrior that wants to super pamper his baby in the garage this makes sense, I guess but even then it really doesn't.

Fortunately for me, my father was a chemistry teacher. I called him up one day and asked him about all the chemicals we were using as I was moving a trolley with basically a warehouse of products to finish an afternoon detail.

This conversation was part of a pivotal moment for us at Auto World. He explained to me that there are basically **four types of cleaning agents**:

Detergents. Degreasers. Abrasives. Acids.

The last two are really only used in cleaning anything for specialized circumstances where you will want to charge the customer extra anyways so essentially we are focused on detergents and degreasers.

Further to this point, my father explained that there are essentially chemicals that react with water and others with oils.

Detergents

They work by breaking up dirt or soil, making it easy to wash it away.

Degreasers

These are sometimes known as solvent cleaners and are used to remove grease from surfaces.

90% of our interior work uses detergents like all-purpose cleaners (APC) and 90% of our exterior work uses degreasers. It's as simple as that - it really is.

So our chemical list includes four main components. The first is a heavy duty exterior cleaner that we can spray on and let sit for a short period of time (1-2 mins) with water. Then scrub and put in that elbow grease and rinse off. This is enough to handle even the toughest exterior gunk without having to grab multiple bottles of different solutions.

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The second on our go-to list is tire shine. We use this purple tire shine that is oil-based and lasts for around two weeks. We buy massive containers and then fill up smaller bottles to use on-demand. A massive container costs us around \$80 and will last us around 3 months doing 8-14 cars a day for tires.

The third item on our list of essentials is an all-purpose cleaner. Without mentioning brands because that opens up a whole can of worms within the detailing community (ask privately if you want to know), we use an APC that is best diluted 20-1 for most messes and 8-1 for more intensive cleaning action. We use this for everything we can from door jams that aren't that dirty to the dash, consoles, cup holders, seats and more. Yes we do carry leather cleaner and conditioner but this is part of our upsells for a leather conditioning package. For the most part the APC is all you need. Find a good brand that is economical and effective while being safe for all surfaces.

The final item in our list is a good glass cleaner. For this we purchase cans for less than \$3 from our windshield supplier and they are amazing. Liquids create too much mess and residue that has to be cleaned off while aerosol sprays do the trick. The one we use just says Glass Cleaner on it because what else do you need to know. We use this on windows and mirrors and we use paper towel which we buy industrial size from our supplier. It's cheap and works. One great thing about Glass Cleaner in a can is that it also works wonders for removing glue from adhesive stickers that you will likely come into contact with from time to time on windows.

So that's it, the four essential chemicals on our detailing carts:

- Degreaser (usually for exteriors and greasy places)
- Tire shine
- All-purpose cleaner (APC)
- Glass cleaner

Sorry it's not more complicated but it doesn't need to be if you want to streamline your operations. Yes we do carry some other items such as shampoo for our foam canons. To be honest though, not every car needs the foam canon and our economy packages which outperform any other package attract customers that really don't care if you gave their brand new Corolla a bubble bath. Don't over-complicate things.

No Waiting Room. Opportunity Awaits.

In the beginning we didn't invest in a waiting room. We could have and looking back maybe we should have early but it is what it is and we have a beautiful waiting room now. In the beginning we chose to hold off on the waiting room to see if it would become essential and as our shop grew so rapidly we decided to build a custom waiting room so we could improve the flow of our incoming traffic. The point is we waited for it to become necessary rather than just building one because other shops had one.

So how could this have been an opportunity? Well as our shop grew and the three chairs we had against a wall could no longer seat the number of customers waiting we had to find a better solution. Plus it wasn't great in the beginning with customers watching over our shoulders. Not because we were doing something wrong but because they wanted to offer their input and in some cases we had customers actually want to help for some reason and they vacuumed their own trunks etc. (we still charged them of course).

The opportunity came when we were brainstorming alternatives to building the waiting room. We realized there was a coffee shop just across the street and this could solve our waiting room problem without us spending very much money and we could also get referrals from the cafe owner.

We approached the owner of the cafe and he was delighted at the idea. He offered us coffee at cost (\$2.50 for his premium coffees) and we printed some cards to hand out to customers letting them know about the cafe across the street where they can wait and also use the FREE wifi at his cafe.

The cards were so well received that customers even mentioned them in the 5 star Google reviews they would leave us after their service. At the same time we were able to tap into the cafe owners clients by having flyers in the cafe and him referring people to our shop. We sent him hundreds of customers and they would often order food during their stay so it was a win-win.

The \$2.50 was an expense but it was the perfect solution to avoid spending on a waiting room that may not have been needed right away.

In the end the coffee cards were terrific and attracted many new customers from the coffee shop. In the end we grew soo much and needed a new way to control the flow of customers that a separate entrance and waiting room were the answer to the new problem. The beginning worked out perfectly though with the cafe and avoiding the initial investment of a waiting room until it was absolutely necessary to solve other problems.

This is what the coffee cards looked like:



This example should show you that there are opportunities in every aspect of your business and what can be seen as a weakness or limiting factor can quickly be turned into an opportunity with the right idea.

Take some time and write down on a piece of paper the limiting factors you can identify or your short comings in your business where others may have an advantage over you and then think of creative ways to transform these into winning strategies that can be beneficial to your business.

Know Your Customer

It's easy to just rush into things and start detailing any customer's car you can to generate sales. While this is not necessarily a bad thing, it is very important that you take the time to assess your customers in order to figure out what your ideal customer looks like.

The problem with not identifying your ideal customer becomes evident after you take on several jobs that make you question your entire existence on the planet and can cause you to feel like giving up. These customers are toxic and you absolutely have to take the time to identify your perfect customer so that you can tailor all of your marketing efforts towards the ideal customer.

To identify your ideal customer you have to think beyond the obvious things like "oh someone with a car of course" and "oh someone who wants to maintain their paint on their fancy sports car".

Your ideal customers will have several characteristics in common and will vary depending on factors such as the services you offer, your geographic region and so on. It is important to create groups of your ideal customers for each service, package, or promotion you plan to push in the market.

At our shop, we have a few ideal customers and we have split them into groups based on combinations of the following criteria often sharing several of the criteria to form multiple targeted groups:

Gender	Male or female
Age	Young, middle age, senior drivers
Lifestyle	Parents, soccer moms, uber drivers, truck fans
Interests	Outdoor living, car shows, car reviews or specific brands
Customer Class	Customer, dealership, fleet vehicles, ride sharing
Vehicle Class	Sports or classics, luxury, older cheap daily driver
Appearance Rating	Cares about vehicle appearance vs just wants it cleaner

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We use these grouping categories to create customer segments for targeting ads and packages or promotions that will appeal to specific demographics. For example we have ads running for soccer moms about how it's time for mom to get a break and have a clean car for driving to soccer practice etc.

Similarly with customers who have luxury vehicles we target ads more about protection and not just trusting anyone with your luxury ride. We get as specific as possible and make sure that the message is consistent from the ad to the landing page to the response back from our staff.

This hyper focus ensures that we get a high conversion rate by appealing directly to the interests of each demographic. When you assess the needs of your customers you can create packages, offer services and upsells that are specific to their needs and when you provide solutions people open their wallets.

For example, for ride sharing drivers like Uber drivers, we offer an upsell interior ceramic coating from SystemX. It is not very expensive and fast to complete the service and the benefits for the customer are clear. They have tons of random people in and out of their vehicle and interior ceramic coating protects their interior from degrading or staining faster than normal wear and tear.

This is where a little critical and creative thinking will translate into real dollars so take some time to identify your customers and segment them so that you can start tailoring packages, upsells and your landing pages to attract those specific segments and convert them into more bookings.

Oops.. What Now?

Mistakes happen. Sometimes it's your fault, other times it's the customers and sometimes it's just a series of unfortunate events. Don't panic, shit happens.

The important thing is how you handle those "oops" moments.

At our shop we pride ourselves on doing exceptional work at affordable prices. Sometimes mistakes happen. I'll share a story with you about one of our mistakes in the early days and how we handled it poorly. Then I'll share a story of a situation where we handled it in a way that I believe is now the right way for the business.

The Wrong Way

We just finished a customer's car cleaning and everything was looking perfect. Two of us were working on the vehicle and unfortunately both of us thought the other had vacuumed out the trunk. This is now the first thing we clean so that we can store the mats in there after being shampooed but in the beginning we were just cleaning things at random without a proper process in place.

The customer came to pickup their vehicle and looked it over. They were very impressed with the work we had done, grabbed their keys, paid their bill and left.

Shortly after they returned upset. They opened their trunk when they got home only to discover that the wood shavings from their recent trip to the garden center were still in the trunk and it wasn't cleaned at all.

I've always been good at deescalating situations so it was easy enough to calm the customer down by explaining it was simply an oversight however the customer still wanted something to be done for the inconvenience (rightfully so of course).

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I offered to vacuum the trunk and clean the trunk (which we did) and also offered a free spray wax on the spot. This seemed like a great idea at the time. The customer asked how long it would take and I explained we would need about 30 minutes.

The 30 minutes quickly turned into just over an hour. I mean we had to clean the exterior again before applying the wax plus cleaning the trunk and giving the vehicle a little drying time before returning outside.

I thought the customer was going to be very happy with the final result. It was great work and the customer did acknowledge that and said he was very happy with the work done however he was now upset that it took up even more of his time and we went over the 30 minutes.

I now had to deescalate another situation that was supposed to be the solution to the first problem.

The point you should take away from this situation is that when mistakes happen there is a better way which you will see in the next example. The reason this method doesn't work out every time is that you are already dealing with a customer who is upset so the next thing you do will be looked over with a very critical eye because they are only thinking about the fact that a mistake was made before so they assume it is likely that you will make another mistake.

The Right Way

The "wrong way" can work at times so shouldn't be discounted too heavily however there is a better way as you will see in the following example.

We had a customer come in for a detailing and a tint for their windows. The detailing was flawless and this vehicle was filthy when it arrived. The tinting was next to perfect but the rear window back glass had a few bubbles in it after a couple days. The customer came back to our shop and wanted the tint redone for that window. This is not an issue as we offer a lifetime warranty on our tint jobs.

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The customer was upset about the inconvenience of having to come back for the fix and when they came we were soo jammed that it wasn't possible to redo the tint on the spot because a back window needs to be taken off with care so that the heating elements aren't damaged. It takes around 3 hours for us to redo a back window (remove film, adhesive and retint).

We could have forced it and redone the tint the same day but then the customer would have been looking over the vehicle with a hyper-critical eye and on a day where we were already rushed this could have just led to a much worse situation.

The solution was to offer an alternative date to do the retint and we offered a free interior cleaning. We advised the customer to bring in the vehicle after a month or so when the vehicle would be dirty and need a clean again so that he could take advantage of the free cleaning. This way he would get the bonus at a future date and leave the vehicle with us for half the day.

The reason this is the right way is that you are offering something for the future that can be scheduled appropriately with your work load and also you will now be dealing with a calm customer who is thinking about the solution vs. having the mistake fresh in their mind.

The good news in this case is that the bubbles in the back window dried out in the sun over the next 30 days (this is what we advise to customers anyway) and the customer still came in for the cleaning but insisted on paying for the service anyway because the tint was great now with the bubbles gone.

There are many ways to handle the "oops" moments. In our experience offering something on the spot or for the future can depend on what happened, the customer's reaction and the bonus(es) that you can/will offer.

Assess each situation on its own merit but it is a great idea to think about something you can offer for almost all "oops" moments and print it on some cards. When something happens you can deescalate the situation and offer the bonus to the customer with the card for the future to reassure them that their concerns are important and that you will take care of the issue right away with the cherry on top for a future date.

Get a Website

You absolutely need a website. Period. I see it all the time with businesses that only have a Facebook page or a one page website they crafted themselves in 30 minutes. While something is better than nothing, it is crucial for your business to have a professional website.

Facebook pages are essential too and I will touch on this in another chapter. The biggest reason to have a website AND a Facebook page is because you will own and have full control over your website whereas a Facebook page you are at the mercy of a 3rd party's look and feel, content displayed and even whether or not you even show up online because sometimes people get their pages blocked. Facebook pages are necessary too but in combination with a website not as a replacement.

With our website we are able to present a professional corporate image and also we can add more content specific to our services as well as forms that collect the exact information we need for our bookings. Plus we can integrate great features such as selling gift certificates online, warranty registrations and more. Websites are an inexpensive piece of real estate you need to own.

A website also shows up in search engines and can offer you the opportunity to showcase your unique business look and feel compared to the one-size fits all Facebook page where they all look pretty much the same.

Think beyond the one page or a basic design you can do with those free website builders and get a professional website if you don't already have one. In fact, we can get you a free one built through another company we own (Creative Designs) who handles all of our marketing for our successful shop.



Get a Free Website Built By Professionals

Scan the QR code here or visit this link to get a free website built by a professional design agency:
<https://creative-designs.ca/landing-page-free-websites/>

Setup Your Google Business Listing

In addition to your website and social media pages, you should setup a Google Business Listing if you haven't do so yet. It is free to do and you just need a phone # and/or address where they can send a verification code to verify your listing.

The benefits are higher ranking in search engines for your website and for your Google Business listing as well as the ability to receive Google reviews which can help your business out a lot when customers are trying to decide between detailing companies to hire.

Setting up a Google Business Listing

Simply visit this link to get started: <https://www.google.com/business/>

Once you setup and verify your Google Business listing it is important to complete your profile so that people share your business and are enticed into choosing you over your competitors. It's not enough to just have the profile with basic information anymore.

Add your logo, cover photo, services and pricing, hours and payment methods as well as offers since Google has now created the ability to add promotions. When adding an offer to your Google Business listing, keep in mind that the customers you get through Google will be a different breed than those found other places (usually).

We have found from our shop that Google customers tend to be higher spenders and better quality than those found on classified sites or Facebook Marketplace where customers tend to want 1998 Civic prices for cash with Ferrari service. On that note about cash deals. Always charge and collect tax. You're running a business and you don't want to risk trouble with the tax man to save someone a few dollars. Real businesses charge tax and by charging tax you present your business as legit and professional.

So go setup your Google Business listing if you haven't done so already. Be prepared to wait 1-3 weeks for the postcard to arrive so start now.

Print Materials

You likely have business cards and that's great and it's possible that the bulk of your advertising efforts are strictly online. This is great but don't forget about print media. One of the biggest advantages you have in the detailing industry is that you have access to the customer's vehicle. At our shop we always leave behind print material in the vehicle.

The materials we leave behind are a mixture of post-service information such as leaving the windows cracked an inch or two to allow the car to dry out and we make sure to take advantage of the real estate on the print material by including promotions and information about other services to entice them back for a repeat visit.

Additionally we make postcards and brochures and leave them under the wipers of vehicles in parking lots, place them in nearby businesses and hand them out to anyone we meet.

We also use print material in grocery stores, libraries and other places where they have corkboards. We place a small printed flyer with tear-away numbers. Take a look at our tear-away number flyer below:



We have found that our success at the shop cannot be attributed to one single advertising method but rather it is the sum of all parts. We do a mixture of everything we can think of and that is how we stay fully booked all year round. We don't have seasons at our shop like the other shops in our area who experience a dry spell. I can honestly say it's because of all of these efforts.

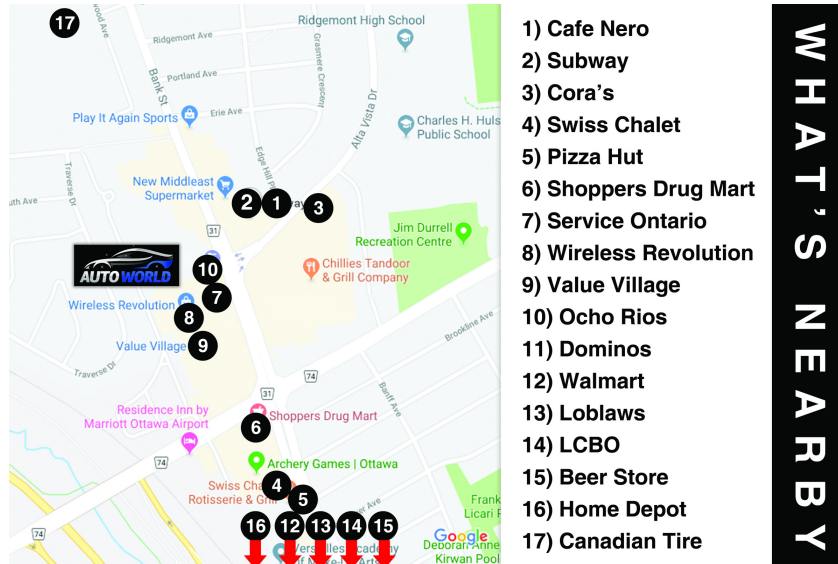
Additionally, we use print materials to explain things to customers quickly with visuals. For example many customers want to know how much their detailing will cost based on the level of mess that they have in their vehicle. Not all messes are the same and I'm sure you have heard a customer say "It's not that bad". Well in these cases this rating chart comes in handy for us.

NOT ALL MESSES ARE THE SAME



Similarly many customers ask us what is around us for shopping while waiting for their appointment to finish. We received this question soo much and it was difficult to explain all of the various shops and things around us in a timely manner so we solved the problem with some printed materials that are posted on the wall. This is to show how print material can solve common problems you encounter with your business too. See our sign graphic below:

Detailing Master Class



Another key print material we use for each of our detailing jobs is a checklist. We have printed checklists and we leave them behind in the vehicle for the customers. This provides reassurance for the customer that we did the following tasks and also it shows clearly in red boxes what are upsells when we explain it to them what is included and what exclusions are available for upgrade. If you aren't using a checklist now, we highly recommend implementing one. It will help keep you on track too. See our checklist below:

DETAILING SERVICE CHECKLIST

Headlight restoration ☐

Bug removal ☐

Exterior wash + hand dry ☐

Console clean and mirrors ☐

Salt removal ☐

Windows clean ☐

Clean mats ☐

Extra mats clean ☐

Rim + tire clean ☐

Pet hair removal ☐

Tire shine ☐

Vacuum trunk ☐

Extra wheels clean ☐

Swirl & Paint Correction ☐

Brake dust removal Clay bar ☐

Engine bay detail ☐

Aquapel or RainX ☐

Air vents cleaning and cup holders ☐

Steam clean Anti-bacterial ☐

Vacuum interior ☐

Shampoo upholstery for stain removal ☐

Door jamb wipe ☐

Fragrance spray or odor bomb ☐

Leather conditioner Ceramic coating or Fabric guard ☐

Ceramic coating interior or Fabric guard ☐

MAKE/MODEL

DATE & AUTHORIZATION

Social Media Pages

You need to harness the power of social media. From Instagram to Facebook and more there are a lot of options out there. To make life easier when posting, setup an account with Hootsuite or something similar where you can post from one software that will automatically post to all of your social media accounts. This way you don't forget or neglect one of your accounts.

Also, when you setup the accounts make sure to upload professional graphics and complete the entire profile by adding your logo, cover photos, services, business info, hours and even some promotions.

Then make sure to mention to every customer to like and follow your pages

The next step is to post and post as often as possible. It is important to stay relevant and this means posting often. So what kind of information can you post? Well of course the jobs you do but also information that contributes to your story. For example, we took a picture of each of our tools and equipment and wrote a post about the machine or tool and why we use it and what makes it so great.

Furthermore we posted about ourselves, our methods and the things that make us stand out.

The frequency or content you post about will vary but just keep in mind that it is a good idea to post a lot to build up the page. The posts that perform the most for driving traffic to your business will be the ones with purpose. So don't just post pictures of a car and "brag" about the great job you did. Instead look for opportunities to share a story. If you help a customer out with a specific request, write about it.

At our shop, we often help customers with some extras such as steam cleaning their children's car seats. We will often promote the story saying we just helped out these two young parents by steam cleaning their car seats as a bonus. Whatever you do post often and make it count. We'll touch on ads later in another chapter about marketing on social media.

Facebook Ads

You can get a lot of leads from advertising on Facebook and your success will be determined by the ads you run and most importantly the way that you setup the advertisements.

Did you know that you can target people in much more detail than just location and gender and age? Well it's true and if you aren't using the behaviour and interests settings for your ads then you should just donate your money somewhere because you are essentially just throwing it away.

This means don't just click the boost post button for your posts to create ads because the boosted posts are very limiting and don't let you take advantage of the highly specific targeting options available to regular ads created in the Facebook Ads Manager.

It all comes down to conversion rates. You will have much higher conversion rates turning leads into customers if the ad is tailored specifically to a particular demographic. For example, we run ads targeting soccer moms and the ad text, image and landing page is 100% tailored to women with children in a specific demographic with particular interests.

In this example, we would target TV shows as interests that moms are shown trending to follow as well as magazines like Home & Garden, Household Living etc.

Another good example is running ads to friends of someone having a birthday soon. This is actually an option in the Facebook demographics. A good ad example would be running an ad for gift certificates at your shop saying "Hey you're friends birthday is just around the corner. Stuck for a gift, get their car cleaned with a gift certificate from Auto World."

The amount of options and examples I could give you right now would warrant an e-book on its own. The best thing to do is sit down and think about your customers' interests, behaviours, ages, gender, income, job titles etc. and craft separate ads for each one.

Detailing Master Class

It takes time to fully setup your ads but the pay off is huge. We have on average 47 ads running at the same time for a variety of demographics and interests and conditions. Each ad has a unique image and text and offer targeting a specific, hyper-focused demographic based on a combination of the items mentioned above.

Our results have been astronomical and our campaigns are very successful. We receive an average return on investment of \$240 for every \$20 spent as a result of our super focused ads. This means that for every \$1000 spent on ads we can be sure to generate around \$12,000. We spend around \$5000/mo on our ads each month across Facebook, Marketplace and Google Ads yielding. This means our ad spend is 8.33% of our revenue generated each month.

In the beginning our ad spend was much higher. We had to learn a lot from trial and error but the good news is that we learned over time, made improvements and our ad spend also got cheaper as Facebook and Google learned more about our demographics and audience to help optimize our ads. This is another area that marketers fail at is running a campaign for a short period of time and thinking it's a failure because the ad spend and return were too close to each other. Reality is the longer you run the ads the more these platforms learn about your campaign and audience with their artificial intelligence.

Another important note is to make sure that your Facebook ads (or any ads) go to a landing page that corresponds with the offer you presented and has a form to capture the customers information. The more you can capture their info such as phone & email you can reach out to them if they don't book right away so you can close the deal with your awesome sales skills.

Also another tip is that on Facebook video will always be more effective than images. If you can get a high quality video made with the right message you will see the magic. If you are unable to get a good video made then a really nice image will do the trick. The important thing is to make sure that you have attention grabbing headings and a nice image that relates to the targeted audience you have defined. Then send them to a slick landing page and watch your phone blow up with notifications

Detailing Master Class

One last note about Facebook ads is make sure to setup your Facebook pixel for your business page so that you can build an audience of people who have visited your landing pages or website. Learn more about the Facebook pixel here: <https://www.facebook.com/business/learn/facebook-ads-pixel>

Essentially the Facebook pixel is a piece of code you place on your website or landing page that lets you measure, optimize and build audiences for your ad campaigns. You can run ads to audiences using your pixel that have been to a landing page or visited your page before. This means that you would make specific ads targeting potential customers that have already been exposed to your business. In these instances, the potential customers are already familiar with your business so you can make specific ads for them such as things like "Still looking to clean that daily commuter of yours?" and "Hey it's time to give Auto World a shot. Let us show you the Auto World experience".

Basically think of Facebook pixel audiences as "familiar customers" or "repeat visitors". Marketing to them is much different than a brand new, cold lead.

Google Ads

We touched on Facebook ads and while Google ads share some similarities in terms of the targeting demographics etc., there are some differences you need to be aware of if you plan on running Google ads.

The first thing to keep in mind is that you can expect to pay more for Google ads than Facebook ads. The benefit is that in Google most of the time customers are searching for your service or product whereas on Facebook you are more just putting your business in front of people and hoping the timing makes sense.

While Google ads can be more expensive than alternative marketing methods, the results can be terrific and typically they are customers searching for your exact service and ready to take action. The other thing about Google ads is that the quality of the customer tends to be a little better than other forms of marketing such as classified ads and Facebook marketplace where customers are just looking for the best deal possible.

This is why our Google ads are different than our Marketplace or classified ad site ads. We usually have higher prices for Google customers to account for the ad spend costs and also because these seem to be higher quality customers based on our experiences.

Another thing to consider is that Google ads are an auction and rely on ad spend and the relevance score of your ad so you will need to factor in the level of competition in Google ads to increase or modify your ad spend if there are many other detailers in your area doing Google ads.

So when making your ads consider that you will be dealing with higher spenders, higher quality customers and people who are ready to take action. Your ads should be designed around this type of customer for the most success. So the takeaway is that our ads are a slightly higher price, go to a targeted landing page with the type of customer in mind and a form to collect their information. Good news is they are easy to setup and Google has support reps that can help you with setup and optimization.

Facebook Marketplace

Posting on Facebook Marketplace can be wonderful... or full of headaches. If you have tried marketing your detailing business on Facebook Marketplace then I'm sure you are more than familiar with the issues of posting and promoting on Facebook Marketplace.

Let's look at some of the issues and then we will take a look at what we have found works and how to overcome some of the issues with Marketplace.

First thing to note is that with Facebook Marketplace you will encounter a few good customers but you have to be prepared to answer thousands of messages from people looking to spend nothing yet receive everything or people that want to do cash deals only no tax and others that want to get pricing and then never reply back. Now that this is touched on let's move on.

Facebook Jail

One of the downsides of Marketplace compared to other advertising platforms is that sometimes your ads get reported by other users who want to see your ads removed (competitors etc.) or even automatically taken down by the Facebook robots. These means you will spend a lot more time reposting and reposting your ads. If you find the right ad text and image combination then you can skip over the robots but then you still have to worry about people reporting your ads.

The part that sucks about your ads getting taken down is that if it happens a few times then you can end up in Facebook jail where they put you in a timeout and you won't be able to post ads. Sometimes they let you post them and you think everything is fine but they aren't visible in the Marketplace. You will know if this happens because you will stop getting messages and responses from your ads. The solution is to just wait a few days and try again. You can try messaging support but it's next to impossible to find out how and when you do it will be a long time before a response if you even get one.

So What Works?

There are ways of posting your detailing services on Facebook Marketplace that have success and generate hundreds of messages on Facebook. You will need to make sure that you are available to answer questions right away if you plan to have extreme success with Marketplace customers. We live in an instant world and customers, especially these ones are easy to close when you reply within 2-5 minutes. Sounds crazy? That's what we do and it works. If we reply after a few hours our closing rate drops like a stack of bricks.

At the time of writing this we have posted over 1946 ads on Facebook marketplace. I know this because we track the success and stats of each of them in an Excel file. I'm not a perfectionist or have OCD but rather I'm a money maker. The success of your business comes from four things.

1. Do something
2. Analyze your results
3. Make improvements
4. Do it again, but better

The reason I bring up the volume of ads we have posted in the last 12 months is to show you that I have a very good idea of what works from trial and error based on real-world examples of what has worked for us.

The first thing you should do is just post an item for sale in Marketplace with the text you want and see what happens. For example the title could be "Detailing with Shampoo" then the price and a description like "Book your car detailing with Auto World and get a full interior and exterior detailing for only \$120. Limited time offer, message for details or click this link."

You may find that this post works perfectly. You may also find as we found that these posts were flagged by the Facebook Gods because of various elements we put in our post such as the link and the word "detailing".

So if you can't post exactly what you want then what do you do? Well the answer is you get creative. Our posts have changed a lot over the months and we continue to make improvements as we need to adjust for Facebook.

So instead of posting "detailing" maybe you have to say "cleaning" or "clean car" or even some ads like we have run (that did well) with titles like "Interior Shampoo". Then in the description we put some more details to actually clarify what it is that is offered.

Typically we have found that Facebook has more of an issue with the title text and the image. Try and find a good image of a car but something realistic. Facebook seems to have more of an issue with cartoon or clipart images and they definitely don't seem to like images with text on them as much but sometimes they sneak through.

Additionally we found that if you join groups online like local buy and sell groups and you post in Facebook Marketplace and in these groups you have a higher chance of keeping the listing on Marketplace without being reported. Plus we try and boost the listing right away and have found that this seems to bypass the Facebook robots somehow and allows more posts to stay online.

Lastly, it can help to think outside of the box. One of our most successful ads which looking back is kind of ridiculous was a picture of an army tank. The title said "Tank Clean in Ottawa". The description said "Get your military tank cleaned from top to bottom... just kidding but we can definitely clean your car, truck or SUV. Message or call us for a quote"

This ad received over 14,000 views in 12 hours, was shared with over 2000 people and received over 500 messages that resulted in 242 appointments booked. Our ad spend on this campaign was \$0 + a little creative brainstorming and 5 minutes of time to find an image and post the ad on the Facebook Marketplace.

Boosted Listings

Facebook Marketplace offers the ability to boost your listings... sometimes. When you post an item for sale in Marketplace check your list of items for sale. If you see the Boost Listing blue button, click it and create a paid listing for 30 days with a budget of around \$100-150. This is what we have found generates some serious traffic.

Landing Pages

These are magical. If you want to get tons of leads and maximize your ad dollars then nothing beats a great landing page when combined with focused ads like we discussed in the Facebook & Google ads sections.

A landing page is a web page that allows you to capture a lead information through a lead-capture form (AKA a conversion form). The biggest mistake seen is when people run ads that just go to their home page or even worse don't link to anything. Creating landing pages allows you to target a specific audience, offer them something of value, and convert a higher percentage into customers while also capturing information about them.

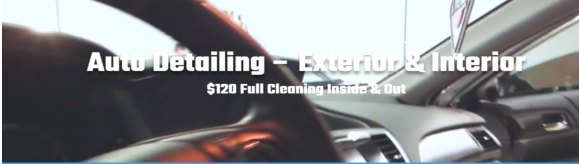
The main benefits of landing pages are:

1. Easily generate leads
2. Collect specific information about your leads
3. Track your conversion rates
4. Increase your conversion rates
5. Make specific landing pages for each unique offer or special
6. They are fast, easy and cheap to setup

For every ad, promo, offer or service at our shop we have a landing page. We also have all or most of these on our website but sometimes we run promotions that are not featured on our website. This way we get organic traffic that pays regular price (or higher promo prices) and for specific ad campaigns targeting very specific demographics we employ landing pages.

On the following page you can see an example of one of our landing pages for a Spring Promo that we run on Facebook and Google. The promo is full cleaning if booking immediately through the form on our landing page. We have retargeting pixels on the page so that if the customer doesn't book today we can remarket to them again through Google and Facebook because it is a repeat visit and the odds of them booking the second time are higher because Google and Facebook will keep showing the same ad over and over to them until they do book because of the tracking codes.

Detailing Master Class



Auto Detailing – Exterior & Interior

\$120 Full Cleaning Inside & Out

Secure Your Deal Now

Name

Email

Phone

Vehicle year/make/model

Choose Appointment Date + Time

Service

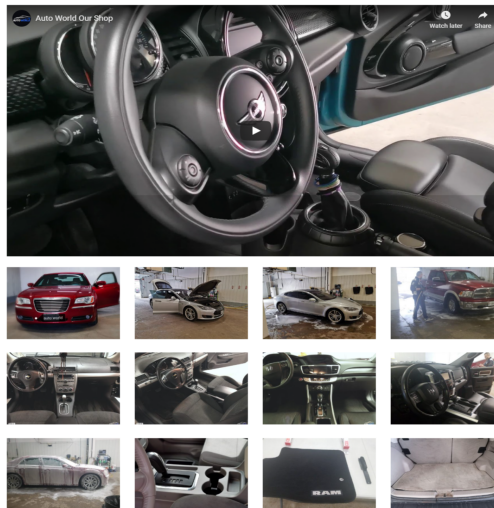
Date

Time Preference

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Taxes extra. Subject to inspection for price based on vehicle condition and type. Shampoo is quick shampoo for clean but stains, pet hair, salt extra.

Landing pages are unique in the fact that they should be very specific. It is not a website, but rather a web page with a specific offer or promotion. The goal of your landing page should be to convert the visitor into a fresh lead ready for a follow up or even better a solid booking on the spot for an appointment.

The process should be to create a very specific ad, let's say a Facebook ad for a promotional offer that goes to a landing page with the details of the offer, some testimonials or other trust-building content, a call to action along with your lead capture form to convert the lead into a customer.

The key components to a successful landing page are

- **Headline**
This should be a large text line(s) that grab attention and reinforce your offer
- **Offer details**
This would be the actual details of the offer or promo that was in the ad which led the customer to this landing page. It is important that it matches up with the offer presented in the ad. If you try to trick the customer they will leave asap once landing on your page.
- **Testimonials or trust-building content**
Add in customer testimonials or information about your warranties, guarantees etc. and if possible a video about your business to help convince the customer to do business with you and submit the form
- **Lead capture form**
This should be a form capturing name, phone & email at a minimum but you should definitely capture other information and if possible even try getting a booking right from the landing page
- **Tracking code**
Google Analytics code or Facebook retargeting pixel etc. to track your landing page visitors.

Create a landing page today and link your ads to it - the benefits are huge!!

Kijiji & Craigslist

Social media is great. Google is great. These are not the only platforms where your potential customers are hanging out though. Classified ad sites are still a big part of the online world and you need to be posting on these sites to maximize your exposure. In most cases it doesn't even cost you a dollar (although you can upgrade or boost posts for a small fee to get greater exposure).

There aren't necessarily any tricks or tips to share here other than it is important to post about your services and include your business details, a nice image or video, an offer and a link to your website or landing page.

At the very least having a link from these sites to your website will help with link building for your website which is great for your SEO (search engine optimization) efforts.

We post in tons of classified ad sites and receive several bookings per week for our efforts. The great thing is that most of them remind you after 30 days when your ad is "expiring" and you can simply click to renew your listing.

The longer time that goes by your post will move down in the list as new listings are posted so it is a good idea to repost a new one every week or every other week to keep your business at the forefront in the view of potential customers.

Another great thing with these classified ad sites is that most of them offer upgrade options like highlighting your post, keeping it at the top, home page feature spots and more. These upgrades will come at a cost but usually it is minimal and can make the difference between 1-5 bookings a week and 10-20 so it's worth trying.

This chapter mentions Kijiji and Craigslist as those are two of the most popular however there are literally thousands of these sites online. Google your local area/city name + classified ads and you will see tons in Google.

Loyalty Cards

Loyalty card programs are a great way to generate extra business that encourages your customers to keep coming back and also shows new customers that you value loyalty and have considered the customer relationship with high priority at your business. Loyalty card programs help build trust between you and your customers to encourage them through rewards to keep using your services.

There are simple ways to track loyalty cards such as literally just printing some business cards and hole punching spots or getting a special stamp to stamp a series of loyalty card spots on each visit.

For a more modern and better way to do it you can do it online through software. For example the software app we created for our own shop, OrbisX allows us to track digitally customer visits and they are automatically rewarded by email with a voucher once the number of spots are punched off on their loyalty card.

Take a look at what our loyalty card tracking looks like in the OrbisX app:

Loyalty Card

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

✓

✓

FULL
EXTERIOR
WASH

Free exterior wash after 5 visits

Loyalty Rewards Earned

DATE EARNED	REWARD	STAMPS	ACTIONS
Apr 20th 2020	Free exterior wash after 7 visits	7	Redeemed
Apr 20th 2020	Free exterior wash after 7 visits	7	Mark Redeemed

We offer a free exterior wash after 5 visits right now. Before we offered the same thing after 7 visits but found 5 was the magic number for the appointments we have at our shop. Once the customer arrives for their booking and we check them in we check off the visit for them. Then after 5 visits they receive an email with the coupon details for the free exterior wash. When they show up for the free wash appointment we mark the voucher as redeemed in the OrbisX system.

We can change the reward received and the number of punch spots to unlock the reward all from the same software. We used to do this manually with printed cards but found this was better for the environment, faster, and offered a more professional setup as the customer receives an email with their voucher.

Benefits of a Great Reward System

- Stop competing on price
- Retain existing customers
- Increase customer lifetime value
- Build personal relationships
- Create brand advocates

If you are unsure what to give away think about some of the smaller upgrades. Doesn't have to be a huge thing, just something. Sometimes we give away Aquapel treatments for windshield glass. It costs us around \$4-6 but the value to the customer is \$35 (what we usually charge for it). Other ideas are things like leather conditioner, tire treatment, spray wax, air freshener etc.

One thing to note about reward programs is that it has been shown to be more effective and appreciated by customers when the reward is an actual item/product/service rather than just a percentage off. When customers think of getting a future percentage off they usually jump to the thought of "oh great, have to spend more money". When you offer a free product or service on a return visit they usually get more excited and plus when they come in to redeem the free item/service/product you can upsell them (and usually they upsell themselves) on getting something else at the same time.

Google Reviews

We are all aware of the elephant in the room. Google is the elephant. Reviews on Google are crucial and sway a lot of customer decisions. If you don't already have a Google Business Listing, go set one up now and read the chapter earlier in this book about GBLs (Google Business Listings).

If you are taking 10 jobs a week as an example and you do a stellar job and don't ask anyone for a Google review I can tell you exactly how many Google reviews you will get - zero.... well maybe 1... maybe. Using the same number, if you ask all ten customers for a review you will at best get 10 Google reviews but most likely you will get 3-5. This is great. This means that each week you can potentially get 15-25 Google reviews if working 5 days a week.

With the right software you can even automate this process so it is one less thing on your todo list but this is a super important thing for building trust with potential customers so you absolutely need to do this part. Either do it manually with an email to each customer or get setup with software for your business to automate this process. Our OrbisX software app we built for our shop (and now offer to detailers) does exactly this and our Google reviews are on autopilot now ever since. It's terrific.

Sometimes negative reviews happen. Sometimes they are completely unwarranted and wrong but that shouldn't deter you from going after Google reviews. You can always bury bad reviews with hundreds of positive ones and customers are pretty savvy now and seeing your reaction to a bad experience can actually lead to a sale. It's been proven by hundreds of studies that even negative reviews can encourage sales because customers see both sides and understand that shit happens.

What should I do if I get a negative review?

The simple answer is breathe deep. Stay calm. Respond politely, acknowledge their bad experience and reinforce that this is not normal and you want to make it right for them. Offer them a free cleaning to show them you can make it right. Most times they won't even take you up on the offer but you will look like a rock star in Google.

If someone leaves a negative review, for example saying that we missed something while cleaning their vehicle then we would write back something like this:

Hello Richard, we are sorry to hear about your experience. We take great pride in our work and if something was overlooked we would be more than happy to clean it for you. Give us a call at 613-212-0057 or book online and we will do a follow up cleaning at no charge. We have great reviews and hundreds of customers trust us with their vehicles each week. We definitely don't want to see yours fall through the cracks. We are here to resolve any issue, just reach out to us. If we don't know something happened we cannot fix it and we want every customer to be happy. Hope to hear from you soon :)

— The Team at Auto World

What should I do if I get a positive review?

Getting positive reviews are great. Don't ignore them either. Always respond, try to use the customer's name if you have it available and reference the service they received or anything they mention from their review. It is important to get Google reviews but it is just as important to reply to all reviews too.

When we get a positive review we reply right away and we always address something they said in the review so that each is unique and specific to that customer's experience.

So if someone says they really loved the phone staff, professionalism and the high quality detailed cleaning we gave their SUV then we would write back something like this:

Thank you Riley for your 5 star review and support. We are happy to hear about your great experience at Auto World. We strive to be the best and improve everyday to ensure SUVs like yours are clean and safe for your family. We have shared your feedback with our phone staff and they were smiling from ear to ear. We hope to see you again soon when your RAV4 needs another Auto World cleanup. Have a great weekend :)

— The Team at Auto World

Sometimes you will get a star rating with no review text. This happens and it's ok and you should definitely respond still even though there isn't much to go on. If a customer left us 5 stars with no feedback, our response would be much simpler and limited to something like this:

Thank you for your 5 star review & support :)

— The Team at Auto World

The takeaways from this chapter are that you should definitely be collecting and asking for Google reviews. Add them to your website also. Respond to all of them, good and bad. Use our examples to help craft responses to your reviews and automate your Google reviews with software such as OrbisX.

While this chapter focused on Google reviews, the same thing applies to Yelp, Facebook Recommendations and other review sites/platforms as well. Google is the big one but don't overlook the others either, especially if you are active on Facebook for example.

Gift Certificates

Many detailers focus on selling the products or services they offer right now, which is important as you need to service customers in this exact moment. While this is important, you also need to consider the sales you can generate from future work that will be performed at a later date.

This is where gift certificates come in and you should start offering them right away. When customers have a great experience, you can presell future services to the same customer, for an upcoming gift they want to get a friend or family member and definitely during the holidays.

You should consider making different gift certificate amounts and offering customers the ability to prepay now for a discount in the future. For example, after their cleaning they can purchase a \$150 gift certificate for only \$125 or something. Yes you will be taking a hit but you guarantee the money now and ensure they will come back. Then on their return visit I'm sure you can find a way to upsell them something to get back the initial loss.

At the very least pitch it to them if they know someone with a birthday coming up and offer your gift certificates as the perfect gift.

The second biggest mistake I see with businesses and gift cards next to not offering them at all is only offering higher dollar amounts. You do not need to make the gift certificate the amount of a package or service. In fact, you will see higher gift card sales if you don't do this because people may want a smaller gift for certain groups of people. For example, if you only offer gift certificates for your \$150 package, some customers may not be interested at all because the person they had in mind may consider this too much for the occasion. It is better to offer gift cards in multiples such as \$25, \$50, \$100, \$150, \$200, \$250, \$500. You will see a greater number of sales and sometimes gift cards are never even redeemed so why wouldn't you offer them.

When it comes to selling gift certificates you have many ways to tackle the issue. One way is to get printed cards with different values on them and a unique code or something so people can't reproduce them at home (sad but it happens). You can also get plastic cards printed with mag strip encoding.

Detailing Master Class

This is a good way to go if you have a shop with a POS system capable of using swipeable cards. The most convenient option of course is to offer them online through software or your CRM. This cuts down on costs as you don't have to print anything and also tackles any fraud issues as well. Plus then the money is paid online and goes straight into your account.

Whichever CRM you use is up to you and what makes sense at your shop. We built our own so that we had something built for detailers that did it all in one place and did it well. Our OrbisX software has gift certificate features for you to sell gift certificates, redeem gift certificates and even provides your customers the ability to customize their gift certificate online with a message for their recipient.

See an example of one of our gift certificates sold to a customer on the customize screen (with their information blacked out of course):



Customize Your Gift Certificate

Your Name

Recipient Name

Recipient Email

Short Message

[Send Gift Certificate](#)

Auto World Gift Certificate

From: John
To: Dad's Birthday
Message: Merry Christmas!!!!!! to the whole family, we wish we could be there but enjoy this gift card to our fav shop!
\$125
No cash value. To be redeemed at Auto World. No expiration.



Warranty System

Depending on the products and services you offer in your detailing business, this section may or may not apply. At our shop we offer ceramic coating, tinting and windshield replacements. Each of these comes with a warranty. Many shops out there just offer a verbal warranty and while they may live up to their warranty and honour warranty claims, your create a professional image and build trust in the customer when you have a formalized warranty system.

At our shop we have printed cards with unique warranty codes (generated from our CRM software) and this is given to the customer to activate their warranty online. For some services we even offer the warranty as an upgrade that they can purchase if they want an extended warranty etc. depending on the service/product. This means that our warranty system has now created an additional revenue stream for our business.

Even if you don't plan on selling warranties and will just offer them for free as part of the service or product, having a system in place to activate warranties and track warranty claims is extremely helpful and definitely makes your business look more established and professional.

Here is what our warranty cards look like:



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On the first side we have the customer's warranty code with instructions for activating their lifetime tinting warranty. On the backside we have post-service instructions and care instructions for their new tint. We have similar cards for our ceramic coating service as well. Our ceramic coating 3 year, 6 year and lifetime coatings are included with the service price and the cards and warranty system are used to provide authenticity, build trust and show the customer we are professional and stand by our work.

If there is an issue with some work performed, customers can submit a warranty claim from our website that goes right into our CRM software and then we can follow up and book an appointment to fix the issue. This helps us track our warranty claim stats also to see how many warranty issues we had each month, year etc.

Whether selling warranties as an upsell or including with the service price, a professional warranty system is a very good idea to setup if you plan on offering warranties as part of or as an upgrade with your services and products.

Upsells & Addons

There is a lot of money to be made in detailing. Loads. The key is either getting a lot of volume or increasing the ticket price of each booking. If you can accomplish both you are going to crush it.

At our shop we chose to go for volume because we had the space and the right software to manage the whole show, plus a great team of course. So we aim for 18-26 jobs per day which has been achievable in our area within the first year of business. We entice customers in with fast and affordable top quality service. Once in the door we focus on upsells and cross-selling.

This means that we inspect the vehicle with the client and make suggestions about different things to add on to their service such as Aquapel window treatment, leather seat conditioning, spray ceramic or even full ceramic coating. We also took some time to think about the additional services and products to offer that would go hand-in-hand with our existing offerings. For example, we added tinting as a service because it pairs well with detailing. If someone comes in for a tinting we pitch them on a detailing at the same time. If a customer arrives for a detailing and their windows are not tinted we pitch them on tinting. If they are already tinted we pitch them on paint protection film or chrome delete or spray ceramic coating etc.

Take some time to think about your existing services and the possible products and services you can add as an upsell or addon during a booking. Make a giant list of all of the things you offer. Then look for what can be paired onto a service and decide on an upsell price.

It may not seem like much at first but if you find an addon that brings in an extra \$20 per booking then you just generated an extra \$2000 for every 100 times you upsell or add this on. The key is finding 2 or 3 per package, service etc. so that customers have choices and give them a bundle discount if they choose all 3 to turn your upsells into hyper-drive. If you don't ask then it will be rare that a booking goes beyond the initial ticket price. Don't be pushy but find a natural way to bring it up with the customer during the initial assessment like "hey, I could also do this to make the car really shine!" etc.

Capture Emails, Everytime!

As the famous hockey player Wayne Gretzky said, "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take". This is true for email addresses also. If you don't ask for them then you won't get them. Email addresses are crucial because while phone numbers change, emails rarely do. Plus email is cheap, fast, and reliable.

Email marketing has stood the test of time and is one of the most effective ways to build stronger customer relationships, and grow your business revenue. Once you have plenty of subscribers in your email list, you can start sending out emails to them using an email marketing software such as MailChimp, OneSignal or similar. If you need help deciding or setting these up, we can help just shoot us an email to support@orbisx.ca

Email works because email is personal. When customers use your business they have now started a personal relationship and when you send them a message they will read it and more importantly they are likely to take action.

You do still have to be smart about what you email them. The best thing to do is provide some value or something irresistible. Think beyond the "Save 20% this weekend only" and similar type of promos that appear spammy.

From our experience what seems to work is sending a tip or info about maintaining their vehicle and then including an offer or call-to-action in the email as well. This way it doesn't come across as just a sales email because you are providing value with a sales pitch. It is important to always include a sales pitch though because you should always be selling - it's a business.

An email list is often compared with the number of followers in social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. but there's a huge difference. The respective companies, not you actually own the followers. The way you can communicate with followers can change with the changes in their policies.

But you own your email list. Having a mailing list means guaranteed access to the inbox of thousands of customers.

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Another important note about email marketing is that you can track your results and performance. You can track things like open rates, click rates, unsubscribes etc. After you send your email campaigns, analyze the performance of your emails, and improve them further.

It is important to keep up on the privacy laws and anti-spam laws in your region to avoid getting in hot water but a general rule of thumb seems to be that if they have requested you contact them by signing up or you have emailed them before through part of your service then you are in the clear.

Local Business Partnerships

Most of your customers will come from a certain radius around your business. Even if you are a mobile provider, there will still be limits to how far you are willing to travel (before charging surcharges). This means that your advertising should be focused within your local area as much as possible.

With online marketing channels you can set specific radius zones and geographic demographics to help limit your ad spend to areas where you are more likely to convert leads into customers. With offline methods you can do similar local focusing with things like handing out flyers, direct-mail marketing etc. but another great way is to pop in to local businesses and setup local business partnerships.

Local businesses have customers with vehicles. These are your perfect customers because that is literally the first requirement for auto detailers. By cherry-picking businesses you want to partner with you can in a way determine the type of customers you are likely to receive as referrals.

Local partnerships with other businesses around you are a great way to harness the strengths and abilities of others from different corners of your business ecosystem. Referral agreements are one of the most strategic ways for you to scale with innovation and solve complex challenges such as tapping into new customer demographics.

There are many ways that these local partnerships can exist and function from simple, informal agreements to "spread the word" about each others' businesses and services to more formal arrangements with commission payments or profit sharing for referrals.

At our shop, we have partnered with some local hair salons and barbershops for example so customers can get their vehicles detailed while they are at their hair appointment. We pick up their vehicle and return it clean. We chose higher end salons to work with because we wanted to tap into their customers with luxury vehicles. The ticket price is usually double what we charge and 30% is paid to the hair salon. While we may not get a ton of volume compared to our dealership accounts, the extra customers are great!

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Additionally we have partnerships with some local mechanics and stereo installers. These are services we do not offer and we receive requests for referrals to good providers by our customers. It helps to have a list of approved providers you can provide customers with and we have even gone a step further to get some business cards from the partnership businesses so we can give the card to our customer and write our name on the back so they know that we sent the referral. It starts off slow but after these partnership businesses see that we are sending them referrals, they start to push our services and reciprocate.

A last note is that you should not discount "competitors". There are going to be shops or mobile guys that are outside of your zone or area. It is a good idea to talk with them and setup a partnership to send each other referrals for customers that ask for detailing but fall outside of your service zone.

This can be mutually beneficial and in the end the customer is left with a good feeling about your business because you helped them find the solution to their problem, even though you weren't the one that helped them with the service.

This is a good idea in general because if that customer knows someone in your area looking for detailing they will likely refer you because you were helpful even when it meant you weren't going to financially gain from the help. Essentially it is a win-win-win scenario.

Start tonight and make a list of businesses around you and within your service area. At this point don't focus on the type, size, or customers of the businesses. It is important to build a big general list. The next step will be to filter, group and sort these businesses by the type of customers you can receive, likelihood of customers to be referred and the frequency as well as the ticket price and type of vehicles you will receive.

From these groups you can now prioritize the ones you will go see first and also the type of partnership you will be requesting - either an informal "let's help each other" or a more formalized commission or profit-sharing model of partnership.

Car Dealerships

This is a topic that raises a lot of mixed emotions and opinions in the detailing world. Some detailers love dealership contracts and others hate them. Their reasons vary and some are valid while others are solely based on a single experience. Don't miss out on the benefits of dealership accounts because of someone else's opinion. At the very least find out for yourself and consider the following story about our experience with dealership accounts.

We have been working with dealerships ever since our second month of business. The relationship with each dealership is different yet shares some similarities because of how we setup the relationships.

Some dealerships send us less than 10 cars a month and others send us 2-5 cars a day. We offer a flat rate for dealerships which means that sometimes we lose or break even and other times we make bank. Sometimes they send us a car that looks like it was already cleaned. We give it the once over quickly and send the invoice over. Our offer with dealerships is a pre-sale and post-sale cleaning.

The pre-sale cleaning includes the engine bay with an interior and exterior clean to get the vehicle ready for test-drives and photos. We do not include wax, spray ceramic, paint protection or other addons. These can be purchased and sometimes they are but not included with the pre/post sale deal we have with them. The post-sale cleaning is offered before delivery to the customer. This gets the car ready by cleaning the mess created during test-drives. Our pricing varies based on the dealership volume. Some dealers pay a lot less because of the volume they send us while others pay more with less volume of course.

If you are solely focused on the cleaning side for the dealership then the margins will definitely be lower although the benefit is you will have a steady stream of revenue during slower periods. This can be great to stay busy all year long however there is a better way to setup dealership accounts.

We take dealership accounts a step beyond this basic setup and it generates a steady stream of cash flow.

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We do make money on the dealership pre/post cleans. We make a lot more money on the other side of the sale. We do this in two ways as outlined below:

Dealership Upsells

Dealerships are always looking to make more money. We offer a variety of services that customers may be interested in and dealerships can offer your services under their name, sold by their sales staff for a premium fee. The dealership makes money on the job, sends you the work and the customer thinks the dealership did the work. We do this with tinting, paint protection film, ceramic coating, wraps, chrome delete and more. We made flyers with dealership pricing for them to offer their customers and there is a 100% markup so the dealership makes good money for simply completing the sale.

Take a look at our dealership sales flyer:

ABBOUDI'S
REPAIR & COLES
143 Montréal Rd,
Vanier, ON K1L 6E8
613-695-7253
www.aboudisauto.com

PAINT PROTECTION FILM (PPF)

BASIC \$799	STANDARD \$1399	ULTIMATE \$3499	FULL BODY \$8999

Paint Protection Film Keeps Your Car's Finish Looking New

From rural roads that wind through the countryside to parking lots and bumper-to-bumper traffic on the highway, your car carries you through life like a champ. If you want to protect your vehicle from the scuffs, abrasions, dents and chips that can happen at any time, it's time to protect your investment with the most durable and efficient paint protection film on the market.

CERAMIC COATINGS

**PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS
LONG-LASTING BEAUTY WITH MINIMAL MAINTENANCE**

Both semi-permanent & permanent coatings available that actually become the functional surface of your vehicle's paintwork by creating an inseparable bond on a molecular level with your paintwork you get a coating that cannot be washed off like a sealant.

PRO 6 YEARS \$1799	DIAMOND LIFETIME \$2999	INTERIOR & UPHOLSTERY Stain Protection for Leather, Vinyl, Carpet and Fabric \$899

System X Pro
Model Year
0-2 Years Old - 6 Year Warranty
3 Years Old or Older - 4 Year Warranty

System X Diamond
Model Year
0-2 Years Old - LIFETIME WARRANTY
3 Years Old or Older - 8 Year Warranty

Full warranty details available at the time of application and registration of the warranty.

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CUSTOM VINYL WRAPS

MATTE, GLOSS, SATIN, TEXTURES,
BRUSHED METAL, CHROME

FULL WRAP
FROM \$3699

We offer a wide range of choices for your vehicle wraps with an extensive selection of colours in both glossy and matte. The process is pretty simple, you simply choose the colour and/or texture you want and leave the rest to our highly trained custom vinyl wrap installers. Equip your car with one or more of the many colours to give your vehicle a customized look that also offers protection from weather related elements.

WINDOW TINTING

LIFETIME WARRANTY
Ceramic and regular tint available
5%, 18%, 35%, 55%, 70%

COUPE/SEDAN \$449	SUV/TRUCK/VAN \$499	EYEBROW \$99	2 WINDOWS \$199

Post-Sale Cleaning Upsells

The second way we capitalize on dealership customers is by the after sales follow up with the customer. The post-cleaning service is offered to the customer as part of the sales process and they essentially are given a voucher to come in with an appointment to get the car cleaned for free after purchasing from the dealership.

When they arrive we assess the vehicle with them and offer some additional services if they want to add them on during the appointment. This is the chance to A) introduce the customer to your business and B) upsell them on something in addition to the free cleaning they have already scheduled.

It is true that some dealerships don't want you interacting with their customers at all. You have two options in this case. Drop them and find other dealerships that do want to work with you under your terms or work with them anyways and even though you won't see the customer directly as the dealer will handle the post-sale cleaning with you. This is ok as you can still make money (just not a boat load) off the cleanings and you can also work on getting them to upsell your services/products on their side using the dealership upsell methods mentioned before this section.

Working with dealerships is relationship management and you can always adjust or modify your deal with them over time. The longer they use your services, the more comfortable they are and the greater the level of trust so you will become increasingly more in a solid bargaining position as time progresses.

So I'm sure you can see the reasons why dealership accounts can be an area of very different opinions among detailers. Don't worry about it. Do what makes sense for you and you have to try and see for yourself. Plus don't judge one dealership experience with the next one or you could miss out on a serious opportunity.

Adding Services As You Grow

In this section we will examine how you can generate more money from your detailing business as you grow. To increase the money you make, you need to keep in mind the main principals of how a business can make more money. There are 3 main ways to make money with your business.

1. Increase the number of customers you have
2. Increase the dollars spent per customer
3. Increase the frequency that customers use your business

The best thing you can do as your business grows is add more services and products. If you are only detailing/cleaning right now then it is a good idea to add ceramic coating. If you can find a tinter or learn to tint then you can add that service as well. There are hundreds of complimentary products and services that you can add to your business and this will be the fastest way to increase your revenue because you will be able to upsell, cross-sell and attract new customers too as well as get existing customers to come back more often for other services.

Imagine you only offer cleaning and detailing services. This means that to increase your revenue and grow you will need to increase the frequency of your customer repeat bookings and take on a lot of new customers to do more bookings each day. The best option is to add more services and offerings to your lineup while simultaneously increasing booking frequency and attracting new customers.

In comparison to just offering one service (interior & exterior cleaning), imagine now that you offer detailing, paint correction, ceramic coating, tinting, chrome delete, taillight tinting, paint protection film, wraps, windshield replacement etc. Now each customer you acquire is almost like acquiring 10 customers at once because that one customer can buy 10 different things during an appointment or throughout the year. This is how we are setup at our shop, so when a customer books a cleaning with us we have a wide range of things to sell them on during their appointment. Adding services as your business grows can magnify your results in ways you couldn't have imagined so you should always be thinking about what's next.

Local Charities & Publicity

Giving back to your community is always a good thing. Giving back doesn't have to mean that you can't benefit at the same time. Giving back is still giving back and never feel bad about getting publicity as a result of doing philanthropic deeds. We give back to many charities and organizations.

Some of the charities and organizations we help have platforms, followers and networks that can benefit us as well with publicity and social posts and we take advantage of this exposure every chance we can get.

Recently we were approached by a charity that helps with moving costs for abused women and children. They are on an extremely tight budget as they don't receive any funding from the government. We helped them out with a donation for their charity event to be auctioned off to raise money. I asked the organizer for a photo from the event, social media post and a mention at the event as well as permission to post about the event and our contribution on our social media pages.

The auction was 4 months away so we were able to get several months of social publicity out of the contribution we made to help their cause. The contribution was also a tax write-off and felt good at the same time.

Similarly, we donated some items and services to a soon to be Olympian for the Canadian bobsled team. In exchange we received a logo spot printed on the bobsled for the Olympics as well as several months of social media exposure. The social media attracted a lot of attention and built a lot of trust in our brand. We utilized this exposure to push one of our cleaning promos and we highlighted the fact that we were one of the official sponsors and contributed to the team of athletes with donations to help support their training efforts.

You may or may not get the same opportunity for some prestigious exposure like this but either way the principal is the same. Reach out to local charities and organizations to see if there is something you can help with and in return use your contribution to generate exposure for your business.

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Take a look at the bobsled picture (our logo may be small but it's there) near the front is our Auto World logo. The point wasn't to gain exposure from seeing it on the bobsled necessarily as they travel too fast for that to be relevant. Rather we used it as social proof that it is real and promoted on Facebook with the post image like the second image.



You Need the Right Software

In the following chapters we will focus on getting your detailing business super organized, streamlined and automated. The right software is the heart of your business and will determine how well things are managed. Additionally the right software needs to automate some of your marketing and business tasks so that you can focus on other areas of your business without neglecting important things like asking customers for Google reviews or to book a repeat appointment. Similarly and often overlooked in the beginning is reporting which is crucial to making business development and growth decisions.

There are many software platforms out there - believe me we tried them all, literally over 40 different software platforms. Some were absolutely horrible, others were ok but missing some key features and some were feature-packed but difficult to use. The majority of them you could tell were designed by techies and not detailers or worse were designed with features detailers would need but coded like a chimpanzee was behind the keyboard.

All of this is to say that the only solution we found in the beginning was a combination of different softwares and apps that came close to getting the job done. There were still tons of missing features and complex, cumbersome programs we had to try and make work for our shop. Fortunately I have a background in coding and business development having built and sold some companies (including software) and at the time of writing this currently own 6 companies that have been around for 10+ years. The solution was to build our own CRM and we did. The software has played such an integral role in the growth and success of our shop. The time came when we had some friends who owned shops in other cities ask if they could use it too because it was exactly what they needed too.

This was the lightbulb moment that we had created the perfect CRM for detailers and tinters to run their businesses. So we packaged it up and called it OrbisX.

Orbis meaning sphere (Latin) + Suffix: X often added to pluralize nouns (French). OrbisX covers 360 degrees of your business (sphere).

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This is not a shameless plug to sell our software. Yes our software is available for monthly subscriptions and we generously offer extended trials for people to check it out. The fact of the matter is that we want you to succeed in detailing and the right software makes one of the biggest impacts for your business. If OrbisX is right for you and I believe it will be then great. If not that's ok too, just make sure you get some software to solve as many problems or time-consuming tasks for your business to truly succeed.

Now you know the why, let me explain what the OrbisX CRM does so you can understand why this software is a game-changer.

The software we created does all the usual stuff you would expect such as:

- Booking calendar
- No-show stats
- Estimates & online signatures
- Invoicing & payments
- Expenses & receipt management
- Reporting & charts
- Appointment reminders (email & SMS)
- Automated Google reviews
- Gift certificates

The big difference is that it does all the usual stuff better. The system is extremely user-friendly and simple to use. Now on to the features that make OrbisX perfect for you as a detailer.

Your Calendar and Daily Goals

Your calendar is one of the most importantly elements for your business because you are managing appointments and bookings. There are many different ways to display booking information and we have found that the most effective display is the monthly overview. If you click on a day you get the daily list and you can mark jobs complete, flag no-shows, add notes etc.

One thing that sets our calendar apart and makes it super efficient for running a business is that you can see the total of shop vs mobile jobs as shown circled in red along with the daily \$ total and the daily hours required.

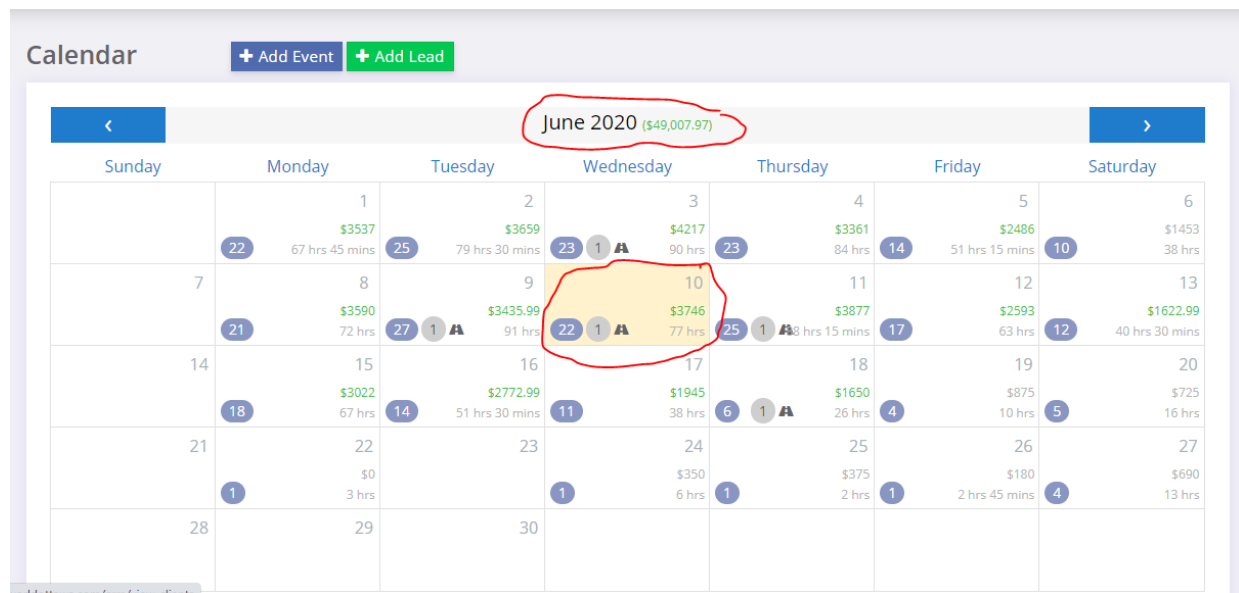
Detailing Master Class

The hours calculated in the screenshot below show the total job hours for all of our staff and if we need to see a specific staff member's calendar we have that option as well and the numbers update to reflect the staff member's schedule.

The other key feature is the dollar amount next to the month label. This is grey by default and turns green when the monthly goal is met. Similarly for the day values, the daily goal is grey until the daily \$ amount is met.

At our shop we are open 6 days a week (Mon-Sat) and our daily goal is \$1500. The formula for the monthly goal is simply the daily goal x the number of days we are open each month.

You can see all of this in a snapshot in this screenshot:

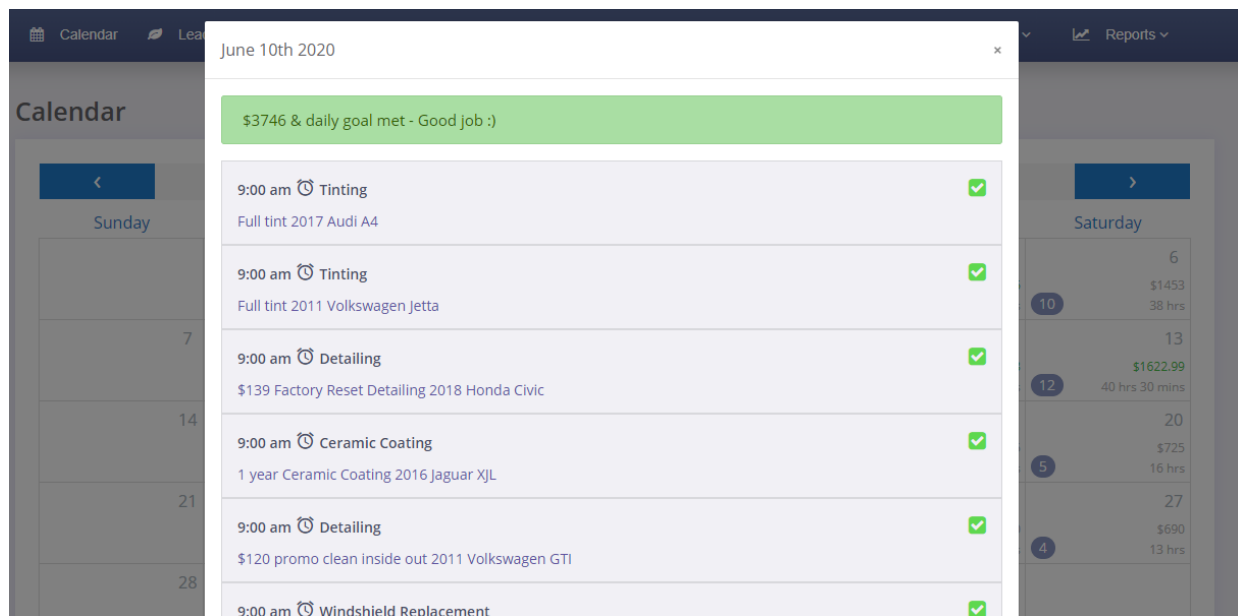


It is extremely important to set daily and monthly goals. As your business grows you need to increase these goals to encourage more growth. When we started our daily goal was \$200. Then it went to \$500 as we consistently hit the \$200 mark. Then it went to \$1000 and now \$1500 one year later.

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The second advantage of the daily goal numbers is that our booking staff can see in a split-second which days to book appointments for so that we can properly spread out jobs and not overload days that already have hit our daily goal.

Clicking on a day reveals the daily list of jobs. Each can be clicked on for more details as well to add notes, mark complete (as these have been in the screenshot) and mark no-shows etc. If you mark a job as a no-show it will show an icon in red and will add the no-show count to the client's profile so you know later if the client wants to book another appointment.



Automation & Artificial Intelligence

You have a lot to do in a day. The more you can automate the better. We found that we were spending a lot of time confirming appointments, sending appointment reminders and even cancelling some appointments. So we built these features into the OrbisX software so that these tasks could now be automated.

When you create a new booking the customer receives an email (if you have it) and a text message. Before the appointment the customer receives another notice asking them to confirm their appointment. If they confirm their appointment then it shows a "confirmed" icon next to the appointment

Detailing Master Class

They also receive a reminder before their appointment to ensure they show up and don't forget. If the customer can't make it and has to cancel they can click the link in the reminder email or confirmation email. This will bring them to a cancellation page where they can specify the reason and it will automatically cancel the appointment for you. One cool feature (if you choose to use it) is that you can offer retention offers for each service. So if someone chooses to cancel a detailing appointment you can make them an offer on that screen saying a special offer you define. For example "Keep your appointment and save 10%". If they keep the appointment then it adds the retention offer into the notes. We also built anti-fraud features here so that if someone tries to do that in the future just to get the discount it will not show them the retention off the next time.

So after your customer confirms on their own, is reminded and shows up for the booking and you do the work you will mark the job complete. Then the next day the customer is automatically asked for a Google review.

All of this is done for you to save you time and create an exceptional customer experience.

Additionally to create more bookings, the OrbisX system has artificial intelligence built into the booking calendar system to reach out to past customers. The system scans the calendar for slow days based on criteria and rules you specify and will reach out to past customers at various intervals you define to get more bookings for you while you sleep, work or do whatever. It's like a 24/7 sales person.

You can choose the days to suggest, define what is a "slow day" and even have different rules for each service you offer.

Loyalty Cards

We touched on the benefits of loyalty cards in an earlier chapter dedicated to the benefits of loyalty cards and the great news is that the OrbisX software has loyalty cards built-in so you can easily reward customers for their business and you can completely customize the offer and the number of visits required for the reward.

Warranty System

We offer warranties with some of our services such as ceramic coating, tinting and windshield replacement at our shop. We needed a professional system for managing and validating warranties. The OrbisX system has a full warranty system and you can even generate your own warranty codes right from the software and customers can activate them online (or you can activate them for them).

The warranty will then show up on their customer profile and if the customer happens to have a warranty claim, they can submit their warranty claim online. This allows you to track warranty claims so that you know how many claims you handle and you can look at the claim history anytime. The warranty claim system even provides the option to deny or approve claims and add notes and details.

Overall the warranty system creates a professional image for your business and since warranties are so important to customers, you can separate yourself from the less professional shops that only offer verbal warranties.

Retention Offers

Cancellations happen. Sometimes it's because they found a better price or offer and other times it's because things have popped up in the customer's calendar creating a conflict. We experienced all of this at our shop and have created a retention system to reduce the number of cancellations.

How it works is that a customer will receive an appointment reminder or confirmation and realize they cannot make it anymore. They click the cancel link and are taken to the retention page saying sorry you can't make it but if you find a way and can keep your appointment here is a special offer just for you. If they accept, the special offer is added to the notes on their appointment. If they decline it simply follows the rest of the cancellation steps asking for the reason they are cancelling and then removing the appointment from your calendar. Cancelled appointments still show up on the customer profile so you can see their full appointment history though.

Timeclock & Payroll

You may work by yourself right now or you may have several employees on your team. If you are a one-man show, you need to think about the future of your business and the challenges you will face with managing staff time and payroll. If you already have employees then you are likely familiar with some of these challenges already.

We grew quickly and managing staff time and payroll became a necessity very fast. We built a full-feature timeclock to solve this issue with a tablet on the wall that staff punch in/out and clock breaks with each day.

The timeclock tracks their work time, break time, sick days, vacation days and even calculates weekly and monthly totals so that our payroll department just has to issue checks and confirm details from time to time.

This has been an absolute life-saving feature for us and with real-time tracking it will make expanding and managing your team headache-free.

Progress Reports

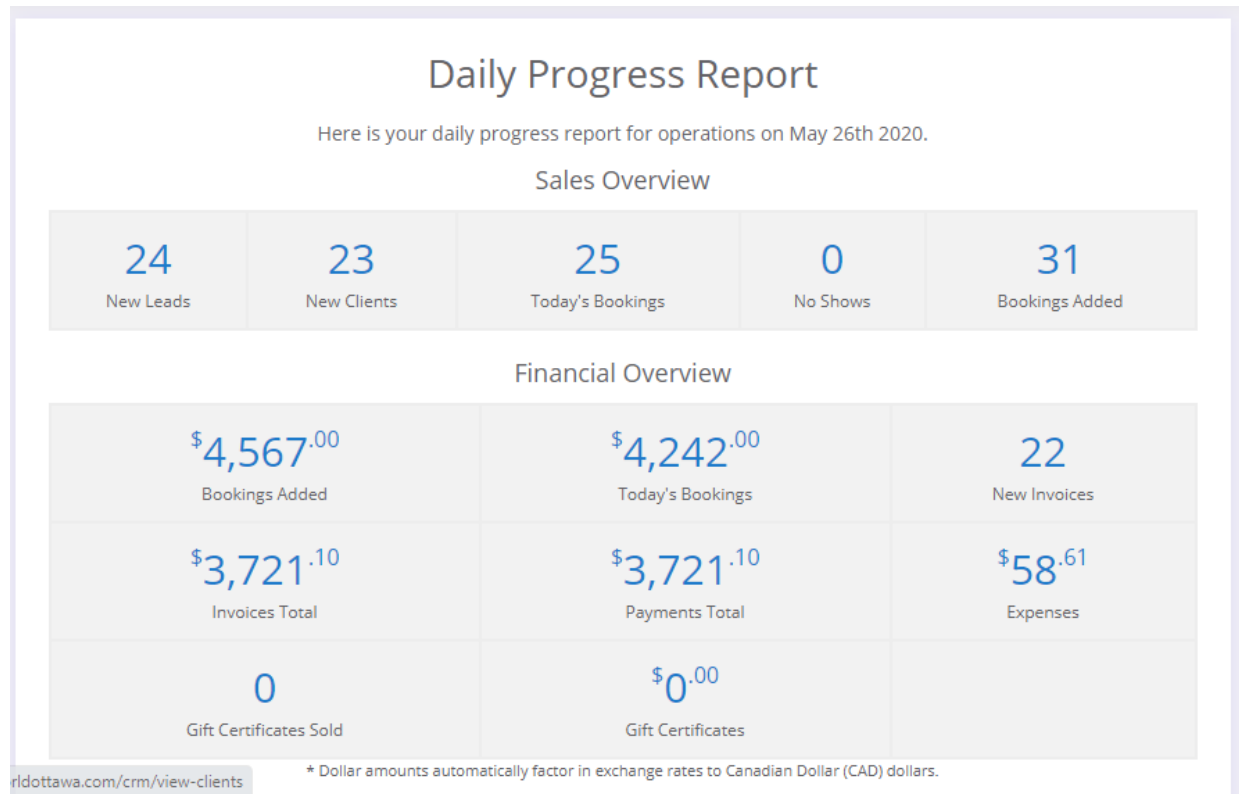
There are many reports we assess for our business in order to improve, streamline and grow. Personally, I look forward to the daily and weekly reports the most. These quick snapshots give a total overview of the daily and weekly operations for key metrics such as the number of bookings, dollar amount of bookings, invoices, gift certificates sold, payments, expenses and even the total dollar value of new bookings added on a particular day etc.

These reports help us to keep on track, give us a general overview of the company's financials as well as giving us some insight into the future by keeping track of the number of bookings added and the dollar amounts for bookings added.

The weekly reports are the same metrics just calculated for the week of course and through the OrbisX CRM you can manually access these reports anytime and even go back in time by selecting specific dates to view.

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Here is a preview of one of the daily snapshots at our shop:



These are emailed to you automatically every night and the weekly ones are emailed every Sunday so you can keep a close eye on your business and the key metrics every detailing business owner NEEDS to know.

Inventory Management

Some detailers have a lot of products and others have a more streamlined list of chemicals and products they use for their detailings. Either way, you need to keep track of your inventory and get in the habit of doing so. If you are working alone right now it may be easier to keep track of which equipment broke, which chemicals need a top up etc. but you need to plan for the future growth of your business. When you have several employees like our shop you can't rely on a piece of equipment being in the same condition you last saw it or chemicals to be replaced or you notified by staff when things need a top up or refill unless you have an inventory management system in place.

Detailing Master Class

We have a lot of volume at our shop and we have streamlined our processes to the point that our turnaround and high quality depend on having fully functioning tools and equipment and a sufficient amount of product and chemicals on hand. It may seem overkill but we do inventory reports every Wednesday and Sunday. Most of the time the inventory check tells us that everything is just fine. However sometimes there are 1-2 products that need to be ordered or a piece of equipment like our Tornador is broken and needs to be fixed/replaced etc.

Our software app, OrbisX has a built-in inventory management system that takes only minutes to go through our entire tool, equipment and product line to complete. Days without issue nothing happens. Days where there are some things that management has to deal with, we receive an email highlighting the products or tools that have issues with notes. It is a very good habit to get into and helps to ensure that your business is operating at peak performance. It's like checking the oil in your car and your windshield washer fluid. As detailers we encourage customers to regularly maintain the vehicle and we need to follow our own advice for regular maintenance in regards to our detailing businesses.

Here is what the inventory system looks like for taking inventory:

The screenshot displays the 'Chemicals Inventory' interface. It features a list of five products, each with a status selection area (Good, Low, Empty) and a notes field. The 'Good' status is selected for all products shown. The products and their last update dates are:

- Butter Wet Wax** (hide notes): Last updated Feb 25th 2020
- Cherry Shine** (hide notes): Last updated May 27th 2020
- Diablo Wheel Cleaner** (hide notes): Last updated Feb 25th 2020
- Exterior Hulk** (hide notes): Last updated Feb 25th 2020
- Fabric Cleaner** (hide notes): Last updated Mar 17th 2020

Creating the inventory report is easy. Simply pull up the app on your phone, walk around your shop or go through your van and check off if chemicals are good, low, or empty and add any notes needed. Then do the same for the equipment section to mark items good, broken, or having an issue.

Items that are low, empty, broken or have an issue will be emailed in a list with notes to the management admins in the OrbisX software. This way my staff can quickly do the inventory check and I only have to step in and take action for items that have issues or need to be ordered again.

POS System

Not all detailers sell products, but they should. At our shop we sell mostly services and we do sell some products ranging from wipers to bottles of tire shine so that customers can keep their tires shined up for summer in between detailing appointments.

The software we use has a Point of Sale (POS) feature with a barcode scanner function. We add items to our POS inventory by scanning the barcode and entering the quantity on hand. Then when we upsell these products to customers we simply scan the barcode when creating an invoice and the product is added to the invoice as a new line item.

If you don't sell products right now, you should definitely look into adding some products to your business for sale and push them as upsells. Customers like to take care of their car, that's why they came to you in the first place. Offering them something extra can increase your sales revenue and it's very easy to do. Think about things you can offer your customers based on the services you offer. Such things as ceramic coating reloads, air fresheners, wipers, Aquapel window treatments, tire shine, vinyl dressings, window cleaners etc. Don't worry about selling them things they can use to clean their own car with because people will always pay for someone else to do it. These product sales are just little helpers along the way in between appointments.

I encourage you to sit down and think about the different things you can sell as addons with your detailing services.

Training Center

The time will come when you need to hire people, or more people. It is important to make sure that you can get your new team members trained and ready to go quickly and most important, properly. We have a very specific method at Auto World and our training center which is built into our OrbisX CRM software allows us to easily and quickly get new staff trained up on our way of doing things.

You can upload training docs, videos, audio and more right into the software so new employees can go through the training on how you want things done at your business. This helps your company grow and ensures that everyone is on the same page delivering the quality you expect.

Overall the OrbisX system has everything you need to manage, optimize and grow your detailing business. While we didn't spend a lot of time discussing features such as invoicing and reporting, all of these features are included and extremely easy to use. Everything from online payments to SMS text marketing has been developed to streamline and optimize a detailing shop.

And the OrbisX CRM has soo much more to offer with many more features being developed. The features we built focused around solving problems we faced at our shop and new features keep being developed and improved based on issues we face at our shop as well as those suggested by our subscribers.

Regardless of the software you choose to setup, make sure that it is something that can grow with your business. If you are mobile right now, plan ahead for the day you have a shop. If you work by yourself at the moment, plan for the day you have staff. Your business needs to grow. If you aren't growing you're contracting. There is no middle ground because the worst thing you can be in business is the same. Reason being is that thinking your business can simply maintain with the exact same customers is a false sense of security. All it would take in that instance is someone new to come around offering something better or different and not your customers will vanish sending your business into decline. Your software needs to help manage but also foster and encourage growth.

Manage Your Inventory

In the previous section we discussed how to do your inventory reports for both your chemicals and tools/equipment and in this section we will discuss common inventory problems.

To effectively run your detailing business you need chemicals, tools and equipment. There are thousands of products, tools, gimmicks and more for sale to detailers and it is easy to get carried away purchasing everything under the sun. Be careful and save your cash. You don't need everything and it is better to buy things in increments as you grow. Don't purchase when you can afford to and instead purchase when you can't afford not to.

When we started out we were brand new to detailing as a business. We had detailed our own vehicles but this is not the same as detailing as a business.

After spending thousands of dollars on products we ended up not using, not liking or finding were not effective, I can tell you the best thing you can do is buy slowly and have a reason for each purchase.

We have now streamlined to a few key pieces of equipment and chemicals that work for us. Depending on your services, customer demographics and the work you do, the chemicals and tools may differ significantly from what we use.

It is important not to go cheap on certain things such as an extractor. You will want a high grade commercial unit that gets hot fast, has a vacuum that can suck up anything, is easy to clean etc. For us, we even paid \$300 more to buy from a local supplier because they offer a temporary loaner should our extractor ever need service. Fortunately that hasn't been an issue but it's nice to know that if our machine stops working for some reason our detailing won't stop for the day and instead we would only suffer about an hour downtime. These are the kinds of things you should keep in mind when you are building your inventory of products and tools.

Detailing Master Class

Another tool that one of our detailers loves is the Tornador. We have two of the official ones on hand at all times plus 3 of the cheap units we bought off Amazon to have as backups in case our primary ones fail.

We purchase extra backups for most of our inventory, especially the ones that get heavy usage and take a beating in a commercial environment.

Similarly with our chemicals and other items like clay bars and products only available in smaller bottles. We purchase multiple at a time to save on shipping, delivery time and to have backups. We try to purchase most items in large volume in big tanks that are fed into our dilution machine so it automatically mixes the right dilution for our spray bottles. This allows us to save time and money while staying organized. You can see our product mixer below which also has convenient racks for exterior washes so we keep the mixer rack in our wet bay (we have 2 dry bays and 1 wet bay).



Your success in your business will depend on many factors and one of them is time. You need to be efficient and be able to pump out jobs quickly.

Detailing Master Class

In order to be very efficient, fast and productive you will need to have sufficient product on hand and know exactly where it is located so you can grab it quickly. We have accomplished record times while maintaining our high level of quality partly because of our cleaning process and mostly due to streamlining our chemicals and tools while ensuring that our inventory is topped up at all times and tools are functioning properly. For the occasions that a tool malfunctions we have backups ready or in the case of our extractor, one will be on the way from our loaner agreement with our local supplier.

To manage all of our inventory we use software as mentioned in the previous chapter about OrbisX and software. Our inventory checks are performed on Wednesdays and Sundays to make sure that everything is in tip-top shape.

If you are just starting out, purchase things as you need them and get a few things to try out but don't buy everything under the sun and don't buy in bulk until you know you like the product and that it works for your business.

If you have been running your shop for some time, take a close look at what you are using and assess what you truly need, what can be used for two things instead of having two separate products to do one task. The time saved may only be a minute or two here and there for using, ordering, refilling, applying etc. but when thinking about volume as you grow those minutes add up fast.

If you can save yourself 30 minutes a day doing somethings a little differently then you will be saving 120 hours per year. Plus keeping your inventory topped up and equipment functioning will make your shop run headache free and your capabilities will be at 100% every day. It only takes us around 5-10 minutes to do our inventory check for one person and 2-3 minutes with two people. This minor investment in time twice a week easily yields a huge return on time saved. Even just catching a minor problem ahead of time can prevent a major problem later. This happened to us when one of our Tornadors had an issue with the connection between the bottle and the trigger mount metal piece. If this went unchecked it would have broken and a replacement would have been around \$300 (we have the black versions). Since we caught it early we were able to fix it in 10 minutes with \$11.97 worth of parts.

Be Fast and then Faster

It's important to do a good job. In fact it's the most important thing for you as a service provider. In this chapter I'll be focusing on how to become fast and why it's important however this isn't the case for every detailer. You need to first take a look at your goals and clearly define your business objectives and the type of business you want to build.

Most of the time people just jump into business, start doing the work and don't think about the type of business they are building. I own several companies and got into detailing on purpose and with a purpose. We had the space already, we just weren't sure what we wanted to do with it and we took time to build Auto World by design. Not everyone is going to be in this position however we are all in the same position that we have 24 hours in a day and the reality is that I spend some of those hours every day assessing my businesses to make sure we stay on track and we are constantly working towards reaching our goals. That doesn't mean just reaching financial targets, this means creating the kind of company culture, customer experience and business infrastructure that supports and cultivates our goals.

If you want to only take on luxury vehicles and prepare cars for showrooms and storage and take care of every spec of dust from headliner to undercarriage over several days then go for it - that's terrific but the majority of detailers will not fall into this demographic and we chose not to go this route on purpose. We have deliberately chosen our demographic and we know our customers inside and out - probably better than they know themselves. We want volume. We want daily drivers. We want the average Joe and Jill.

Do we detail some high end 6 and even 7 figure cars? Yes.

Do we spend more time on these and use a different process? Yes.

Is this our goal and do we target these customers? No, but it happens because we are so good.

When you focus on volume as we do you need to be good but also fast as lightning. The misconception out there is that more time = better quality.

Detailing Master Class

There are some instances where you can't cut corners and in these cases more time does in fact equate to better quality however there are hundreds of ways you can become more efficient, faster and still produce high quality details.

Since people love lists, here is a quick list of the ways to get faster:

- Move faster and hire help
- Reduce the number of products you use
- Get the right equipment
- Practice and time yourself
- Redefine what's included
- Focus on what matters most

The first way to get faster is by timing yourself and simply adding in a little extra hustle. It is in fact a race. You need to move faster so that you can do more details. This can only get you so far of course because you can't push your body to the limit every day forever. So the next step is to get help and hire someone as soon as your volume warrants it. Use software like we have discussed in the previous section on the right software so that you can upload training videos to help get new employees up-to-speed quickly following the exact methods and processes you establish for your business.

The next step to increasing your speed is to reduce the number of products you use for each detail. You will still need some specialized products on hand for certain issues but for most details you will only need 3-4 products for the entire detailing. If you have 10 products, try and reduce it to 8 and then 7 and then 5. This will reduce your costs as well as remove some unnecessary steps in most cases. For example, when we do an exterior wash not every car needs a rinse then a foam cannon then hand wash then rinse and dry. Most of the time a quick rinse, hand wash and rinse and dry is all that you need. Remember the goal is a clean car not specific steps. If a step isn't needed then don't do it. Some people love to clay bar and if you include this step for example then factor it into your price. At our shop this is extra and only needed as prep for other work like ceramic coating or paint protection film installation (ppf). This is where assessment of the vehicle is super important.

Detailing Master Class

One of the biggest gains in your speed will come from having the right equipment. This means an extractor with heat and a kickass vacuum so you can breeze through shampoos, carpet and mat extraction etc. It means getting mat hooks to hang the mats so you can simply pressure wash them and scrub a little if needed and using a Tornador or air gun to quickly blast our crevices. If you can't purchase the right piece of equipment right now that's ok, it just means you will be a little slower or less efficient but plan for the purchase of the right equipment so you can take your detailing to the next level.

You will also need the right strategy. Some prefer to do carpets first, others like our shop go exterior, then trunk then top to bottom. We'll get into our strategy soon but for now the key is to practice and record each step you do and how long it takes. When you stop to keep track of this you will lose time right now and things will move slower overall but you will be taking notes about what to fix and improve so you can get faster. Keep a log and try variations like cleaning the mats last or cleaning them first etc. This is how you refine your process through time trials and diligent record keeping.

The next thing you should do is redefine what you include with your packages. A lot of this will depend on the market you are in and the expectations you discuss with your customer. The most important thing to do is find out what the majority of your customers expect and that will help define your included services. Then you just slap a price on it and you're good to go. I see it all the time detailers are concerned with what someone else is charging and constantly asking advice on am I charging too much or too little. Really you are the only one that can answer this question aside from the market. If you are charging too little you will be too busy then you should slowly raise your prices until you find the right balance between being busy and making money. Most of the time if you are asking if you are charging too little the real issue is that you are including too much. If customers are booking based on your price then that may not be the issue when you are ultimately feeling like you are working too hard for too little pay.

The solution is to redefine what is included. I see guys all the time including clay bar and wax. These are prime upsell services and in my opinion should only be included as part of a top-tier high ticket price service.

Detailing Master Class

It's better to get people in the door by saying "exterior wash" and then upsell the clay bar and spray wax or ceramic coating. Simplify your packages and make most other things a-la-carte. We have different packages listed on our website but honestly that is just for appearances and to throw off our competitors. 90% of our marketing is for one package with a fixed price and it includes all the essentials customers are asking us for with everything else being an upsell. It works. It is streamlined and our detailers know the drill. They know exactly what to do for each car, truck and SUV. They know exactly what not to do and what to upsell to the customer.

The last major way to improve your time is to focus on what matters. There are hundreds of components on a car and various material and fabric types. You could literally spend a week cleaning out the average daily driver but unless the ticket price has at least one comma in it, we aren't going to do this at our shop. It's just not a profitable way to reach our goals.

The first thing we do at our shop is ask our customer what 3 things we can fix or clean that will make them smile and leave a 5 star review. They have the information about what they expect so simply asking them is the best way to get it. Once they tell us, this becomes our focus. With our focus clearly defined we can still run through our checklist to clean the other components and areas of the vehicle but with less attention to detail in those areas because they are of least concern to the customer. This doesn't mean we skip areas or do a poor job; rather it means that we don't spend as much time on them and focus more attention where the customer has requested.

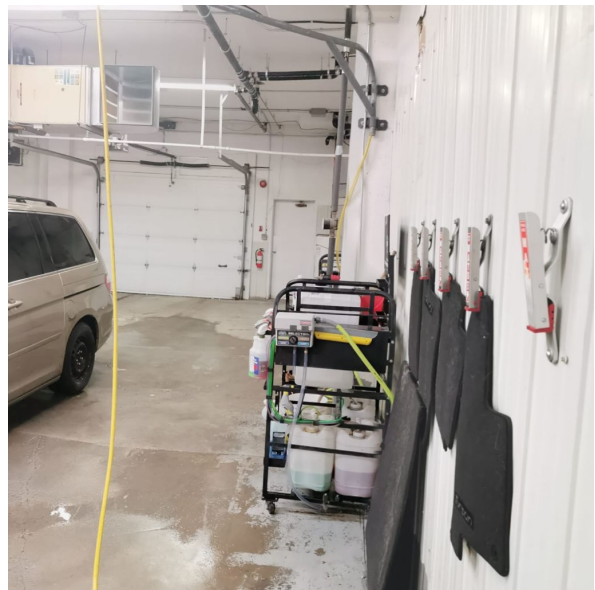
This initial assessment is crucial. It is the time to talk, not after the job is done or in progress. We ensure that customers understand what is included and what is available for upgrade. We also ensure they understand the price and payment methods and that price is not negotiable after assessment. We also ensure that they understand the reason for us asking about the three areas to focus on and what that means for everything else not mentioned in the three focus areas.

Sometimes customers tell us simply "I just want it cleaner". We say sounds good, it will look incredible. We then look over the vehicle to find 3 focus areas and we tell the customer this will be our focus so that everything is clear

Speed Up Your Details

There are many ways to speed up your services. Sometimes you can only shave off a minute or two and other times you can cut the time in half with the right improvements. In the beginning it was taking us around 3 hours to do a detail when we first launched. Each month we reviewed things and performed time trials to identify inefficiencies and make improvements. After dozens of time trials, improvements and trial and error we have been able to shave 2 hours off of our average detail time. We will cover the full method shortly but first let's look at some of the improvements we made.

One of the first time consuming things we discovered through time trials was the cleaning of mats. We had to find a way to speed up the cleaning of the mats and also to keep them clean while we cleaned the rest of the vehicle. The solution was hanging wall clamps which allows us to clean up to 16 mats at a time and they hang there to dry (a bit) before being bagged and placed in the customer's trunk. With a clear place to hang and clean them we shaved 20 minutes off our detailing time from the initial time trials to our current optimal cleaning time (1:06 one hour and six minutes on average).



Detailing Master Class

Another time consuming (and quality issue) was the removal of salt and stains. Where we operate in Canada salt is a major problem as the city uses salt to keep the roads safer by melting the ice and unfortunately (for drivers) this means salt stains in the floor and carpet. We initially tried drill brushes with steam. This proved to be less effective and also take up huge amounts of time. The solution was to invest in a commercial hot water extractor. We tried a few options and tested some different brands and models and settled on the Thresher2. This was the right one for us because the vacuum is out of this world and it heats up ready to use in as little as 8 minutes and stays hot all day long.

With the extractor we have been able to provide higher quality cleanings while shaving an additional 57 minutes off of our running time. Here is a picture of our extractor:



We will investigate the full method top to bottom for our cleanings to show you how we accomplish a full interior and exterior detail with two detailers in just over an hour. First I'll explain what we include so that we are on the same page.

Our most successful package is our \$139 promo. This package is designed for the average Joe, the average vehicle with average needs. We don't focus too much on "level of dirtiness" because our method is fast no matter what.

We do have a "dirtiness chart" as shown in the print material chapter. We don't always pull this out unless there is something really bad or a customer says they expect it to look brand new with the promo package. We show them that we have packages for their level of mess that would deliver the quality matching their expectations. This is not a very common issue as we usually just treat all the cleanings the same and focus on upselling everything else we can from ceramic coating, polish and paint correction, Aquapel, tinting etc.

What's included in our promo package?

Here is what we include in our promo offer along with the average time to complete with 2 detailers working in a physical shop with all the right tools, chemicals, equipment and efficient setup in place. Our shop is 4000 sqft and capable of hosting 14 cars at a time comfortably.

- **Hand wash and dry** (6 mins)
- **Foam cannon shampoo** (4 mins)
- **Bug removal from grill & windows** (2 mins)
- **Vacuum interior and trunk** (10 mins)
- **Shampoo & extractor** (15 mins)
- **Salt removal** (6 mins)
- **Clean door jams & air vents** (4 mins)
- **Clean mats, seats, carpet** (8 mins)
- **Wipe down dash, console & steering wheel** (5 mins)
- **Clean windows & mirrors** (4 mins)
- **Dress tires with shine** (2 mins)

We don't discriminate on vehicle size except for things like transit vans etc. or extra large vehicles that aren't the average daily commuter type of vehicle. Family vans, trucks, SUVs, cars etc. all are welcome. Some may think this is a missed opportunity but for us it's better to get every customer in the door and upsell them something rather than waste time trying to convince someone and haggle over price. Our booking process is super fast and most customers are locked into an appointment within one or two questions and within 2 minutes of speaking to them. Everything with us is about speed because we get hundreds of phone calls each week, 200+ live chat messages and on average 100+ emails. We have a dedicated team member just for this.

Detailing Master Class

Ok so we are about to dive into our method. One last note is that from our experience it takes us roughly the same amount of time to clean any level of mess because of our equipment, chemicals, staff, and process. We hustle. We work really hard and most importantly as mentioned several times in this book, we make sure to ask the customer for the 3 things to focus on. We have hundreds of 5 star reviews, hundreds of satisfied and returning customers and we are growing like wild fire. Our shop is profitable and has been growing by leaps and bounds and we're only 12 months in. Most shops in our area slow down in the winter for both details and tinting.

Our primary technician with 17 years experience told me he has never in all those years seen a shop as productive and busy all year round as ours. Even our chemical supplier who services 90% of the shops and dealerships within our city told us he has never seen a shop this busy all year round and asked us what our secret was. Nothing slows down at our shop. Dealer jobs are busy, tinting is busy, detailing is busy, even ceramic coating and PPF installs are slammed all year.

I mention this to provide you with credibility and to show you that we know what we're doing and it works for us. In trying to help other detailers in the past I am usually met with criticism or blanket statements like "that's not possible" or "that's not true detailing". It's unfortunate that there are soo many out there that will never see their full potential as a business in detailing because of such a narrow-minded and inaccurate mindset. Auto World is living proof. Period. So if you are ready to streamline your detailings or at least investigate ways to do so then this will work for you. You don't have to copy our exact process (you can if you want) but the key thing is to look at your current processes in great detail to make massive improvements.

The same thing goes for our package and inclusions. Maybe this will work for you and maybe you want to include more or remove some things. The concept behind why we do the things we do is the blueprint, not necessarily the specific offering or finer details. If you employ the same principals and concepts that we do then you will be executing the blueprint for success that makes this Detailing Master Class soo powerful.

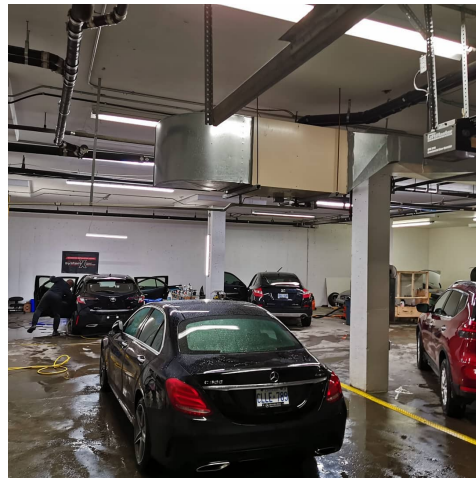
Ok so now we move on to the process that we use for detailing at our shop.

Our Detailing Process Explained

- Hand wash and dry (6 mins)
- Foam cannon shampoo (4 mins)
- Bug removal from grill & windows (2 mins)
- Vacuum interior and trunk (10 mins)
- Shampoo & extractor (15 mins)
- Salt removal (6 mins)
- Clean door jams & air vents (4 mins)
- Clean mats, seats, carpet (8 mins)
- Wipe down dash, console & steering wheel (5 mins)
- Clean windows & mirrors (4 mins)
- Dress tires with shine (2 mins)

We have two detailers on each shift at our shop. Depending on the jobs for the day they usually tackle cars on their own and together. Usually they tag team several cars at a time by following a process of one doing the exterior wash on car #1 together then one guy drives that car to the dry bay and preps the car by removing garbage while the other guy completes the exterior wash on car #2. Once car #2 is done he drives that car to the drive bay at which point the first detailer moves to that new car to prep and remove garbage. The process repeats until 4 cars are ready to go.

Similarly if they are each doing a car alone they follow the same process just without helping each other. It's very fast to clean the exteriors as we have an overhead hose for the pressure washer that swings around the whole car without touching the ground. Here is a picture of our wash bay and hose:



Detailing Master Class

To get specific about the exterior wash, when the vehicle is pulled into the wash bay we do a quick spray rinse to wet the exterior. Then we hand wash the exterior with our car shampoo while our degreaser that we call "the hulk" is sprayed on the wheels and front end to make it easy to scrub the front to remove the bugs and clean the rims and tires. During the exterior wash we also clean the door jams with the pressure washer and we remove and hang the mats on our wall with our mat clips.

Once the exterior wash is complete, we move the vehicle to our dry bay and the large debris and garbage removal begins. During this phase we also quickly bag all personal belongings that were not removed by the customer and we set these aside. While this is happening the mats are pressure washed, scrubbed etc. on the wall.

The trunk is cleaned and vacuumed. The mats are then quickly extracted with the vacuum on the extractor to remove dirt, debris and excess water. The mats are then bagged and placed in the trunk along with the personal belongings bag.

The next step is to spray the entire interior with our Tornador containing a special mixture of interior APC (All-Purpose Cleaner), highly diluted degreaser and our special car scent. This mixture has been shown to provide the perfect mixture of cleaning agents for all circumstances we have encountered while adding a nice scent to the car that customers love. We get it all done at the same time.

The Tornador is a great product. It is not a universal cleaning solution or a magic wand. We primarily use it to quickly spread our product mixture while blowing out dirt and debris from crevices, cracks, hard to reach areas and to spread our awesome car scent throughout the vehicle.

With everything blown out now and resting on the floor and some outside of the vehicle we move on to cleaning the windows and mirrors and a quick vacuuming while the solution works its magic on the doors, trim, console, steering wheel and everywhere else. Once the windows and mirrors and vacuuming are done we grab a new set of micro fibers and we clean the doors, headrests, console, cup holders, air vents, dash, vinyl etc.

Detailing Master Class

Our next step is to pull out our super extractor and our drill with the upholstery attachment. We spray the seats with our special mixture again, quickly drill over the seats and then shampoo and extract in horizontal lines.

While the extractor is out and ready to go we go over the carpet, tackling any salt spots as needed. If the vehicle has leather seats we skip the previous step of course and instead use our solution with a micro fiber to clean the seats. At this point the interior is usually ready to go but we give it a once over for any missed spots or additional quick vacuuming that may be needed.

Finally we dry any remaining water with our mammoth towels and tire shine is applied to the tires. The customer is notified by our phone staff their vehicle is ready for pickup and the invoice is created and the job is marked done in our booking calendar.

That's it in a nutshell. The way we move is like watching a finely tuned machine. It wasn't always like this but with weeks and months of refinement we have reached an optimal level of operation with very little room to improve. We have done the same refinement processes for our other services as well and the process varies depending on the service of course but one thing they all have in common is that we have worked tirelessly to get to this point where everything is running at peak levels.

The hard work and time trials and refinements we made have paid off both in financial revenue and in making the work easier on our staff because the process is smooth and everyone works well together. We have trained every staff member on the exact same things. Even our tinters are trained on our way of doing details and they will jump into the process and help when they are in-between tint jobs and vice versa.

You may be in a similar setup as us or you may not have a shop or you may have a small space or work out of your garage right now. Regardless of your current setup, there are definitely a hundred ways you can improve. The first step is identifying your objectives for your business and where you want to be in 5-10 years. All of your refinements and actions today should be leading towards this end goal.

Live Chat and Availability

Connecting with customers is essential to increasing your bookings. In fact, the faster you connect the more bookings you will close over your competitors, even if your price is higher. People are coming to you because they want something done. The average customer wants to spend 30 seconds shopping around but they will spend all the time in the world shopping around if they don't find what they are looking for right away.

You are not a detailer. You have a detailing business. You are sometimes wearing the hat of a detailer and other times you wear other hats including that of a sales person. When customers contact you it is your job to sell them on your service, your price, your company, your customer experience etc. Sales takes many forms and it's not always direct, in your face sales pitches. Sometimes it's just being extra courteous or over-explaining the same thing 100 times after the customers asks. It's ok, answer the questions and be happy to have every customer contact you. In every interaction you will learn something about your customers, your services, your business and the industry.

No customer communication is a waste of time. You either close deals or learn more about things you need to improve. If customers don't like your price then you should try and find something they do want to buy. Make a smaller, simpler package for these customers and work on upselling them. There is a reason car companies for example have economy and luxury brands as part of their lineup. For example, Acura is the luxury division of Honda. This is because their customers are people looking for reliable transportation. Some want the bells and whistles and others kept asking for discounts. They didn't complain about how someone dare ask for a discount. Instead they created a product for these people and this demographic.

All of this is to say that we live in a world where customers want to talk in different ways. The important thing for you is that they want to talk. So you need to be there - and there is everywhere. At our shop we have a website, landing pages, live chat, SMS text, email, phone and even in-person walk-ins. We make sure we are available. Our live chat and email staff finish at 8-9pm and start at 9am. Our emails are handled within minutes usually of receipt.

Detailing Master Class

It is incredibly important for us to be responsive. At first we avoided live chat but the minute we deployed it on our website it was clear that we made a mistake by not having live chat before. 90% of the live chat and messenger customers make a booking within 2 minutes after asking one or two questions and out of the 200+ messages we receive each week on live chat and messenger alone, we close on average a staggering 52% of them which results in 100+ bookings just from these "instant" platforms.

When you are working alone it can be difficult to respond quickly however it is important. It may take you longer to finish a detailing in the beginning if you are responding to messages and detailing however you have to cross this threshold before you can reach the next level. The alternative is to do what we did which is hire someone ahead of time knowing that the extra expense would quickly pay itself off. The best part is you can start with someone who is looking to work from home for less pay because they don't actually have to see the customers or be present at your location.

Another good idea is to offer someone the ability to earn commission on upsells also so they can act as a super sales person for you over live chat, messenger and email.

Try implementing "instant" platforms like messenger, live chat and replying to emails quickly and you will see a difference in your closing ratio. The simple act of "being available" has had one of the biggest impacts for our revenue at our shop by increasing our volume. The fact is that the statement "the early bird gets the worm" is the real deal and since we are the early bird in most cases we get more worms than the other shops around us. Of course there are a ton of other reasons and factors contributing to our success, the sum of all parts mentioned in this book are the reason we are doing bigger numbers than the more "established" guys in our city and we are only 12 months in.

There are tons of live chat options available. We personally use Tawk.to for ours. The one you choose will depend on your preferences but this is the one that works well for us and it's free for most users. Setup is simple and they have apps for your phone and even computer. Make yourself available and watch your bookings increase!

Automate Your Bookings

The success of your business depends largely on your bookings. It can be difficult to get more bookings and focus on advertising and responding to customers when you are working - assuming you are the one actually doing the detailing. There are ways to keep your calendar full even when you are busy. You can automate your bookings by setting up email lists and email marketing to your customers to make repeat bookings.

The other option as we briefly touched on in the software section is to put your bookings on autopilot with artificial intelligence.

Imagine having a dedicated sales person looking at your calendar of appointments every day and following up on your existing customers to book new appointments for their preferred services. Now imagine if this didn't cost you anything extra.

In a nutshell, this is what the OrbisX AI appointment robot is all about.

The AI booking robot scans your calendar every day to find days that could use a few extra appointments and then the AI robot contacts your customers to book appointments on those days. The best part is it is fully customizable with your own rules for each service so you can truly harness the power of OrbisX and book your appointments on autopilot – totally handsfree.

How does it work?

Simply set the rules you want the AI to follow for each of your services and the artificial intelligence magic will start working 24/7 to keep your calendar full of jobs. Choose the service and specify the last appointment time.

Let's assume you create a new rule for Detailing service with a last appointment of 6 months. The AI robot will scan the database for all customers who got their car detailed 6 months ago. Then the AI robot will analyze your calendar of jobs looking for days that need appointments.

Then the AI robot will analyze your calendar of jobs looking for days that have few or no appointments booked. Once the AI robot finds some ideal days that could use a few extra appointments, the AI robot will email and SMS text customers matching the criteria with suggested appointment dates.

The email and text SMS messages will contain a unique link to your custom booking calendar in the OrbisX system. Customers can click the link and book an appointment on the suggested day. It's like having an extra staff member doing follow up calls with existing customers to get them to book another appointment.

Let's Look at a Real-World Example Together

To truly show you the power of the AI booking robot, let's look at some examples together using real-world scenarios from our shop.

Rule #1 – Detailing

Auto World recommends customers have their vehicle detailed every 6 months at a minimum so the AI booking robot is setup to look for days with less than 5 appointments and reach out to customers with a last detailing service from 6 months ago. This results in bookings for customers to get their semi-annual detailing service completed.

Rule #2 – Ceramic Coating

Most of the ceramic coating jobs done at Auto World have a 3 year warranty so the AI booking robot is setup to look for days with less than 3 appointments and reach out to customers with a last ceramic coating service from 3 years ago. This results in bookings for customers to renew their ceramic coating with a new paint correction & ceramic coating service.

Rule #3 – Headlight restoration

The headlight restoration service lasts for approximately 8-12 months with the methods used at Auto World so the AI booking robot is setup to look for days with less than 10 appointments and reach out to customers with a last headlight restoration service from 9 months ago. This results in bookings for customers to get another headlight service to renew their aging headlights.

Streamline Your Offerings

We have touched on streamlining your services in some other chapters so there is no need to repeat history however this section is all about getting organized and as your business grows it will become important to streamline again and again.

The reason for mentioning this at the end of the chapter about getting organized is because as your business grows and you add more services and products (assuming you follow the my previous advice) you will need to streamline these new services and products as well. This can be challenging if the new services you add on are outside of your skillset and you hire someone to do them. At our shop for example we added tinting and even though we didn't know how to tint in the beginning (we do now) we outsourced. We formed a relationship with a tinter who would come tint at our shop under our brand. This meant bringing in outside processes that we had to mold and shape to our way of doing things which took time.

Eventually we hired our own in-house tinters and kept the training going to do things the way we wanted them done. Adding new services means more streams of revenue but it also means you will end up with too many options.

Things can get confusing pretty fast. You may have seen this at some restaurants with a never-ending menu with hundreds of items. Making a decision from too many options can feel like torture and for your staff it can be difficult to remember all of the options and even harder to explain the differences to customers. Plus you will waste a lot of time explaining things to customers when you could just book them in and get it done.

The takeaway here is that multiple packages are ok in the beginning with a single service but as you add services and grow you may want to consider streamlining each service with 1-3 max packages per service. This is helpful especially for customers who are getting multiple services at the same time.

So always keep in mind streamline, streamline, streamline. When you add services or even thinking about your existing services, streamlining is the goal.

You Will Need Help

Being self-employed is awesome. If you are just looking for a replacement to your job then you don't have to worry about growth as much. If you are running a business then growth is critical.

There are many tasks you have to do as a business owner and as you grow it can become increasingly difficult to do everything well if at all. The worst thing you can do is neglect aspects of your business. Unfortunately I see it all the time and usually the first things to get neglected are some of the most crucial for growth such as responding to emails right away, streamlining services and looking at ways to take advantage of free publicity from news outlets and charity efforts.

These are the same detailers that will be slammed for 2 weeks, neglect their business and then their phone stops ringing once the current bookings are done and they start to panic. To keep your phone ringing, emails coming in, messenger and live chat dinging and your calendar fully booked you need to keep the momentum going.

The only way to keep the momentum going is to hire help (or clone yourself).

Don't be scared to take the leap. The issue with growth is that it creates dips. By this I mean that in order to grow you have to re-invest. So hiring your first team member means that right away you will be committing to an expense without the revenue to justify it. However once you are able to get twice as much done you can keep the momentum going and the revenue will catch up and exceed the added expense of the new team member. Then you just repeat this process over and over again.

One way to offset the full expense of a full-time team member is to outsource some work or hire part-time staff. This can help you grow as well and is a good option if you don't have the reserves or capital to take on a full-time staff member right now.

Training Center

The way you do things at your business become part of your customer experience, company culture and the reason for your success and why customers choose you time and time again.

As we mentioned in the last chapter, you are going to need help as your business grows. To maintain your quality control, reduce headaches and ensure that things are done the way you want them done it is important to properly train your team members.

When you have some downtime, make videos and training documents for each of your services and processes. These will prove to be invaluable once you start hiring people. Put these into a training manual or even better use software like we do with our OrbisX CRM for detailers that has a full training center which allows us to add videos, documents, audio files and more.

Each of our new hires goes through our training documents in the OrbisX CRM so that we can get them trained up quickly and on the methods and processes we use at our shop.

This is by far the easiest way to ensure consistency across your team and to develop a great company culture. We made an investment of time in the beginning but now training new staff is a breeze. In fact, you can save some time and cut corners in a way by using YouTube videos from other channels and creators that follow your methods and include them in the training center if the videos follow your practices.

It is clear you will need help. It doesn't have to create more headaches for you though as help is supposed to solve problems and make your business more productive. Proper training is the way to go.

Multiple Locations

Everything we have talked about so far has talked about how to refine your business, processes and offerings. Most of this has to do with improving efficiency and increasing revenue. As you grow you will eventually reach a ceiling. The ceiling for your business is going to be defined by different factors than the next business but one that business owners usually face is capacity.

This can be your capacity ceiling based on the number of staff you have but it can also be a limit on the capacity of vehicles you can take at one time. Meaning that even if your phone is ringing off the hook and you are booked around the clock, you can still only take a certain amount of vehicles at a time. At our shop, our capacity is 14 cars at a time. Some cars are there for several hours or even overnight in cases like ceramic coatings. With detailings we have a high turnover in and out so that is less of a concern with our ceiling. However when you mix in a variety of services from detailing to tinting to ceramic coating and PPF installation, our 14 car capacity becomes less as spaces are taken up for several hours for some bookings.

At the time of writing this we are averaging 26 jobs a day and we are hitting a capacity ceiling. We are already shopping around for a second location and/or a unit that is twice the size of our current space.

The way to deal with capacity ceilings depends on the issue but in the case of space, you have three options. The first is do nothing and keep taking only the number of jobs you have but this means your revenue will plateau. The other options are setup a second location or move to a bigger space.

Each of these last two options has advantages and disadvantages depending on your business model, customers and the market and the cost of commercial space in your area. Setting up a second location can be expensive but if you have streamlined your business and it is running at optimal performance then you can add a second location with less headaches and costs if you duplicate what you are currently doing.

This is likely the route we are going as we planned for 5 locations in the city.

Build for an Exit Plan

You may not have thought about this but what is your plan to get out of detailing? The bulk of this book has been about setting up, growing and expanding your detailing business. This is great and I wish you all the success in the world. The day will come that you will want to sell, retire or just stop your business.

It is important to think about growing your business and improving your business but it is also important to think about your exit plan. This shouldn't be your main focus of course while you are running your business but my point is that you should think about your long term play.

How you develop your business will either open up or limit your exit plan options and opportunities. For example if you are the only one running your business and you stay that way until you want to exit it will be more difficult to sell because in a way "you" are the business. This is especially true if you put your name in your company logo and name like "Adam's Detailing". It will be harder for you to sell your business because the new owner will also have to completely re-brand unless their name is Adam. This adds one more hurdle that makes the business less valuable to potential buyers.

On the other hand if you build your business up and hire staff and get them running the show with minimal involvement from yourself to perform the actual service work then the business will be much more attractive to potential buyers and investors.

This is the primary reason our shop is named Auto World. This was not an accident. We planned to add more services than detailing from day one. That is why detailing isn't in our name. Additionally we have hired help every step of the way and built a great company culture with proper training manuals, processes and basically an entire plug-and-play model that allows for anyone to walk in and take over operations. This makes our business very appealing to potential buyers and in fact we have already received and denied two offers.

As you build your business focus on the now but keep an eye on the future.

Detailing Master Class

In conclusion I'll keep it simple. Thank you for reading the Detailing Master Class. I have given you a good blue print for success in your detailing business and I hope you experience growth, success and the best thing ever which is a steady stream of customers and 5 star reviews.

You can do it. Anyone can do it. Just wake up everyday and work your ass off.

It has been a pleasure to speak with you and as I always say "I always go the extra mile because there are no traffic jams". Keep going the extra mile and you will succeed, whatever success means to you, you will achieve it through hard work and doing that little extra every day.

All the best,
Shawn Gervais

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shawn Gervais". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Shawn" and "Gervais" being capitalized and prominent.

Detailing Master Class

Congratulations on taking the next steps to growing your detailing business to seven figures. It takes hard work, dedication and some serious follow-through. You can do it. With the right tools, attitude and execution, anyone can grow a successful business. Good luck and most importantly, have fun.