

CARS NEWS

Where people, training and technology meet

Fall Issue, November 2007

Applying the Essential Skills to Automotive Curricula

This fall and winter, CARS will conduct a series of instructor workshops designed to strengthen delivery of automotive curricula through the infusion of Essential Skills. Workshops have been held with the Toronto District School Board, Nova Scotia Community College and Centennial College. Additional workshops will be held at the following educational facilities:

December 7, 2007
Vancouver Community College

February 22, 2008
Fanshawe College

To Be Announced
Red River College, NAIT, Douglas College

Keeping Customers Coming Back with CARS OnDemand

CARS newest training tool, CARS OnDemand, provides the automotive aftermarket with Internet-based training on a wide range of technical and business topics, including ways to improve customer service and satisfaction.

Lessons are presented in convenient two hour video-based instruction segments. Each lesson comes with Student Learning Guides and Exams and other supplementary materials that enhance the learning experience. CARS OnDemand programs can be taken at the participant's convenience, any time, anywhere there is Internet access. (continued on page three)

CONSUMER AWARENESS BRINGS CUSTOMER LOYALTY

If satisfied customers are at the heart of your business, then informed customers are as well. Informed consumers make knowledgeable drivers, prepared to make sensible decisions about vehicle care, maintenance and repair. In this issue, CARS takes a look at some of the ways the motive power repair and service industry builds customer satisfaction through consumer education.

Customer Education Best Practices

Reception area displays of new and worn parts and fluids
Call waiting messages with vehicle maintenance tips

Customer recognition events including shop tours

Customer information brochures

Presentations at school career fairs

Glossaries of terminology

Shop posters outlining services, repair procedures, and insurance claim processes

Mail-out reminders of service milestones

Hosting seasonal maintenance clinics

The Canadian Automobile Association Helping People Travel Well

The Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) is the first organization that one in four licensed drivers in Canada call when they have car trouble.



While the familiar blue and white tow trucks are still part of what CAA is all about for its 5 million members, the organization's services go much beyond that. When asked what CAA is all about in 2007, CAA President David Armour says "CAA helps people travel well – period." Traveling well comes down to "traveling with safety, with peace of mind, traveling that's good for the environment and getting great deals.

Even CAA's broader offerings still relate back to traveling well – the home insurance, health guides, the well known Trip Tics." (continued on page two)



Canadian Automotive
Repair and Service

Service d'entretien et de
réparation automobiles du Canada

www.cars-council.ca

The Canadian Automotive Repair and Service (CARS) Council is Canada's leader in training development for the motive power repair and service industry, one of the largest and most important components of the Canadian labour market.

As a national, not-for-profit sector council, CARS undertakes research and activities to support the professional development needs of this exciting industry.



Brought to you by:

CARS Council
203 - 57 Auriga Drive
Ottawa, ON K2E 8B2

Editor:
Dagmar Horsman

Layout:
Tammy Laurin

Translation:
Gilles Laframboise

We welcome your submissions
and comments

Phone: (613) 798-0500
Fax: (613) 798-9963
E-mail: dagmar@carscouncil.ca
Corporate Website: www.cars-council.ca
Youth Website: www.carsyouth.ca



Funded by
the Government of Canada's
Sector Council Program.

The opinions and interpretations in
CARS News are those of the authors and
do not necessarily reflect those of the
Government of Canada.

The Canadian Automobile Association (continued from page one)

Consumer choice

From its beginnings as an emergency response service, CAA has now expanded into all travel-related areas, becoming Canada's largest wholly owned leisure travel agency, covering everything from out of province health insurance, to car rentals and travel guides.

Member needs and opinions are a strong driving force in shaping the direction that CAA takes both nationally and regionally. The more severe weather conditions Canadians face compared to Americans, have a significant impact on travel, and the servicing that vehicles need and consumers expect. Depending on community needs local clubs to provide a variety of services, ranging from CAA service shops in Saskatoon to extensive travel services in Ottawa.

CAA clubs send out expert teams to local repair shops, restaurants, accommodations and attractions to assess whether they meet all the criteria for CAA accreditation and consumer trust.

Global partnerships allow CAA to offer international driver's licenses and discounts abroad on such things as accommodations, attractions, and rentals. CAA can also reduce cross-border red tape. "We will look after the paperwork if you want to take your motorbike to Europe for the summer," says Armour.

Go vs. tow

"Canadian drivers don't want to be towed, they want to get going" says Armour, "so we do our best to get them back on the road." CAA's 60% go rate means that 6 times out of 10, when the blue and white CAA tow truck pulls up beside a vehicle, diagnostics and repairs will be done on the spot without the need for a tow to a repair facility. Roadside services include basic diagnostics, tire repairs, as well as battery boosts and replacements.

In five to ten years CAA expects to increase its go rate to over 80%. This will revolutionize the traditional role of tow truck operators, requiring them to develop a huge range of skills, including accessing and interpreting the vehicle diagnostics for a wide range of makes and models. Already, in the inner city of Vancouver all the tow truck operators are licensed technicians.



CAA President David Armour
Photo courtesy of CAA

David Armour sees a lot of parallels between running the CAA and his previous nine years as president of United Way Canada. Both provide an opportunity to work with "the best and brightest minds in Canada, actively building trust, responding to individual needs with strong stewardship to achieve common goals." Armour professes that becoming the president of CAA is a dream come true for someone who has been a self-confessed "car nut" all his life, starting with a passion for vehicles nurtured on his first job, working on cars at a gas station, bringing cars in on a tow truck.

The ultimate goal is for the CAA fleet to be able to handle all minor repair issues on the spot, reserving the towing option for major issues that need to be addressed by dealerships and manufacturers. CAA is working with manufacturers to ensure that its staff has the skills and knowledge to deal with the latest in on-board telemetry and diagnostics, is able to open vehicles and can handle hybrid batteries and the associated electrical system shut downs.

CAA is negotiating with cell phone providers so that "In future, if you give us permission, we will send a truck straight to your location", says Armour. This will drastically reduce service response times.

New services

Armour talks about the next evolution of travel planning in terms of providing electronic navigation on handheld Magellan devices in the near future. "Consumers will benefit from the very big Trip Tic advantage this technology will be able to offer. They will be able to figure out where

they are, how to get to their destination, as well as get information on hotels, restaurants, attractions and more."

CAA's new services include "a tool that allows car buying consumers to build their own vehicle, so to speak" says Armour, "by selecting the specs they want and then searching for vehicles that meet those criteria."

(continued on page three)



Consumer Awareness Brings Customer Loyalty

The Canadian Automobile Association (continued from page two)

CAA is piloting online courses for car maintenance and ownership for consumers, that include providing information on the inner workings of today's cars, purchase and maintenance costs, as well as the environmental impact they have.

Consumer advocacy

CAA's focus on travelling well extends all the way to recommendations to government and industry on various environmental issues related to lower emissions, conservation of natural resources, and recycling of non-renewable resources. "We have to think about the carbon footprint of what we are producing, says Armour. "While the US is more concerned with shifting the balance from offshore to domestic energy production including biofuels such as corn, Canadians tend to be more concerned with environmental impacts of the technology related to alternative fuel sources and getting these fuels to market." Research conducted with Pollution Probe partners, indicates that young Canadians in particular want less of an environmental footprint.

Consumer awareness

Armour takes pride in the CAA's work with various governments on enhancing driver safety, starting with padded steering wheels, seat belts, lap belts and ABS brakes. For each innovation CAA has provided consumer information on how it works under various driving conditions.

While CAA provides consumer information to the uninitiated, it also supports and celebrates the enthusiasts. "There is a segment of youth out there that takes pride in the performance of their vehicles, that are swapping chips, fuel injectors, headers, says Armour. "They take pride in their vehicles and are handy at working on all this technology." By sponsoring the Electrathon electrical vehicle races and other youth competitions, CAA is "recognizing great skills, and developing visibility for the talent that is out there among youth. We want them to know we hire people with technical skills and that putting those skills to work can be really interesting and exciting. And we get them thinking about the environment and the value of the problem solving skill sets that are crucial to diagnostics today."



Keeping Customers Coming Back With CARS OnDemand (continued from page one)

CARS OnDemand is completely Internet-based. Any computer purchased in the last five years should be capable of displaying OnDemand.

To participate, it is recommended that your computer has: Windows XP or greater, Windows Media Player 9 or greater, and 512 MB of memory.

You will also need a commercial or residential high speed Internet connection : Cable, DSL or T1

Among the hundreds of training programs students can choose from, the following can be particularly useful in helping shops build consumer trust and customer loyalty:

Personal Computers

Computer Basics (1 module)
Introduction to the Internet (1 module)
Introduction to Word (2 modules)
On-Line Research (1 module)
On-Line Transactions (1 module)
Search Engine Optimization (1 module)
Web Site Planning / Evaluation (1 module)

Business Management

Generations (1 module)
HR - Integrating/Motivating Employees (1 module)
Integrating New Employees (1 module)
Teamwork (1 module)

Customer Relations

Advanced Customer Service Skills (1 module)
Communication Skills (1 module)
Customer Service Skills (1 module)
Technical Information for Frontline Staff (5 modules)
Telephone Skills (1 module)

Other CARS OnDemand courses cover: collision repair, financial practices, legal matters and technical repair.

Sales and Marketing

Marketing (Dupont)
Merchandising
Road to Sales Success (Sherwin Williams)
Sales

Office Administration

Collecting/Billing
Collections (1 module)

Operations Management

Parts Department Management (1 module)
Pre-Repair Management (1 module)
Shop Flow Management (1 module)

Mentor Coach

Mentor Coach Communications (2 modules)
Mentor Coach HR Techniques (1 module)

CARS and Car Care Canada at Georgian College Auto Show

From September 28-30th, CARS participated in the 22nd edition of the "Largest Outdoor Auto Show in North America" hosted by students from the Canadian Automotive Institute (CAI) at Georgian College in Barrie, Ontario. CARS was excited to have an interactive booth at the student-run event which attracts 22,000 visitors annually.

CARS used automotive parts and a board game to promote greater consumer appreciation of the skills and technology that go into the repair and maintenance of the close to 18 million vehicles on the road in Canada today. CARS had a variety of materials on hand, providing career information and showcasing industry best practices, as well as CARS' soon-to-be released professional development tool, CARSability.

CARS exhibited alongside Car Care Canada, who hosted six consumer car care clinics. Host Kelly Williams educated consumers about the basic parts of the car, what they do, what to watch for, and when and why they need to be maintained.

Customer Satisfaction Built on the 9 Essential Skills

Technicians and shop managers who engage in **continuous learning** are in a position to educate their customers on the latest vehicle technologies being used in their vehicles and increase their comfort level about work that needs doing.

Using computers to record and track customer and vehicle data enables shops to provide customers with timely service reminders based on individual driving habits and maintenance records.

Service managers and technicians can **use documents** like shop brochures and manufacturers' service manuals to educate consumers on the value of regular maintenance and service.

Oral communications are key in explaining to customers what procedures are required on their vehicle, and ensuring that they are satisfied when the work is completed.

Using a tire tread wear gauge is one example of how **numeracy** comes into play in taking a variety of readings and measurements that ensure vehicle safety and drivability.

Reading computerized service bulletins alerts service managers and technicians to product selection, upgrades and recalls that customers should be made aware of.

Thinking skills help service managers and technicians judge the accuracy of customer complaints to help them discern between necessary and unnecessary repair procedures.

Technicians **write up** detailed diagnostic results so that customers can understand the work that is required on their vehicles.

Teaming up with other staff to troubleshoot particularly **tenacious** vehicle problems is one form of **working with others** designed to reduce repair time get the customer back on the road faster.

For more information contact:

ednasello@cars-council.ca

Build Business with Consumer Vehicle Check-up Events



Many Canadian repair and service facilities use the month of May to promote regular maintenance with their clients as imperative to ensuring safety, protecting personal investments and preserving the environment. Promoting regular vehicle maintenance is a good way to build longer lasting customer relationships.

Car Care Canada is offering a free *Car Check Event Planner* on CD with step-by-step instructions that walk you through planning and executing your own consumer vehicle check-up events. This kit provides shop owners with all the material they need to start planning their spring Car Check Event. The *Event Planner* is a "must have" for all owners of service facilities as well as jobbers, retail store owners, warehouse distributors and everyone whose business depends on consumers becoming more car care aware. It includes additional resource materials, such as sample press releases to educate consumers, sample advertisements, and radio spots.

To order your **FREE CD/DVD instruction kit** today, visit the eStore at www.carcarecanada.ca

Both consumer and wholesaler versions of the *Be Car Care Aware* Web Banner promoting Car Safety Month are available for download from the INDUSTRY section of the Car Care Canada website at:

www.carcarecanada.ca



85% of vehicles on the road need maintenance

Free vehicle inspections by Car Care Canada in May 2007 during Car Care Month, gave Canadian drivers a chance to chat with certified technicians and find out what if any work their vehicles needed. Extrapolating from these spot inspections in Montreal, Toronto, Guelph, Winnipeg and Calgary, it appears that 85% of cars on the road in Canada today need maintenance.

20% of vehicles failed the inspection because of low, overfull or dirty motor oil. This can affect the safe driving performance of the vehicle and damage internal parts.

Under-inflated tires were found on 18%, which impacts safety, fuel-consumption and the life-span of a tire.

EcoTRANSPORT

Transport Canada's new **ecoTRANSPORT** strategy is part of the Government of Canada's agenda to protect the environment and the health of Canadians and to further Canada's economic prosperity. Initiatives include:

The **ecoTECHNOLOGY** for Vehicles Program raises awareness among Canadians about advanced environmental vehicle technologies and their benefits, and helps them make informed decisions about purchasing vehicles that use clean technologies.

This new program will test advanced vehicles to confirm their safety and environmental technologies across Canada. The program will investigate a range of technologies, such as plug-in hybrid, fuel cell and electric vehicles. Look for consumer facts on these new environmentally friendly technologies at **ecoTECHNOLOGY** for Vehicles Program displays at auto shows across the country.

For more information visit:
www.ecoaction.gc.ca/ecovehicles