

Outsourcing Simply Makes Sense

Column Number 100!

First of all I want to recognize a milestone. This month's column is my 100th for BodyShop Business Magazine on the topic of web presence management. I want to thank my loyal readers for your ongoing support and also thank the editors and publisher at BodyShop Business for the opportunity to share what I believe is helpful information with the collision repair industry each month. The feedback I have received over the years has been great and I truly appreciate it all. To see a comprehensive list of, and links to, all my columns and other articles that I have written for BodyShop Business over the past 20 years, go to <https://www.optimaautomotive.com/autobody-shop-advice/>

Now let's talk about outsourcing. Given the nature of what we do in the collision repair industry we simply cannot do everything that needs to be done ourselves, and if we try it's like pushing on one side of a balloon and trying to make the balloon keep its original shape. When you push, another area of the balloon expands outward. You try to push that back in and it bulges out somewhere else. You just can't do it, nor will you be able to do it all effectively in your shop. So outsourcing is something you should consider. You might outsource now, mechanical repairs, PDR, hail damage or other operations on the car. But have you considered outsourcing when it comes to your online marketing? You probably should.

When I speak with shops I hear a lot of the same types of marketing issues and challenges. Time is a major factor and they often throw something together and do the best they can with in. But that's not usually getting it done. As I often say, this is not like the movie "Field of Dreams". Just building a website or having a Facebook page doesn't mean people will come to them. Doesn't it make more sense to have a true professional do what they do best on your behalf.

I tell shop owners that they don't want me touching a car in their shops because that's not my area of expertise, and I don't want them touching "my" Internet! That's my turf and my team has it down really well. Why not outsource to a company that really has their act together that can partner with you to maximize your chances for success? You do what you do best, we'll do what we do best on your behalf. It works.

With the economy in a free fall thanks to coronavirus, at the time I am writing this, you are probably losing some business by now since people aren't driving as much. You'll have to make some tough choices on areas of your budget where you have to make cuts. The temptation might be in areas of marketing- but let me caution you about this before you do. Back in August of 2018 I wrote on this topic, you can see that article here: <https://www.bodyshopbusiness.com/why-you-shouldnt-cut-back-on-digital-marketing/> In this article I pointed out that we've done extensive research on marketing expenditures. When businesses cut marketing, their exposure in the community is left to happenstance and reputation. Not good.

When you spend money on marketing, and not just any marketing, but the *“right”* marketing, you should see a return on your investment, as much as \$10 or more for every dollar spent. Repeated studies (from places like The AdCouncil and Columbia University) have verified this. Companies that spend at least 10 percent of their revenues on the right marketing are almost always leaders in their market areas. That’s not opinion, it’s based on actual research. Further, those companies that spend 5 percent of their revenues on marketing are receiving a relatively successful return on their investments. Predictably, those who spend 3 percent or less on marketing see their local area market share stall or shrink.

Remember how I stated it, the *“right”* marketing. If you aren’t a marketing guru yourself, and if you don’t have any marketing specialists working for you, how do you know where and how to allocate dollars for marketing? You don’t. That’s where outsourcing to marketing professionals you trust comes in.

Online marketing is part of this... a big part. Find a professional who really knows online marketing, has strong reviews and testimonials and, preferably has experience in the collision repair industry. You don’t want to have to take up your valuable time to tell a marketing pro what you want, let the experienced, outsourced pro’s tell you what you actually need. That’s a winning formula.