

## DEALERSHIP OR REPAIR SHOP: To use or not to use?

Because we treat our customers as family and want what's best for you, we did some research. Did you know that you can save an average of more than \$300 a year by utilizing the services of your local family owned auto repair shop as opposed to the dealer?

A report compiled by *AutoMD.com* using data from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, the Federal Highway Administration and the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association absolutely blew me away. Car owners who went to dealers for repairs spent an average of \$1,209 a year versus \$903 for those who used independents.

"Now you have to make a sound decision based on what is best for you and your car and there are many factors in deciding where to go for your vehicle's service and repair; and, in some cases, the dealership service center can make more sense than the local repair shop for recalls or warranty work," said *AutoMD.com* President Shane Evangelist. "But for many jobs, if the car owner does his/her research and finds the right independent repair shop, the work required can be done expertly while also saving hundreds of dollars."

All of our customers have different priorities. Some like to replace their car every few years while others drive'em 'til they drop. Here is what BC Auto and the local dealer can offer you.

### **IF PRICE IS WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT**

We know you work hard for your money and everyone has had to tighten their purse strings lately so it's okay, even smart to make sure you get a fair price on your auto repairs and service.

*AutoMD.com* states, "While it is definitely true that labor rates generally are much cheaper at your local repair shop (as much as 20% less on average) than at the auto dealership, and that many of them specialize by brand and even have OEM-certified mechanics on staff, it is not always the best option. The dealers not only have the diagnostic equipment supplied by the factory, but also the proprietary and – in some cases - restricted OEM codes and information needed to diagnose and repair the more advanced technology issues in newer vehicles."

Since Massachusetts made the Right to Repair Act law in July 2012, (it has also been introduced in the US Senate and hopefully will become law nationally), the playing field regarding scan tools, diagnostic information and equipment is being leveled. This increases our ability to diagnose and repair your vehicle in an even more cost effective way than before.

We do agree that sometimes you can get something for nothing and that's when you need to return to the dealership; for repairs covered by warranty or recalls. Free is better no matter what...

### **WHO KEEPS BETTER RECORDS ON MY VEHICLE**

Although the dealership keeps your service records up to date and has the manufacturer's schedule of maintenance based on mileage and time since the service was last done, they may not actually know when it's time for you to have your maintenance done. Here, we truly have the advantage.

We have access to the same information regarding what services need to be performed and when they should be done but we are able to accurately calculate what date we need to schedule your appointment. We monitor your average mileage and we talk to you to make sure that your driving habits haven't changed; have you been on vacation, did you change jobs, are the kids taking the bus to school now instead of using Mom's Taxi Service? All of these small things can change your average mileage.

Your next service is calculated immediately after we finish writing your current repair order. We do our best to let you know what needs to be done the next time we see you and for scheduled maintenance we can even send you an estimate in the mail so you can plan ahead. You'll know when you need to come in to see us and how much it will be.

### **RELATIONSHIPS, PROFESSIONAL, PERSONAL, GENUINE**

Everyone has a relationship with the dealership where they bought their car and it should be a good and mutually beneficial one. You should trust that the service center mechanics will perform only necessary service and repairs and that they will be done in a professional manner.

According to *AutoMD.com* “you don’t actually have a relationship with the mechanic working on your vehicle; you have a relationship with the service writer whose pay is based on the amount of service he/she writes” and that’s not a personal relationship, it’s a business relationship. “In a smaller independent repair shop, you are more likely to have a more direct relationship with the owner of the shop and even the mechanic,” states *AutoMD.com*.

That’s how it is at BC Auto Repair. As we said in the first sentence, we treat our customers as family. You have a relationship with Peggy, our service writer and you know our technicians Steve and Chris. Of course Bill is always here to answer your questions, give advice on what car to buy, or just to sit down and talk about the news of the day.

We have a genuine relationship that is both professional and personal. We like it that way.

### **SO THE BOTTOM LINE COMES DOWN TO THIS**

We understand that we can’t do 100% of the service and repairs on your vehicle; you will need to go to the dealer for warranty work and recalls but we will continue to provide you with professional, friendly service at a fair price to remain your primary service and repair shop.