

## Advice for Car Wash Guy

Written by Steve Marr  
Monday, 25 July 2016 04:49

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“Jim” developed a nice Michigan business over 15 years of washing cars at people’s homes. He offered an old-fashioned hand washing for \$30 to \$40 for a van or a larger vehicle. He developed a steady clientele of customers who liked this service. All they had to do was pull the car out of the garage without having to take it anywhere. In addition the car didn’t have to go through a harsh carwash. With Michigan’s regular summer rains and winter road salt, this developed into a popular service. He also serviced cars at a customer’s employment location. They liked driving to work with a dirty car in the morning and going home with a clean vehicle in the afternoon.

His equipment was fairly minimal. He owned a simple utility van with the name of his car wash business displayed on the side and handed out business cards with his pricing on the back. His services included the basic car wash, waxing, carpet shampooing and engine cleaning. He asked me for some ideas about how to grow his business.

I suggested that he offer a 50% discount for first-time users as an incentive to get them to try his service. I also suggested that he either offer a \$25 referral discount to customers who referred someone new or offer them a free car wash. This would be an excellent way to generate referral business.

I also recommended that he print two versions of his business card. He could use one for first-time users with the wording:

Car Wash/Wax at your door

Prices: [normal]

Discount: first time user (50% off)

Web Address

Company name and phone

Then, he could use a different card for regular customers. This one would contain his contact information but also highlight the referral bonus. The referrals started generating more business and worked very well.

Additionally I suggested he start an email list sorted by location. This would allow him to send a quick email to past customers when he would be in their area on a specific day. He would use the email to set additional appointments.

Referral gifts for new customers can be an excellent incentive. King Solomon wrote “A gift opens the way and ushers the giver into the presence of the great.” (Proverbs 18:16, NIV) Everyone likes receiving a nice gift. Think through how you could use this idea in your business

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