



5 Ways to Turn More Transmission Repair Leads Into Customers

From the Transmission Repair Cost Guide
<http://www.transmissionrepaircostguide.com>

As an owner or manager, you know that internet shoppers are a different breed of lead.

They are very cost conscious.

They want estimates, quotes and financing options.

They want to see good reviews on Yelp, Google and BBB.

And they often have many questions they want answered.

People searching online are looking to quickly find a low-friction solution to their transmission problem. They can be any stage of the buying process when they reach your website and call your shop. Many are just starting to experience problems, some might have work done in the near future, some are shopping prices and some will go the used or trade-in route. In our experience, when followed up timely and properly, internet leads historically have a 1:7 conversion to a major RO, assuming a few are bad leads, minors, going elsewhere, a junking/trading in the car, etc.

While this guide focuses mostly on online leads (because it's what we do), these tips will help convert any given lead into a customer. That said, the call and email scripts and offers you use to get other leads in the door won't necessarily work as well for getting an internet shopper in the door. A general outline of our sales technique we recommend can be found at the end of this guide.

The following 5 tips will help you turn more of the leads you're getting into jobs:

1) Follow Up as Soon as Humanly Possible

Quick response times are a major key to having success with internet leads. The goal should be to connect with the lead in under 30 minutes so that they're still on the Transmission Repair Cost Guide or your shop's website and are still actively looking for a solution to their transmission problem when they hear back from you.

According to a study published in the Harvard Business Review, businesses that that tried to contact potential customers within an hour of receiving a query were nearly seven times as likely to qualify the lead (defined as having a meaningful conversation with a key decision maker) as those that tried to contact the customer even an hour later - and more than 60 times as likely as companies that waited 24 hours or longer. We've found that if the leads are not called within minutes, the chances of reaching them are considerably lower. After a few hours most leads "go cold" - ie. they aren't available to talk or have potentially found another solution (they've agreed to be towed to a competitor).

- Call & email each lead ASAP after receiving it.

- If they don't answer, leave a short, friendly voicemail.
- Then send the lead a quick email as well.

2) Utilize Text Messaging

Some customers prefer to communicate by text instead of email or phone calls, so you should offer it as an option.

Text messaging is a great way to keep in touch with customers. A study by SAP found that 64% of consumers surveyed say businesses should use SMS more often and 70% said that SMS is a good way for a company to get their attention. This points to an opportunity for shops to incorporate SMS communication into their multichannel strategy to attract and retain customers.

For example, offer to text message your shop's phone number and address to customers.

Check out Autotext.me or DemandForce for texting automation that is built for shops and keeps your customer informed during the repair process.

3) Automate Email and/or Text Message Follow-ups

Once a week, follow up with all of the leads you received via an email blast. In our experience, this will close one or two more jobs. Then try following up one more time a week after that. Shops who do these things on a regular basis are getting far more results from internet shoppers than the ones who are not.

In addition, every customer who submits the contact form on your website or calls your shop should get an email and/or text (ideally automated) from you with your shop's address, phone number and website link. This helps drive more calls, appointment shows and jobs as your message will be prominently displayed on their phone and is likely the only one they received from the different shops they contacted – helping your shop stand out from the competition.

This might sound high-tech, but it is quite straightforward to implement. Talk to your website manager or agency about setting up automated emailing & texting. If you'd like to do it yourself, look into using Callrail or Twilio to send text messages. For automated emailing, check out Mailchimp or Aweber. Zapier is an integration tool that can pull everything together by connecting and coordinating all of these tools.

4) Offer Financing Options

Many internet leads are only interested in a low cost fix. If the customer doesn't have the cash or credit to pay for the repairs and your website doesn't clearly display financing options, they will move on and find someone who does offer financing.

The solution to this problem is to offer traditional financing or in-house financing (when necessary) with 50% down and automated credit card weekly payments for 4-6 months.

Consider a \$2400 repair – it can be difficult for many customers to come up with that much cash or credit. If they can't find a reasonable financing option for a rebuild or replacement, you may lose them to a used unit install at a general repair shop or a trade-in. In our opinion, it's better to chance a default and lose some labor \$\$ than to lose the job entirely.

The 2015 Marketing Survey by Drivetrain Technology found that around 40% of transmission repair shops offered no financing options to customers.

Simply mentioning that you have financing options such as CarCareOne, Springleaf, Cross-Check, EasyPay and Globalcheck will increase your appointment shows and repairs completed.

5) Give the Customer a Price Range

We're living in the era of the internet price shopper.

- RepairPal is based around transparent pricing.
- OpenBay is based around price shopping.
- AutoMD – comparing price quotes.
- YourMechanic is based on price savings and convenience vs. shops.
- The Transmission Repair Cost Guide gives approximate cost ranges for used, rebuilt and reman transmissions, so the price range for a transmission rebuild isn't a mystery to the internet shopper.

Search "transmission repair cost" and you'll find prices from \$1800 to \$3500 almost instantly. Over 50,000 visitors in the US see this pricing every month, so many internet shoppers already have an idea of what the cost range is before they call a shop.

All of the big online auto repair "disruptors" are based around pricing/cost. Offering a free check/diagnosis on price shopping leads isn't going to be as effective as offering a fair, reasonable, realistic rebuild or replacement range based on the transmission model.

This is why we encourage Cost Guide Certified Shops to provide each lead with a realistic price range.

Think of it this way:

If a customer calls around to your competitor who does not quote prices on the phone, who are they more likely to go to? Your shop that gave up-front, straightforward and realistic pricing, offered financing, text messaged them and asked them thoughtful questions or the shop that tells the customer that they have to bring their car in before they'll say how much it'll cost?

Putting it all Together

Here is a general outline of a sales technique to use for internet leads:

1. Chat with the customer about their vehicle's problems and ask them thoughtful questions about their situation, what they're looking for and what their plans are. Make it clear that you empathize with them about their problem.
2. When they ask for an estimate, give them a price for a remanufactured unit plus installation as the worst-case scenario price.
3. Then quote a lower, realistic ballpark range to rebuild their transmission. Explain why this range exists and what it'll take for you to diagnose the problem and be able to provide a more number. Explain the difference between reman and rebuild and why installing a used transmission can be a bad idea.
4. Then mention the financing options you offer and why they should do business with you.

The lead will qualify itself from there.

What to do Next

1. Pick one of the tips above that your shop isn't currently using and implement it!
2. Continue receiving leads from us by signing up for full access to the Cost Guide Certified Shop program here: www.transmissionrepaircostguide.com/signup/

About the Cost Guide

Our mission is to educate people in your area about transmission repair and make your shop their go-to choice.

We help people navigate through the process of determining that they have a transmission problem, answer as many of their questions as possible and then refer them to the local Certified Shop once they're ready to get an estimate and bring their vehicle to a shop for repairs.