PerforMAX
Dealer Solutions

Why Do You Think They Call It Waiting?

The truth is that it's rarely the technician's fault when a simple maintenance service takes longer than promised. The actual time a vehicle is in a Tech's bay is usually a small portion of the total time involved when a simple oil change, tire rotation and multi-point inspection takes longer than 35 or 40 minutes.

How is the "headlights to tail lights" time in your dealership on a wait maintenance service? How long does it take from the time a customer pulls into your drive until they pull out with receipt and thorough multi-point inspection in hand? Have you timed it recently?

I have witnessed everything from less than 30 minutes to over 2 hours!
Pick any morning during peak time and perform a time study. It's important to perform the study during peak times because those are the times when processes are abandoned and where our opportunity to improve lies.

If your total time is over an hour, most often you will find that the vehicle is actually only in the bay 20-25 minutes of that time.

In order to move the needle in a positive direction, we must first determine where our best opportunities exist. I suggest breaking your time study down into the following sections:

1. Write up time (including the time it takes the customer to be greeted)
2. Pre-bay time (the time from when the vehicle leaves the service drive until a technician gets into the vehicle)
3. Actual In-Bay time (from the time tech pulls in till he pulls out)
4. Post Bay time (time from when the tech exits the vehicle until the customer shuts the door to leave)
5. Wash bay time – OPTIONAL (If you wash customer's vehicles, time the wash separately)

Perform several of these studies with different advisor/technician combinations. What is your average time? In which area of the process could time be improved?

Use the above data to design a written process for all Quick Maintenance services. When writing the process, be very specific in listing each step and who performs it. Look for opportunities to reduce time that vehicle sits idle. Identify ways that will allow everyone who comes into contact with the vehicle to know not only that the vehicle is waiting, but how far along in the process it is. It's all about accountability.

Here is a sample process:

1. Greet customer on service drive using ***PerforMAX*** Customer Interactive Process, to include a Menu presentation and permission from customer to perform a multi-point inspection.
2. Service Advisors to designate vehicle as Quick Service Waiter by turning on hazard lights and placing work order under driver's side wiper blade.
3. Porter/Advisor pulls vehicle ahead into designated "Quick Service Waiter Parking" and turns off hazard lights.
4. Porter/Advisor places work order in Quick Service Rack in next available slot.
5. Next available technician selects work order from lowest slot available in rack or is assigned work order by Shop Foreman or electronic dispatch system.
6. Technician to make multi-point inspection the first operation completed. (If inspection results in an additional sales request – give work order and multi-point inspection to advisor to present to customer while maintenance is completed
7. Upon completing work order, technician then marks current time on driver's side windshield, turns work order into advisor for booking and parks vehicle in designated "Quick Service Wash Parking."
8. Wash bay personnel selects vehicle by oldest time on windshield, after wash is complete, turns keys into Service Advisor and proceeds to hand dry vehicle.
9. Service Advisor then escorts customer to cashier, explains invoice line by line, and reviews multi-point inspection findings while wash bay personnel completes vehicle.
10. After cashiering, advisor then escorts customer to vehicle and thanks them for their business!

Following these simple steps, you will drastically reduce the cycle time on quick maintenance services.

Put the "quick" back in a Quick Maintenance Service in your shop!