

Are you OVER paying your mechanic?

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By Austin C. Davis

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Reader Question: I am on a tight budget, should I tell my mechanic how much I can afford to spend?

Dear concerned car owner,

Do you like to take your car in for repairs? Do you ever feel like you were cheated or taken advantage of by the shop or their mechanics? Do you know it could be what you are saying to the repair shop that could be costing you more? Most auto repair shops are run by honest hard-working people but in some circumstances you may bring out the dark side at some shops.

For instance, never tell the shop how much you are willing to spend without first getting an explanation of what you are going to have done. When you give the shop a "spending limit" they may have a tendency to do as little as possible but will manage to spend up to your limit. For example, a woman came into my shop and told me she had \$500 to spend. She did not start off her conversation with "hello", or "can you fix my car", all she said was how much money she wanted to give me.

Now granted, it is nice to have people come into the shop and actually like to pay their bills, but this lady gave me a spending limit before she told me what she wanted to have fixed. She thought she had transmission trouble and assumed that it would cost her a fortune to repair. While on a test drive with her I concluded that the problem was not transmission-related, but that the car probably needed a tune up or something along those lines.

But wait, this person wanted to give me \$500! If I was not an honest shop owner, I would have remained quiet on the test drive and taken the money that she was willing to pay. Let's say that I told this customer that I could fix her car because I am a nice guy and since she only had \$500 to spend I would try to help her out as much as I could. In reality, the actual repairs needed would have only cost \$200.

Because this customer thought she had expensive transmission trouble, she would probably be happy with a bill for \$350 and she will also think the shop did her a favor. Her first mistake was to diagnose

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the problem herself. I wonder if she goes to her dentist and tells her which tooth to pull or if she thinks it is time for another root canal? You take your car to the repair shop to have someone else diagnose and repair your car; so let them do their job. Her second mistake was to tell the shop how much she was willing to spend.

Most of the mechanics and service writers that I know of work on commission, and in the example above, an additional \$150 would sure be a nice tip. I see this happen all the time and it is so easy to prevent. Sometimes it is better to simply describe the symptoms to the service writer, remain quiet about your budget dollars and let the shop diagnose the problem with your car and how much it will cost to repair.

If the problem you are having with your car will require a test drive for the mechanic or service writer to

hear make sure you ride in the car with them at the time you drop off your car for repairs. If they can't hear it or feel it they can't fix it, and you will probably just get frustrated and discouraged by them not being able to repair the problem you want them to fix. Have you been over-paying your mechanic?

Sincerely,

Austin C Davis

Interested in an e-book about everything your mechanic doesn't want you to know? Sound advice from Austin Davis. [Click Here!](#) [Click here](#)

Austin Davis comes from a family that has been in the auto repair industry for over 64 years. Austin has written a book "What Your Mechanic Doesn't Want You To Know". His book is about how to find an honest mechanic, and the simple steps to keep them honest. Austin points out that it is usually what the customer says or does that can cause them to be taken advantage of by a repair "professional." You can view his website at [Click here](#)

How To Choose The Best Web Host...For You

By Anthony Vita

How To Choose The Best Web Host...For You
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Web Hosting is a service. Auto mechanics also provide a service. How would you decide which mechanic is best for you? Price? Experience? Reliability? This is the same line of thinking that should go into deciding which company should host your website.

It is very common to see choices centered around price, especially with so much competition in the hosting business. It is not uncommon to see hosting plans range from free to upwards of \$50 per

Are you OVER paying your mechanic?

month. However, if you happened to see a sign on the street that said "\$2 mechanic inside" you would probably drive right by, right? How good could a "\$2 mechanic" possibly be? Why would a mechanic with skill and experience charge next to nothing for their service? Certainly, it is worth paying a mechanic. You don't want to be overcharged, but you do realize an experienced mechanic has value.

This example is very similar to the hosting world. Some may argue a car is more important than a website. Tell that to the bed and breakfast owner who does 90% of their booking via their online reservation system. If your business depends on a website to either completely drive or supplement sales, you know how important a website can be.

When it comes to choosing a host, there are not enough choices centered around experience and reliability. These are the foundations for any good company. A mechanic who has worked on cars for 10 years is going to be more familiar with his trade than a mechanic who only has 2 years experience. If you were deciding on a mechanic, wouldn't you lean towards the one who has worked on cars for a longer period of time and perhaps comes on a good recommendation?

Okay, enough talk about cars, let's talk hosting. When you are looking for a company to provide the service of web hosting, try placing price aside for a moment. First, look for a company that has been in business for a number of years. Any host that has been around for over 5 years is probably doing something right. That's not to say a host of 2 years can't help you, but at least begin your search with the most experienced.

After you've found a few candidates, write down about 10 questions you would like to ask your future host. Even if you know the answers to some questions, that's okay. The reason for the questions is to see how long it takes to get answers and the quality of those answers. If you don't like what you see, scratch them off your list because that is exactly the type of response you will get when a support issue arises.

Try to get the web addresses of 4 or 5 sites they host and visit over a period of a week or so and see if you notice any downtime or blatant sluggishness. You may even want to email the owners of these sites and ask what they think of their host.

This may seem like a lot of work just to decide on a host for your website. It's certainly more involved than simply looking for the cheapest price. When you only look at price you overlook some essential factors, such as experience and reliability. If your website is important to you or your business, you will

come to rely on that experience which translates into quality service.

Anthony Vita has been helping businesses and individuals get an online presence ever since starting his own successful web hosting business, Web Feat, Inc., in 1997. Contact him at

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