

Is the Customer Always Right?

THE answer to this question may be either "yes" or "no", there being plenty of arguments in favor of either answer.

It may be contended that at the time the slogan was adopted in such stores as Marshall-Field's and John Wannamaker's, it was a necessary step in the progress of merchandising; that because of the methods used up to that time, some very drastic action had to be taken to convince the customer that it was safe for him to deal with your concern.

It might be contended that such a period has passed and that the policy has been continued for so long that the interpretation of it has become illogical. It seems that to a large number of people such a policy works entirely to their advantage and they continue to take an exaggerated advantage of the plan even to the point of downright dishonesty.

An analysis made of the cost of operating on such a policy in one department store reveals the fact that of all the adjustments made, customers were actually wrong in over fifty per cent of the cases. The cost of handling returned merchandise in this one store alone reached a total in excess of \$72,000.00 for one year.

This same line of reasoning may be applied in the use of such a slogan in the service department, although no figures are available to indicate the cost of operating under the idea that the customer is always right.

We do know, of course, that there are several distinct advantages on the "yes" side of this argument. We may say that the increase in business, as a result of treating the customer in this way, far offsets any amount which the dishonest customer will accept on adjustments which are unfair to the service department. We may further say that the selling of service has not progressed as far as the selling in other lines of merchandise and, therefore, the slogan should still apply in our particular line of work, since even today all customers have not been brought to the point where they can thoroughly trust the service organization with which they are obliged to deal. We believe that it is a matter of correct interpretation of the slogan; we believe that when the customer enters the service station, we should assume

that what he is about to tell us concerning his car, or the bill which we recently rendered him, or the work that we recently did for him, is based upon the conviction which he has in his own mind that he is right. This customer may be just as wrong as he can be, but if your adjustment is made against him while he firmly believes that he is right, then you are just as wrong as you can be. It seems to us that the one thing to get across to the customer is the fact that you are just as interested as he is in getting the thing settled. He cannot hold out in rage against you for a long period of time, if you convince him at the start that you want more than anything else to have the matter that he has brought to your attention settled. About the best thing to do, is to get all the cards on the table as quickly as possible, by all means let him play his hand first and in playing it he undoubtedly will give you some mighty good cards to use while you are playing yours.

Most Americans have a few drops of sporting blood in their system; they are willing to concede something and they have more or less of a sense of fair play, however, they do not want to be argued with, nor combated, therefore, never *argue* your side of the case, do only one thing after listening to his story and that is *explain* your side of the case, then tell him what you feel you should do about it. If he wants to start an argument, ask him to place himself in your position and determine what adjustment he would make. If you find the whole controversy cannot be settled with reasonable speed, pick out a few items which can be, and settle on these. Above all, keep in mind the fact that we are all paid to sell service, not to argue.

The customer is not always right, but he is nearly always honest in his claim, when he isn't, you can generally detect it and when he is, give him credit for honestly trying to get what he believes he is entitled to. In making any adjustments, make it with the idea of breaking down the barriers of mistrust which has grown up in the customer's mind. Any adjustment which sends the customer away with the conviction that he has been treated fairly, and after all that is all he wants, is not only money well spent, but money which will sooner or later come directly back to you.

Service Managers' Annual Meeting, September 10-11-12, 1930

Visible Cards for Follow-up Records

This Packard Service Record will promote customer satisfaction, and increase new car sales and service profits.

International factograph cabinets or the binders referred to in Volume 4, No. 4 give you a visible "control line" on each of your customers which is unquestionably a "Profit line" because of

- A. Close customer contact resulting in greater satisfaction, good will, and new car sales.
- B. Increased service department profits.
- C. Service Department improvements and economies, and intimate knowledge of customers' complaints.
- D. Time saved in keeping and referring to service records and increased efficiency of record and Service Department.

Packard owners are busy people, and being very human, are apt to put off having trifling mechanical troubles taken care of at the right time. Here is a vast



International Cabinet File for D-21C Stock Cards

group of customers who are seemingly satisfied with the operation of their cars, while in reality many of them are not. With this in mind, consider the value of keeping in closer touch with all your customers all of the time.

It is easier and costs less to keep customers sold than to get new ones. There is no theory about it. People like to do business where they feel there is a constant personal interest taken in their needs and satisfaction. Thus, you arrive at the heart of the matter,—the service record and the manner in which it is kept.

A glance at the illustration of the Standard Packard Service Record No. D-31-B in International factograph cabinets is sufficient to indicate the advantages of this method of keeping records over blind cards in a drawer or folder.

With every customer's name, when car is due to be brought in for service, and whether now overdue, visible, you can go over your entire service record in a few minutes each day and have the proper follow-ups carried out promptly. The visible portion of the reverse side of the card gives complete monthly record of service rendered. Below this is shown car delivery date, key number, model, type, motor number, etc.; as well as a record of service calls, customers' comments, and follow-up letters mailed.

A positive service control is afforded through an unusual arrangement found only in International. When a customer is overdue for service, simply offset the card from the left position over to the right-hand position on the card holder. This offset card continues to flash an overdue condition until customer brings car in when the card is then returned to its normal position on the card holder. No need to attach or insert signals; International's built-in signals eliminate this procedure.

These cabinets represent the latest development in visible record equipment, and for your service records may be likened to an investment in time-saving, profit-increasing equipment for your shop.

The International cabinet embodies many very distinct operating features, among which are the following:

1. **MECHANICAL SHIFTING**—To provide space for new cards or close up spaces—simple, speedy, and positive.
2. **PERFECT LAYBACK**—The one piece hanger operates without resistance, resulting in feather-weight action of the cards, and equally flat writing surface, front and back.
3. **UNIFORM AND INDEPENDENT SPACING**—Spacing is controlled by accurate die-cut notches in sides of tray which give perfect visible margins, front and back.
4. **BUILT-IN SIGNALLING**—The construction of the equipment permits signalling without using detachable signals, resulting in perfect and speedier control for recorder.

The International factograph cabinets are recommended to you because of their many advantages and may be purchased direct from the Packard factory by addressing the Service Letter Editor.

Be sure and specify the Standard Packard Service Customer's record card No. D-31-B.

The cards are \$6.76 per thousand.

The prices and capacities of the Cabinets are as follows:

Width Card	No. Trays	Cabinet Number	Card Tray	Capacities Cabinet	Green
7 $\frac{5}{8}$	2	2-8	77	154	\$ 27.00
7 $\frac{5}{8}$	6	6-8	77	462	66.00
7 $\frac{5}{8}$	12	12-8	77	924	111.00

Cabinets may be had in Walnut or Mahogany finish at slightly increased cost.

Profits in Parts

Is your parts department making money?

Possibly you have tried to find the answer by studying figures covering expense and turnover. Possibly the reason is to be found in obsolete stock as referred to in Volume 4, No. 13 of the Service Letter. On the other hand it may be that you have taken our suggestion and have weeded out the obsolete parts both from the bins and from the inventory accounts and still there seems to be some trouble.

Here is another suggestion, maybe its the looks of the place. Have you looked at it lately through the eyes of a customer? In the first place, is the stock room clean? Can you show it to a new car prospect with pride and say "Look here Mr. Jones how much money we have spent to insure the prompt and satisfactory servicing of your new car." Are the parts clean and protected from rust? Are they neatly and carefully stored so as to protect them? The way some parts are kept that we have seen, they never should be used in a Packard car, much less sold over the counter.

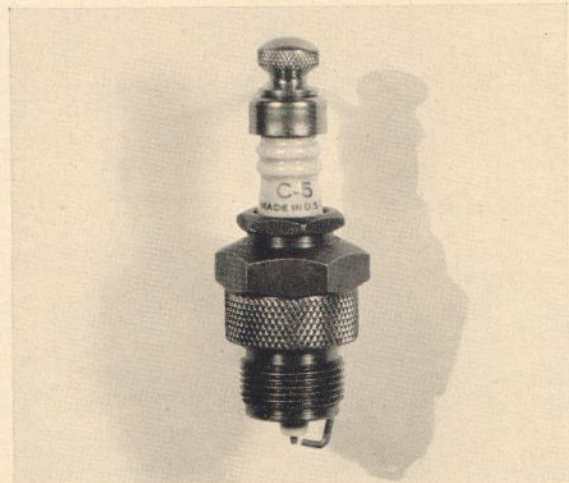
Next, take a look at the location of the stock room, does it in any way encourage the sale of parts, or has it been placed entirely with the idea of shop convenience? Don't you think both should be considered? If you are in the business of selling service you ought to try to sell some parts too and displaying what you have to sell is half the battle.

It may be time for your old-time stock room to shake the dust and dirt off from its feet and move up where it can be seen. Give a little thought to this mighty important part of your business. Remember, you are a merchant and your wares must be *sold*.

Want to Know Something About Brakes?

One sure way is to see the new Service Film—it's on the subject of brakes and it was produced after much study and thought by the Service Departments of the factory and the Bendix Brake Company. We know that it will be a real help to you in servicing brakes. This by the way is a good time to go after some additional work by selling vacationists on the importance of having good brakes before starting on any trips, but first be sure you can fix them right and the right way is shown in the film. Service Films are issued each month at \$3.50 each.

The New Spark Plug



The C-5 Spark Plug is being used on current motors. It will be found to cover a wider range and therefore is better adapted for average driving conditions than any previously used.

A Few Suggestions

LIGHTS

When inspecting lights, do not fail to start the motor first, then turn the lights on and test for flaring of the lights, as you accelerate the motor. This will tell you if there are any loose or dirty connections. Correct this condition before the car goes out and burns out some lamp bulbs, leaving the owner without the necessary lights.

LUBRICATING VALVE

When testing cylinder and piston lubricating valves for leaks, make sure that the motor has run long enough to get the oil thoroughly warm. The best time for making this test is when the car comes in from a long run.

HAND BRAKE LEVER

When a car is in the Service Station for a general inspection, or for any brake work, do not overlook the hand brake lever, it can only perform its function when properly lubricated.

DIAGNOSIS

We give here a short list of some actual cases of improper diagnosis of mechanical troubles. The troubles were reported by the service salesman and the orders written up for the work in the first column, whereas the actual difficulty is listed in the second column:

- Car wandering—Loose spring clips.
- Motor out of tune—Spark plug gaps wide.
- Piston pin loose—Oil knock.
- Transmission noisy second speed—Muffler plates loose.
- Noisy rear axle—Tire noise.
- Piston slap—Valve sticking.
- Piston slap—Spark plug loose.
- Loose shackle—Shock absorber knock.
- Noisy damper—Fan belt loose.
- End play in crankshaft—Damper loose.
- Loose bearings—Cylinder block loose.
- Coils cutting out—Boiling gas.

Personal Mention

Our group of family views for this issue includes two sent in by Mr. H. B. Sellers, who many of you will remember served for some time as Wholesale Service Representative in the Philadelphia Organization. He now has charge of service activities in Atlantic City and evidently is trying to show the entire Philadelphia Organization that he knew what he was talking about when he asked a dealer to clean up his service department and operate it along standard methods.



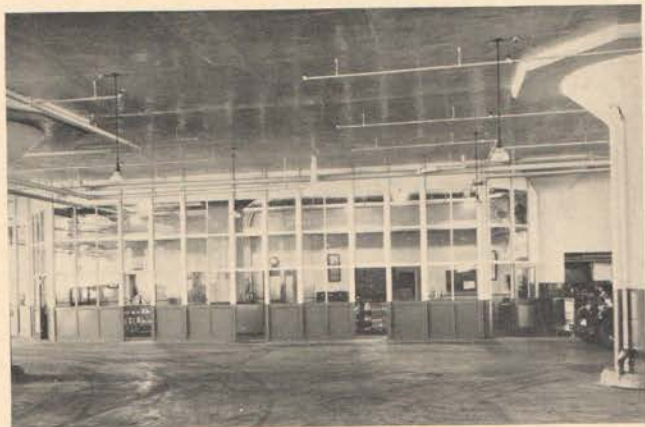
Mr. Sellers informs us that they are equipped to handle any type of work in their new building, which has in excess of 8,000 square feet of floor space. The floor is finished in English coral red; the trim and office in green and the walls and ceiling in white. Things certainly look ship shape and we know that you won't have to worry about any tourists which are headed for the very popular resorts near Atlantic City.



This establishment is presided over by Mr. Compton, as you will notice by the exceptionally attractive Neon sign. The radiator is outlined in blue Neon tubes and the other lettering is in red. You will notice too that the sign is in the shape of the courtesy coat pin; it is very unusual and attractive in appearance. Mr. Compton is not a newcomer to the automobile business, but has recently taken over a Detroit Branch dealership and with his new sign, exceptionally attractive show room and a very neat service department, we look forward to hearing from him often and we know that you join us in wishing him success.



And here we have the Service Sales Office of the new Newark, New Jersey Service Station. It is well lighted and conveniently arranged; accessory show cases are used for writing service orders. Note also the black-board giving the time promised on each job, which is up where the customer can obtain his own information. We would also call your attention to the use of the Service Posters. This organization certainly should be doing some good work for Packard owners with their new building and equipment. Howard Day is the Service Manager and we will bet that he is mighty glad to get into quarters that are big enough to carry on service the way he thinks it ought to be handled.



We appreciate receiving these notices concerning the personnel of the Service Department and we want every one connected with the Service Department of the Packard field organization to know that the Service Letter is issued for their benefit and in the interest of better Packard service.

We Welcome Suggestions and Inquiries from Packard Service Men. Address All Communications Care Editor, Packard Service Letter.