

NOVEMBER 2025

MOBILE

Magazine

MOBILE TIRE WARS:

10 MUSTS FOR PROTECTING YOUR TIRE BUSINESS

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Bonus: Mobile Service Book Review

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VERNON E. DAVIS, II



Fixed Ops Leader,
Vernon E. Davis, II
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

MOBILE SERVICE and TIRE WARS: Will History Repeat Itself?

In 1983, I was a fresh-faced Service Advisor trainee at a domestic Dealer in Tampa Bay, being “mentored” by a grumpy old Service Advisor (probably younger than I am now). He gave me an early lesson that I have never forgotten when he said... “If someone calls in for an oil change, push them out as far as you can. We can’t make money on them and we have a shop full of engine repairs that we CAN make money on. And...if anyone calls and needs tires, send them to Bob Lee’s Garage down the street. We don’t do tires.”



A few years later...Jiffy Lube and a slew of other quick service competitors sprouted up on every corner and took all that NUISANCE business off our hands. We snickered about their stupidity all through the 80’s. We were churning high gross and they were working for peanuts.

Then, somewhere in the 90’s, we heard about this new buzzword called “retention”. We woke up to the fact that we were churning and burning our customers (not called “Guests” back then). And, we were hit with the cold hard facts that: A) less than HALF of our sales customers were maintaining their cars with us, B) these inactive customers were far LESS likely to buy from us again, and C) we started missing what now is considered “gravy work”.

My friends, I don’t have a crystal ball, but SOUND THE ALARM because it’s happening all over again. Dealers and OEMs are slow to get active in Mobile Service even though we ALL enjoy home delivery of products & services in OUR own lives. Not just competing for oil changes, but the surge of aftermarket chains and ISP competitors is selling TIRES, the ultimate retention item! The time to act is NOW and this issue is dedicated to TAKING ACTION!

If you are struggling to figure out this puzzle, we can help. With over 400 Mobile Service Dealer training events under our belts, we are well equipped to get you jump started or take you Next>Level.

Cheers, js

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“Dealers are under attack on tires. If we don’t respond swiftly and aggressively, we are going to get ‘Jiffy Lube’ all over again.”

—John Schmidt

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

LETTER FROM
THE EDITOR

3-5

FEATURE ARTICLE
MOBILE TIRE WARS: 10 MUSTS
FOR PROTECTING YOUR TIRE
BUSINESS

6

GEO>TECH MOBILE
SCHEDULER

7

THE FUNNY PAPERS

8

**DUMBEST IDEAS
EVERRR +**
UNINTENDED
CELEBRITY SHOUT OUT

9-10

MOBILE BOOK REVIEW:
IGNITE.DRIVE.THRIVE.LEAD
BY
VERNON E. DAVIS, II

11

MOBILE UNIT
UPFITTING + OUR
EDGE

12

MOBILE U



SOME THINK
OUTSIDE
OF THE BOX



SOME
SMASH
THE BOX



WE NEVER
HAD A BOX

THAT'S NEXT>LEVEL

NEXT>LEVEL BY THE NUMBERS

1

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Agency dedicated *exclusively*
to Remote Services

1

AND ONLY Consultant "behind the
curtain" as a Dealer Performance Coach,
Workshop Facilitator, and Program
Content Provider to the two
largest OEM Mobile Service
Programs in America

7

OEM Brands served by
NEXT>LEVEL as Mobile
Service Subject Matter Expert

400+

Number of Mobile Service
Dealer Training Events and
Workshops delivered since 2020

MOBILE TIRE WARS: 10 MUSTS FOR PROTECTING YOUR TIRE BUSINESS

by John Schmidt

There's a storm brewing on the service horizon, and if Dealers don't act decisively — and soon — they risk repeating one of the costliest mistakes in automotive retail history.

Over the last 18 months, a wave of aftermarket mobile tire service providers has flooded the market. They're fast, convenient, aggressively priced, and already stealing market share from franchised Dealers who have yet to wake up to the threat. And this isn't just about losing tire sales, it's about losing everything that comes with those tire sales: the customer's loyalty, their maintenance business, and ultimately their next new car purchase. We've seen this movie before...

Decades ago, Dealers dismissed routine maintenance as "low-value work," preferring the fat gross profit margins of heavy repairs and warranty claims. They ceded the quick-lube, tire, and minor service business to independent shops and national chains. Since then, they've been fighting uphill to win that volume back.

Now, history is poised to repeat itself. Mobile tire service is the new front line in the battle for customer retention, and the aftermarket is already outflanking many Dealers.

THE QUESTION IS: HOW WILL YOU RESPOND...OR WILL YOU RESPOND?

There are 10 MUSTS every Dealer needs to execute NOW to protect their tire business and defend their customer relationships:

1. Equipment: Arm Your Fleet for Battle

If you're going to compete in the mobile tire arena, you need the right gear. That means equipping a dedicated tire-capable mobile unit with a professional-grade tire changer, wheel balancer, and sufficient tire storage. Don't wait until you're "ready" — the market isn't going to pause for you. Get into the mobile tire business today, even with one unit, and scale from there.

2. Promotion: Make Some Noise

Too many Dealers launch mobile services quietly and then wonder why they don't gain traction. If you're serious about tires, shout it from the rooftops. Promote your mobile tire offering everywhere: your website, digital ads, social media, point-of-sale materials, service drive signage, email campaigns, and even during the sales-to-service handoff. If your customers don't know you offer mobile tire service, they'll assume you don't and they'll go elsewhere.

MOBILE TIRE WARS: 10 MUSTS FOR PROTECTING YOUR TIRE BUSINESS (CONT'D)

3. Frictionless Scheduling: Click, Confirm, Done

Customers today expect Amazon-level ease. If your mobile tire appointment process involves phone calls, email exchanges, or waiting for confirmation, you're already losing. Invest in a true mobile scheduling platform that allows customers to instantly book a confirmed appointment, not just submit a request. Bonus points if the system clusters appointments geographically to maximize route efficiency and technician productivity.

4. Competitive Pricing: Think Retention, Not Gross

Let's be honest: tire margins have always been thin. But, tires are not about profit, they're about retention. As Carl Sewell wrote in *Customers for Life*, if you keep the customer's tire business, you keep their maintenance business. Keep their maintenance business and you keep their next car sale. Be prepared to accept slim margins on tires to secure the larger, long-term revenue stream.

5. Alignments: Solve the Friction Problem

Here's the Achilles' heel of mobile tire service: alignments. If the customer has to make a separate trip for one, you've reintroduced the very friction mobile service is supposed to eliminate. Explore emerging mobile alignment solutions or develop partnerships to complete the full package in one visit. Dealers who crack this code will gain a significant competitive edge.

6. Complimentary Bonus Services: Sweeten the Deal

Add value that ties customers back to your store. Offer free tire rotations, road hazard protection, or complimentary alignment checks with tire purchases. These extras cost little, but speak volumes about your commitment to service and value and they're benefits aftermarket competitors often overlook.

7. Accurate, Credible Tread Reports: The New Standard

If your technicians are still pulling out a penny or a quarter to measure tread depth, you're already behind. Mobile customers expect precision and professionalism. Equip your team with digital tread depth tools that provide instant, easy-to-understand reports delivered via text or email. Real-time, transparent reporting builds trust and trust drives sales.

8. Technician Training & Incentives: Empower Your Front Line

Your mobile technician isn't just a tire changer, they're your brand ambassador and frontline salesperson. Train them thoroughly on how to present and sell tires without feeling "salesy."



MOBILE TIRE WARS: 10 MUSTS FOR PROTECTING YOUR TIRE BUSINESS (CONT'D)

Provide a written inspection process and sales script, and conduct role-play sessions until they're confident. Incentivize performance. Customers love the transparency of mobile service and the casual, conversational rapport they can build with a technician — leverage that to boost tire revenue.

9. HOTSHOT & Tire Storage Provisions: Few things are more frustrating than a technician who successfully sells a set of tires on-site — only to lose the sale because the tires aren't in stock or can't be delivered promptly. That's why tire inventory management and Hot Shot delivery support are critical components of a successful mobile tire strategy. When a tech closes a sale in the field, **the Dealership should be able to "Hot Shot" the tires directly to the job site within THIRTY MINUTES.** This responsiveness turns opportunity into immediate revenue and demonstrates the kind of service agility that aftermarket competitors can't match.

10. Target Market: Focus Where It Counts

Yes, commercial fleet tire work is fast and efficient. But, fleet buyers view tires as a commodity — "cheap, black, and round," with "round" sometimes optional. Your real opportunity is in the retail sector, where convenience trumps price and value-added features matter. Focus your mobile tire strategy on the existing customer base in your DMS. If price and value are competitive, they'll stay with their selling Dealer.

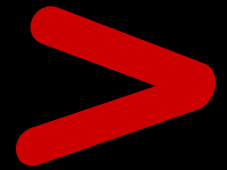
THE CLOCK IS TICKING ...

The "Mobile Tire Wars" have already begun. Your customers are being targeted right now. The only question is whether you'll stand your ground and fight or surrender the battlefield without a fight. The future of your Fixed Operations and your Dealership depends on the choices you make today.



GAME CHANGING TECH

FULL-SUITE REMOTE SERVICE SCHEDULER

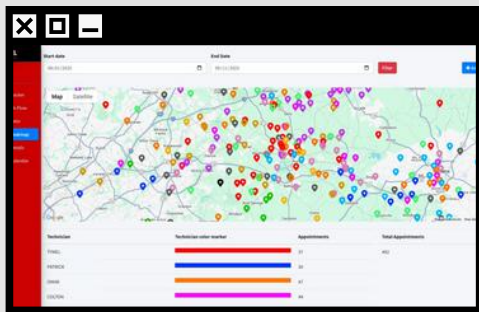


GEO>TECH is for use by internal dealer remote service coordinators, third-party BDC teams, or service customers. Our proprietary tool has an intuitive interface that requires little to no training to get you up and running quickly. It has the capability of scheduling mobile service and pick-up and delivery from the same portal and can be accessed on a computer or mobile device with our tech mobile app. Our scheduler works as a free-standing platform or integrated with Dealer DMS, such as CDK and Dealertrack.

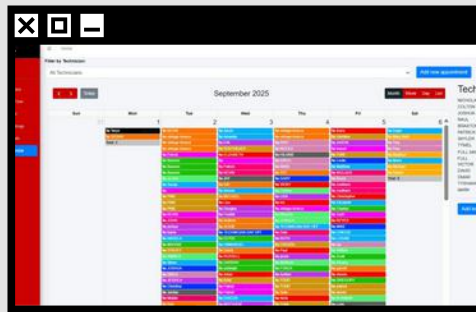
GEO>TECH's dynamic features include the following:

Appointment Clustering ETA Calculation Route Optimization Appointment Limiters Automatic Tech Dispatch

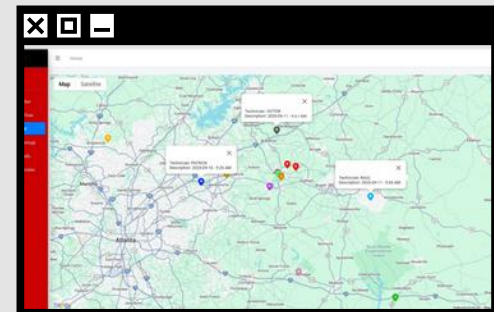
Appointment Heatmap



Appointment Calendar



Technician Locator

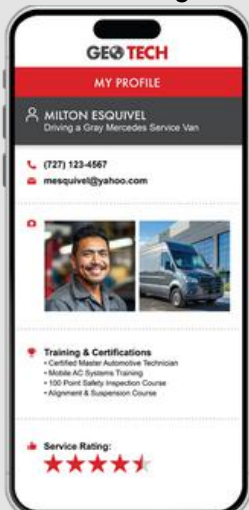


Our App has a new design with even more horsepower and these unique features:

Mandatory 6-Photo check-in



Meet-Your-Tech Profile Page



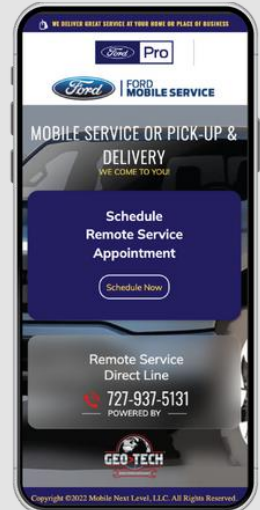
Optional Video/Photo MPI



Finger Sign



Customizable Interface



THE FUNNY PAPERS

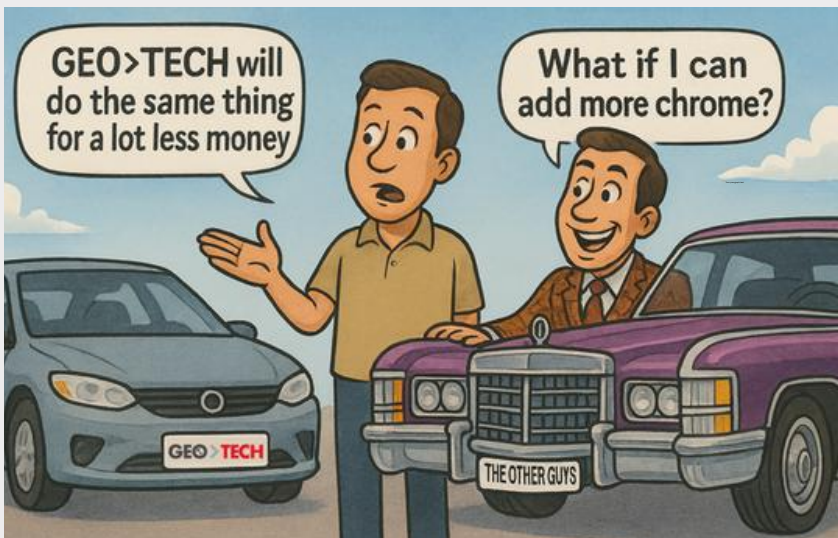
NEXT LEVEL[®] Funnies

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I WAS INSPIRED TO CREATE A SERIES OF LIGHT-HEARTED CARTOONS TO CAPTURE SOME OF THE EYEBROW RAISING MOMENTS I HAVE ENCOUNTERED OVER MY PAST 5 YEARS TRAINING MOBILE SERVICE DEALERS, AND PROVIDING SCHEDULING SOFTWARE AND UPFITTING TO THEM. I HOPE YOU ENJOY THEM AND GET A CHUCKLE!

-John Schmidt

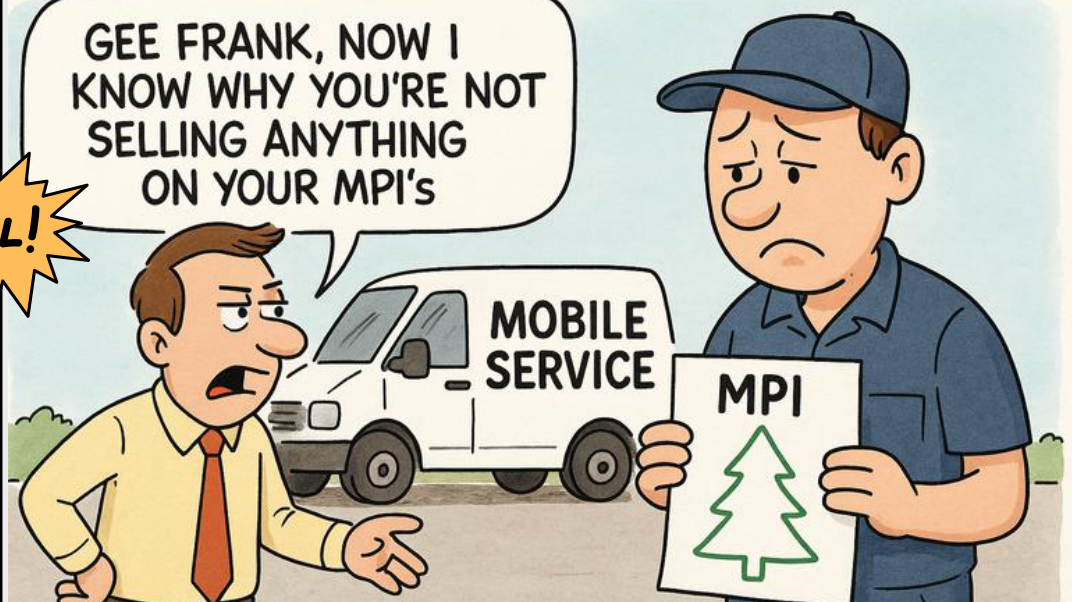


A DEALER
COMPARING OUR
GEO>TECH MOBILE
SCHEDULER TO A
FANCY
COMPETITOR :)...

ARE
YOU
KIDDING
ME?

LOL!

GEE FRANK, NOW I
KNOW WHY YOU'RE NOT
SELLING ANYTHING
ON YOUR MPI's



MORE FUNNIES TO COME!

MORE

DUMBEST IDEAS EVERRR

TINY HOUSES 1997



INITIAL PUBLIC RESPONSE

"What is this...BIZARRO WORLD? I thought the American Dream was to work hard and struggle to buy a McMansion! Now it's cool to live in a cargo freight container? And this little wood "thing"... I can't decide if it looks more like a tool shed or an outhouse! By comparison, my double-wide looks like the Taj! UMM HARD PASS!"

SINCE THEN

"The tiny house industry is a growing sector driven by high housing costs, remote work, and a desire for a simpler, more sustainable lifestyle. Despite challenges like code fragmentation, the industry is expanding with a global market valued at over \$1.31 billion in 2024 and projected to reach \$1.68 billion by 2030.

MOBILE SERVICE



INITIAL PUBLIC RESPONSE

"Dumbest idea ever. I can't make any money in my shop on oil changes and recalls as it is. Why would I spend \$150K on a van to change oil in my customer's driveway? There is NO way this can make money, none of my customers are asking for it, and what about oil spills?"

SINCE THEN

Dealers are realizing a substantial increase in parts and labor sales, capacity, throughput, CSI, commercial fleet business, recall penetration and maintenance retention. Additionally, they have slashed loaner expenses and shop carryovers. For the most advanced Dealers, Mobile Service repair orders account for as much as 30% of their total RO count. The sky is the limit!

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"Every brilliant idea was once a dumb idea." - js



ANOTHER SHOUT OUT!



Dancing With The Stars



In *Ignite Drive Thrive Lead* — or *IDTL* as I refer to it — Vernon E. Davis, II delivers a refreshingly grounded and practical guide to building and sustaining a successful automotive Mobile Service operation. Backed by collaborator Bill “Brox” Broxterman and testimonial contributor Derek Robinson (widely known as the “OG of Ford/Lincoln Mobile Service”), this book is more than just a how-to manual — it’s a field-tested playbook forged from years on the front lines of Dealership service innovation.

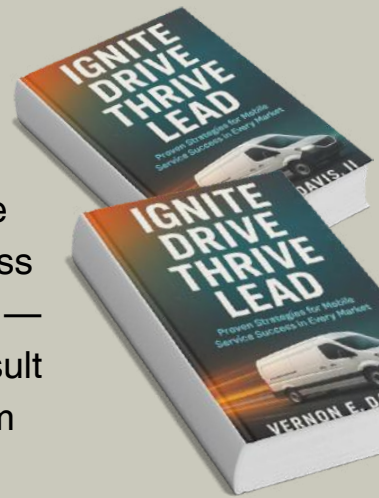
Brilliant at the Basics

From the opening chapters, Davis wastes no time cutting through the noise and diving directly into the “must-do’s” and “must-don’ts” that define success in Mobile Service. His writing style is crisp, confident, and deeply informed — and it’s immediately clear that he’s lived every lesson he’s sharing. The result is a guide that doesn’t just theorize about best practices; it documents them with impressive granularity. Full transparency, I have not read Vernon’s “*Messages in the Madness*” book trilogy or I would have already known this.

Brox’ influence was immediately felt, as well. I have worked closely with Brox and he is extremely detail oriented. His presence on the pages is palpable. One of the book’s greatest strengths is its relentless focus on fundamentals. In an era obsessed with the “latest and greatest” tools and technologies, *IDTL* reminds readers that success in Mobile Service — much like football — comes down to mastering the blocking and tackling. Davis emphasizes patience, diligence, and faithfulness to the process, building a strong foundation upon which more advanced strategies can later stand.

A Dealer’s Must-Have Playbook

Having spent years as a trainer for multiple OEM programs myself, I found Davis’ approach both familiar and refreshing. Too often, trainers like us “blast” a Dealership with a firehose of processes and best practices over the course of a few days — only to leave and watch the Dealer’s enthusiasm dissipate just as quickly. *IDTL* serves as the perfect antidote to that problem: a tangible, easy-to-reference “leave-behind” that Dealerships can revisit repeatedly as they grow their Mobile Service operations. This makes *IDTL* more than just a book; it’s a long-term companion for every Dealership already engaged in Mobile Service and an essential primer for any Dealer considering launching it.



Strengths and Opportunities

No book is without its quirks, and *IDTL* is no exception. At times, the narrative can feel repetitive, circling back to the same core themes more than once. But, in context, this repetition feels less like filler and more like deliberate reinforcement — a reflection of the reality that, in Dealership training, key messages must often be repeated many times before they truly stick. If there's one area where readers might crave more depth, it's in the "how." While Davis does an excellent job explaining what to do, he stops short of deeply exploring how to execute certain advanced strategies — particularly around appointment scheduling efficiency and the nuanced "crawl-walk-run" steps needed to scale a Mobile Service business. That said, this gap isn't necessarily a flaw. It feels more like an intentional opportunity — a perfect setup for a potential second volume that dives deeper into advanced tactics, tools, and technology.

Final Verdict

In *Ignite Drive Thrive Lead*, Vernon E. Davis II proves himself not just a skilled practitioner, but also a gifted writer. His ability to distill years of real-world experience into actionable insights is impressive, and his focus on fundamentals gives this book lasting value in an industry too often distracted by fads and quick fixes.

Whether you're a veteran Dealer looking to sharpen your edge or a newcomer preparing to launch your first Mobile Service unit, *IDTL* is an indispensable resource — one that belongs on every Dealership's shelf. And, if Davis follows it up with a second book that digs deeper into advanced execution? I will buy it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vernon E. Davis II is a seasoned leader in automotive fixed operations with over two decades of experience delivering measurable growth, operational excellence, and customer satisfaction. From January 2018 to August 2025, he served as a Mobile Service Solution Specialist with MSX International, partnering with Ford and Lincoln retailers across 18 states. With multiple Master Certifications in service management disciplines, Vernon is recognized for his ability to combine technical expertise, strategic execution, and people-first leadership. His career reflects a simple truth: lasting results come from building strong relationships and leading with integrity.

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- Program Reboots
- Leadership Changes
- Mobile Service Team New Hires
- Mobile Unit Vehicle Discovery

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- Create Action Plan
- Implement Best Practices
- Month-to-Date Performance Tracking
- Ongoing Accountability for Action Items

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ACCURATE TIRE TREAD DEPTH MEASUREMENT AND
A FRICTIONLESS MOBILE TIRE SALES PROCESS!



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