

MAY 2026

MOBILE

Magazine



THE PODCAST ISSUE

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Dedicated EXCLUSIVELY to the
Advancement of Mobile Service and
Pick-Up & Delivery



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

THE PODCAST ISSUE



John Schmidt

FOUNDER, MOBILE NEXT>LEVEL

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In this month's issue, we salute our podcasters - yes, those mostly unsung heroes who keep the automotive world talking. In an industry that never slows down, these voices create a digital hangout where ideas are exchanged, best practices are shared, and relationships are built.

Podcasting has become the connective tissue that ties OEMs, Dealers, and Vendors together. Whether you're on a long drive, between service calls, or catching a quick break, these conversations bring insight and energy directly to you - on your schedule.

What makes automotive podcasters special isn't just the content - it's the authenticity. They ask the real questions, challenge the status quo, and often say what others won't. In doing so, they help move our industry forward.

To all the hosts, producers, and guests behind the mic - thank you. You are informing, entertaining, and uniting this community in ways we've never seen before.

Now press play.

Let's go get 'em.
Cheers, js

OUR DEALERS >

7 of the TOP 20 Volume Mobile Service Dealers in the U.S. chose GEO>TECH by NEXT>LEVEL as their Mobile Service Appointment Scheduler. **This group of Dealers collectively averages over 1,000 Remote Service Repair orders per Dealer, per month.**



There is no greater thing you can do with your life and your work than follow your passions – in a way that serves the world and you.

SIR RICHARD BRANSON

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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

AND ONLY Automotive Consulting 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

500+

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

THE PODCAST ISSUE

by John Schmidt

Mobile Magazine Live Podcast: Our Journey from Conception to Launch

In 2022, during our first year in business, I was searching for ways to stretch every marketing dollar. That's when I noticed a prominent podcast gaining traction in the automotive fixed ops space. It seemed like the perfect platform to share the Mobile Service story. So, I reached out - only to discover that vendors had to pay-to-play. My naivete was on full display. Lesson learned.

That moment reminded me of a story from the 1980's rock era. A close friend of mine, in a rising metal band, once told me they'd been invited to open for a legendary act on a world tour. I was ecstatic - until he stopped me. "It's pay-to-play," he said. "We only survive if we sell a ton of merch." Big opportunity? Maybe. Smart business? Not always.

That realization planted a seed: if the platform doesn't fit, build your own.



In 2023, I launched The Mobile Minute. Except...it wasn't live, had no guests, and felt more like a five-minute infomercial. After three episodes, it was clear - this wasn't it. Too scripted, too much work, not enough value. I shelved it.

Fast forward to 2025. Inspired by the voices in this very magazine, I committed to doing it right: a real podcast featuring real conversations, built around our monthly content. Then...I procrastinated. Growth took priority.

Until April 2026.

We finally launched Mobile Magazine Live: The Podcast. It wasn't perfect - but it was real. And going forward, it will deliver what we do best: authentic, insightful, and entertaining content for the Mobile Service community.

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DAVE FOY



Fixed Ops Mastermind was born out of Dave's vision to gather industry leaders and share knowledge. He recognized the need for a platform where professionals could connect and learn from each other. Dave mixes deep technical expertise with people-first leadership and a heap of unconventional thinking. With four decades in the industry, he is a "positive disruptor," helping fixed ops departments break free from the "we've always done it this way" mindset.

How do you balance technical depth with storytelling so your episodes stay engaging for both operators and industry leaders?

Seven years of going live every week has a way of teaching you things no media training ever could. After 7 years of Fixed Ops Mastermind Live each week and 120-plus episodes, you develop an instinct for the moment when a conversation shifts from interesting to genuinely valuable. And recognizing that moment is key. Many times it is when a guest gets technical. A lot of hosts let that be the part where the audience checks out. I lean into it. Because buried inside the technical stuff - the process details, the metrics, the operational specifics - that's where the real gold is. My job is to slow it down, pull it apart, and translate it so that the operator running two vans in Tulsa gets just as much out of it as the VP of Fixed Ops at a twenty-store group. The storytelling is what gets people to the table. The depth is what makes them stay

You need both. A great story with no substance is entertainment. Substance with no story is a training manual. The sweet spot - that's where the episodes people actually share come from. I've just had enough reps to know how to find it.



When you're planning an episode, how do you decide which topics are worth diving into and which ones won't resonate with your audience?

Honestly, it comes down to one filter: does this move the needle for someone in the field or is it just interesting noise? The content that always lands - and I mean always - is

anything that hands someone a solution they didn't know they needed or reframes a problem they've been living with so long they stopped questioning it. That second one is actually the more powerful of the two. Sometimes the biggest unlock isn't a new tool or a new process - it's just seeing an old frustration through a different lens. I think about it this way: problems don't disappear on their own. They just wait. And the right conversation, the right guest, the right angle - that's what exposes them for what they really are. Not roadblocks. Opportunities with a solution that hasn't shown up yet.

So when I'm planning an episode, I'm asking myself - is there a real problem living underneath this topic? And does the person I'm talking to have something genuine to offer against it? If the answer to both of those is yes, we're booking it.



***“Leaving
the industry
better than
I found it.”***



How do you structure an interview to pull out real operational details instead of surface-level talking points?

The quickest way to get talking points is to show up with a list of questions and work through them in order. That's an interview. I'm after a conversation - and there's a difference.

Before any episode, I do my homework. I want to know the operation, know the journey, know enough about who's sitting across from me that I can recognize when they say something worth chasing. Because that's where the real operational detail lives - not in the answer to the question you asked, but in the thing they mention offhand while answering it. That's the thread you pull.

The conversation model gives guests room to go somewhere unexpected, and unexpected is almost always better than prepared. People drop their talking points when they feel like they're just...talking.

That said, I always have questions in my back pocket. Every single time. Because even the best conversations can stall - and unlike our mobile techs, I don't have a van I can dispatch to get things rolling again.

The real skill after seven years isn't knowing what to ask. It's knowing when to stop asking and just listen - and then knowing exactly which moment to jump back in before the momentum slips.



JEREMY STEPHENS



Mobile Service Monday was created to help Dealerships grow and scale successful Mobile Service programs. Jeremy's episodes cover real-world strategies for increasing service revenue, improving tech efficiency, and delivering a better customer experience without adding bays or bricks. It's a space to connect and share insights - no fluff - just real conversations, proven strategies, and practical support for people who truly understand the journey.

Which guest or episode changed your perspective the most on how mobile service should be run or scaled?



Honestly, almost every episode does. Every time we have a guest on the show, I take something away. Most of the time, it's something very basic, and I'm embarrassed that I hadn't thought of it - or that we had stopped doing it. Those small reminders from real operators have had the biggest impact on how I think about running and scaling mobile service.

From your vantage point as a host, what separates the Mobile Service operations that thrive from the ones that stall out?

The operations that succeed have leadership buy-in and strong processes and they treat mobile service like a separate business or department, not something you use only when you need it. They focus on people, process, and accountability instead of just trucks and tools.

The ones that stall usually try to run mobile service like a regular shop or treat it as fill-in work, which leads to confusion and burnout.

How do you structure an interview to pull out real operational details instead of surface-level talking points?

This may shock some people, but there really is no structure at all. We try to keep it real. Most of the time, we just let guests tell their story. When people share what they've actually lived through - what worked, what didn't, and what they learned - you naturally get real operational details instead of polished talking points.

"Always open to good conversations and shared ideas."



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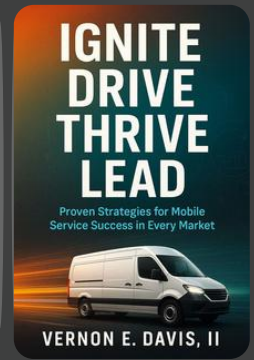


PODCAST INSIGHTS

- PODCASTS WERE NAMED IN 2004 WHEN A JOURNALIST MASHED TOGETHER "IPOD" AND "BROADCAST."
- FIXED OPS-FOCUSED PODCASTS ARE AMONG THE **FASTEST-GROWING NICHEs IN AUTOMOTIVE MEDIA** BECAUSE SERVICE DEPARTMENTS DRIVE THE MAJORITY OF DEALERSHIP PROFIT
- MOST FIXED OPS PODCAST LISTENERS ARE DEALERSHIP LEADERS, MAKING **THE AUDIENCE UNUSUALLY HIGH-VALUE** COMPARED TO GENERAL BUSINESS PODCASTS
- MOBILE SERVICE DISCUSSIONS OFTEN REVEAL REAL ROI NUMBERS, SHOWING HOW **ONE VAN CAN GENERATE SIX-FIGURE ANNUAL REVENUE**
- RECALL COMPLETION IS A HOT TOPIC, WITH MOBILE SERVICE FRAMED AS A **MAJOR ACCELERATOR FOR GETTING RECALL WORK DONE**

- TECHNICIAN RECRUITING AND RETENTION** ARE TOP RECURRING THEMES, REFLECTING THE INDUSTRY-WIDE TALENT SHORTAGE
- EPISODES FREQUENTLY SPOTLIGHT WORKFLOW EFFICIENCY, INCLUDING **DISPATCHING, SCHEDULING, AND PARTS LOGISTICS** FOR BOTH IN-STORE AND MOBILE OPERATIONS
- CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DOMINATES THE CONVERSATION, ESPECIALLY HOW **MOBILE SERVICE IMPROVES TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY**
- FIXED OPS PODCASTS OFTEN BREAK DOWN KPIS LIKE ELR, HOURS PER RO, AND RETENTION RATES IN A WAY THAT'S **ACCESSIBLE TO NON-TECHNICAL LISTENERS**
- MANY EPISODES HIGHLIGHT REAL DEALERSHIP CASE STUDIES, **GIVING LISTENERS PRACTICAL, ACTIONABLE TAKEAWAYS**

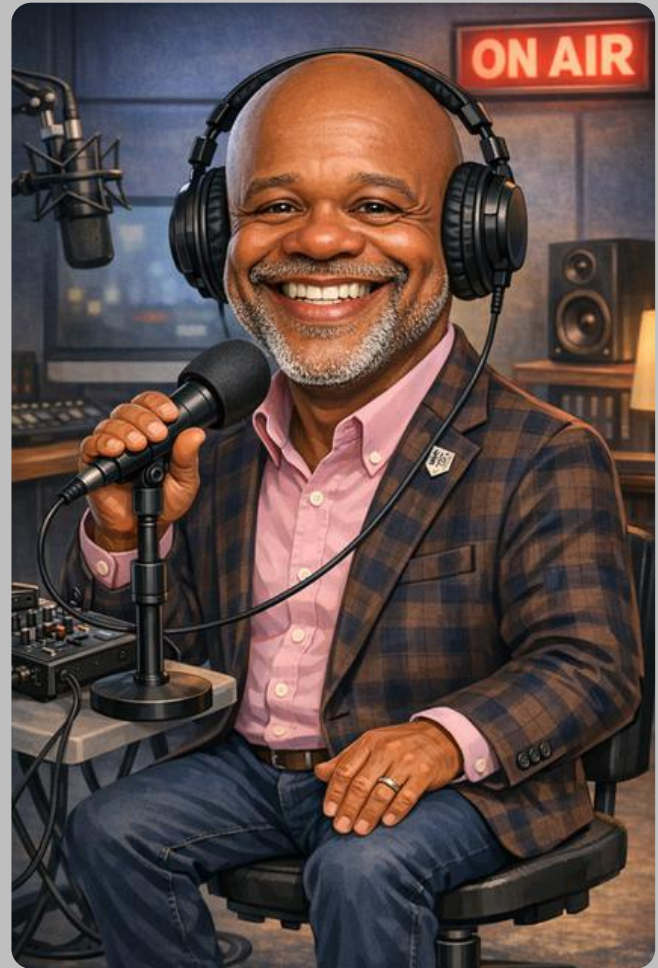
VERNON DAVIS



In his book *IGNITE, DRIVE, THRIVE, LEAD*, Vernon “Longhorn” Davis seeks to bridge the gap between traditional service and modern customer convenience by offering commentary on elevating fixed ops performance, scaling mobile service operations, and offering a fresh perspective on leadership. His live, weekly talk show, *Messages in the Madness*, features discussions centered around positivity, good mental health, and personal growth.

What’s a mobile service or fixed ops trend or idea you’ve heard on your show that you think more dealerships or independents should be paying attention to?

*One trend I believe more dealerships and independent service operations should pay attention to is the continued expansion of convenience-based service models and the evolution of mobile service itself. In *Ignite, Drive, Thrive, Lead*, I stress that mobile service is no longer just about recalls and oil changes. Forward-thinking dealerships are expanding the scope of work their mobile units perform and creating new revenue opportunities in the field. One area I believe deserves more focus is **mobile glass work**, which has proven highly lucrative for many dealerships while adding another convenience-based offering customers value. I also encourage dealers to expand into services like battery testing and **replacement, fuel system cleanings, tune-ups, and other automotive fluid exchanges such as***



transmission, coolant, and drivetrain

services. However, these expanded offerings should only be performed by highly experienced technicians with the skill and judgment to work independently in the field. The dealerships that will win in the future are the ones willing to expand beyond the basics and treat mobile service as a growing business model, not just an add-on.

What’s the biggest myth or misconception about mobile service that you find yourself correcting again and again?

The biggest misconception I find myself correcting about mobile service is that many people still view it as simply a convenience feature rather than a true business strategy. Too often, dealerships treat mobile service like an added perk for customer satisfaction instead of recognizing it as a scalable, revenue-generating operation. Another common myth is that mobile service cannot be profitable. The reality is, when structured properly, mobile service can become one of the most effective tools for increasing revenue, improving retention, and driving additional work back into the shop. A mobile unit should not be viewed as just a van doing oil changes. It is a rolling extension of your service department and, when used strategically, a customer acquisition and retention platform. I also frequently remind leaders that success in mobile service does not come from simply buying a van and expecting customers to use it. It requires intentional planning, proper staffing, internal marketing, and operational discipline.

At its core, the biggest misunderstanding is this: mobile service is not just transportation with tools, it is a transformational shift in how dealerships can deliver service, grow revenue, and meet customers where they are.



From your vantage point, what separates the mobile service operations that thrive from the ones that stall out?

From my vantage point, the mobile service operations that thrive are the ones that treat mobile service like a true business, not a side project. Too many dealerships buy a van, wrap it with logos, send a technician out, and think they have a mobile service program. That is not a strategy, that is simply owning a vehicle.

The operations that succeed understand that mobile service requires structure, planning, accountability, and leadership. They invest in the right people, the right processes, and the right support systems to make the program sustainable. They properly schedule appointments, pre-plan routes, ensure parts availability, track performance metrics, and market the program both internally and externally.

On the other hand, the operations that stall out are usually the ones that fail to commit fully. They under-resource the program, assign the wrong technician, provide little oversight, and then wonder why the van is not producing. Many also make the mistake of limiting mobile service to low-value work and never expanding beyond the basics.

Simply put, the dealerships that win are the ones that understand mobile service is not “set it and forget it.” It must be managed, grown, and treated like any other profit center in the business. The ones that embrace that mindset thrive. The ones that do not usually stall before they ever reach their full potential.



“Love what you do or don’t do it.”

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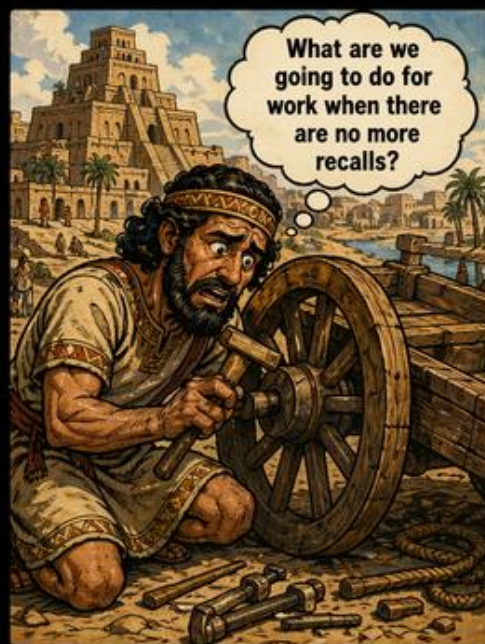
MOBILE MAYHEM!



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 7 YEARS TRAINING MOBILE SERVICE DEALERS, PROVIDING SCHEDULING SOFTWARE AND UPFITTING TO THEM. I HOPE YOU ENJOY THEM AND GET A CHUCKLE!

-John Schmidt

Recalls in History!



MESOPOTAMIA 4200 BC



2026 AD



THE FUTURE- 3012 AD

MORE MADNESS TO COME!



PARTNER PROPS!

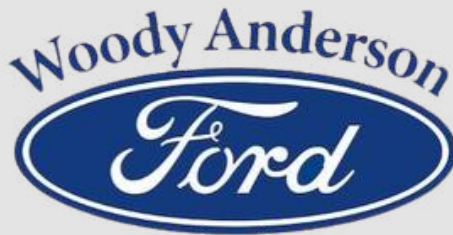
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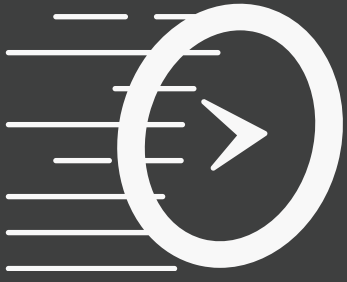
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by NEXT > LEVEL

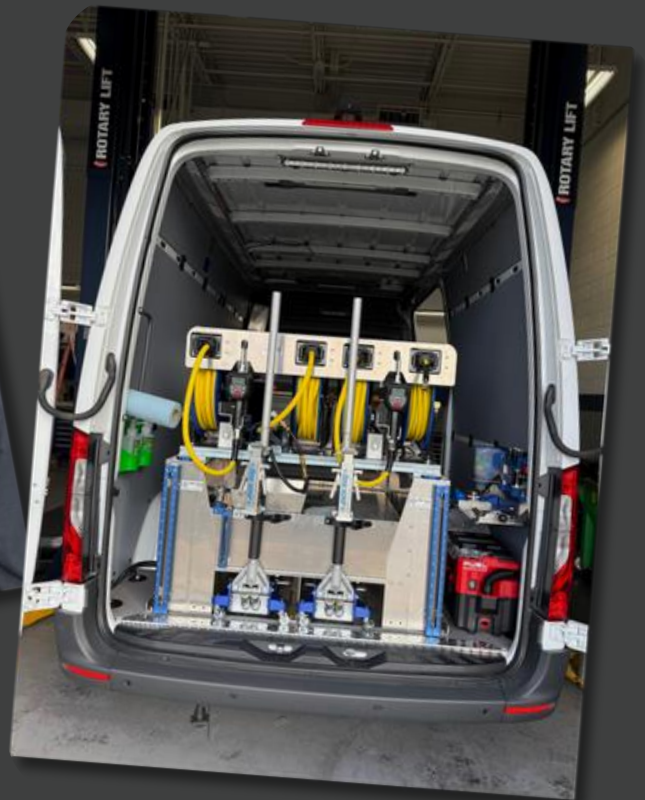
WE SMASHED THE OLD SCHOOL UPFITTER MODEL AND CHANGED THE GAME.



CHECK OUT THIS SHORT VIDEO AND SEE HOW WE DID IT.



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DUMBEST IDEAS EVERRRR

CROCS 2002



INITIAL PUBLIC RESPONSE

"Are you clowning me right now? Because those shoes are RIDICULOUS and you look like BOZO. Whaaaattt? You bought them in 10 colors? Are you nuts? Is this a cry for help?" So apparently the attention-starved will do just about anything to stand out in a crowd.

SINCE THEN

Crocs has evolved from a polarizing fad into a multibillion-dollar global footwear brand despite their ugliness!

Revenue reached \$2.9 billion in 2023, growing 9% year over year. Who is buying these?

**STOP CLOWNING AROUND
AND GET SOME NORMAL SHOES!**

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!

**YOUR NEXT DUMB IDEA IS AT
WWW.MOBILENEXTLEVEL.COM**

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



— ANOTHER SHOUT OUT!

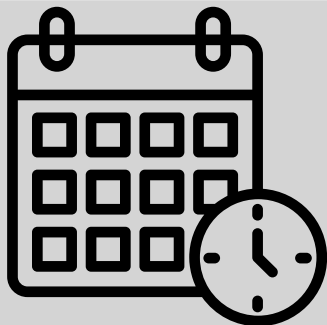


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