A New Vehicle Should Not Mean 3 Years Without Us

We often see customers resurface after a three year absence. When asked why we did not see them, the reply: “We bought this car new and we were told we had to take it to the dealer for service to maintain the warranty”

NOT TRUE!

A salesman at a Dealership will imply you need to return to the dealer to maintain warranty. It is illegal for them to say you are required to return your new vehicle to them for service in order to maintain warranty. A well trained salesman will plant this seed. Most people leave the new vehicle purchase transaction feeling that they are required to return to the dealer for their service.

The new car market is so competitive with internet sales, Costco, and other direct pricing, that there is not a lot of profit on a new car sale for the dealer. The profit comes from up-selling options and accessories and after the sale with the long term service relationship that they would like to establish.

Cars we see “fresh out of warranty” after three years of dealer service are not always in perfect

Timing Belt Replacement

Many engines with overhead camshafts have timing belts that have a limited life span. Car makers use these belts instead of more durable chains because chains are noisier and cost more to manufacture. Your vehicle owner’s manual will recommend at what mileage the timing belt must be replaced. These intervals range from every 60,000 miles to every 105,000 miles. If you are not sure if your vehicle uses a timing belt or if it is due for replacement call us and we can help determine your situation.

The job of the timing belt is to turn the camshaft(s) at exactly 1/2 the speed of the crankshaft while maintaining a precise alignment. This means that the crankshaft will make two revolutions for every revolution of the camshaft. Engines will have at least one camshaft, or as many as four camshafts in some of the V-type engines. The camshaft causes the intake and exhaust valves to open and close in time with the pistons which move up and down in the cylinders. The valves must open and close at exactly the right time in relationship to the piston movement in order for the engine to run properly.

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According to reports in the China Daily and Shanghai Daily, Geely Holding Group was the first Chinese auto maker to exhibit a Chinese automobile manufacturer to exhibit products at the 2006 North American International Auto Show, held in Detroit Jan. 14 through 22.

The auto maker has already been exporting its models to the Middle East and Eastern Europe and intends to launch U.S. sales in 2008. Geely will be the second Chinese auto maker to announce intentions to sell in the United States. One of Geely’s vehicles, the 7151 CK sedan, is expected to retail for less than $10,000.

Payment Protection Systems, a California-based microprocessor firm, has developed an aftermarket black box that will automatically immobilize a vehicle if payments aren’t received on time, every time.

“On Time” is the name of the black box attached to a vehicle’s dashboard and wired into the starter. The product will warn drivers when a payment is pending several days prior to the due date. If payment isn’t received, the vehicle will not start until reprogrammed.

The black box contains a microprocessor, which is preprogrammed by the financing company with the frequency of payments, payment due date and grace period. An add-on option is the inclusion of a GPS locator. As a safety measure, the unit will not shut down a vehicle that is operating. Also, emergency codes are available in the event the vehicle has been disabled.

We offer a Courtesy Shuttle Van Service to help you get to where you need to be going. Schedule an appointment for the Shuttle when you make the appointment for your vehicle to be serviced.
There are two types of engines that use timing belts. They are described as: “Interference Engines” and “Non-interference Engines”. The difference lies in the proximity between the valves and the pistons. On an interference engine, if the timing belt slips even one notch, the piston can crash into an open valve causing serious (expensive) engine damage by bending valves and breaking pistons. Non-interference engines will usually not self destruct, but in either case if the belt fails, the engine will immediately shut down leaving you stranded.

Timing belts fail without warning and on some vehicles, are almost as hard to check as they are to change. In most cases, your only protection is to change the belt at the recommended intervals. Timing belt replacement is not a cheap job but it is far less costly than the alternative.

I recommend that you replace the water pump and inspect engine oil seals, belt tensioners, or idler bearings for possible replacement during a timing belt job. Just replacing the timing belt may not be the cheapest option in the long run. If any of these other items fail later you will be right back where you started less the money from the first repair. 90% of the labor to change the water pump or other components has already been done with the timing belt job. Consider it good insurance against any over-lapping labor to save money and insure a quality repair. Water pumps can last over 120,000 miles but many do fail and will cause additional expense, inconvenience and possible over-heating damage to the engine. Ask your Service Writer what the experience is with the water pump on your model car and let him know how long you plan to keep the car. This way, at least we can help you in making an informed decision.

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Flat-spotting. Flat-spotting, severe wear of the whole tread contact patch in one place on the tire, results from panic-braking (skidding) with the wheels locked up, usually on older cars without ABS. The flat spot will often introduce an imbalance that can be felt in the steering wheel. The imbalance from the flat spot makes the tires unsafe-replacement is the only safe solution.

Bald spots. Smooth spots on the tread, or areas between the edge and the center of the tread that are more worn than others, might indicate a wheel that’s way out of balance. Front wheels out of balance are usually easy to feel, but sometimes rear wheels are overlooked.

Swelling/bubbling. If any spots on the sidewall or tread are visibly swelling outward or bubbling, we can replace the tire. The tire might have been damaged by an especially deep pothole or piece of road debris.

Change immediately to the spare if there are any doubts about the tire’s safety. Tires should be rotated and balanced every 6,000 miles, roughly every other oil change interval unless you are using synthetic oil or don’t change you oil often enough. Between visits it is a good idea to look at your tires periodically. If you ever have a concern swing by or call us.

Remember
Although the technicians have the weekend off, the office is open on Saturdays from 10am to 1pm. We are here to make appointments for service, receive vehicles for work the following week, release vehicles that are completed, and answer any questions that you might have!

Free Air Conditioning Diagnostic
up to 1 hour w / repair

Fuel Injection Service
$89.95

Expires August 31, 2006

Oil & Lube Service Tire Rotation & Balance
w/ 100pt Inspection
$44.95

Expires August 31, 2006

Ford Escape Hybrid Goes Flex-Fuel
Ford Motor Co.’s new SUV research vehicle, the Escape Hybrid E85, has a dual mission: to help reduce U.S. dependence on imported oil while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The company’s Escape Hybrid E85 combines two petroleum-saving technologies - hybrid electric power and flexible-fuel capability. The vehicle is capable of operating on blends of fuel containing as much as 85 percent ethanol; E85 is a fuel blend that contains 85 percent ethanol and only 15 percent gasoline. Compared to regular fuels, ethanol use releases no CO2. As an example, Ford noted that using an ethanol blend, the Escape Hybrid E85 produces about 25 percent less carbon dioxide than a gasoline-fueled version Escape Hybrid.

Ford notes that if just 5 percent of the U.S. vehicle fleet were powered by hybrids operating exclusively on E85, imports of oil could be reduced by about 140 million barrels a year.

Thank You!
Special thanks go out to all of our clients and friends who have graciously referred our shop to their friends and neighbors. Our business is built based on the positive comments and referrals from people like you. We just couldn’t do it without you!