



**PartsTech**

# The State of General Auto Repair Shops in the U.S.

Essential insights and benchmarks to drive your shop's growth in 2025



# Table of Contents

<b>03</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>Service of Fully Electric Vehicles</b>
<b>05</b>	<b>Who Took the Survey</b>	22	EVs serviced per year
05	Respondents' roles	23	Top-performed EV services today
05	Respondents' number of locations	24	Helping EV drivers choose the right tires
06	Age demographics	25	EV servicing confidence and training
06	Industry experience	26	Prepare for the future: EVs and alternative fuel training
07	Years till retirement	<b>27</b>	<b>Top Industry Challenges</b>
07	How respondents first entered the industry	<b>30</b>	<b>Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage</b>
<b>08</b>	<b>Geographical Locations</b>	30	Feeling the impact of the technician shortages
<b>09</b>	<b>Key Takeaways</b>	31	Believed causes of the technician shortage
<b>12</b>	<b>Average Shop Size and Daily Car Count</b>	32	Strategies for attracting technicians
12	Average shop size by number of bays	33	Retention: Building loyalty and reducing turnover
12	Average daily car count per bay	34	Retention opportunity: Providing a career path for your technicians
13	A note on increasing your shop's daily car count	37	Career development opportunities offered to technicians
<b>14</b>	<b>Revenue Related Data</b>	38	The role of financial transparency in technician engagement
14	Hourly labor rate	40	Filling the technician pipeline: Apprenticeship programs
15	Average gross profit on parts	<b>41</b>	<b>Software Usage in Shops: A Snapshot</b>
16	Average repair order value (ARO)		
16	Activities that positively impact ARO		
17	Industry thoughts, insights, and tips on increasing ARO		
<b>20</b>	<b>Shop Staffing</b>		
20	Number of technicians per bay		
20	Number of service advisors per bay		
21	Should you hire another service advisor?		



# A Note from PartsTech

## Hello Shop Owner,

Welcome to our second annual report on the State of General Automotive Repair Shops. We understand that running a repair shop involves much more than just fixing cars — it's about serving customers, staying competitive, working smarter, overcoming challenges, and finding new ways to grow. In October 2024, we surveyed 752 general auto repair shop owners and employees across the United States and compiled the results to bring you key data, trends, and actionable insights. **This report will help you benchmark your shop's performance and identify opportunities to streamline operations, increase revenue, and proactively address industry challenges.**

**We surveyed 752 general auto repair shop owners and employees across the U.S. and compiled the results to bring you key data, trends, and actionable insights.**



## Insights from industry experts

**This year, we've enhanced the report by including insights, tips, and strategies from trusted industry experts.** Whether it's improving operational efficiency, retaining technicians, keeping pace with new vehicle technologies, or increasing your average repair order value, these experts share **real-world advice** to help your shop succeed. By combining survey data with **perspectives from experienced shop coaches, owners, and other industry pros**, this report offers a practical guide to help you improve the way your shop operates.

# A Note from PartsTech

## Free, actionable resources made for you

At PartsTech, we are dedicated to simplifying how your shop orders parts and tires — but we are also committed to providing your shop with free, actionable resources to help you enhance your operations, grow your business, and increase revenue. **Throughout this report, you'll find links to free resources related to the topics and tips covered.**



## Topics covered in the report

This year's report includes national survey findings, key trends, and benchmark data\* points tailored to general auto repair shops:

- ✓ Survey participants' demographics and geographical locations
- ✓ Average shop size and daily car count
- ✓ Average repair order value (ARO), labor rate, and gross profit on parts
- ✓ Shop staff headcounts
- ✓ Electric vehicle servicing trends
- ✓ Top challenges faced by the industry
- ✓ Strategies for technician attraction and retention
- ✓ Shop software usage and its role in operations

*\*Due to rounding, percentages in this report may not total precisely 100%.*



# Who Took the Survey

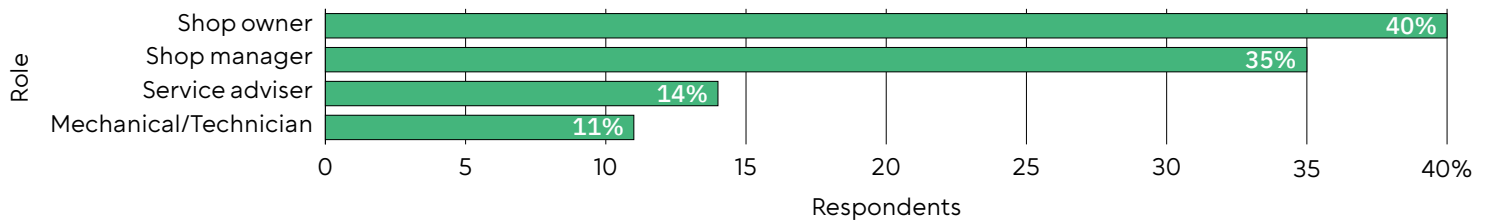
Before diving into the findings, here's a look at who responded to the survey. Understanding the age, experience, and roles of respondents provides important context for the data and the perspectives shared throughout this report.



## What is your role?

The majority of survey respondents were shop owners and managers, with valuable insights from a smaller group of service advisors and technicians.

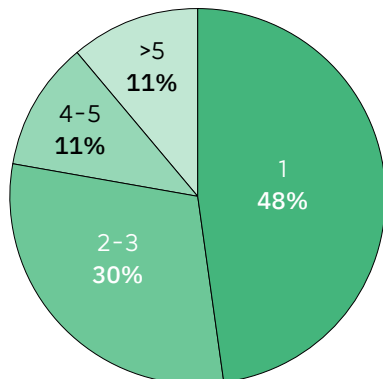
### What is your role?



## How many locations do you have?

Nearly half of the respondents own or work for a single-location shop.

### How many locations do you have?



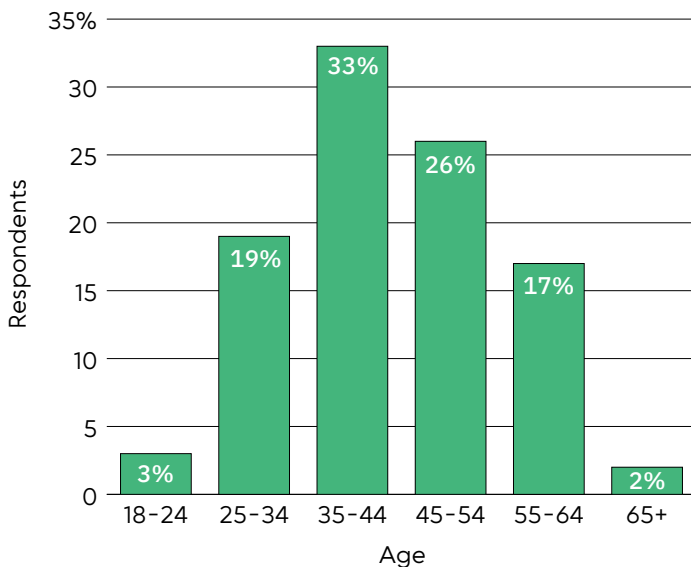
# Who Took the Survey



## Demographics and industry experience

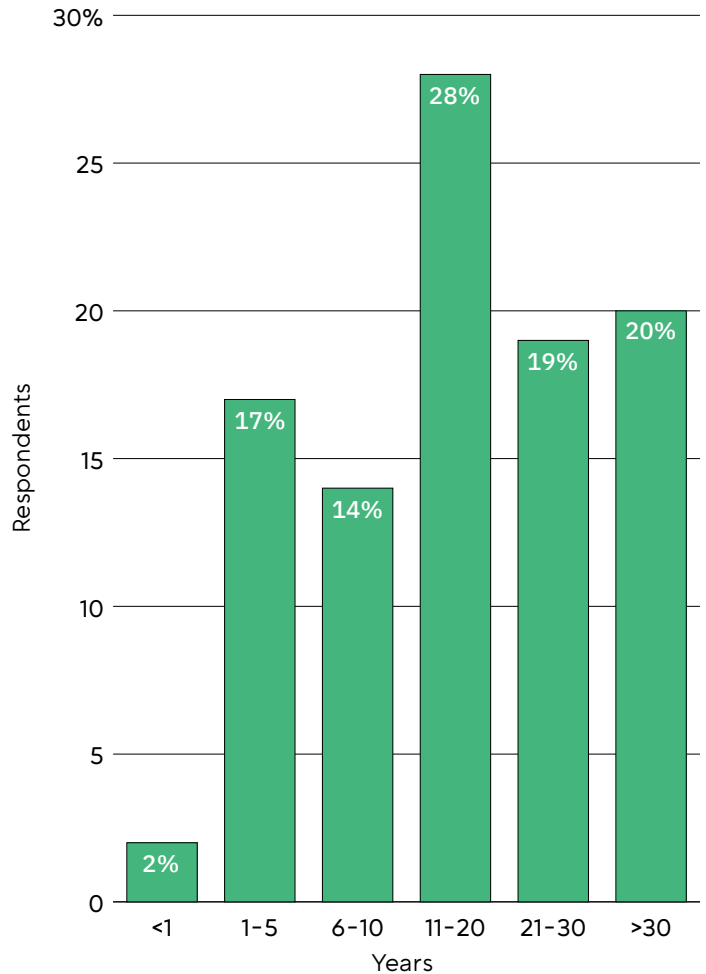
The top age bracket among respondents was **35-44 (33%)**, representing a mid-career demographic.

### What is your age?



## Time in the industry

### How long have you been in the industry?



The most common industry experience among respondents was **11-20 years (28%)**, though a collective **one-third have been in the industry for 10 years or less**, reflecting a younger generation of professionals. **20% have over 30 years of experience**, representing a core group of seasoned professionals.



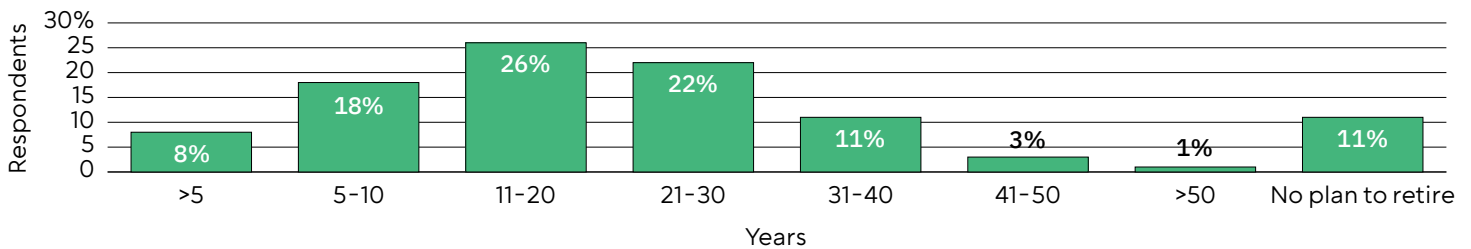
# Who Took the Survey



## Years until retirement

More than a **quarter** of respondents plan to retire within the **next 10 years**, while 11% say they have no plans to retire at all.

### In how many years do you plan to retire?



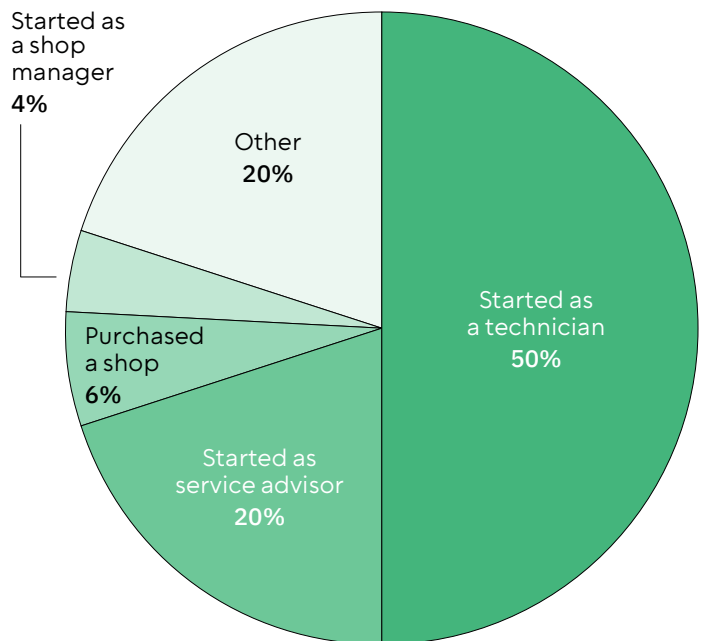
## How respondents first entered the industry

Half of the respondents share a common journey — **starting their careers as technicians** before transitioning into roles such as shop manager or owner.

Among those who selected **other**, the responses overwhelmingly pointed to **two key additional entry paths**:

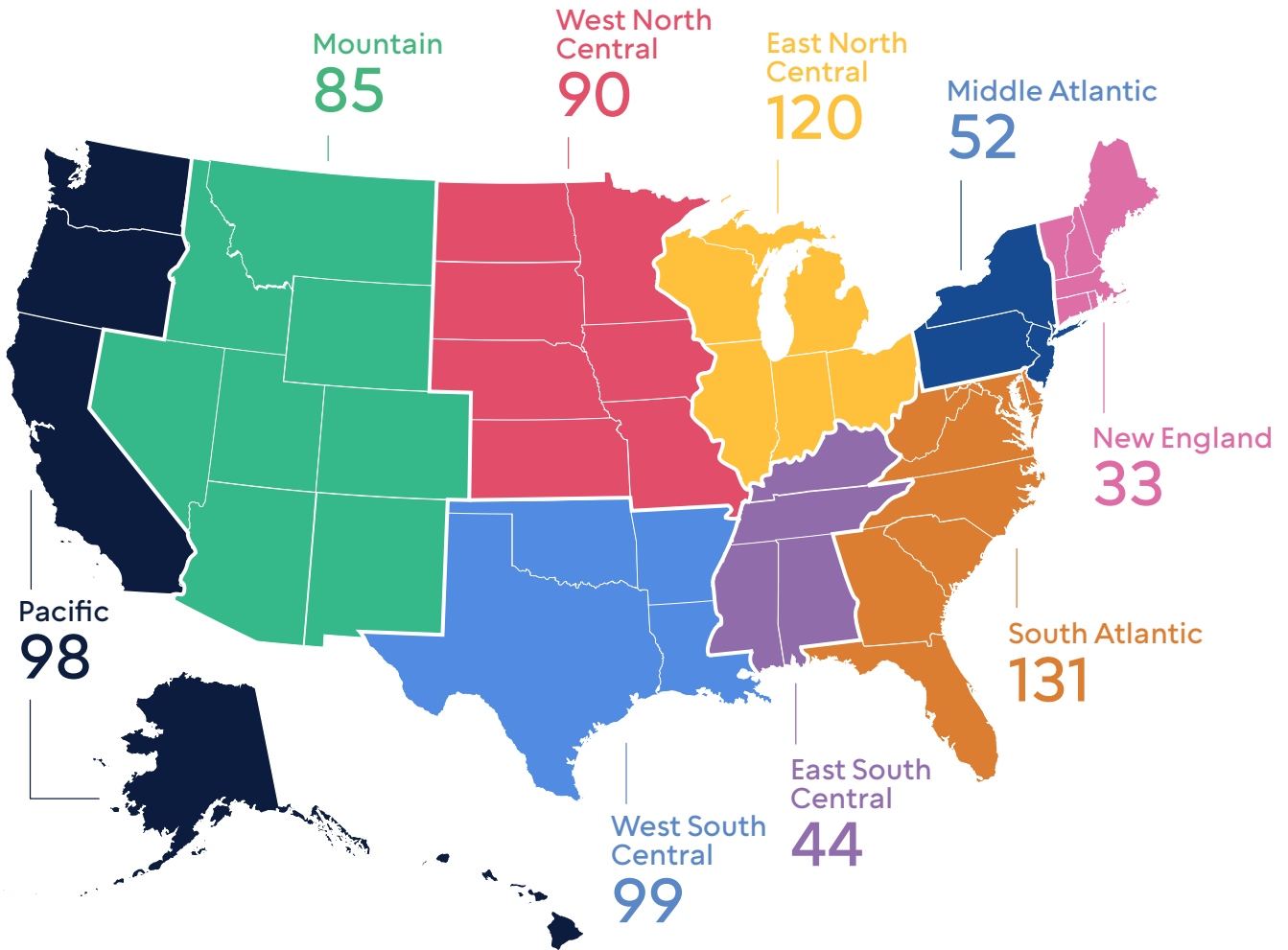
- **Parts-related roles**, such as parts counter worker, parts manager, or parts delivery driver.
- Grew up in a **family-owned shop** — born into the industry by way of a family operation that has been alive for generations.

### How did you first get started in the industry?



# Respondents' Geographical Locations

This map illustrates the distribution of survey respondents across the nine Census Bureau divisions.



## New England

- Connecticut
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- Rhode Island
- Vermont

## East North Central

- Indiana
- Illinois
- Michigan
- Ohio

- Wisconsin

## Middle Atlantic

- New Jersey
- New York
- Pennsylvania

## West North Central

- Iowa
- Kansas
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Nebraska

- North Dakota
- South Dakota

## South Atlantic

- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Maryland
- North Carolina
- South Carolina
- Virginia
- West Virginia

## East South Central

- Alabama
- Kentucky
- Mississippi
- Tennessee

## West South Central

- Arkansas
- Louisiana
- Oklahoma
- Texas

## Mountain

- Arizona

- Colorado

- Idaho
- New Mexico
- Montana
- Utah
- Nevada
- Wyoming

## Pacific

- Alaska
- California
- Hawaii
- Oregon
- Washington



# Key Takeaways



## Customer experience is key to higher average repair order (ARO) value

**Enhanced customer experience** was identified as the top action that positively impacts ARO. Creating a customer-first environment through active listening, clear communication, and helpful interactions positions shops as trusted advisors. **Shops that focus on delivering exceptional customer experiences with effective strategies, staff training, and modern communication tools achieve higher ticket values.** Satisfied customers are more inclined to approve additional repairs and services and refer their friends. This insight reinforces the idea that **customer-centric operations should remain a cornerstone** for any shop aiming to boost profitability.

See page **16** to learn more.

**Satisfied customers are more inclined to approve additional repairs and services — making a customer-first approach a key driver of success.**



## Top industry challenges: Technician shortage and training required for increasingly complex vehicles

The technician shortage continues to be a pressing challenge for the industry, compounded by the need to train existing staff on emerging technologies. As vehicle technology evolves and many existing technicians approach retirement age in 10 years or less, the demand for skilled technicians with specialized training grows — making it imperative for shops to **invest in education and upskilling their teams.** See page **27** to learn more.

# Key Takeaways



## Shop staffing per bay: Technicians and service advisors

Staffing plays a crucial role in shop performance and efficiency. This year's report provides a per-bay perspective on shop staffing, offering a more precise view of industry norms:

### → **Technicians per bay**

On average, shops have **0.7 technicians per bay**. This ratio suggests that most shops operate with fewer technicians than bays, meaning a typical 6-bay shop likely has 4 to 5 technicians.

### → **Service advisors per bay**

The data shows an average of **1 service advisor for every 3 bays**. For a 6-bay shop, this translates to 2 service advisors.



## Average daily car count per bay is 2.2 vehicles

**Increasing car count** was identified as an improvement many respondents wish to achieve. To provide a benchmark for comparison, we calculated the average number of vehicles serviced per bay, revealing that shops service **2.2 vehicles per bay per day**. For context, this means an average 6-bay shop services approximately 13 vehicles daily.

See page **12** to learn more.

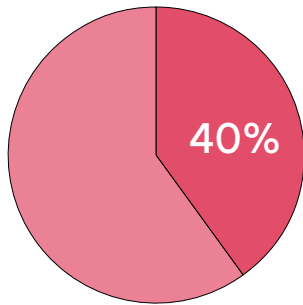
Understanding these averages can help shops evaluate staffing strategies and identify opportunities to improve productivity and customer service.

See page **20** to learn more.



# Key Takeaways

40% of shops do not have career pathing opportunities at all.



## The role of a positive work environment in technician retention

According to the shop owners and managers who took the survey, **creating a positive work environment** was selected as the most effective strategy for technician retention. **Shops that foster a supportive and growth-oriented environment often find it easier to build and maintain skilled teams.** Competitive compensation came in second, showing that paying well falls flat when there’s a negative work environment. **See page 33 to learn more.**



## Retention opportunity: Providing career paths for technicians

An opportunity for retaining technicians lies in **offering clear, structured career paths.** Despite “lack of career pathing” being a common frustration among technicians, only 10% of survey respondents reported having a formal career path in place. **40% of shops reported not having career pathing opportunities for their technicians at all.**

Supporting technicians by helping them define and pursue a clear career path and set of goals can **differentiate a shop as an employer of choice in a competitive labor market.** **See page 34 to learn more.**



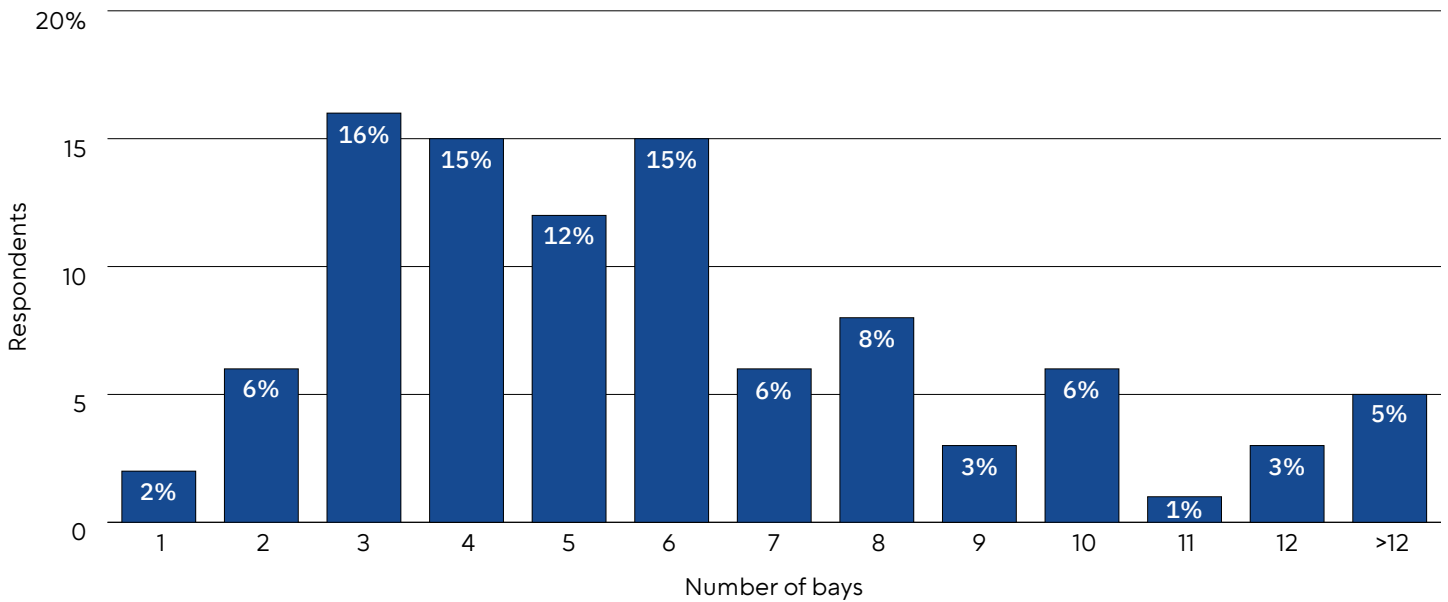
# Average Shop Size and Daily Car Count



## Average shop size by number of bays

The average shop size among respondents is **6 bays**, with 81% of shops having 8 bays or fewer.

### Average shop size by number of bays



## Average daily car count per bay

# 2.2 vehicles per bay per day

On average, shops service 2.2 vehicles per bay per day. This means that the average 6-bay shop services approximately 13 vehicles per day.



How to calculate your per bay daily car count



Average Daily Car Count



Number of Bays in Your Shop



Average Daily Car Count per Bay

# Average Shop Size and Daily Car Count

## → Industry insight

A note on increasing your shop's daily car count.

“

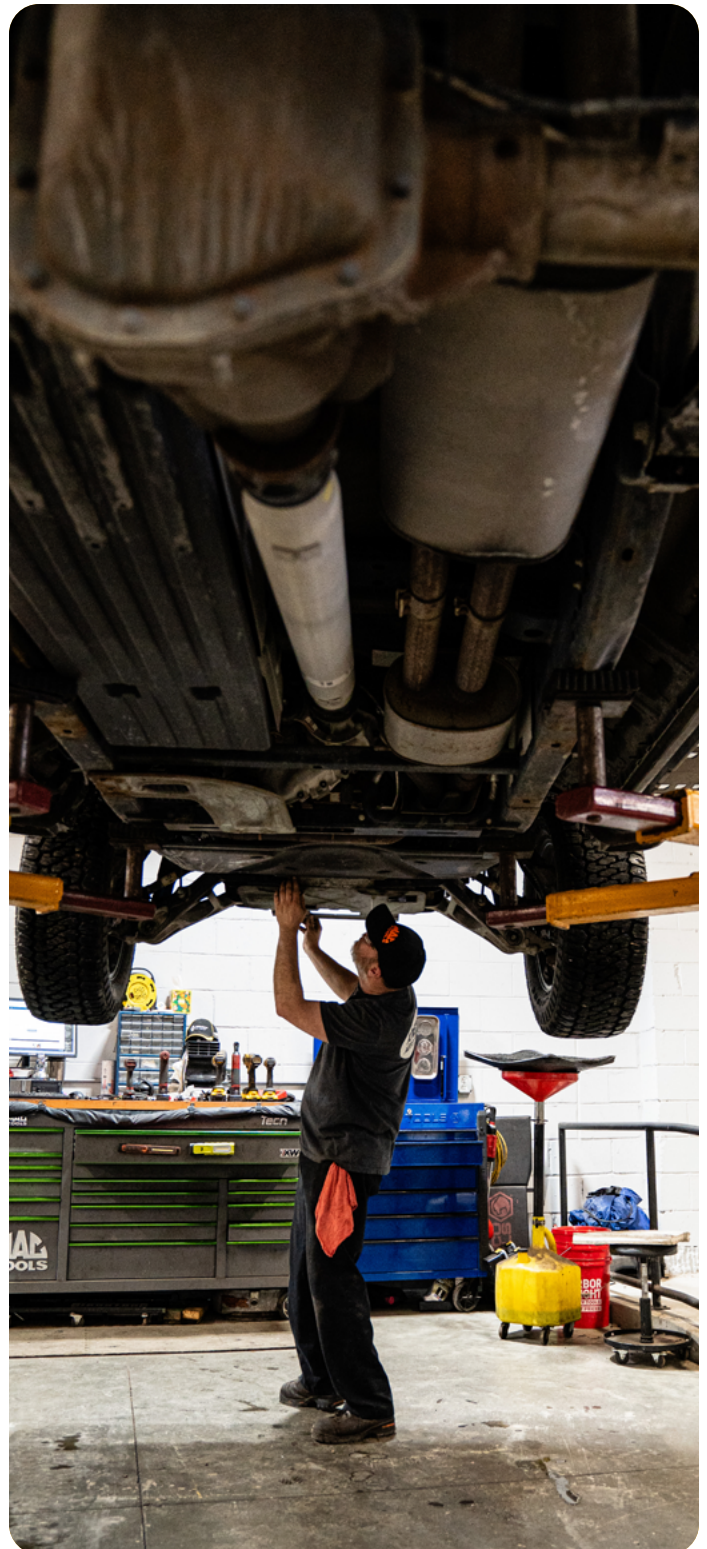
A multi-faceted approach is required to successfully increase your shop's car count. In a nutshell, success comes down to effort rooted in a well-thought-out plan.

### Tip

Set measurable goals, clearly define your target customer, and deliver value through tailored services. Place deep effort into obtaining the training, technology, and resources to enable you to prioritize and execute on operational efficiency. Always keep the customer at the center — focus on proactive communication and provide convenience at every step to build trust and foster lasting loyalty.

”

- Amber Wright, Director of Partnerships, AutoLeap<sup>1</sup>



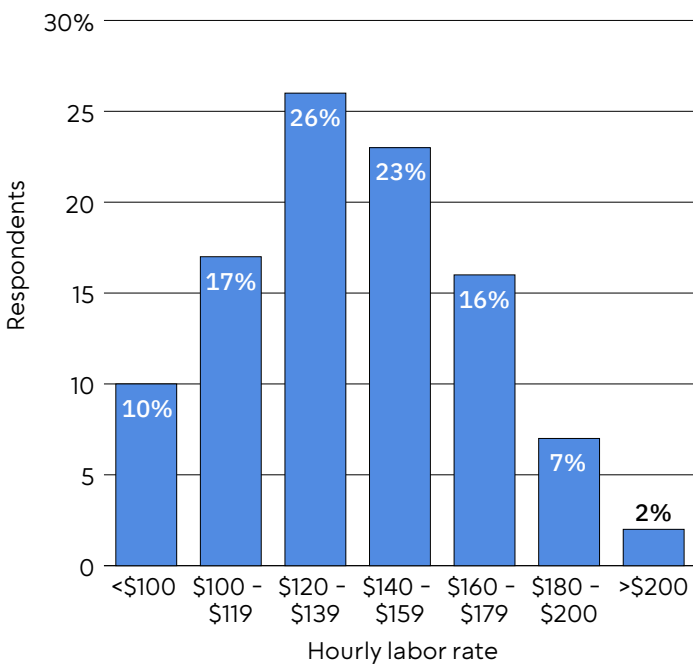


# Revenue-Related Data

## Hourly labor rate

Nearly half of the shops price their labor rate between **\$120-\$159 per hour**.

### Hourly labor rate



## → Free resource

### Set your labor rate to match the value you deliver

Determining the right labor rate for your shop can feel like a daunting task. While there are guidelines to help, there's no one-size-fits-all formula — every shop is unique, and your labor rate should reflect the unique value you provide your customers. By analyzing your shop's specific costs, expertise, and market conditions (or landscape), you can arrive at a labor rate that supports both your business and your customers.

[Check out our blog series](#) with the Repair Shop of Tomorrow<sup>2</sup> for expert insights to get you on the right track.

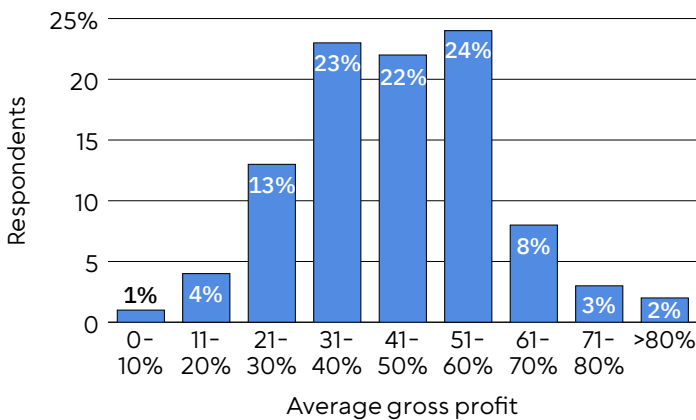


# Revenue-Related Data

## Average gross profit on parts

The top selected gross profit on parts per month was **51-60%**. According to The Institute for Automotive Business Excellence<sup>3</sup>, shops should aim for a benchmark of 58% gross profit on parts. Based on this target, **more than 63% of respondents would benefit from reevaluating and updating their parts markup strategies** to increase monthly profits.

### Average gross profits on parts per month



How to calculate your gross profit on parts

$$\left( \text{Total Sales} - \text{Cost of All Parts Sold} \right) \div \text{Total Sales} = \text{Gross Profit on Parts}$$

## → Free resource

### Parts Markup Guide, Benchmark Matrix, and Webinar Series

We partnered with The Institute for Automotive Business Excellence to create a Parts Markup Guide featuring a detailed benchmark matrix, actionable tips to help you create and/or optimize your strategy, and a companion webinar series. [Explore it here.](#)



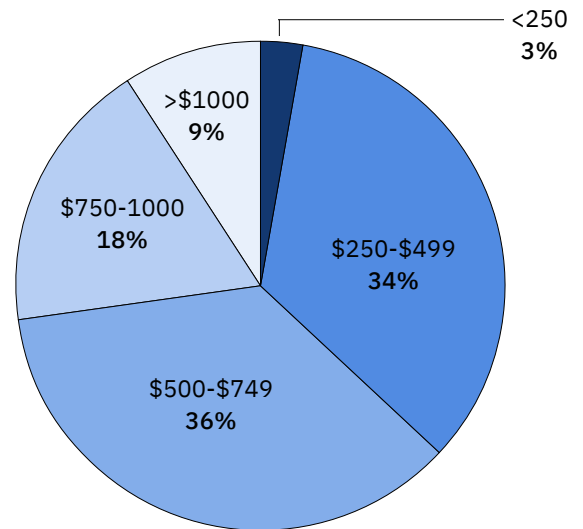
# Revenue-Related Data



## Average repair order value

36% of respondents reported an average repair order value (ARO) between **\$500 and \$749**, with **\$250 to \$499** in a close second.

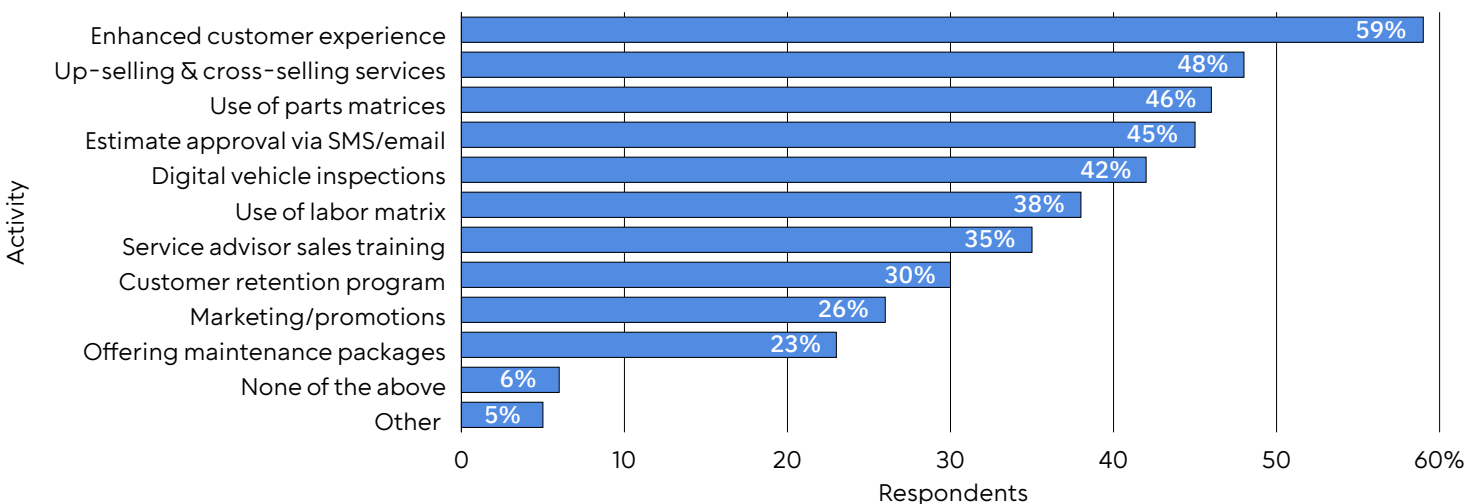
Average repair order value



## Increasing average repair order value

Respondents were asked to indicate all actions that positively impact their average repair order value. The top result made it clear: **A solid customer experience strategy** is something all shops should take seriously.

### What most positively impacts your shop's average repair order value?





# Revenue-Related Data

→ Industry thoughts, insights, and tips on increasing ARO

We asked industry experts to provide their perspectives and tips on the top five activities shops believe most positively impact their ARO.

“

## Enhanced customer experience

Actively listening to understand each customer's vehicle needs and goals positions your shop as a trusted advisor. When customers feel heard, they're more likely to trust your recommendations, which leads to loyalty and referrals.

### Tip

Improve your team's customer communication skills, with listening as the top priority, so they can provide tailored recommendations that align with each customer's specific needs.

”

- **Maryann Croce, Shop Coach Small Biz Vantage<sup>4</sup>**

“

## Up-selling and cross-selling

Our clients expect us to inform them of any and all needed repairs and services their vehicles need. Sometimes, I think there is a stigma around upselling, but it is our moral and ethical duty to provide honest and detailed information about the state of the vehicle and both necessary and critical services so that the client can make the correct decision on the future of their vehicle.

### Tip

It is vitally important to completely inspect each vehicle that enters your shop thoroughly and communicate your complete findings clearly to your customers. This greatly aids in upselling and cross-selling conversations.

”

- **Dave Kusa, Shop Coach, The Automotive Coaching and Training (ACT) Group<sup>5</sup>**



# Revenue-Related Data

→ Industry thoughts, insights, and tips on increasing ARO



## Use of parts matrices

Improper parts markup can cost shops \$40,000 to \$70,000 in missed profits annually. When we first begin coaching a shop, we often see margins between 32% and 44%, but a proper markup matrix can improve these to 55%–58%. Fixing your parts pricing is one of the easiest ways to boost profitability.

### Tip

Create a strong matrix, train your team to use it, stick to it, and exercise discipline to avoid emotional discounting. Implementing and sticking to a strategic parts matrix leads to immediate improvements in your shop's performance.



- **Cecil Bullard, Owner & CEO, The Institute for Automotive Business Excellence**<sup>3</sup>



## Estimate approval via SMS/email

Tekmetric data from 2024 shows that Repair Orders (ROs) authorized digitally have an average value 50% higher than those without digital authorization. By allowing customers to remotely view their estimates from anywhere by sending them via SMS and email, you empower customers with transparency and control over their repair decisions.

### Tip

Consider implementing digital estimate authorizations — they are a simple yet impactful way for your shop to build trust, deliver a seamless experience, and strengthen customer relationships.



- **Sunil Patel, Founder & CEO Tekmetric**<sup>6</sup>

# Revenue-Related Data

→ Industry thoughts, insights, and tips on increasing ARO

“

## Digital vehicle inspections

Adding thorough digital vehicle inspections (DVI) to your workflow can quickly boost ARO with longtime customers and make a great first impression on new customers. DVI help your customers clearly see what's happening with their vehicle — making them more confident in approving recommended services. In my role traveling across North America, I see DVI as a top focus for successful shops — one even tracks “completed inspections” as their top KPI!

### Tip

Perform detailed DVI for every vehicle. Your goals should be to include images, videos, and notes to build trust with customers and improve their understanding of what needs to be done on their vehicle. This not only leads to higher AROs but also protects your shop by documenting the state of the vehicle when in your care.

”

- **Jonathan Moretti, Enterprise Solutions Engineer, Shopmonkey<sup>7</sup>**

→ Shop owner insight

**Increasing ARO: Blending operational excellence with exceptional customer experience**

“

At Motoro Cars, we constantly work to increase our average repair order (ARO) by strategically executing multiple actions, many of which are highlighted in this report. Success lies in balancing the art of delivering efficiency and transparency while ensuring customers feel educated, valued, and cared for.

”

- **Felix Diaz, Founder and CEO Motoro Cars<sup>8</sup>**

[Learn more](#) about how Felix Diaz increases ARO in his shop by:

- Enhancing customer experience through amenities
- Getting quick wins with routine services set up as canned jobs
- Telling a story through DVI
- Providing transparency and flexibility via digital estimate approvals
- Putting customer education before upselling



# Shop Staffing



## Number of technicians per bay

Participants' shops have an **average of 0.7 technicians per bay**, indicating most shops do not have a 1:1 ratio of technicians to bays. For example, this means a typical 6-bay shop has **4 to 5 technicians**.



**0.7 Technician**



**Per Bay**



## Number of service advisors per bay

The majority of shops have **1 service advisor for every 3 bays** — meaning a 6-bay shop tends to have 2 service advisors.



**1 Service Advisor**



**Per 3 Bays**



**Note:** In last year's report, we shared the average number of technicians and service advisors shops have per location. Since shop locations vary in number of bays from shop to shop, this year's staffing numbers are represented on a per-bay basis.

# Shop Staffing

## → Shop coach insight

### Should you hire another service advisor?

“

If your 6-bay shop, for example, operates like a well-oiled machine and you have the capacity for more vehicles, adding a second service advisor is a wise decision.

However, many shops need to make some improvements before hiring another service advisor. First, assess whether your shop's backend production can sustain the associated costs. If your current production is struggling, adding more front-end staff may lead to overloading your existing team of technicians.

[View this self-assessment](#) to decide whether you're ready to hire another service advisor or if you should first focus on improving operations or exploring other strategic hires.

If your responses to the self-assessment questions are mostly positive, it indicates that your shop is operating efficiently and effectively. This is a strong sign that your

shop could benefit from the addition of another service advisor.


If the assessment reveals that you're not quite ready for another service advisor but you still feel a staffing gap, think about hiring a customer service representative or shop assistant. These roles can help improve productivity and efficiency in your shop by providing support in areas that need it — setting the stage for a future transition to a service advisor position.

”

- **Maryann Croce, Shop Coach**  
**Small Biz Vantage<sup>4</sup>**



# Service of Fully Electric Vehicles

 **By 2035, EVs on U.S. roads could make up more than 26% of the vehicles**

Despite representing a relatively small share of the total vehicles on the road today, EVs are on an accelerating adoption curve. Projections suggest by 2030, annual EV sales are expected to reach 7.7 million, representing nearly 46% of light-duty vehicle sales — 2 million more than earlier forecasts.

 **7.7 million**

EV sales are expected to reach 7.7 million vehicles, representing nearly 46% of light-duty vehicle sales — 2 million more than earlier forecasts.

By 2035, EVs on U.S. roads could total 78.5 million vehicles, making up over 26% of the nearly 300 million vehicles expected nationwide<sup>9</sup>.

## Percent of EVs on the road by 2035



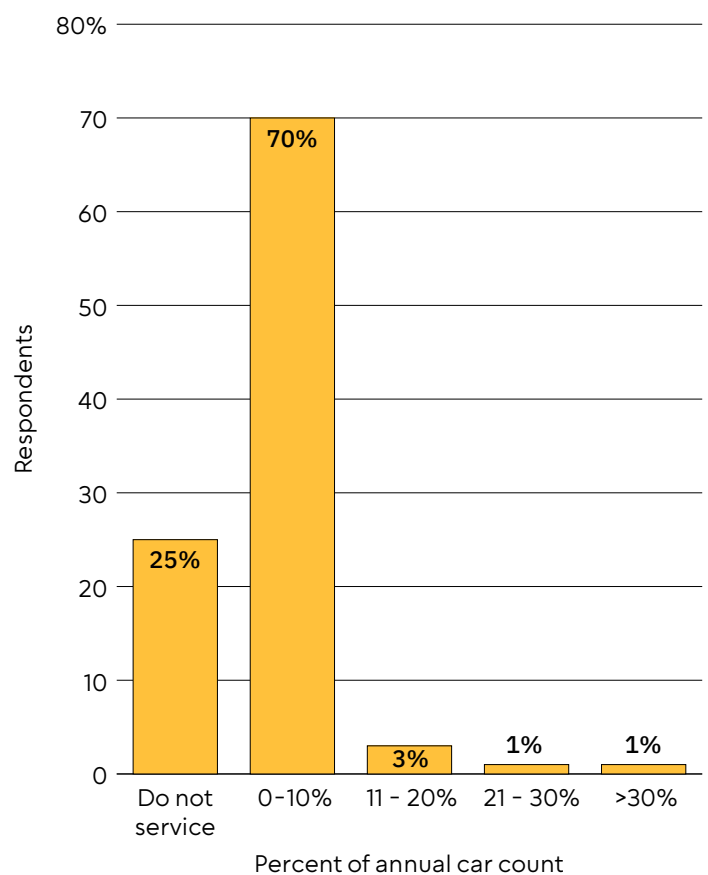
74% ICE



26% EV

 **Few EVs enter general repair shops — for now**

**What percent of your annual car count are fully electric vehicles (not hybrid)?**



Most repair shops service only a small number of EVs each year. Whether due to little customer demand, historically limited access to EV repair information and parts, or a lack of training, **25% of shops do not work on EVs, and 70% report that EVs account for 10% or less of their annual car count.**



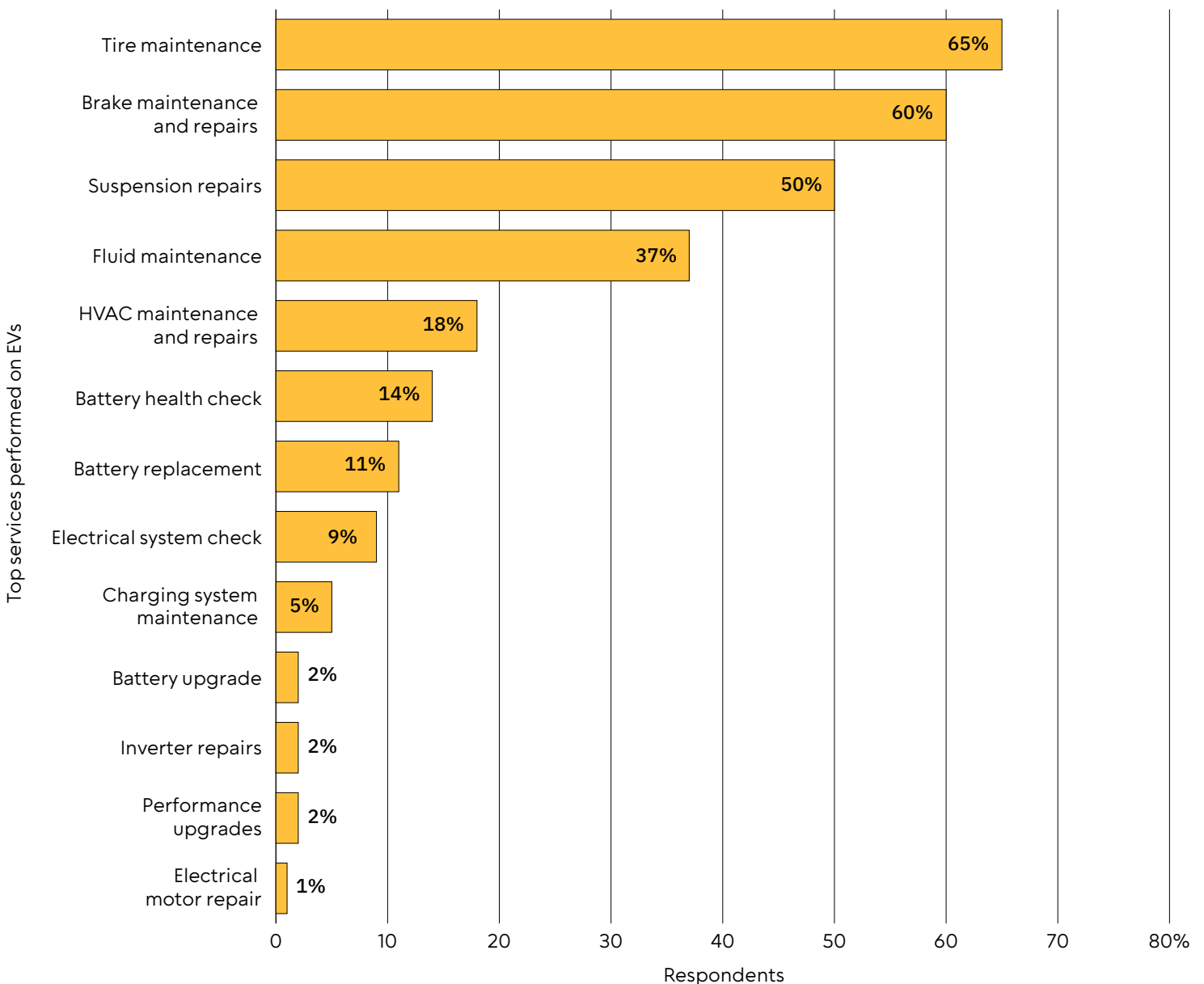
# Service of Fully Electric Vehicles



## Top-performed EV services today

**Tire maintenance** emerged as the most common service for shops that service fully electric vehicles, with **65%** of respondents listing it among their top three EV services.

### What are the top three services you perform on full electric vehicles?



# Service of Fully Electric Vehicles

## → Industry insight

### Helping EV drivers choose the right EV tires

“

Tire maintenance is the top-performed EV service because tires on EVs wear out faster than those on ICE vehicles due to factors like instant torque, increased weight (15%-20% heavier), unique tire compounds, and more aggressive driving habits. Major tire manufacturers report up to a 20% increase in wear rates, with some EV drivers needing replacements after just 15,000 miles.

**20%  
Increase**

Major tire manufacturers report up to a 20% increase in wear rates for EV tires.

**This fact is an opportunity for your shop to become an expert in EV tires.** Regular tire rotation is essential to maximizing tread life. While non-EV tires can be used if they match load and speed specifications, customers may notice drawbacks like increased road noise, reduced rolling resistance efficiency, and diminished performance.



**Your shop staff and sales team must understand the available EV-specific tires, their features, and the benefits of recommending the right tire to match the vehicle and the customer's needs.**

”

**- J.P. Brooks, Chief Revenue Officer  
Fitment Group<sup>10</sup>**



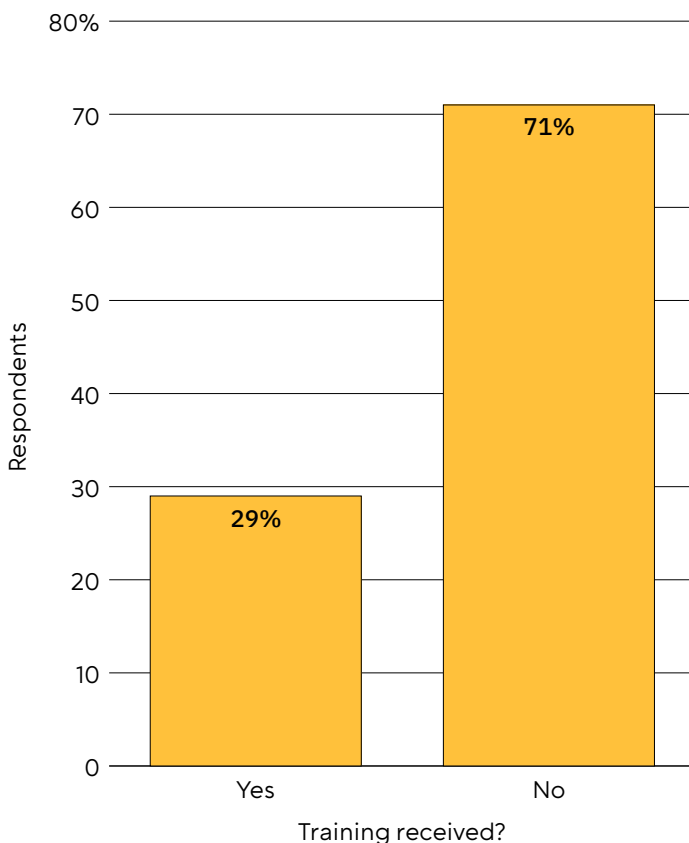
# Service of Fully Electric Vehicles



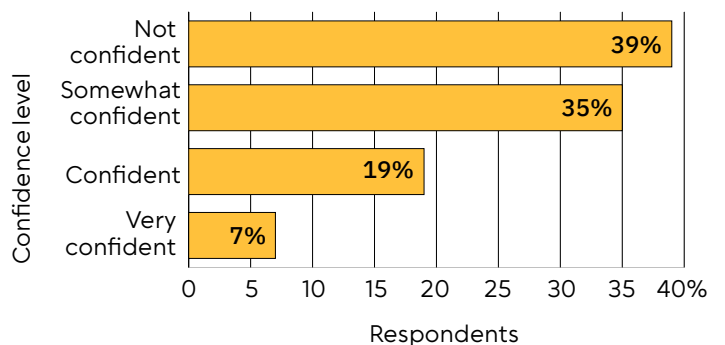
## The EV service opportunity — Now is the time to train your team

As EV adoption grows, many shops are still in the early stages of readiness. Fewer than a third of the survey participants reported that their shop's technicians have received EV-specific training, and **confidence in servicing EVs remains low**. This gap presents a strategic opportunity for shops willing to lead by investing in EV training and tools.

### Has your team received specific EV repair training?



### How confident is your team in repairing fully electric vehicles?



## → Industry insight

### Bridging the gap: The need for offering both ICE and EV vehicle maintenance



Only 4% of the market is comprised of households that own an EV vehicle exclusively. This means that 96% of EV owners own both an EV vehicle and an ICE vehicle. Customers prefer the convenience of going to one shop for all of their vehicles. **Shops have an opportunity to stand out by offering both ICE and EV services.**



- **Josh Martalock**, VP of Sales  
Tire Guru<sup>11</sup>

# Service of Fully Electric Vehicles

## → Shop coach insight

### Prepare for the future: EV and alternative fuel training



**Now is the time to start training your team in EV repair and service.** Strategize and budget for the new EV tooling your shop will need to protect your technicians and vehicles.

We may see fewer EVs than expected due to a lag in charging infrastructure, but we will see the continued push toward reducing and eliminating petroleum-powered vehicles. Remember to expand your knowledge and training on alternative fuel sources, such as

hydrogen fuel cells and plug-in hybrids. Though EV and alternative fuel training are not widely available nationwide, keep an eye out in your area as options are growing. NAPA is developing programs, and Earthling Automotive in San Francisco offers excellent training.



- **Dave Kusa, Shop Coach, The Automotive Coaching and Training (ACT) Group**<sup>5</sup>

## → Industry insight

### Closing the EV skills gap in automotive repair



NAPA Autotech recognizes the critical need for comprehensive EV training through our EV Ready program. With only about 3% of automotive technicians currently proficient in electric vehicle maintenance and fewer than 10% qualified to work directly on EV batteries, we are committed to bridging this skills gap. Our proactive investment in technician education

ensures that shops have the opportunity to fully prepare their team to meet the evolving needs of customers in this rapidly changing automotive landscape. Our Tools of the Trade website furthers that mission by providing resources for prospective trade workers and driving education of the future of automotive repair, including in EV.



- **Donovan Ringo, Sr. Manager Emerging Markets, NAPA Auto Parts**<sup>12</sup>

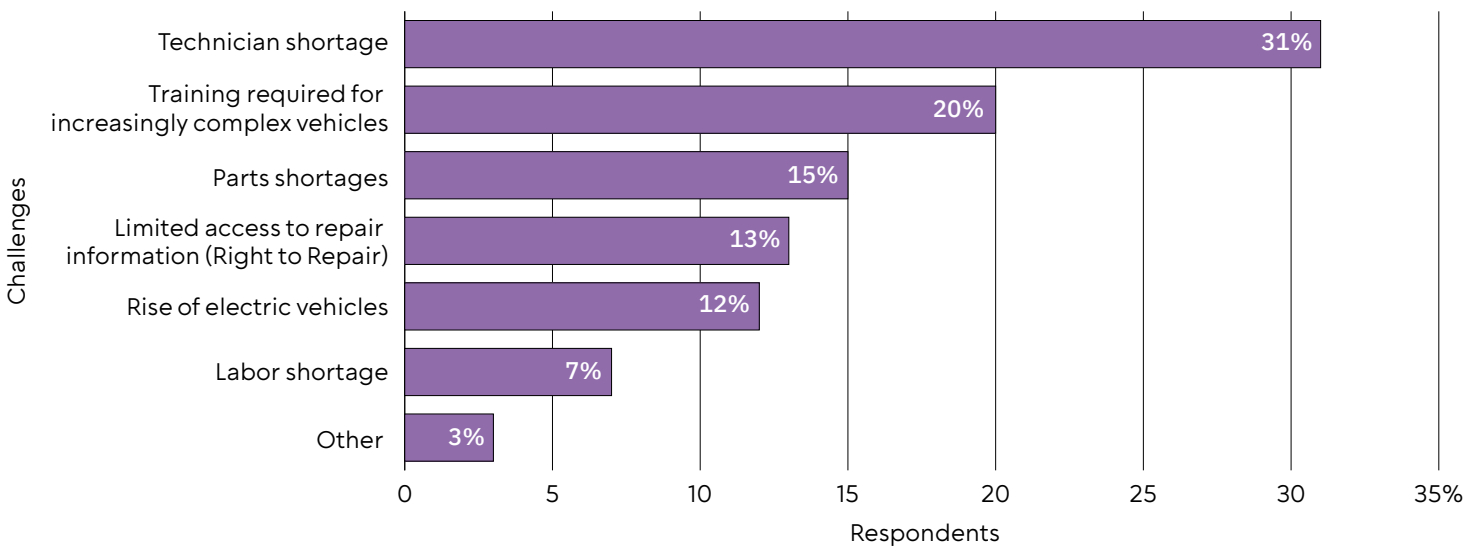


# Top Industry Challenges

## ! Biggest challenges

The top two industry challenges identified were the ongoing technician shortage and the training needed to keep pace with increasingly complex vehicle technologies.

What's the biggest challenge you expect to face in the next 5 years?



# Top Industry Challenges

Industry challenges won't resolve themselves — they call for proactive effort from everyone in the industry. Whether by taking action in your own shop or engaging in broader industry collaboration, your participation is crucial for overcoming these issues and driving real progress. See the insights below and visit the Hiring and Retaining Technicians section of this report for thoughts on addressing the top two challenges.

## → Shop coach insight

**The technician shortage and rapid technology changes are two sides of the same coin**

“

Training is both necessary and an opportunity. It attracts motivated talent and equips teams to handle complexity. Shops should approach training as an investment, not an

expense. Aligning training with team and shop goals fosters loyalty and positions your shop as a leader. Engaging schools and promoting the industry as a viable, respected career path strengthens the talent pipeline for the future.

”

**- Maryann Croce, Shop Coach  
Small Biz Vantage<sup>4</sup>**





# Top Industry Challenges

## → Industry insight

**Increasing vehicle complexity requires a concerted effort to train your team**



Repairs that once required minimal effort, such as wheel alignments, now demand advanced precision to calibrate Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) correctly. ADAS is just one small example of how modern vehicle design has evolved — turning routine services into high-stakes, complex processes. To remain competitive, shops must not only navigate these intricate systems across a breadth of vehicle makes and models but also uphold the precision required for safe and reliable repairs. In this environment, investing in ongoing technician training has become a core component of long-term success, not just a nice-to-have.



**- David Niemiec, General Manager Mitchell 1<sup>13</sup>**

Investing in ongoing technician training has become a core component of long-term success.



# Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage

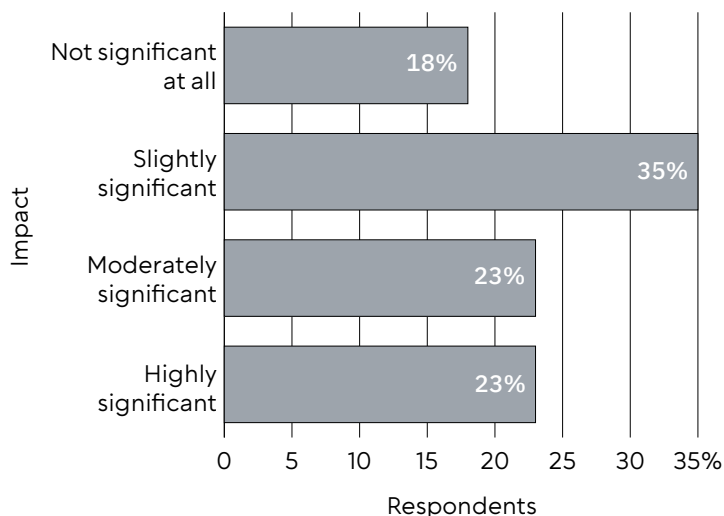
The automotive industry continues to face a shortage of skilled technicians, and shop owners and managers are at the front lines of this challenge. In our survey, **514 shop owners and managers** shared their perspectives on the challenges of attracting and retaining technicians, along with strategies that are working for them.



## Feeling the impact of the technician shortage

Of the participating shop owners and managers, 46% reported that the shortage of skilled technicians has a **moderate to highly significant impact** on their shop.

What is the impact of the technician shortage on your shop?





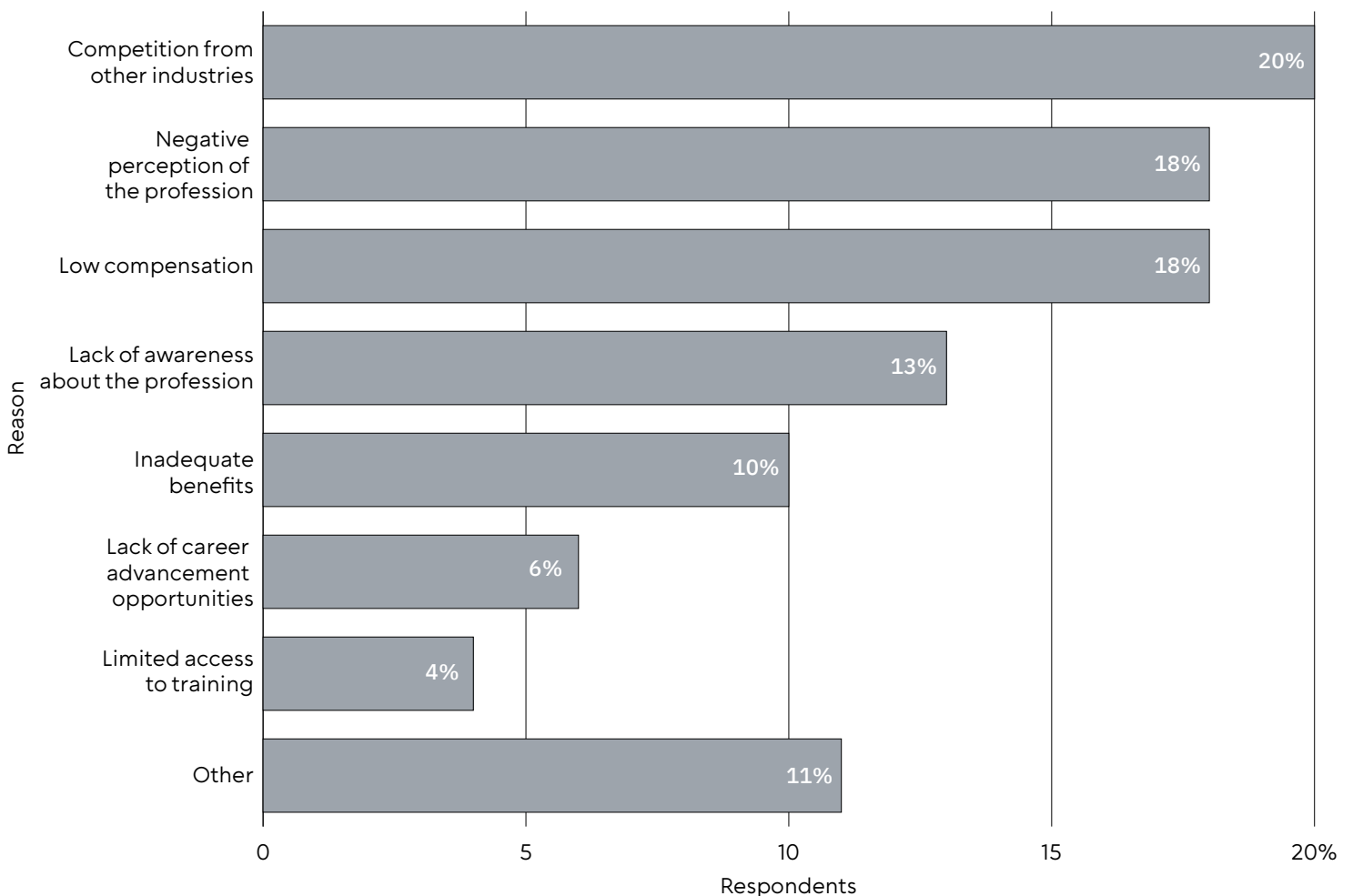
# Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage



## Causes of the technician shortage

Shop owners and managers identified the three primary causes of the technician shortage: **competition from other industries** (20%), **negative perceptions of the profession** (18%), and **low compensation** (18%). These factors reveal significant hurdles for the industry but highlight areas where shops can concentrate on attracting new talent and reshaping perceptions.

What do you believe is the primary reason for the technician shortage in your region?



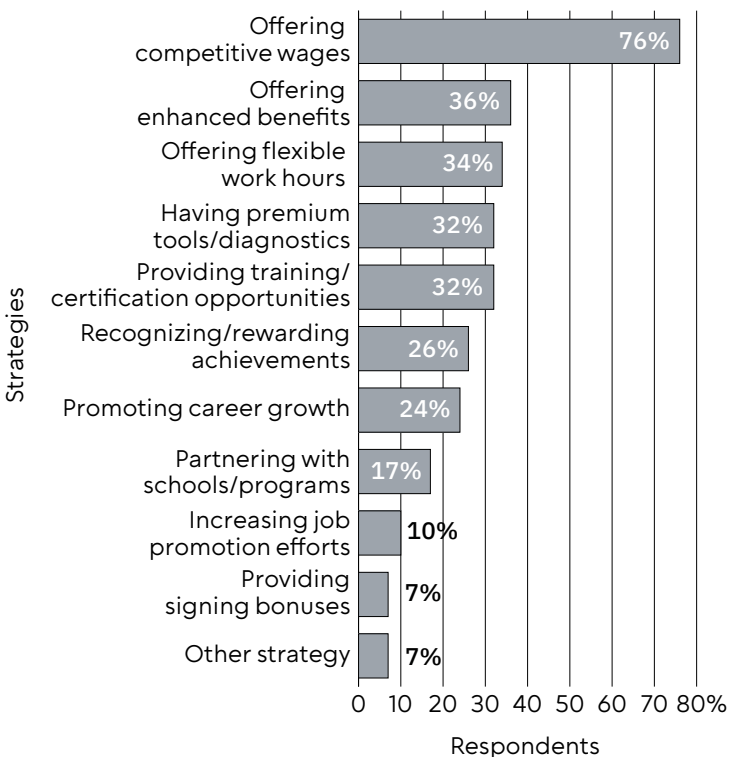
# Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage



## Strategies for attracting technicians

We asked shop owners and managers to share the top 3 strategies that have been most effective for attracting technicians to their shop. The majority identified **offering competitive wages** as the top strategy. Enhanced benefits, flexible work hours, access to premium tools and diagnostics, and opportunities for training and certification were all closely ranked as secondary effective strategies.

### Which strategies do you find most effective for attracting new technicians?



### Reputation matters

Several technicians who participated in our industry survey stated that the **reputation of the shop or owner** was one of the top aspects that attracted them to the shop they currently work for. It's important to understand that your shop's reputation extends beyond customer reviews and star ratings — it's also about how your shop is perceived as a workplace.

**Ask yourself:** What would your team say about their experience working for your shop? Building a positive reputation internally is key to drawing in top talent.



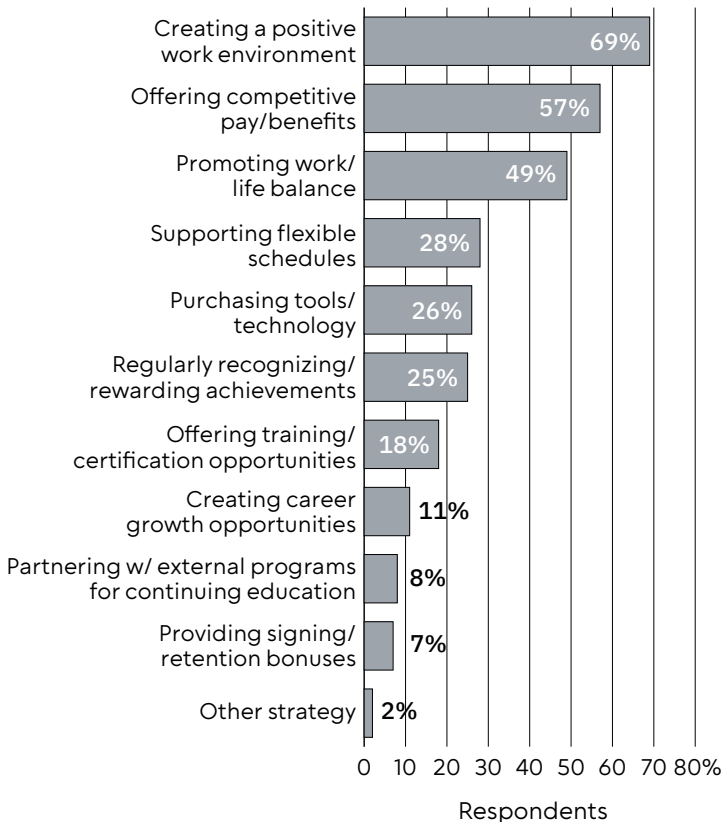
# Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage



## Retention: Building loyalty and reducing turnover

Attracting skilled technicians is only half the battle – retaining them also requires a strategic approach. Owners and managers identified the most effective strategies for retaining technicians as **creating a positive work environment** (69%), offering competitive pay and benefits (57%), and promoting work-life balance (49%).

### Which strategies do you find most effective for retaining technicians?



A positive work environment goes beyond competitive wages and surface-level perks. It's about fostering a culture where technicians feel valued, supported, and motivated to stay long-term.

# Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage

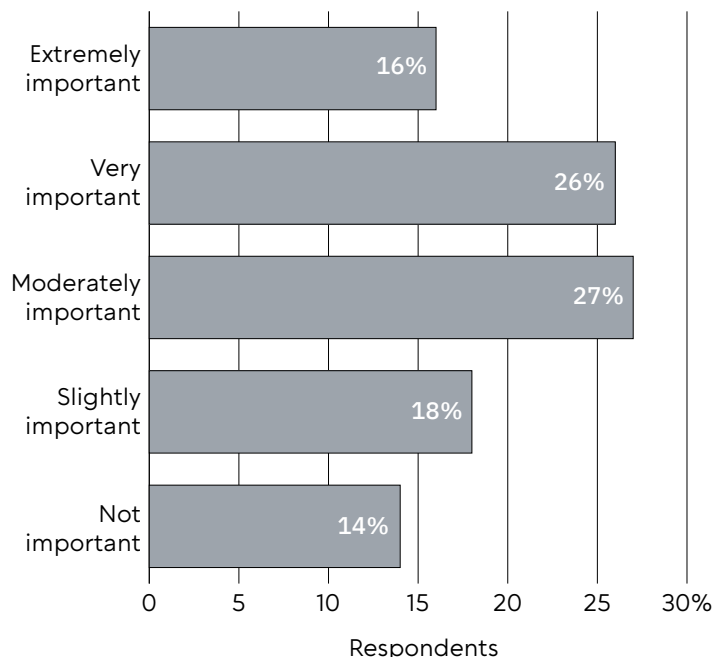


## Retention opportunity: Providing a career path for your technicians

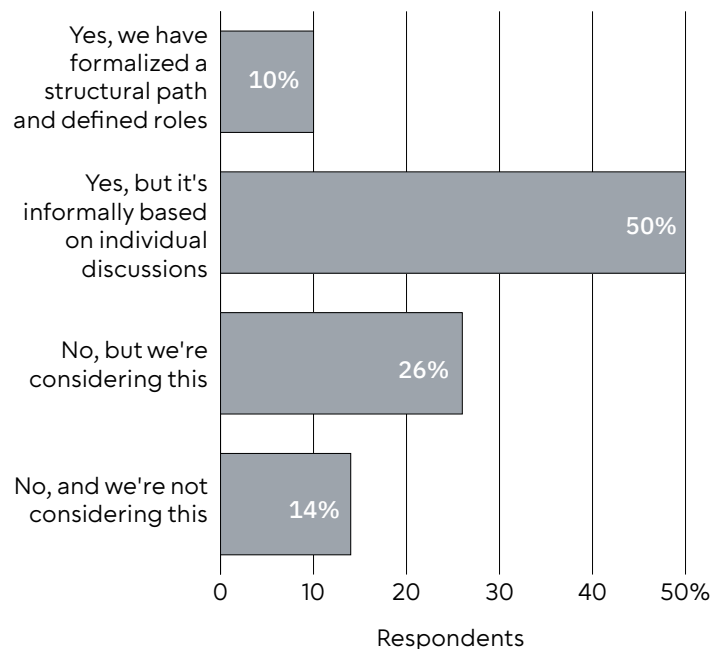
One of the most **significant opportunities for retaining technicians** lies in providing **clear career paths**. According to Wrench Way, one of the biggest complaints they hear from technicians is that “they are often frustrated with their employers because they don’t provide a clear path for career growth.”<sup>14</sup>

**69%** of the shop owners and managers who responded to our survey **agree that career pathing is moderately to extremely important to retaining technicians**. Yet only **10%** of respondents have a clear, formal career path for technicians within their shop. **50%** provide career opportunities for their technicians, but they are informally based on individual discussions. **40% of shops do not have career pathing opportunities for their technicians at all.** (continued on next page)

### How important is career pathing to retaining technicians at your shop?



### Do you provide clear career path opportunities for technicians in your shop?





# Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage

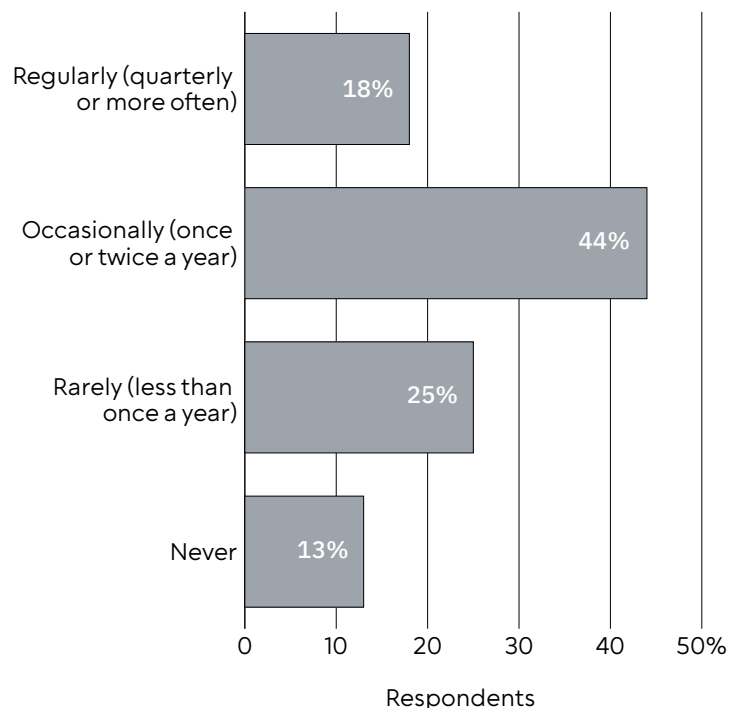


## Retention opportunity: Providing a career path for your technicians (continued)

**Shops prioritizing structured career pathing and regular discussions with their technicians stand to gain a competitive edge in retaining top talent.** 44% have career-advancement discussions at least annually, with 18% holding discussions at least quarterly. Unfortunately, a quarter (25%) of respondents rarely have these discussions, and 13% never do.



### How often do you discuss career advancement opportunities with your technicians?



# Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage

## → Industry insight

Increasing technician engagement and motivation with career pathing

“

When technicians in your shop, both new and existing, see a clear path to career advancement, their engagement and motivation increase. By offering a structured career pathway and tools for tracking progress, you're fostering growth and showing your technicians that you

care about their future. This approach can be a powerful differentiator in recruiting and retaining top talent.

”

- Marc Brune, Business Development Manager Mentor Mentee<sup>15</sup>

## → Free resource

[Click here](#) for 3 Tips for Launching an Auto Technician Mentoring or Apprenticeship Program





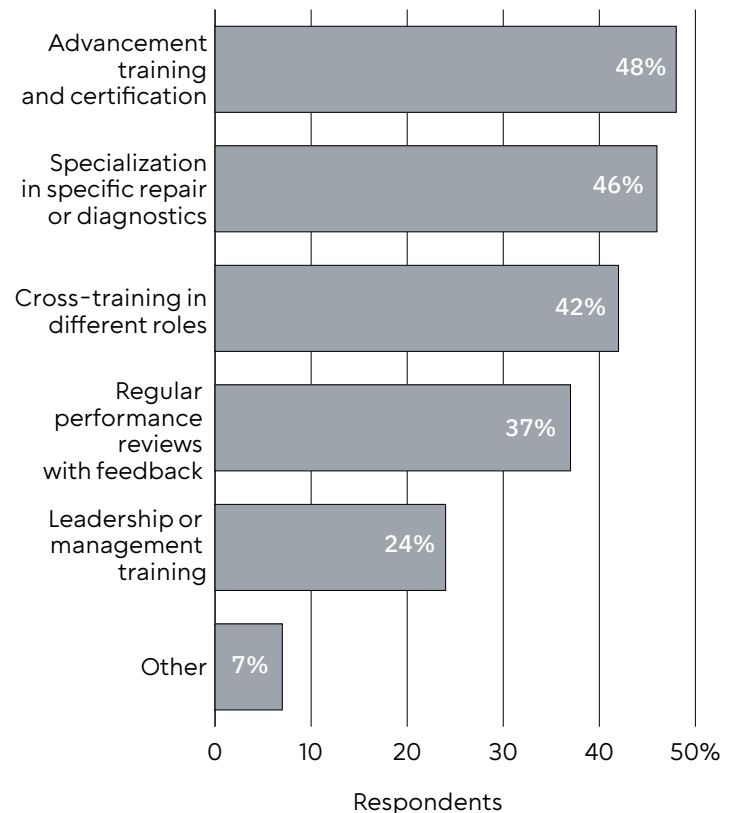
# Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage

## ★ What career development opportunities are shops offering their technicians?

Here are examples of career development opportunities the participating shop owners and managers offer technicians. The top three responses were **advancement training and certification** (48%), **specialization in specific repair or diagnostics** (46%), and **cross-training in different roles** (42%).



### What types of career development opportunities do you offer technicians?



# Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage

## → Industry insight

“

### Building a culture of education and growth

Education was the biggest thing being asked for in the interviews I held in 2024. It seems everyone is hungry for more knowledge, and that's exciting because we offer an education plan at our shop. We really like to hone in on specific niches and individual strengths as the platform for our team's education.

### Tip

From great onboarding to advanced technologies and repair education, your shop needs to cover all ends of education for the future of auto technicians to continue to grow. But, technician training doesn't matter if the team is not backed by a great company culture and solid leadership. To truly support your team's growth, both you as a shop owner and your managers must prioritize ongoing education and leadership development, as these form the foundation of a thriving workplace culture.

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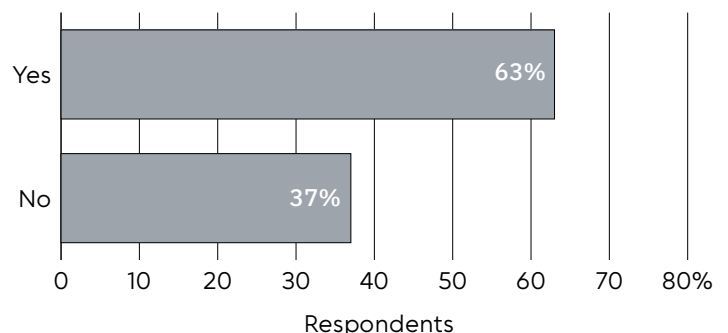
- **Lauralee Schmidt, COO**  
**Schmidt Auto Care<sup>16</sup>**

## 💰 The role of financial transparency in technician engagement

Financial transparency is an often underutilized strategy for increasing technician engagement and fostering a stronger sense of ownership. By openly sharing financial data and performance metrics, shop owners can help their teams see how daily efforts contribute to overall profitability. This approach builds trust and strengthens team alignment, ensuring that everyone is working toward shared business goals.

While many shops already embrace this practice, **37% of survey participants have the opportunity to start sharing financial information with their teams.** (see the next page for expert insights on this topic)

### Do you share financial information with your technicians?





# Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage

## → Shop coach insight

### Why you should share your shop's financials with your staff

“

I always encourage shop owners to share their finances with their entire team. When you create clarity around the numbers, it helps demystify business operations. Your technicians will start to understand where the money from their labor goes and develop an appreciation for the shop's pricing strategies. Financial transparency also increases accountability and fosters a sense of ownership; when employees see the financial impact of their actions, they take greater

responsibility and are more motivated to follow best practices and optimize their performance. Ultimately, it cultivates a profit-driven culture where everyone works toward the same goal: profitability and efficiency.

”

- **Dave Kusa, Coach, The Automotive Coaching and Training (ACT) Group<sup>5</sup>**

## → Free resource

[Learn more](#) about getting started with financial transparency with your team.



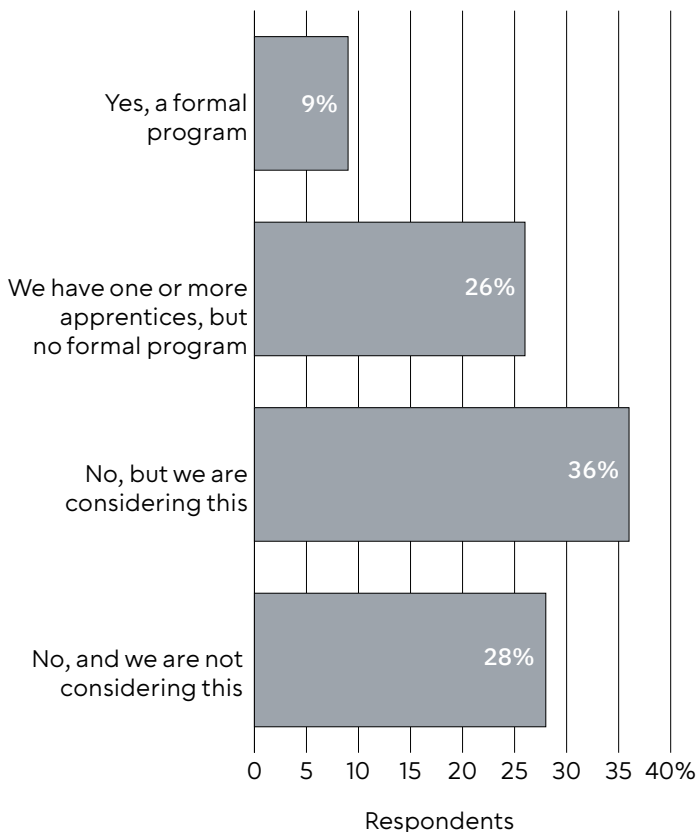
# Hiring and Retaining Technicians Amidst the Technician Shortage



## Filling the technician pipeline: Apprenticeship programs

Building a strong pipeline of technicians requires forward-thinking strategies, including technician apprenticeship programs. Currently, most shops lack such programs — representing a major industry opportunity.

### Does your shop have an apprenticeship program for technicians?



## → Industry insight

**Fostering the next generation of technicians requires proactive involvement across the industry — including inside your shop**



Partnering with local technical schools and bringing apprentices into your shop is a game-changer for building a strong talent pipeline. Apprentices bring fresh energy and a willingness to learn, while mentorship helps them develop real-world skills that align with your shop's needs. By investing in apprenticeships, you not only help minimize the development of bad habits (because they are never introduced) but also create a supportive atmosphere that promotes success.



**- Scott Brown, Founder  
The Diagnostic Network<sup>17</sup>**

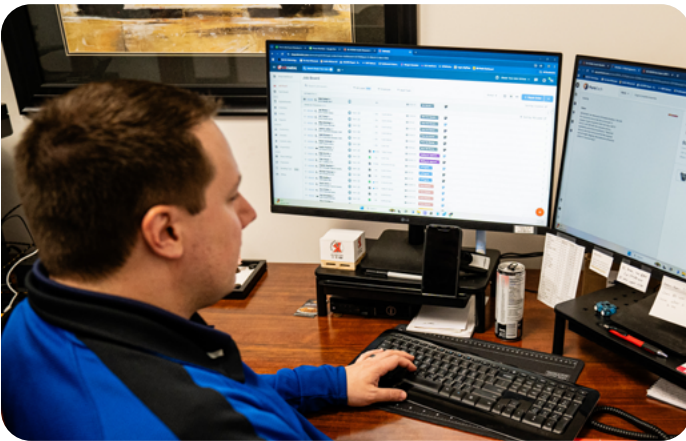
## → Free resource

[Read Scott's tips](#) on bringing young technicians into your shop.

# Software Usage in Shops: A Snapshot

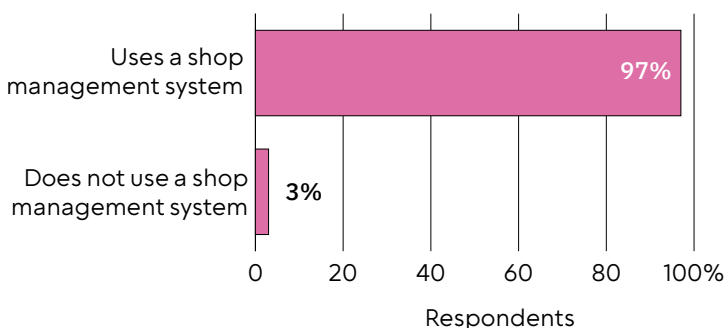


## Prevalence of shop management software



**97%** of respondents reported using a shop management system (SMS) — highlighting how these platforms have become essential to modern shop operations. In this year's survey, **28%** of respondents reported relying exclusively on an SMS — a **47%** increase from our 2023 survey — highlighting the growing penetration of the robust, all-encompassing capabilities of today's SMS solutions.

### Shops that use a shop management system



## → Free resource

### Choosing the best shop management software

Shop management systems streamline operations by uniting essential functions — scheduling, inspections, estimates, invoicing, inventory tracking, payments, customer communication, and more — into a single, cohesive platform. And by integrating seamlessly with other key shop software tools like accounting, marketing, and parts ordering solutions, these shop management systems simplify workflows and eliminate the inefficiencies of juggling multiple standalone tools. Selecting the right system depends on your shop's size, specialty, budget, strategy, and more. Learn more about selecting the best shop management system for your shop.

To learn how to choose the best shop software for your shop [read more here](#).

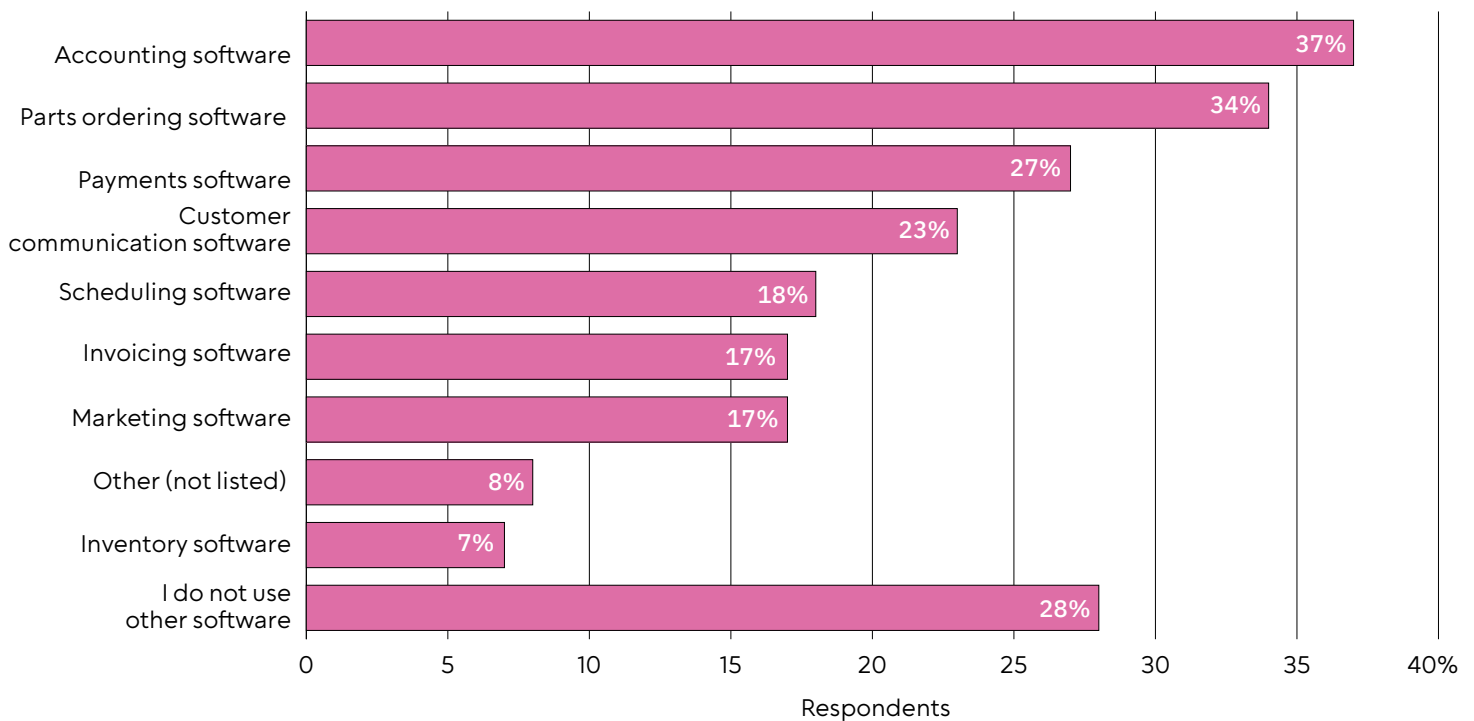
# Software Usage in Shops: A Snapshot



## Beyond shop management systems

While shop management systems include features like invoicing, payments, and customer communication, shops with unique needs may still benefit from supplementing their tech stack with other specialized solutions. For shops integrating additional tools into their workflows, **accounting software** (37%) and **parts ordering platforms** (34%) are the most commonly used — pointing to a focus on financial management and efficient parts procurement. Other tools, such as payments software (27%), customer communication software (23%), and scheduling software (18%), emphasize the importance of improving customer experience and optimizing operations.

### What software do you use other than a shop management system (if any)?



Adopting advanced software solutions can help address key challenges and opportunities highlighted in this report — such as streamlining operations, meeting evolving customer expectations, and mitigating staffing shortages. **These tools enable your shop to improve efficiency, maintain high service standards, and stay competitive in an increasingly technology-driven market.**



## → A Final Word

This report is more than just numbers – it’s a snapshot of where the industry is today and where it is headed. Every shop’s journey is different, but staying informed and proactive lays the groundwork for success. Whether your goals this year are to improve revenue, create more efficient operations, attract and retain technicians, keep pace with new vehicle technologies, etc., we wish you the best!

For more free resources designed to help you up-level your operations and grow your business, visit the [PartsTech Resource Hub](#).

## Sources

- <sup>1</sup>[AutoLeap](#)
- <sup>2</sup>[The Repair Shop of Tomorrow](#)
- <sup>3</sup>[The Institute for Automotive Business Excellence](#)
- <sup>4</sup>[Small Biz Vantage](#)
- <sup>5</sup>[The Automotive Coaching and Training \(ACT\) Group](#)
- <sup>6</sup>[Tekmetric](#)
- <sup>7</sup>[Shopmonkey](#)
- <sup>8</sup>[Motoro Cars](#)
- <sup>9</sup>[The Edison Electric Institute \(EEI\)](#)
- <sup>10</sup>[The Fitment Group](#)
- <sup>11</sup>[Tire Guru](#)
- <sup>12</sup>[NAPA Auto Parts](#)
- <sup>13</sup>[Mitchell 1](#)
- <sup>14</sup>[Wrench Way](#)
- <sup>15</sup>[Mentor Mentee](#)
- <sup>16</sup>[Schmidt Auto Care](#)
- <sup>17</sup>[The Diagnostic Network](#)





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