

Loaded questions

Alan Hargreaves, Director of E.M.A Computer Solutions challenges bodyshop owners to assess the health of their businesses.

How is your bodyshop loaded? Is it done by the number of T-cards in the rack? Is it done by filling diary pages? Is it done on an 'in-Monday-out-Friday basis'? Is it governed by the availability of courtesy cars? Or is your shop simply loaded on a 'gut feeling'?

If you're loading your shop using any of the above methods then I'll stake my reputation on one or more of the following statements being true of your business:

- 1) you're not meeting all promise times,
- 2) you're setting 'safe' promise times,
- 3) you have more courtesy cars than you need,
- 4) you don't have enough estimators,
- 5) your productives are experiencing 'idle time',
- 6) your customers' cars are on site far longer than necessary and you're wasting time moving them around, and
- 7) you are haemorrhaging cash!

No-one likes being told they're doing something wrong, particularly managers, but hard times lie ahead for bodyshops: what with new legislations on the way and work providers demanding more discounts/referral charges. The vast majority of bodyshop owners and managers don't realise it but they are not managing their businesses, their businesses are managing them. And most misinterpret being busy as being profitable.

At EMACS we produce a PC-based bodyshop loading programme that can transform your business into an efficient, productive and profitable organisation within days of installation: and it pays for itself several times over in the year.

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