

Hunter Highlights

News and
Trends of the
Automotive
Service Industry

Hunter Inspection Lane Technology Drives Auto Dealers' Customer-Pay Service



As industry trends pressure auto dealers to generate more “customer-pay” service, some of the most successful operations are increasing their undercar service volume by 100% or more through a simple investment in Hunter technology.

In minutes Hunter’s automated drive-through inspection lane can identify commonly overlooked alignment, brake and suspension service opportunities and print the results for the vehicle owner. Without lifting the vehicle or removing wheels, actual braking performance, suspension adhesion and damping and wheel sideslip (an indicator of misalignment or worn or damaged parts) can be measured. The modular inspection lane components can be configured to fit the most challenging space requirements. Some configurations are certified to operate out-of-doors in demanding weather conditions.

This issue features a few examples of some of the hundreds of auto dealers throughout the country who are successfully using Hunter automated inspection lane technology to quickly identify needed service and earn more profits.

Hunter Technology Helps Michigan Dealership Double Service Volume

Lemmen Grand, the Coopersville, Michigan Chevrolet, Buick, Pontiac and GM dealer has a formula for success that has helped its service department increase monthly undercar service numbers by 100%. The dealership installed a Hunter automated inspection lane in the service write-up lane to measure the brake performance and wheel sideslip of arriving vehicles. According to Lemmen Grand staff, customers are most likely to authorize service when they see evidence of needed repairs while in the write-up area.



Lemmen Grand staff take advantage of the inspection lane equipment's high visibility in the service write-up lane to capture more authorizations of needed service.



After vehicles are adjusted or repaired, the inspection lane is used again to verify the work and provide customers with before and after results. The increased volume generated by the automated inspection lane has prompted the dealership to upgrade its current Hunter alignment system to handle the additional work.

Hunter Inspection Lane Drives Five-Fold Increase in Alignment Sales



Al Serra Chevrolet service staff review sideslip results with each customer.

Adding Hunter SS100 Sideslip Meters to its service write-up lanes helped boost alignment sales by more than 500% at Al Serra Chevrolet in Grand Blanc, Michigan. The SS100s measure arriving vehicles for excessive sideslip, an indicator of misalignment or worn suspension or steering parts. Service write-up staff use the results printout to discuss service options with the vehicle owners. Failed vehicles are then diverted to the shop's Hunter-equipped alignment bay where further inspection and alignment is completed using DSP600 camera-based sensors to speed service.

A single SS100 in the write-up lane at Al Serra GMC, Buick, Hummer has shown comparable success, increasing alignment sales by 300% since the units were installed in March 2005.



The dealership's three SS100 Sideslip Meters test up to 300 vehicles per day.



Two Hunter RX-P flush-to-floor lift racks are used to speed 15-minute oil-change service. Vehicles entering the service department through these lanes are inspected by the SS100 when exiting forward.

Indoor - Outdoor Capability Matches Dealership Needs

Excessive land and building costs in the crowded northeast U.S. corridor led Key Lincoln Mercury in Bridgeport, Connecticut to locate its Hunter automated inspection lane out-of-doors, freeing up indoor space for service work.

The dealership's highly successful lifetime vehicle warranty program is what initially prompted management to investigate the Hunter inspection lane technology. The inspection lane helps keep warranty related costs down by identifying service needs before they can cause additional damage. It also speeds customers through the required preventive maintenance schedule stipulated by the warranty program.



Arriving vehicles have brakes and wheel sideslip tested on the Hunter B400 Brake Tester and SS100 Sideslip Meter. A flat screen monitor mounted in the service area window guides the driver. Customers see the results on the system console located at the write-up counter inside.

New York Mercedes-Benz Dealer Chooses Hunter for New Facility

Massapequa Mercedes-Benz's recent move into its new multi-million dollar free-standing facility gave Service Director Tim Gannon the opportunity to expand the scope of his service operations. Gannon's strategy included installing a Hunter automated inspection lane, not only to speed vehicle inspections, but also to provide customers with a higher level of service.

Gannon is now working to expand his back-shop capabilities to handle the additional business the inspection lane equipment has already proven to generate. Currently about 60% of the vehicles he sends through indicate a need for service. Customer response has been overwhelmingly positive and some even request the service by name.

Massapequa Mercedes-Benz Service Director Tim Gannon discussing a suspension analysis display. The dealership's inspection lane configuration includes an SS100 Sideslip Meter, B400 Brake Tester and SA400 Suspension Analyzer.



Hunter SS100 Sideslip Meter is First Step in Bobby Rahal's Innovative Automated Quick Service Line

Forward-thinking race driver, team owner and businessman Bobby Rahal has integrated Hunter inspection lane technology into his innovative, automated maintenance service line at his Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania Honda dealership. The computer-driven service area provides automated assistance for routine vehicle maintenance, lowering costs and freeing up experienced staff and specialists for advanced service work.



Bobby Rahal Honda recently underwent a ground-up restoration and expansion of sales and service facilities.



Vehicles entering the automated maintenance lane are first tested for excessive sideslip. The SS100 measures each axle and shows results instantly on the console screen.

Rahal staff report that 15 to 20% of vehicles tested by the Hunter SS100 Sideslip Meter require further inspection for alignment or worn steering or suspension parts. After exiting the line, Rahal's technicians complete needed alignment and wheel service work in the shop's Hunter-equipped service bays.

Hunter Automated Inspection Lane Plays Dual Role at Michigan Dealer



A Hunter-equipped automated inspection lane works a double shift at Good GMC, Isuzu in Grand Rapids, Michigan. After serving the retail side of the business during the day, it goes to work on the night shift providing fleet vehicle service. The Hunter SS100 Sideslip Meter and B400 Brake Tester are an ideal fit for this work, providing drive-through vehicle inspection that measures and records actual brake performance and wheel sideslip. In less than one minute, the test results indicate when additional or wheel-off inspection or service is required and provides vehicle-specific performance data for dealership and fleet records.

During the day, retail wheel alignment sales have jumped from about four per week to as many per day and brake service has shown a similar increase since the equipment was installed. Approximately 30 to 40 vehicles are tested per day. The service work is fed to Hunter-equipped alignment and wheel service bays.

Good GMC, Isuzu service write-up staff greet arriving retail customers with specific data about their vehicle's undercar performance.

Hunter Provides High-Tech Solution for Historic Dealership



Pictured above, the historic building that houses Orrin B. Hayes sales and service facilities belies the contemporary vehicles and high-tech service available inside. At right, in three minutes, each arriving vehicle receives a complete brake, suspension and wheel sideslip inspection.



A unique auto dealership in Kalamazoo, Michigan showcases how Hunter automated inspection lane equipment can fit the most challenging shop environments. Orrin B. Hayes Jeep Eagle, Mercedes-Benz, Mazda has thrived in the same building complex in its historic downtown neighborhood since first opening its doors in 1920. The dealership keeps its sales and service operations in the original, restored building by making the most efficient use of critical space.

Space that serves as a driveway between service areas now finds additional use as a full-service Hunter automated inspection lane featuring a B400 Brake Tester, SS100 Sideslip Meter and SA400 Suspension Analyzer. The inspection lane itself also provides a net savings of floor space by eliminating the need to tie up service bays for diagnostic inspections.

Hunter Sideslip Meter Doubles Pennsylvania Auto Dealer's Alignment Sales

Increasing alignment and parts sales by 100%, a newly installed Hunter SS100 Sideslip Meter paid for itself in just months, according to service staff at Dick Milham Ford, Toyota in Easton, Pennsylvania. Milham is a leading car dealer in northeastern Pennsylvania, but not the first in the region to employ Hunter automated inspection lane technology. Information shared by competing dealers prompted Milham to more closely examine the equipment's potential.



Milham uses a valet system to ensure that every car is driven over the SS100 Sideslip Meter when entering for service. Every customer receives a printout and discusses results with service write-up staff.

Michigan Auto Dealer Boosts Brake and Alignment Sales With Hunter Technology



Customers get brake and sideslip performance results immediately when checking their vehicles in at Betten Auto Center in Grand Haven, Michigan.

Even selective automated inspection lane testing for brake performance and wheel sideslip is driving enough new business to Betten Auto Center's service bays to justify an upgrade of their back-shop alignment and brake service capabilities. The Grand Haven, Michigan GM dealer currently tests only vehicles with more than 15,000 miles on the odometer (approximately 20 to 30 cars per day). The drive-through inspection lane, installed in May 2005, uses a Hunter B400 Brake Tester and SS100 Sideslip Meter to measure actual brake performance and excessive wheel sideslip as customers check-in their vehicles.

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