

The Secrets Of Selling Standard Transmission Work



By Mike Weinberg
Contributing Editor

We usually speak in this column about the fine points of repairing manual gear boxes. It occurred to me that if a shop can't sell the work to the customer, there's isn't much need to know how to fix them.

The first order of business is to let your customers know that you work on manual transmissions and transfer cases. Include in your advertising the entire range of services that you provide to the motoring public. If you are not

working on all types of transmissions, it may be time to explore how to bring in the additional income every shop can use.

There is a cardinal rule in selling standard transmission repair: NEVER, REPEAT, NEVER quote a price on a stick until the unit has been torn down and completely inspected. With an automatic box, the supply of good "experienced" parts is plentiful and relatively cheap. There is no dependable supply of used gears, and with

many variations in ratio and models, quoting a price off the cuff is suicidal. Incidentally, the tear down and inspection of the transmission should include removal and inspection of the clutch. Fifty percent of all manual gearbox problems start with a bad or worn clutch, and the additional dollars generated from clutch work will help your bottom line.

With the clutch and unit torn down and thoroughly dissembled, it is time to write an

estimate. It is my suggestion to replace all main bearings, seals, synchro rings and gaskets on every overhaul. Re-using bearings will create comebacks for noise and bearing failure. Be careful to note gear damage. In the case of broken gears, always replace the opposing gear even if it looks new. Whatever stress caused the gear to break also was placed on the opposite gear. You only have one chance to sell the customer now, and if you take a chance, you will eat the comeback with a knife and fork down the road. Don't place yourself in harm's way. Sell the customer everything he needs. Don't neglect to check the coupling teeth on the speed gears and synchronizers. Worn pointing on the front edges will create clash on shifting, and if the back taper is worn off the sides, gear jump-out will occur.

As you write up your estimate, make sure you add the correct mark-up percentages to the parts to keep you profitable. Do not go by manufacturers' suggested retail prices. There is no such thing as a list price. It is a suggested price from the factory that you are under no obligation to follow. Most import dealers give you a "generous" 15% off list when you purchase parts. Don't let a billion-dollar manufacturer control your

continues page 60

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation
(Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Title of Publication: TRANSMISSION DIGEST

2. Issue Frequency: MONTHLY

3. Issue Date: 07 7 8 0 0

4. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: PO BOX 2210, SPRINGFIELD, GREENE CO., MD 65801-2210

5. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of the Publisher: PO BOX 2210, SPRINGFIELD MD 65801-2210

6. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor: BOBBY MAIZE, PO BOX 2210, SPRINGFIELD MD 65801-2210; LULA MILLER, PO BOX 2210, SPRINGFIELD MD 65801-2210

7. Owner: MD PUBLICATIONS, INC.; CAROL LANGSTON; L. R. LANGSTON, JR.

8. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities: NONE

9. For Completion by Nonprofit Organizations Authorized to Mail at Special Rates: (SEE INSTRUCTIONS)

10. Extent and Nature of Circulation: Total No. Copies (Net Press Run) 20,437; Paid and/or Requested Circulation 17,710; Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 10b and 10c) 17,710; Free Distribution by Mail, Carrier or Other Means 2,512; Total Distribution (Sum of 10d and 10e) 20,222; Copies Not Distributed (Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing) 215; Return from News Agents 183; TOTAL (Sum of 10f, 10g and 10h) equal net press run shown in 4 20,437

11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: BOBBY MAIZE, PUBLISHER

