

# No Fishing Allowed

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Do you look for additional service work when a customer's car is in the repair bay? Many customers will appreciate a technician that discovers a small inexpensive problem before it becomes a larger, more expensive one. In addition, most customers do not want to bring their car back a second day for additional services.

What would you say if I told you, not to look for additional work? Well, not to look for additional warranty work that is.

I first learned of this concept about 10 years ago. I had sent a Chrysler to a dealership we use for warranty work. The car was still under factory warranty and the check engine light was on. The service advisor at the dealership called me to say that the car was ready. In addition, she mentioned there may be a problem with the transmission but they could not authorize a repair at this time.

Evidently, the repair technician noticed a transmission shifting problem while road testing for the check engine light. Although it took some poking and prodding, I finally got the service advisor to tell me why they couldn't repair the transmission. Turns out the local Chrysler District Service Manager, (DSM), advised the dealership not to up-sell additional warranty work. The policy was plain and simple: "Do not perform or recommend any corrective warranty repairs that the customer did not mention at write-up."

Seems like Chrysler was looking to reduce warranty claims. What better a way to do that than to tie the hands of the dealership technicians? How would you like to be a flat rate technician in that shop? You're not going to make much money with that policy in place. Worse yet, it's not exactly the best policy for customer satisfaction and retention.

I decided to research this topic a bit further. What better person to ask than a close relative that just happens to be an executive at General Motors? It seems like Chrysler is not the only one to use this service philosophy. GM also prohibits the up-selling of warranty work. GM even named the process of looking for this additional work. The term they use is "fishing." Other common versions of this are called "warranty fishing" or "fishing for warranty work." Regardless, at that time it was prohibited.

I am still left wondering if this policy is still on going. Recently I sent a 2002 GMC Envoy to the dealer for warranty work. The customer was reporting an intermittent shudder when the transmission was downshifting on the highway. In addition, the customer wanted us to check a loud whine noise from the r/f wheel at highway speeds. Since the customer said the whine noise occurred after our tire rotation service, I did not bother mentioning it to the dealership service advisor. All they knew was that the GMC was coming in for a transmission shudder.

Later that day we picked up the Envoy from the dealer. Their repair order stated that they were unable to duplicate the transmission shudder complaint. Now, I figured I would test drive the Envoy for the whine noise. When I got above 40 MPH, the whine noise started. It seemed more like a very loud screech.

Back at the shop, we noticed that the Envoy would not make the noise with the rear wheels spinning on a lift. We decided to raise the front wheels as well and put the truck in 4WD. As the front wheels got up to speed the screech noise pierced through the shop. The noise was found coming from the differential carrier seal. We found the problem and correction called out in a GMC technical service bulletin. I told the customer that I would set up another appointment for him with the dealership so they could correct the noise under warranty.

The customer wanted to know why the dealership technician did not hear the noise. I told the customer that I had not mentioned the noise to the service advisor. In addition, I told the customer that either the noise did not occur on their road test or they decided not to go, fishing.

Now there is a difference if the (FISHING) is safety related, they can and usually will fix any safety items they find. In the article he stated the (DSM) did not allow up-selling warranty work. (Manufacture

pays – not dealership) Here's why... The dealerships are audited about once a quarter. If there is a warranty repair performed and charged to the manufacturer, that the customer did not state or complain about when he or she dropped off the vehicle. (On the original signed repair order) The dealership in most cases will be charged back for the repair. So you really can't trust them to check out and fix your car unless it benefits them. The Technicians, Service Advisors, and the Management know up-selling warranty work is a BIG NO-NO!

The dealership wants to thoroughly check over your car and fix it ---- when the warranty is expired.

and

(Don't forget your wallet)