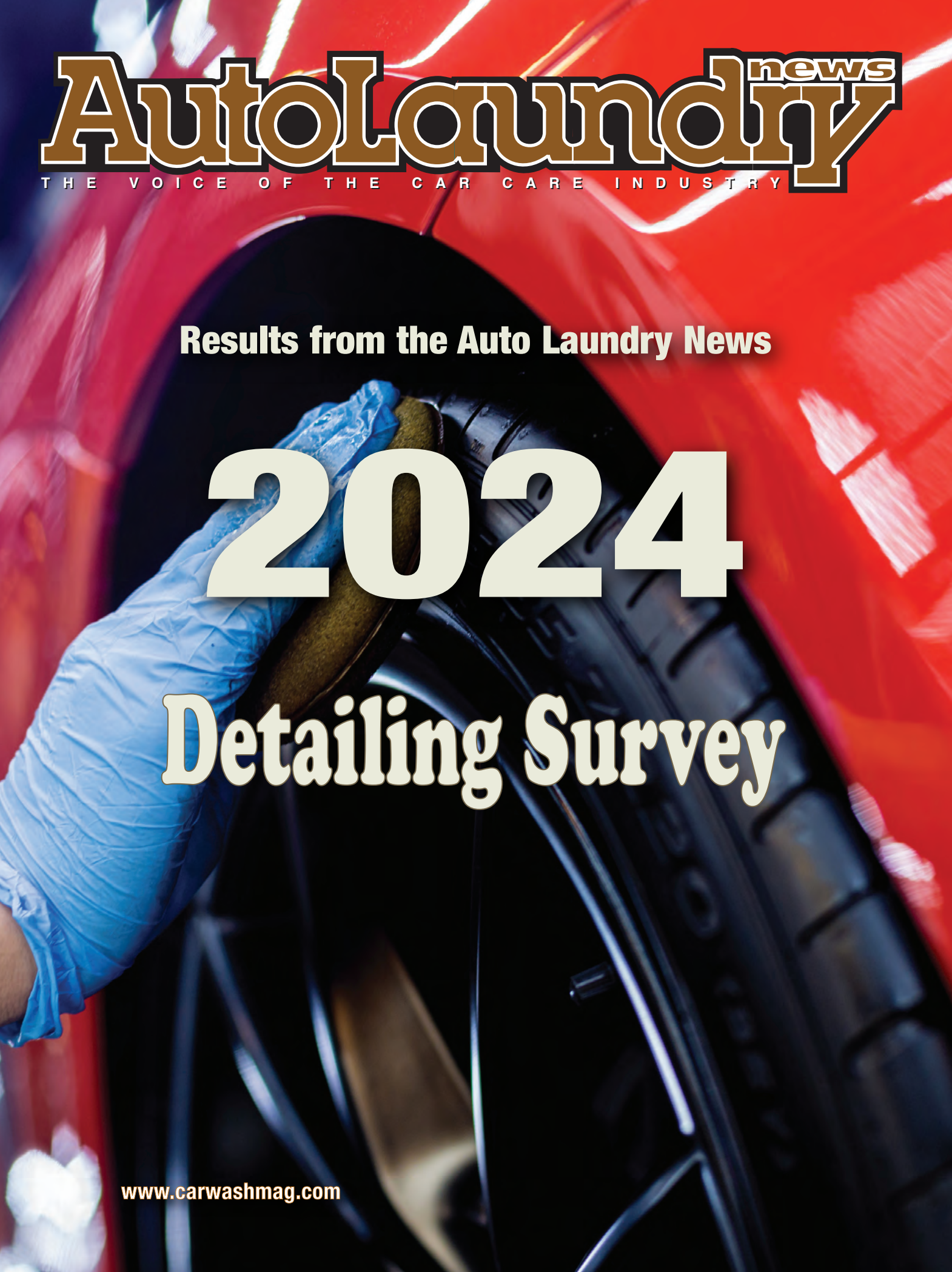
Auto Laundry news
THE VOICE OF THE CAR CARE INDUSTRY



Results from the Auto Laundry News

# 2024 Detailing Survey

www.carwashmag.com

SURVEY

## Results From The *Auto Laundry News*

# 2024 Detail Survey

The 2024 *Auto Laundry News* Detailing Survey was conducted by randomly mailing questionnaires to subscribers who provide detailing services at their car care businesses. The information contained in this report results from an analysis of data provided by respondents from across the United States.

### RESPONDENT POOL PROFILE

For comparative purposes, respondents are, on occasion, separated into three main categories: freestanding detailing shops (Freestanding), detail shops run in conjunction with a car wash (Car Wash Combo), and mobile detail services (Mobile Services). A three-year perspective of the category breakdown appears below:

| Detailer Type | 2024 | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Freestanding | 39% | 50% | 58% |
| Car Wash Combo | 39% | 32% | 26% |
| Mobile Service | 22% | 14% | 0% |

### PERFORMANCE

Less than half (48 percent) of survey respondents report a year-to-year income increase. This is a step backward compared to last year, when 58 percent reported an increase. Unfortunately, this represents a broader trend — over the past five years, the majority of detailers reported an increase in income just twice. Despite the rising cost of goods, most detailers have not seen an equal increase in their income.

Mobile operators fared the best from a revenue perspective, with 60 percent reporting an income increase and no respondents experiencing a revenue decrease over the past year. A quarter of all Freestanding and Car Wash Combos report a decrease in revenue, while 42 percent of Freestanding and 50 percent of Car Wash Combos report a revenue increase.

### INFLATION

The uninspiring revenue results are even more eye-raising when you consider that 67 percent of detailers report increasing their prices over the past year to keep pace with inflation. This increase is on top of the 71 percent that raised prices in the year prior.

Car Wash Combos raised prices with the greatest proportion, with 75 percent reporting an increase, followed by Freestanding at 67 percent and Mobile at 60 percent. The average price increase across categories was 12.9 percent.

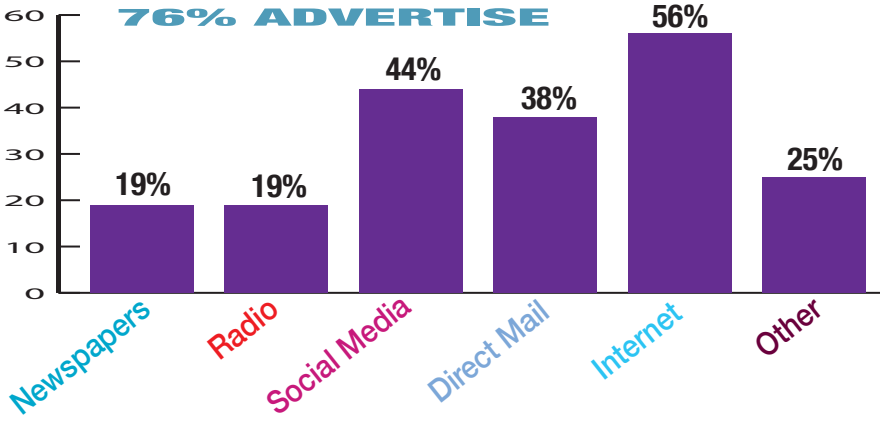
### CERTIFICATION

Certification continues to be an essential piece of a successful detailer's arsenal. Interestingly, however, just 38 percent of respondents report certification, slightly down from the 41 percent that did so last year. Detail King and the International Detailing Association were the two most popular certification bodies among respondents.

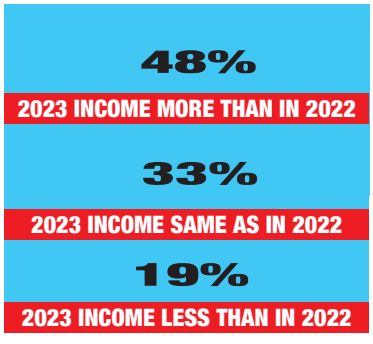
### PERCENTAGE OF DETAIL BUSINESS DONE BY SEASON

| | WINTER | SPRING | SUMMER | FALL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FREE-STANDING | 23 | 27 | 28 | 22 |
| CAR WASH COMBO | 16 | 34 | 26 | 24 |
| MOBILE | 16 | 30 | 29 | 25 |

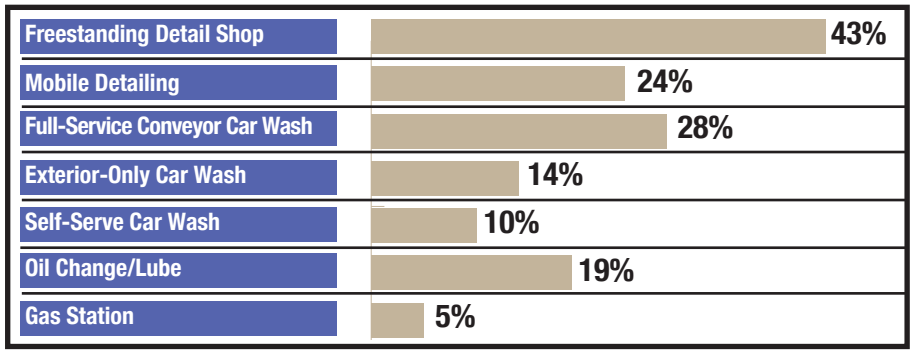
### ADVERTISING & PROMOTION




### INCOME COMPARED TO LAST YEAR

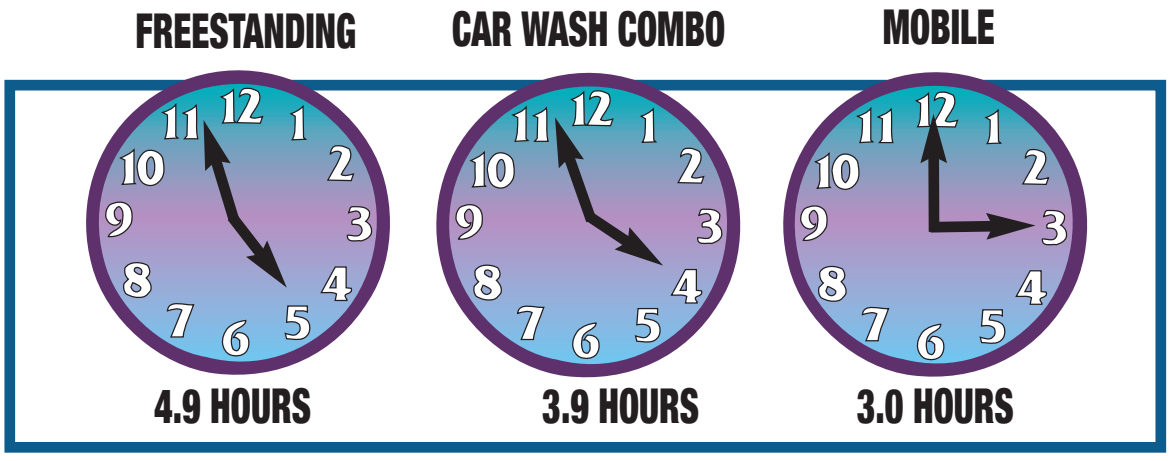



### OPERATOR PROFILE

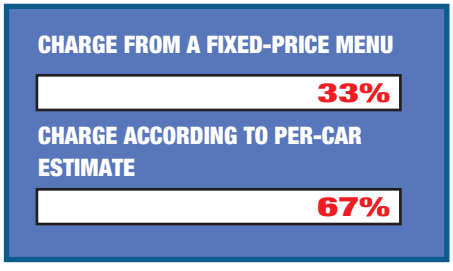


SURVEY

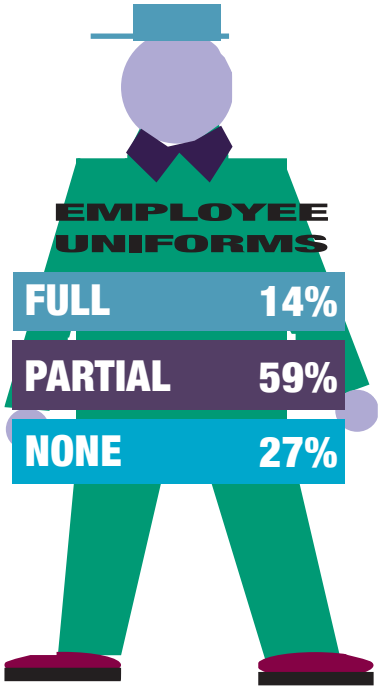
## AVERAGE TIME REQUIRED TO COMPLETE STANDARD DETAIL PACKAGE




## DETAIL SERVICE PRICES



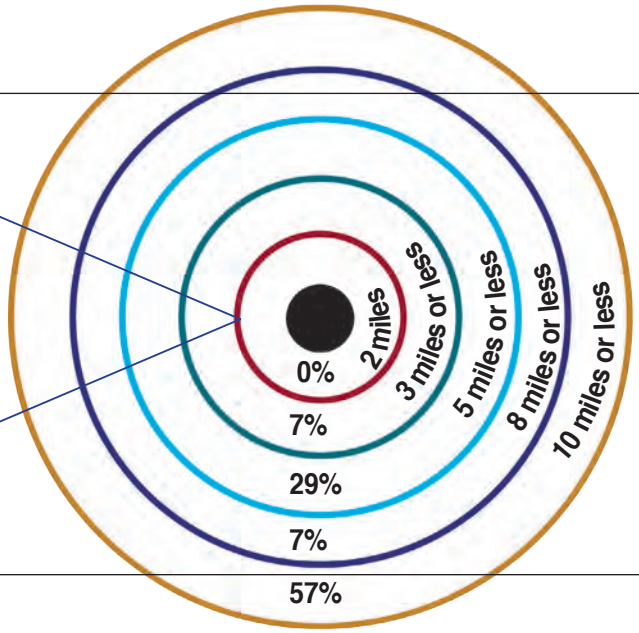

## AVERAGE NUMBER OF CARS DETAILED ANNUALLY




## COMPETING DETAIL SHOPS IN AREA

| NUMBER OF COMPETITORS | OPERATORS REPORTING |
|---|---|
| 0 | 10% |
| 1 | 10% |
| 2 | 4% |
| 3 | 38% |
| 4 | 10% |
| 5 | 4% |
| MORE THAN 5 | 24% |

## HOW FAR DO CUSTOMERS COME?
(% from within 2-mile radius, 3-mile radius, etc.)



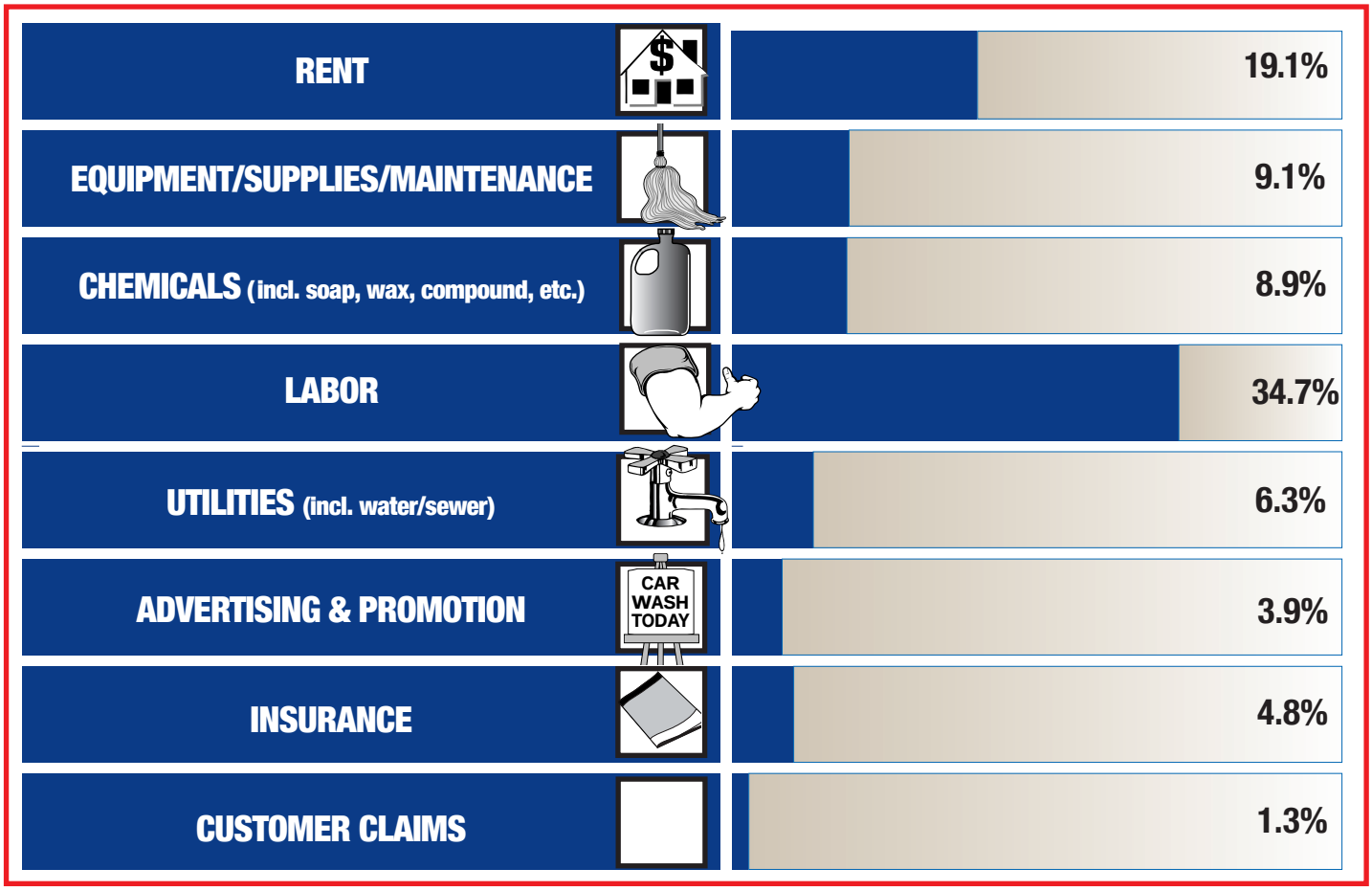

## CUSTOMER PROFILE

| | |
|---|---|
| 85% – Retail | 8% – Auto Dealers |
| 4% – Taxi/Limo | 3% – Other (Fleets,Body Shops, Etc.) |

## RETAIL VEHICLE PROFILE

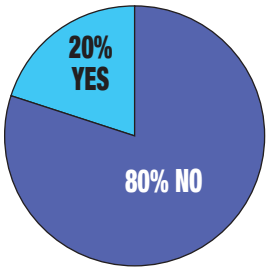
| | |
|---|---|
| 16%– New (under 1 yr. old) | 28% – 3-5 yrs. old |
| 21%–1-2 yrs. old | 35% – 5+ yrs. old |

## OPERATING COSTS AS PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE

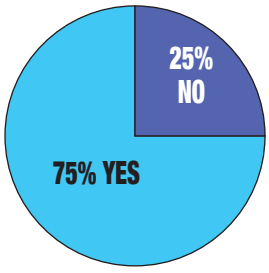


## OFFER EXPRESS SERVICES

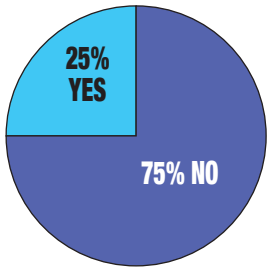
### FREESTANDING




### CAR WASH COMBO



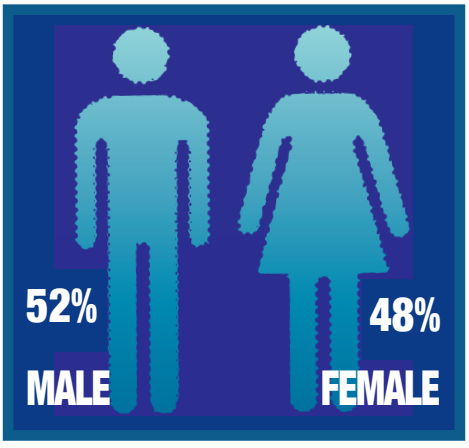

### MOBILE

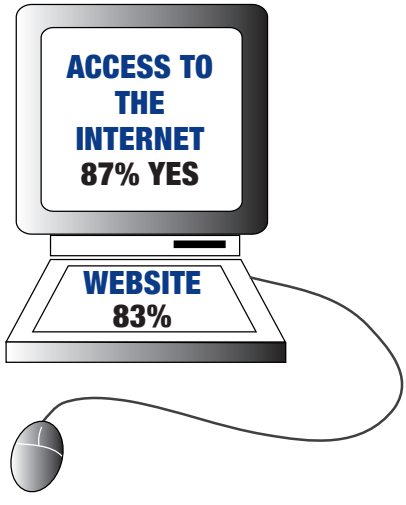



## STANDARD EQUIPMENT

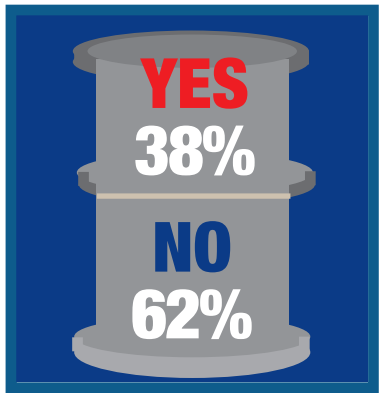
| TYPE | PERCENTAGE UTILIZING |
|---|---|
| HI-SPEED BUFFER | 86% |
| ORBITAL WAXER | 76% |
| PAINT THICKNESS GAUGE | 14% |
| VACUUMS | 95% |
| WET/DRY VACS | 86% |
| CARPET/UPHOLSTERY EXTRACTOR | 67% |
| STEAM-CLEANING MACHINE | 48% |
| PRESSURE WASHER | 90% |
| CARPET SHAMPOOER | 67% |
| OZONE MACHINE | 52% |
| MICROFIBER CLOTH | 90% |
| DETAILER'S CLAY | 81% |
| SURFACE PREP TOWEL/PAD | 76% |

## RETAIL CONSUMER PROFILE




## EMPLOY CERTIFIED DETAILERS



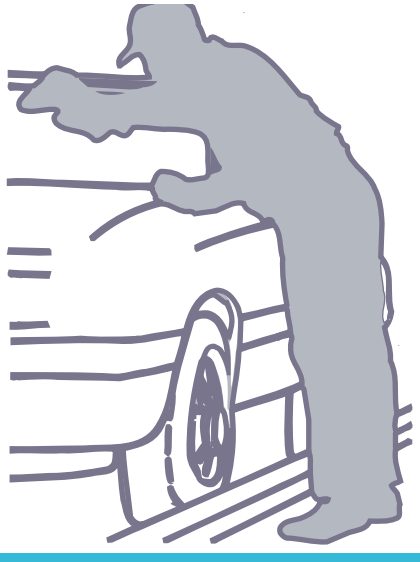
## AVERAGE PACKAGE PRICES

| RETAIL | FREE-STANDING | CAR WASH COMBO |
|---|---|---|
| COMPLETE INTERIOR/EXTERIOR DETAIL | $383.83 | $258.83 |
| INTERIOR DETAIL ONLY | $233.00 | $145.00 |
| EXTERIOR DETAIL ONLY | $232.16 | $144.00 |

| WHOLESALE | FREE-STANDING | CAR WASH COMBO |
|---|---|---|
| COMPLETE INTERIOR/EXTERIOR DETAIL | $246.00 | $211.66 |
| INTERIOR DETAIL ONLY | $161.33 | $114.00 |
| EXTERIOR DETAIL ONLY | $162.00 | $112.50 |

## LABOR COSTS

AVG. WAGE PER HOUR



| | |
|---|---|
| 9% | PAID MINIMUM WAGE to $12.00 PER HOUR |
| 24% | PAID $12.00 to $15.00 PER HOUR |
| 43% | PAID $15.00 to $18.00 PER HOUR |
| 24% | PAID OVER $18.00 PER HOUR |

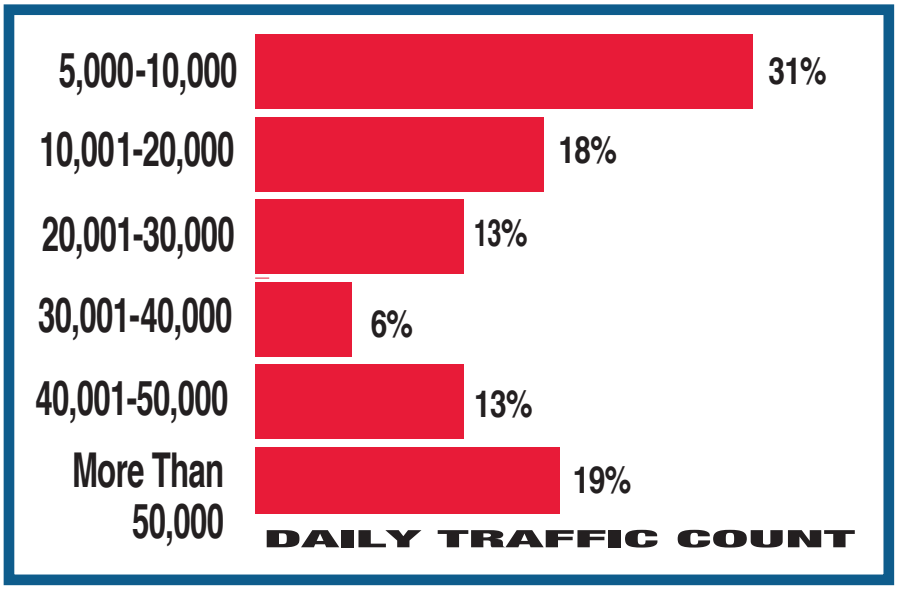
## PERCENTAGE OF DETAIL BUSINESS DONE BY DAY OF THE WEEK

| | FREE-STANDING | CAR WASH COMBO | MOBILE |
|---|---|---|---|
| MONDAY | 16 | 16 | 17 |
| TUESDAY | 16 | 14 | 15 |
| WEDNESDAY | 18 | 15 | 18 |
| THURSDAY | 18 | 15 | 25 |
| FRIDAY | 19 | 18 | 20 |
| SATURDAY | 9 | 14 | 5 |
| SUNDAY | 4 | 8 | 0 |

## A LA CARTE SERVICES AT FREESTANDING SHOPS

| SERVICE | PERCENT OFFERING OVERALL | AVERAGE PRICE |
|---|---|---|
| HAND WAX | 86% | $175.00 |
| MACHINE WAX/BUFF | 43% | $150.00 |
| CARPET SHAMPOO | 57% | $91.66 |
| UPHOLSTERY CLEANING | 57% | $92.00 |
| LEATHER/VINYL (INT.) DRESSING | 57% | $41.66 |
| VINYL/RUBBER (EXT.) DRESSING | 57% | $26.66 |
| DEODORIZING | 57% | $51.25 |
| PAINT TOUCH-UP | 43% | * |
| PAINTLESS DENT REMOVAL | 29% | $50.00 |
| WINDSHIELD REPAIR | 14% | * |
| EXTENDED UPHOLSTERY PROT. | 29% | * |
| EXTENDED PROT. PAINT SEALANT | 43% | $191.00 |
| HEADLIGHT RESTORATION | 86% | $106.00 |
| ENGINE CLEANING | 71% | $46.25 |
| WINDOW TINTING | 43% | * |
| INTERIOR SANITIZING | 57% | $60.00 |
| CERAMIC COATING | 57% | $850.00 |

* *Too few responses*




## AVERAGE GROSS REVENUE PER CAR
(CAR WASH SALES ONLY)