The Voice Of The Car Care Industry

Auto Laundry News

RESULTS FROM THE AUTO LAUNDRY NEWS

2025 DETAILING SURVEY

CarWashMag.com

SURVEY

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2025 DETAIL SURVEY

The 2025 *Auto Laundry News* Detailing Survey was conducted by randomly mailing questionnaires to subscribers who provide detailing services. 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).

This year's respondent pool swayed heavily toward freestanding locations. Whether this is a one-year anomaly among respondents or a larger industry trend will bear watching in the years to come. A three-year perspective of the category breakdown appears below:

Detailer Type	2025	2024	2023
Freestanding	80%	39%	50%
Car Wash Combo	8%	39%	32%
Mobile Services	12%	22%	14%

Economic Performance

Around a quarter of respondents (26 percent) report a year-over-year increase in income. This continues the downward trend of the percentage of operators seeing an increase in income. Last year, 48 percent reported an income increase, while 58 percent reported an increase two years ago.

Only twice over the past six years has the majority of detailers reported an increase in income. While inflation has forced many operators to raise prices over the past few years, the increase in the cost of their services has not equated to a rise in revenue.

One key reason could be the sheer number of cars operators detail annually. This year, freestanding operators report detailing 925 cars on average. The past two years that total was well over one thousand per year. Volume is down, and it is affecting revenue.

Certification

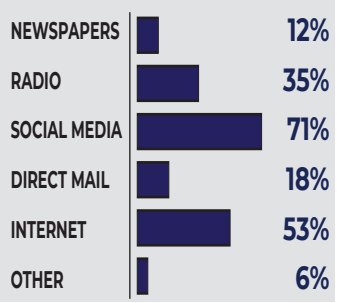
Certification is an important piece of any detailer's tool kit. It not only provides the necessary knowledge to perform both basic and advanced detailing services, but it is also a powerful marketing tool that can help set a detailer apart from the competition.

We witnessed a big jump in the number of operators employing certified detailers this year. More than three-quarters of respondents (76 percent) report employing detailers with certification credentials, up from 38 percent last year and 41 percent two years ago.

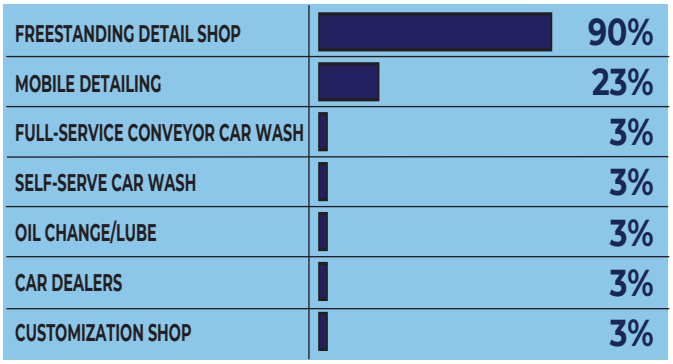
PERCENTAGE OF DETAIL BUSINESS DONE BY SEASON

	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL
FREE-STANDING	16	30	28	26
CAR WASH COMBO	12	28	46	14
MOBILE	15	27	16	42

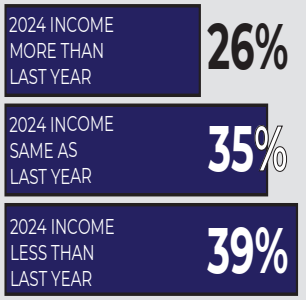
ADVERTISING & PROMOTION



OPERATOR PROFILE



INCOME COMPARED TO LAST YEAR

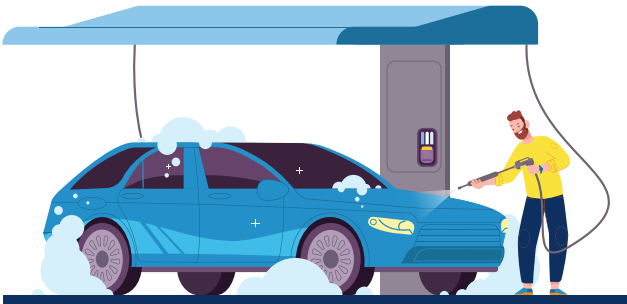


AVERAGE TIME REQUIRED TO COMPLETE STANDARD DETAIL PACKAGE

DETAIL SERVICE PRICES

CHARGE FROM A FIXED-PRICE MENU	54%
CHARGE ACCORDING TO PER-CAR ESTIMATE	46%

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CARS DETAILED ANNUALLY



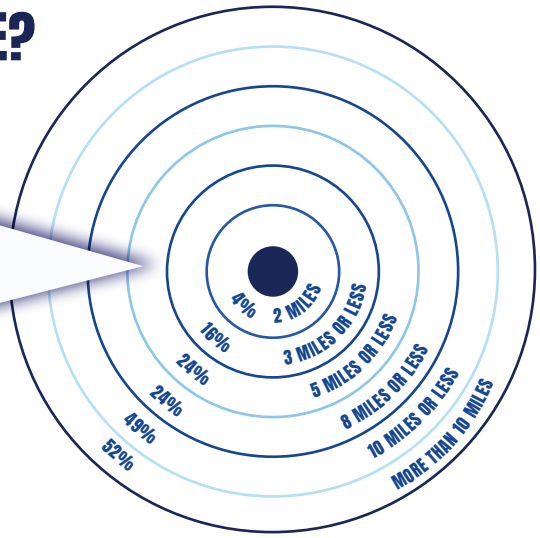
FREESTANDING **925**

COMPETING DETAIL SHOPS IN THE AREA

NUMBER OF COMPETITORS	OPERATORS REPORTING
0	5%
1	9%
2	27%
3	9%
4	14%
5	9%
MORE THAN 5	27%

HOW FAR DO CUSTOMERS COME?

(PERCENT FROM WITHIN 2-MILE RADIUS, 3-MILE RADIUS, ETC.)



CUSTOMER PROFILE

85% - RETAIL
8% - AUTO DEALERS
1% - TAXI/LIMO
6% OTHER

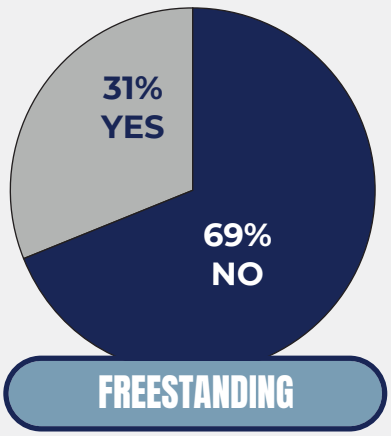
RETAIL VEHICLE PROFILE

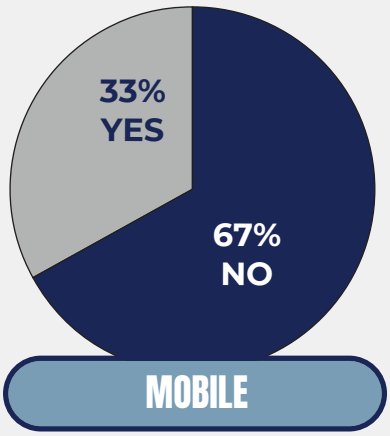
18% - (UNDER 1 YEAR OLD)
24% - 1-2 YEARS OLD
31% - 3-5 YEARS OLD
27% 5+ YEARS OLD

OPERATING COSTS (AS A PERCENTAGE OF REVENUES)

RENT	15.5%
EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES/MAINTENANCE	9.0%
CHEMICALS (INCL. SOAP, WAX, COMPOUND, ETC.)	9.8%
LABOR	35.4%
UTILITIES (INCL. WATER/SEWER)	4.5%
ADVERTISING & PROMOTION	7.2%
INSURANCE	5.8%
CUSTOMER CLAIMS	1.0%

OFFER EXPRESS SERVICES





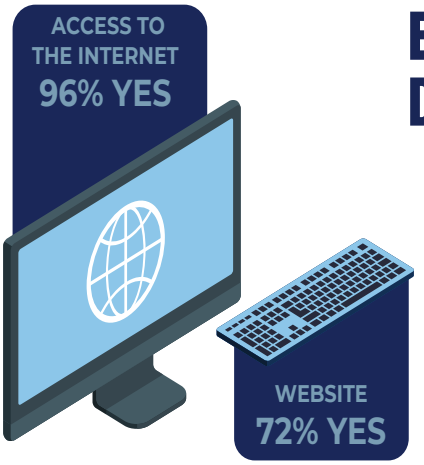
STANDARD EQUIPMENT

	PERCENTAGE UTILIZING
HI-SPEED BUFFER	83%
ORBITAL WAXER	83%
PAINT THICKNESS GAUGE	48%
VACUUMS	83%
WET/DRY VACS	78%
CARPET/UPHOLSTERY EXTRACTOR	74%
STEAM-CLEANING MACHINE	65%
PRESSURE WASHER	91%
CARPET SHAMPOOER	56%
OZONE MACHINE	43%
MICROFIBER CLOTH	96%
DETAILER'S CLAY	96%
SURFACE PREP TOWEL/PAD	87%

RETAIL CONSUMER PROFILE

56%
MALE

44%
FEMALE



EMPLOY CERTIFIED DETAILERS

76%
YES

34%
NO

AVERAGE PACKAGE PRICES

RETAIL

	FREE-STANDING	MOBILE
COMPLETE INTERIOR/EXTERIOR DETAIL	$418.19	$246.80
INTERIOR DETAIL ONLY	$231.69	$140.80
EXTERIOR DETAIL ONLY	$231.00	$138.80

WHOLESALE

	FREE-STANDING	MOBILE
COMPLETE INTERIOR/EXTERIOR DETAIL	$302.25	$145.00
INTERIOR DETAIL ONLY	$189.80	$90.00
EXTERIOR DETAIL ONLY	$257.40	$82.50

LABOR COSTS

AVERAGE WAGES PER HOUR PER EMPLOYEE

- 18% PAID MINIMUM WAGE to $15.00 per hour
- 23% PAID $15.00 to $18.00 per hour
- 32% PAID $18.00 to $20.00 per hour
- 27% PAID OVER $20.00 per hour

PERCENTAGE OF WASH BUSINESS DONE BY DAY OF WEEK

	FREE-STANDING	MOBILE
MONDAY	18%	17%
TUESDAY	22%	20%
WEDNESDAY	22%	16%
THURSDAY	18%	15%
FRIDAY	15%	16%
SATURDAY	3%	13%
SUNDAY	2%	3%

A LA CARTE SERVICES AT FREESTANDING SHOPS

SERVICE	PERCENT OFFERING OVERALL	AVG. PRICE
HAND WAX	47%	$108.57
MACHINE WAX/BUFF	65%	$269.00
CARPET SHAMPOO	47%	$118.00
UPHOLSTERY CLEANING	53%	$119.88
LEATHER/VINYL (INT.) DRESSING	41%	$64.17
VINYL/RUBBER (EXT.) DRESSING	24%	$62.50
DEODORIZING	29%	$65.60
PAINT TOUCH-UP	29%	$59.00
PAINTLESS DENT REMOVAL	24%	$141.67
WINDSHIELD REPAIR	6%	*
EXTENDED UPHOLSTERY PROT.	35%	$122.80
EXTENDED PROT. PAINT SEALANT	29%	$193.00
HEADLIGHT RESTORATION	88%	$88.21
ENGINE CLEANING	71%	$62.67
WINDOW TINTING	18%	$277.00
INTERIOR SANITIZING	29%	$145.00
CERAMIC COATING	65%	1,040.00
PINSTRIPING	18%	$99.50

*Too Few Responses

EMPLOYEE UNIFORMS

FULL	5%
PARTIAL	78%
NONE	17%

DAILY TRAFFIC COUNT

5,000-10,000	74%
10,001-20,000	10%
20,001-30,000	5%
30.001-40,000	11%