



What's leaking work out of your shop, and how to stop it.



Finish what you started

one job, start to finish



the same job, interrupted



same amount of work, 3x the time

A job that should have taken an hour takes 3 hours because your phone won't stop ringing.

It isn't the minute on the phone, answering the same question for the hundredth time. It's losing your place in the job and picking it back up cold.

That's where the hours go, and it's where mistakes get made.

And it happens every day, which is why the week always feels longer than the work in it.

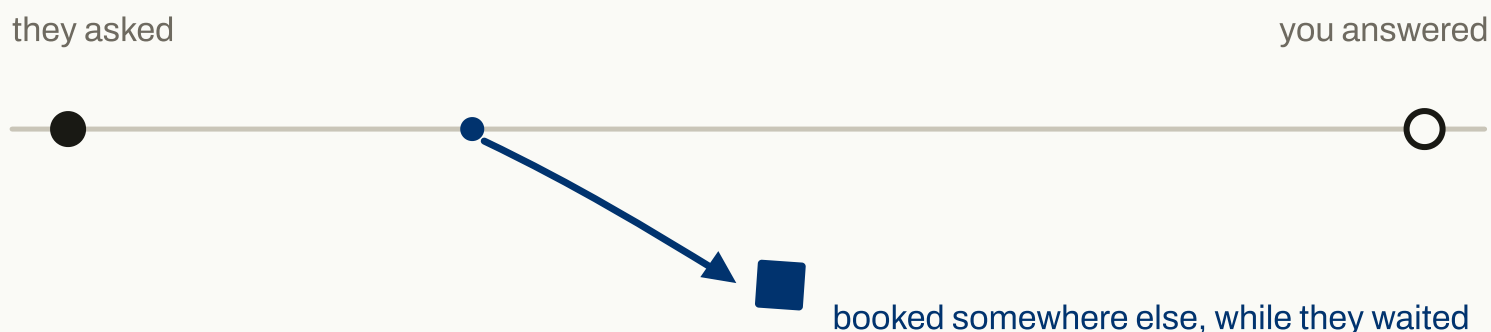
Most shops fix this by silencing their phone. It works, but the people who actually wanted to book got voicemail and called your competition. You've traded one problem for the other, and you've probably already had the argument with yourself about which is costing you more.

The fix is easy with the right tools. Whether you're under a car in the middle of the day or the shop's been closed since Saturday, every call still gets answered and the details get taken. The ones that matter reach you when you put your tools down. The rest wait.

Customers still hear from you and don't dial the next shop. You keep working on the car in front of you and still win the next one, without lifting a finger.



Answer before they move on



Somebody asks what a job is going to cost. You get back to them that evening. They'd already booked somewhere else at lunchtime.

It wasn't your price that lost it. They never got as far as your price.

You'd spent an hour of your own evening working that quote up properly, because you don't guess at a number you'll be held to. That hour's gone either way. And it isn't the price shoppers you lose like this. It's the ones who actually wanted the work done and just needed somebody to get back to them.

So you try being quicker. You thumb numbers out between jobs with your hands still dirty, and then a car turns up in worse shape than described, and now you're explaining why the invoice doesn't match what you said. You'll have that conversation twice before you go back to taking your time.

None of how you quote has to change. Somebody who messages at 9:00am gets the same answer as somebody who messages at 9:00pm: you've got it, here's what to send over, here's when you can talk. You still see the car. You still set the number.

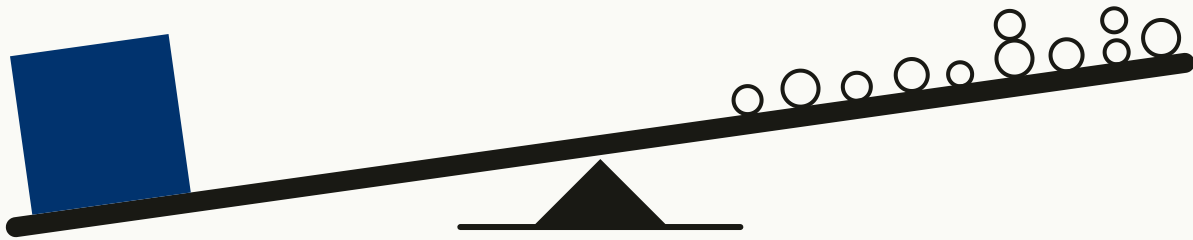
They're waiting on you instead of working down the rest of the search results. The job's still there when you get to it.



The shop with the reviews wins the call

one bad review

everyone who paid and drove off



A single bad review can cost you more work than a good month brings in.

You know exactly which one it is. Maybe an ex-employee, maybe somebody who was never a customer, maybe a job that ran long and they took it out on you in public. It sits near the top of your profile doing damage every day, and there's nothing underneath it to bury it, because the fifty people who were happy just paid and drove off.

Happy customers don't think to write anything. The angry one always does.

So you start asking. You remember for about a week, feel like you're begging for a favour, then a busy Tuesday turns up and you stop. Every shop means to sort this out. Almost none of them do it.

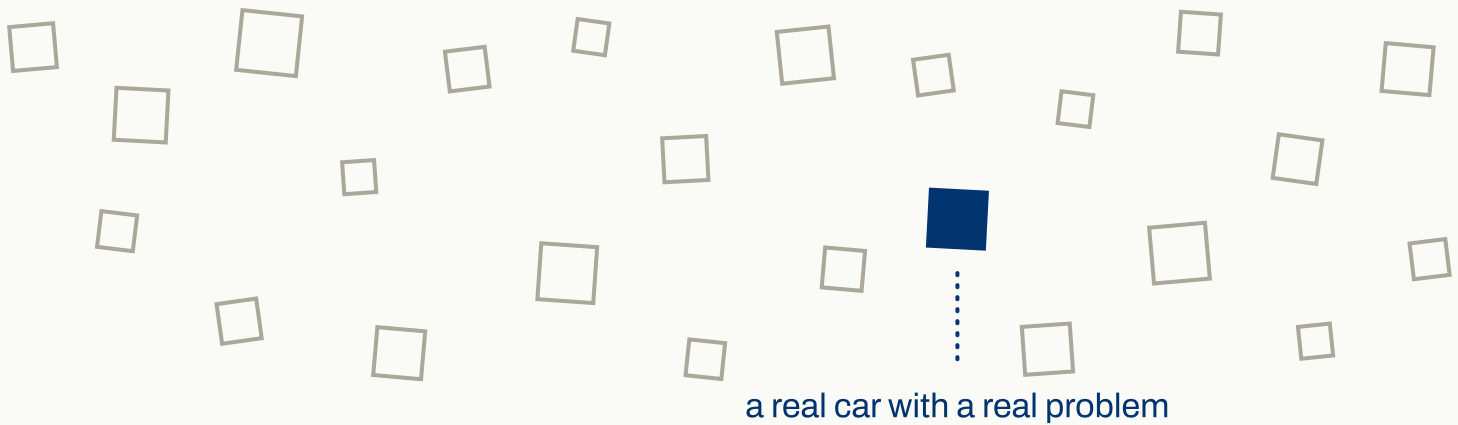
Review requests can go out after the work is finished, in your name, to the people who just paid you and to the ones from last year nobody ever asked. Anything that comes back unhappy reaches you first, so it turns into a phone call instead of a star rating.

Somebody comparing three shops on their phone has usually decided which one to call before anybody picks up. That decision gets made on what other people wrote about you, not on anything you'd have told them yourself.



Your contact form is working for somebody else

what the form brings in



Most of what comes through the contact form on your website is somebody selling **to** you, not buying **from** you.

You put it there so customers could get hold of you. What turns up is agencies, SEO people and whoever bought a list with your shop's name on it, and every one of them looks like a real enquiry until you open it. So naturally you begin checking it less often.

Then at some point you stop checking it altogether.

And somewhere mixed in with the spam there is a customer who genuinely wanted their car booked in who filled it out, heard nothing for three days, and took their business elsewhere.

A lot of shops just pull the form down and tell people to phone instead. Which lands you straight back at the phone going off while you're working on a car.

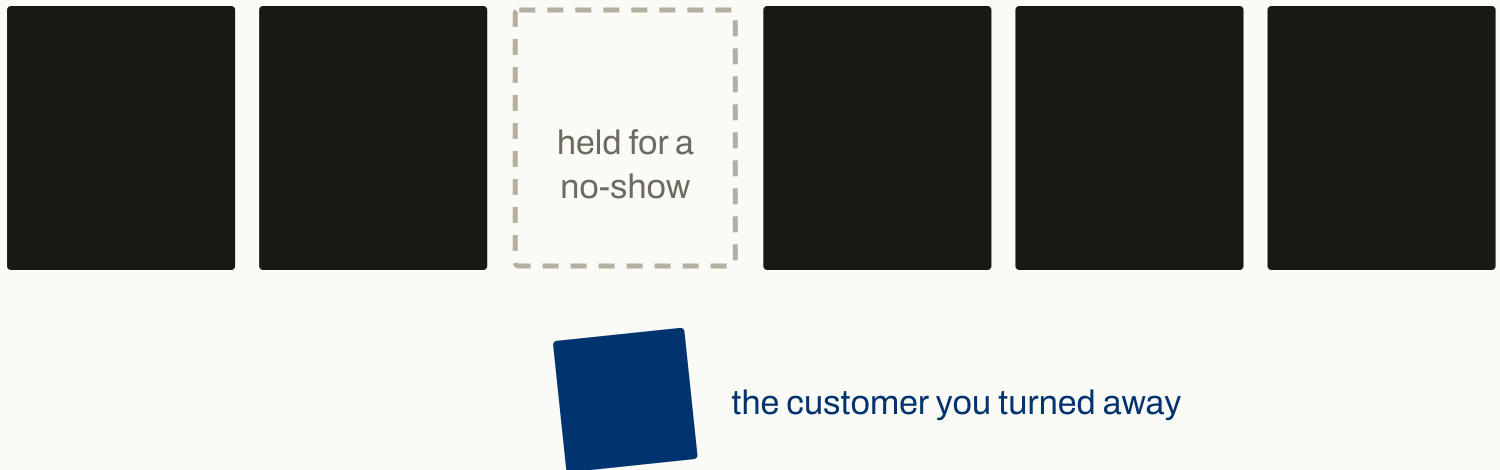
Your contact form can do the sorting itself, so somebody with a real car and a real problem answers the questions in about ten seconds, but somebody working a list can't be bothered. Whatever gets through is short enough that you'll actually read it.

You start reading the enquiries again, and it goes back to being worth having.



You can't sell a slot twice

the day, as booked



Your 11:00am appointment doesn't turn up. The customer didn't call ahead to say so. The bay sits empty and the customer you turned away last week because you were fully booked could have taken that slot.

It was never about the money on that one job. It's the time slot.

Somebody wanted that time and you handed it to a person who was never coming. Add the ones who go quiet three days out, and the ones who booked and genuinely forgot, and you end up spending half your day chasing people instead of working.

Plenty of shops start taking a card up front. That works until somebody decides asking for a deposit is what a scam looks like, which is fair enough when they're getting scammed by somebody new every week. Then you're arguing about a no-show fee and eating a one-star review for your trouble.

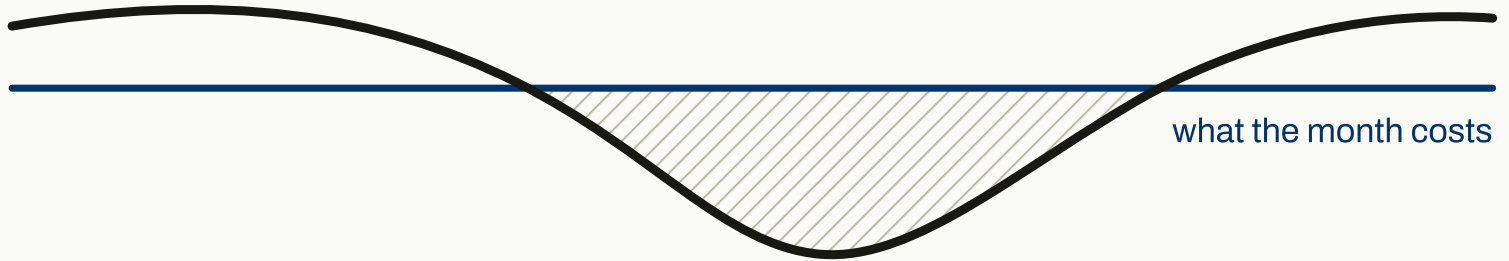
Nobody **has** to be chased. Customers confirm when they book and get notified again the day before, so the ones who would have forgotten don't. Where a deposit makes sense, it's part of booking the job, not a phone call where you have to ask.

The car that's in the calendar turns up. You stop holding time for people who were never going to.



Fill the slow months before they start

the work coming in



what the month costs

the gap you end up discounting to fill

Every shop has months where half the bays sit empty, and you already know roughly when yours are.

Rent doesn't get any quieter and neither does payroll, so the usual move is to cut the price and take on work you'd normally wave off. It fills the calendar. It also tells the customers you least wanted what your work costs, and they'll be back next year expecting the same number.

You've bought yourself a slow month and paid for it out of the busy ones.

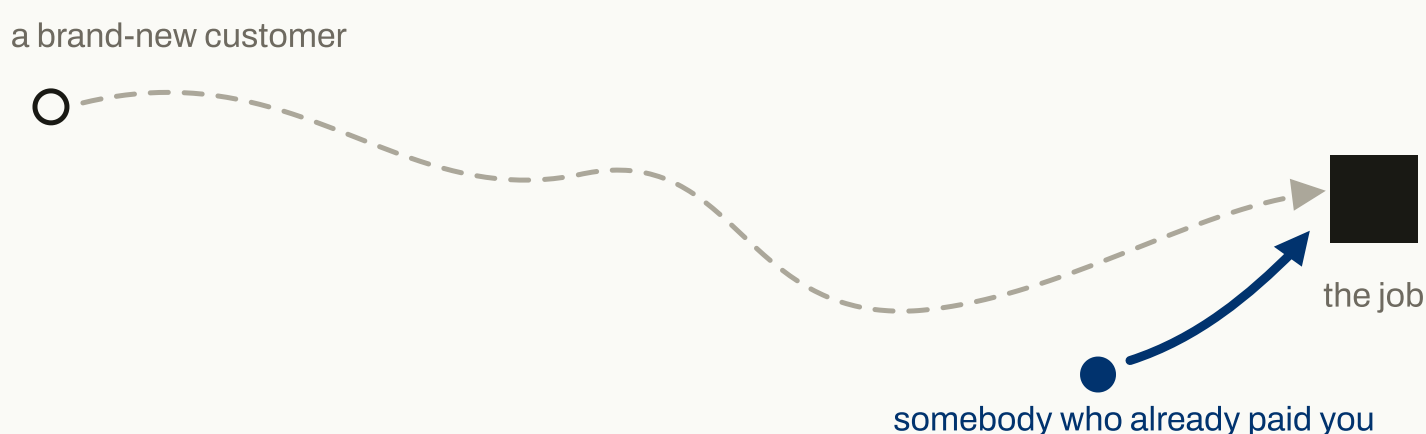
Nobody does anything about it until it's already quiet. By then price is the only lever with enough time left to pull, which is how it ends up being the one you pull every year.

Shops that get through those months without discounting just start earlier. Before it goes quiet, the people who've already paid you in the past hear from you with a reason to book something in. Not money off, a reason.

The month fills at your normal rate with people who already know your work, and you never find out how far you'd have had to drop to fill it the other way.



They bought once and never came back



Somebody paid you, liked the work, but you'll never see them again.

Nothing went wrong and they didn't find somebody cheaper. A year later the next job came up and you just weren't the shop that came to mind, because nothing had come from you since the day they collected the car. Every one of those names handed you their keys once already. That's the hard part of getting a customer, and you've done it.

Every shop knows this and means to do something about it. But the cars that are actually in the bays take priority.

The difference between a *returning* customer and a *previous* one is whether they ever heard from you again.

Nothing clever goes into fixing it. When people continue to hear from you, on a schedule you only have to set up once, they're far more likely to choose you when the next job comes up, because they already know and trust you.

The work comes back from customers you already earned, and you stop paying to find replacements for people who never really left.

Most shops have four or five of these issues happening at once. You've probably already worked out which ones are yours.

If you want to see how we identify and fix them, we're happy to chat.

Noah Morris

Founder, Bloom Creative

+1 (289) 812-6834

noah@bloomcreates.ca

