



## **Dealer Service Technician Needs Assessment Survey Summary**

The survey was sent to all 290 dealer members, of which 130 responded. Of the 130 respondents, the majority were Service Managers followed by Dealer Principals. The survey was open from September 9, 2015 to September 25, 2015. Please note, not all respondents submitted an answer to every question.

### **ABOUT YOUR DEALERSHIP**

#### **Question 1-4:**

Question 1 through 4 asked respondents to list their name, title, dealership, address and contact information. When WSADA sent out the survey, dealers anonymity were promised, and with that in mind names, phone numbers, and addresses have been removed from the survey and summary.

Of the 130 responses received, 107 (82.3%) are from western Washington and 23 (17.7%) from eastern Washington.

#### **Question 5: What manufacturers are represented by your dealership/franchise?**

**Answered: 126 (96.9%) | Skipped: 4 (3.1%)**

Of the 126 responses received, respondents represent a variety of cars, light trucks, and RVs. The top 3 franchises respondents represent within this survey are:

1. Chevrolet (29 total respondents out of 44 Chevrolet dealer members)
2. Honda (26 total respondents out of 27 Honda dealer members)
3. Toyota (25 total respondents out of 30 Toyota dealer members)

## **TECHNICIAN WORKFORCE & TRAINING**

### **Question 6-8: List your top 3 franchises by sales volume.**

**Answered: 99 (76.2%) | Skipped: 31 (23.8%)**

Of the 99 responses received, respondents listed their top 3 franchises by sales volume. For the primary, secondary and tertiary franchise, we have listed the top 3 from each category. Please note, the number next to each franchise indicates the number of respondents that selected that franchise.

#### **Question 6: Franchise 1**

1. Toyota (17)
2. Chevrolet (16)
3. Ford (14)

#### **Question 7: Franchise 2**

1. Honda (8)
2. Buick (6)
3. Hyundai (6)

#### **Question 8: Franchise 3**

1. GMC (5)
2. Nissan (5)
3. Dodge (3)

### **Question 9: What are the expected vacancies for your top 3 franchises.**

**Answered: 99 (76.2%) | Skipped: 31 (23.8%)**

Respondents provided the total number of expected vacancies for each of the following technician positions:

- Master Technician
- Mid-Level Technician – Repair & Replace
- Mid-Level Technician – Advanced Maintenance
- Entry-Level Technician – Lube, Oil, Filters

Responses were based on the top 3 franchises listed in Question 6 through 8. Based on comments, growth and dealership expansion appear to drive vacancies. Overall, the top 5 franchises with expected vacancies are Honda, Subaru, Chevrolet, Toyota, and Ford:

#### **Master Technician: 301 total vacancies**

1. Honda: 36 vacancies
2. Ford: 32 vacancies
3. Toyota: 32 vacancies
4. Chevrolet: 30 vacancies
5. Subaru: 24 vacancies

**Mid-Level Tech – Repair & Replace: 303 total vacancies**

1. Honda: 38 vacancies
2. Chevrolet: 35 vacancies
3. Subaru: 34 vacancies
4. Toyota: 34 vacancies
5. Ford: 30 vacancies

**Mid-Level Tech – Advanced Maintenance: 285 total vacancies**

1. Honda: 37 vacancies
2. Subaru: 34 vacancies
3. Chevrolet: 33 vacancies
4. Toyota: 33 vacancies
5. Ford: 31 vacancies

**Entry Level Tech – Lube, Oil, Filters: 420 total vacancies**

1. Toyota: 58 vacancies
2. Honda: 45 vacancies
3. Chevrolet: 38 vacancies
4. Ford: 38 vacancies
5. Subaru: 38 vacancies

**Question 10: What challenges, if any, have you encountered in filling any vacancies among the categories above?**

**Answered: 82 (63.1%) | Skipped: 48 (36.9%)**

The following is a list of the top 4 responses received from survey participants:

1. Applicants do not have qualified training and/or experience. (46 responses)
2. Not enough applicants applying for open positions. (17 responses)
3. Difficult to compete with outside competition in terms of pay and benefits. (12 responses)
4. Difficult to recruit and retain both Mid-Level and Master Level Technicians. (9 responses)

**Question 11: What do you think is the main reason(s) a technician leaves your employment?**

**Answered: 78 (60%) | Skipped: 52 (40%)**

The following is a list of the top 3 responses received from survey participants:

1. To work at a municipal/government fleet (35 responses)
2. To work at another dealership (30 responses)
3. To work in manufacturing (13 responses)

**Question 12: What are the three most critical training needs for technicians at your dealership today?**

**Answered: 85 (65.4%) | Skipped: 45 (34.6%)**

The following is a list of the top 3 responses received from survey participants:

1. Diagnostics of advancing technologies and computers in vehicles (47 responses)
2. Knowledge of fundamentals and overall attitude (26 responses)
3. Factory certification and manufacturer training qualifications (16 responses)

**Question 13: How do you anticipate fulfilling those needs?**

**Answered: 77 (59.2%) | Skipped: 53 (40.8%)**

Of the 77 respondents, 42 indicated they would develop a training program within the dealership by utilizing the experience of their higher level technicians to help mentor and train lower level technicians. In addition, respondents stated they would use ongoing training programs to help develop their technicians.

**Question 14: What is the salary for each category of technicians at your dealership?**

**Answered: 88 (67.7%) | Skipped: 42 (32.3%)**

Respondents either provided a salary wage or a per hour rate when responding to this question. There is a noticeable gap when comparing salary and wage in urban and rural areas, with rural areas offering mid to low pay and urban areas offering mid to high pay. Below are the top, bottom, and median reported pays offered to each category of technicians.

**Master Technicians:**

**Top Reported Pay:** \$35 per hour | \$120,000 per year

**Median Pay:** \$26 per hour | \$80,000 per year

**Bottom Reported Pay:** \$20 per hour | \$45,000 per year

**Mid-Level Tech-Repair & Replace:**

**Top Reported Pay:** \$55 per hour | \$100,000 per year

**Median Pay:** \$21.75 per hour | \$55,000 per year

**Bottom Reported Pay:** \$13 per hour | \$30,000 per year

**Mid-Level Tech-Advanced Maintenance:**

**Top Reported Pay:** \$40 per hour | \$70,000 per year

**Median Pay:** \$17.50 per hour | \$43,500 per year

**Bottom Reported Pay:** \$12 per hour | \$25,000 per year

**Entry Level Tech-Lube, Oil, Filters:**

**Top Reported Pay:** \$35 per hour | \$45,000 per year

**Median Pay:** \$12 per hour | \$27,500 per year

**Bottom Reported Pay:** \$10 per hour | \$15,000 per year

**Question 15: Do you offer benefits to your technicians?**

**Answered: 100 (76.9%) | Skipped: 30 (23.1%)**

**Medical:** 100 out of 100 (100%)

**Vacation:** 98 out of 100 (98%)

**Dental:** 96 out of 100 (96%)

**Retirement:** 92 out of 100 (92%)

**Sick Leave:** 32 out of 100 (32%)

## **FAMILIARITY WITH AND QUALITY OF GENERAL AND MANUFACTURER AUTOMOTIVE TECHNICIAN PROGRAMS**

**Question 16: Rate your level of familiarity with these Washington Community and Technical Colleges **general** automotive technician programs:**

**Answered: 93 (71.5%) | Skipped: 37 (28.5%)**

A number of respondents reported being familiar with the following top three schools from across the state:

1. Shoreline Community College (33 responses)
2. Bates Technical College (30 responses)
3. Green River College (29 responses)

In contrast, respondents reported being the least familiar with the following three schools:

1. Grays Harbor College (7 responses)
2. Lower Columbia College (5 responses)
3. Peninsula College (5 responses)

In addition, a number of respondents reported hiring graduates from the following three schools from across the state:

1. Shoreline Community College (42 responses)
2. Renton Technical College (22 responses)
3. Clover Park Technical College (13 responses)

In contract, respondents reported they hired the least graduates from the following four schools:

1. Big Bend College (1 response)
2. Clark College (1 response)
3. Lower Columbia College (1 response)
4. Yakima Valley Community College (1 response)

With the majority of the survey respondents located in urban areas of western Washington, it is clear that the level of familiarity and hiring of graduates reported is with schools closer to the location of the dealership.

**Question 17: Rate the quality of the training technicians you have received through the applicable **general** automotive technician programs:**

**Answered: 75 (57.7%) | Skipped: 55 (42.3%)**

The three top ranked schools are:

1. Shoreline Community College (Excellent Rating: 15; Above Average Rating: 21)
2. Renton Technical College (Excellent Rating: 6; Above Average Rating: 7)
3. Bellingham Technical College (Excellent Rating: 1; Above Average Rating: 5)

Results may be skewed as a majority of the respondents are located in western Washington.

**Question 18: Rate your level of familiarity with these manufacturer technician training programs: Answered: 89 (68.5%) | Skipped: 41 (31.5%)**

A number of respondents reported being familiar with the following top three manufacturer technician training from across the state:

1. Shoreline Community College – GM Automotive Service Education Program (ASEP) (34 responses)
2. Shoreline Community College – Toyota Technical Education Network (T-TEN) (24 responses)
3. Shoreline Community College – MOPAR College Automotive Program (MCAP) (23 responses)

In contrast, respondents reported being the least familiar with the following two manufacturer technician training:

1. Clark College – Toyota Technical Education Network (T-TEN) (12 responses)
2. Spokane Community College – Toyota Technical Education Network (T-TEN) (9 responses)

In addition, only a handful of respondents reported being a part of an industry co-op/internship with the manufacturer technician training programs:

1. Shoreline Community College – GM Automotive Service Education Program (ASEP) (4 responses)
2. Renton Technical College – Ford ASSET Program (3 responses)
3. Shoreline Community College – MOPAR College Automotive Program (MCAP) (1 response)

Also, a number of respondents reported hiring graduates from the following top three manufacturer technician training from across the state:

1. Shoreline Community College – GM Automotive Service Education Program (ASEP) (13 responses)
2. Shoreline Community College – Toyota Technical Education Network (T-TEN) (12 responses)
3. Shoreline Community College – Honda Professional Education Network (T-TEN) (10 responses)

In contract, respondents reported they hired the least graduates from the following two manufacturer technician training programs:

1. Renton Technical College – Ford ASSET Program (6 responses)
2. Clark College – Toyota Technical Education Network (T-TEN) (1 response)

With the majority of the survey respondents located in urban areas of western Washington, it is clear that the level of familiarity and hiring of graduates reported is with schools closer to the location of the dealership. In addition, half of the manufacturer programs available are located at Shoreline Community College.

**Question 19: Rate the quality of the technicians you have hired through the applicable **manufacturer** training programs:**

**Answered: 61 (46.9%) | Skipped: 69 (53.1%)**

The three top ranked manufacturer training programs are:

1. Shoreline Community College – Toyota Technical Education Network (T-TEN) (Excellent Rating: 7; Above Average Rating: 6)
2. Shoreline Community College – GM Automotive Service Education Program (ASEP) (Excellent Rating: 6; Above Average Rating: 8)
3. Shoreline Community College – Honda Professional Automotive Career Training (PACT) (Excellent Rating: 6; Above Average Rating: 5)

Results may be skewed as a majority of the respondents and available manufacturer trainings are located in western Washington.

## **WORKFORCE PIPELINE**

**Question 20: Do you currently partner with any Washington State Community and Technical Colleges to meet your workforce needs?**

**Answered: 92 (70.8%) | Skipped: 38 (29.2%)**

**Yes:** 32 (34.8%) – Directed to answer [Question 21](#)

**No:** 53 (57.6%) – Directed to answer [Question 22](#)

**Don't Know:** 7 (7.6%) – Directed to answer [Question 22](#)

**Question 21: Indicate which ways your dealership has worked with one of Washington State's Community and Technical Colleges to meet your workforce needs.**

**Hosted program interns (Answered: 29 | Skipped: 3)**

- Responded Yes: 23 out of 29 (79.3%)
- Responded No: 4 out of 29 (13.8%)
- Responded Maybe: 2 out of 29 (6.9%)

**Provided a practicum experience for students in the program (Answered: 30 | Skipped: 2)**

- Responded Yes: 24 out of 30 (80%)
- Responded No: 3 out of 30 (10%)
- Responded Maybe: 3 out of 30 (10%)

**Received referrals from faculty about top-performing students (Answered: 30 | Skipped: 2)**

- Responded Yes: 26 out of 30 (86.6%)
- Responded No: 2 out of 30 (6.7%)
- Responded Maybe: 2 out of 30 (6.7%)

**Helped development of curriculum needed to meet your training needs (Answered: 31: Skipped: 1)**

- Responded Yes: 20 out of 31 (64.5%)
- Responded No: 9 out of 31 (29%)
- Responded Maybe: 2 out of 31 (6.5%)

Respondents indicated they were very involved with automotive training programs and would also promote the program to potential students who might be interested in the automotive technician field.

**Question 22: In which ways would your dealership consider working with one of Washington State's Community and Technical Colleges to meet your workforce needs:**

**Host program interns (Answered: 55 | Skipped: 5)**

- Responded Yes: 31 out of 55 (56.4%)
- Responded No: 4 out of 55 (7.3%)
- Responded Maybe: 20 out of 60 (36.3%)

**Provide a practicum experience for students in the program (Answered: 53 | Skipped: 9)**

- Responded Yes: 26 out of 53 (49.1%)
- Responded No: 6 out of 53 (11.3%)
- Responded Maybe: 21 out of 53 (39.6%)

**Receive referrals from faculty about top-performing students (Answered: 58 | Skipped: 2)**

- Responded Yes: 51 out of 58 (87.9%)
- Responded Maybe: 7 out of 58 (12.1%)

**Help development of curriculum needed to meet your training needs (Answered: 54 | Skipped: 6)**

- Responded Yes: 24 out of 54 (44.4%)
- Responded No: 5 out of 54 (9.3%)
- Responded Maybe: 25 out of 54 (46.3%)

Overall, the majority of respondents appear interested in partnering with an automotive training program.

**Question 23: Overall, how might the Washington State Community and Technical Colleges automotive training programs statewide better support your workforce needs?  
Answered: 43 (33.1%) | Skipped: 87 (66.9%)**

The following is a list of the top 3 responses received from survey participants:

1. Expand and support training programs for other franchises not already available within the state. In addition, offer hands on practical experience for students and begin or increase support for students at the high school level. (26 responses)
2. Increased communication between automotive programs and dealerships to help improve opportunities for students to be hired by dealerships and allow dealerships to recruit graduates from the program. (10 responses)
3. Promote, recruit and/or expand programs to allow a larger number of students to participate in available automotive training programs. (7 responses)

**Question 24: Indicate if you would like any additional information about the following General Technician Programs:**

**Answered: 51 (39.2%) | Skipped: 79 (60.8%)**

Each program, despite distance, drew interest from dealerships from across the state. The top 5 programs that received interest were:

1. Shoreline Community College (23 out of 51)
2. Renton Technical College (22 out of 51)
3. Bates Technical College (20 out of 51)
4. Clover Park Technical College (20 out of 51)
5. South Puget Sound Community College (19 out of 51)

**Question 25: Indicate if you would like any additional information about the following Manufacturer Training Programs:**

**Answered: 30 (23.1%) | Skipped: 100 (76.9%)**

Each program, despite distance, drew interest from dealerships from across the state. The top 3 programs that received interest were:

1. Shoreline Community College – GM Automotive Service Education Program (ASEP)  
(8 out of 30)
2. Shoreline Community College – MOPAR College Automotive Program (MCAP)  
(8 out of 30)
3. Renton Technical College – Ford ASSET Program (8 out of 30)

**Question 26: Any additional comments or questions?**

- Help! We are getting into deep trouble. I don't think our manufacturers understand how much they are negatively impacting this business.
- I don't really know if these other colleges outside of our area or with the other manufacturer programs are beneficial to us. Is someone going to Walla Walla going to come to Everett? Maybe, but I don't think that it would help for us to get involved with further away programs.
- We need to develop more training locations. We are in the process of hiring over 65 technicians to meet our needs. This trend will only increase as we move forward.
- You're on the right track getting something going on this. This is becoming a crisis that WSADA can assist with ASAP.
- We have to send our Techs to Portland for their advance training. Very expensive and they do not like to travel that far.
- Thank you!