



Get Spiffy, Inc.
4506 South Miami Boulevard, Suite 150
Durham, North Carolina 27703

One thing that makes franchising with Spiffy enticing for our franchise owners is the flexibility that mobile servicing can provide. Not only can entrepreneurs pursue a service model that provides top-notch convenience for their customers, but dealerships can expand their existing service operations beyond their physical location. Tom Wood Automotive has done it in Indianapolis, and now Keeler Motor Car Company is doing the same for customers throughout Albany and New York's Capital Region.

We spoke with Jesse Hord about his experience launching Keeler Automotive's Spiffy franchise, what led their dealership to mobile services, and how they plan to leverage mobile servicing to make car care easier for their customers. This interview was conducted on February 7, 2022, after their official franchise launch, and has been edited for clarity.

What led Keeler Automotive to consider franchising with Spiffy?

We had been experimenting with mobile service for a couple of years through our dealerships. Started conversations with our OEMs, probably two to two and a half years ago. We felt like it's definitely going to be a component of our future, particularly as we go through the powertrain change over EV. We studied that service model a lot and started a partnership with another mobile firm when we heard about Spiffy through some contacts in the industry.

We had a conversation with Connor Finnegan [VP, Strategy & Head of Franchise Development], and it sounded like Spiffy was further along and deployed in multiple markets. The way Spiffy thinks mobile, starting with the wash services, made a lot of sense to us, based on what our experience had been to date. That's what really led us to do the franchise. We saw it as a huge opportunity, particularly to partner with a new brand that we could then have under the dealership umbrella.

How has the consumer desire for mobile services progressed over the last five years or so?

I think the ability to provide more services through the mobile van has expanded somewhat. Some of the technology around the HVAC system, plus the green services that Spiffy helped pioneer on the wash program so that it's environmentally safe, has brought it further than it was when we started. I think it's still early days for consumer understanding, but the experience Spiffy has had with fleets helps us better understand our technicians' speed, the vehicles, and the efficiency that you can achieve with the mobile service model. I think consumers will come along a lot further in the next couple of years.

When we rolled out in the dealership, just kind of opening the door to mobile services [without Spiffy], the take rate was a little less than what we expected. I think that really comes down to marketing and understanding the consumer side of what's going to occur during the services. Plus things like, "how convenient it is how to use the application?" Some of that is just an education process and seeing it at work.

One of the things we were able to do prior to the Spiffy relationship was partner with a local hospital, and we did free services for the frontline workers there during COVID. And we learned a lot. We proved that we could do eight to ten appointments a day on the consumer side, going to a parking garage and consolidating services,



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and that the consumer experience was off the charts from everything we learned over the couple of weeks that we did that. That really gave us the confidence that we were headed in the right direction. I think the partnership with Spiffy brings a lot more forward than we could do on our own, trying to roll out the model.

From a labor perspective, how are you assigning the mobile services to your mechanics? Do you have technicians who might be at a lower experience level going out and doing the services, or do you have mobile-specific technicians?

The way we've built out the management of this is that our Honda service manager, who is a former BMW technician, is responsible for the mobile effort at the top. We've partnered him with who I would call a mobile team leader, Shane Powell, a former Mercedes technician who had worked in dispatch and understands the full scope of the brick and mortar operation. Below him, we brought in a lower-level trainee who learned the Spiffy process and has been servicing fleets like Enterprise and Avis. Our next step is to get more guys like him that we can onboard and then train under Shane.

What was the onboarding and training process like for you?

We had myself, a lady by the name of Laura Haggerty - who is more on the business back-office side of Spiffy from an accounting perspective - and Drew McHugh, who is the Honda service manager responsible for mobile. Then Shane came for the training. We did kind of an abbreviated introduction to the process for those guys. I know they've done some mobile training. And then Mike Tolzman [VP, Franchise Operations] came up once we had our van finalized and did on-site training with Shane. We did a number of cars in the dealership lot and did some oil changes; that's was sufficient to get us started.

As we rolled through January, we've done a lot of scheduled services. The airport, and the Enterprise and Avis lots, are right down the street from the dealership. That close proximity has allowed us to get familiar with the equipment to get what the multiple appointments scenario looks like from a fleet perspective. I think it's put us in a really good place to start to go out and do consumer services.

What about this process - learning about Spiffy, onboarding, and launching the business for consumers - has stood out the most to you?

I think Spiffy was very methodical. They've done a lot of testing and experimentation around the design of their vans, the technicians they hire, and the services that they're offering - starting with wash and then moving into oil change and expanding from there. It was clear to us that that was the right path. And then just the functionality of the app and the frictionless consumer experience, it seemed like the full package was already there that would be easy for us to deploy in our market without having to go through the trial and error process.

Is there anything else about your experience you would like to share?

The more we go along with the partnership, the more confidence it gives us that Spiffy has really honed the model pretty well. Everyone we've interacted with from Spiffy has been very professional and has great processes and procedures in place that we're really excited. It's been clear that there's tons of demand across the spectrum from fleets. I know on the consumer side, once we get it out, it's going to give us a real competitive advantage for our stores.



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Thank you so much to Jesse for chatting with us about how Keeler Automotive is bringing Spiffy to their customers throughout New York's Capital Region. We love hearing about how each franchise sets out for success in their markets, and Keeler's efforts for customers in the Albany area are no exception.

If you're looking to learn more about starting your own Spiffy Franchise, [contact us](#) today!