



## Dave Jensen Touts Education and Idea Sharing Amid Industry Changes

by Emily Schmitt

Automotive Oil Change Association (AOCA) board member attributes his success to swapping ideas with other professionals. Now he's encouraging others to do the same.

Dave Jensen knows the fast lube industry is changing. And as an industry veteran, Jensen is poised to help other fast lube operators handle those changes.

Jensen made his start in the quick lube nearly 30 years ago while working in his father's shop, called Lube It, in Kitchener, Ontario. In 1992, he branched out on his own and opened a Pennzoil 10 Minute Oil Change Centre in Waterloo, Ontario. Jensen now employs 11 people who service nearly 70 cars per day. His shop provides what Jensen calls "fast fit" services—anything that can be done in 20 minutes or less, and nothing mechanical.

More recently, Jensen—like many fast lube owners—has been grappling with changes that could significantly alter the way fast lubes do business: an increase in drain intervals and an increase in the use of synthetic oil, to name a few. Amid these changes, and with his experience in tow, Jensen has focused on education, openly sharing with other industry professionals the ideas and best practices that have made his shop successful.

Jensen is also an active member of the AOCA. He joined in 2000 and served on the board of directors from 2002 to 2009. He was president from 2006 to 2009 and was recently nominated to fill a vacancy on the board. During his first stint on the board, Jensen helped increase the number of Canadian members from 17 to 85. He did this through a variety of efforts, including lobbying in Ottawa, Ontario, and making the AOCA Management Course available to Canadian operators.

AOCA headquarters recently interviewed Jensen. Below are a few highlights from that conversation.

**AOCA:** *What are some trends you're seeing in the fast lube industry?*

**Jensen:** The biggest trend is drain intervals—frequencies are going down. We used to turn them three to four times a year, now we're turning them twice a year. This is due to manufacturers extending drains. Along with that comes a different product mix. You look at the cars coming through the doors now and a lot of them are taking synthetics.

For fast lube operators, this means you have to keep product in hand, you have to make sure you have the right products to service the vehicles and you have to be aware of what's coming.

**AOCA:** *With the increase in drain intervals, many fast lube operators are looking to add other services to increase their car count. What advice do you have for these operators?*

**Jensen:** Basically, it comes down to what drives your business. What are you doing to increase your car counts? What services are you adding that won't impede what you are—a fast lube?

What happens to a lot of people is they add a lot of services that tie up too much time, and then customers have to wait too long and they leave. So, it's a fine line we walk between what you want to be, what services you want to add and how you see yourself.

**AOCA:** *Your involvement with AOCA has been centered on education. As a facility owner, why do you feel it is necessary to place education at the forefront?*

**Jensen:** Because of the industry, it's very important that not only myself, but everyone, is properly trained. If your staff is properly trained, it makes the whole industry look better. We are competing with dealers, so if we aren't trained and knowledgeable, we don't look professional.

**AOCA:** *You've been a member of AOCA for quite some time. What value do you get out of the association?*

**Jensen:** The value you get out is what you put in. I mean, what isn't of value? Government affairs have value. Education has value. Networking with your peers has value. The vendors have a tremendous value. But the most you get out of it is sitting at a table with fellow operators—that's where your ideas come from.

It's just an open and generous industry. People are not afraid to share ideas on anything from managing employees, to procedures, to marketing ideas. That's one thing I've really enjoyed about it. You can pick up the phone and call anyone and they'll usually share with you.

**AOCA:** *What advice do you have for someone new to the association?*

**Jensen:** Ask a lot of questions. Get involved, take the courses, learn about the association, talk to your vendors and get as much knowledge as you can, even before you get into opening your shop. Changing oil is the easy part; knowing how to do it correctly and professionally is the tough part. ♦