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## Is Saturday trading going to make money?

If your workshop is not already open on a Saturday, maybe it's time to think about it in this 24/7 society in which consumers are conditioned to buy almost everything else any time over the weekend.

If you are sure there will be a demand for your services, there's nothing stopping you from opening the doors next Saturday, but at what cost?

The reality is that the rent, insurance and electricity are covered for 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It could be logical therefore to open on Saturdays since you're already incurring many of the fixed expenses. There's also the argument that if your workshop is closed on Saturdays, stranded customers, or those who can't get their vehicle in during the week, will wind up at your competitors' shops.

There is an element of truth in this but before deciding to open your workshop on Saturdays, or even to continue to trade on Saturdays, the following must be considered.

### Will you make a profit?

The assumption is probably yes, but you need to run over the numbers to see if Saturday trading will put you ahead or behind. By opening on Saturdays you'll more than likely incur the added cost of overtime, which will escalate your operating expense. The essential point is that you'll need to work out exactly how much work needs to be generated in Saturday sales to make it worthwhile.

In running these numbers though, make sure you are not counting work that you would have otherwise performed during the week.

### **Impact on team morale**

More than one workshop owner has admitted that he wouldn't want to work on Saturdays, so why would he make his staff do so.

If technicians are asked to put in the extra day it's possible that productivity from Monday to Friday might suffer, there could be a decline in the quality of customer service, or perhaps it will result in an increase in employee turnover, just to name a few.

Sure, you may have some young, motivated technicians who would love to be at work on Saturdays so they can earn a higher income, but it's more than likely that the excitement will wane over a short period of time.

Opening the doors on Saturdays may be great for short-term performance, but the odds are that it will impact on other areas.

### **Don't ask your customers**

Whatever you do, don't survey your customers to see if they would like your workshop open on Saturdays. Of course they will say yes, since it's to their benefit, and there is absolutely no downside for them.

### **Testing Saturdays**

If you feel strongly about giving Saturday trading a try, by all means, but don't broadcast it to the world straight away. Try it with a skeleton staff for a couple of months and then measure the results.

Avoid offering Saturday servicing and repairs to regular customers who would otherwise book during the week. Only offer it to customers who ask about Saturday bookings and walk-ins. Otherwise, you're robbing Peter to pay Paul.

### **Try rotating staff or only open every second weekend**

There are workshops that successfully open on Saturdays, but they do so every second weekend. Others will open every weekend but rotate the staff so that everyone has every second weekend off.

## **Is your business in its infancy and still growing**

If your business is still in its infancy, opening on Saturday can be a great way to build exposure to new customers and help make the business cashflow positive. But remember that burnout is a real issue so make sure that everyone has one weekend off every month.

So if you're thinking about opening on Saturdays, do your due diligence. There may be good reasons for doing so , but all we are saying is – be aware of the consequences.

The place to start is [www.tatbiz.net.au/resources](http://www.tatbiz.net.au/resources)

*Just go for it!*