



Indicators that Drive Your Shop's Performance

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"What gets measured gets managed."—Peter Drucker

There are indicators that drive what gets managed in our business. What indicators do you follow to drive your company's performance? Are they the correct indicators for what you are trying to achieve?

What Gets Measured Drives Performance

My last car was a conventional 2009 Honda Civic sedan. Some of the steel in the engine came from my former employer in Ohio. I know PMPA member shops that produce components used in several systems in it—gasoline engine, stock, right down to the floor mats. There's nothing high performance about it. It came with the standard instrument package. Speedometer, tachometer and odometer. I think it had lights for amperage and temperature, fuel gage, a clock. So, the feedback the car gave me was pretty standard: how fast was I going? How revved was the engine? How far had I travelled? How much time elapsed? How much time until I arrived? How much gas did I have? Did I mention it told me how fast I was going?

Despite the fact it was a standard sedan with standard equipment, I managed to collect a number of speeding tickets, enough to earn the privilege of getting unsolicited mail from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to inform me that I was well on my way to earning "elite status" (that is, bench time) for points for moving violations. The performance I measured was speed. And time. And if could get there faster by touching the gas pedal a little firmer, well, time is money, right?

Speed, miles per hour, time to get to the destination: I drove with the measurements that I had available. And the urge to make continuous improvement made sure I was travelling just a little bit faster than what the speed limit was, where an officer was doing an inspection on traffic quality (speed). The measurements I had drove my performance in the areas they measured—speed, elapsed time and arrival time. I drove fast. I drove to the clock. I drove to miles per gallon. I got tickets.

My current car is a 2015 Honda Civic gas-electric hybrid. Some of the steel in the engine came from my former employer here in Ohio. I know PMPA member shops that produce components used in several of its systems. It was assembled in Indiana. Stock engine. There is nothing custom in the car, not even aftermarket floor mats. However, the instrument package on this hybrid provides some different performance indicators: miles per gallon (MPG) for the current drive, MPG for the last



drive, MPG for the life of the car, dashboard indicators that change from blue to green when less fuel is used. There is a live, instantaneous bar graph of gas consumption rate as you are driving, as well as a display of state of battery charge, and whether the car is running on electric, gas or both, and where the charge is going, whether it be to or from the batteries. It also has a speedometer, odometer and a clock.

I no longer have only speed, elapsed time, odometer or time to arrival as my performance measures. Now, I have live, real-time indicators of my rate of fuel consumption, MPG at that moment, on my last drive and for the life of the car. I know how many miles I can drive based on the fuel remaining in the tank that's updated as I drive and based on my recent miles-per-gallon performance.

Here's the thing; I haven't been pulled over by the police since I bought the car. Not once. Nothing else has changed. I have the same commute, same freeways, same jurisdictions. I get passed by police now, not pulled over by them. I drive by speed traps, and while I nervously glance at the mirror, the fact is that I know I am driving to maximize MPG, not MPH. I drive the speed limit, but my eyes are split between the road and the gas consumption rate meters, not the speedometer. I spend very little time in the passing lane. I drive to light up the green fuel economy lights on my dashboard, not the red and blue flashing lights on the police cars I used to encounter. I am still the competitive person that I was before. But now I have a new measure with

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