



Express Care Operator Profile

Dave Brahler • Springfield, IL

Express Care Since	2012
Year Opened	1979
Number of Stores	5
Oil Changes Per Day	41
Premium Oil %	37%
POS System	ISI



Background

In 1979 the Brahler family opened their first quick lube in Springfield, IL. Branded “Brahler’s Oil and Lube” it featured a major brand motor oil. Over the next 30 years the Brahlers added four additional stores around the community. Like most quick lube operators in that era they were focused on providing fast and convenient oil changes. They offered air filters and wipers, but didn’t do extra services. Oil changes were enough and volumes were high. Over the years they followed industry trends and added services to make up for lost margins and lower oil car counts.

Time for a Change

In 2012, Dave Brahler’s oil supply contract had expired. He says, “To be honest, I wasn’t looking to switch even though it was becoming more and more evident that my supplier wasn’t meeting or understanding my needs as a quick lube operator. It had nothing to do with the brand, it’s a good brand. It had everything to do with the support I knew I needed. I felt that we would just die on the vine if we didn’t change how we were looking at the business. They loved the gallons we pumped, but they didn’t know how to give the support it takes beyond supplying oil to make a quick lube successful. I had been loyal for over 30 years, but loyalty needs to be good for both sides and they just weren’t willing or able to give me the expertise I needed.”

“Justin called me out of the blue and I decided it was time to hear what Valvoline had to offer. I knew that they ran a significant number of their own corporate stores. Because they operate their own stores Valvoline lives the quick lube business and know how it works. As Justin described the level of support Valvoline provides I decided to make the switch. If I’m going into battle then I’m going to go into it with the best General I can find. I was wasting my time with a rep who spent 11 of his last 12 years pushing fuel. That’s not my business.”

Conversion

A significant concern was how loyal customers would react to the change in brands. Dave continued, “I thought it was going to take years to switch my customer base to Valvoline, but what I found was that service and convenience was what my customers were most concerned with. The Valvoline Reward cards made it easy to talk about Valvoline and made it simple for the customers to switch. It went much easier and faster than I expected.”

Premiums

With the previous brand Brahler’s premium oil percentage languished at 17%. With Valvoline’s programs and in-store training the percentage rose to 29% with 3 months and a year later passed 37%. For a typical quick lube every 5%

increase in premium growth results in \$14,000 per store in additional annual gross profit and \$2,000 in Valvoline's Premium Incentive Payout. Brahler continues, "I know this wouldn't have happened if I had not joined the Valvoline team. Valvoline doesn't just say 'sell more premiums'. They know how to do it and have given me the tools and training to make it happen quickly."

Ancillary Products

Brahler's chemical sales are also higher in every sales line. Fuel injector sales have seen steady growth and now exceed the NOLN benchmark. Transmission flush and Coolant flush now meet or exceed the NOLN averages. Dave says, "I have some stores that are 10 times higher in some categories just because they have learned how to communicate value to the customer." With margins that range between 30 and 50%, this is a significant additional to profitability.

The Express Care Advisor

A key differentiator of the Valvoline package is the Express Care Advisor. These quick lube experts average 15 years in the industry. Dave continues, "We feel like we are partnered with someone who has the same goal as we do. There is something about someone else taking an honest and objective look at your business, and then helping you to see what you can't or won't see. But then they didn't just tell me everything we were doing wrong, they provided a plan and the training to get it done. Valvoline got us thinking not just about talking to the customer, but understanding how to talk to the customer. Valvoline made my guys better at talking to the customer and are helping us to continue to improve. We now think in terms of delivering consistently

across all of our stores. In our meetings we talk about the things that we are going to do when each and every customer hits the lot. This is what we are going to deliver. We're better because of that focus and it is showing in our ticket averages."

Summary

Brahler is more positive than ever about his quick lube business. He says, "Continued ticket growth is where the real value is over time. My ticket is way up and I haven't increased my price. Plus, my guys are more professional and more confident than they were before. That's because now they are dealing with the Valvoline guys who are focused on value and service and know the quick lube business. My customers are getting a better experience because my guys are more knowledgeable and customer focused than ever before. Valvoline has the ability to make our people better. We're better because we went with Valvoline. That's a fact!"

Express Care Take Away

Great Execution using the Express Care Advisor and marketing tools. The result is significant increase in gross profit and customer satisfaction.

