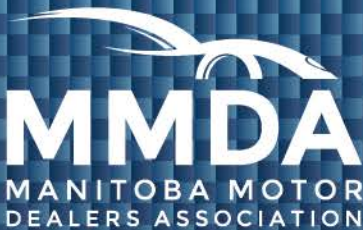


# MOTOR DEALER INDUSTRY

## CAREERS



[mmda.mb.ca](http://mmda.mb.ca)

[autocareerstart.com](http://autocareerstart.com)

Sales and General Management  
Service and Technical Management



# THE MOTOR DEALER INDUSTRY: AN INTRODUCTION

The Motor Dealer industry in Canada is a vibrant and growing one that is only getting bigger. Since the invention of the automobile, modern society has made the automobile an integral part of our everyday lives. With the convergence of technology, vehicles such as cars and light trucks have now become a tool for transportation AND productivity. The people needed to sell, maintain and repair these technological marvels must now be more educated, tech savvy and professional than ever.



In Canada, the automotive industry is the largest employer in the country, and over one million new vehicles are purchased or leased each year. In Manitoba alone, there are over 125 new car and heavy truck dealerships.

A modern dealership in Manitoba is a complex, yet highly organized business that is licensed by the automotive manufacturer to sell their brands. Within a dealership, there are

many levels of career and management opportunities.

The Manitoba Motor Dealers Association (MMDA) is the association that new car and heavy truck dealerships



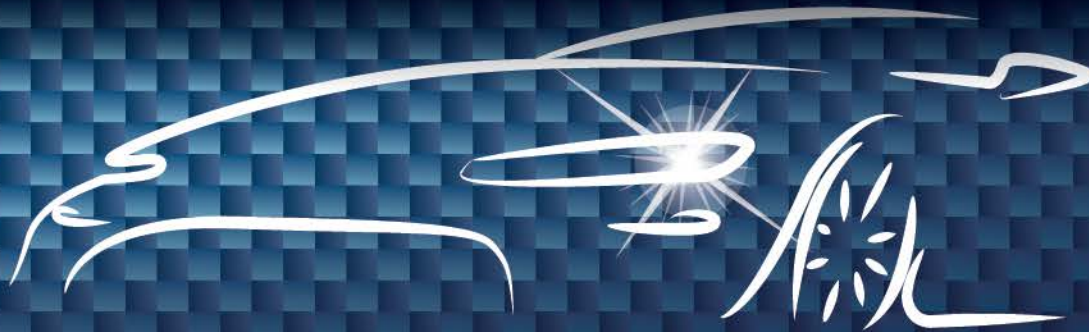
belong to in Manitoba. MMDA is over 70 years old and has developed a high standard of ethics that every dealer member must adhere to in order to remain a member in good standing. MMDA member dealers in Manitoba employ over 4,700 quality people and generate \$2.7 billion in retail sales.

People who choose a career in the Motor Dealer industry are people just like you. From recent high school and college/university graduates, to those looking for a second career and new immigrants to Canada, getting started in the automotive industry is simple and decisive: all you need is a passion for the industry and a strong

work ethic. **Education programs and the various apprenticeship programs available will guide you through the rest.**







**Truck and Transport Mechanic:** A Truck Transport Mechanic is certified to maintain, service, repair and modify transport trucks and their components. They also can service gravel trucks, public transport, school buses, public utility vehicles, semi-trailer trucks and truck tractors.

There are courses designed to teach theory and practical work in the areas of mechanics, standard and automatic transmissions, electrical, brake and steering systems, gas and diesel engine overhaul, rear axles, suspension and servicing of equipment. A number of related trade courses such as arc and gas welding, mathematics, science and communication are included.

A four-year apprenticeship program consist of four levels. A minimum of 1,800 hours of Practical and Technical training is required per level. About 80% of the time is spent learning practical on-the-job skills under the supervision of a certified journey person and 20% consists of learning the theoretical and technical aspects of the trade through in-school training.

Technicians are well-paid (frequently based on skill and speed) and are in high demand. Today's technician must be able to research information on computers to keep informed of the latest updates. This trade especially, is on the cutting edge of environmental engine efficacies and technicians have the opportunity to work on these new technologies before they are introduced in other sectors.



**Service Advisor:** When a customer comes into a dealership with a problem or for scheduled service, they will often speak with a Service Advisor who will look at the immediate issue at hand, but also pull up the customer's profile to see if any scheduled maintenance is needed, or to provide any special offers that may fit the customer's profile.

**Parts Counter Salesperson:** The Counter Salesperson is the person in the service department that handles retail product sales, such as branded apparel and accessories, and third party and aftermarket products.



**Shipping and Receiving Clerk:** The Shipping and Receiving Clerk is responsible for ensuring that products and parts are sent out and received on time. This role requires excellent attention to detail and scheduling.

**Parts Driver:** The Parts Driver is the person who delivers parts to other dealerships and picks up parts from the manufacturer or other dealers. Many young people starting out in the industry begin as Parts Drivers while they enroll or further their education.



**Appointment Coordinator:** The Appointment Coordinator schedules all customers for their service visit based on their vehicle needs. They also call customers reminding them of their appointments.

**Detailer:** The Detailer is responsible for completing all vehicle clean ups when a customer takes delivery of their new vehicle. This includes both an interior and exterior clean. Also, many dealerships offer full detailing packages for customers to have their vehicle cleaned while in for service.





# SERVICE & TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT



**Fixed Operations Manager:** In larger organizations, the Fixed Operations Manager oversees all operations of service including service, parts and autobody shop. He/she is the direct report for these specific managers.

**Service Manager:** The Service Manager oversees all operations within the service side of the business. This includes the service advisors, technicians, appointment coordinators and the clean-up department.

**Parts Manager:** The Parts Manager plays a key role in a dealership's service division. In order for any service department to run smoothly, parts need to be ordered and arrive on time for repairs to be carried out. This person is required to have excellent organizational skills.



**Parts Consultant:** When a customer needs repairs, parts are often needed. The Parts Consultant is the person in charge of sourcing the necessary parts to ensure that repairs are completed on time and on budget.

**Autobody Technician:** The Autobody Technician carries out repairs on the body (exterior and chassis) of the vehicle. Using hand and power tools, they replace, repair and restore damaged body parts and vehicle frames in accordance with factory, dealership and insurance company specifications. Unibody frames, plastic and aluminum parts, and environmental regulations have made the job of the autobody technician more complex. Today's technician must be able to research information from manuals and be willing to continue their training as new technologies are introduced. Dealerships demand that Autobody Technicians must adhere to strict safety and environmental regulations. The Autobody Technician can often specialize in either repairs or painting. While this is a very "hands on" role, Autobody Technicians must be able to do fast research through manufacturers' databases and manuals on parts and techniques, in addition to consulting with other resources to achieve a satisfactory result.



**Service Technician/ Licensed Journeyman:** Today's Service Technician position is more skilled and challenging than ever before. New cars and trucks are far more complex than they used to be, a modern service bay is beginning to look like a science lab, with expensive, sophisticated diagnostic and repair equipment, including computers.

The "grease monkey" image is a thing of the past. Although hand skills remain important, physical work is no longer the major aspect of automotive servicing. Today, the emphasis is on diagnostics, a process that requires an ability to think through problems in the abstract. The ability to diagnose the source of the problem quickly and accurately requires good reasoning ability and a thorough knowledge of automobiles. In fact, many technicians consider diagnosing "hard to find" troubles one of their most challenging and satisfying duties.

The first step is an Apprentice Technician, who is under the close guidance of a qualified technician, the shop foreman and the service manager, will learn the trade thoroughly in order to advance to the job of Licensed Journeyman Technician. There are four levels of apprenticeship, each requiring a combination of on-the-job experience, up to eight weeks of classroom instruction and passing an exam before they move on to the next level. As they graduate through each of these levels, their responsibilities and skill demanding assignments will increase at the dealership.

As automobiles are becoming increasingly complex, a person who chooses a service technician career is committed to lifelong learning to keep up with rapidly changing technology.



# EDUCATION

*If you're wondering what type of education or background you need to get into the Motor Dealer industry, there is not one path but various ways and routes to get there.*



Some people know from a very young age that they want to enter into the Motor Dealer industry on the service and repair side, and participate in a placement program through their high school. From that point onward, they find part-time or full-time work at a local dealership and then choose an apprenticeship program to become fully licensed.

For those with an administrative or management position in mind, they will often choose a degree program such as the one offered at the Automotive Business School of Canada at Georgian College in Barrie, Ontario. Others may choose a certificate or diploma background. Having a formal education in the automotive industry gives you a competitive edge, for you will learn the various facets of a dealership and its operation, that others may not have exposure to, in hands-on or on-the-job training.

Many choose the Motor Dealer industry as a second career and discover that the skills they've developed in other industries are immediately and effectively transferrable to the Motor Dealer industry. From marketing and social media managers, to outside sales executives and accountants, there are many positions within a dealership that need your existing skills.

New Canadians also find the Motor Dealer industry a welcome environment for skills that have been developed back home. With a few upgrades to their education, many new Canadians have gone onto administrative and management positions, while others have eventually become dealer principals themselves.

**A dealership can be divided into two general areas:**

## **Sales and General Management**

refers to the areas of the dealership that focus on vehicle sales, finance and insurance (F&I), administration and the management and leadership of a dealership.

## **Service and Technical**

**Management** refers to the areas of the dealership that focus on service, maintenance and repairs, parts, autobody shop and the management of all of these operations.

The following pages are brief summaries of the types of positions that you may find in a typical dealership.



# SALES & GENERAL MANAGEMENT



**Dealer Principal:** The Dealer Principal or President is the owner of the dealership. This person is the leader of dealership strategy and is often chosen by the manufacturer to represent their brand based on their proven abilities. Many sales people and managers have gone on to later own their own dealerships.



**General Manager:** There are several titles associated with "General Manager." Some dealerships have General Managers who oversee all operations and report to the Dealer Principal. Some Dealer Principals are also the General Manager. In other dealerships there are General Sales Managers that oversee specifically, the sales operations.



*"When I got into the industry at first, I started as a sales rep on the sales floor. Then I had the opportunity to become a fleet manager, pre-owned vehicle manager and now the general sales manager."*

**DAVE ROBITAILLE — GENERAL SALES MANAGER**



**Controller:** The Controller is a member of a dealership's senior management team. This position requires a university degree and is often occupied by someone who is a chartered accountant (CA) or a certified general accountant (CGA). The Controller has the whole financial picture of a dealership from budgeting and financing, to taxation and investment management.



**Finance and Insurance Manager (F&I):** This is an integral role in the sales operation. When a customer has made a decision to purchase or lease a vehicle, the F&I Manager arranges for suitable financing, insurance and completes a product presentation which includes extended warranties and protection packages for the vehicle. This role is also referred to as the Business Manager.

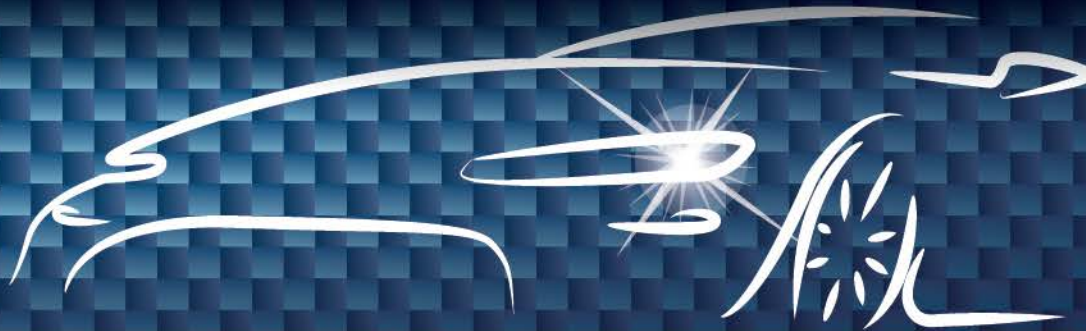


**Accounts Payable:** Accounts Payable is the area of the dealership that requires organizational skills and attention to detail. People in this department ensure that invoices are paid on time and play an integral role in the overall smooth financial operation of a dealership.



**Business Development Centre (includes the Manager and Associate):** The Business Development Centre (BDC) can include a Manager and an Associate. In many dealerships, especially large ones, a customer will speak with a BDC Manager or Associate first, who will then refer them to an appropriate salesperson on the floor. They are also the people who will call existing customers and notify them of upcoming offers, upgrades and let them know of new products, service packages or vehicles available.





**Receptionist:** A dealership's Receptionist is the front-line "face" of the dealership. Many people start out in a dealership in this position. The Receptionist greets customers and directs them to the appropriate area of the dealership. This is often the first person that anyone walking into a dealership will meet.



**Office Manager:** As in every office with complex operations, an Office Manager is needed to ensure the smooth operation of day-to-day office operations. Office Managers from other industries can often transfer their skills to the automotive environment.

*"I would say definitely join the industry. If you have a passion for business, a passion for cars or a passion for people, you can do really well in this industry."*

**DOMINIQUE GIROUARD — SALES PERSON**



**Marketing Manager:** In some dealerships this role is handled by the General Manager or Sales Manager, but as more and more dealerships in Manitoba become part of large dealer groups, the role of Marketing Manager is becoming more important and more defined. Marketing Managers handle all aspects of marketing and advertising for their dealerships. Many Marketing Managers come from other industries or have marketing agency backgrounds. Today's Marketing Managers are tech-savvy people, with excellent computer skills and a clear understanding of the newest digital mediums available.



**Sales Person:** Sales is a very important role of any dealership. Salespeople are essentially brand ambassadors that know the vehicles inside and out and can help customers make an informed decision when choosing to purchase or lease a vehicle. In Manitoba today, Salespeople must pass a Sales Person Knowledge Test through Manitoba Public Insurance license in order to work on the dealership floor and sell cars. Salespeople who apply themselves and build a customer base will earn a very rewarding income.



# ANOTHER REASON TO PURSUE A CAREER IN THE AUTO INDUSTRY!

S2 Safety, under the parent company of MMDA, provides safety services to a variety of workplaces in Manitoba. If you choose a career in the auto industry, you can feel secure knowing that S2 Safety works with our automotive member base, creating safe working environments for present and future employees.

For more information about S2 Safety and the services we provide visit [www.s2safety.ca](http://www.s2safety.ca)



**S2 SAFETY**  
SALES AND SERVICE  
SAFETY ASSOCIATION

## GETTING STARTED

**So you've decided to take the next step and research which program is best for you to prepare for the Motor Dealer industry.**

Having an appropriate education is the key to being competitive in today's market place. The chart below shows colleges that offer automotive courses and the types of programs they deliver.

If you are a high school student, contact your guidance counsellor to review your options. There are also many Manitoba high schools that offer Level One Automotive Technician, Heavy Duty/Truck Transport and Autobody through the High School Apprenticeship Program (HSAP). HSAP lets you start your apprenticeship training while you are still in high school. It combines regular high school instruction with paid, part-time, on-the-job training.

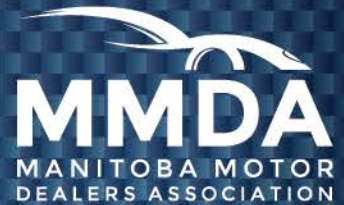
You can get more information about this at Apprenticeship Manitoba at: [hwww.gov.mb.ca/wd/apprenticeship/](http://hwww.gov.mb.ca/wd/apprenticeship/)

## AUTOMOTIVE PROGRAMS

COLLEGE	LOCATION	PROGRAM OFFERED	WEBSITE
Assiniboine Community College	Brandon	Certificates Diploma	<a href="http://www.assiniboine.net">www.assiniboine.net</a>
Georgian College/ Canadian Automotive School of Business	Barrie, Ontario	Certificates Diploma Degree/Co-Op	<a href="http://www.georgiancollege.ca">www.georgiancollege.ca</a>
Manitoba Institute of Trades & Technology	Winnipeg	Certificates Co-Op	<a href="http://www.mitt.ca">www.mitt.ca</a>
Red River College	Winnipeg	Certificates Diploma	<a href="http://www.rrc.ca">www.rrc.ca</a>
University College of The North	The Pas Thompson	Certificates Diploma	<a href="http://www.ucn.ca">www.ucn.ca</a>

Visit [autocareerstart.com](http://autocareerstart.com) for more information.

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