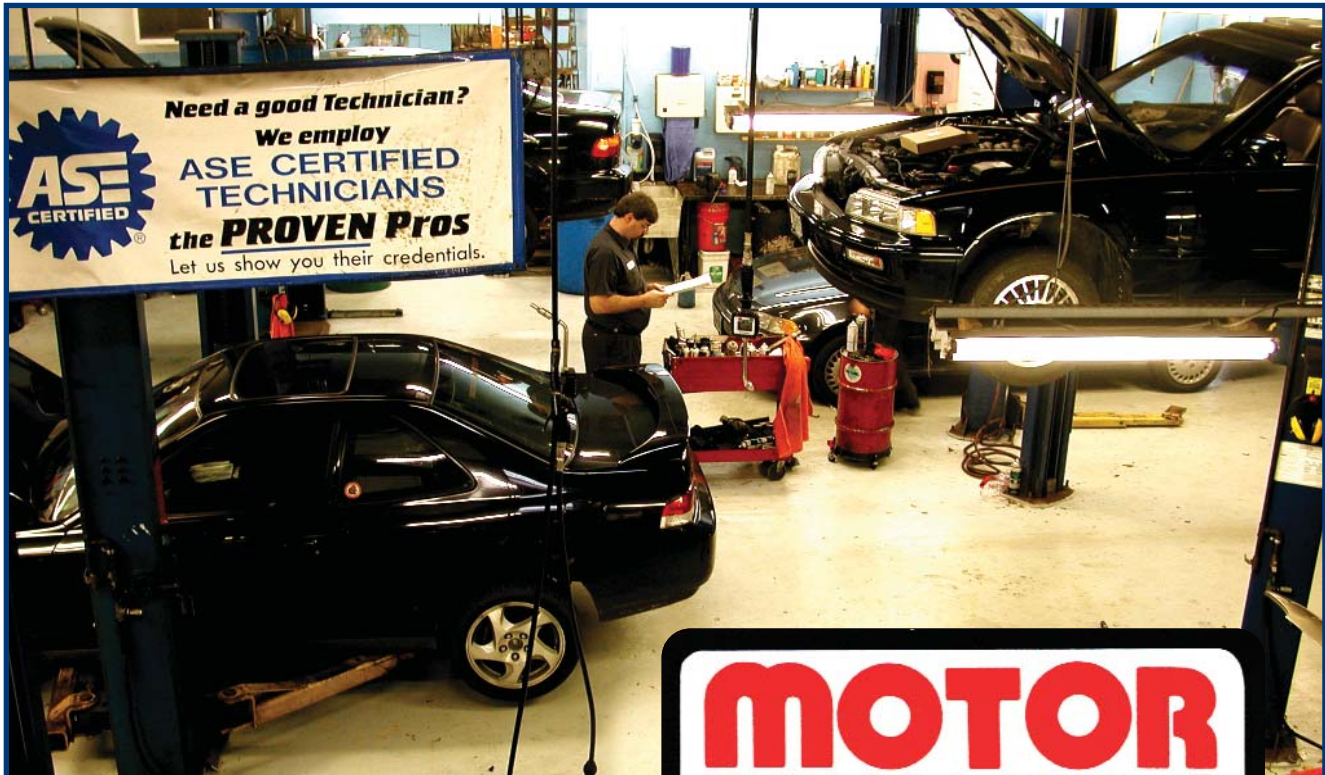


Nothing Less Than the Best

Motor Works Prides Itself on Use of Honda Genuine Parts



MOTOR WORKS

When broken down, a successful business is really the sum of its parts. This statement couldn't be more true than in the case of Motor Works, Inc. of Rockville, MD, a northern suburb of Washington, D.C., especially when it comes to the use of Honda Genuine parts.

Motor Works, Inc.: The Facts

Owner: Greg Skolnik

Founded: Dec. 26, 1979

Staff: 6 total; 3 technicians, 1 service advisor, 1 operations manager, 1 general manager/owner

Shop Equipment: 6 lifts and 1 ramp lift for alignment and emissions analysis

Total Square Footage: 3,066

"We've been working with Glenn Parks and Mark Nicchitta of Herson's Honda wholesale department for years, and parts driver Robert Adotey is in here at least two to three times every day," says Motor Works founder Greg Skolnik. "We have three buttons on our phones that speed dial directly to wholesale parts: two to Honda and another to Acura."

You know you have a good working relationship with your parts suppliers when you remember them around the holidays, as Skolnik says he does annually. "As a matter of fact, Robert and Glenn are both on my Christmas bonus list."

Prompt, accurate parts deliveries also allow Skolnik to continue to work in a tight, but cozy, 3,066-square-foot shop.

"We maintain a small inventory of around \$17,000 — fast-moving and service parts mostly — because we have rapid access to millions of dollars in inventory nearby," he says.

Having used OEM parts, including Honda fluids, exclusively since opening in 1979, Skolnik says he absolutely believes it has helped boost customer satisfaction with repairs.

"Our attitude about quality is directly aligned with the use of OEM parts," he says. "Our clients are willing to pay a little more because we are willing to pay for quality. A win-win situation for everybody."

HONDA PARTS, HAPPY CUSTOMERS

To illustrate his belief in the use of Honda Genuine parts, Skolnik remembers a time when his partnership with

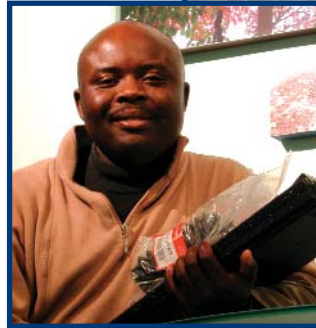
Herson's helped him repair a long-time client's Civic 4WD wagon with greater efficiency.

"A while back, a long-term client was complaining about intermittent brake growl," he says. "We had replaced the brakes the previous year, and there was plenty of lining still remaining. We re-serviced the pads and the noises went away for a while.

"When the problem persisted," Skolnik continues, "we searched for a cause and found no



Glenn Parks can be seen smiling in the front of the boat, enjoying a day off from Herson's.



Herson's Honda parts driver Robert Adotey posed for this photo on his fourth delivery of the day.

mechanical reasons. After some research, Glenn in the parts department informed us that the 4WD wagon from that year uses a 'special' front pad lining with chamfered edges and a special compound over the standard Civic wagon pads.

Need I say more? Problem solved! Happy shop, happy client!"

In addition to timely and accurate deliveries from Herson's, Skolnik says he also values the "brain trust" of Honda knowledge he and his staff have access to on a daily basis.

"Because of our relationship with Mark and Glenn, we've learned about and subscribe to Service ExpressSM," he says. "We love it and use it daily. We can get trending and warranty information on certain parts if necessary and, on that rare occasion something goes wrong with an order, they always bend over back-

ward to get us the right parts, right away — even if that means driving it here themselves."

It's also the little details that count, and Skolnik says he can count on Herson's to help out in that area.

"Mostly, I depend on them to help me fill the gaps, like suggesting the gaskets when we order the manifold, etc. This makes us more efficient and profitable, and helps us get our clients' cars back to them quickly and on estimate."

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Right: Pictured at the top (L-R) are technicians Keith Koval, Todd Lewis and John Lannon. Pictured at the bottom (L-R) are Mike Winokur, shop manager; Dave Henkin, service advisor; and Greg Skolnik, general manager and owner.



Left: Customers have a cozy area to relax in while they wait for vehicle repairs.

Below: An inviting store-front helps make customers feel comfortable as well.

PROMPT SERVICE

The timely and accurate completion of repairs on 180 to 200 vehicles per month has led to a healthy client base that does a lot of Skolnik's marketing for him.

"While we have advertisements in both Washington, D.C., area phone directories," he says, "the bulk of our promotion is in the form of client referrals and direct mail, mostly due to our exclusivity toward Honda and Acura servicing."

Skolnik says his Web site at www.motor-works.com has also "become one of the more productive promotional spokes in our marketing wheel." Add to that a heavy focus on a prescheduling program, weekly service reminder card program and, most importantly, a satisfied customer base, and business is booming.

"Basically, we try to make an uncomfortable responsibility easier and smoother ... kind of like going to the dentist," Skolnik says, adding that no-fee loaner vehicles (all Civics) are provided free of charge, rides to and from workplaces and Metro rail station are given on a regular basis, and "fast-lube" oil services are limited to morning appointments to avoid long lines. "We maintain detailed history charts on each vehicle we work with to keep up on the proper maintenance.

"Mostly, we have fun here and it seems infectious to the clients. We work daily to maintain a healthy partnership between the client and their service provider. They are trusting us to advise them and we are trusting them to do what is right. We aren't the least expensive and I don't want to be. We



employ some of the most dedicated and brightest technicians in the area."

'SORRY, WE'RE CLOSED ON FRIDAY'

All this, and the shop is open only four days a week, Monday through Thursday. It's a system that has worked well for Skolnik — and his employees — since its implementation in 1990.

"I feel that this industry can get the better of anyone working in it and decided in 1990 that four days was enough," he says. "In return for maintaining a four-day work week, I ask each team member to do something for themselves during their time off, whether it be a weekly massage, taking karate lessons, spending time with their kids, hunting, riding their dirt-bikes, whatever ... just not working on cars professionally!"

Skolnik says this philosophy of "balance" might sound a bit strange in the automotive repair industry — and it is. But he wouldn't have it any other way.

"Everyone that works with us has now been spoiled by it," he says. "Sure, I could make more money being open more, but I'm not interested in being the richest guy in the graveyard. Most people respond with, 'Wow...I wish I (or my boss) could do

Right: F. Lea Gilpin, of Mid-Atlantic AAA, is shown presenting Motor Works Owner Greg Skolnik with the shop's AAA-accredited sign.

Below: The Motor Works "Wall of Fame" filled with certifications assures customers that their car will be fixed right the first time.



these same parts would likely need to be replaced again the next year."

In 1982, Skolnik began marketing only for Honda cars. (Coincidentally, also the year he and his wife bought their first new Honda — a Windsor blue Prelude with bone interior. "She's very decisive," he says.)

"We decided on Honda over Toyota because the parts department at the local dealer was so much better and efficient than the Toyota dealer was at that time," Skolnik says. "We knew in order to provide a fast turnaround for our clients, we needed a quality parts provider. We found that at Herson's."

And the quality OEM parts Herson's provides

that,' or 'What a great idea.' The D.C. area, in particular, is incredibly fast-paced (read nuts!) and in need of balance. This is how I make a difference in my own little area of it."

PARTS+SERVICE=SATISFACTION

When it comes down to it, Skolnik says that while he owes his success to a variety of factors, he feels his decision to specialize in the repair of Honda vehicles in the 1980s was a step in the right direction.

"That's the bottom line ... value.

Our clients need to feel they are getting a good value for their dollar, not necessarily the lowest price."

"When anybody hangs out a shingle, they'll work on A.T.R. (Anything That Rolls) in order to generate enough dollars to stay alive," Skolnik says. "Opening day, we had \$90 remaining in the bank account. It was nine months before the first salary check was written."

But working on anything and everything didn't last long. While Skolnik started his technical career working on VWs and Audis, he says he was always intrigued by the differences in design philosophy between American, German and Japanese vehicle manufacturers.

"I liked Honda cars because they didn't seem to break as much and the designs were better," he says. "I felt bad replacing parts on VWs knowing that

has resulted in many satisfied Motor Works customers.

"We believe that the use of OEM parts to be in the clients' best interest because the fit, lifespan, warranty and availability all work tirelessly to equal a better value," Skolnik says. "That's the bottom line ... value. Our clients need to feel they are getting a good value for their dollar, not necessarily the lowest price. In many cases, it is actually less expensive to use Honda parts. We've seen folks replace four and five aftermarket alternators and still say 'but they are so much cheaper.' How much did they spend? Cheaper times five equals more expensive in my book! Do it right the first time with the right stuff!" ■