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Studebakers Automotive employees Raymond Muli (left) and Gerry Chiasson prepare a truck for delivery in the service department of the Brampton based auto centre, specializing in previously-owned vehicles. Below, sales manager Reg Newell (left) and owner Mike Estey display one of the many mini-vans in stock.

Photos by Ted Brown



Feel at home at Studebakers Automotive

Since the mini-van has become the most common vehicle on the road today, it's logical that a retail sales outlet would specialize in that particular vehicle.

Studebakers Automotive Group Ltd. is such an outlet, serving the needs of mini-van drivers as well as motorists of all cars, from its 391 Main St. N. location in Brampton, in the building formerly occupied by Heart Lake Motors.

Owned and operated by Mike Estey, the company is one month off celebrating its first anniversary, but has been doing great business in its first year of selling and leasing previously-owned vehicles.

"We like to offer a soft sell to our customers," says Estey, "And in doing so, make them feel comfortable to come in and check

out our vehicles. I don't believe in intimidating a person who is in the market for a car, van or truck—I want them to feel at home as they shop for that vehicle."

In the automotive business for 17 years, Estey brings his sales experience into play, but also recognizes it goes further than just signing the dotted line when the vehicle is sold or leased.

"Not only do we offer a full sales service to our customers, but we look after them after they've made the deal," says Estey. "I believe good customer service is the only way to survive in this business."

Estey added he's looking for return business, and can't have an unhappy customer to achieve that goal.

And so far, that philosophy has been successful, with the business thriving in the pre-

viously-owned market.

With sales manager Reg Newell and salesman John Burnham looking after the sales, customers can browse the lot in search of that special vehicle, with all prices prominently posted in the windshield of each van.

"We like our customers to be informed," says Newell, "And our prices are always competitive."

"We're also proud of our prices," adds Estey, "We want the competition to see them too."

Newell said if a customer has his heart set on a specific van, car or truck, and they don't have one in the lot, they will do their best to locate a car or van to meet those particular needs.

While Newell and Burnham have the sales department under control, service

manager Peter Lunardo also brings 25 years of service experience to the operation.

The shop offers full service, including air conditioning service and all cars sold through Studebaker Automotive carry the new Drive Clean accreditation on them. All vehicles also carry a six month, 10,000 kilometer power train warranty, but customers have the option of upgrading that warranty to a three year bumper to bumper coverage on some vehicles.

Studebakers sales department is open 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday to Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Fridays, and until 6 p.m. Saturdays. The service department is open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Friday, and from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday.

—By Ted Brown, staff writer

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