A PRACTICAL GUIDE

The Auto Detailer's Quote and Deposit Sheet

A practical guide for mobile auto detailers to create clear packages, set deposits, and calculate travel fees

Made by the Braxis machine

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

What this is

This guide is for mobile auto detailers.

It is a practical method, not a promise of a result. It contains no invented statistics, no fake customers, and no guarantees. The words were drafted with AI assistance.

Use the checklist at the end on a real piece of work this week.

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Define Service Packages Clearly

Start by outlining a limited set of service packages that cover the most common customer needs. Use descriptive names such as "Basic Wash," "Premium Interior," and "Full Detail." For each package list the specific tasks included, the expected time to complete, and the materials required. Keep the language simple and avoid jargon so clients can instantly understand what they are buying. Include a brief note on optional add-ons, like pet hair removal or headlight restoration, and state that these are priced separately. By standardizing packages you reduce confusion, speed up quoting, and make it easier to compare jobs when estimating travel and labor costs.

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Set a Reasonable Deposit Policy

A deposit secures the appointment and covers travel or material costs. Decide on a flat percentage—typically 20 to 30 percent of the total package price—or a minimum dollar amount for small jobs. Clearly state the deposit amount on the quote and explain that it is non-refundable unless the service is cancelled within a short window (e.g., 24 hours). Offer multiple payment methods such as credit card, mobile payment, or cash. Include a line for the client to sign, acknowledging the deposit terms. Automate reminders for the remaining balance to be paid upon completion, and keep a simple ledger to track deposits versus completed jobs.

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Calculate Travel Fees Accurately

Travel fees compensate for time and fuel. Begin by defining a base radius—often 10 miles—from your home base where travel is free. For locations beyond that radius, charge a per-mile rate that covers fuel, vehicle wear, and additional travel time. Use a mapping tool to measure the distance from your base to the client’s address, then apply the rate to determine the fee. Add a minimum travel charge for short trips to avoid under-charging. Include any parking or toll costs as separate line items. Present the travel fee transparently on the quote so customers understand why it is applied.

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Create a Professional Quote Template

Design a one-page PDF template that includes your business name, contact information, and logo at the top. Below, list the selected package, any add-ons, the travel fee, and the deposit amount. Add a subtotal, tax (if applicable), and total due. Provide spaces for the client’s name, address, phone, and email, as well as a signature line for agreement. Use a clean, easy-to-read font and leave ample white space. Save the template in a format that allows you to quickly fill in details for each new job, then export the completed quote as a PDF for instant delivery via email or messaging.

Deliver the Quote Instantly and Follow Up

Once the quote is completed, send the PDF to the client immediately using email, a messaging app, or a link to a cloud storage folder. Include a brief message confirming the details and reminding the client of the deposit deadline. Set an automated reminder for the deposit due date, and follow up with a polite check-in if payment has not been received. After the service, send an invoice that references the original quote, showing the deposit applied and the remaining balance. Prompt payment collection completes the cycle and builds trust for future bookings.

USE THIS

Checklist

- [ ] Define clear service packages
- [ ] Set a deposit percentage or minimum amount
- [ ] Determine a per-mile travel rate and base radius
- [ ] Create a one-page PDF quote template
- [ ] Send the quote instantly and track deposit payment

Where this came from

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