

A POSITIVE GARAGE DOOR REPAIR EXPERIENCE

THE NORM OR GOOD LUCK?

By Vicki Jones, Editor

The garage door industry is known for negative stories about unsavory dealers. Rarely are articles published about the legitimate, hardworking dealers in the industry.

In fact, D+AS featured two stories in our summer 2022 publication that highlighted the ongoing issue of unscrupulous dealers — “Spike in BBB complaints for garage door businesses” and “Ohio Attorney General sues garage door company.”

These stories are critical in helping to bring about necessary change in our industry, but they certainly don’t represent all the dealers in the industry. Regardless, when I received an unexpected call from my dad letting me know that his garage door was broken, I couldn’t help but take a deep breath and brace myself for the story.

The customer

My dad is a senior citizen, 76 to be exact. He lives in a retirement community in a relatively quiet suburb. If you think this

sounds like the profile of a common target for crooked companies, I had the same thought.

We have reported several stories of elderly people who have been grossly overcharged for parts and/or who have paid for parts and services they didn’t need. Knowing this made me cautiously nervous. I hoped my dad had not been unfairly taken advantage of.

He explained that his garage door was stuck open. He knew that he could use the manual release to close it, but then what?

Once closed, he was concerned he wouldn’t be able to manually open the door when he needed to.

Typically, my dad procrastinates on getting things repaired, but this couldn’t wait. He said, “My garage door is my front door. I had a sense of urgency to get it taken care of immediately.”

The contact

Where to start? Like many senior citizens, my dad is not internet

savvy. Consequently, Googling a garage door repair person in the area was not his first option. Instead, he pulled out our local, small town Grapevine magazine and thumbed through it. A few pages in, he noticed a garage door repair service ad for a dealer in the area.

The appointment

He called “Local Garage Doors” at 10:00 a.m. The person on the phone patiently listened as my dad explained the problem and scheduled an appointment for 2:00 p.m. that day. A few minutes later, the person called back to let my dad know that there was actually a technician in the area that could be there right away.

The service

Shortly after, a repairman from the company arrived and met with my dad. The technician examined the garage door and opener and accessed that the gear in the back of his 20+ year-old garage door opener was broken, and the technician said the unit needed to be replaced.

He presented my dad two options: the basic or the upgraded model. My dad asked what features the upgraded model offered and what the cost difference would be.



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The salesmanship

The technician then described the features of the upgraded model, emphasizing the motion light and quieter belt-driven system, and told him that it included an app that would allow my dad to verify the status of the door from his smart phone.

The original operator was chain-driven and, according to my dad, "was off track and had been making an ungodly noise." While my dad has no background in door operators, he knows about cars. When the tech compared the belt of the opener to a timing belt in a car, it made sense to him.

After hearing what he deemed a "reasonable difference" between the two models, my dad opted for the upgraded model.

The work

As I'm sure many customers do (especially seniors with plenty of time on their hands), my dad sat in the garage and chit-chatted with the technician while he completed the work. He said the technician was very personable and talked with him while he efficiently installed the new unit and wall console. Next, he calibrated the limits and force and installed the safety sensors.

He then tested the new system and demonstrated how to use the remotes and the

app feature. All and all, he completed the job in about an hour and a half.

The surprise

My dad was floored by all the features that his new opener offered. He said, "I had no idea how cool it would be to have a bright motion light for my garage." His previous model had a small single bulb in what he described as a plastic cage. He said, "It burned out years ago, but since I can't really get on ladders anymore, I had just accepted my dark garage."

My dad was also amazed by the quiet operation of his new belt-driven system. He opened and closed the door for me several times to prove how truly quiet it was.

The takeaway

My dad is active for his age and a person who prides himself on being a self-sufficient handyman. Outsourcing these types of jobs is difficult for him, and paying for repair services is something he does begrudgingly. However, this experience opened his eyes. "When you get older, you realize, you don't have a choice. You can't make the repairs on your own anymore."

For dealers, there's also a huge takeaway. Most customers aren't aware of all the

awesome features that are now available for garage door openers. Since garage doors don't need to be replaced very often, how can we expect the everyday homeowner to stay current on the new product features?

The key is knowing which features to market to which customers. My dad couldn't get over the fact that he didn't have to drive all the way home to see if he remembered to close the door. And the bright LED light was the feature he never knew he needed.

The follow-up

About a week after the job, my dad received a "thank you for your business" note from the company. He, again, raved about the customer service. From beginning to end, this was a positive experience, and trust me, my dad is not the easiest customer to please.

The conclusion

This is just one example of the many dealers that are delivering quality products and service throughout the industry every day. Despite the overwhelming tendency to report stories about deceptive or dishonest dealers, I'd like to believe that this experience is more representative of the norm for our industry.

Kudos to this company for succeeding in all stages of the job, for representing the industry positively, and for providing a product that my dad loves while treating him with dignity and respect.

About the company

We reached out to Local Garage Doors to get some background. The family-owned company has been in business for eight years. The owner, Tyler Martin, was introduced to the garage door industry by his father and now has over 20 years of experience in the industry.



The company has 11 offices in Northern California covering the Bay Area, Reno, Sacramento, and South Lake Tahoe areas; and roughly 30 employees (including 18 technicians). ■

Share your story!

D+AS would love to highlight more companies like this in our magazine. Email vicki@vjonesmedia.com and tell us how your company is making a positive influence on the industry.