

CAR WASHES

How to sell a car wash

By Ayodele Olasiji, Optimax Commercial · Updated October 18, 2026 · 2 min read · Online at [optimaxdeals.com/guides/how-to-sell-a-car-wash](https://www.optimaxdeals.com/guides/how-to-sell-a-car-wash)

SHORT ANSWER

To sell a car wash, prepare revenue by month, car counts, membership numbers if you sell them, an equipment list with ages, and your water and utility costs, and confirm whether the land is included. Buyers subtract the cost of any equipment they will have to replace, so know how old your machines are. Market it privately to buyers under NDA, then sign a letter of intent and close.

How to, at a glance

1. Gather car counts, membership numbers and financials
2. List equipment with make and year
3. Price in what aging equipment will cost the buyer
4. Consider leasing it out if you are not ready to sell

Questions owners ask

How long does it take to sell a car wash?

Often several months. Clean financials, documented equipment and a clear answer on the real estate shorten it.

Should I replace my automatic before selling?

Only if the new machine adds more to the price than it costs. Get a written quote and compare it with what buyers will subtract for the old one.

What does Optimax charge to sell a car wash?

3% of the sale price at closing, \$25,000 minimum, nothing upfront and nothing if it does not sell. Buyers also pay Optimax a fee under their own agreement, and both sides are told in writing.

The records buyers ask for

- Revenue by month for two to three years, and cars washed per month.
- Membership or wash club count and monthly revenue, if you sell them.
- Wash type: express tunnel, full serve, in bay automatic or self serve, and how many bays.
- Equipment list with make, model and age, plus recent repairs.
- Water, sewer, electric and chemical costs, and whether you use city water, a well or a reclaim system.
- Whether you own the land or lease it.

Why memberships matter

Monthly wash plans bring revenue that repeats without new marketing, so buyers look closely at member count, cancellations and price. If you have no plan today, a buyer may see room to add one. That is worth mentioning, but not worth pricing in as if it already exists.

Old equipment lowers the price

A buyer who sees a 15 or 20 year old friction automatic subtracts the cost of replacing it. You can replace it before you sell, or price the wash knowing the buyer will. Our guide on [touchless and friction machines](#) covers the choice.

Not ready to sell? Consider a lease

Some owners want out of daily operations but not out of the property. Leasing the wash to an operator can fit. See [should you lease out your car wash](#).

Thinking about selling your car wash?

Buyers already signed up and under NDA, including cash buyers. No public listing. 3% at closing, \$25,000 minimum, nothing upfront.

Get a private call back

www.optimaxdeals.com/sell/car-wash

Get the free seller kit

www.optimaxdeals.com/seller-kit/car-wash

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