



**KOBY**



Providing great customer service is a top priority for the employees at Koby Import Auto. Pictured here are some of the dealership's employees. Pictured from left to right (front row) are: Mary Barras, Mark Craver, Joseph Moree, Roger Koby and David Lowther, (back row) Ryan Smith, Bruce Phichit, Blane Kirkland, Derrick Pickens, Craig Valenti, Charles Dixon and John Sellers.

## For Koby, Love of Cars is Key to Success

**Roger Koby** turned his passion for working on cars into a successful career that continues to evolve. As owner of Koby Import Auto, which now includes Subaru and Mitsubishi dealerships, Koby says that while the business side of selling cars is constantly changing, what stays the same is the enhanced customer service his dealership provides – and return customers are the proof.

“My goal is to build the relationship (with the customer) and help them find the right car, provide them with the right service on that car, and build value with the customer,” he said.

Koby Import Auto, located at 1431 East I-65 Service Rd. S., between Government Boulevard and Cottage Hill Road, is the Mobile Area Chamber's Small Business of the Month.

At 23, Koby opened an auto service business on Old Shell Road, where he worked as a BMW technician and did a

lot of restoration and body work on old BMWs and Porsches. From there, the business model moved Koby toward another business in the early to mid-1980s, where he was importing cars from Europe and doing “Department of Transportation and Environmental Protection Agency conversions” to make them street legal in the United States, then selling them.

In the mid-1990s, he moved the business to Government Boulevard, and for the next 15 years he sold and serviced luxury used cars and operated an auto detailing company.

In 2001, Koby purchased a Subaru franchise and brought the brand back to Mobile. From there, business has taken off, he says. With the nationwide popularity of Subaru brands such as the Forrester, Outback and Legacy, Koby's business has grown substantially each year. To date, he said, business is up 35 percent from a year ago.

Capitalizing on Subaru's success, Koby added the Mitsubishi franchise in April. It had been more than a year since there was an opportunity to purchase a new Mitsubishi in Mobile, Koby said. Some of the manufacturer's most popular models are the Outlander and Lancer.

To manage the company's growth, Koby's priority is to continue adding employees. To date, 28 people work at Koby Import Auto and at his separate car-detailing business, and he expects that number to grow.

“In adding the new franchises, the demand to provide service to those vehicles has increased,” he said. And who knows what Koby will look to add next, he added, since “there is room to grow in this location.”

The dealership is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and the service department opens at 7:30 a.m.

Go to [mobilechamber.com/award.asp](http://mobilechamber.com/award.asp) to submit a Small Business of the Month nomination, or contact Danette Richards at 251-431-8652 or [drichards@mobilechamber.com](mailto:drichards@mobilechamber.com).