

Relocation-Based Automotive Upholstery Atelier Growth Strategy: How Location Shapes Revenue, Customer Access, and Market Quality

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Abstract

This article examines relocation as a growth instrument for a small or medium-sized automotive upholstery atelier and studies the problem more deeply than a simple distance-to-customer explanation would allow. The paper asks whether moving an atelier closer to denser car ownership, stronger purchasing power, and more active automotive consumer clusters can expand order volume and revenue. To answer that question, the article develops an evidence-linked empirical use case by synthesising English-language studies on firm relocation, spatial demand, service location, automotive after-sales behaviour, customer choice, and the geography of vehicle-related services. The central argument is that automotive upholstery differs from many other local services because demand is shaped not only by proximity but also by client convenience, trust formation, the district's symbolic status, partner density, and the psychological effort required to initiate a high-involvement custom order. For that reason, location is not merely a background condition; it is a business variable that shapes workshop visibility, conversion, average order value, repeat demand, and partnership attractiveness for dealerships, detailing studios, used-car sellers, and private vehicle owners. The article proposes an applied framework that links market proximity, purchasing power, visibility, complementary business ecosystems, and workshop throughput, then demonstrates its use through a parameterised scenario in which an atelier relocates from a peripheral low-density area to a suburban automotive corridor with greater vehicle concentration and stronger income indicators. Five testable propositions are derived from the reviewed evidence, and the projection is stress-tested against lower conversion, a narrower travel threshold, an unchanged order mix, and higher rent. The worked example suggests that relocation may create growth not through simple price inflation but through several connected effects: higher customer accessibility, lower market friction, stronger trust signalling, better referral integration, and access to segments able to sustain higher-value interior restoration and customisation orders. The article contributes a practitioner-oriented model for using existing empirical research to make small-scale strategic decisions under limited-data conditions.

Keywords: *Automotive upholstery atelier, Relocation strategy, Market proximity, Purchasing power, Workshop visibility, Complementary business ecosystem, Service location, Empirical use case.*

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Introduction

An automotive upholstery atelier is often described in simple operational terms: sewing equipment, trimming tools, materials, patterns, and skilled hands. In practice, the business is more spatially sensitive than that description suggests. An atelier does not sell a standard object stored on a shelf. It sells access to specialised craftsmanship, visual trust, and a service experience in which the client must decide that the trip, the time, and the price are justified. This means that geography enters the business model not as an administrative backdrop but as a direct determinant of visibility, conversion, reputation, and pricing power. The depth of this problem becomes clearer when the atelier is compared with other local services. The location of a café affects profit because passing flow supports spontaneous purchase. The location of a flower shop matters because convenience and visibility shape occasion-driven buying. The location of a bank matters because routine routes, symbolic trust, and neighbourhood centrality reduce psychological effort. An upholstery atelier shares elements with all three, yet it also differs from each of them. It depends less on impulse than a café, more on trust than a flower shop, and more on aesthetic credibility than a bank. For that reason, the location problem in automotive upholstery cannot be reduced to rent or raw proximity alone. It combines access, district image, client effort, and the surrounding commercial context. Studies on firm relocation show that businesses move not only because rent differs across districts, but because market access, transport links, competitive exposure, and local demand composition alter the underlying economics of the firm (Kronenberg, 2013; Nilsen, Torset, Diez-Gutierrez, Cherchi, & Andersen, 2020). Retail and service studies likewise show that attraction effects and local environment quality influence demand generation and revenue quality (Damian, Curto, & Pinto, 2011; Calvo-Porrà & Lévy-Mangín, 2018). The current article takes that logic and applies it to an automotive field that is usually discussed in technical terms rather than in spatial-economic ones. Previous literature has analysed the customer choice of car maintenance providers, after-sales service quality, and the role of firm location in automotive service pricing orientation (Brito, Aguilar, & Brito, 2007; Izogo, 2015; Kwarteng, Sarpong, & Acheampong, 2019). Other work has addressed customer satisfaction, relationship benefits, and the spatial planning of vehicle-related service infrastructure (Adusei & Tweneboah-Koduah, 2019; Hong, Kim, & Oh, 2020; He, Kuo, & Sun, 2022; Huang, Wu, Zeng, & Sun, 2023). Yet automotive upholstery ateliers are still rarely examined as location-dependent growth systems. As a result, many owners continue to treat relocation as a cost burden or an administrative inconvenience, even though in some cases it may be one of the strongest levers for revenue expansion. The gap is specific rather than generic. Automotive service research measures provider choice, repair quality, and after-sales satisfaction, yet it stops at the level of maintenance and mechanical work (Brito et al., 2007; Izogo, 2015; Kwarteng et al., 2019). No study identified in this review treats an upholstery or interior-trim workshop as a spatial firm whose order flow depends on catchment density, district credibility, and adjacency to automotive partners. That specific absence defines the gap addressed here. The article therefore asks a more developed question than before: how does location influence atelier revenue not only through distance to the market, but also through customer convenience, district reputation, complementary nearby businesses, and the purchasing power embedded in the local service ecosystem? The problem is not purely theoretical. In everyday practice, atelier owners face a recognisable dilemma. Peripheral premises are cheaper, parking is easier, and larger work areas are often more available. However, the workshop is less visible, clients travel farther, impulse consultations become rarer, referrals from nearby automotive businesses weaken, and participation in higher-value local networks becomes harder. A more central or better-connected base may cost more, but it can improve customer access, shorten decision cycles, strengthen perceived legitimacy, and support premium interior customisation orders. Whether such a move is justified depends on how these variables interact rather than on one rent comparison alone.

No new survey, location-tracking archive, or proprietary workshop dataset was collected for this study. Instead, the empirical contribution is presented as a small evidence-based application built from existing empirical research rather than from original fieldwork. This distinction is important. The article does not claim to have measured one atelier directly. It claims something more modest and, for many practitioners, more usable: published empirical studies can be synthesised into a transparent decision framework and then translated into a worked scenario that approximates a real relocation choice. The working assumption is that atelier growth is shaped by five interlocking mechanisms. The first is proximity to market. Closer access to dense demand zones should increase consultation frequency, reduce customer effort, and improve conversion reliability. The second is purchasing power. Areas with stronger household income, more valuable vehicle stock, active detailing culture, and greater willingness to invest in comfort and aesthetics are likely to support higher average realised prices and more stable repeat demand. The third is location-mediated trust. Clients often evaluate the credibility of a custom interior atelier through the district, the neighbouring businesses, and the general service environment before they evaluate the sewing itself. The fourth is ecosystem embeddedness. Nearby dealerships, detailers, body shops, used-car sellers, and premium wash studios can work as repeat referral channels that lower acquisition cost and stabilise demand. The fifth is workshop throughput. Consultation flow, conversion, and workshop loading together determine how much of the reachable demand is converted into completed orders. The article develops these assumptions into a structured argument, then tests them in a parameterised use case built from the literature. Each mechanism rests on prior findings rather than on intuition (Brito et al., 2007; Wang, Liu, Wang, & Xie, 2008; Adusei & Tweneboah-Koduah, 2019; Nilsen et al., 2020).

Conceptual Background

The main practical issue in automotive upholstery is not simply whether demand exists. Demand for interior repair, restoration, and visual enhancement exists almost everywhere cars circulate. The more relevant issue is whether demand is dense enough, close enough, solvent enough, and relationally structured enough to sustain efficient workshop loading. An atelier that serves a large peripheral radius can appear busy while still being economically weak because too much of its commercial energy is absorbed by explanation, travel inconvenience for clients, irregular order timing, and a low-value project mix. This is why location strategy in automotive upholstery should be treated as a business design problem, not merely as a real-estate decision. In a service of this type, proximity performs several economic functions at once. It increases the amount of demand that can be reached within a commercially acceptable convenience zone. It lowers market friction before an order is placed. It improves the probability of repeated interaction with dealerships, used-car sellers, detailers, body shops, and private clients who value visible craftsmanship enough to pay for it. Yet deeper analysis shows that proximity by itself does not explain commercial performance. A nearby workshop can still underperform if it is hidden, hard to access, socially misaligned with its target clients, or detached from complementary businesses. Research on service characteristics and service location supports this broader view because such services are strongly conditioned by accessibility, perceived reliability, and the surrounding commercial environment (van der Burg, Ahaus, Wortmann, & Huitema, 2019; He et al., 2022). This logic becomes clearer when examined from the viewpoint of a small atelier rather than a large multi-site brand. A one-team upholstery studio cannot compensate for poor location through scale alone. It has limited staff capacity, limited walk-in visibility, and only a narrow margin between one completed project and the next. In such firms, each additional barrier between the client and the atelier has a compounded effect. It lowers consultation flow, weakens trust, increases postponement, and makes it harder to secure higher-value projects. Studies of customer choice in automotive services indicate that attributes related to reliability, confidence, and service structure materially influence provider selection (Brito et al., 2007). Although

upholstery is less urgent than maintenance, the principle transfers well: perceived dependability has market value, and location is one of the first visible signals of dependability. Purchasing power enters the picture less directly but no less forcefully. In higher-income or commercially stronger districts, the atelier is not merely exposed to customers with more money in a general sense. The studio is exposed to a different service mix. Newer vehicles, premium interiors, dealership preparation work, lease-return refurbishment, and custom comfort upgrades all become more likely. Customers in such areas may also be more willing to pay for careful leather restoration, bespoke stitching, foam correction, steering wheel retrimming, or full interior harmonisation. Research in automotive after-sales service repeatedly links service quality, relationship benefits, and satisfaction to continued use and value perception (Hong et al., 2020; Balinado et al., 2021; Gupta & Raman, 2022). For automotive upholstery, that means areas with stronger purchasing power may sustain not only more orders but better orders, measured by average invoice value, project complexity, and repeat willingness.

At the same time, relocation should not be romanticised. Moving closer to the market can raise fixed cost, intensify competition, and expose the atelier to more demanding customers. Studies of local demand shocks and firm survival show that market conditions can materially affect commercial resilience (Marin & Modica, 2021). Spatial studies of vehicle-related service infrastructure also demonstrate that optimal placement depends on balancing demand concentration with accessibility constraints rather than chasing centrality for its own sake (Dang, Wang, Xie, & Fu, 2023; Huang et al., 2023). Deeper analysis also reveals a subtler risk: a move into the wrong district can create symbolic mismatch. If the atelier targets premium comfort work but locates in a low-trust or visually degraded environment, the physical closeness to the market may fail to convert into price acceptance. Conversely, a prestigious district without practical parking or easy drop-off can produce visibility without usability. Commercial performance therefore depends on the fit between target customer, district image, and real operational convenience. The applied implication is that atelier relocation should be assessed through a broader set of business variables than before: accessible car-owner volume within a reasonable travel threshold, average household income, concentration of complementary automotive businesses, consultation-to-order conversion, average order value, repeat-client share, district visibility, parking convenience, search frictions, and the share of work likely to come from higher-value partners such as dealerships, detailing studios, and premium used-car sellers. When those variables are viewed together, relocation stops being a vague strategic ambition and becomes a quantifiable redesign of the studio's earning geometry. The deepest problem, therefore, is not simply where the atelier is located, but whether the chosen location reduces client effort while simultaneously increasing trust and order quality.

Literature Review

Relocation research provides the starting point. Kronenberg (2013) demonstrates that firm movement is shaped by identifiable economic and spatial motives rather than by random managerial preference. Nilsen et al. (2020) deepen this understanding by showing that relocation choices are linked to both the decision to move and the characteristics of the destination, which is especially important for service businesses whose demand is territorially uneven. These studies do not analyse automotive upholstery directly, yet they provide the conceptual base for treating relocation as a strategic response to changing market opportunity. Local market quality and service performance form a closely related body of evidence. Retail research on shopping centres, although distant from upholstery in subject matter, demonstrates that demand concentrates around accessible, attractive, and economically active environments. Damian et al. (2011) show how anchor structures affect centre performance, while Calvo-Porrà and Lévy-Mangín (2018) analyse pull factors that attract users to retail spaces. For an atelier, these insights

translate into a broader proposition: some urban zones pull automotive customisation demand disproportionately because they combine mobility intensity, commercial density, and higher-value user segments. Evidence drawn from the automotive field itself sits closer to the present case. Ehinlanwo and Zairi (1996a, 1996b) examined best practice in car after-sales service and highlighted the role of process quality, responsiveness, and organisational discipline. Brito et al. (2007) studied customer choice of maintenance providers, indicating that service attributes can structure demand in a measurable way. Izogo (2015) linked service quality perception to the automotive repair setting, and Kwarteng et al. (2019) explicitly connected service innovation, firm location, and pricing orientation among automotive SMEs. Together, these works support the claim that automotive service revenue is not independent of place. Location shapes not only demand volume but also what kind of pricing posture is feasible, what service bundles can be sold, and what customer segment is realistically reachable. Satisfaction, loyalty, and relationship value in after-sales settings carry the argument further. Adusei and Tweneboah-Koduah (2019) demonstrated the connection between after-sales service and satisfaction in an emerging economy. Wang et al. (2008) proposed a method for evaluating customer satisfaction in automotive after-sales service, while Hong et al. (2020) examined relationship benefits in auto maintenance and repair. More recent work by Balinado et al. (2021) and Gupta and Raman (2022) confirms that service quality remains a central driver of perceived value and satisfaction. The sequencing implication is direct: where the atelier is placed affects the firm's ability to attract and retain the kind of customers who sustain premium interior work, and that spatial positioning may influence satisfaction even before the service result is seen. Service characteristics and spatially allocated vehicle services complete the picture. Van der Burg et al. (2019) investigated on-demand service characteristics and highlighted how timing, request variability, and fulfilment conditions influence service design. He et al. (2022) analysed the spatial planning of public electric vehicle charging infrastructure using a contextualised location-allocation model, while Dang et al. (2023) and Huang et al. (2023) studied the spatial distribution and optimisation of vehicle-related service points. These works converge on a practical principle: automotive services become more productive when location decisions follow demand geography rather than property convenience. Spatial fit can be modelled, not merely guessed. Read together, these streams supply the components of a model without ever combining them for the case at hand. Relocation and retail research explains where demand concentrates. Automotive service research explains how customers judge providers. Spatial optimisation research explains how service points should be positioned. None of it addresses a craft workshop selling high-involvement interior work. The accumulated evidence is nevertheless sufficient to state testable propositions rather than general observations, and five follow directly from the studies reviewed above.

P1. Proximity to dense car-owner activity increases the volume of demand an atelier can reach within a commercially acceptable travel threshold (Kronenberg, 2013; Nilsen et al., 2020; He et al., 2022).

P2. Stronger local purchasing power raises average realised order value by shifting the service mix from basic repair toward restoration and customisation (Kwarteng et al., 2019; Gupta & Raman, 2022).

P3. District image and frontage quality influence trust formation, and therefore conversion, independently of physical distance (Damian et al., 2011; Calvo-Porrà & Lévy-Mangin, 2018).

P4. Density of complementary automotive businesses lowers customer acquisition cost through referral flow and raises the share of pre-qualified enquiries (Hong et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2023).

P5. The joint effect of P1 to P4 on monthly revenue exceeds the effect of equivalent capacity expansion at a peripheral site (Marin & Modica, 2021; Dang et al., 2023).

These propositions are stated for testing rather than for demonstration. The use case developed below illustrates their combined logic under explicit parameters. It does not confirm them, and the distinction is maintained throughout the analysis.

Methodology

This study uses a structured evidence synthesis with a parameterised empirical use case. No original field observations, customer interviews, atelier logs, or proprietary financial records were collected. The empirical element therefore does not consist of a newly generated dataset. It consists of a transparent demonstration of how published empirical findings can be translated into a practical scenario that matches the article's title question. The methodology treats location as a multi-dimensional construct rather than as distance alone. The projection covers demand and revenue only; operating costs lie outside its scope.

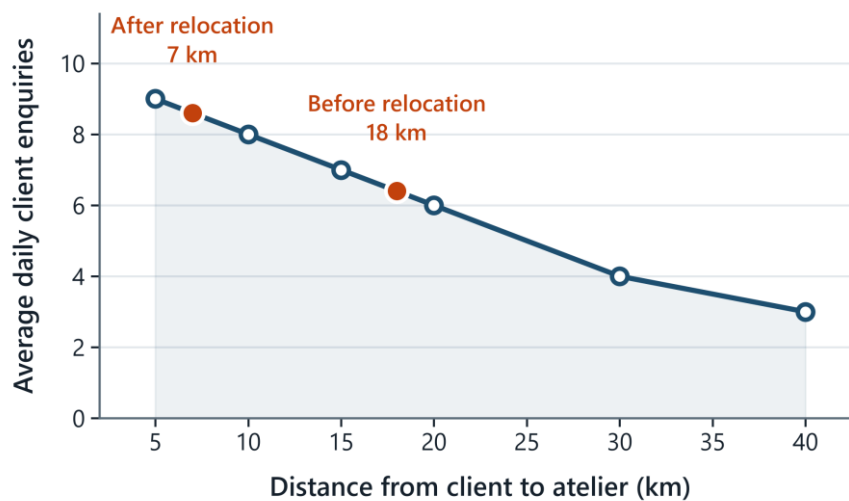
Table 1: Analytical Framework of the Study

Component	Description	Expected Output
Market Proximity Analysis	Evaluation of distance between the atelier and the main customer clusters.	Accessibility index
Purchasing Power Analysis	Assessment of local income levels influencing willingness to pay for upholstery work.	Price potential indicator
Visibility and Trust Analysis	Assessment of frontage quality, district image, and perceived legitimacy of the workshop.	Trust-signalling score
Ecosystem Analysis	Estimation of referral potential from nearby automotive businesses.	Partner-density indicator
Demand and Revenue Projection	Projection of expected monthly orders, average order value, and revenue changes after relocation.	Projected revenue profile

Table 2: Variables Used in the Empirical Model

Variable	Type	Measurement
Population density	Independent	People per square kilometer
Car ownership rate	Independent	Cars per 1000 inhabitants
Average household income	Independent	Median regional income
Distance / travel effort	Independent	Kilometers and estimated client travel time
Complementary business density	Control	Number of dealerships, detailers, and used-car sellers nearby
District visibility and frontage quality	Independent	Composite score of district image and workshop frontage

The evidence base includes English-language sources covering firm relocation, local demand and service location, automotive after-sales service quality, customer choice in automotive services, and the spatial planning of vehicle-related services. The sources were selected because they offered either conceptual grounding or usable empirical findings concerning market proximity, customer valuation, service placement, pricing orientation, demand concentration, or accessibility-related efficiency. In the analytical frame adopted here, location quality is decomposed into proximity, visibility, district credibility, complementary-business density, and convenience of customer action. The synthesis followed a defined search protocol. Records were retrieved from Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate using combinations of the terms firm relocation, location choice, service location, retail attraction, after-sales service, automotive repair, customer choice, and vehicle service spatial distribution. The search window ran from 1996 to 2023. Inclusion required three conditions: publication in English in a peer-reviewed journal or in indexed conference proceedings; an empirical or modelling contribution rather than commentary; and a reported result bearing on at least one of the five framework components. Studies confined to manufacturing plant location, national industrial policy, or macro-level agglomeration without a service-demand mechanism were excluded, as were non-indexed practitioner reports. Nineteen sources met the criteria and constitute the evidence base used below.

Figure 1: Client Enquiries and Distance to the Atelier

The schematic plots average daily client enquiries against the distance separating the client from the atelier, measured across a range from five to forty kilometres. Three elements carry the argument. The decay curve shows enquiry volume falling steadily as distance grows, with the steepest loss beyond the twenty-kilometre mark. The shaded area beneath the curve represents the reachable demand pool that the workshop can realistically serve. The two highlighted points fix the baseline and relocation scenarios at eighteen and seven kilometres of average client travel, where daily enquiries stand at roughly 6.4 and 8.6 respectively. The figure matters because it converts distance from a descriptive attribute into a decision boundary, and that boundary is the quantity the proximity component operationalises (Fig. 1). The curve records enquiries rather than completed orders. The projected doubling of monthly orders therefore combines this rise in enquiry volume with the higher conversion that a shorter travel zone supports. The analytical framework used in the article has five linked components. The first is a proximity-to-market component. Here the business is assessed through an effective customer-access zone defined not by maximum geographic radius alone but by the travel threshold within which visiting the atelier still remains convenient and commercially realistic. The second is a purchasing-power component. This captures the average value environment of the destination area through income profile, vehicle mix, and the probable share of premium or custom orders. The third is a visibility and trust component. This reflects how district image, frontage quality, and surrounding business signals affect whether potential clients perceive the atelier as legitimate and worth visiting. The fourth is an ecosystem component. This estimates the referral and cross-selling value of being close to dealerships, detailers, body shops, and used-car traders. The fifth is a throughput component. This estimates how relocation influences completed orders per month by altering consultation flow, conversion, and workshop loading. The worked use case begins from a stylised small automotive upholstery atelier located on the outer edge of a regional market. The baseline case assumes one compact team and a peripheral workshop with acceptable rent but weak direct exposure to dense demand. The relocation scenario shifts the atelier to a suburban automotive corridor closer to dealerships, detailing centres, used-car traders, and higher-income residential districts. Published empirical research is then used to justify directional assumptions rather than to fabricate atelier-specific coefficients. Studies on firm relocation and location choice justify the role of market access (Kronenberg, 2013; Nilsen et al., 2020). Service-location studies justify the importance of accessibility and placement (van der Burg et al., 2019; He et al., 2022). Retail and service-attraction studies support the interpretation of visibility and local pull effects (Damian et al., 2011; Calvo-Porrà & Lévy-Mangin, 2018). Automotive service studies justify the influence of

service environment on pricing orientation, satisfaction, and repeated use (Kwarteng et al., 2019; Balinado et al., 2021; Gupta & Raman, 2022). The aim of the use case is deliberately narrow. It asks whether relocation can plausibly generate growth through improved demand reach and better monetisation conditions, not whether every atelier should move. The output is therefore a decision-support illustration. It should be read as an empirical application built on existing empirical studies rather than as a claim about one measured workshop. Even so, the use case goes further by separating demand quantity from demand quality and by treating trust and ecosystem effects as economically meaningful rather than secondary.

Results

The parameterised use case suggests that relocation can alter atelier economics through a chain of modest changes that become strategically significant once combined. In the baseline scenario, the peripheral atelier serves a broad but thin market. The workshop averages 18 completed orders per month. The average realised price is assumed to be relatively modest because the customer mix is dominated by direct-pay repairs and simple material replacement. Client inconvenience is high, order decisions are slower, and the workshop remains partly underloaded because several stronger demand pockets are situated outside the most comfortable travel zone. The deeper interpretation is that low revenue here is not caused by one weak factor but by the cumulative burden of distance, low visibility, slower trust formation, and weaker referral ecology. Firm-level relocation evidence points to exactly this kind of composite pressure rather than to a single binding constraint (Kronenberg, 2013; Nilsen et al., 2020).

Table 3: Operational Indicators Before and After Relocation

Indicator	Before Relocation	After Relocation
Average monthly orders	18	36
Average order value (USD)	220	305
Monthly revenue (USD)	3960	10980
Average client travel distance (km)	18	7
Qualified referral share	14%	33%

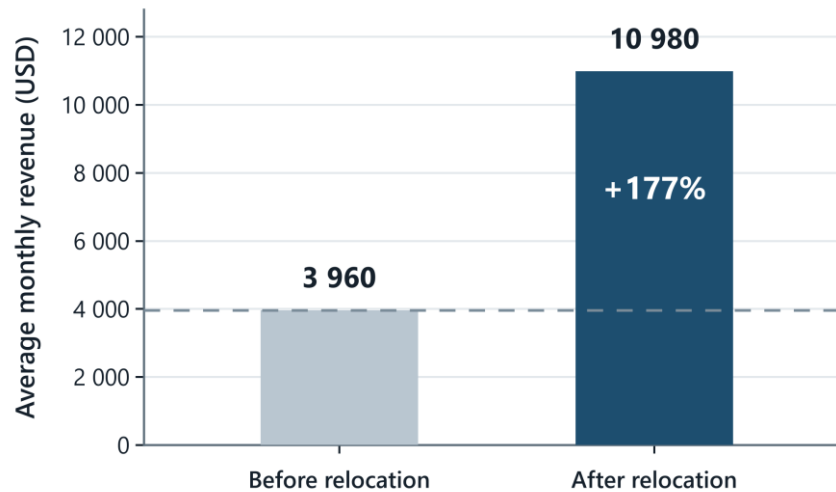
Table 4: Efficiency Indicators of the Atelier (22 Working Days per Month)

Metric	Baseline	After Strategy
Completed orders per craft team / month	18	36
Revenue per active workday (USD)	180	499
Idle workshop time percentage	52%	18%
Repeat-client share	22%	39%
Capacity utilisation	0.48	0.82

After relocation to a better-connected suburban corridor, the first change is not price but consultation density. Closer access to dealerships, detailing studios, used-car sellers, and higher-income neighbourhoods means that more potential clients fall within the practical convenience zone. Drawing on the service placement logic in van der Burg et al. (2019) and He et al. (2022), the scenario assumes that monthly reachable demand rises enough to support 36 completed orders per month rather than 18. This is not because the city magically creates demand for the atelier alone. It is because more of the existing regional demand becomes reachable under conditions that favour action rather than postponement. The analogy with cafés or flower shops is only partial: here the rise does not come mainly from impulse walk-ins, but from a reduction in the behavioural threshold required to begin a custom, trust-dependent purchase. The second change concerns customer effort and market friction. Because the studio now sits nearer the dominant demand zones, the average travel burden for consultations, material selection, and vehicle drop-off falls. The size of that reduction varies by urban form, and in the scenario average client travel falls from 18 km to 7 km. The principle behind it is robust: a workshop that stands closer to the market spends less of its commercial energy overcoming hesitation before revenue

begins. This effect is reinforced when the new location also reduces psychological distance and increases spontaneous trust. A district with orderly automotive businesses, visible professional neighbours, and practical parking makes the atelier easier to believe in. Spatial planning studies in vehicle services support the idea that location quality improves not only access but utilisation of the service unit itself (Dang et al., 2023; Huang et al., 2023).

Figure 2: Revenue Change After Relocation and Market Quality Improvement



The bar comparison sets average monthly revenue before relocation against the projected figure after it, holding the cost side outside the frame. The left column records USD 3,960 generated by eighteen orders at an average of USD 220. The right column records USD 10,980 generated by thirty-six orders at an average of USD 305, an increase of 177 per cent. The dashed reference line marks the baseline level so that the gap between the two scenarios can be read directly. The figure isolates the compound nature of the projected gain, since neither volume nor price alone produces the difference shown (Fig. 2). The third change concerns the revenue profile of each order. The relocated atelier is now exposed to zones with stronger purchasing power, newer vehicle stock, and more premium-oriented demand. This does not mean every project becomes high-end. It means the average realised price can rise because the order mix becomes more favourable. Drawing from Kwarteng et al. (2019), who linked firm location to pricing orientation, and from the after-sales satisfaction literature, the scenario assumes that the atelier can shift from a low-margin repair market toward a mixed market that includes leather restoration, steering wheel retrimming, seat foam correction, panel wrapping, and full interior refresh packages. In the scenario, average realised revenue per order rises from USD 220 to USD 305. A fourth change then follows almost automatically: better neighbouring businesses generate a referral stream that is qualitatively superior to cold demand, because referred customers arrive with stronger prior trust and clearer service intent. When these changes are combined, the monthly economics of the atelier shift sharply. A baseline of limited orders at a modest average ticket produces a constrained revenue level that leaves little room for material stock, marketing, reserve capital, or expansion. A relocated model delivering more orders with a stronger average ticket can more than double monthly revenue even if rent increases. The main result is therefore not a narrow claim about one coefficient. It is a structural claim: for automotive upholstery, growth may be achieved more efficiently through relocation than through simply expanding capacity in a poorly positioned workshop. What deepens the result is the recognition that revenue improves not only because more clients exist nearby, but because better-located demand is easier to convert, easier to retain, and more compatible with higher-value service packages. Thin local demand is associated with weaker firm resilience, which makes that constraint more than an accounting inconvenience (Marin & Modica, 2021). The use case also clarifies an important limit. Relocation

works best when the destination improves both proximity and solvency. A move into a denser but low-value area may raise enquiry volume while worsening price pressure and payment discipline. Likewise, a move into an affluent but logistically awkward district may raise prestige without improving actual order flow. The strongest results arise when the destination combines car-owner concentration, complementary automotive businesses, practical accessibility, meaningful purchasing power, and a district image that does not conflict with the atelier's target positioning. This last point is essential. Revenue depends not only on where demand lives, but on where demand feels comfortable spending on visible interior improvement.

Sensitivity of the Projection

Point estimates invite false precision, so the projection was re-run under weakened assumptions. Three parameters were varied because each of them carries most of the analytical weight: the consultation-to-order conversion rate, the travel threshold defining the convenience zone, and the average realised order value. Rent was added as a fourth test even though operating costs lie outside the main scope, since the reviewed relocation literature treats occupancy cost as the principal counterweight to improved market access (Kronenberg, 2013). Each scenario alters one assumption at a time, with a final row combining the two most damaging deviations.

Table 5: Sensitivity of the Revenue Projection to Key Assumptions

Scenario	Adjusted assumption	Monthly revenue (USD)
Baseline projection	36 orders, USD 305 average	10,980
Conversion 25% below assumption	27 orders, USD 305 average	8,235
Travel threshold narrowed from 20 to 10 minutes	24 orders, USD 305 average	7,320
No price uplift after the move	36 orders, USD 220 average	7,920
Rent higher by USD 1,500 per month	36 orders, USD 305 average, net of rent delta	9,480
Combined downside: lower conversion and no price uplift	27 orders, USD 220 average	5,940

The projection degrades gracefully. Removing the price uplift costs 28 per cent of projected revenue, while a quarter reduction in conversion costs 25 per cent. Narrowing the convenience zone from twenty to ten minutes of travel is the harshest single test, yet it still leaves revenue at 67 per cent of the central estimate. The combined downside scenario matters most. Even when conversion falls by a quarter and the order mix fails to improve at all, projected revenue of USD 5,940 remains 50 per cent above the peripheral baseline of USD 3,960. The direction of the result therefore survives assumptions considerably less favourable than those used in the central case. Its magnitude does not. A rent increase of USD 1,500 per month absorbs roughly a fifth of the gross gain, which sets a practical ceiling on the occupancy premium an atelier can justify. In the central case that ceiling stands near USD 7,000 per month of additional rent. Under the combined downside it falls to roughly USD 2,000, and prudent planning should use the lower figure.

Theoretical Implications

The framework extends service location theory in one specific direction. Classical treatments of service placement optimise accessibility against demand density, which is the logic that drives location-allocation models for vehicle-related infrastructure (He et al., 2022; Dang et al., 2023). Those models assume that reaching the customer is the binding constraint. Automotive upholstery violates that assumption. The binding constraint is the client's willingness to commit a vehicle, a budget, and an aesthetic judgement to a workshop that must first be believed. Accessibility is necessary but not sufficient, and the framework therefore adds a credibility term to the standard distance-decay structure. A second contribution concerns the unit of spatial analysis. Agglomeration reasoning usually treats co-located firms as competitors for a shared pool of demand. In the upholstery case the surrounding automotive businesses function instead

as a distribution channel, because dealerships, detailers, and used-car traders convert their own customer relationships into referred work (Hong et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2023). Proximity to apparently adjacent firms raises rather than erodes accessible demand. This inverts the usual competitive reading of density and aligns automotive upholstery with retail anchor effects, where a strong neighbour lifts the performance of the whole location (Damian et al., 2011; Calvo-Porrá & Lévy-Mangín, 2018). The third implication is about firm scale. Spatial economic frameworks built on multi-site firms assume that network configuration can compensate for a weak individual site. A single-team atelier has no such compensation available, so location error translates directly into lost capacity utilisation rather than into redistributed volume (Marin & Modica, 2021). For micro-firms in trust-dependent crafts, spatial choice operates closer to a survival parameter than to an efficiency parameter. That claim is stated here as a theoretical position, and testing it would require the firm-level panel data discussed in the limitations.

Discussion

The findings support a practical interpretation of automotive upholstery as a location-sensitive, trust-mediated service business. This interpretation matters because many small ateliers still make strategic decisions with a purely workshop-centred mentality. They think in terms of machines, materials, or labour capacity, while underestimating the economic force of spatial positioning. The literature reviewed here suggests that this underestimation is costly. A better location changes not only demand quantity but the operational rhythm of the whole business and the calibre of demand entering it. Location shapes pricing posture and service placement simultaneously, which is why the two effects are difficult to separate in practice (Kwarteng et al., 2019; He et al., 2022). From a managerial standpoint, the strongest contribution of the article is the repositioning of location as a layered productivity variable. In conventional reasoning, productivity improvement in automotive upholstery might mean better workflow, cleaner pattern systems, improved material preparation, or more disciplined finishing. All of these remain important. Yet if the atelier begins each month too far from the strongest market, internal optimisation can only recover part of the loss. The analogy with broader service-location research is straightforward: poorly placed capacity stays partially wasted even when well managed. Relocation, in this sense, is not a cosmetic change of address but a reconfiguration of productive access, symbolic credibility, and referral economics. Spatial optimisation studies of vehicle-service points report the same asymmetry between placement quality and unit utilisation (Dang et al., 2023; Huang et al., 2023). The discussion also suggests that purchasing power should be handled more carefully in atelier strategy than is common in everyday practice. Owners often assume that higher-income districts matter only because they allow a slightly higher price. The literature implies a richer effect. Stronger purchasing power often coexists with higher service expectations, better vehicle condition sensitivity, greater willingness to preserve resale value, and a stronger preference for visual coherence and comfort. That aligns automotive upholstery more closely with premium automotive service logic than with simple repair work. Studies in after-sales quality and relationship benefits help explain why this happens: customers do not evaluate automotive services only through the final invoice. They value confidence, treatment quality, and the feeling that the provider is competent and safe (Hong et al., 2020; Balinado et al., 2021; Gupta & Raman, 2022). In practical terms, this means that location affects both the price ceiling and the emotional ease with which the client accepts that ceiling. At the same time, the article should not be read as an argument for universal centralisation. Some ateliers serve specialised niches such as classic-car restoration, trade-only subcontracting, or factory-adjacent trimming work. Their optimal geography may differ substantially. What the article demonstrates is narrower but still useful: when a firm depends on repeated private clients, premium interior work, and local referral networks, relocation toward better market proximity and stronger purchasing power deserves serious consideration before major capital expansion. The deepest

managerial lesson is that the best atelier location is not always the most central one, but the one that best aligns convenience, trust, and the economic profile of the target client. Several limitations remain. The first is obvious: the use case is synthetic. It is evidence-linked, but it is not based on one directly observed atelier's live financial records. The second is transferability. Research from automotive maintenance, shopping environments, and vehicle-service infrastructure is relevant, but upholstery retains its own decision dynamics. The third is local variation. Street networks, local reputation, competition, district identity, and parking norms can all alter the economic return of a move. The fourth is scope: the use case models the revenue side only. Apart from the single rent test reported in the sensitivity analysis, wages, materials, and other operating costs were not estimated, so the scenario indicates revenue potential rather than a net profit outcome. A fifth limitation is statistical. No technique was applied to test the relationships among the five mechanisms, because a synthetic scenario contains no variance to model. The propositions stated earlier are therefore unfalsified rather than supported, and P5 in particular, which concerns the joint effect, cannot be separated from its components without observed data. Structural equation modelling on a cross-section of relocated and non-relocated ateliers would be the appropriate test, with conversion and average order value as endogenous variables and catchment density, district score, and partner count as predictors. Until such data exist, the scenario should be read as an internally consistent projection whose external validity is unestablished. These limits do not invalidate the framework. They simply mark its proper use. It is a structured pre-decision model, not a substitute for local due diligence. They also indicate why future work should treat location not as a single variable, but as a cluster of mutually reinforcing business conditions. Future research should therefore move in two directions. One direction is direct empirical validation through atelier order logs, before-and-after relocation comparisons, and customer-origin mapping. The other is segmentation. Upholstery markets differ by vehicle class, aesthetic preferences, local income structure, and whether demand is driven by repair, resale preparation, or custom styling. Even so, the present article already shows that a meaningful empirical application can be built without claiming fieldwork that did not occur. Existing empirical studies, when read across adjacent literatures, are sufficient to support a disciplined growth argument. Further research could also model search costs, neighbourhood prestige, and partner-network density to test which element contributes most strongly to atelier profitability.

Conclusions

This article examined relocation as a growth strategy for an automotive upholstery atelier under several linked conditions: improved proximity to the market, stronger local purchasing power, higher visibility, better complementary-business density, and stronger trust signalling through place. The central conclusion is that an atelier should be analysed as a location-sensitive service system in which workshop placement influences both operational efficiency and revenue quality. An atelier does not merely exist in geography. It monetises geography through access, trust, visibility, and service credibility. Because no original field study was conducted, the article framed its empirical contribution as a small applied use case derived from existing empirical research. That approach proved sufficient to demonstrate a plausible mechanism of growth. Relocation can increase accessible demand within a practical customer travel zone, reduce market friction, improve monthly order throughput, strengthen referral quality, and expose the atelier to customer segments capable of sustaining higher-value interior restoration and customisation packages. When these effects occur together, the move may create a stronger return than simple capacity enlargement from a peripheral workshop. The practical value of the article lies in its decision logic. An atelier considering relocation should ask a richer set of questions than simple rent comparison allows. How much demand becomes reachable within the target customer convenience zone? How much consultation friction can be eliminated? What does the district communicate about trust, quality, and price legitimacy? Which neighbouring businesses can feed

qualified referrals? How does the destination change the likely service mix and average realised price? And does the new area combine vehicle concentration with purchasing power rather than offering only one of them? If the answers are favourable, relocation should be considered not as overhead escalation but as controlled business redesign. These questions can be applied in a fixed order. The checklist below converts the five-component framework into sequential decision tests, each with a threshold that the destination must clear before the next component is assessed. A destination failing any single test should be rejected rather than compensated for elsewhere, since the mechanisms are complementary rather than substitutable.

Table 6: Relocation Decision Checklist for Atelier Owners

Component	Question for the owner	Threshold for proceeding
Market proximity	How many car owners fall inside a twenty-minute travel zone from the new site?	Reachable vehicle stock at least double the current catchment
Purchasing power	Does the local vehicle mix and income profile support restoration and customisation work?	Median income and vehicle age profile above the current district
Visibility and trust	Does the district image and frontage support the intended price level?	Visible frontage, orderly automotive neighbours, workable parking
Ecosystem density	How many dealerships, detailers, and used-car traders operate within three kilometres?	At least five potential referral partners with compatible positioning
Throughput and cost	Does the projected order gain cover the rent differential under the downside scenario?	Combined downside revenue still exceeds current revenue plus rent delta

In that sense, the growth of an automotive upholstery atelier is not always a matter of adding more equipment. Sometimes it is a matter of standing in the right place with the craftsmanship already possessed.

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