

AUTO ALLIANCE
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Auto Industry Guide to

Service, Training and Repair

Automobile Service Information & the Aftermarket Repair Industry



The Facts on Service, Training and Repair

Autos and auto repair today: state of the art, sophisticated, complex

- ▶ Automobiles have become increasingly complex over the past three decades, driven primarily by technology, regulatory requirements and competition.
- ▶ Automotive diagnosis and repair has also become increasingly complex, largely in proportion to the advances in automotive and service technology advancements.
- ▶ It is becoming increasingly difficult for technicians, independent and dealership alike, to remain abreast of technology for all the makes and models that they traditionally support.
- ▶ More systems on more mainstream models now require the use of service information, scantools and specialized training for even the most routine of services like tires and wheels, braking and front end systems. This trend will continue and accelerate.

70
PERCENT

of auto repair shops
have computers.



MOST TECHNICIANS have working relationships with nearby shops to share information, while some shops subscribe to automaker websites or third party service information resources as a primary source for their service information needs.

Automakers commitment to the independent repair industry:

providing the same repair information and scantools as provided to dealers

- ▶ Automakers already provide affordable access to all of the same service and training information that is provided to franchised dealers.
- ▶ There are many avenues available for independent repairers to access this information:

Non-Electronic Methods

While a growing percentage of auto repair shops have computers, there are still a significant number of shops that do not have computers. These shops are limited to obtaining information from the traditional sources of paper manuals, technical tips in trade publications, networking with other shops, and using commercial technical telephone hotlines.

Electronic Methods

Current estimates are that about 70 percent of shops today have computers. Having a computer adds the ability of using CD-rom-based service information. Many shops have Internet access, but only about 50 percent have a high speed Internet connection, the most effective for on-line service information.

Sources of Electronic Based Service Information Include:



CD ROM

- ◀ Independent or automaker CD-ROMs



WEB

- ◀ Independent information provider websites
- ◀ Automaker service websites



ON-LINE NETWORKS

- ◀ On-line technician networks, such as the IATN forums/chat rooms



3RD PARTY DATABASES

- ◀ Third party technical assistance
Identifix-Direct hit (www.identifix.com)

How technicians resolve service questions



Networking Locally

Most technicians have working relationships with technicians in other nearby shops (including dealerships) and share information about technical issues that arise in repairing vehicles.

Help Functions of Independent Information Providers

Most shops (independents and dealers alike) subscribe to independent information providers with the largest being *Mitchell 1*, *ALLDATA*, and *Identifix*. These independent information providers obtain information from automakers and then re-package this information to allow a shop a "one stop shopping" venue through the Internet for most service information needs.

Technical Hotlines

Technical hotlines, contacted by telephone or email, are an important source of information for technicians. Many independent shops subscribe to commercially available technical hotlines that provide immediate technical assistance in the diagnosis and repair of vehicles.

Networking On-line

With the popularity of the Internet, there are a growing number of technicians that participate in on-line networking through "forums" or "chat rooms", such as those operated by *the International Automotive Technicians Network (www.iatn.net)* and others. This type of networking broadens the number of participants to the worldwide web as compared to the traditional neighborhood.

Help Functions of Automaker Websites

Some shops subscribe to automaker websites as a primary source for their service information needs. This is particularly true in cases where shops specialize in particular brands or types of vehicles. For instance, some repair shops specialize in European makes or in Japanese makes, and some may even specialize in even one (or a few) specific brand(s), such as BMW or Toyota. More often repair shops will subscribe to an automaker website on a short-term basis (24-72 hours) to obtain information for a specific repair for a vehicle in the shop where the information is not readily accessible from their normal information sources. All automaker service websites have "help" functions to assist users to find information on the website, deal with any other website user issues, or report missing information or errors.

- ◀ These resources all help guarantee that independent repairers have access to the information they need to service and repair automobiles.

News on



the Motor Vehicle Owners' Right to Repair Act

"Bill Poses Threat to Driver Security"

HOME NEWS TRIBUNE
Thursday, June 21, 2007

"TECHNOLOGY; A Mechanic's Laptop Makes Manuals All But Obsolete"

The New York Times
Thursday, January 28, 2007

"Bogus Solution to High Auto-Repair Costs"

ConsumerReports.org
Thursday, July 13, 2006



helping bridge the gap

The National Service Task Force (NASTF) is a national, voluntary cooperative partnership between automakers, the independent aftermarket repair community, the automotive equipment and tool industry, automotive trainers, locksmiths, suppliers, the insurance industry, law enforcement, auto dealers and others. NASTF serves as an effective resource for repairers and manufacturers alike and has managed to develop an effective forum to point independent repairers to the information and tools they need and to provide a mechanism to report and resolve the few gaps that remain. While not a direct provider of service information, NASTF's website, www.nastf.org, provides web based links to every automaker's service information website.



For a closer look, visit
www.nastf.org



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**ASE is a member of NASTF and
supports the NASTF process.**

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The Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers is a trade association including
BMW Group, DaimlerChrysler, Ford Motor Company, General Motors,
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