



The Automotive Technician



Using technology to diagnose technology

Vehicles under five years old are vastly different to those that have been on the road for up to a decade or so. If you haven't yet discovered that fact, you are regrettably not alone.

Surveys by The Automotive Technician (TaT), reveal that a majority of the repair trade is still using the same old tools and equipment that they used on much older cars and are no doubt wondering why they can't seem to fix problems on modern vehicles quickly and efficiently.

It is tragic for the trade that the underpinning skill sets of the majority of technicians in the aftermarket workshops have not changed, meaning that there has been little to no improvement in the ability of far too many workshops to fix a modern vehicle. That is as bad for the workshop as it is for their customers.

Far too many technicians still believe that once they've achieved their certificate, there is nothing more they need to know. Logic would tell you that as vehicles rapidly become more technologically sophisticated, surely a corresponding upskilling would be required just to keep up.

What was once a largely mechanical device on wheels has become a multi-level high tech computer on wheels. The advancements over the past 10 years have been astronomical and there are no signs that the pace of change is slowing down.

Who knows where we will be in 20 years. If Uber has their way we might all be flying around in unmanned drones. What will you do with your old spanner set then?

All this seemingly depressing news is deliberately intended to shock you into looking at your own business and the skills of those on the tools, and to also tell you that all is not lost.

Help is at hand, but you will need to give up a little of your time to find out how to **use technology to diagnose technology**.

The state of the industry has not gone unnoticed in the Capricorn corridors. Which is why it is putting an extra effort into specific training events at the forthcoming round of Capricorn Gala Dinners and Trade Shows.

TaT technical trainer Jeff Smit will be conducting one and a half hour training sessions focused on revealing the technologies that he uses in his own workshops to diagnose today's 'computers on wheels'.

On the theme, 'A scan tool is more than a code reader', Jeff's session covers how to make the best use of good known scope and scan data.

Many training sessions on the market boast about ‘Getting more from your scan tools’ but sadly, those sessions fail to demonstrate how to efficiently make use of scan tool and scope data in a busy workshop on a day to day basis.

Jeff Smit will use real-life case studies and automotive calculators with good scope and scan data to demonstrate simple yet effective diagnostic methods that can be used in every workshop to get the job fixed quicker and with less stress.

What’s missing in many training programmes is the necessity to be able to use scope and scan data effectively to get the job diagnosed and resolved in a real-world environment.

Jeff Smit will also talk about aftermarket information resources, and how to access and use them.

With manufacturers moving over to electronic logbooks, access to factory service portals is no longer just about diagnostics. It has become a necessity just to perform simple maintenance schedules.

The good news is that manufacturers are slowly starting to make access available to the Australian aftermarket repairer.

But where do you begin? Where to find the portals and how to access them has become as essential as owning a good scan tool or two.

Jeff will run through TaT’s online Aftermarket Information Resource that is regularly updated as new information becomes available.

The training sessions are being provided free of charge by Capricorn Society and will run immediately prior to each tradeshow, which is then followed by the dinner. The training sessions are held in a relaxed environment and are great warm-up to the trade show.

Here are the dates:

QLD – Saturday 15 September (2.30pm – 4pm)

NZ – Saturday 29 September (2.30pm – 4pm)

WA – Saturday 27 October (2.00pm – 3.30pm)

SA – Saturday 3 November (2.30pm – 4pm)

VIC – Saturday 10 November (1.00pm – 2.30pm)

NSW – Saturday 8 December (2.30pm – 4pm)

TaT trainers believe that all technicians, regardless of their levels of expertise, need to update their skill sets. The sustainability of aftermarket workshops demand that technology, programs, tools and equipment are used in much smarter ways for late-model diagnostics.

Those registering for the Gala Dinners and Tradeshows are encouraged to take the extra step and register for the training sessions also.

If you haven’t yet registered for anything, login to your Capricorn account and head for Events. If you have already registered for the dinner and would like to attend the training, simply email events@capricorn.coop.