

UPDATE



Neil LePine

## Opinion Time

**Autologic's Sales Manager Neil LePine poses some interesting questions on the role of 'diagnostics' within your bodyshop business.**

Traditionally, the primary function of a bodyshop is to dismantle and repair the vehicle body not necessarily to fix a vehicle's electronics but times are changing.

A large number of bodyshops still only allow an hour or so to fix immediate electronic problems such as deactivation of airbag warning lights. When the problem can't be immediately resolved or the diagnostic work takes longer than the allocated time due to a lack of expertise, many bodyshops will look to an external third party to complete the job in order to 'get the vehicle back on the road'. This is a short term fix that is losing the bodyshop valuable time and revenue.

In times of recession, it is even more imperative for businesses to seize every opportunity; to make every potential money-making situation count. Some bodyshops recognise the diagnostics potential and have invested in diagnostic equipment.

### **The Diagnostics Key**

A key question is though, 'to what diagnostic level does a bodyshop want to go'? There is a vast difference between entry-level and high-end diagnostic tools.

If a bodyshop views diagnostics simply as a necessary evil and remains focused purely on vehicle bodywork, then entry-level diagnostic tools should suffice. These lower-end diagnostic scanners simply highlight the nature of the problem and leave it to the individual engineer to interpret the data and thus hopefully fix the fault. Often the need for specialist intervention reappears and revenue is redirected to a third party.

High-end diagnostic tools, such as the Autologic unit, are more akin to having

an additional technician on your team, taking bodyshops to the next level. A number of current Autologic customers have a bodyshop and are already putting the Autologic tool to good use.

Autologic provides a dealer-level diagnostic solution for seven vehicle manufacturers; BMW, Land Rover, Mercedes Benz, Porsche, Jaguar, VAG and Volvo. Autologic will not just diagnose the fault. Through a combination of on-screen assistance, coupled with telephone and on-line support and guidance from Master Technicians, Autologic actually helps fix the fault in the shortest possible time. This allows the bodyshop to return the vehicle to the owner more promptly, without any extra or unnecessary delay.

Autologic's level of technical support is unique in the aftermarket diagnostic tool sector. Having access to factory-trained Master Technicians who can talk the engineer through any complicated procedures such as flash programming ECU's, will eliminate the need for a bodyshop to use outside subcontractors.

With ever increasing advances in vehicle technology, it is becoming harder for independents to compete with main dealers in being able to offer an inclusive service. This is critical to the future of bodyshops. Autologic can provide bodyshops with an OEM diagnostic solution and go one step further providing an unrivalled technical support structure maintained by Master Technicians. Bodyshops are assured of the highest level of technical support at all times. This provides a real unbeatable solution for those bodyshops who are serious about securing their future.

**The key question then is not 'to what level does a bodyshop want to go?' but actually, 'how much further can a bodyshop go with the right diagnostic tool and support'?**