

Study reveals why the amateur mechanic may become a thing of the past

A significant number of car owners are incapable of identifying the most common and important parts of their car's engine, a new report has revealed.

PRESTON, LANCASHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM, January 23, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A significant number of car owners are incapable of identifying the most common and important parts of their car's engine, a new report has revealed.

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Christopher Wylie, Head of Automotive at Scrap Car Network

The study, conducted by ethical car recycling specialists [Scrap Car Network](#), found that a significant percentage of car owners were unable to correctly identify various important parts, such as the camshaft, alternator, clutch, spark plugs and even the catalytic converter.

For many motorists, the attitude of 'I put fuel in it and it goes' holds true, and with modern automotive engineering being what it is, this is often all that's required. But for drivers of a certain vintage, the idea of not knowing your timing chain from your alternator seems like a recipe for

disaster.

So what's driving this trend?

If you've opened the hood on any car made in the last five years, you probably already know the answer. Modern car engines are designed to reduce the owner's ability to tinker, tweak and customise the parts. Typical engines are now most commonly housed in segregated and shielded compartments, with none of the moving parts visible. What's more, a lot of manufacturers design the compartment housings so they can only be opened or accessed with specialist (and often expensive) tools, sold by the manufacturer.

There are plus sides to this. Safety is an obvious one. The manufacturers know the scope and parameters of what can be altered in their engines. And of course, their customers are more likely to come to them for servicing and repairs if they can't get to the guts of the engine on their own - another benefit, albeit for the industry.

There's also the issue of software and even - in newer models - artificial intelligence. So the parts of the engine are controlled and modified by software, rather than a determined amateur with a wrench.

The downside, as the study reveals, is that tinkering with, customing and repairing our own cars looks like it's becoming a thing of the past. Not only are we attempting our own repairs, we're apparently unable to even identify the parts.

Christopher Wylie, head of automotive at Scrap Car Network agrees that modern engine design is contributing to this trend.

"Modern cars tend to be more reliable and green, which is a great thing. But modern engine design, where moving parts are concealed and hard to access, has really made it difficult for people with an interest to tinker with their engines and make basic repairs and customisations.

"It's quite probable that a lot of drivers see nothing more than a neatly arranged assembly of engine casings - and have certainly never seen a head gasket - when they open their bonnet to add screen wash or check their oil. So it's no surprise that so many motorists can't tell their alternator from their crankshaft."

"On the whole this is probably a net benefit for motorists as consumers and the environmental benefits of more efficient engines are undeniable, but it does seem a shame that the opportunity to tinker and make basic repairs appears to be dying off."

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