

AutoPulse

Community initiative by **GaragePlug**

EXCLUSIVE MAGAZINE FOR THE **AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS**

**"IF YOU'RE NOT ADOPTING TECHNOLOGY
TO CREATE A **FRICTIONLESS CUSTOMER
EXPERIENCE**, YOU MIGHT AS WELL SHUT
DOWN YOUR BUSINESS."**

ANKUSH ARORA

CEO, AL MANSOUR AUTOMOTIVE

HEIN SCHEFFER

CEO, AUTOMAGIC GROUP

DAVID MCNAMARA

DIRECTOR OF TIER 2 AFTERSALES, AL-FUTTAIM

MAJED ALMADI

BOARD MEMBER & SPARE PARTS RETAIL MANAGER AT
ACDELCO AND ALJOMAIH AUTOMOTIVE COMPANY

EXCLUSIVE CONVERSATION

WITH THE CEO OF AL MANSOUR AUTOMOTIVE

LEADERSHIP AND CULTURAL ADOPTION | MARKET EXPANSION
STRATEGIES WITH REAL EXAMPLES | SALES VS SERVICE

2024 DEC

ABOUT THE AUTOPULSE INITIATIVE BY GARAGEPLUG

The automotive aftermarket service industry has a reputation problem. Consumers often view it with suspicion, and valuable knowledge seems concentrated within a select few.

We at **GaragePlug**, an AI software platform-based digital transformation company passionate about the auto service industry's potential, recognized this. We saw that true improvement could only come through collective growth and rising standards.



This realization fueled the creation of AutoPulse Magazine and the non-profit community initiative behind it. We, at GaragePlug, believe that one company's success isn't enough. **The industry needs a platform to bridge the knowledge gap and empower everyone.**

AutoPulse offers a unique space for industry leaders to share their thought leadership without ego or fear of competition. We believe that by fostering collaboration and open exchange, the entire industry can thrive.

This is where GaragePlug's experience with digital transformation comes in. We understand the challenges faced by automotive service businesses firsthand. Through AutoPulse, we aim to share not just industry secrets, but also the power of technology in achieving those high standards.

AutoPulse is more than a magazine; it's a call to action. We invite you, the reader, to not only gain knowledge but also contribute your expertise. Let's build a future where innovation and technology are synonymous with the aftermarket service industry. Together, we can transform the industry's reputation and unlock its true potential.

Join us on this journey. Read AutoPulse, contribute your knowledge, and let's watch the industry rise, together.

HAPPY READING!

-TEAM AUTOPULSE + TEAM GARAGEPLUG



Ashish S

Community Evangelist



Divya A

Editorial Head



Gunjan A

Design Head



Nandita C

Community Relationship Head



Jayesh R

Editor-in-chief

“THE AUTOPULSE COMMUNITY - REFLECTION”

Networking Events

Jeddah Dinner Event



Riyadh Dinner Event



Dubai Breakfast Event



Events were loved by the community!

Majed A. • 2nd
Spare Parts Retail Manager @ Aliomaih A... 1mo ...

I would like to express my gratitude for being part of this inspiring and insightful gathering. I feel pleased that I met such professional after sales and IT managers with this level of expertise in automotive aftermarket and related IT utilization.

In my humble opinion, Garage Plug can make a positive impact on the local market specially with this synergistic approach of presenting a common ground for collaboration between industry companies.

Wish you all the best and thank you for having me.

Wajih ul Hasan Mahmood • 1st
General Manager | UAE , Pakistan , Egypt |... 1mo ...

Great to see some familiar faces together again

Well done Garageplug team **Shubhra Srivastava**
Ashish Shrivastav

Majid Hussain • 1st
Business Head | Automotive aftermarket E... 1mo ...

A big thank you to the GaragePlug team for such a fantastic event! It was an honor to be a part of it. I found the sessions highly interactive and productive.

Shubhra Srivastava N.

Bassim Khan • 1st
Business Development | Category Manag... 1mo ...

My heartfelt gratitude for the incredible community you have built for the automotive sector. Your contributions are truly invaluable, and I firmly believe they will pave the way for significant advancements in our industry.

It was a genuine pleasure meeting so many inspiring leaders during our gathering. The insights shared were enlightening and have left a lasting impression on me.

Additionally, thank you so much for the thoughtful gift of the book. It means a lot to me, and I look forward to diving into it.

Russell Younghusband • 1st
Global Automotive Director at Getac | Driving technological change in ...

Thanks again to the GaragePlug team for the invite and what was a worthwhile event. Industry Community programs such as Autopulse require a lot of time and a continued commitment to provide interesting and thought provoking content, as well as a forum for peers from the industry to get together and debate common challenges and ...n

Raed Al-Qadasi • 1st
Procurement Manager at Golden Petrol Co. 1mo ...

So glad to meet you all 🌸 it was a nice event

Like · 4 | Reply

Siraj Ahmed Khan • 2nd
Retail Business expert in Lube and FMCG,... 1mo ...

Dear Madam Shubhra & Mr. Ashish,

It was a pleasure meeting all the industry professionals at last night's gathering organized by GaragePlug team. I wanted to take a moment to share my feedback.

Throughout my 20-year career, I have been involved in the development of six different POS systems for the quick lube industry. In every instance, there was always something missing—features we requested or needed that weren't fully addressed. However, GaragePlug has truly impressed me. It is the perfect application for quick lube, car wash, and workshop businesses. Every functionality we could hope for has already been built into the system.

You and your team have done an outstanding job in making this solution not only professional but also easy to use for technicians, marketing department, and operational managers. The ability to make informed decisions based on its comprehensive data is invaluable.

Thank you for the hard work and dedication in delivering such a game-changing solution. Best of Luck.

AUTOPULSE FREE BENCHMARKING INITIATIVE - REPORT



ABOUT THE INITIATIVE -

As part of the AutoService2.0 movement, AutoPulse, in collaboration with GaragePlug, offered free audits to enterprises across MENA and SEA. This initiative aimed to raise awareness about the current operational gaps in workshops, showcase the potential of modern technologies and provide external perspectives for improvement—all at no cost. Initially, there was hesitancy among enterprises in participating in the benchmarking reviews. However, as businesses began to see the tangible value of the initiative, more joined in with enthusiasm. The audit team, led by industry veterans like Shubhra, CEO of GaragePlug, and Ashish, an ex-Toyota leader with Kaizen expertise, earned widespread support. Their deep insights into operational excellence turned participants into avid members of the AutoPulse initiative, unlocking opportunities to transform service centres for the future.

The automotive service industry is at a critical juncture. With customer expectations rising and technology evolving at an unprecedented pace, traditional workshops face mounting pressure to innovate.

Over the past few months, I had the privilege of conducting detailed audits across more than 40 workshops in the MENA and SEA regions. These workshops varied in size and specialization, yet their operational challenges shared striking similarities. This report provides a comprehensive analysis of these workshops, highlighting key challenges, insights, and actionable recommendations derived from the audits. It serves as a roadmap for workshops to modernize their operations, enhance customer satisfaction, and future-proof their businesses.

AUTOPULSE FREE BENCHMARKING INITIATIVE - REPORT

CHALLENGES FACED BY WORKSHOPS OF SERVICE ENTERPRISES

The audits revealed several recurring challenges that hinder workshop efficiency, profitability, and customer loyalty:

1. Fragmented Processes

Workflows across workshops lacked integration. Operations such as customer check-in, vehicle inspection, work-in-progress tracking, and invoicing were disconnected, leading to inefficiencies, delays, and errors.

2. Manual Dependencies

Despite the availability of technology, many workshops relied heavily on paper-based processes for inspections, repair orders, and inventory management, resulting in high error rates and inefficiencies.

3. Limited Customer Engagement

Workshops struggled to maintain clear communication with customers, failing to provide timely updates on vehicle status or send proactive reminders for services.

4. Missed Revenue Opportunities

Lack of visibility into service history and deferred recommendations meant workshops failed to capitalize on upselling opportunities.

5. Inefficient Technician Utilization

Technician productivity was not systematically monitored, leading to uneven workloads and underutilization of skills.

6. Inconsistent Feedback and Follow-Up

Feedback collection was largely manual and unstructured, preventing workshops from gaining actionable insights to improve their services.



INSIGHTS FROM AUDITED WORKSHOPS: A DATA-DRIVEN ANALYSIS

From the detailed audits performed on **40+** workshops, a clear picture emerges of an industry still heavily reliant on manual processes and disconnected workflows. While a few workshops demonstrated progress, the vast majority face critical challenges that hinder operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. Below is a neutral analysis. **No names will be revealed in this report for privacy.**

1. Vehicle Check-In and Reception

Findings:

- **15%** of workshops have implemented digital check-in systems, which improved processing times and reduced errors in job card creation.
- Workshops using online appointment systems reported a **20%** reduction in customer congestion during peak hours.
-

Observations:

- **75%** of workshops still rely on manual check-ins, resulting in repetitive data entry and onboarding delays of **10-12 minutes** per customer. Customer service histories were inaccessible during check-ins in 70% of workshops, leading to missed opportunities for upselling deferred services.

AUTOPULSE FREE BENCHMARKING INITIATIVE - REPORT

- Walk-ins dominate customer flow (**85%** of total customers), creating bottlenecks during peak hours and overburdening reception staff.
- In workshops relying on manual job cards, error rates reached **12%**, often causing delays or miscommunication between reception and technicians.

2. Vehicle Inspection

Findings:

- Around **30%** of workshops have adopted digital inspection tools, improving technician efficiency and enabling standardized workflows.

Observations:

- Manual inspection workflows remain dominant, with **65%** of workshops using paper-based checklists. This adds **15-20 minutes** per vehicle and introduces inconsistencies in reporting.
- Only **40%** of workshops provide customers with photo or video evidence of inspection findings, limiting transparency and trust.
- Deferred service tracking is absent in **60%** of workshops, meaning missed opportunities to follow up on recommended repairs.
- In workshops without standardized inspection workflows, **20%** of reports contained errors or missing details, delaying approvals for additional work.
- Inspection results are rarely communicated digitally, with **80%** of workshops relying on verbal explanations, often causing confusion for customers.

3. Work-in-Progress (WIP) Tracking

Findings:

- **15%** of workshops use real-time tracking systems, enabling transparent updates for customers and reducing service advisor workloads.

Observations:

- Real-time WIP tracking is absent in **85%** of workshops, forcing customers to repeatedly call for updates, with an average of **7-9** inquiries per vehicle during service.
- Technicians frequently have to manually communicate job status updates to service advisors, disrupting their workflows and adding **10-15** minutes of downtime per job.
- Vehicle handover delays were observed in **75%** of workshops, with average handover times extended by **20-30** minutes per vehicle due to unclear workflows.
- Customers often perceive the lack of transparency as mismanagement.



4. Technician Utilization and Productivity

Findings:

- Some workshops (**22%**) have adopted technician performance tracking tools, improving service completion rates and enabling better workload distribution.

Observations:

- Productivity monitoring is absent in **78%** of workshops, resulting in uneven workloads and inefficient use of technician time.
- Non-core tasks such as fetching tools or waiting for approvals consume **20-25%** of technicians' time, significantly reducing repair capacity.
- Rework rates average **12-15%**, primarily caused by unclear repair instructions or a lack of access to service history.
- Many workshops do not track technician time per job, making it impossible to identify bottlenecks or incentivize performance improvements.

AUTOPULSE FREE BENCHMARKING INITIATIVE - REPORT

5. Inventory Management

Findings:

- Around **30%** of workshops have implemented centralized inventory systems, improving stock visibility and reducing delays in part availability.
-

Observations:

- Inventory mismanagement is widespread, with **72%** of workshops struggling with visibility, leading to stockouts or delays in **25%** of repairs.
- Manual tracking systems result in errors in **10-15%** of inventory records, leading to wasted resources and inefficiencies.
- Inter-branch stock transfers take **2-3 days** in **70%** of workshops, delaying service completions and frustrating both technicians and customers.
- Overstocking was observed in **30%** of workshops, tying up capital and increasing the likelihood of parts becoming obsolete.

6. Invoicing and Approvals

Findings:

- Digital invoicing systems, present in **40%** of workshops, have streamlined approvals and improved customer confidence in service costs.

Observations:

- Verbal cost estimates are still used in **60%** of workshops, leading to misunderstandings and rejection rates of **10-15%**.
- Manual invoicing delayed job closures by an average of **15-20** minutes per vehicle in **70%** of workshops.
- Deferred service recommendations are rarely integrated into invoices, with only **25%** of workshops leveraging this feature to boost revenue.
- Customers frequently complain about a lack of transparency in cost breakdowns..

7. Customer Feedback and Follow-Up

Findings:

- Workshops with automated feedback systems (**25%**) achieved response rates exceeding **70%**, providing actionable insights to address customer concerns.

Observations:

- Manual feedback methods dominate in **75%** of workshops, with response rates often falling below **30%**.
- Many workshops lack a centralized system for tracking feedback and complaints, making it difficult to identify recurring issues.
- **50%** of workshops do not send service reminders or follow-ups, missing opportunities to retain customers and encourage repeat visits.
- Google reviews and internal feedback systems are disconnected in most workshops, preventing them from gaining a holistic view of customer sentiment.

THE ROOT CAUSE: DISCONNECTED OPERATIONS AT THE WORKSHOP LEVEL

At the heart of the inefficiencies uncovered during the audits of **40+** workshops lies a single root cause: disconnected operations. Workshops across MENA and SEA are struggling with fragmented systems and manual workflows, which not only hinder internal processes but also negatively impact both customer experiences and head office oversight. These disconnections ripple through the service lifecycle, creating inefficiencies, missed opportunities, and a lack of accountability.



AUTOPULSE FREE BENCHMARKING INITIATIVE - REPORT

DISCONNECTED OPERATIONS AND THEIR IMPACT

Fragmented Internal Workflows

Disconnected operations mean that critical processes—such as vehicle check-ins, inspections, work-in-progress tracking, and invoicing—are siloed. Departments often operate independently, without real-time access to shared data. For instance:

- Reception staff manually input customer data, which is rarely shared with technicians or service advisors in real-time.
- Deferred services and inspection findings are not consistently linked to invoicing systems, resulting in lost upselling opportunities.
- Inventory teams operate in isolation, unaware of technician requirements or upcoming repairs, leading to stockouts and delays.

The result? Delays, errors, and bottlenecks across all departments, with no unified workflow to keep processes aligned and efficient.

Disconnected Customer Experience

The lack of operational integration directly impacts the customer experience. Modern customers expect transparency, efficiency, and personalized service—none of which are possible with fragmented systems. Common issues include:

- Long wait times due to repeated data entry and manual processes during check-ins.
- A lack of communication during service, forcing customers to make multiple inquiries to track their vehicle's status.
- Mistrust caused by verbal cost estimates and inadequate transparency in invoicing or inspection findings.

Disconnected operations fail to meet these expectations, leaving customers dissatisfied and less likely to return. Moreover, these inefficiencies lead to negative word-of-mouth and damage the workshop's reputation in an increasingly competitive market.

Disconnected Head Office Oversight

For workshops operating under a larger chain or head office, disconnected operations extend beyond the service outlet. Without integrated systems, the head office struggles to:

- Gain real-time visibility into the performance of individual service outlets.
- Monitor critical metrics such as technician productivity, revenue leakage, or deferred service follow-ups.
- Ensure standardization across outlets, leading to inconsistent service quality and missed growth opportunities.

This lack of oversight creates a reactive approach to problem-solving rather than a proactive one, leaving workshops to operate inefficiently without accountability.

The Domino Effect of Disconnection

The impact of disconnected operations is not limited to one area. It creates a domino effect:

- Bottlenecks in one department lead to inefficiencies across the entire workshop.
- Frustrated customers spread negative feedback, reducing footfall.
- Without accurate data, the head office cannot identify issues or optimize processes, resulting in financial losses and stagnation.

THE WAY FORWARD: CONNECTING OPERATIONS

To address these challenges, workshops must adopt a connected operations framework. This involves integrating workflows across all departments—ensuring that data flows seamlessly from check-in to invoicing and beyond.

WHAT'S IN THIS MAGAZINE?

Featuring top auto aftermarket service industry leaders

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MOVEMENTS IN THE INDUSTRY

JOBS IN KEY AUTOMOTIVE COMPANIES

UPCOMING EVENTS

AL-MANSOUR AUTOMOTIVE PARTNERS WITH MATADOR TIRES TO DISTRIBUTE IN EGYPT



Al-Mansour Automotive Group has partnered with Matador Tires, a key brand under the German Continental Tire Group, becoming its exclusive distributor in Egypt. Starting September, Matador Tires will be available at over 50 Al-Mansour outlets and authorized dealers nationwide.

The partnership, signed during a ceremony attended by Al-Mansour leaders Ankush Arora (CEO), Lotfi Mansour (COO), Grant Fitzpatrick (aftersales Director); along with Continental's MD Jose Luis de la Fuente, focuses initially on private car tires, with light transport vehicle tires in a second phase.

Ankush Arora emphasized the partnership's strategic value in enhancing Al-Mansour's market presence and delivering high-quality automotive solutions. Jose Luis de la Fuente highlighted Egypt's promising market, marking this as a significant step in expanding Continental's Middle East footprint.

Courtesy: Auto Club

UAE AUTOMOTIVE AFTERMARKET SET TO REACH \$1.91 BILLION BY 2028

The UAE's automotive aftermarket industry is projected to grow to \$1.91 billion by 2028, driven by increasing vehicle ownership, technological advancements, and robust demand for parts and services, according to Glasgow Research & Consulting.

A key factor in this growth is the rising involvement of Southeast Asian automotive companies, now holding a 5% market share. These firms bring cost-effective, high-quality products and expertise, reshaping the sector and supporting its evolution toward sustainability and innovation.

Vishal Pandey, Director at Glasgow Research & Consulting, highlighted that economic recovery and infrastructure development are fueling vehicle ownership, which in turn drives demand for aftermarket parts and services. He emphasized that Southeast Asian companies' focus on advanced technologies aligns with the UAE's vision for a greener, more efficient automotive sector.



AUTOMECHANIKA DUBAI 2024 IS SET TO SHINE



Automechanika Dubai 2024 is set to be the largest edition of the event yet, taking place from December 10–12 at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

This year, the exhibition will expand to 17 halls, featuring over 2,200 exhibitors from 161 countries, showcasing innovative products and technologies across 10 product categories, including Parts & Components, Tires & Batteries, and Innovation4Mobility.

A key highlight is the Southeast Asia regional focus, with more than 100 exhibitors presenting advanced solutions and technologies tailored to global and regional markets. The Innovation Zone and specialized workshops, such as the Telematics Workshop and Modern Workshop demonstrations, will spotlight groundbreaking developments in sustainability, electric mobility, and telematics.

Automechanika South Africa, which was held in November 2024, successfully brought together over 12,000 buyers and featured an EV Zone dedicated to advancing electric vehicle technology in Sub-Saharan Africa.

These events demonstrate Automechanika's influence in driving innovation and fostering global partnerships within the automotive aftermarket sector.

Courtesy: [Tradeshows.tradeindia.com/](https://www.tradeshows.tradeindia.com/)

TENDER LAUNCHED FOR EMIRATI CAR WASH SERVICES

The Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO), in partnership with the Department of Municipalities and Transport (DMT), has announced a tender for Emirati-owned businesses to develop car wash and service centres in Al Dhafrah and Al Ain, specifically in Al Marfa, Ghayathi, Liwa, Al Sila, and Al Qou. This initiative supports local entrepreneurship and enhances community services across the region.

The tender is open for proposals from November 1 to December 16, 2024. Interested bidders can access the Request for Proposal (RFP) document online and the submission deadline is December 16 at 5:00 PM UAE time. For more information, visit <https://www.investinabudhabi.gov.ae>.

ITYRECAR LAUNCHES PREMIER AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE CENTRE IN DUBAI



iTyreCare has officially opened a state-of-the-art auto service center in Dubai, responding to the increasing demand for quality vehicle maintenance and repair services. This full-service facility offers a wide range of services, including engine diagnostics, brake repairs, tire replacement, and air conditioning repairs, tailored specifically to address the challenges posed by Dubai's harsh climate. Led by automotive expert Imran Shahzad, the center employs skilled technicians equipped with advanced tools to ensure top-tier care for all vehicle types, from luxury to classic cars.

Additionally, iTyreCare provides free diagnostic tests and a convenient pick-up and drop-off service for customer vehicles, enhancing the overall experience. With a comfortable waiting area featuring Wi-Fi and refreshments, iTyreCare aims to be the go-to destination for auto repair in Dubai.

Courtesy: Gulfnews

CAR GARAGE EXPERT'S OPENS NEW BRANCH IN DUBAI, UNVEILS PRE-PURCHASE INSPECTION SERVICE

Car Garage Expert has elevated automotive care in Dubai with its new, cutting-edge service centre in Al Quoz and the introduction of a comprehensive car pre-purchase inspection service. The Al Quoz centre is fully equipped with advanced diagnostic technology and staffed by expert technicians, offering services from routine maintenance to extensive repairs for sedans, SUVs, and luxury, and commercial vehicles. With 24/7 roadside assistance and a Mobile Car Mechanic service, Car Garage Expert provides reliable support for vehicle owners anywhere in the UAE.

The newly launched pre-purchase inspection service is designed to give prospective buyers crucial insights into a vehicle's condition. Going beyond standard checks, this service provides a meticulous assessment that uncovers hidden issues, accompanied by a detailed report to help buyers make sound, secure purchases and avoid unexpected expenses.

“At Car Garage Expert, we recognize the significance of purchasing a dependable vehicle,” said Mian Mohammed Fahad, the company's owner. “Our Pre-Purchase Inspection service empowers buyers with confidence through a thorough, professional evaluation.”

Courtesy: Khaleej Times

SASCO EXPANDS ITS PRESENCE IN RIYADH



Saudi Automotive Services Company (SASCO) has announced the opening of a new station located on Othman ibn Affan Road in the Al Narjis district of Riyadh. CEO Riyadh Almalik mentioned in January that the company aims to launch 50 additional stations throughout 2024. Almalik emphasized that this initiative is part of SASCO's broader strategy, which focuses on expanding through acquisitions and new openings. The company has set an ambitious target to operate 600 stations by the end of 2024.

Courtesy: Argaam

PETROMIN SHINES AT MANAGEMENT AWARDS



Petromin Corporation was honored at the 2024 Management Excellence Awards. CEO Kalyana Sivagnanam won "Saudi Arabia Executive of the Year – Automotive Services," and the Corporate Strategy Team, led by Shoaib Jawaaid, received "Saudi Arabia Team of the Year – Automotive Services," reflecting their commitment to leadership, success, and excellence.

Courtesy: Petromin LinkedIn

ARAMCO EXPANDS INTO PAKISTAN WITH LAHORE STATION LAUNCH



Saudi Arabian oil giant Aramco has inaugurated its first branded petrol station in Lahore, Pakistan, marking its entry into the country's fuel retail market. This launch follows Aramco's recent acquisition of a 40% stake in Gas & Oil Pakistan Ltd. (GO), a major player with over 1,200 outlets nationwide.

The new station offers premium fuel, high-quality lubricants, automotive services, and a modern convenience store, aimed at enhancing customer experience.

Yasser M. Mufti, Aramco's executive vice president, highlighted the growth potential in Pakistan, while GO's CEO, Khalid Riaz, expressed optimism about elevating service standards. This venture aligns with the strengthening economic ties between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, including a recent \$5 billion investment package from Saudi Arabia, further solidifying their strategic partnership.

Courtesy: Business Recorder

FAMCO EXPANDS SERVICE NETWORK WITH NEW RIYADH SHOWROOM



Al-Futtaim Auto & Machinery Company (FAMCO), a part of Al-Futtaim Automotive, has unveiled a new 3S (Sales, Service & Spare Parts) showroom in Riyadh, strategically designed to enhance service offerings for heavy equipment and commercial vehicles. Located on Al Kharj Road, the expansive 19,270 square meter facility includes 15 service bays and a dedicated workshop of 1,478 m², ensuring comprehensive aftersales support.

This innovative showroom will feature renowned brands like Volvo Construction Equipment and Ashok Leyland, enabling FAMCO to meet the rising demand driven by major projects such as NEOM and the Red Sea Project. FAMCO emphasizes its commitment to ongoing customer support through maintenance services, operator training, and advanced diagnostics.

Ramez Hamdan, Managing Director of FAMCO, stated that the new facility is pivotal for providing reliable machinery performance, solidifying FAMCO's role as a trusted partner in Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 initiative and supporting the nation's rapid infrastructure development.

Courtesy: Eye Of Riyadh

Do you know?

Egypt has built the largest automotive city in the Middle East on the Ain Sokhna-Kattameya highway. Spanning 57 acres, it features showrooms, car yards, auto spare parts centres, eight maintenance and inspection centres, banks, shops, and more. With space for 4,000 cars, 10 toll gates, and modern amenities like fire and ambulance services, it's a hub for car sales and services.

SAMACO MOTORS SET TO GO PUBLIC IN 2025

Saudi Arabia's luxury car dealer, Samaco Motors, is set to go public on the Saudi stock market in 2025. CEO Mohammed Sharbatly announced this exciting development during the launch of Porsche's new electric vehicles in Riyadh. The company, an exclusive dealer for prestigious European automotive brands like Audi, Bentley, Porsche, Lamborghini, and Volkswagen, aims to expand its luxury portfolio by adding two more brands.

Samaco Motors holds a remarkable 50% market share in the luxury European car segment in Saudi Arabia and operates 21 locations across Jeddah, Riyadh, and Al Khobar. These facilities include showrooms, service centers, spare parts depots, and body shops, all structured by brand for enhanced customer experience.

With a recent agreement signed with a Saudi investment bank for the initial public offering, Samaco Motors is poised for significant growth, marking a new chapter for the company as part of the historic Al Nahla Group.

Courtesy: Argaam

GAC MOTOR SOUTH AFRICA LAUNCHES LIFETIME ENGINE WARRANTY

GAC Motor South Africa has introduced an industry-first lifetime engine warranty, redefining automotive assurance in the region. This remarkable offer applies to all GAC Motor vehicles purchased in 2024 and beyond, ensuring lifetime peace of mind for the first owner, provided that vehicle

services are conducted at authorized centers with approved parts.

In collaboration with its strategic partner, Salvador Caetano, the brand is poised to expand its network of franchised sales and service dealers across South Africa. Over the next three years, GAC Motor aims to make its services more accessible in major cities and towns, enhancing customer convenience and support.

The lifetime engine warranty is part of GAC Motor's bold vision to establish itself as a world-class automotive leader. Flagship models like the Emzoom and Emkoo embody the brand's dedication to innovation, reliability, and excellence, offering South African motorists cutting-edge designs and top-tier performance.



Leslie Ramsoomar, Managing Director of GAC Motor South Africa, invites drivers to experience the brand's superior offerings, setting a new benchmark for automotive assurance and redefining trust in the South African car market.

Courtesy: Carmag

"I don't believe in taking the right decisions, I take decisions and then make them right!"

-- Ratan Tata (1937-2024)

In Remembrance



VINFAST LAUNCHES IN MIDDLE EAST, STRENGTHENS GLOBAL EV PRESENCE



Vietnamese electric vehicle (EV) manufacturer VinFast has officially entered the Middle Eastern market, marking a major step in its global expansion strategy. The launch introduces VinFast's lineup of advanced and eco-friendly electric vehicles to a region embracing sustainable mobility solutions, supported by progressive policies encouraging EV adoption.

Announced on October 29, the launch aligns with VinFast's mission to provide intelligent, powerful, and environmentally friendly transportation options. Speaking at the event, VinFast Middle East CEO Ta Xuan Hien emphasized, "This launch represents a crucial milestone in our journey to establish a strong global presence while contributing to the electrification revolution in the region."

VinFast's entry into the Middle East highlights its

focus on offering innovative EVs tailored to the needs of Gulf markets. The company aims to support the region's goals for sustainable development by delivering vehicles with cutting-edge technology, superior performance, and robust warranties.

This expansion builds on VinFast's growing reputation as a leader in the global EV market, with operations already established in North America, Europe, India, and Southeast Asia. By entering the Middle East, VinFast reinforces its commitment to promoting sustainable mobility worldwide while partnering with key regions in their transition to electric transportation.

VinFast's launch in the Middle East underscores its ambition to reshape the global EV landscape with smart, eco-friendly solutions designed for the future.

Courtesy: VOI.id

Royal Enfield enters the electric motorcycle segment with the launch of Flying Flea in Milan, Italy. The brand plans to introduce two electric models, the classic-styled FF-C6 and scrambler-styled FF-S6, by early 2026.



DENSO SIGNS MOU WITH T-HUB, INDIA'S LEADING STARTUP INCUBATOR, TELANGANA



The Telangana government has teamed up with Japanese automotive giant Denso to revolutionize India's automotive sector through T-Hub, the state's premier startup incubator. This collaboration aims to foster local innovation by connecting Denso with cutting-edge Indian startups via T-Hub's T-Connect platform.

The partnership will focus on addressing complex challenges and crafting next-generation automotive solutions, with Denso mentoring startups on global industry trends. Speaking at the MoU signing, IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu highlighted Telangana's emergence as a hub for automotive innovation, supported by strong semiconductor, sensor engineering, and design ecosystems.

Denso's India region CEO, Yasuhiro Iida, emphasized the company's commitment to advancing innovation and empowering local talent through R&D resources and technical expertise. This partnership reinforces Telangana's position as a key player in India's evolving automotive industry, driving sustainable growth and intelligent mobility solutions tailored to India's unique needs.

Courtesy: Denso Press Release

KTM INTRODUCES ANDROID AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY TO ICE MOTORCYCLES

KTM has announced that its upcoming motorcycles with Internal Combustion Engines (ICE) will feature Android Automotive technology, marking a first for the two-wheeler industry. Previously



exclusive to cars, Android Automotive offers a standalone infotainment system with features like eSIM connectivity, offline maps, and seamless app integration via Google Play.

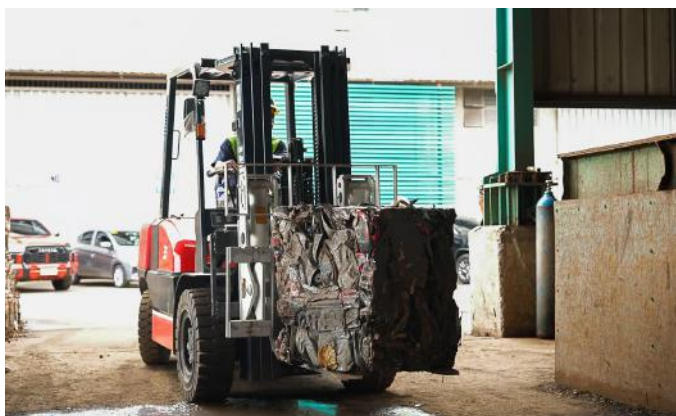
The new motorcycles will debut with KTM's advanced Communication Control Unit (CCU), which powers an anti-glare, anti-fingerprint TFT dashboard available in horizontal (8.8-inch) and vertical (8-inch) formats. The CCU includes 32GB of storage, 3GB of RAM, and connectivity options like GPS, Bluetooth, and Wi-Fi.

Initially, software updates will be handled via KTM dealerships, with over-the-air (OTA) updates planned for the future. This innovation reflects KTM's commitment to enhancing rider experience through cutting-edge technology.

Courtesy: Republic World

PHILIPPINES LAUNCHES FIRST ECO-FRIENDLY VEHICLE DISMANTLING FACILITY

The Philippines has launched its first-ever vehicle dismantling facility, Garaheco, in Pampanga, operated by En Tsumugi ELV Dismantler Corp. Adopting Japanese eco-standards, Garaheco safely recycles end-of-life vehicles (ELVs), turning scrap into reusable steel for construction and new cars. Backed by Toyota's "Global 100 Dismantlers Project," it promotes a circular economy, tackling pollution, road hazards, and aging vehicles.



Currently handling passenger cars, it will soon expand to motorcycles, trucks, and corporate fleets. With government support, Garaheco offers a sustainable solution for greener roads, reduced emissions, and eco-friendly vehicle disposal—paving the way for a cleaner automotive future in the Philippines.

Courtesy: Auto Industriya

QUALCOMM, GOOGLE TEAM UP ON AI FOR CARS



Imagine a car that not only understands your voice but also anticipates your needs—whether it's offering a coffee break when you're drowsy or suggesting local landmarks.

Qualcomm and Google have teamed up in a groundbreaking partnership to transform the automotive world with AI-powered vehicles. This collaboration merges Qualcomm's cutting-edge Snapdragon Digital Chassis with Google's Android Automotive OS, Cloud, and Gemini Nano to create smarter, more connected cars that will redefine the driving experience.

The duo is working on developing AI-driven voice assistants, intuitive cockpits, and real-time updates for cars. These innovations, powered by Qualcomm's AI chips, will help make vehicles smarter and safer while pushing towards software-defined cars that can evolve with regular updates.

What makes this partnership exciting is the focus on software-first vehicles. Cars will no longer rely on hardware overhauls to stay up-to-date. With this new framework, manufacturers can easily add features and improve safety through cloud-based updates, ensuring a continuously evolving user experience.

This collaboration is setting a new standard for the automotive industry, creating a unified platform for developing AI-powered, software-defined cars. As more manufacturers adopt this tech, we'll see smarter, more connected vehicles rolling off production lines, ready to offer personalized, safe, and efficient driving experiences. The future of driving is here—intelligent, adaptable, and always improving!

Courtesy: Yahoo

SAUDI ARABIA PLANS \$100BN INVESTMENT IN AI

Saudi Arabia's \$100bn AI initiative, "Project Transcendence," aims to transform the country into a regional tech hub, focusing on AI infrastructure, data centers, and start-ups. As the Kingdom plans to rival the UAE in tech innovation, this ambitious project could significantly impact various industries, including the automotive sector. With AI increasingly integrated into vehicle technologies, could this AI push open new opportunities for the automotive aftermarket in the future?

Courtesy: Bloomberg

SERVING CUSTOMERS, BUILDING TRUST—THE SOUL OF THE AUTOMOTIVE AFTERMARKET



Rommel Serrano

a leading automotive expert from Southeast Asia.

Rommel Serrano is a seasoned automotive industry leader with over 22 years of expertise spanning service operations for brands like Toyota, Nissan, and Mercedes-Benz.

A dedicated leader, Rommel fosters teamwork, promotes employee development, and excels in strategic planning and operational efficiency across diverse automotive brands.

Note- This transcript is a highly condensed version of the full episode.

AutoPulse team's thoughts on this episode -

This was a very interesting podcast, as during the course of the conversation, we completely deviated from the original questions. The initial focus was on understanding the aftermarket service industry in the Southeast Asia region, but as the discussion unfolded, we realized that Rommel had a unique perspective on customer service. This led the podcast to take a different direction, centering around the mindset and approach required to excel in the automotive service world.

While today's conversation touched on the challenges and trends in the automotive aftermarket, the real focus became what Rommel calls the soul of the business: customer trust and experience.

Whether you're running a dealership, managing an independent garage, or planning to enter the industry, this episode is packed with actionable insights and inspiring perspectives.

About Rommel & his vast career experiences

AutoPulse Team: Rommel, thank you for joining us. Let's start with your story. How did you begin your journey in the automotive industry, and what has kept you motivated over the years?

Rommel: Thank you for having me. My journey started with a love for cars. In high school, I was involved in the amateur drag racing scene, which wasn't exactly legal but was a lot of fun. That's where I learned the basics—tinkering with engines, modifying carburetors, and experimenting with ways to boost performance.

This passion drove me to pursue mechanical engineering in college. After graduation, I joined the industry as a service staff member, handling warranty-related concerns. From there, I was promoted to a technical instructor, where I trained technicians and service advisors. Later, I became an area officer, overseeing dealer operations, and eventually moved into my role as a service manager.

What's kept me going is the opportunity to help people. Whether it's ensuring a family's car is safe for the road or solving a complex repair issue, serving customers gives me purpose.

AutoPulse Team: It sounds like your career has been fueled by more than just a love for cars—it's about connecting with people through your work.

Rommel: Absolutely. Fixing cars is the technical side, but serving customers is the human side. That's what makes the work meaningful.

AutoPulse Team: You've described customer service as a calling rather than just a job. Can you elaborate on what you mean by that?

Rommel: When you serve customers, it shouldn't feel like just another task on your to-do list. It's about genuinely wanting to help someone solve a problem or meet a need. Customers can tell if you're sincere, and that sincerity is what builds trust.

I always tell my team, if you don't have the passion to serve, don't be a frontliner. The frontline is where the customer forms their first impression of your business. If the service advisor isn't professional, attentive, or empathetic, it doesn't matter how good the technical work is.

AutoPulse Team: What does that sincerity look like in practice?

Rommel: It's in the little things: listening carefully to the customer's concerns, explaining the work being done in clear terms, and ensuring their vehicle is ready on time. Transparency is key.

Customers need to feel confident that what they're paying for has been done. Whether it's showing them photos of the repair process or providing detailed invoices, these small gestures build trust.



Trust—The Currency of Customer Loyalty

AutoPulse Team: It's clear that trust plays a central role in your approach to customer service. How do you think trust impacts loyalty, especially in the competitive automotive aftermarket?

Rommel: Trust is everything. It's what keeps customers coming back and recommending your business to others. In the aftermarket industry, we don't always have the same brand recognition as dealerships, so we have to work twice as hard to earn that trust.

Take pricing, for example. Many customers choose independent garages because they're more affordable than dealerships. But being competitive in pricing doesn't mean cutting corners on labour or parts—that would hurt your income and reputation.

It's also a big mistake to just add your desired margins to labour and parts costs and pass it directly to customers. Instead, the key is to find ways to lower your costs without sacrificing quality.

With lower costs, you can maintain your margins while offering a lower price that benefits your customers.



I always strive to deliver exemplary service—offering 5-star quality at a 3-star price. That balance not only earns customer loyalty but also positions your business as a standout in the industry.

Competing with Dealerships

AutoPulse Team: You've worked in both dealerships and independent garages. What are the key differences between the two, and how can independent garages compete with dealerships?

Rommel: Dealerships have advantages like OEM support, advanced diagnostic tools, and access to proprietary training. However, their biggest weakness is their approach to customer interaction. Many dealerships focus on processes and upselling, which can make the experience feel impersonal.

Independent garages, on the other hand, have the opportunity to build personal relationships with their customers. They can offer flexibility, transparency, and a sense of community that dealerships often lack.

AutoPulse Team: What's an example of how independent garages can excel in customer experience?

Rommel: It's simple things, like letting customers see their vehicles being repaired. Transparency creates confidence. Even if a customer can't enter the workshop for safety reasons, you can install a window or use CCTVs to show the work being done. Dealerships rarely offer that level of visibility, and it's a missed opportunity for them.



Challenges Facing the Aftermarket Industry

AutoPulse Team: What challenges do you see for the aftermarket industry, and how can businesses address them?

Rommel: The biggest challenges are digitalization and training. Many independent garages still rely on manual processes. They don't have systems to track customer data, service history, or send reminders. This makes it harder to retain customers and compete with dealerships that use sophisticated CRMs.

Training is another challenge. Vehicles are becoming more complex, and technicians need ongoing education to stay ahead. Unfortunately, many shops rely on informal training or experience passed down from senior mechanics.

AutoPulse Team: What can independent garages do to overcome these challenges?

Rommel: Start small. Invest in basic CRM tools to keep track of customer information and send service reminders.

For training, partner with local organizations or suppliers that offer workshops. It's also important to create a culture of continuous learning within your team.

AutoPulse Team: Let's talk about the future. How do you see the rise of EVs impacting the industry?

Rommel: EVs will change the game, but the full impact will take time—maybe 5 to 10 years in Southeast Asia. Dealerships will dominate EV servicing initially because of their specialized tools and training. However, independent garages need to start preparing now.

The biggest shift will be in maintenance revenue. EVs require fewer services—no oil changes, fewer moving parts—which means garages will need to diversify their offerings. Battery maintenance, software diagnostics, and EV-specific repairs will become critical.

AutoPulse Team: How can the aftermarket prepare for this transition?

Rommel: Invest in training and equipment. Start building partnerships with suppliers who can provide EV-specific tools and parts.

And don't forget to educate your customers about EV maintenance—it's a great way to build trust and position yourself as a forward-thinking business.

Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

AutoPulse Team: For those looking to start a new business in the aftermarket industry, what advice would you give?



Rommel: First, **understand your market**. Know your customers—are they professionals, families, or fleet owners? Are you catering to four-wheel vehicles, two-wheel vehicles, or both?

Second, **invest in capacity and scalability**. Build a shop that can handle growth. Don't just plan for today—think about how many customers you'll need to serve in 5 or 10 years.

Third, focus on **customer retention**. Train your staff to provide excellent service, keep your facilities clean and welcoming, and treat every customer like family.

Finally, remember that **profit follows trust**. Build trust with your customers, and the profits will come naturally.

A Message to the Industry

AutoPulse Team: Rommel, you've shared so many valuable insights today. As we wrap up, what final message would you like to share with the industry?

Rommel: If there's one thing I'd emphasize, it's this: put customers first. Whether you're running a dealership or an independent garage, your success depends on how well you serve your customers. And remember—serving isn't just about fixing cars. It's about solving problems, building trust, and creating relationships that last a lifetime.

AutoPulse Team: Wise words to end on. Thank you, Rommel, for joining us.



QUICK SERVICE BUSINESS MODEL: DEALING WITH COMPETITORS AND LEVERAGING AUTO SERVICE NETWORKS TO BOOST TYRE SALES



Saju Eapen

Consultant - Automotive Industry
Ex-General Manager, Q-tire

Saju Eapen is a seasoned professional with more than four decades of expertise in the automotive industry.

Saju has consistently excelled in senior stakeholder management, strategic thinking, and business process improvement.

His extensive background also includes successful leadership tenures with Bridgestone EMIA, MRF and International Tire Cente/ Q-tire making him a true authority in the field.

Note- This transcript is a highly condensed version of the full episode.

AutoPulse team's thoughts on this episode -

This intense 95-minute episode with Mr. Saju was packed with insightful answers to our spontaneous, tricky questions about the automotive industry and business strategies.

His vast experience and unorthodox approaches, from optimizing retail networks to investing in mobile service vans and e-commerce, showcased his innovative mindset.

The AutoPulse team was deeply impressed by his ability to blend operational efficiency with customer-centric solutions, offering practical advice and visionary strategies.

While the magazine version will capture key highlights, it cannot fully convey the depth of this conversation. This episode is a must-read for anyone looking to understand the future of automotive aftersales management

About Saju & his vast career experiences

AutoPulse Team: Can you share some of the most exciting and challenging projects you've been a part of during your career?

Saju: I played a pivotal role in creating a modern tyre and service franchisee network. This innovative concept transformed traditional tyre dealerships into state-of-the-art service centres.

Looking back, it's a source of immense pride to see how this idea has flourished. Yet another standout initiative was introducing a road hazard protection program providing customers with coverage for tyre damages caused by accidents or road hazards. This program not only benefited motorists but also fostered strong customer loyalty.

Additionally, adopting the subscription business model for tyres and services. It allowed customers to pay for tyres on a monthly basis, ensuring both customer satisfaction and stable cash flow through collaborations with fintech companies.

AutoPulse Team: What is the recipe for success for setting up a successful franchisee network? Can you tell us more about that accomplishment?

Saju: Today the customer expectation from a tyre store is to be a one-stop solution for their world-class cars. Professional services at the front desk, personalized attention, an analytic update on the diagnostic report of their cars and the right recommendation as the next steps are possible franchise success recipes.

Smart Growth Strategies

AutoPulse Team: What were the growth challenges, and how did you overcome them?

Saju: One of our primary growth challenges was expanding our retail network effectively to capture a significant market share. Opening stores in strategic customer pockets is crucial, but it's equally important to ensure that each new location contributes positively to our profitability. To address this, we conducted exhaustive studies to evaluate the time it took for each store to make a positive impact on our P&L. This analysis helped us identify non-performing and under-performing stores.



(Q-tire <> Qatol Partnership initiation ceremony)

We resized those that weren't meeting expectations by adjusting headcounts, the number of service bays, and operating hours. This optimization significantly reduced our operational expenses and improved the overall profitability of our network.

Additionally, we explored opportunities to invest in mobile service vans. This approach proved to be a cost-effective solution by saving on lease fees while aligning with the current customer expectations for convenience and flexibility.

Mobile servicing allowed us to reach customers directly at their locations, enhancing their experience and satisfaction.

Another key opportunity we pursued was establishing a strong presence in the e-commerce space and various marketplaces. This strategy was particularly effective in reaching the rising customer base of Gen Z, who prefer online interactions and value the convenience of digital services. By leveraging these channels, we were able to expand our reach and cater to a younger, tech-savvy demographic.

Overall, by strategically expanding our retail network, optimizing under-performing stores, investing in mobile services, and embracing e-commerce, we successfully navigated our growth challenges and positioned ourselves for sustained success in the competitive automotive service industry



Saju's view on OEMs vs the Aftermarket (Industry trends):

AutoPulse Team: Can you share insights into the biggest trends in the aftermarket industry and their impact on workshops and businesses like yours?

Saju: The global automotive aftermarket industry is on a growth trajectory, with expectations to reach over \$550 billion in the next decade. Key growth regions include Asia Pacific and Europe. We're witnessing a rising interest in electric vehicles (EVs), with more charging infrastructure in place.

OEM manufacturers and dealerships are entering the multi-brand service centre space, but customers often seek professionalism rather than brand loyalty. Consumer awareness of car maintenance is increasing, driven by the desire to maintain vehicle efficiency and secure better resale values.

Customers are taking long-distance trips, leading to more frequent maintenance and component replacements.



(Saju leading the launch of EV network in UAE)

AutoPulse Team: How are OEMs venturing into multi-brand service centres, and how are customers perceiving this shift?

Saju: OEMs entering the multi-brand service segment typically do not prominently display their brand, focusing on professionalism instead.

Customers are conscious of the need for transparent and efficient service. OEM dealerships are providing video footage and guided tours to enhance transparency. Extended warranties and service contracts initially attract customers, but many opt-out as prices rise. Independent franchises and garages still have room to grow, especially if they emphasize professionalism and transparency.

AutoPulse Team: How can aftermarket businesses thrive amid dealer and OEM competition?

Saju: To thrive, aftermarket businesses must become more technically oriented by upskilling their teams. Technicians and service advisors should possess specialized maintenance skills beyond tires. Recruiting automotive maintenance specialists and reorienting its existing team.

Strengthening the team with specialized skills will not only boost service revenues but also attract customers seeking comprehensive automotive solutions.

With the increasing prevalence of EVs. Aftermarket players should prepare to handle EVs and other technically advanced vehicles. It's essential to focus on upskilling technicians and service advisors to meet customer expectations.



(Saju with the first customer in the MENA who purchased tires and services on a subscription model he started)

Branding and marketing strategies to gain and retain customers - Quick Service businesses

AutoPulse Team: Can you share your approach to bringing in new customers and encouraging repeat business within an automotive service network? What specific strategies do you use to gain repeat customer base?

Saju: Driving customer footfalls to the point of sales is crucial. Automotive customers replace tyres once in 2/3 years based on their daily mileage.

Engaging with customers and understanding their driving habits is rewarding as it will help the business forecast the expected end of tyre life.

Reaching out to these customers through emails/SMS/call centres a few weeks before the end of the tyre service date will enhance customer experience and drive customer footfall to the stores.

Additionally, we engage with customers through social media, especially during local events like sports days, Ramadan, and Eid. For instance, we can run contests where customers can participate by liking our page, referring friends, and leaving comments on our website. Prizes like iPhones, bicycles, and even a weekend staycation at a luxury hotel have attracted new customers and fostered loyalty.

Another unique initiative is to reach out to the customer base by conducting road shows on tyres and driving safety campaigns at schools and colleges. An educational program for school children instills road safety from an early age which is the need of the hour, leaving a lasting positive impact.

Our primary target group should be local residents in the neighbourhood considering their long-term presence in the vicinity of the store.

AutoPulse Team: How did you brand your commitment to providing top-quality service to maintain repeat customers? Share your branding strategies.

Saju: Adherence to the standard operating procedures ensures top-quality service. It is important to keep track of the service team consistently making sure they are following the process and procedures defined for each service.

An internal audit team should be formed to make surprise visits to grade the technician on the job and assess the missing gaps in the service levels. Technicians who fail below expectations are reoriented and put on the watch list. The frequency of process audits is enhanced until perfection is achieved.

Customers who watch these audit procedures at the PoS find this initiative as the first of its kind and become your brand ambassadors as well as your die-hard customers.

Calibration of equipment at frequent intervals and upgrading vehicle specs annually on garage equipment are important steps to offer quality service.



Explaining the date of manufacture, speed ratings and load index and temperature gradings on tyres leave a lasting impression of transparency among customers.

Conducting battery/lube testing with diagnostics tools and validating the need for replacement builds the trust among customers that the store manager/technicians are not cross-selling but are genuine in their recommendations.

Providing value-added services such as flushing the engine before the oil change and cleaning battery terminal oxidations are steps towards offering professional service.

One can go the extra mile by topping water/fluids for windscreen cleaning and checking coolant levels, brake fluids, hand brakes, and electricals and giving a report on the motorable condition of the car.

AutoPulse Team: What's a good percentage for repeat business in quick service and aftermarket businesses? Can you share a good repeat customer rate?

Saju: A solid benchmark for repeat business in the tyre change segment is around 50% to 60%. If the customer return rates are below these benchmarks it would be worthwhile to engage the call centre team to touch base with customers and understand their pain points and motivate them to turnaround with specialized care addressing their pain points.

It is rarely the price that demotivates a customer to return back to a store. Bad customer experience, Poor service levels and long waiting times are deterrents that stop customers from revisiting the stores.

AutoPulse Team: If a quick service or aftermarket business owner asked for the one repeat customer percentage to aim for to maintain profitability, what would that be?

Saju: Going beyond tyres and services is the secret to customer retention and enhancing profitability.

Brands should target to increase the tyre, non-tyre and service mix ratio.

Adding to the product portfolio by including automotive accessories and auto-related products adds to the ticket value at the POS.

AutoPulse Team: Do you calculate customer acquisition costs, estimate customer lifetime value, and utilize specific metrics to ensure your marketing budget efficiently meets your marketing return on investment goals?

Saju: It is important to have KPIS/Metrics for all marketing efforts. It is said that what is not measured cannot be improved. **A good budget for sales and marketing is approximately 3% of Net Sales** and it is important to measure how well the money is spent and what needs to be improved.

Every Sales and Marketing campaign should be measured for customer acquisition cost, and customer lifetime value and strategize the sales and marketing campaigns to get the best ROI.

AutoPulse Team: Can you discuss how you handle competition from original equipment (OE) dealers who set up workshops near your stores and offer high-budget marketing? What branding strategies or countermeasures do you employ?

Saju: Branded Competitors opening new stores near your network is an endorsement that you are a force to reckon with.

The one and only strategy to counter this move is to enhance the customer experience at the store and the quality of service. Customers who tend to migrate from our stores to the competitors can understand between excellence, good, and average and they remain loyal to service providers who offer them the best.

The podcast concluded on a lighthearted note with casual family talk, reflecting Saju's bright and positive personality. His approachable demeanour and genuine insights made the conversation both engaging and inspiring.



(Inauguration of the first MRF T&S in India - Saju was part of the core team)

A CANDID CONVERSATION WITH THE CEO OF AL MANSOUR AUTOMOTIVE

- Leadership and cultural adoption
- Market expansion strategies with real examples
- Sales vs service
- Digital transformation
- Aftermarket vs OEMs



Mr Ankush Arora is the CEO of Al Mansour Automotive. He has extensive experience in the automotive industry, spanning over 30 years and various OEMs and geographies.

MR ANKUSH ARORA

CEO of Al Mansour
Automotive

He has played a significant role in scaling up Al Mansour Automotive, one of the largest automotive distributors in Egypt, with partnerships and franchises for multiple global car brands. Ankush Arora's leadership has been pivotal in navigating the company through industry changes and driving its growth and success.

AutoPulse Team: It would be great if you could tell us about your journey as a story.

Ankush: Absolutely. My name is Ankush Arora, and I am currently the CEO of Al Mansour Automotive. My experience in the automotive field spans about 34 years. This journey started right after college with the two-wheeler business and within twelve months, I transitioned to the four-wheeler business. I have worked in multiple geographies across Asia and now in Egypt. Interestingly, I have had the advantage of working on both sides of the fence - the OEM side and the Retail/Distribution side. This crossover, which I made about ten years ago when I joined Mansour Automotive, has been quite a unique & rewarding experience.

AutoPulse Team: That's fascinating. How did your career in the automotive industry begin?

Ankush: I started my career as a salesperson, right from the grassroots, whether in the two-wheeler or the four-wheeler business. Fortunately, I worked with companies that were a strong training ground, this helped shape my perspective of the industry and the career opportunities that they provided. I started with Escorts Group in the Rajdoot and Yamaha motorcycle division, dealing with tough products but gaining valuable experience. After 18 months, I moved to Oman for six years. Just around the early mid 90's, the Indian automotive industry was opening up, so I returned to India to join General Motors.

I had opportunities with Honda, Daewoo, Ford, and GM. I decided to join GM and embarked on a long journey of over 18 years in various roles and geographies. After GM, I spent a year with Tata Motors as the head of strategy on the executive committee before deciding to take on a new challenge at Mansour Automotive. I wanted to rekindle my entrepreneurial spirit and apply my experiences to lead Mansour Automotive successfully.

AutoPulse Team: You wanted more challenges?

Ankush: Exactly. I wanted to view the business from a different perspective and work with like-minded people ready to take calculated risks, make quick decisions, and adapt for the future.

AutoPulse Team: How did you end up in Egypt, leading Al Mansour Automotive?

Ankush: That's an interesting story. My last assignment with General Motors was in South Korea, where I was responsible for shutting down the Daewoo brand and launching Chevrolet in its place. This was one of the most challenging yet rewarding assignments.

During my time in Korea, I met Mr. Mansour, our chairman, who was visiting us. After leaving GM and spending a short stint with Tata Motors, I was looking for a new opportunity and Mr. Mansour was looking for someone to lead their automotive business in Egypt, and after a conversation, I was on the next flight to London. We had a three-hour discussion, and our hearts and minds met. That's how I landed in Egypt.

AutoPulse Team: You've worked in many geographies. Which experience was the best, or what did you learn from different cultures?

Ankush: Each experience has given me something unique. One critical thing to remember is that if you don't understand the culture, you can never be successful in business.

Understanding the culture, whether it's consumer, business, or political, is crucial. For example, in Korea, punctuality and hierarchy are very important. In meetings, everyone is on time, and the seating arrangement is based on hierarchy. It was a new experience for me, coming from places where equality is more common.

AutoPulse Team: How did you adapt to these cultural differences?

Ankush: Initially, I observed and understood the culture. Then I started implementing changes gradually. For instance, in Korea, I started having diagonal slice meetings with people from different levels in the organization, bypassing the hierarchical barriers.

This allowed me to get a real understanding of what was happening. People appreciated this approach because they saw that my intention was not to promote my own agenda but to honestly understand their issues, their perspectives and not necessarily base my decisions or actions only on the views of my direct reports.

AutoPulse Team: That sounds challenging. Were you accepted as a leader in Korea?

Ankush: Yes, over time. Despite the cultural barriers and language differences, people saw that my intention was to understand and help them. This helped me gain their trust.

AutoPulse Team: How did you manage the cultural differences in Egypt?

Ankush: Egypt was the opposite of Korea. The culture was more laid back, easy or in sync with the famous term used commonly in Egypt – IBM (Inshallah, Bukra, Malish) – God willing will happen tomorrow. Meetings were often delayed, and discussions were lengthy, took me about a year to digest the new nuances and start implementing changes.

I structured meetings to last no more than two hours with clear agendas. Outside of work hours, I spent time with key people to build relationships and understand their perspectives. This gradual approach allowed me to make necessary changes without causing a shock to the system.

AutoPulse Team: Your ability to adapt to different cultures is impressive. How do you manage to do that?

Ankush: It starts with understanding and respecting the local culture. You have to roll up your sleeves and be on the ground, listen to people, and observe. Building relationships and trust is key.

You need to have clear intentions and honesty in your approach. Whether it's a hierarchical culture like Korea or a more relaxed one like Egypt, understanding and adapting to these differences is crucial.



AutoPulse Highlights

In Korea, employees formed unions and culturally, these unions act as militants.

These unions discussed wages every year and if things didn't go right, they were known to group up, burn the photos of their leaders publicly and show retaliation.

When Mr Ankush left Korea, he was the only expat executive in General Motors Korea's history to receive a farewell from the union leaders, which is a significant achievement.

Leadership style and building strong company culture where everyone delivers

AutoPulse Team: So now coming to the organization, you're running multi-national businesses at such a high level as the CEO. How do you bring that kind of culture which delivers results?

What kind of changes have you implemented at the organizational level in Al Mansour? And how did you bring about those changes?

Ankush: For any organization to have a strong culture, it needs to have, number one, the right value system, and number two, the right HR practices. If these aren't properly in place, you can never change the culture and align it with the vision of the organization.

At Al Mansour, the values were very well entrenched before I joined. These values—integrity, accountability, continuous improvement, empathy, and innovation—are in the DNA of the company.

We were somewhat of a top-down organization where everything ended up on the CEO's desk. If someone was asked to do a business plan, it was because the CEO asked for it. Accountability was not always clear. To address this, we needed to put in the right processes to lay down clear objectives that people owned and were accountable for.



AutoPulse Team: How did you approach this?

Ankush: My leadership style is inclusive. I believe if you don't include people, you can't hold them accountable. People need to understand the full picture to be accountable. So, we started by including the management team in understanding the vision and the journey we were on. We began to monitor and measure what people had signed up for. For me, the most effective mechanism is the traffic light system—red, yellow, and green.

Every six months, we review the commitments. Green means completed, yellow means work in progress with challenges, and red means urgent action needed. This system helps in accountability and transparency.

AutoPulse Team: How does this monitoring work?

Ankush: It starts with including your senior management team, not just direct reports but also the next level, about 30-35 people in the organization. We made them part of strategic discussions and project teams. This way, they understood they couldn't work in isolation. They needed to rely on teamwork and individual expertise to achieve goals.

We implemented monthly reviews, half-yearly business plan reviews, and annual reviews. Initially, people had too many initiatives, which often led to many unfinished tasks. We realized it was better to focus on a few key initiatives and do them well. This approach improved effectiveness.

AutoPulse Highlights

Community initiative by @arpansingh

Building a strong company culture requires just two things -

- 1) The right value system
- 2) The right HR practices.

AutoPulse Highlights

Community Initiative by GarageHub

AutoPulse Team: How did you align remuneration with this new growth approach?

Ankush: We reconfigured the remuneration system to align with this approach. The leadership team had to pick common goals, and 70% of their annual variable remuneration depended on team goal achievement, with 30% based on individual contributions. This promoted teamwork and better execution.

AutoPulse Team: Did you see the results?

Ankush: Absolutely. When people saw the value of focusing on fewer, more impactful initiatives, the results improved significantly. Today, our senior management team of about 35-40 people works with common goals and priorities, fostering a more effective and productive culture.

AutoPulse Team: Can you share some innovative achievements during your time at Al Mansour?

Ankush: On a strategic level, we now follow a mid-to-long-term business plan philosophy. We laid out clear strategic priorities for the next five to ten years. Our goals are to grow the business, reimagine the customer experience, and become an employer of choice. We aim to transform from a traditional automotive distributor to a mobility solutions provider, capturing the peripheries of our core business. This new thinking has brought new energy into the organization.

Operationally, one innovation I'm proud of is the digitization of our inventory management. Inventory is the biggest financial asset in an automotive business. We implemented RFID technology to track our inventory, reducing costs and improving efficiency. This approach drastically lowered the cost of maintaining inventory and reduced damages and management costs by 50%.

AutoPulse Team: That's impressive. How has this impacted your financials?

Ankush: Effective inventory management is crucial. Mismanagement can lead to huge losses, but with our digitized system, we maintain a healthy balance sheet and remain a profitable company without interest costs on our P&L.

AutoPulse Highlights

Community Initiative by GarageHub

Since Ankush has achieved great things in life, we were curious to know what his ultimate goal is now, as he nears retirement.

He answered -

“I have two main goals. First, to leave a legacy that benefits the industry and our business. We are on that journey, and I believe we will achieve it in the next three to four years. Second, I want to find platforms where I can share my experiences and learnings with the next generation. It's important to contribute back and help others succeed.”



AutoPulse Team: Any leadership mental models that you follow that you devised on your own, would be really interesting.

Ankush: You know, life is simple, and it's always better to keep it simple rather than complicate things. The more you're free mentally, the more effective you're going to be.

My style is very clear. I am an inclusive leader. I'm a very passionate leader. I strongly believe in the right vision and strategy. I'm structured, but at the same time, I keep things loose when I wish to. I am a decision-maker, and I'm a go-getter.

I'm not scared of taking risks until it's an obvious, oblivious risk which is jarring in your face. But if there is a 50%, or 60% gut feeling that tells you, "Hey, this might work," I'm ready to embark on that journey.

AutoPulse Team: So, you take calculated risks?

Ankush: Maybe a step ahead of calculated risks. I'm a very open leader, so I have an open-door policy. If I'm not busy or I'm just at my desk, people can just knock and come in. If they want to have a chat or conversation, they can call me anytime. I respect work-life balance. I invariably don't disturb people on the weekends unless there's a fire or something urgent.

AutoPulse Team: You make sure others also balance their work-life balance?

Ankush: Exactly, and these are again learnings. There was a phase, and there will always be a phase in everybody's career when you are a complete workaholic. You can't blame anybody but yourself. People often say, "Hey, my company makes me work a lot," or "My job is crazy." No, it's not the job. It's how you manage your time. That's my style.

AutoPulse Team: Your leadership style seems to be understanding the culture first, then seeing how to work within that to make it effective.

Ankush: Absolutely. That's why I'm happy here in Egypt. People might say, "Hey, you're not ambitious now." I am ambitious, but I'm ambitious in the environment I'm in because I'm happy.

Business and operations expansion strategies

AutoPulse Team: That's very inspiring. Moving on to the more core topics, can you outline the strategic approach Al Mansour Automotive employs for expanding into new regions, especially in Africa and the Middle East?

Ankush: We are an Egypt homegrown business, and our main focus is Africa. The Middle East is not as much our focus. We only have operations in Iraq in the Middle East. For a lot of people, Africa is an opportunity and a challenge. It is the last frontier in the world that still has huge development and knowledge-sharing opportunities. We see Africa as a long-term play, not a short-term one. Africa has 52 or 56 countries, each varying in size, shape, economic, and political structure.

When we look at an African market, we consider the demographic construct of the market and the economic growth. Politically, most African countries are stable, often due to long-term rulers. We also consider the right product fit and how it aligns with our overall strategy in terms of our portfolio of brands.



AutoPulse Team: How do these factors impact your expansion strategy in Africa?

Ankush: Africa has taught us how to work in volatile, challenging, and high-opportunity conditions, whether in Libya, Ghana, Ivory Coast, or Tanzania. Each has its nuances.

We are a large format company, but Africa has taught us to manage small format setups effectively. For example, I sell 90,000 units in Egypt, but in Uganda, I sell 600 units and in Ghana, 2000 units. Managing a small format business effectively prepares us for future growth. We are addressing two critical issues in Africa: supply chain challenges and capital challenges. Africa's market regulations are not stringent, and it's an open market with a lot of cross-border movement.

With two of our principles, we have worked on a super distributor model, adopting a hub and spoke concept. Hubs are markets with significant opportunities, while smaller markets become the spokes.

AutoPulse Team: How does this hub and spoke model work in terms of supply chain?

Ankush: The supply chain challenges are addressed by commonising the portfolio among clusters of markets, placing inventory where it has the maximum pull, and having the ability to spread it to spokes efficiently. This model also benefits the OEMs by giving them scale with one entity rather than dealing with multiple small markets. From a capital standpoint, the cost of capital in Africa is high, averaging between 25 to 32%.



AutoPulse Highlights

Community Initiative by GarageHub

-Ankush

When entering a new market, by making your product available within 30 days from a regional inventory centre, we can penetrate the market more effectively and improve financial operations.

AutoPulse Team: How are you implementing digital interventions in these markets?

Ankush: Today, the entire inventory movement, visibility, and availability are online. For example, with GM, we manage 14 countries in Africa. Three have our own operations, and eleven have appointed dealers managed and serviced from hubs. Order processing, inventory visibility, parts processing, and training are all done online.

AutoPulse Team: How do you handle the cultural differences and business practices in these diverse markets?


Ankush: There are cultural differences and differences in business practices. However, there are also similarities. About 50% to 60% are similar, and 30% to 40% are different.

Adapting quickly is crucial. One of the biggest challenges in Africa is people. While there are smart people, many have not been exposed to successful business practices. It's like India 25 or 30 years ago. We address this by assigning good talent from Egypt to these markets. They impart knowledge and culture to the local staff, making the operation efficient.

AutoPulse Team: So, you're playing a long-term game while being profitable in the short term?

Ankush: Exactly. We are in 14 countries, with direct operations in three, which are the hubs. The rest are managed by appointed dealers.

AutoPulse Highlights
Community Initiative by GarageHub



Ankush's 5-step thought process before expanding into new geographies -

1. Align with the company's vision.
2. See how it fits into your overall business strategy.
3. Evaluate if there is an apt market for the product or service.
4. Ensure you have the financial and organizational bandwidth.
5. Have a clear business plan, even if not lucrative initially, it should show growth in the outer years.

-Ankush

AutoPulse Team: That's a comprehensive strategy. How do you manage the disparity between customer expectations and service delivery in these regions?

Ankush: We are learning as we go along. We are good in some things, not so great in others. It's a function of the market condition and our own capability. One of the biggest challenges is finding the right people and aligning them with successful business practices.



AutoPulse Team: How do you align your business practices in these diverse markets?

Ankush: We place good talent from Egypt in these markets to impart knowledge and culture to the local staff. This makes the operation efficient and prepares our talent for future challenges.

AutoPulse Team: This seems to give you an edge in these markets.

Ankush: Yes, it does. By doing this, we grow our talent in Egypt and make our operations efficient in new markets.

Sales vs. Service in the Automotive Industry

AutoPulse Team: Mr. Ankush, what are your thoughts on the balance between sales and service in the automotive industry?

Ankush: It's essential to balance both. Service, often referred to as "after-sales," while I don't agree with this word, is just as important as sales.

The brand's status can dictate the priority, but neither can survive without the other. In most organizations, service is called after-sales, but I often question why it isn't called "before sales."

I believe that service delivery or after-sales support is more crucial than sales capability alone. One cannot thrive without the other, although the priority might change depending on the brand's status or business.

AutoPulse Team: Can you give an example from your experience?

Ankush: Sure. Let me share a success story with the MG brand. We introduced MG to the Egyptian market in 2018.

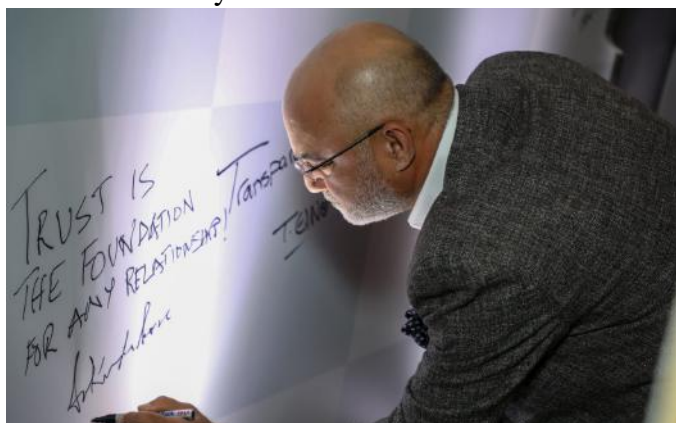
Initially, the market was sceptical about Chinese products, questioning their quality, reliability, and durability. For us, ensuring these aspects, along with robust after-sales support, was paramount to building consumer trust. Before launching, we rigorously tested the product for six to nine months to ensure it met our standards.

When we launched the brand, we made it a point to ensure service readiness and parts availability were beyond 100%. If there was an issue, we fixed it immediately without bothering about warranties. The goal was to keep the customer's vehicle off the road for no more than a few hours. This approach built trust and significantly contributed to our success. Within three years, MG became the number one passenger car brand in Egypt, surpassing established brands like Hyundai, Kia, etc.

AutoPulse Team: How do you balance sales and service in terms of profitability?

Ankush: In Egypt, achieving an 85% to 90% absorption ratio means you're in good shape. This ratio indicates that service operations cover most operational expenses.

For our operations, the minimum fixed coverage ratio is 90%, and the maximum is 165%. This structure allows us to withstand business cycles, ensuring stability even during downturns. The focus on service ensures that even during low sales periods, our fixed operations are covered, providing financial stability.



AutoPulse Highlights

AutoPulse Team: How do you measure the impact of service?

Ankush: The absorption ratio is a critical KPI. If it's high, it indicates good service retention and customer satisfaction. If it's low, it signals issues that need addressing.

In Egypt, our fixed coverage ratio ranges from 90% to 165% across our network, including central structural costs. This means our service operations significantly contribute to covering our fixed costs, allowing us to navigate business cycles effectively.

Aftermarket vs. Dealership Services

AutoPulse Team: What is your take on the balance between aftermarket and dealership services?

Ankush: The balance between aftermarket and dealership services depends significantly on the market's evolution and the consumer's mindset. In some countries, both authorized and aftermarket services can coexist harmoniously, while in others, the market dynamics may not allow for such a balance.

For instance, in markets where the automotive industry is still developing, like Egypt, consumers often prefer aftermarket services due to historical habits and perceptions of cost-effectiveness. However, as products become more technologically advanced, providing the right level of service through aftermarket channels becomes increasingly challenging. The cost of delivering high-quality service and parts through aftermarket channels must be carefully managed to remain competitive.

AutoPulse Team: Can you provide specific examples of how this balance plays out in different markets?

Ankush: Sure. In Egypt, our approach has been to educate consumers about the benefits of authorized service centres while also ensuring that our parts are available through a widespread network of dealers. We have 400 parts dealers in Egypt, which helps create an entry barrier for competition. By ensuring that our genuine and OEM parts are readily available, we support the aftermarket while maintaining a strong presence in the authorized service segment.

In some markets, consumers have historically preferred dealing with aftermarket services, believing they are more cost-effective. However, we continue to educate these consumers, emphasizing the benefits of authorized services, such as quality assurance and reliability. This education is a slow process, but it is crucial for shifting consumer preferences over time.

AutoPulse Team: Are there any strategic moves you're making to capture both markets?

Ankush: Yes, strategically, we aim to dominate both markets by ensuring that our parts are accessible through various channels. This involves maintaining a robust network of authorized service centres while also supplying parts to aftermarket dealers.

We are also exploring opportunities to provide aftermarket services directly. However, the timing for this expansion will depend on our ability to handle the cost side efficiently. Opening aftermarket stores requires a well-established sourcing mechanism for all makes of parts, whether they are genuine, first-level OEM, or second-level OEM. This ensures we can offer cost-effective, high-quality solutions.


AutoPulse Team: What are the biggest challenges you face in this dual approach?

Ankush: The biggest challenge is sourcing parts efficiently and maintaining quality across all channels. For aftermarket services, sourcing the right parts at competitive prices is crucial. This involves dealing with various suppliers and ensuring that the parts meet our quality standards. Additionally, while finding technicians for labour is relatively straightforward, ensuring they are equipped with the right parts and tools remains a challenge.

In summary, the key to succeeding in both the aftermarket and dealership services is a balanced approach that emphasizes quality, accessibility, and consumer education. By addressing these challenges and adapting to technological advancements, we can continue to meet the evolving needs of our customers.

Technology and Digital Transformation in Automotive Services

AutoPulse Team: How is technology changing the automotive service industry, especially post-COVID?



AutoPulse Highlights
Community Initiative by GarageHub

— “ —

Ankush: Number one, it's a no-brainer that if you are not going to be an adopter of technology and make it easier for the customer to have a frictionless experience, you can shut down your business.

— ” —

AutoPulse Team: What challenges do established organizations face in this digital transformation efforts?

Ankush: Initially, it's often a top-down, force-driven change. People resist change, but once they see the benefits, they adapt. It's about aligning business processes with consumer habits, as these habits are now more inclined to digital interaction rather than physical.

For example, younger consumers expect the same efficiency from booking a car service as they do from ordering food online. Businesses must adapt to these new expectations to remain competitive.

AutoPulse Highlights

Digital transformation efforts require a dictatorship to achieve company-wide adoption.

— “
I'll be very honest with you on this one. In the initial stage, sorry to say this, it's a dictatorship forced down. Otherwise, you will keep sitting in the meeting room discussing and only hearing reasons why it cannot work.

— ”
-Ankush

One of the biggest challenges is overcoming internal resistance to change. Often, it requires a forceful push from the top to initiate digital transformation.

People tend to stick to familiar processes, but once they experience the benefits of digital tools, they adapt. For example, employees who resist using new digital systems in the workplace will quickly learn to navigate online platforms for personal tasks, like shopping, when they see convenience.



AutoPulse Team: Can you provide a specific example of how you're addressing these challenges?

Ankush: We enforce digital adoption within the organization. For instance, even if employees initially resist using new digital tools, they adapt quickly when they experience the efficiency and benefits firsthand. It's a process of gradual adoption, starting with enforcement and evolving into a seamless part of the workflow as people recognize the advantages.

Ankush's words to the auto service industry

Ankush: Again, I'm in no position to give advice, but I have a few thoughts. First, we are facing disruption in an industry like we've never seen before. The whole concept of what an automobile means and what it can do for the consumer is changing. We need to adopt this reality and reconfigure ourselves. Look for opportunities where you can continue to grow and enhance your business, rather than asking, "What am I going to do?" or trying to push the responsibility back to your OEMs or internally seeking solutions just to stay alive. The solutions you need to find yourselves, and you must adapt to be good with the changes we are seeing.

The consumer is changing. Their expectations and needs are changing at a phenomenal pace. If we do not gear ourselves and lift up our game, we are nowhere.

AutoPulse Team: Thank you, Mr. Ankush, for sharing your insights. This was one of our best podcasts.

Ankush: Thank you for having me. It's been a pleasure discussing these important topics with you.

BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL AUTO BODY REPAIR FRANCHISE NETWORK

A CANDID CHAT WITH THE CEO OF AUTOMAGIC GROUP



MR HEIN SCHEFFER

CEO of Automagic
group

Hein Scheffer is the founder of Auto Magic, a prominent auto body repair franchise in South Africa. He identified a niche in the non-structural repair market and developed a business strategy that set new industry benchmarks. Under his leadership, Auto Magic expanded into a national network of franchisees, focusing on empowering entrepreneurs to operate their own auto service businesses with robust support.

Early Career and Entrepreneurial Beginnings

AutoPulse Team: Hein, could you start by telling us a little about your background and how you came to be the CEO of Automagic?

Hein: Sure. I began my career with military training and then transitioned into banking. However, I always had an entrepreneurial spirit and found the banking environment too monotonous.

That's when I started Clear Vision, a company focused on replacing broken and cracked windscreens in motor vehicles and trucks. It grew quite large, and I eventually came across Novus, a company specializing in windscreen repair. I bought the distribution rights for Novus in southern Africa and quickly built a network of about 80 agents.

AutoPulse Team: How did you establish Automagic, and what made it successful?

Hein: While working with Novus, I noticed many cars with bumps and scratches. I saw a niche in the market for quick and efficient body repairs. Traditional panel beaters didn't focus on this, so I thought, why not open a few shops dedicated to these repairs?

The idea really started taking shape during a pivotal meeting on 11 September 2001, with Philip Vosloo, Derek Urquhart, and myself.

Philip, who owned a business called Franchise Directions, brought immense expertise in setting up franchise models and had previously headed the Franchising Division at a major South African bank.

Derek, a qualified Chartered Accountant and partner at a major accounting firm, added a financial and operational perspective to the venture.

During that meeting, while we discussed forming a business focused on quick repairs for drivable vehicles, we received the tragic news of the 9/11 attacks. It was a sombre moment, but it further cemented the gravity and determination with which we wanted to build something meaningful. By the end of that meeting, Auto Magic Holdings Pty Ltd was born.

With my contacts in the insurance industry, the idea was well received. We started Automagic in 2001, focusing on repairing drivable vehicles quickly to minimize downtime for our customers. To ensure a national footprint without requiring too many dedicated facilities, we signed up existing panel shops in less populated areas as agents, while setting up our own shops in strategic locations.

One of the biggest innovations we introduced was an electronic platform that connected insurance companies, repair shops, and customers. This platform allowed claims to be uploaded directly by insurers, streamlined the allocation of work to our shops, and gave customers real-time updates on their vehicle's status.

Challenges and Expansion of Franchise Model

AutoPulse Team: What were some of the challenges you faced in growing Automagic?

Hein: One of the main challenges was ensuring consistent quality across all our franchises. We focused heavily on training and certification. Every panel beater and spray painter working with us had to be qualified. We also established a customer care department to handle any complaints or issues quickly. Another challenge was managing the parts supply. We don't keep a warehouse of parts; instead, we have strong relationships with suppliers who understand the urgency of our business.



(Hein Scheffer; Derek Urquhart and Philip Vosloo
- Founders of Auto Magic)

AutoPulse Team: How did you handle the supply chain for parts?

Hein: Through our electronic platform, we manage orders efficiently. Our shops can buy parts directly from trusted suppliers. We also assist them if they face any difficulties. This system ensures we get the parts as quickly as possible, minimizing the time vehicles spend in the shop.

AutoPulse Team: Hein, can you elaborate on the growth trajectory of Automagic and how the franchise model played a role?

Hein: The franchise model was crucial to our growth. We started with a few shops and gradually expanded to about 60 franchises across the country. The key was to find the right partners. We looked for individuals who were not just business-savvy but also shared our commitment to quality and customer satisfaction. Our electronic platform played a significant role in maintaining consistency across all franchises. It allowed us to monitor each shop's performance, ensure they adhered to our standards, and support them in every aspect of the business.

AutoPulse Team: How do you ensure quality and consistency across all your franchises?

Hein: Quality is a top priority for us. Every franchisee undergoes rigorous training, and we only work with certified panel beaters and spray painters. We also conduct regular inspections and audits. Our customer satisfaction index (CSI) is another critical tool. We constantly gather feedback from our customers and address any issues promptly. This continuous loop of feedback and improvement helps us maintain high standards across all our franchises.

AutoPulse Highlights

“The selection of the Franchisee is most important. We developed a personality questionnaire as the first step for everyone who applied. This questionnaire highlighted strong and weak personality points, helping us to select the right people to go into business with. We had a personal interview with each potential franchisee to ensure we could work together long-term.”

AutoPulse Team: What innovations or technological advancements have you introduced to keep Automagic ahead of the competition?

Hein: Our electronic platform is our biggest innovation. It has transformed how we operate, making our processes more efficient and transparent. We've also integrated features that allow for real-time updates, photo documentation of repairs, and seamless communication between all parties involved. This transparency builds trust with our customers and partners. Additionally, we've focused on eco-friendly practices, such as using water-based paints and recycling materials wherever possible.

AutoPulse Team: Can you share more about your approach to sustainability and eco-friendly practices?

Hein: Sustainability is important to us. We've adopted several eco-friendly practices, such as using water-based paints, which are less harmful to the environment. We also recycle materials and ensure that our waste management practices are up to standard. These efforts not only help the environment but also appeal to environmentally conscious customers.

AutoPulse Highlights

Community initiative by GaragePulse

Annual Awards Evening:

"Every year, we have an awards evening. We fly everyone in from all over the country and spend a weekend at the Southern Sun Hotel. We select the franchisee of the year and other award recipients. It's a great opportunity for everyone to meet in person and build strong relationships."

Customer Satisfaction and Insurance Relationships

AutoPulse Team: How do you manage relationships with insurance companies, and what makes them choose Automagic?

Hein: Our relationship with insurance companies is built on trust and performance. We have annual meetings to agree on labour rates, parts markups, and service standards.

Our high customer satisfaction scores also play a significant role. Insurance companies want to ensure their clients are happy, and our track record shows that we can deliver. We provide regular updates and detailed reports to insurance companies, which helps in maintaining transparency and trust.

AutoPulse Team: What is your current customer satisfaction index, and how do you strive to improve it?

Hein: Our target is always above 80%, and we've been successful in maintaining that. We achieve this through constant communication, quality checks, and a dedicated customer care team that handles any issues immediately.

We also gather feedback from customers to identify areas for improvement. Our goal is to make every customer's experience seamless and satisfactory.

Streamlining Operations

AutoPulse Team: Hein, you mentioned earlier about the importance of operational efficiency. Can you elaborate on how you streamline operations at Automagic?

Hein: Streamlining operations is all about using technology effectively. Our electronic platform is central to this. It allows us to manage everything from booking appointments to tracking repairs and handling invoicing. By digitizing these processes, we've reduced the chances of errors and made the workflow more efficient. Each step of the repair process is documented, and all stakeholders have access to real-time updates. This transparency helps in maintaining accountability and ensures that everyone is on the same page.

AutoPulse Team: How do you handle the logistical challenges, especially with parts procurement?

Hein: Parts procurement is indeed a challenge, but we've built strong relationships with suppliers over the years. We don't maintain large inventories to avoid storage costs and potential wastage. Instead, we rely on our network of trusted suppliers who understand our need for quick turnaround times. Our platform also helps in managing orders efficiently, ensuring that parts are ordered and delivered as quickly as possible.

AutoPulse Highlights

Community initiatives by GarageMag

No Inventory Strategy:

"We don't have a warehouse full of parts. We operate with no inventory. We have offices with desks and computers, and we order and manage everything from there."

Customer-Centric Approach

AutoPulse Team: Customer satisfaction seems to be a core focus for Automagic. How do you ensure that your customers are always happy?

Hein: Our customer-centric approach is rooted in understanding and meeting the needs of our customers. We ensure that every interaction with Automagic is positive and hassle-free. From the moment a customer contacts us to the final delivery of their repaired vehicle, we strive to provide a seamless experience. Our customer care team is always ready to assist with any queries or concerns. We also make sure that customers are kept informed throughout the repair process, which helps in managing their expectations and ensuring their satisfaction.

AutoPulse Team: What role does feedback play in your operations?

Hein: Feedback is crucial for continuous improvement. We regularly gather feedback from our customers through surveys and direct interactions. This feedback helps us identify areas where we can improve and also reinforces what we're doing right.

We take every piece of feedback seriously and act on it promptly. This approach has helped us maintain high customer satisfaction levels and build long-term relationships with our clients.

AutoPulse Team: What are some specific innovations or initiatives that have significantly improved the customer experience at Automagic?

Hein: One of our key innovations is the real-time update feature on our electronic platform. Customers receive updates on the status of their vehicle repairs, which keeps them informed and reduces anxiety. We've also implemented a photo documentation system where before and after photos of the vehicle are shared with the customer. This transparency builds trust and ensures that customers can see the quality of our work. Additionally, we offer a satisfaction guarantee, where we follow up with customers after the repair to ensure they are completely satisfied with our service.

AutoPulse Team: Could you elaborate on the satisfaction guarantee and how it works?

Hein: Our satisfaction guarantee is a testament to our commitment to quality. After a vehicle repair is completed, we ask customers to fill out a satisfaction survey. If there are any issues or if the customer is not fully satisfied, our customer care team contacts them immediately to resolve the problem. We make sure to address any concerns promptly and, if necessary, bring the vehicle back for further repairs at no additional cost. This approach has helped us maintain high customer satisfaction and build a loyal customer base.

AutoPulse Highlights

Community initiatives by GarageMag

Maintaining Franchise Health:

"We monitor each franchise closely through our electronic platform. Complaints and compliments are tracked, and we address issues promptly. This helps us maintain a healthy relationship with our franchises and ensure consistent quality."

Training and Development

AutoPulse Team: Training seems to be an important aspect of maintaining quality at Automagic.

How do you approach training and development for your staff and franchisees?

Hein: Training is indeed crucial for us. We ensure that every panel beater and spray painter working with us is certified and goes through rigorous training. For new franchisees, we provide comprehensive training at our head office, covering everything from our electronic platform to customer service standards. We also conduct on-the-job training where our team goes to the new shop and works closely with their staff until they are fully capable of maintaining our standards. Regular training sessions and workshops are held to keep everyone updated on the latest techniques and technologies in vehicle repair.

AutoPulse Team: How do you handle the ongoing development and keeping up with new technologies?

Hein: We stay abreast of new technologies and innovations in the automotive repair industry. Our partnerships with major parts and paint suppliers play a big role in this. They provide us with the latest information and training on new products and methods. Additionally, we have an IT team dedicated to continuously improving our electronic platform, ensuring it meets the evolving needs of our business and our customers.



AutoPulse Highlights

Comprehensive Support:

"Franchisees receive comprehensive support, from setting up the business to ongoing training. We ensure they understand the administrative side and the quality standards. This support is key to maintaining high service standards across all franchises."

AutoPulse Team: Beyond business success, how does Automagic contribute to the community and the automotive industry?

Hein: We believe in giving back to the community and contributing to the industry. Automagic regularly participates in community service projects and supports local initiatives. For instance, we have partnered with several vocational training centres to provide training and job opportunities for young people interested in automotive repair. This not only helps the community but also ensures a steady supply of skilled workers for the industry. We also collaborate with industry associations to advocate for higher standards and better practices in vehicle repair.

AutoPulse Team: Can you share an example of a community initiative that Automagic has been involved in?

Hein: One of our notable initiatives is our partnership with local schools and vocational training centres. We provide scholarships and training opportunities for students interested in automotive repair. Additionally, we have a mentorship program where experienced technicians mentor young apprentices, helping them gain the skills and confidence needed to succeed in the industry. These efforts have made a significant impact, both for the individuals involved and for the industry as a whole.

Leadership and Vision for the Future

AutoPulse Team: Hein, you mentioned earlier that you've recently stepped back from the CEO role. Can you tell us more about this transition and what it means for Automagic?

Hein: Yes, after 23 years at the helm, I decided it was time to step back and let new leadership take over. Philip Volsoo, who has been with us from the beginning, is now the CEO. Philip brings a wealth of experience and a deep understanding of our business. He was instrumental in setting up our franchise model and has a strong vision for the future. I am confident that under his leadership, Automagic will continue to thrive and innovate.

AutoPulse Team: What will your role be moving forward?

Hein: I will be taking on the role of Chairman, focusing on strategic growth and new business opportunities. This transition allows me to step back from the day-to-day operations and concentrate on the bigger picture. I will still be involved in the business, providing guidance and support to Philip and the rest of the team. It's an exciting time, and I'm looking forward to seeing how the company evolves under new leadership.

AutoPulse Team: What is your vision for the future of Automagic?

Hein: My vision for Automagic has always been to set the standard for quality and efficiency in vehicle body repairs. Moving forward, we will continue to focus on expanding our franchise network and exploring new markets. Innovation will remain at the core of our strategy. We will keep enhancing our electronic platform, adopting new technologies, and finding better ways to serve our customers. Sustainability will also be a key focus.

AutoPulse Team: Do you have any specific goals or milestones you want Automagic to achieve in the next five years?

Hein: In the next five years, I would like to see Automagic become the go-to name for vehicle body repairs not just in South Africa but potentially in other regions as well. We plan to increase our market share, enhance our service offerings, and maintain our high customer satisfaction rates. Achieving these goals will require continuous improvement and a strong commitment from our entire team. I'm confident that with Philip at the helm and the talented team we have in place, we can achieve these milestones.

AutoPulse Team: Can you share any recent success stories or milestones that Automagic has achieved?

Hein: One of our recent successes was expanding our franchise network to over 60 locations across South Africa. This growth has allowed us to serve more customers and reduce repair times significantly. Additionally, we recently received an award for excellence in customer service from a leading insurance company, which was a proud moment for our entire team. These milestones reflect our commitment to quality and customer satisfaction.



Reflections on the Journey

AutoPulse Team: Reflecting on your journey, what are you most proud of?

Hein: I'm most proud of the impact Automagic has had on the industry and the community. We've built a business that prioritizes quality and customer satisfaction. We've created job opportunities and contributed to the local economy. Our innovative approach has set new standards in the vehicle repair industry. Seeing how far we've come and the positive difference we've made is incredibly rewarding. I'm also proud of the team we've built – a group of dedicated and talented individuals who share our vision and commitment to excellence.

AutoPulse Team: What advice would you give to aspiring entrepreneurs in the automotive industry?

Hein: My advice would be to stay committed to quality and customer service. Understand the needs of your customers and always strive to exceed their expectations. Innovation is key – don't be afraid to adopt new technologies and methods. Build strong relationships with your partners and suppliers, as these relationships are crucial for success. Finally, surround yourself with a talented and dedicated team. Success is not a solo journey; it's achieved through collaboration and shared vision.

Personal Insights and Legacy

AutoPulse Team: Hein, how do you balance your professional life with personal interests and hobbies?

Hein: Balancing professional and personal life can be challenging, but it's essential for long-term success and well-being. I make it a point to dedicate time to my family and hobbies.

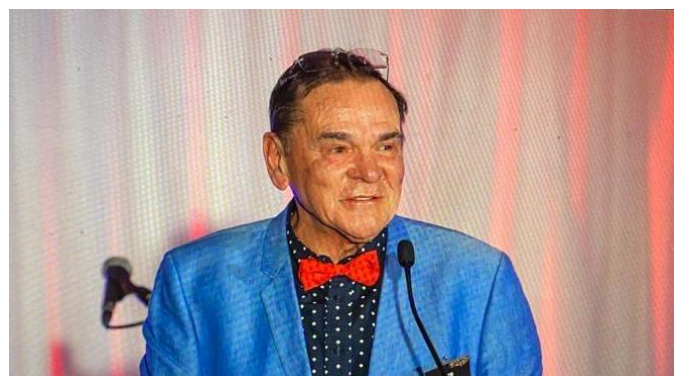
I enjoy outdoor activities like hiking and fishing, which help me relax and recharge. It's important to have a support system, and my family has been incredibly supportive throughout my journey. Taking time for personal interests also allows me to come back to work with a fresh perspective and renewed energy.

AutoPulse Team: Looking back, is there anything you would have done differently in your career?

Hein: Every journey has its ups and downs, and there are always lessons to be learned. If I could change anything, I would have embraced technology even earlier. The electronic platform has been a game-changer for us, and integrating it sooner could have accelerated our growth. However, I believe every experience, whether good or bad, has contributed to where we are today. The key is to learn from mistakes and continually strive for improvement.

AutoPulse Team: Hein, thank you for sharing your incredible journey with us. It's been a pleasure to learn about the founding and growth of Automagic, and we're excited to see what the future holds for you and your company.

Hein: Thank you. It's been a pleasure to share my story. I appreciate the opportunity to reflect on our journey and discuss our vision for the future. I'm confident that Automagic will continue to innovate and lead the way in the vehicle repair industry.



GETTING INSIDE THE MIND OF A LEADING AUTO SERVICE GIANT

A MINI-INTERVIEW WITH DAVID MCNAMARA -
AFTERSALES DIRECTOR OF AL-FUTTAIM



MR DAVID MCNAMARA

Director of Tier 2 After
Sales at Al-Futtaim

A visionary leader in automotive after-sales, David McNamara is the driving force behind Al-Futtaim's Tier 2 Aftersales transformation.

With decades of experience across OE, dealership, and aftermarket channels, he is renowned for pioneering customer-centric innovations and shaping the future of the industry.

AutoPulse Team: Today, we're honoured to have David with us. David is the highly accomplished after-sales director of Al Futtaim's Tier 2 service network, Autocenters, with extensive experience transforming vehicle servicing into a seamless, customer-centric experience.

While David currently serves in a leadership role at one of the region's most respected automotive groups, today's discussion will focus on his vision and expertise. David, thank you for joining us.

David: Thank you for having me! I'm excited to share some of the trends, strategies, and ideas shaping the future of automotive after-sales. It's an exciting time for the industry, and I'm thrilled to be part of this conversation.

The Shift in Customer Expectations

AutoPulse Team:

David, let's start with the customer. Automotive after-sales hasn't traditionally been considered customer-friendly. How have expectations evolved in recent years?

David: You're absolutely right—historically, after-sales has been seen as a necessary inconvenience. But the world has changed. Customers today value their time more than ever, and they expect services to fit seamlessly into their lives.

We've seen this across industries: from food delivery to online shopping, the trend is clear—services must adapt to customers' lifestyles, not the other way around. In automotive after-sales, this means rethinking the entire process.

Take regions with challenging climates or limited public transport. For many customers, servicing a vehicle requires extra costs—taxis, second vehicles, or even taking time off work. These inconveniences simply don't align with today's on-demand culture.

Customers now want options like mobile servicing, extended hours, or the ability to drop off their car at a location that fits into their daily routine.

Rethinking Service Models

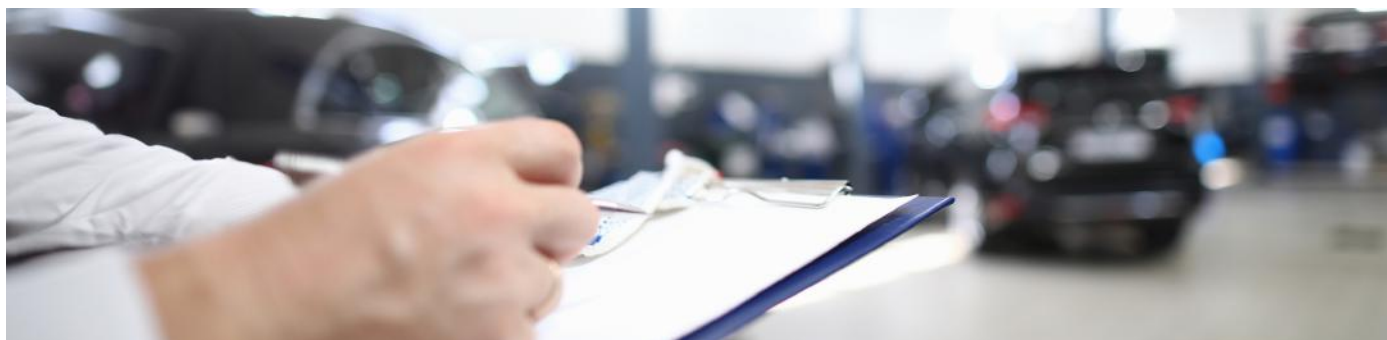
AutoPulse Team: So, convenience is clearly the driving force. What specific changes have you made to align after-sales with these expectations?

David: It all starts with understanding what the customer truly values. Through focus groups and customer surveys, we identified a few key priorities: convenience, transparency, and control.

One of the most impactful changes we've made is introducing mobile servicing units. These units bring the service directly to the customer, whether they're at home or at work. This eliminates the need for drop-offs and completely removes one of the biggest pain points.

For customers who prefer visiting a service center, we've strategically placed locations in high-traffic areas like shopping malls. This allows customers to make productive use of their time—grabbing groceries, seeing a movie, or enjoying a meal—while their car is being serviced.

It's about integrating maintenance into their lifestyle. Customers no longer need to choose between essential errands and vehicle servicing—they can do both simultaneously.



The Role of Technology in Transparency and Trust

AutoPulse Team: The mention of transparency and control is interesting. How does technology play a role in creating a better customer experience?

David: Technology is at the heart of what we do. One of our most innovative tools is the electronic vehicle health check (eVHC). This isn't just a diagnostic tool—it's a way to involve customers in the process.

Here's how it works: When a customer brings in their vehicle, they receive a digital report detailing its current condition. The report includes a health score that changes in real time as the customer approves or declines recommended work.

For example, if the vehicle's score starts at 65 and the customer approves a brake pad replacement, the score might increase to 80. It gamifies the process, giving customers a sense of achievement and making the experience more engaging.

Transparency is key. Customers can see exactly what's being recommended and why, particularly when it comes to a safety-critical area on their vehicle.

This builds trust, which is critical in an industry where scepticism about upselling has been a long-standing issue.

Integrating Mobility Solutions

AutoPulse Team: Beyond transparency, how do you address the logistical challenges customers face, like arranging transportation during servicing?

David: Mobility solutions are a game-changer. We've partnered with third-party mobility apps to offer customers a range of options. Whether it's a rental car, rideshare service, or even a shuttle, customers can choose what works best for them.

For instance, a customer who drops off their vehicle at a mall-based service centre can take advantage of a complimentary shuttle to nearby locations. Alternatively, they can use a rideshare voucher to get back to work or home.

The idea is to make the process seamless. Customers shouldn't feel stranded or inconvenienced while their vehicle is being serviced. By offering mobility options, we're removing another major barrier to a positive after-sales experience.

Tackling the EV Challenge

AutoPulse Team: Let's pivot to a topic that's transforming the industry: electric vehicles (EVs). How is the rise of EVs impacting after-sales strategies?

David: EVs are revolutionizing the automotive landscape, and after-sales is no exception. On one hand, EVs have fewer moving parts, which means fewer traditional maintenance requirements. On the other hand, they come with their own set of challenges—battery diagnostics, software updates, and specialized tools, to name a few.

What's particularly interesting is the emergence of smaller EV manufacturers, especially from China. These brands are gaining market share with longer warranties and extended service intervals. However, many of them lack a robust after-sales network, which creates an opportunity for us.



We've invested heavily in preparing for this shift. Every new service centre is equipped with dedicated EV service bays. These bays include specialized tools and diagnostic equipment designed specifically for EVs. We are adding to Al Futtaim's overall position as a market-leading EV mobility provider in the UAE.

Training has been another focus area. Our technicians undergo certification programs to ensure they're equipped to handle everything from battery health checks to advanced maintenance.

We've also trained our advisors to educate customers on EV-specific concerns, such as battery degradation and charging options.

Combining Activities for a Seamless Experience

AutoPulse Team: You mentioned earlier about integrating maintenance into customers' routines. Can you give us more examples of how this works in practice?

David: Sure. Let's say a customer needs an oil change. Traditionally, this would require a dedicated trip to the service center. But with our approach, they can schedule their service at a mall location.

While their car is being worked on, they can catch a movie, grab a coffee, or shop for groceries.

This concept of combining activities transforms maintenance from a chore into an opportunity. Customers feel like they're maximizing their time, and that's a powerful value proposition.

For customers using our mobile servicing units, the experience is even more seamless. We come to them, allowing them to focus on their priorities while we take care of the rest. We also open extended hours to cater for shift workers and allow maintenance to be carried out during the evening. Historically many vehicle owners would have to lose part of their weekend to complete their maintenance requirements.

Preparing for the uncertain Future of the industry

AutoPulse Team: David, the automotive industry is evolving rapidly. How do you future-proof an after-sales business in such a dynamic environment?

David: Future-proofing is about staying ahead of trends while staying true to the customer. Here are four key strategies:



- **Invest in Innovation:** Whether it's EV infrastructure, digital tools, or mobility solutions, investing in the future is non-negotiable. This ensures you're ready for new challenges before they arise.
- **Embrace AI:** Use systems that learn and adapt, such as EVHC systems that just through taking a picture can identify if a component has failed, using the database of similar previous recommendations to make educated evaluations of a vehicles condition
- **Focus on Training:** The automotive industry will continue to evolve, and so will the skills required to succeed. By continuously upskilling our workforce, we ensure our teams are prepared for whatever comes next.
- **Adaptability:** Flexibility is critical. Whether it's shifting customer preferences or new market entrants, being agile allows us to respond effectively.

AutoPulse Team: David, this has been an enlightening conversation. Thank you for sharing your insights and strategies with us.

David: Thank you—it's been a pleasure. I'm excited to see how the industry continues to evolve, and I hope these ideas inspire others to innovate.



AutoPulse Highlights
Community initiated by Saragomug

“Future-proofing is about staying ahead of trends while staying true to the customer”
-David McNamara.

Key Takeaways for the Auto Service Industry

AutoPulse Team: David, what advice would you give to others in the industry looking to innovate and stay competitive?

David: Listen to your customers. Their needs are constantly evolving, and staying attuned to those changes is the key to long-term success.

Don't be afraid to experiment with new models, whether it's mobile servicing, digital tools, or new training programs. The industry is in a state of flux, and innovation is what will separate the leaders from the laggards.

Most importantly, focus on creating value. Every decision you make—whether it's about pricing, location, or technology—should enhance the customer experience.

(Image source - Khaleej Times)

The future of the Auto Service Industry - answered by Industry Experts

As the automotive service industry evolves, it's crucial to understand what lies ahead and how today's service centers can position themselves for future success. This section brings together expert insights to explore the next generation of workshops and the key initiatives that will define the future of service centers.

We sat down with industry leaders to discuss the changing landscape of automotive services and the steps necessary to stay ahead of the curve. Their thoughts provide valuable guidance on how service centers can adapt, grow, and thrive in an increasingly digital and customer-centric environment.

In the following mini-interviews, we dive into their perspectives on what the future holds for service centers, how they can evolve into tomorrow's leaders, and the innovations they are focusing on to remain competitive. From embracing digital transformation and predictive maintenance to enhancing customer experience and fostering collaborations with key industry players, these leaders share the strategies that will shape next-gen workshops.

AutoService 2.0: The Future of Seamless, Customer-Centric Workshops!

After rapid discussions with 9+ industry leaders, a shared vision of the future for service centers has emerged: a seamless fusion of convenience, technology, and customer-first innovation. Leaders agree that tomorrow's workshops must become one-stop solutions, offering diverse services under one roof to save time and effort for increasingly busy customers. This shift goes beyond mere convenience, aiming to transform service centers into spaces where customers feel comfortable and valued, with amenities like coffee bars, gaming zones, and workspaces enhancing the overall experience.

Technology stands at the heart of this transformation. AI and predictive maintenance will not only drive efficiency but also empower workshops to provide transparency and proactive care. Leaders highlighted the growing need for real-time diagnostics, digital tools for communication, and visual evaluations to build trust and confidence. Franchise expansion, collaborative partnerships with OEMs and insurers, and a focus on parts availability will also play critical roles in meeting operational challenges and scaling services without compromising quality.

Preparing for the rise of electric and autonomous vehicles adds another layer of complexity, requiring continuous skill development and access to advanced tools. Leaders stressed that workshops must adapt quickly to these changes to remain relevant.

The overarching theme is clear: service centers must evolve into highly efficient, customer-focused ecosystems that leverage technology and collaboration to deliver fast, reliable, and personalized services. By aligning innovation with the needs of both customers and the industry, these next-generation workshops promise to set a new benchmark for the automotive aftersales experience.

It is time for AutoService2.0



Wajih Al Hassan

GM and Business Head, Petromin Express UAE

Wajih is a results-driven leader spearheading the Sales and Operations for Petromin Express across UAE, Pakistan, and Egypt. He oversees strategic growth, profitability, and operational excellence while mentoring multicultural teams. Known for launching innovative projects like OE warranty services and female-run tire centers, Wajih is passionate about delivering exceptional customer experiences in automotive aftermarket services. With expertise in business turnaround, strategic planning, and team development, he is dedicated to driving value for stakeholders and fostering industry innovation.

AutoPulse Team: What does the future of service centers/Next-Gen workshops look like to you?

Wajih: The future of service centers is essentially about maximizing the utility of every square foot of retail space—making sure it's either generating revenue or improving the customer experience. For me, a next-gen workshop must provide a **one-window solution**, addressing all the customer's needs under one roof.

Think about it: today's customers are time-starved. They don't want to visit one place for an oil change, another for a car wash, and yet another for window tinting or other maintenance tasks. The future lies in offering **everything from start to finish** in one place—saving customers' time and effort.

But convenience alone isn't enough. We need to rethink the experience itself. A visit to a service center is often seen as inconvenient or frustrating. That has to change. By providing amenities like



The future of the automotive service industry!

coffee machines, gaming zones, or even workspaces with laptop charging stations, we can transform the experience.

Imagine a service center where customers feel welcome and even enjoy their time there. They could sip coffee, catch up on work, or play a quick game while waiting. This reduces the “waiting pain” and makes the entire process feel like a natural extension of their day rather than an interruption.

The next-gen workshop must be a space where customers feel their needs are met efficiently while also having a positive, comfortable experience. That’s the future I see.

AutoPulse Team: How can today’s service centers become tomorrow’s leaders in the industry?

Wajih: Leadership in this industry comes down to two key things: **innovation** and a **customer-first approach**. To stay ahead, service centers must evolve with the changing times.

At **Petromin Express UAE**, we’ve already begun this transformation. We’ve moved from being just a quick oil service provider to offering a **comprehensive multi-care model**. Under this model, customers can access every service they need for their vehicle in one place. It’s seamless, transparent, and efficient—everything a modern customer expects.



The future of the automotive service industry!

We're also focusing on creating a better in-store experience. For instance, we've redesigned our waiting areas. Customers can now use **bar stools and laptop charging stations** to work while their car is being serviced. And of course, they can enjoy **complimentary coffee and tea**. These changes may seem small, but they make a big difference in how customers perceive the time spent at our service centers.

The goal is to ensure customers feel valued and comfortable. If they leave feeling like their time was well-spent, they're far more likely to return. It's all about turning a routine service into a **memorable experience**.

AutoPulse Team: Are you ready for the changes coming to the automotive service world in the next few years?

Wajih: Absolutely. We're not just ready—we're actively preparing. Change is inevitable, and we see it as an opportunity to innovate and grow.

One area we're focusing on is **digitally managing the entire customer journey**. From the moment a customer engages with our brand—whether through a chatbot, a digital ad, or our website—their journey is guided seamlessly. Once a booking is made, the process is handed over to our **garage management system**, which ensures efficiency and transparency throughout the service.

But the journey doesn't end there. After the service is completed, we follow up with a thank-you message and a request for feedback. This continuous engagement not only helps us improve but also builds trust and loyalty.

We're also treating our service centers as **retail channels**. Customers today are used to seamless, connected experiences when they shop online or visit a store. Why should their automotive service experience be any different? By integrating technology and creating a streamlined process, we're aligning with the expectations of today's digital-savvy customers.





AutoPulse Team: Any specific initiatives that stand out in your journey toward becoming future-ready?

Wajih: One initiative we're particularly proud of is our focus on **customer journey management**. We're developing a chatbot system that will guide the customer through every stage—from initial contact to booking, service updates, and feedback collection. This ensures that the experience is smooth and connected from start to finish.

Additionally, our **multi-care model** is a game-changer. By offering all vehicle maintenance services under one roof, we eliminate the hassle for our customers. And we're doing this with a focus on transparency and speed—two factors that are critical in building customer trust.

On the in-store side, we've made several changes to improve the ambiance. Customers can now work, relax, or simply enjoy a good cup of coffee while their vehicle is being serviced. These small touches go a long way in creating a positive perception of our brand.

AutoPulse Highlights

We're enhancing the customer journey with a chatbot system for seamless service and introducing a multi-care model that offers all vehicle services under one roof. Additionally, we've improved in-store ambiance to provide a more comfortable experience for customers.

AutoPulse Team: In closing, how would you summarize the journey toward creating next-gen workshops?

Wajih: OIt's not just about fixing cars—it's about creating a complete experience that customers value and trust. By focusing on convenience, innovation, and customer satisfaction, we can redefine what it means to be a service center in today's world.

At **Petromin Express UAE**, we're not just keeping up with change; we're driving it. The next-gen workshop isn't a concept for the future—it's something we're building today.



Prem Anand Kumar

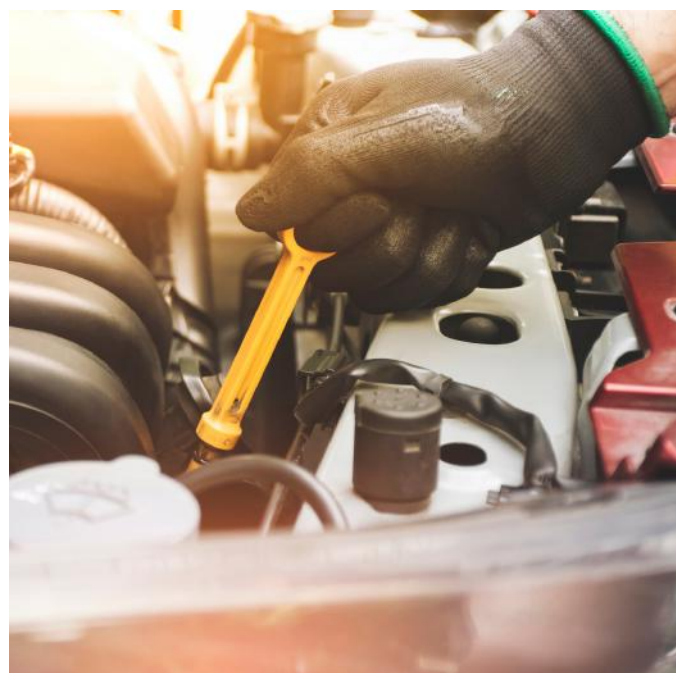
Business GM of Auto Fix by Bahwan International Group (BIG)

Prem Anand Kumar Nallasamy is a visionary leader in the automotive aftersales industry, heading AutoFix UAE Operations at Bahwan International Group. He excels in driving operational excellence, aligning business strategies, and ensuring customer satisfaction across multi-brand workshops. Prem is celebrated for his strategic innovation and commitment to empowering high-performing teams.

AutoPulse Team: What does the future of service centers/Next-Gen workshops look like to you?

Prem: The future of service centers will revolve around five key areas that will transform how workshops operate and serve their customers.

- Digital transformation is already reshaping the industry. Customers increasingly prefer remote services to save time, and many will avoid visiting a workshop altogether. Instead, they expect fully digital communication from start to finish. At Auto Fix, we've already started offering digital evaluations through video. For example, we share pre- and post-repair inspection reports with customers via video, providing high transparency. This kind of visual communication builds trust and confidence, ensuring customers stay informed about the work being done.
- Predictive maintenance will play a pivotal role. With advancements in AI, customers want to know about upcoming maintenance requirements in advance. This allows them to prepare and plan, making their experience smoother and more efficient.



The future of the automotive service industry!

- Franchise expansion will drive growth. Service centers will increasingly adopt franchise models to expand their network across regions without heavy investment. Once a robust operational model is established, franchising becomes a natural step to scale and strengthen brand presence.
- Collaborative partnerships will gain importance. Workshops will collaborate closely with OEMs and third-party providers for technical updates, part numbers, and supply chain optimization. Similarly, partnerships with insurance providers will streamline processes and broaden service offerings.
- Parts availability will be a major focus. Multi-brand workshops face significant challenges in sourcing quality parts for a wide range of vehicles. The future lies in forging strong partnerships with OEMs to ensure the availability of high-quality parts, which will be crucial for delivering reliable services.



To sum up, digital transformation, predictive diagnostics, franchise expansion, collaborative partnerships, and a robust parts supply chain will define the next-gen workshop. Additionally, workshops must be ready to service electric and hybrid vehicles, which are already becoming mainstream. The future is about staying agile and evolving with the changing demands of the automotive world.

AutoPulse Highlights

Service centers will embrace digital tools, AI-driven predictive maintenance, and franchise expansion, offering video evaluations for transparency and partnering with OEMs for quality parts and services.

AutoPulse Team: How can today's service centers become tomorrow's leaders in the industry?

Prem: Service centers that prioritize five critical areas will position themselves as leaders in the future

- Adopting a customer-centric approach is vital. Service centers must cater to customer needs with high transparency. For instance, offering service history through a digital app is becoming essential. Customers should be able to access their vehicle's service history at any time, which builds trust. Additionally, implementing loyalty programs will encourage repeat business and strengthen relationships.
- Investing in training is key. Companies that heavily invest in technical training and soft skills for their staff will excel in service quality. Trained employees are better equipped to deliver exceptional customer experiences and adapt to new technologies.
- Focusing on electric and hybrid vehicles (EVs) will be a game-changer. Workshops that prepare for EV servicing and integrate telematics solutions for fleet customers will gain a competitive edge.

The future of the automotive service industry!

- Establishing a strong digital presence is non-negotiable. Service centers must be active on social media and leverage digital tools to connect with customers effectively. A strong online presence enhances visibility and drives customer engagement.
- Strategic partnerships will differentiate leaders from followers. Workshops that collaborate with OEMs for parts and technical updates, as well as tech companies for cutting-edge solutions, will stay ahead of the curve.
- We've already begun expanding through franchise partnerships. This approach allows us to scale efficiently while maintaining consistent service quality.
- We're heavily investing in training and technology updates. We believe in the importance of regularly upskilling our teams to stay ahead of industry trends and deliver exceptional service. This includes preparing for the growing EV and hybrid market, ensuring we're equipped to handle these vehicles as they become more common.

By focusing on these areas—customer-centricity, training, EV readiness, digital presence, and strategic collaborations—today's service centers can secure their position as industry leaders in the years to come.

AutoPulse Team: Are you ready for the changes coming to the automotive service world in the next few years?

Prem: Absolutely. At Auto Fix, we are proactively preparing for the future and have already initiated several key strategies.

- We're enhancing our ERP system to address evolving customer expectations. While our existing SAP ERP system has strong features, we're seeking a more advanced solution that can better connect with customers, enhance confidence, and provide valuable data analytics. This will also integrate with predictive maintenance tools, enabling us to offer seamless services.
- We are strengthening our collaboration with OEM suppliers to ensure a reliable supply of high-quality parts. Parts availability remains a major challenge, and we are actively working on solutions to address this.

We view these changes not as challenges but as opportunities to innovate and grow. The future is bright, and we're excited to lead the way.

AutoPulse Team: What's your final thought on the future of service centers?

Prem: For me, the next-gen workshop is not just a vision—it's a carefully built strategy. At Auto Fix, we're tackling industry challenges head-on with targeted investments in technology, partnerships, and customer-centric operations. We have already strategically expanded to 7 locations across the UAE. From predictive maintenance to EV readiness, we're preparing for every shift in the industry. Our approach is simple: anticipate the future and make it work for our customers and partners today.





Majed Almadi

**Board Member, Acdelco Service Center
Spare Parts Retail Manager, AlJomaih
Automotive Company**

Majed is a seasoned automotive professional with over seven years of experience in industrial sales, decision-making, and retail management. Currently, as a Spare Parts Retail Manager at AlJomaih Automotive, he oversees the operations of 8 sales channels, ensuring optimal product availability, quality, and profitability.

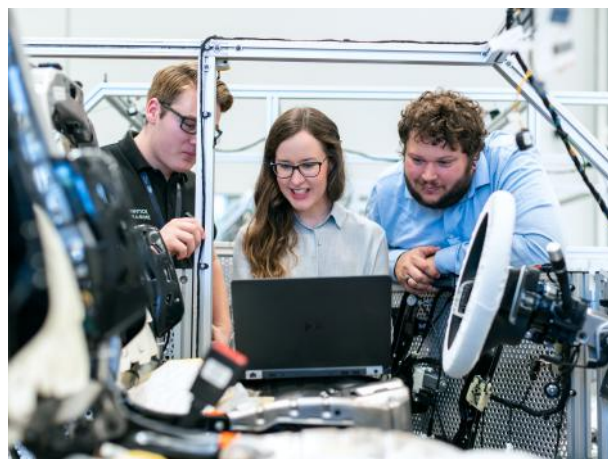
Majed has a proven track record in implementing effective marketing and sales strategies, as well as delivering exceptional customer service.

AutoPulse Team: Majed, what does the future of a connected aftersales ecosystem look like to you?

Majed Almadi: The future of a connected aftersales ecosystem is transformative. With advancements like artificial intelligence (AI) now being utilized in almost every business, the automotive aftermarket has a real opportunity to become more efficient in terms of cost, time, and customer satisfaction.

When we talk about service centers and their coordination with parts departments, the operation today still depends heavily on fast and accurate communication. After diagnosing a vehicle, the parts required need to be identified and cross-checked with inventory. Often, this process involves a lot of back-and-forth communication between the service team and parts department, which can lead to delays or errors.

AI can play a significant role in transforming this process. For example, after a diagnosis is completed, AI can immediately generate an accurate parts list and check inventory levels. If the required parts are unavailable, it can calculate lead times and initiate an order from suppliers. By doing so, the communication time is reduced, and the risk of errors in identifying and ordering parts is minimized.



The future of the automotive service industry!

What's even more interesting is how AI can predict how long a vehicle will need to stay in the service center. By analyzing parts availability and lead times, AI provides a realistic estimate for repairs. This not only improves planning and resource allocation but also enhances customer trust, as they receive more accurate timelines.

In short, the future will be about creating seamless workflows between service centers and parts departments. AI and similar technologies can help eliminate inefficiencies and ensure that customers receive a faster, more reliable service experience.

AutoPulse Team: How do you manage central inventory to ensure essential parts are always available while avoiding overstock, especially during peak demand?

Majed Almadi: Inventory management is a delicate balance. On one side, you need to ensure that essential parts are always available. On the other, you have to avoid overstock, which ties up capital and creates inefficiencies. The solution to this is demand forecasting.

The supply chain department must prepare safety stock, which acts as a buffer to meet unexpected demand. To calculate safety stock, we use a formula based on three factors: lead time demand, reorder points, and maximum daily usage. This ensures that even during periods of high demand, like seasonal peaks, we're able to maintain availability without excessive stock.

Another important strategy is frequently replenishing fast-moving items. Parts like oil filters and brake pads are critical for workshops, so we ensure they're always restocked promptly to avoid shortages.

AI is also an invaluable tool in this area. When accurate data is entered into the system, AI can

analyze patterns, predict demand, and recommend stock levels for each region. For instance, during peak summer months, demand for air conditioning parts typically increases. AI can help us adjust our stock levels proactively to meet this seasonal need.

By combining safety stock preparation, frequent replenishment of high-demand items, and AI-driven insights, we can strike the right balance between availability and efficiency.

AutoPulse Team: What strategies do you use to maintain strong relationships with suppliers and negotiate favorable terms for parts procurement?

Majed Almadi: Maintaining strong relationships with suppliers is one of the most important aspects of running an efficient automotive operation. At Aljomaih Automotive Company, we've always placed a high value on these partnerships.

For example, our relationship with General Motors (GM) spans over 50 years. Throughout this time, we've consistently met key performance indicators (KPIs), grown GM's market share, and enhanced the brand's awareness in our region. This track record of reliability has earned us unwavering support from GM whenever we've needed it.

AutoPulse Highlights

"Strategic supplier partnerships and data-driven inventory management are at the heart of operational excellence. By forecasting demand, aligning on supply chain expectations, and categorizing SKUs based on movement, businesses can ensure consistent quality, prioritize shipments during peak seasons, and meet customer needs without overstocking. This approach not only minimizes inefficiencies but also strengthens trust and creates a sustainable operation."

The future of the automotive service industry!

These partnerships are built on mutual respect and trust. By meeting or exceeding the expectations of our suppliers, we ensure that they see us as dependable partners. This is critical when negotiating favorable terms, whether it's about pricing, lead times, or payment schedules.

For us, it's not just about getting the best deal in the short term. We work closely with our suppliers to forecast demand and align on supply chain expectations. This collaborative approach allows us to secure priority shipments during peak demand periods while ensuring consistency in quality and availability.

Building and maintaining these relationships takes time and effort, but they're essential for creating a sustainable and efficient operation.

AutoPulse Team: What factors do you consider when deciding the range of SKUs to stock regularly?

Majed Almadi: Deciding which SKUs to stock is a key part of our inventory strategy. As a car dealership, we focus heavily on fast-moving items that are essential for routine services and maintenance. These are the parts that customers and workshops rely on most, so their availability is non-negotiable.

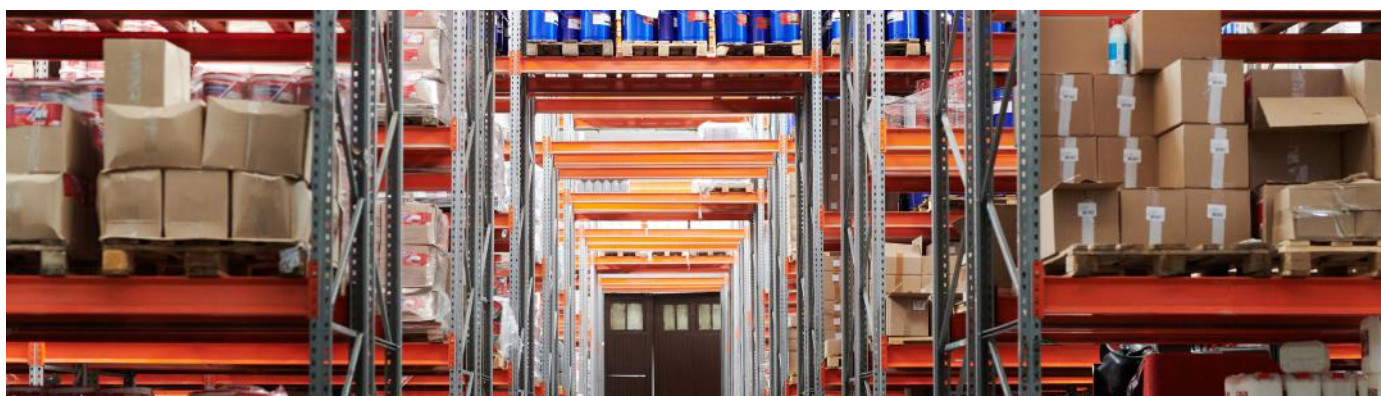
We use a system to categorize our inventory based on purchase history and demand frequency:

- **Ultra-fast-moving items:** These are parts like air filters and oil filters that are in constant demand and need frequent replenishment.
- **Medium-moving items:** These include parts like condensers, which are used less often but still play a significant role in certain repairs.
- **Slow-moving items:** Specialty parts that may be required occasionally but aren't in high demand.
- **Dead stock (D1):** Parts that haven't moved in over two years. For these, we analyze whether to repurpose, reduce stock levels, or clear them from inventory.

This categorization helps us focus our resources where they're most needed while managing slower-moving inventory efficiently.

Seasonal trends also play a big role in our SKU strategy. For example, during summer, there's a predictable spike in demand for air conditioning-related parts. By analyzing these patterns in advance, we can adjust our stock levels to ensure availability without overstocking.

The ultimate goal is to align inventory with customer needs while minimizing waste and inefficiencies. By relying on data and well-structured categorization, we can ensure that we're always prepared to meet demand effectively.





SIRAJ

Regional Operations Manager from Mohrkey

With 20 years of experience in the automotive services industry, Siraj is a founding member of Petromin Express, the largest quick lube service provider in the Middle East and Africa. Currently serving as Regional Sales and Operations Manager for KSA at MOHRKEY Car Services, Siraj brings unmatched expertise in driving operational excellence and growth.

AutoPulse Team: That's impressive, Siraj. Let's get into the heart of it. What does the future of service centers or next-gen workshops look like to you?

Siraj: The future of service centers is all about seamlessly integrating technology with customer-centric experiences. I envision next-gen workshops as highly automated and data-driven environments.

They'll leverage tools like predictive maintenance, real-time diagnostics, and digital service platforms to completely transform the way we operate. This integration won't just make operations more efficient; it will also create a transparent and reliable experience for customers.

Today's customers expect rapid, dependable service, and these advancements align perfectly with those expectations. By combining cutting-edge technology with a focus on customer satisfaction, next-gen workshops will set a new benchmark for the industry.

AutoPulse Team: What do you think are the biggest challenges in adapting to the digital transformation of sales within the auto service sector, and how are you addressing these?

Siraj: One of the biggest challenges is bridging the gap between traditional face-to-face interactions and the convenience of digital platforms. Many customers still value personal interaction as it builds trust, but at the same time, they're also looking for the speed and ease of digital services.

Adapting to digital sales also requires substantial investment in technology and retraining staff to effectively use these new tools. This isn't always easy, especially in an industry where traditional methods have been the norm for decades. To address these challenges, we've implemented several strategies.

The future of the automotive service industry!

First, we've adopted advanced CRM systems that centralize customer data. This allows us to provide personalized service even in a digital-first environment. We've also invested heavily in digital marketing, including targeted campaigns and social media engagement, to reach customers where they're most active. Upskilling our workforce has been another priority. By training our team on new tools and processes, we ensure that they can confidently navigate the digital transformation while still delivering a personal touch. This multi-faceted approach allows us to maintain the trust of our customers while embracing the convenience and efficiency of digital platforms.



AutoPulse Team: What role does innovation play in maintaining a competitive edge in the auto service industry?

Siraj: Innovation is absolutely fundamental. In today's competitive landscape, it's not just an advantage—it's a necessity. It allows us to anticipate customer needs, optimize our operations, and offer new value-added services that differentiate us from competitors. For instance, AI-driven diagnostics are revolutionizing the way we identify and resolve vehicle issues. These tools significantly reduce the time needed for diagnosis, improving both efficiency and customer satisfaction.

Innovation also enhances the customer journey. Mobile booking platforms, for example, allow customers to easily schedule appointments at their convenience. Contactless payment systems provide both security and ease of use. These advancements set us apart by making the entire service process more streamlined and customer-friendly. Additionally, innovation enables us to explore new revenue opportunities. Offering subscription-based maintenance plans is one way to provide customers with peace of mind while ensuring predictable revenue for our business.

In short, innovation keeps us ahead of the curve and ensures that we're consistently delivering value to our customers.

AutoPulse Team: Finally, what role do customer feedback and reviews play in shaping your service approach?

Siraj: Customer feedback is invaluable. It gives us direct insights into what we're doing right and, more importantly, highlights areas where we can improve. In an industry where trust and reliability are essential, listening to our customers is critical. We actively monitor reviews and comments across platforms like social media, review websites, and direct surveys. This feedback isn't just collected—it's analyzed and acted upon. For example, if we notice recurring comments about delays in service, we'll investigate the root cause and make adjustments, whether that's improving parts procurement or optimizing staff schedules. Customer reviews also play a key role in building our brand reputation. Positive reviews act as endorsements that attract new customers, while constructive criticism helps us refine our processes. To encourage feedback, we make it as easy as possible for customers to share their thoughts, whether through post-service surveys or integrated



review systems like Google Reviews. What's equally important is showing customers that their feedback leads to tangible improvements. When customers see changes like extended service hours or improved facilities based on their suggestions, it builds trust and strengthens loyalty. By leveraging customer feedback consistently, we ensure that our services not only meet but exceed expectations. This commitment to listening and adapting helps us build long-term relationships, which are essential in a competitive market.

AutoPulse Team: Siraj, thank you so much for sharing your insights. Your experience and vision provide valuable perspectives for anyone looking to understand the future of service centers?

Siraj: Thank you—it's been a pleasure discussing these topics. I look forward to seeing how the industry evolves and continues to innovate.



Mazen Rahhal

Head of Sales, Operations and Business Development - Autobox (B2C / Retail)

Mazen is a young, ambitious professional driven by success. His objective is to reach his full potential in business development and operations management, consistently striving for excellence in his career. Mazen is committed to making a significant impact through his work and achieving outstanding results.

AutoPulse Team: Mazen, it's a pleasure to have you with us. To start, could you introduce yourself and tell us a bit about your role and experience?

Mazen: Thank you for having me. I'm currently the Country Sales, Operations, and Development Manager at Bin-Shihon Group Ltd in the Autobox division. It's been an exciting journey working in the automotive service industry, and I've had the privilege of leading teams to drive innovation, customer satisfaction, and operational excellence in this rapidly evolving market.

AutoPulse Team: Let's jump right into it. What does the future of service centers or next-gen workshops look like to you?

Mazen: The future of service centers in Saudi Arabia is heading toward advanced digitalization. I see AI diagnostics and automated processes becoming integral parts of operations, enabling faster and more accurate repairs. Connected workshops will enhance overall efficiency and effectiveness, providing seamless collaboration between different departments.

There will also be a strong emphasis on sustainability. Green technologies, electric vehicle (EV) support, and eco-friendly practices will define the next generation of workshops. For example, workshops will adopt energy-efficient equipment, recycle waste more responsibly, and implement systems that align with global sustainability goals.

On the customer side, real-time updates, contactless services, and digital interfaces will become standard. These features will streamline the customer experience, making it more transparent, convenient, and satisfying. Ultimately, service centers of the future will be defined by their ability to blend technology, sustainability, and customer-centricity into a cohesive operation.

AutoPulse Team: What leadership practices have been key to your success in managing an auto service business?

Mazen: Leadership in the auto service business is about fostering a collaborative and efficient environment. For me, clear communication has been crucial—it ensures that everyone on the team understands their roles and responsibilities and can work together effectively.

Prioritizing customer satisfaction is another key practice. This means consistently delivering high-quality service on time, which not only builds customer trust but also strengthens loyalty.

Additionally, I emphasize a culture of continuous improvement. It's essential for both myself and my team members to stay ahead of the curve by learning new skills and adopting the latest technologies. Encouraging this mindset helps us adapt to industry changes, maintain efficiency, and drive a forward-thinking approach.

AutoPulse Team: What role does innovation play in maintaining a competitive edge in the auto service industry?

Mazen: Innovation is absolutely the cornerstone of maintaining a competitive edge in this industry. It enables us to deliver faster, more accurate diagnostics and repair solutions, which directly improve customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Digital tools like AI and data analytics have completely transformed how we operate. These technologies allow us to offer more personalized and efficient services, setting us apart from competitors. For example, AI-driven diagnostics can quickly identify vehicle issues with precision, reducing the time and cost of repairs. Sustainability is another area where innovation plays a big role.

By adopting eco-friendly practices and offering EV maintenance services, we position ourselves as forward-thinking leaders in a market that's rapidly evolving toward greener solutions.

Finally, “thinking outside the box” is crucial. Introducing new products and services that go beyond market norms helps us enhance the overall customer offering. This not only improves the customer experience but also educates them about the latest advancements in the industry.

AutoPulse Highlights

Innovation is key to staying competitive in the auto service industry, driving faster diagnostics, personalized services, and eco-friendly solutions.

AutoPulse Team: What role do customer feedback and reviews play in shaping your service approach?

Mazen: Customer feedback and reviews are essential to refining our service approach. They give us real-time insights into satisfaction levels and help pinpoint areas for improvement.

By actively listening to this feedback, we can tailor our offerings to better meet customer expectations. For example, if customers suggest specific enhancements to our processes, we can evaluate and implement those ideas to improve service quality.

Reviews also play a significant role in building credibility. They demonstrate to clients that we value their input and are committed to adapting based on their needs. When customers see that their feedback leads to tangible changes, it strengthens their trust in our brand.

This approach not only fosters loyalty but also drives continuous growth in our customer relationships and retention rates.

The future of the automotive service industry!

AutoPulse Team: What strategies have been most effective for improving customer satisfaction in your workshops?

Mazen: Improving customer satisfaction starts with transparent and timely communication. Customers want to know the status of their repairs and the associated costs without surprises. By keeping them informed at every step, we build trust and enhance their experience.

Delivering high-quality, reliable repairs and ensuring quick turnaround times have also been critical. These practices show our commitment to professionalism and efficiency.

We also invest in technology and staff training. Keeping our team skilled and knowledgeable ensures that we can consistently meet customer expectations. Post-service follow-ups are another key strategy. By checking in with clients after their visit, we show that we care about their satisfaction and are ready to address any concerns.

These strategies work together to create a seamless and satisfying experience for our customers, ensuring they feel valued and confident in our services.

AutoPulse Team: What are the biggest challenges facing auto service businesses today?

Mazen: Auto service businesses face several challenges, especially in Saudi Arabia. One of the biggest is keeping up with rapid technological advancements. Modern vehicles require advanced tools and techniques, which means continuous investment in equipment and staff training is essential.

The shift toward electric vehicles adds another layer of complexity. Workshops must adapt to new systems and standards to stay relevant.



Recruiting skilled technicians is another hurdle. As vehicles become more technologically advanced, the demand for highly trained technicians grows, but the supply doesn't always keep pace.

On top of that, we face increasing customer expectations for price, speed, quality, and transparency. Balancing these demands in a competitive market is challenging.

Finally, economic fluctuations can impact operating costs and customer spending habits, making financial stability harder to maintain. Overcoming these challenges requires a proactive approach, continuous learning, and a commitment to adapting to industry trends.

AutoPulse Team: Mazen, thank you for sharing your insights. It's clear that your experience and vision are driving meaningful progress in the auto service industry

Mazen: Thank you. It's been a pleasure to discuss these important topics, and I look forward to seeing how the industry evolves in the coming years.



AutoPulse Team: Hussein, welcome to the podcast. It's great to have you with us. Let's begin with your vision—what does the future of service centers or next-gen workshops look like to you?

Hussein: Thank you for having me. The future of service centers will align closely with the operational structure of car dealerships and authorized agents. These next-gen workshops will not only handle repair and maintenance but will also focus on customer retention by building trust and long-term relationships.

I see service centers transforming into highly organized and technology-driven hubs that seamlessly integrate with car manufacturers and agents. Through advanced tools like diagnostic systems directly connected to manufacturers, service centers will gain real-time insights into vehicle performance. This integration will allow workshops to address issues proactively, minimizing vehicle downtime and enhancing customer satisfaction.

Reliable Dealer Management Systems (DMS) will play a pivotal role in the transformation of service centers. These systems will centralize data, enabling better inventory management, streamlined processes, and improved customer interactions. With AI-powered DMS, service centers will be able to predict customer needs, optimize workflows, and deliver a highly personalized experience.

In short, the future of service centers lies in leveraging technology and strategic partnerships to redefine operational efficiency and customer service.

Hussein Alwardany

**National Service Operation Manager
from MOTOCARE**

Hussein Alwardany is the National Service Operations Manager at Motocare, leading and optimizing service operations across the organization. With a focus on efficiency, customer satisfaction, and operational excellence, Hussein plays a key role in driving growth and ensuring seamless service delivery. A strategic leader, he is dedicated to enhancing service standards and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

The future of the automotive service industry!

AutoPulse Team: That's an insightful perspective. As a leader in the auto service industry, what advice would you give to others looking to improve their operations?

Hussein: My advice is straightforward: adopt a scientific and systematic approach. Implementing a reliable Dealer Management System (DMS) is essential for operational efficiency. A DMS acts as the backbone of a service center, providing actionable data on key performance indicators like service times, inventory levels, and customer satisfaction metrics.

By analyzing this data, leaders can identify bottlenecks, streamline workflows, and make informed decisions to improve overall performance. For example, tracking service demand trends through a DMS allows you to allocate resources more effectively during peak times, reducing delays and enhancing customer satisfaction.

In addition to technology, focus on the fundamental pillars of management. Clear communication within the team ensures alignment with organizational goals, while regular training programs help employees stay updated with the latest tools and techniques. Empowering teams to take ownership of their roles fosters a culture of accountability and innovation.



Finally, it's crucial to stay adaptable. The automotive industry is evolving rapidly with the rise of EVs and sustainability initiatives. Leaders must embrace these changes and continuously seek opportunities for improvement.

AutoPulse Highlights

Community Initiative by GaragePulse



To improve operations, adopting a scientific approach with a reliable DMS is crucial for tracking key performance metrics and optimizing workflows.

AutoPulse Team: What do you think are the biggest challenges facing auto service businesses today?

Hussein: The biggest challenges revolve around overhead costs and pricing pressures. Managing these effectively is critical to staying competitive in today's market.

Overhead costs are rising due to the increasing complexity of modern vehicles. Advanced technologies like sensors, AI-driven systems, and EV components require specialized tools and trained technicians, driving up operational expenses. Additionally, adapting to EVs involves investing in new infrastructure, such as charging stations and battery diagnostics.

Pricing is another challenge. Customers expect competitive rates, but offering lower prices can strain profit margins, especially for service centers with high overhead costs. Striking a balance between cost efficiency and pricing is a constant challenge, particularly with fluctuating economic conditions and supply chain disruptions.

To address these issues, service centers need to focus on cost optimization. Predictive analytics can help reduce excess inventory and streamline procurement processes, minimizing waste. Adopting energy-efficient technologies and renegotiating supplier contracts are also effective strategies for controlling costs.



AutoPulse Team: What role do customer feedback and reviews play in shaping your service approach?

Hussein: Customer feedback, or Voice of the Customer (VOC), is crucial for refining and improving service offerings. It provides real-time insights into what customers expect and where we can improve.

VOC allows us to tailor our direction based on real-world data. For example, if customers consistently mention delays in service, we can identify the root cause—whether it's staffing, inventory shortages, or inefficiencies—and take corrective action. This helps us build trust and ensure that we're meeting customer expectations.

Positive reviews act as endorsements, attracting new customers and strengthening our reputation. At the same time, constructive criticism is an opportunity for growth. Listening to feedback and acting on it

demonstrates to customers that we value their opinions and are committed to improving.

Additionally, VOC helps us stay ahead of emerging trends. Feedback on areas like EV services or sustainability practices can guide our investments and keep us aligned with market demands. In the end, customer feedback is more than just a tool for improvement—it's a strategic asset that ensures we remain competitive and customer-focused.

AutoPulse Team: Hussein, thank you for sharing your thoughts. Your insights into the future of service centers and the importance of customer feedback provide valuable takeaways for anyone in the automotive service industry

Hussein: Thank you. It's been a pleasure to share my perspective, and I look forward to seeing how the industry continues to evolve.



Raed Al-Qadasi

Procurement manager, Golden Petrol

Raed is a highly motivated and confident individual who thrives on challenges. As a Procurement Officer, he oversees the supply chain for over 500 branches, ensuring quality, efficiency, and compliance. Raed has also successfully initiated international procurement agreements, expanding the company's global footprint. With a strong background in accounting and finance, he possesses a keen eye for detail and a strategic approach to problem-solving.



AutoPulse Team: Raed, it's a pleasure to have you with us today. To start, could you share a bit about your perspective on the automotive service industry and your professional experience?

Raed: Thank you for having me. The automotive service industry is constantly evolving, and I've been fortunate to witness and be part of its transformation. My approach has always been centered on leveraging technology, optimizing processes, and fostering strong communication to ensure smooth and efficient operations.

AutoPulse Team: Let's begin with your vision for the future. What does the future of service centers or next-gen workshops look like to you?

Raed: While I'm sharing my thoughts, it's incredible to consider how much the world is improving and finding better ways to perform routine tasks. We're in the 24th year after 2000, and it's amazing to observe the rapid evolution in different fields globally.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a prime example of this evolution. It's a revolutionary technology that I believe will soon be deeply integrated into the day-to-day operations of service centers. Humans are too smart to let AI's potential go untapped. By leveraging AI, we can enhance productivity, speed up processes, reduce physical efforts, and save valuable time.

The key is incorporating AI into basic and routine tasks to free up human resources for higher-value activities. This approach is the right way forward, and I'm confident that it will transform how service centers operate, making them more efficient and customer-focused.

The future of the automotive service industry!

AutoPulse Team: What methods do you use to ensure the smooth functioning of your day-to-day operations?

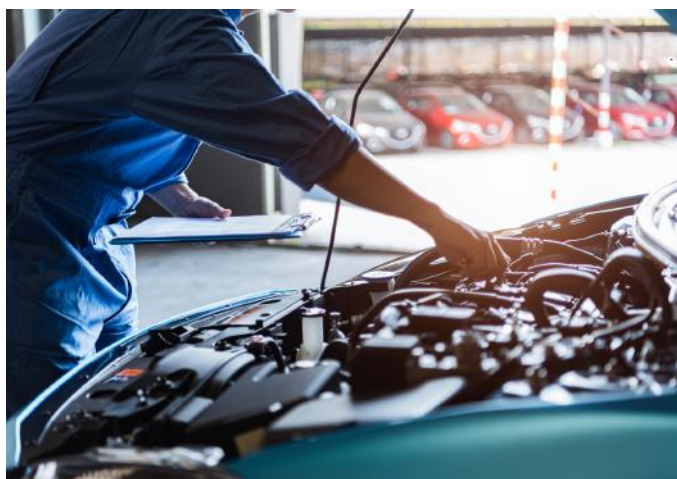
Raed: Ensuring smooth daily operations is about creating a balance between communication, organization, and prioritization.

First, **Active Listening and Context Retention** are crucial. By remembering relevant details from conversations, I ensure continuity in communication, which makes interactions feel cohesive and personalized.

Second, **Time Management and Prioritization** are essential. I prioritize tasks based on urgency and complexity, which helps address critical issues promptly while managing the workload effectively.

Third, **Resource Management** plays a significant role. By leveraging tools like predictive analytics, digital platforms, and automated systems, I can streamline operations and deliver results efficiently.

Continuous Learning and Adaptation are also fundamental. Seeking feedback and staying open to change ensures I remain relevant and prepared for new challenges. Finally, providing clear and straightforward responses ensures simplicity and prevents misunderstandings. These practices collectively drive operational success.



AutoPulse Team: How are you navigating industry challenges, such as supply chain issues and changing customer expectations?

Raed: The industry does face some significant challenges, but a few strategic methods help address them effectively:

- **Diversify Suppliers:** Relying on a single supplier can create vulnerabilities. By diversifying, I reduce the risk of delays or shortages.
- **Invest in Forecasting and Inventory Management:** Using predictive analytics and real-time data provides valuable market insights, allowing me to predict demand accurately and maintain optimal inventory levels.
- **Strengthen Communication:** Transparent and consistent communication with customers is crucial for managing expectations and maintaining trust.
- **Form Strategic Partnerships:** Collaborating with logistics providers, vendors, and industry groups strengthens supply chains and improves overall efficiency.

These approaches allow me to navigate challenges proactively and stay ahead in a competitive market.

AutoPulse Team: Raed, thank you for sharing your thoughts. Your insights into leveraging AI, maintaining smooth operations, and tackling industry challenges are incredibly valuable.

Raed: Thank you. It's been a pleasure to share my perspective, and I'm excited to see how the automotive service industry continues to evolve and innovate in the years ahead.



AutoPulse Team: Muneeb, welcome to the podcast. Could you start by telling us a bit about yourself and your role at Motocare?

Muneeb: Thank you for having me. I'm Muneeb Ali, the Sales Manager at Motocare, a division of Saudi Bugshan Group, and I work from our Bridgestone headquarters. I've been fortunate to witness and contribute to the rapid evolution of the automotive service industry. Our team is committed to providing innovative and customer-centric solutions to meet the dynamic demands of this competitive market.

AutoPulse Team: Let's begin with your vision for the future. What does the future of service centers or next-gen workshops look like to you?

Muneeb: The future of service centers is both challenging and exciting. Unlike many retail industries where the focus is shifting from brick-and-mortar stores to online platforms, automotive retail has a unique dynamic. The success of an automotive retailer hinges on optimizing their network to maximize customer outreach.

Strategic location selection will play a significant role in staying competitive. Retailers with well-placed service centers can outperform their competitors by being closer to their customers and offering more convenience. In this industry, having a physical presence still matters significantly.

Additionally, to stay competitive, service centers must adopt a multi-brand approach. Customers are looking for one-stop solutions where they can have all their needs met, regardless of their vehicle's make or model. This adaptability will define the next generation of service centers.

Muneeb Ali Vistro

Sales Manager, Motocare

Muneeb Ali Vistro is a results-oriented sales leader currently serving as Sales Manager at Motocare, where he oversees 40 retail automotive quick-service centers across Saudi Arabia, generating SAR 42 million in annual revenue. He has a proven track record in sales strategy, team leadership, and revenue growth, driving a 14% increase in FY 2023. Muneeb's expertise spans sales planning, operational restructuring, and customer-centric service enhancements like brake and AC services, making him a key industry innovator.

The future of the automotive service industry!

AutoPulse Team: What role does innovation play in maintaining a competitive edge in the auto service industry?

Muneeb: Innovation is absolutely critical in today's competitive landscape. Retailers can no longer rely solely on promotions or special offers to stand out. Customers are now looking for modern, efficient, and cutting-edge services, and failing to keep up with innovations can quickly lead to a perception of being outdated.

For example, AI and related technologies have become a norm in the industry. AI can streamline diagnostics, predict maintenance needs, and provide more accurate and efficient service. Delaying the adoption of these technologies risks losing credibility with customers who expect their service providers to be on the cutting edge.

Another significant factor is the influx of electric vehicle (EV) technology. As EV adoption continues to grow, service providers must adjust their offerings to meet the needs of this expanding market. This includes training technicians, investing in EV-compatible tools, and staying updated with the latest standards in EV servicing.

Ultimately, innovation isn't just about staying relevant—it's about ensuring that customers see your business as forward-thinking and reliable in a rapidly evolving industry.

AutoPulse Team: What are your goals for expanding or growing your business over the next few years?

Muneeb: In our initial years, we focused on rapid expansion, opening multiple centers to establish a strong presence in the market. Now, our strategy is shifting toward optimizing our network.

We're carefully selecting locations that align with our target market to ensure maximum efficiency and customer accessibility. The goal is not just to expand for the sake of growth but to make strategic decisions that add value for our customers.

Additionally, we're adding quick services at our centers to make them one-stop solutions for our customers. By offering a wide range of services under one roof, we aim to provide convenience and reliability, ensuring that our customers can address all their automotive needs in a single visit.

AutoPulse Team: Muneeb, thank you so much for sharing your insights. Your focus on strategic growth and innovation is inspiring and provides valuable perspectives for others in the industry.

Muneeb: Thank you. It's been a pleasure to discuss these topics. I look forward to seeing how the industry evolves in the coming years, and I'm excited to be a part of that journey.





AutoPulse Team: Bassim, welcome to the podcast. It's great to have you with us. Could you start by telling us a bit about your background and experience in the auto service industry?

Bassim: Thank you for having me. It's a pleasure to be here. Over the years, I've been fortunate to work with some exceptional professionals and mentors in the automotive service industry. Their trust and support have helped shape my approach to leadership and innovation. My journey has been about adapting to the ever-evolving landscape of this sector and staying focused on creating meaningful customer experiences.

AutoPulse Team: Let's begin with your vision for the future. What does the future of service centers or next-gen workshops look like to you?

Bassim: The future of service centers will revolve around the customer experience. Next-gen workshops will adopt hybrid service models that combine both physical and digital touchpoints to meet customer expectations.

I see these workshops being designed with a customer-centric mindset, offering personalized services, seamless online booking systems, real-time updates, and constant communication channels. These elements will ensure that customers feel connected and in control of their service experience.

However, the role of a skilled workforce cannot be overlooked. While technology will drive many aspects of next-gen service centers, it's the people behind the scenes who will foster a customer-centric culture.

Bassim Khan

Business Development Manager NFR CAR SERVICES

With over 14 years of experience in retail operations, business development, and category management across automotive services, fuel operations, and FMCG sales, Bassim is a strong advocate for leadership that empowers teams to drive revenue growth and business expansion. He excels at leading teams through a clear vision, aligning strengths to goals, and fostering accountability.

The future of the automotive service industry!

Skilled technicians and service advisors will continue to play a pivotal role in delivering high-quality service and building trust with customers.

AutoPulse Team: What leadership practices have been key to your success in managing an auto service business?

Bassim: One practice that has been particularly important for me is providing autonomy to my team. When you give individuals the freedom to make decisions and take ownership of their projects, you create an environment where innovation and accountability thrive. In my career, I've been privileged to work under mentors who trusted me with full ownership of my initiatives. This trust boosted my morale and productivity, and it's a philosophy I've carried forward in my own leadership style. By encouraging team members to explore new ideas, make decisions, and collaborate, we can create a culture where creativity flourishes, and challenges are navigated with confidence.

Another key practice is not shying away from exploring new ideas. The automotive industry is constantly evolving, and staying open to innovation is critical for long-term success. It's about empowering teams to think outside the box and adapt to change proactively.

AutoPulse Team: What role does innovation play in maintaining a competitive edge in the auto service industry?

Bassim: Innovation is not just an advantage—it's an absolute necessity in today's automotive landscape. The industry is evolving at a rapid pace, and staying competitive requires a commitment to embracing new technologies and methodologies. Integrating advanced tools into our operations can significantly enhance service efficiency and customer experience.

For example, using digital systems to streamline diagnostics and repair processes allows us to deliver faster and more accurate services. This not only fosters loyalty among existing customers but also attracts new clients who value modern and efficient solutions. To stay competitive, it's important to remain proactive and continually explore innovations that align with customer needs. By doing so, we can ensure that our service offerings remain relevant and impactful in a fast-changing market.

AutoPulse Team: What role do customer feedback and reviews play in shaping your service approach?

Bassim: Customer feedback and reviews are invaluable for refining and improving our service approach. Understanding the customer—their circumstances, preferences, and expectations—is the foundation of delivering great service. We achieve this by collecting data and conducting research to gain insights into what works for our customers and where we can improve. Once we understand their needs, we can design our products and services around those insights. At its core, it all comes back to a simple, age-old truth: "Treat others as you would want to be treated." By treating our customers with respect, empathy, and genuine care, we not only meet their expectations but also exceed them, creating lasting trust and loyalty.

AutoPulse Team: Bassim, thank you so much for sharing your thoughts. Your focus on customer experience, innovation, and leadership is truly inspiring and provides valuable insights for anyone in the automotive service sector.

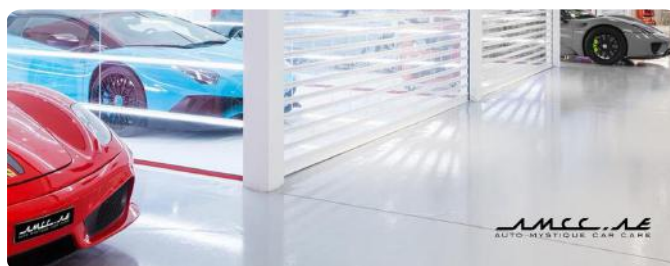
Bassim: Thank you. It's been a pleasure to share my thoughts. I'm excited to see how the industry continues to evolve, and I'm proud to be part of shaping its future.



Shaneabbas Yusufali

Executive Director at Auto Mystique Car Care (AMCC)

Shaneabbas Yusufali is the Executive Director at Auto Mystique Car Care (AMCC) in Dubai, a company renowned for luxury vehicle detailing and photography. With nearly a decade of leadership, he oversees daily operations, business development, and financial strategy. Known for employing innovative, science-backed techniques, Shaneabbas ensures AMCC delivers unparalleled reflection and protection for vehicles.



AutoPulse Team: Shane, thank you for being here. To begin, what does the future of service centers—or next-gen luxury workshops—look like to you?

Shane: Thank you for having me. The future of service centers, especially in the luxury segment, is set to undergo a major transformation. I see AI and automation as key drivers of this change. Workshops like AMCC will invest heavily in technology to ensure operations are more efficient and that we deliver an even higher standard of service.

In the luxury space, it's about going beyond expectations. Technology will allow us to streamline processes like bookings and communication while providing real-time updates to our clients. These advancements will redefine customer service, ensuring every interaction is seamless, transparent, and worthy of a luxury brand.

AutoPulse Team: Are you ready for the changes coming to the automotive service world in the next few years?

Shane: At AMCC, we don't just prepare for change—we embrace it. The future of luxury car care is incredibly exciting, and we're already laying the groundwork to stay ahead. From adopting the latest automation technologies to enhancing our customer-facing platforms, we're committed to delivering an unmatched experience.

For us, it's not just about managing operations efficiently; it's about creating moments that leave a lasting impression on our clients.

The future of the automotive service industry!

The luxury segment demands a personal touch, and technology allows us to elevate that by providing real-time insights, consistent communication, and a level of precision that our clientele expects.

AutoPulse Team: How does AMCC plan to navigate and lead through these changes?

Shane: Our approach is simple: stay proactive and adaptive. We're constantly looking for ways to innovate and refine how we operate, whether it's enhancing our internal processes or reimagining how we interact with our clients.

At the end of the day, it's about ensuring that every visit to AMCC is synonymous with excellence and luxury.

AutoPulse Team: Shane, it's been fantastic hearing your insights. Any final thoughts on the road ahead for luxury car care centers?

Shane: The automotive service industry is at the brink of a thrilling transformation, and for luxury workshops like AMCC, this is an opportunity to lead by example. By staying at the forefront of innovation, we can ensure that our clients continue to receive not just a service, but an experience that aligns with the highest standards of excellence.

AutoPulse Team: Thank you, Shane, for sharing your vision and setting the benchmark for the future of luxury car care.

Bassim: Thank you. It's been a pleasure to share my thoughts.





Mohammad Fadhl

Operations Manager, BIN-SHIHON GROUP

With a strong foundation in leadership across sales and operations, Fadhl has consistently met ambitious targets and streamlined processes throughout his career. His dedication to customer service and satisfaction has driven significant achievements, including improvements in sales management. With extensive experience in team building and people management, Fadhl fosters a collaborative environment that bridges communication gaps and enables cross-functional collaboration.

AutoPulse Team: Mohammad, welcome to the podcast. We're thrilled to have you share your insights for this edition. Could you start by telling us about your perspective on the future of automotive service centers and next-gen workshops?

Mohammad: Thank you for having me, and it's truly a pleasure to contribute to AutoPulse. The future of service centers and next-gen workshops is incredibly promising and will be shaped by a few key trends.

- **Digital transformation** will play a major role. The integration of advanced technologies and big data analytics will make service processes more efficient and reliable. Workshops will rely on these tools to streamline operations, reduce downtime, and deliver better outcomes for customers.
- The rise of **electric vehicles (EVs)** and autonomous driving technology will force service centers to adapt. Technicians will need new skills and specialized equipment to handle these advanced systems, which will define the next generation of automotive services.
- **Skill development** will also be crucial. Continuous training programs will ensure that workers can keep pace with technological advancements and meet the demands of modern automotive systems.
- **Collaboration and partnerships** between manufacturers, technology providers, and service centers will become more prominent. Sharing data and expertise will improve service delivery and lead to better outcomes for customers.

The future of the automotive service industry!

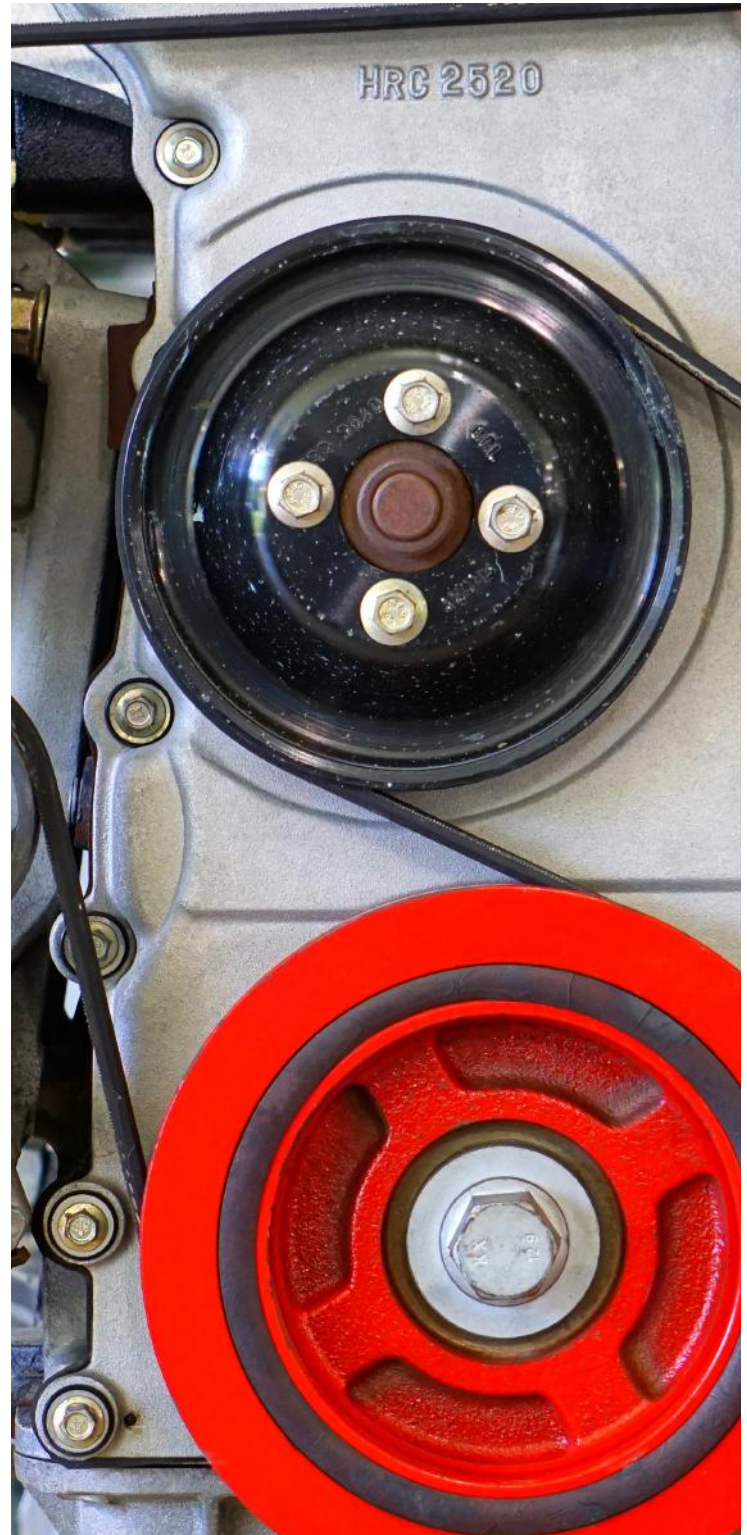
Lastly, workshops will focus heavily on enhancing the customer experience. Features like online booking, real-time updates, and personalized services via mobile apps will become standard. We'll also see a rise in mobile and on-demand services, where technicians perform repairs onsite for greater customer convenience.

AutoPulse Team: Those are exciting developments. Let's talk about daily operations. What methods do you use to ensure smooth functioning in your workshop?

Mohammad: Smooth operations are essential, and several methods can help achieve this.

- Having standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in place is crucial. Clear and detailed SOPs ensure consistency and efficiency across all processes.
- Technology integration is a game changer. Tools for inventory management, scheduling, and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) streamline operations and maintain accurate records, saving both time and effort.
- Regular training and development is vital. Ongoing training helps staff stay updated on the latest technologies and practices, enabling them to work more efficiently.
- Effective communication is another key aspect. Regular meetings and updates keep everyone aligned and ensure tasks are completed smoothly.
- We also emphasize customer feedback systems. Actively collecting and analyzing feedback allows us to identify areas for improvement and address issues promptly, enhancing service quality.

Finally, empowering employees is important. Giving team members autonomy encourages problem-solving, innovative thinking, and a more productive work environment. These methods, when combined, not only improve operational efficiency but also enhance customer satisfaction.



The future of the automotive service industry!

AutoPulse Team: What operational changes have had the biggest impact on improving your workshop's efficiency?

Mohammad: Several operational changes have made a significant impact on our efficiency.

- First, adopting shop management software has been transformative. These tools help with scheduling, billing, and tracking repairs, streamlining processes, reducing paperwork, and improving communication between teams.
- Second, continuous training for technicians ensures they are familiar with the latest tools and repair techniques. This not only enhances productivity but also reduces time spent on repairs.
- Using a **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** system has also been impactful. It allows us to track customer interactions, preferences, and service history, enabling us to deliver tailored services and improve satisfaction.
- Lastly, offering mobile solutions for scheduling and customer communication has provided greater flexibility. It makes it easier for customers to interact with us and helps us stay responsive to their needs.

These changes have collectively resulted in faster turnaround times, improved operational efficiency, and enhanced customer service, which are critical in today's competitive environment.

AutoPulse Team: Mohammad, thank you so much for sharing your insights. Your emphasis on digital transformation, operational excellence, and customer-centricity provides invaluable lessons for others in the industry

Mohammad: Thank you—it's been a pleasure to share my thoughts. I'm looking forward to seeing how the industry continues to evolve and how we all adapt to meet these exciting challenges.



SHOUTOUTS TO THE NEW INDUSTRY LEADERS, GOOD LUCK WISHES FROM THE AUTOPULSE COMMUNITY



New Managing Director - KSA of Auto Millennium Group

Name - Mahmoud Nahouly

Mahmoud Nahouly has been appointed Managing Director at Auto Millennium. He brings extensive expertise in automotive, sales, marketing, product development, and team management to drive growth and innovation.



New Chairman and CEO of Shell Lubricants Egypt, and Cluster GM for the Middle East and Central Asia

Name - Haytham Yehia

Shell has appointed Haytham Yehia as Chairman and CEO of Shell Lubricants Egypt and Cluster GM for the Middle East and Central Asia, overseeing operations with a focus on Egypt.



New Global Chief Marketing Officer of Castrol

Name - Sandeep Sangwan

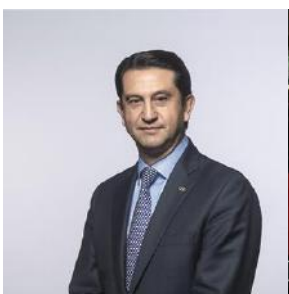
Sandeep Sangwan, former Managing Director of Castrol India, has been appointed Global Chief Marketing Officer of Castrol. He is now transitioning to the company's UK headquarters after leading key markets across Europe, Asia, and Africa since 2012.



New CHRO - Automotive Business at Mahindra Group

Name - Meenakshi Priyam

Meenakshi Priyam has been appointed CHRO for Mahindra Group's automotive division, bringing diverse experience to enhance workforce strategies, drive change, and support Mahindra's vision for growth and innovation.



New Global CEO of Hyundai Motors


Name - Jose Muñoz

Hyundai Motor Company (HMC) today announced the appointment of José Muñoz as the company's President and CEO, effective Jan. 1, 2025. Muñoz will lead Hyundai Motor Company's global business, succeeding current President and CEO Jaehoon Chang, who has been promoted to the Vice Chair of Hyundai Motor Group.

WORTHY AUTOMOTIVE JOBS TO LOOK OUT FOR:




BATAS MAW Commercial Vehicles Nepal has been actively searching for a **General Manager - After Sales** to join them.



HCP Automotives has been actively searching for a **General Manager, Aftersales** to join their client in Singapore.




Luxury Lounge LLC Dubai has been actively searching for a **General Manager** to join them.



AutoCentral Multi-brand Car Service Centre in Abu Dhabi has been actively searching for a **Service Advisor** to join them.



AutoMillennium Group Dubai has been actively searching for a **Business Development Manager** to join them



Pratik Automobiles Ranchi has been actively searching for a **General Manager - Service** to join them.

Disclaimer:

While sharing this job information, it's important to note that we're not endorsing the company. This is shared with the intention of providing potential industry opportunities, but please use your discretion before making any decisions.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2024 - 2025



Dec 2 – Dec 5

**Automechanika
Shanghai, China**



Dec 10 – Dec 12

**Automechanika
Dubai, UAE**



Dec 14

**10th India Vehicle After
Sales Summit, India**



Feb 10 – Feb 11

**ReFuel Forum
MENA, Dubai**



Feb 19 – Feb 20

**AutoAmericas
Show, USA**



Mar 12 – Mar 14

**Tyrexpo Asia,
Singapore**



Apr 2 – Apr 3

**ReFuel Forum
APAC & ANZ**



Apr 18 – Apr 21

**Automorrow Event,
Egypt**



Apr 28 – Apr 30

**Automechanika Riyadh,
Saudi Arabia**



**May 22 – May
24**

**Chengdu International
Trade Fair for
Automotive Parts and
Aftermarket Services,
China**



Jun 3 – Jun 5

**Automechanika
Birmingham, UK**



Jun 19 – Jun 21

**Automechanika
Ho Chi Minh City,
Vietnam**



July 25 – July 27

**Auto Parts Vehicle
Expo, Pasay, Philippines**



Sep 1 – Sep 3

**ReFuel Forum Africa,
Cape Town**



Oct 22 – Oct 24

**AutoCare Jeddah,
Saudi Arabia**

ENDING NOTE FROM THE AUTOPULSE TEAM

As we reach the final page of this issue, we extend our heartfelt thanks for joining us on this transformative journey. Your unwavering support fuels our non-profit initiative to empower the automotive service sector.

Now, we invite you to be more than readers; become champions of change. Support our mission and actively engage with us.

Together, we'll steer our industry to new heights. Your involvement is the spark that ignites progress.



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