

## CONSUMER CHOICE

With the rapid changes in vehicle technology, there is a concern that some car companies are leveraging their technological and market power to restrict competition and force car owners into their dealership networks. This is likely to be achieved by restricting the access of independent repairers to vital repair and service diagnostic information, perpetuating a 'myth' that a car owner must use an authorised repairer and fit 'genuine' parts to preserve their manufacturer's warranty and offering programs such as capped price servicing with terms and conditions that significantly erode the value of the service offering.

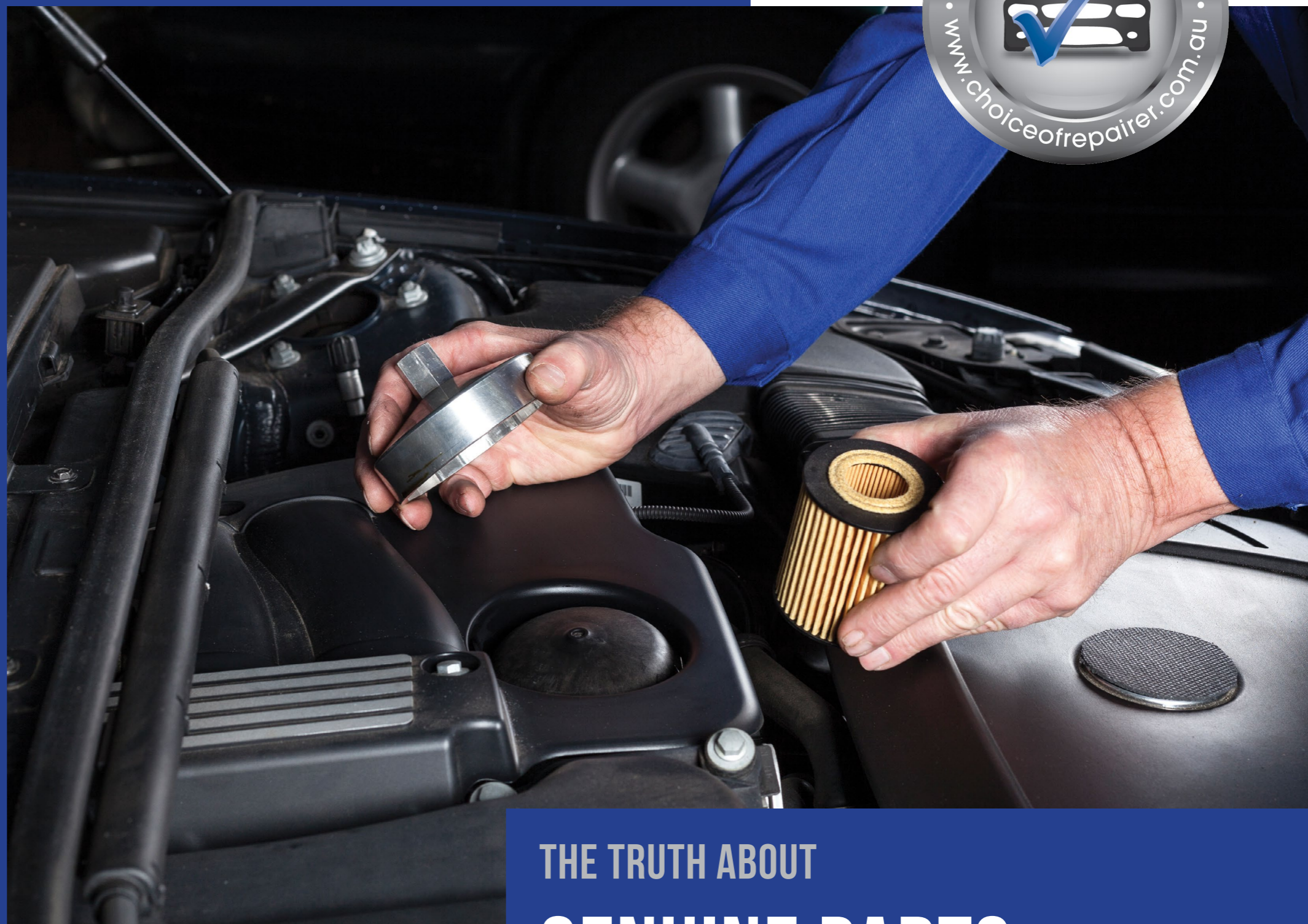
If allowed to continue unabated, this behaviour will result in a large decline in the market share of the independent repairer segment of the industry and will force the closure of many thousands of family owned repair businesses, reducing freedom of choice for the consumer and driving up the cost of vehicle ownership. This will also have a detrimental impact on employment and skills development in the retail repair and service sector.

The 'Choice of Repairer' initiative is an information campaign designed to help protect consumer choice and advocate for fair competition in the automotive aftermarket.

## JOIN THE CHOICE OF REPAIRER CAMPAIGN

If you believe in full and open competition in the vehicle repair, servicing and replacement parts sector we urge you to register your support for the Choice of Repairer initiative. To do this simply log on to our website [www.choiceofrepairer.com.au](http://www.choiceofrepairer.com.au)

Once you have registered your support we will keep you updated on the progress of the campaign.



THE TRUTH ABOUT

# GENUINE PARTS

A WORKSHOP GUIDE TO DISPELLING THE MYTHS



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An initiative of the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association



## PROTECTING THE INDEPENDENT WORKSHOP

The Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA) believes in free and open competition as the best way to ensure that all car owners have access to affordable, high quality repairs and parts. The AAAA advocates that consumers have a right to factual information and the right to choose their repairer without being unfairly influenced by confusion or misinformation, be that intentional or otherwise.

### WHAT ARE GENUINE PARTS?

The term 'genuine' part has been used by vehicle manufacturers as a general reference to parts and accessories that are sold in a manufacturer's branded packaging.

This vernacular is commonly used as a marketing tool by vehicle manufacturers and their dealerships, to give the impression that their branded parts are in some way superior to 'non' genuine spare parts. This can lead to unfounded fear and apprehension for the vehicle owner.

### As a workshop owner, it pays to stay in tune with the common language used:

- 1. Original Equipment Manufactured (OEM) Parts**  
These are routinely manufactured under contract by outsourced suppliers and distributed through dealerships, who contentiously refer to them as 'genuine' parts.
- 2. OEM Supplier Branded Parts**  
It is common for OEM suppliers to also distribute and sell parts under their own brand. These are the same manufacturers as the 'genuine' parts (above) but the supplier uses their own company branding. Same part, same factory, different box!
- 3. Independent Aftermarket Parts**  
Replacement parts that are manufactured specifically for use after the car is built. These are usually similar quality and are fit for purpose parts, interchangeable with the same functionality as the OE part but produced by a different manufacturer to the OEM supplier.
- 4. Specialist Parts, Modification & Performance Enhancement**  
Parts and accessories that the car companies do not include in the original build and are added after purchase to modify the vehicle for its intended end use (bull bars, suspension lift kits, roof racks, tow bars etc.).

## FITTING AFTERMARKET PARTS TO A CUSTOMERS VEHICLE

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has previously issued guidelines that explain that the issue here is not who manufactured the parts, it is whether the parts are fit or appropriate for the purpose intended.

If a part is non-genuine, but is interchangeable with the genuine part, it could be seen as being fit or appropriate for the purpose and would therefore not void the manufacturer's warranty.



It is important to remember that most car manufacturers do not make parts themselves; they are almost always made by a third party component company and put in a box with the manufacturer brand on it. Every part manufacturer and fitter has obligations under Australian Consumer Law (see below).

### REASSURE YOUR CUSTOMER

Should a customer raise a concern with you, or request you fit manufacturer's branded parts, you can confidently advise them that if the parts you fit are of equivalent quality then they should not have any effect on any new car warranty. These parts also come with Consumer Guarantees in the Australian Consumer Law in the very same way that OEM parts do. These parts may also provide a significant price advantage.

*Your customer can rest assured that fitment of quality aftermarket parts by a qualified technician preserves their right to any new car warranty offered by the manufacturer.*

## YOUR OBLIGATIONS AS A WORKSHOP

As indicated above just as OEM parts do, aftermarket parts also come with consumer guarantees under the Australian Consumer Law. If an aftermarket part was to fail or causes other damage to the vehicle, the vehicle manufacturer will not be liable for any of the damage caused by the failure of that part. It is therefore important to ensure that both you and your parts suppliers have a reliable warranty support and adequate insurance.

### BEST PRACTICE

- Always use appropriate quality spare parts and lubricants from reputable suppliers and manufacturers.
- Have your parts supplier confirm their warranty policy and where possible get a written reference of their quality standards.
- Itemise your customer invoices and job cards, quoting the parts and lubricants you have used and include the brand description and item numbers.
- Ensure that your customer is aware if any reclaimed or second hand parts are being used.