

ADAS Complexity Reshapes Aftermarket Product Strategy

Aftermarket executives should consider how calibration requirements affect product strategy, technical support and the ability to deliver complete repair solutions.

Advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) are creating opportunities across the automotive aftermarket, but they also introduce new complexity for manufacturers, suppliers and distributors. As these technologies become a larger part of vehicle service and repair, industry executives should consider how calibration requirements affect product strategy, technical support and the ability to deliver complete repair solutions.

Stew Peregrine, senior executive at Autel North America, identifies inconsistent calibration guidance as a key challenge. OEM service procedures may clearly require calibration after certain repairs but provide less definitive direction following wheel alignments, suspension work, collision repairs or other events. That can leave technicians and repair planners interpreting requirements for safety-critical systems.

For suppliers, that complexity points to an opportunity to think beyond individual replacement components. ADAS service can involve cameras, radar systems, suspension and steering components, glass, body repairs and alignment. Peregrine also stresses that physical conditions such as ride height, suspension condition, structural geometry and sensor mounting angles must be considered before calibration.

Complete Service Event Context

That interconnected repair environment suggests manufacturers should evaluate products in the context of the complete service event. A component that changes vehicle geometry or sensor positioning may have implications for downstream ADAS procedures. Providing application-specific technical information, installation guidance and training alongside the product could therefore become increasingly important to customers.

Distribution strategy should evolve accordingly. Distributors traditionally focus on having the right part available at the right place and time. With ADAS, supporting the repair may also require helping customers understand the

related tools, equipment and procedures needed to complete the job. Suppliers and distributors that connect products with relevant technical resources can help shops navigate increasingly complex repairs and reduce uncertainty.

Peregrine advocates for clearer, event-based calibration triggers, including an industrywide standard calling for forward-facing ADAS calibration after every wheel alignment. Importantly, this is his recommended approach rather than a universal OEM requirement. Calibration requirements can vary by vehicle and repair procedure, reinforcing the importance of current, application-specific information.

Peregrine also argues that the industry should not have to rely on third-party tools to interpret unclear calibration requirements. He says missing specifications should instead be treated as gaps in OEM repair information.

Aftermarket Executives and Strategy

For aftermarket executives, the larger strategic issue is how effectively their organizations can help customers manage that complexity. Product development teams can consider ADAS implications earlier in the design and application process. Sales and marketing teams can communicate how products fit into the complete repair. Training programs can help customers recognize when additional procedures may be necessary. Distributors can increasingly position themselves as sources of technical knowledge alongside parts availability.

Greater clarity could also have operational benefits throughout the channel. Peregrine maintains that incomplete ADAS procedures contribute to cycle-time pressures, supplements, insurer disputes, training burdens and legal exposure.

ADAS therefore represents more than another expanding product category. It is changing how multiple vehicle systems interact during service and repair. For manufacturers and distributors, the opportunity is to develop strategies that connect parts, equipment, technical information and training. Companies that make increasingly sophisticated repairs easier for customers to understand and execute can strengthen their value proposition as ADAS continues to reshape the aftermarket.