

BRAKES & CLUTCHES

PRODUCT TEST

TECHNICIAN: ED GRIMLEY, STAFFS **PRODUCT:** PRO-CUT BRAKE LATHE

“THE FINISH ON THE DISCS WAS INCREDIBLE!”

The Pro-Cut brake lathe has always been one of those pieces of equipment that I've wanted to have a play with, so when PMM offered us the chance to trial one in our workshop (Tower Garage in Staffs) we jumped at it.

Following delivery of the unit, I set aside a couple of hours to be shown how to operate the machine. This was useful but it really is very easy to use and one of our younger mechanics picked it up after watching me skim just two discs.

Getting braver

The first couple of times that we used the brake lathe it seemed to take a fair bit longer than it would've done to simply change the discs, however as you get used to the unit you quickly become a lot braver about how much you can take off in one go so you don't have to skim the disc half a dozen times to get the end result. You also realise how much harder rust is than steel as a heavily rusted disc can soon wear down the cutting tips. Once we were familiar with the machine a disc could be skimmed in less than 10 minutes, as claimed by the manufacturer.

Easy sell

Selling the service to customers was also a lot easier than I thought it was going to be. When faced with a bill for new discs or one for half the amount for skimming the discs, it didn't take them long to decide. There are occasions where it's harder to justify using the lathe on something smaller with relatively cheap discs, as we can earn more from fitting new discs with the mark-up on the discs themselves, but I can imagine it's a lot easier to sell the service to a Porsche owner (there's a Pro-Cut brake lathe in every Porsche garage) than it is to the owner of a Fiesta.



- Easy to use
- Good revenue raiser
- Fantastic results
- Great if you have a lot of commercial fleet customers
- Car sales loved it

“When faced with a bill for new discs or one for half the amount (through the brake skimming service), it didn't take long for our customers to decide.”

It's important to state as well that you can't use the lathe on every brake disc; sometimes you just have to concede that no matter how good this piece of kit is, new discs are the only option. The lathe does a great job of rejuvenating old discs but it can't put metal back onto them!

One job that was particularly beneficial for us to use the lathe on was a set of front discs on a Transit that we had in. The unit really did a great job and the finish on the discs was incredible (see ‘before’ and ‘after’ pics, left).

Valuable alternative

In my opinion there is definitely a place in the market for a service of this kind, and it is a valuable alternative to be able to offer your customers. Smaller workshops, such as ours, do need to be mindful that they need the space to house the unit and it can be quite noisy on occasions where you're restoring heavily rusted discs. However, the noise can be reduced by using the silencer supplied to stop the disc resonating when cutting. That said, the return on the investment can be fairly prompt if you're making good use of the unit and pitching the service to your customers correctly.

To request further details about the Pro-Cut brake lathe, available from Haweka,
circle 098