

Hot Tips From Hot Rod Builders

broad range of engine packages. "Our job is to help the customer determine which package he needs." Even then, there's a lot of custom work and detail to end up with a satisfied end user.

"This is a passion-driven business," he says. "You have to love what you do and figure out a way to make a living doing it. You have to have a way to set yourself apart from the crowd. We were all young and dumb when we started. If we'd looked at the capital investment versus return, nobody in their right mind would do this."

Beck actively markets his business through print ads in car-enthusiast magazines, but says his most valuable marketing tool is exposure on Google. His primary target is the high-end performance guy who's done his homework. "I ask myself what I'd like to see if I were to spend \$10,000 to as much as \$50,000 on an engine. I'd want to

see a professional operation — and that's what we've built here."

Equipment is a big deal for a lot of the engine specialists we talked to. "You have to be self-sufficient," says **Byron Raney** (Raney Race Engines, San Paulo, CA). "You have to have the guts to make the investment."

Raney bought one piece of equipment at a time and now, 20 some years later, he's state-of-the-art. Besides the tools, Raney says you have to work long hours and have contacts. "It's hard to break into this business unless you've got some grassroots experience," he admits. "My advantage was working with some of the top fuel teams when I was 18 to 23 years old. You have to be willing to do what you have to in order to make money in this business."

While customer names like **Don Prudhomme** and **Shirley Muldowney** give Raney street cred, one of his

best marketing tools is his '64 Nova with 18-inch tires. "I drive it on weekends," he says. "It sounds like a funny car and really turns heads."

Because of the competition of mail-order companies, **Jay Steel** (Taylor Engines, Whittier, CA) concentrates on authentic hot rods. "Eighty percent of what we do are antiques," he says. "The other 20% is typical engine shop work." For Steel, the real hot rods are one way for a small shop to have some success. "Guys can't go shopping for a flathead," he notes. Over the 37 years he's owned Taylor, Steel has seen his share of ups and downs, and he was able to flow with the market and survive serious slumps. When the Northridge earthquake shook "closed" signs onto the doors of other shop owners whose buildings had been condemned, Steel could hang in until business picked up. "This is really a toy market and it's tied to the economy.



► Part # 49496

RED ANGEL
OIL STOP LEAK & CONDITIONER

In The Country!

Permanently Seals...
 • CONDENSERS
 • CONNECTION HOSES
 • EVAPORATORS
 • GASKETS & O-RINGS

GUARANTEED

Works on Gas or Diesel Engines, Turbochargers, Marine Engines, Power Hydraulic Pumps, Actuators & Cylinders.



Part # ◀ 49499

WHITE SHEPHERD
OIL STOP LEAK & CONDITIONER

In The Country!

Permanently Seals...
 • POWER STEERING
 • ENGINE OIL PAN LEAKS
 • TRANSMISSION LEAKS
 • DIFFERENTIALS
 • RACK & PINION STEERING
 • HYDRAULIC SYSTEMS

GUARANTEED

Works on Gas or Diesel Engines, Turbochargers, Marine Engines, Power Hydraulic Pumps, Actuators & Cylinders.



► Part # 38386

BlueDevil
ENGINE & COOLING SEALANT

In The Country!

Permanently Seals...
 • BLOWN HEAD GASKETS
 • LEAKING RADIATORS
 • WARPED & CRACKED HEADS
 • LEAKING HEATER CORES
 • ENGINE BLOCK LEAKS
 • LEAKING FREEZE PLUGS

GUARANTEED

1/2 GALLON 1/2 QUART
 3.6 LITERS MADE IN U.S.A.

Are PERMANENT Sealers



| RED ANGEL A/C STOP LEAK & CONDITIONER NON-CLOGGING, PERMANENT FIX FOR R-12 OR R-134A SYSTEMS | WHITE SHEPHERD OIL STOP LEAK & CONDITIONER NON-CLOGGING, PERMANENT FIX FOR R-12 OR R-134A SYSTEMS | BlueDevil ENGINE & COOLING SEALANT FOR GASOLINE OR DIESEL NON-CLOGGING |
|--|---|--|
| Non-clogging to the system or the recovery unit Permanent fix for R-12 or R-134A Systems | Non-clogging Quickly revitalizes hard, shrunken, leaking seals to their original condition | Non-clogging Bonds to metal, aluminum, cast or alloy |

over 90% success rate ★ 100% guaranteed ★ easy to use

Available from:









www.gouniversalproducts.com

For all tech support contact Universal Products, Inc. - 888-863-0426