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Motorcycle Parts – OEM or Aftermarket ???

By Daniel Levy

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This is always a difficult one to answer when shopping for motorcycle parts and I firmly believe that each one of us must decide what's best for our bikes AFTER carefully evaluating each of the possibilities.

For me?

Well... it really depends on what I am looking for – just replacement or improvement – , the availability of the part, my budget and other things. Sometimes I buy OEM, others aftermarket motorcycle parts.

Keep reading. You will find some views that will hopefully help you decide the next time you shop for motorcycle parts.

What a heck are OEM parts??

OEM parts stands for Original Equipment Manufacturer parts which not necessarily mean the OM (Original Manufacturer) actually produced them. You know, many motorcycle and automobile manufacturers don't manufacture each of the parts used in their vehicles. They frequently have the parts designed and manufactured by outside independent companies and then, install them in their machines or put them in their own boxes to be sold as OEM parts!

Good to know when buying OEM Motorcycle Parts:

When you buy OEM Motorcycle Parts you are buying the exact same original part the manufacturer used to build your motorcycle, that means:

>> Same performance as the part installed in your motorcycle right now. The part won't be better nor worse than the original part you want to replace.

>> Normally OEM parts a more (in some cases MUCH more) expensive than aftermarket parts.

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>> Motorcycle and car agencies clerks will normally tell you OEM Parts are higher quality and the best option for replacements. Is this true? Well sometimes it is, sometimes it's not.

>> Normally after a certain period of time, the manufacturer will allow the company that originally designed/produced the part to sell it in their own box at a considerably lower cost, making it: an Aftermarket OEM part! :-)

>> BE CAREFUL if your bike is still in its guarantee period make sure you use only OEM parts and have them installed by authorized mechanics. If you don't do so, you will probably void the guarantee.

What about Aftermarket parts??

Aftermarket parts should perform as well as OEM parts but are produced by companies other than the original manufacturer(s).

Things to know when buying Aftermarket Motorcycle Parts:

>> MAKE SURE YOUR GUARANTEE PERIOD IS OVER. In many cases, you can VOID your guarantee if you have an aftermarket part installed by an unauthorized mechanic in your machine. I know I said it before, but it's worth repeating; I happened to me! :-)

>> Equivalent aftermarket Suzuki motorcycle parts are normally cheaper than OEM parts. Sometimes up to 70% cheaper!

>> Aftermarket parts can have lower, the same or higher quality than the original.

>> When buying aftermarket parts make sure you are getting AT LEAST the same quality as the OEM part. If possible try to get some reviews about brands and performance. You can do it in the Internet, with your favorite mechanic or with fellow riders.

>> If you are looking for high performance parts and devices, you know the kind: carbon fiber, titanium, aerospace aluminum parts and gizmos, well you will probably find them as aftermarket motorcycle parts.

OEM or aftermarket motorcycle parts, sooner or later you will be shopping for them...

Enjoy the ride!

Daniel Levy

Daniel Levy is the owner and contributing writer of www.Japanese-Motorcycles-Only.com . He loves motorcycles and Web development. For more great info visit

<http://www.japanese-motorcycles-only.com>/If you need motorcycle parts, check out BikeBandit: my favorite online store for motorcycle parts. You will find a full review of their business in this page:<http://www.japanese-motorcycles-only.com/bike-bandit.html>

Car Repair Prices: Why Your Oil Change Is Never "Just An Oil Change"

By Theodore Olson

For a repair shop, there is little profit in the \$29.95 oil change. By the time a shop pays its technician, pays for the oil, the filter, and the hazardous waste disposal fees, there's no money left.

This low profit margin is worsened by the extremely competitive "Quick Lube" business, which forces local repair shops to refrain from raising prices, despite rising costs.

This all begs the question: If oil change specials, which range from \$15.95 to \$29.95, clearly produce very low profits, then why do so many service facilities advertise oil change specials?

The answer is actually very simple: It gets you in the door. Service centers know that once they have your vehicle, they can sell you additional work.

Suggesting additional work is called upselling, and it's a primary profit tactic of every service facility.

Here's a typical example. You drop your vehicle off for "just an oil change." Upon completion your service representative smiles and proudly states, "We noticed that your air filter was dirty; so we popped in a new one." You may think "Great; what wonderful service!"

What really occurred is that you were casually upsold an air filter. It probably wasn't needed; it certainly wasn't replaced according to any factory recommendation, and you were definitely overcharged for what was most likely a poorly-fitting, aftermarket, inferior air filter.

Here's a real-life example that occurred recently. This particular vehicle had 54,000 miles on it, and was dropped off at a local shop for "just an oil change." Upon paying the bill, the customer was handed an estimate for \$199 to replace his air filter and top radiator hose.

Shocked at the price, he called me.

After review, I found that the air filter suggestion was premature. It didn't need replacement until the manufacturer's recommended 60,000-mile service interval. The top hose was also premature. In fact, it did not need replacement at all, despite a very minor problem easily addressed during the factory maintenance schedule—at no extra cost.

Check out the aftermarket part prices quoted below (including the unnecessary radiator hose). Compare these to the manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP) for the factory OEM parts (Original Equipment Manufacturer).

Local Shop Aftermarket Air Filter: \$32 Manufacturer OEM Filter, MSRP: \$17

Local Shop Aftermarket Top Hose: \$36 Manufacturer OEM Top Hose, MSRP: \$19

Notice that this local shop was doubling the price of the OEM parts with its inferior aftermarket parts.

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Now, let's look at the labor time quoted.

Local Shop Labor Time: 2.0 @ \$60 per hour = \$120
Manufacturer Labor Time: 0.9 @ \$60 per hour = \$81

Notice that the shop labor time estimate for the repairs was 2 hours. This is more than "twice" the manufacturer's recommendations (even after calculating manufacturer times against the industry standard multiplier).

Had the local shop abided by the vehicle's particular maintenance intervals instead of trying to make a quick buck, it should have recommended a 60,000-mile service at the next visit. This would have better served the client, saved him \$199, and maintained the vehicle properly.

Instead, the service center lost a customer, forever!

What needs to be made crystal clear is that this type of price-gouging occurs every day in every type of service facility in one form or another across the automotive service industry.

This type of price-gouging is considered normal!

Theodore P. Olson (Ted)

Solutions Ted holds extensive certifications from

Mercedes-Benz, Toyota, GM, and ASE. He is the author of eight books and numerous articles on the automotive service industry.



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