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Autologue to Donate System Access to Students

Jim Franco, president and CEO of Autologue, is making three of his online management system software products available to aftermarket high school, trade and college students in hopes of furthering education and training.

By aftermarketNews staff

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BUENA PARK, Calif. -- Data provider Autologue Computer Systems Inc. is providing aftermarket students an unprecedented opportunity, at no cost, to access the real-world industry tools previously utilized only after graduation.

Jim Franco, president and CEO of Autologue, is making three of his online management system software products available to aftermarket high school, trade and college students in hopes of furthering education and training.

The idea aims to attract and better educate young people in the industry to keep the aftermarket thriving and growing, a notion that far surpasses the value of money or recognition for Franco.

"I'm not in it for the glory. We need to get youngsters in the industry and trained. We have a responsibility throughout the entire aftermarket to train and empower young people in this industry and show them the opportunities," Franco said.

"I have the opportunity to give back. I can make a difference. If I can motivate just one student, I've won."

And smaller aftermarket companies, unlike big OE companies, often don't have the luxury of large budgets to help get their names out in the mainstream at industry schools, he added.

"So we have to do everything we can to build awareness," Franco said.

Autologue's Shop Management System is geared toward repair shops and the professional installer and can provide estimates, work orders, vehicle history, appointment scheduling and product cataloging.

ePaperlessOffice manages invoices, statements and credits online and eDelivery, reports on driver routes and expected delivery times.

"This is a product they would use in the shop, whether they are a technician in the garage or an owner using it for accounting," Franco said.

An April meeting with Steve Hoellein, president and CEO of Felt Auto in Ogden, Utah, spurred Franco's desire to give back. "His passion, his enthusiasm, how he goes to schools and talks to students inspired me," Franco said.

His first order of action is to start at the top — with the teachers. Franco will be meeting with the North American Council of Automotive Teachers (NACAT) to specify how the program will be structured to reach students. He has also found a partner in the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association (AAIA) and will be posting product descriptions and information on the organization's website.

In addition to student benefits, Autologue can also utilize its reporting systems to capture which schools are using the systems and who is accessing it, information that can then be used to target areas where minimal use has been reported.

All online access and technology support will be handled in-house by Autologue's staff and Franco hopes this will set a precedent for other companies.

If we do this right, it will flow out through our industry, and hopefully spur ideas for our products, he said.

Hoellein and Franco are also interested in spearheading a "Recruiting Career Week," an initiative through which they envision calling on all parts stores, repair shops, distributors, suppliers and manufacturers to contact their local high schools, trade schools and colleges to build interest and exposure in the aftermarket, Franco said.

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