



HISTORY OF THE AUTOTEK

Hey, DJ? How far do you want to go back? WAY BACK... Well it goes a little something like this: The year is 1977: Bellbottoms are still the rage, "The Love Boat" is the breakout television hit, and a lot of you were not even born yet. On the automobile front, economical cars, which make relatively zero horsepower, are the rage because of the gasoline crisis, but badass car audio guys like ourselves (if we had lived back then) would have gotten souped-up conversion vans with plush shag carpet, especially for the ladies. Then, if you were cool, you would have outfitted it with a Craig 8-Track and maybe some Jensen Triaxials. If you were mad cool, you would have proba-

bly found out about a small boutique manufacturer of Dolby C auto-reverse cassette head units (cassette was badass when everyone else was rockin' to 8-track). This company was known as Autotek. Two guys named Sid Schrieber and Bob Fils started the company to bring better sound to the car audio world. Schrieber knew that although hi-fi head units were selling strong, to really get good sound in a car you needed outboard power amplification. Eventually, Sid bought out his partner and built the legacy of Autotek that is still creating killer products today.

"When I was a rep, way back in the 1970s, there was a lot of aftermarket

car stereos being stolen because most of the two-knob decks back then had chrome knobs," recalls Schrieber. "I kept telling the car audio manufacturers to make a deck without chrome knobs. The factories wouldn't listen, so I decided to go to Japan and find a factory to make these radios. My first order was for 200 pieces. Then it became 500, then 1000!"

So, what's the moral of the story? "As a manufacturer, I always listened to the dealers and complied with what they wanted," adds Schrieber. "These are the guys who have their ear to the streets, and Autotek has always been about listening to installers and salespeople."

THE HISTORY OF AUTOTEK

When the market for expensive in-dash head units started to drop around 1980 (by this time the manufacturers of car audio who we know today were making units at a low street price), Schrieber, once again, listened to his dealers and knew the route to take was creating a line of high-powered amplifiers. He eventually enlisted the help of Peter van Rijsbergen.

"In 1985 Sid hired me as his engineer," states van Rijsbergen. "We developed the first American-made amplifiers for Autotek, designed and built in California. Our business doubled. Then tripled. The amplifiers had a brute-force design power supply that did not limit current when overdriven. The manufacturers in the Far East would not design this type of product.

American companies at this time were producing similar product, but the leaders were using unregulated power supplies. Our amplifiers produced stronger bass."

Simultaneously, the soundoff scene was starting to blossom.

Schrieber recalls attending one of the first parking-lot SPL contests in southern California: "I'm watching this event and listening to how loud our amplifiers are making these cars. At one point, I asked one of the dealers 'Is this necessary? No one can listen to music this loud.' The shrewd dealer pointed out 'Your right, that isn't music, that is the sound of making money we are listening to!'"

Soon after, Autotek became the first manufacturer to be affiliated with USACi (then USAC).

The four major lines in the original Autotek line-up were the Super Sport (entry level), the Street Machine (most



AUTOTEK'S SID SCHRIEBER



OLD SCHOOL:
AUTOTEK'S
MODEL 70
AND SR90

popular), the Stealth (the high fidelity line), and the Mean Machine (the SPL monsters).

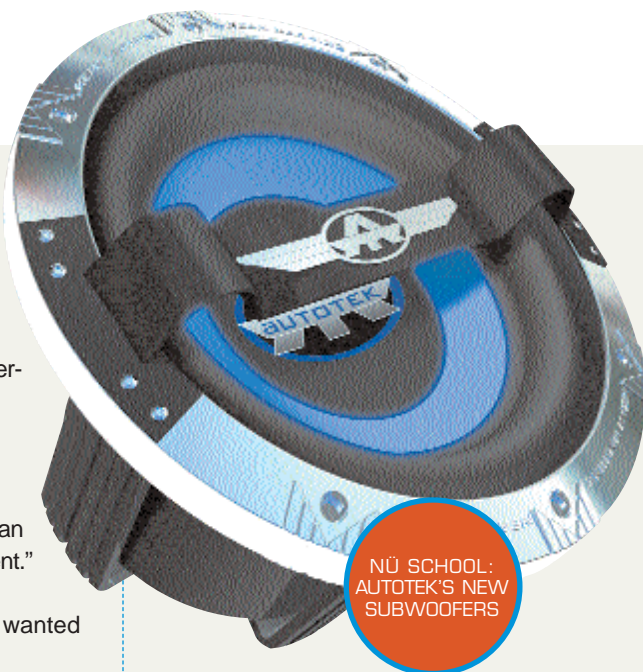
"Our dealers made the most profit with our Street Machine line, as they were the best blend of price and performance," states Schrieber. "The Stealth line had a really custom look and a patented mounting mechanism that enthusiasts love. And the Mean Machine pounds the pavement."

These four lines created options for consumers who wanted the Autotek name.

"We have always made sure that Autotek amplifiers deliver maximum power by paying careful attention to power supply design," adds van Rijsbergen. "Our quality control is rigorous. We test, re-test, and then re-design extensively. We use large heat sinks, large capacitors, big transformers, and other quality components."

Sid Schrieber has done an amazing job with the Autotek company, and he will be passing the baton onto Maxxsonics USA.

"We have enjoyed significant success and growth with HiFonics and Crunch since we started Maxxsonics USA in late 2001," states Alden Steifel, president and CEO of Maxxsonics. "Autotek had always been a competitor with HiFonics from the early days of car audio. Even prior to acquisition of the HiFonics brand, I met Sid and we developed a friendly relationship. Shortly after we created Maxxsonics, Sid and I began having conversations about the market and the future of our companies. Sid liked what we were doing. Autotek has always provided world-class product and enjoys strong brand recognition with the dealers and the industry as a whole. For us, and Sid, the legacy of Autotek was a perfect match for Maxxsonics and its brands. Sid and



**NU SCHOOL:
AUTOTEK'S NEW
SUBWOOFERS**

I talk often throughout the transition and we refer to him as our 'consigliore,' he's quite involved and we listen."

Autotek has been an impressive brand in terms of brand loyalty and repeat buyers. It seems once someone has an Autotek amp, they stick with the brand forever.

"Autotek is the perfect fit for Maxxsonics' long-term strategy," adds Steifel. "Our HiFonics and Crunch brand are both widely distributed throughout the world. Maxxsonics' goal is to establish Autotek as a premier retail-only line. We have added people internally to support the Autotek dealer base and our reputation as one of the easiest companies in the 12-volt industry to do business with will only get better. Our commitment to product design and product support is our highest priority here. It's only going to get better for Autotek dealers."

"We looked at the market, our target competitors, and what the car audio enthusiast wants and needs," explains Ted Henricks, vice president of Sales and Marketing for Maccsonics. "We developed a product line that our retailers can merchandise, sell profitably, and enjoy selling. The 2005 Mean Machine product is the best and coolest amplifier line on

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the market today. Powered by Maxxsonics on the inside, we have provided a complete line of Super D subwoofer amplifiers and a complimentary line of two and four channel sound quality amplifiers. The Mean Machine amp line looks fantastic. We have encased black aluminum extrusion in a blue, illuminated stainless steel shroud that screams performance and style. And we don't stop with amplifiers. We have a complete line of new Mean Machine speaker systems and subwoofers. All subs are all available in dual voice coils, both two and four ohm, and, we've illuminated the Autotek logo. The new speaker systems can handle high power, they are illuminated, and feature our new low-profile design so they virtually fit any vehicle on the market today."

So, the legacy of Autotek continues into the new millennium. For those

installers who are unfamiliar with the Autotek brand, check out one of the amps — you can really feel the muscle-car design and the brand heritage in the product.

"We have many new projects past the conceptual phase," adds Henricks. "Our strategy is to provide Autotek dealers with all new Maxxsonics innovations and technologies. Maxxsonics USA's long-term goal is to be a complete mobile entertainment leader. Autotek provides us a launching pad for the best we can offer. Autotek is destined to be the crown jewel of Maxxsonics. So get ready for a tremendous year for a new perennial favorite."

Schrieber sums it up with this bit of wisdom for you young installers: "Keep on doing this as long as you are enjoying it. It's so much fun to spend hours in a car when you don't look at the timeclock. I have had so much fun working with young installers, and that's what keeps my hair from becoming gray." <<

PUTTIN' IT IN

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(Photos 17, 18). Confident that everything was working properly, I bracketed the changer to the floor (after checking for clearance) (Photos 19, 20) and reassembled the vehicle in reverse order.

The NEOCDC package is a great upgrade and is ever so simple to install. I miss the days when a customer would come in with a VW and want a CD changer and we could just plug in a Panasonic changer to the factory run cable and send them on their merry way. Well, not only is the NEOCDC almost as easy for you, the installer, but the customer gets a whole lot more than just a CD changer — they get a music jukebox.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON THE PRODUCTS USED IN THIS INSTALLATION, PLEASE VISIT WWW.PERIPHERALELECTRONICS.COM.