



# AIR FILTERS & INTAKE SYSTEMS

## FOR PERFORMANCE APPLICATIONS

**T**he retail sales presentation for performance air filters is simple but powerfully effective. With today's economy, as well as advancements in internal engine components, race engines are now expected to go more miles between rebuilds. Air filters and intake systems are key aspects that keep performance from deteriorating over the duration of the rebuild by not allowing tiny particles of dirt and debris to be ingested. Therefore, "a high-quality, lightweight, non-restrictive filter system provides a competitive advantage," noted Gary Donahoe of Coast Fabrication in Huntington Beach, California.

"In today's economy racers are working within a budget more than ever," added Nick Schero of Outerwears in Schoolcraft, Michigan. "Racers want to save money and feel like they are getting serious value from the money they are spending. It only makes sense to protect the expensive and vital parts of your race cars."

Tim Stewart at K&N Engineering in Riverside, California, has noticed that the weekend racing enthusiasts now seem to be trying to find ways to protect their engines more, indicating solid business opportunities for performance retailers to increase sales and upgrades in air filters and air intake systems. "This may be due to the struggling economy and the effort to make their motors last longer without having to spend their resources rebuilding them."

### Trends

As reported by some of our contacts, dry filters are very popular with racers today. "The preference for oil-free filters continues to increase," noted Colin Greenlees, R2C Performance Products, Forest Park, Illinois. "With the high incidence of oil-affected sensors, coupled with the undesirable maintenance procedure involved with cleaning and oiling gauze products, low restriction, high efficiency, easy-to-maintain dry filters, such as the R2C PowerFlow, are gaining market share rapidly.

"Race teams now comprehend that gauze-based media products are considered more universal in nature and may not suit their specific needs," Greenlees

continued. These needs are being met by oil-free synthetic designs, he said.

Joey Granatelli of Granatelli Motor Sports in Oxnard, California, also noted that dry filter technology seems to be the catch phrase, “but whether you use a dry filter or you use an oiled filter, the end result is the same—they both have their strengths.”

Granatelli said that he is beginning to see more people going back to the “tried and true, oiled, cotton gauze filter. Oiled filters have the perception of trapping more dirt and you can always see it.”

Also trendy in this product category right now are custom designed systems.

motorsports industry. “We have noticed an increased appetite for our unique, higher-performing filtration products from those craving more horsepower,” Kevin Schaefer noted. “On a custom motorcycle or under the hood, space is a valuable commodity. Our unique filter medias and in-house capabilities enable us to meet our customers’ needs, providing custom tooling and design options, OEM private labeling and engraving, as well as our custom color selection.”

### Merchandising Tips

“Better dealers understand that success requires promotion, creative marketing, and education,” Greenlees advised. “As

*The latest trends and newest air filter products are described here to help you determine which air filters will be fast movers off of your store’s shelves.*

“Over the last year we have had an increase in requests for custom one-off or small quantity air filters to fit applications where no standard size filter exists,” Donahoe said.

In keeping with the trends, Performance Filtration Products in Pennsburg, Pennsylvania, incorporates an array of dry-type filter media into its custom air intake and breather filter elements for the

new technology emerges, dealers at the forefront make it a point to fully understand the design features of new products and how these features translate into user benefits.

“Quality dealers rely on rigorous product training and expect their staff to be aware of and understand product innovation and explain the benefits to their customers,” Greenlees continued.

Because many racers are now focusing on their budgets more than ever before, they want to save money and get real value from the money they do spend. As such, one air filter contact reported that it only makes sense to protect the expensive and vital parts of their race cars, and one way to do this is to use pre-filters on race air filters to prevent even more debris from entering the race engine to protect the valuable, and expensive, components inside.

