

## **A Performance Products Perspective**

*What you need to know to enhance your ride while protecting your investment in the process.*

**By Jennifer Lange, NADAguides.com**

Fuel injectors, air intakes, exhaust systems, clutch kits. There are plenty of performance product choices on the market today – a smorgasbord of parts and accessories designed to enhance a vehicle’s performance or improve its overall curb appeal.

It’s long been argued that performance products are the cat’s meow – a mindset sharply embraced by car enthusiasts who wouldn’t hesitate to slap down \$2,000 for exhaust headers or \$250 for chrome grille strips.

But for the conservative car owner – the drive-from-point-A-to-point-B kind of guy – do performance products make sense and ultimately, are vehicles worth more money if they’re loaded with aftermarket goodies?

According to Mark Perleberg, lead auto expert at NADAguides.com, a leading vehicle information website, certain performance products can – and oftentimes do – enhance a car’s value. However, he cautions that not only does it depend on the types of products installed, it’s important to consider *how* those products are installed.

“Sure Edelbrock shocks are cool, but do I negate my manufacturer’s warranty if ABC Stock Shop installs them on my car? More importantly, at resale time, will I get a return on my investment? These are questions you have to ask yourself.”

If you think Perleberg’s a pessimist, think again. He’s avid about aftermarket products and his 2005 Dodge Magnum sports \$3,000 worth of aftermarket tires and wheels – a testament to his love of customization. He believes certain performance parts can give you the drivability of a more expensive model for less cost, they can also increase a car’s value due to custom enhancements that give the vehicle a look of individuality. What’s more, he believes they can improve sound and performance, increase curb appeal at resale time or enhance fuel efficiency – a benefit in today’s skyrocketing gas-price world.

Perleberg chose to enhance his car because he says he likes the look of cool rims and low profile tires. And so, for likeminded enthusiasts eager to load up on the latest and greatest performance parts and accessories, he offers the following advice.

Perleberg suggests car buyers consider upgrading to the diverse selection of performance products offered by most of today’s car makers – at the point of purchase – to avoid the potential of voiding a car’s warranty (the potential that comes with the installation of after market products...after the fact). And if you decide to add add-ons once the car’s sitting in your driveway, Perleberg urges car owners to find a reputable and certified technician who’s experienced in installing the products the right way, the first time.

What's more, Perleberg says there are certain types of performance products that, over the long haul, make more common sense...and oftentimes more financial sense... than others. Some of these products include intake and exhaust systems that augment the combustion process (enhancements that can improve an engine's performance and ultimately its fuel efficiency), superchargers or turbochargers for an added performance boost, cooling system upgrades, transmission coolers (ideal for improving a vehicle's towing functionality), brake upgrades for increased safety, a shock swap which can often improve your vehicle's ride and overall handling, or suspension packages for those off-road, adventurous types interested in making their vehicles more stable and durable.

While Perleberg can't ensure you'll get more money at resale time for a truck that's been equipped with a suspension package, he believes that a potential likeminded buyer would find a suspension package more attractive (and more valuable) than its stock counterpart.

Along those lines, Perleberg says consumer mindset has shifted in the past ten years from ultra-conservative to more of an enthusiast approach to car buying and owning – good news for folks who value performance enhancers. Today, it's common to find plenty of vehicles in the resale market that have been equipped with aftermarket performance products, either by the manufacturer when the car was sold new or by the seller who made enhancements during the ownership lifecycle.

“Don't forget the tuner market is red hot right now,” said Perleberg, “and that has certainly helped make positive changes in the way car buyers view performance products. And there are plenty of TV shows dedicated to car customization today too – I think this has certainly been a contributing factor in shifting the way car buyers think.”

What's more, Perleberg says today's car owning generation is competitively minded, a fact that the performance product industry has most certainly leveraged.

“Power, speed, maneuverability – that's what drivers want nowadays,” said Perleberg. Manufacturers know this and aftermarket companies know this. Consumers are in the driver's seat. They always have been and they always will be.”

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