



Test Lanes Claim Their Place in Tomorrow's Garages

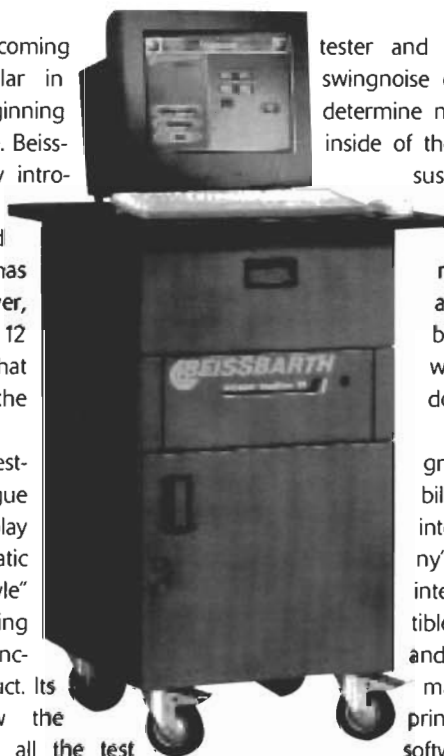
Beissbarth claims to have a reputation as "one of the world's most innovative manufacturers of automotive servicing equipment," and because of this it is committed to leading the industry in the development of one of the most up-to-date products to hit the garage equipment market – the test lane.

As test lanes are becoming increasingly popular in Ireland the UK is just beginning to sit up and take notice. Beissbarth has only recently introduced its test lane into the UK market, and claims that the industry has responded well. However, all eyes are on the next 12 months and the impact that VOSA will have on the future of the test lane.

Beissbarth's micro-testline 69 features "analogue LCD measurement display and super automatic mode." The "cock-pit style" design of the rotating display is the most distinctive feature of the product. Its function is to show the measured values from all the test operations; such as braking efficiency/performance as a percentage or axle load in kilograms. Three different measured values are shown for the toe, suspension and brake tests. A simple green/yellow/red scale can indicate the measurements or pointers on a three-way universal analogue display and a large LCD digital display can also display the results.

Super-automatic mode and infrared remote control are two features that the company claims cannot be found on other test rigs. The standard "super automatic" operating mode is designed to give operators menu control of the entire testing process. The computer automatically controls all the test phases, stores the data, indicates when the car should be moved forward and, via the brake test rig rollers provides an automatic drive-out support. Beissbarth UK managing director, Philip Hodges, explains: "The entire process takes scarcely three minutes, including the automatic data archiving and printing functions – and without touching a single key."

The product features standard facilities such as brake and suspension testing, and a sideslip tester. Its ability to perform noise detection diagnosis makes it different to its competitors. Combined with the suspension



tester and the company's micro-swingnoise 62, the equipment can determine noise in the underbody, inside of the vehicle and from the suspension, all at variable speeds. The speed selection setting allows mechanics to find that annoying rattle that might be present at 60 mph without having to drive down the motorway.

To give the product greater technological capabilities the mtl 69 can be integrated with the company's BNET-PC software interface, which is compatible with any Windows PC and allows technical information to be archived and printed. BNET Office testline software can also be utilised

in conjunction with the equipment and contains standard modules: order manager, print manager for standard and 3D graphic printouts, archiving manager and ASA network interface. This provides a test center with greater technical opportunities in the workshop; for example the testline can be connected to a PC in a reception area making

the measured values available for order processing, customer advice and allocation of data for invoicing.

The company's screen-testline 70 is technically identical to the mtl 69 but offers something slightly different. Instead of an analogue display the stl 70 features an equipment cabinet on wheels, Windows software, a 17-inch colour monitor, keyboard and accessories and interface module. It also offers measured-value display and operator control via the monitor, a customer/vehicle database, BNET Office testline software. It is network-compatible, with interface to commercial software and online software updates and remote maintenance diagnosis.

The stl 70's measured-value monitor display expresses information in various modes allowing the data to be easily compared to the reference database values. The measurements can be indicated as digital values or bar graphics, which is designed to aid the diagnosis process. The results are also shown in comparison to legal parameters and additional reports draw a mechanic's attention to possible vehicle faults.

"The potential of test lanes is big, and will come to fruition in the next 15 months. The pressure is coming from the sheer volume of vehicles on the road and the need for better testing facilities. Bodies such as VOSA and the GEA will also drive the further introduction of test lanes, with consumer demands confirming their necessity in garages, as they require more from their vehicles and better performance," concluded Mr Hodges. *cma*

