

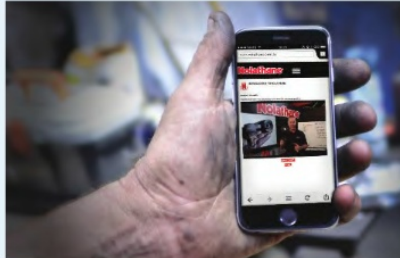
BUSINESS SERVICES

START WITH THE BASICS AT THE NOLATHANE ACADEMY

Nolathane are excited to launch a new online learning portal

Nolathane says the primary objective of the academy is to improve the suspension category knowledge base at all levels of the industry, be it mechanics, apprentices, call centres, counter and field sales, or purchasing through to category management.

A big part of this initiative was the use of Mark Larkham who has proven very effective for Nolathane since coming on board as the Technical Ambassador.



"Mark Larkham has done an amazing job simplifying our product and category through the short video content produced to date. We now wish to activate that content from a elearning perspective and get all those within the industry, who deal in our products to either refresh their knowledge or bring them up to speed if new to it all," Nolathane General Manager, Mr Andrew Nolan said.

The modules are short one to two minute videos followed by a multiple choice question and answer format.

"We have certainly taken on board the time pressures of the market so we have developed very short and to the point content that delivers the key information we wish those completing to retain. The first module 'Introduction to Nolathane' can be completed in 15 minutes, so we are not talking hours to complete," Mr Nolan said.

On successful completion, Nolathane proudly issues a personalised certificate that it hopes will become part of any individual's key learning achievements.

For more information, visit www.nolathane.com.au/academy.php

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS OF AUTO PARTS DELIVERY

In the high-pressure auto-parts delivery game, there is little room for error

If you gain a reputation for late or misplaced deliveries, customers can easily find another supplier who can do it better.

This is the view of Mr Walter Scremin, General Manager at national delivery transport firm, Ontime Group, which has provided solutions in parts delivery for more than 25 years.

"Parts delivery is high-octane, it never stops and every day brings new challenges. I think that's why we love it," Mr Scremin said.

"It's an industry where you can do extremely well by developing a name for being professional and reliable."

Mr Scremin said that parts delivery problems share common traits. Drawing on his 25-plus years' experience in the industry, he has outlined the Seven Deadly Sins of parts delivery:

- 1. Not knowing the full costs:** Running an inefficient operation will gradually erode your profitability. Becoming more efficient starts with knowing the true costs involved. "I've seen many businesses work hard yet only just scrape by, as they don't understand their delivery costs," Mr Scremin said. "Performing your own deliveries with capital equipment and personnel costs can be difficult to measure as there are so many variables. But by being smart about it and using technology you can unearth the costs involved, and make changes to keep costs down."
- 2. No reliable back-ups available:** Being unable to deal with absentees is one of the most costly and frequent mistakes made by parts delivery fleets. "The effect is profound because it either results in parts delivered late, or not at all. We've known of business owners who often filled in at short notice and did the deliveries, and it drove them up the wall." Mr Scremin said that building flexibility into delivery fleets was possible via clever outsourcing. "Having a flexible arrangement where absences can be covered quickly is the professional response. It not only makes for better delivery performance, it gives parts managers and business owners peace of mind."
- 3. Using incorrect labels:** When outsourcing your deliveries, attention to detail increases the chances of successful delivery. Any packages must have a clearly defined label with the address, otherwise it may be lost or misdirected. A common problem is re-using a parcel which has an out-of-date address still showing. "There's nothing wrong with re-using

a parcel provided it's still in good shape, but you must ensure there is only one label showing," Mr Scremin said.

- 4. Using incorrect packaging:** Packaging must be sturdy enough to be handled multiple times, through many hands and via automated conveyors. The correct size of packaging is important – a carton that's too big can be as troublesome as one that's too small. Incorrect packaging is the major contributor to damaged goods. "Anything remotely fragile must be protected and properly wrapped, as broken goods at point of delivery will cost you," Mr Scremin said.

- 5. Being unable to inform customers of a delivery's progress:** There is no longer any excuse for not informing customers of their deliveries. Even smaller parts business can now access smartphone-based telematics systems cheaply, keeping customers up to speed. "Customers now expect to know how their deliveries are progressing – this is no longer a value-add, it is becoming a basic expectation," Mr Scremin said. "Technology such as QR codes make it easy to keep customers in touch."

- 6. No proof of delivery:** "Proof-of-delivery protects parts companies from claims that a delivery didn't show up, or that the wrong part was delivered", Mr Scremin said. "It used to be much harder to prove otherwise against such claims, but thankfully proof-of-delivery has never been easier, cheaper, or more widely available than now. Using a simple telematics system provides instant proof." He said that easy and fast access to proof-of-delivery also assists in accounts receivable when a customer is delaying or avoiding paying for goods.

- 7. Going the long way:** Fleets can easily double-up on delivery runs or accidentally take a longer route, making them less efficient, which increases the cost-per-delivery. The answer is frequently analysing delivery driver routes with fleet tracking software. "Being efficient in deliveries requires focus, but it is possible to save time and money on your deliveries by monitoring these things," Mr Scremin said. "Too often a driver will be taking twice as long to deliver a part as necessary, but this won't show up unless you make the effort to use telematics and analyse your fleet's performance."

For more information, visit www.ontimegroup.com.au

