

FOUR MASTERS ACCUTEK

ACCURATE TECHNOLOGY.
NO JOB TOO HARD!

Partners Stuart "Stuey" Crombie and Chris Payne officially went into business as Accutek some 15 years ago. They met about 10 years previously whilst working as designers for an electronics company. This background has stood them in good stead and the skills they developed at that time go toward making Accutek one of the most versatile FOUR MASTERS there is.

Loyal readers may remember a Porsche, which we wrote about in issue two you may also recognise Stuey from our FOUR MASTERS feature in the same issue. Chris however, is altogether more enigmatic, preferring to get on quietly and efficiently with his work!

Stuey's interest in car audio began when he got his first car at the age of 16. He still has this car and one day, it will reappear with an up to date system fitted! As with many lads of the time, Stuey wanted loads of bass and to achieve this he would cram as many subwoofers into his car as possible. However, this changed when he took his car to a sound-off and was beaten hands down by a competitor who had just a pair of component speakers up front and a single 12" subwoofer powered by a single amplifier in the rear. After this he swapped lots of cheap equipment for a few high-end products in search of great sound quality instead! Around this time he met Chris and quickly discovered they shared an appreciation of good sound. They set up a part time business, Audio in Motion, so that they could improve knowledge and skill preparing installs for others. Eventually, they made the decision to go fulltime with this venture although in the early days, they continued to work for their previous employer in a poacher turned gamekeeper style arrangement.

As well as audio upgrades, Accutek undertake many varied renovation projects. Recently, they have undertaken a number of bottom-up refurbishments of camper vans. Stuey is an ardent VW fan and will always jump at the opportunity to get his hands on any vehicle carrying that particular badge. Accutek's recent innovative modification to enable a T4 van to take a double-sized multimedia system has been a revelation and bought in a wave of other T4 owners wanting to do this. Some renovation projects live with Accutek for a while as everything from replacement body panels to upholstery work is carried out. A lot of specialist skills are farmed out to friendly suppliers and Accutek is often called upon by these suppliers, to supply its' skills to other projects.

Stuey tells us; "About 90% of our work comes from word-of-mouth and personal recommendations. Having been here for a long time, we have certain notoriety for being good at what we do. We draw trade work in from all over the south of England. Much of this is because of our electronics capabilities. We get a lot of vehicles with broken factory fitted entertainment systems in. These can be vehicles that have been part exchanged and are being brought up to working condition for resale or simply vehicles with ongoing problems which cannot be fixed by a car





TOP FIVE DEMO TUNES:

OFF THE WALL | MICHAEL JACKSON

FM | STEELY DAN

CHOW DOWN | CORDUROY

HEALING | INDIA AIRIE

HIFI BOSSANOVA | MATT BIANCO

dealer. In many cases these entertainment systems can cost £3000 plus to exchange for a working one from the original manufacturer. We use our electronics knowledge to find ways to fix what is there rather than throwing it away. This can be a much cheaper option for the garage or owner of the vehicle.

Although a lucrative part of the business, both Chris and I are never happier than when planning and creating an audio or full multimedia system from scratch. We always approach such projects as a challenge to improve a vehicle rather than simply adding to it. Many recent audio projects require a "stealth" install, which can present more of a challenge than a show car. There is precious little space behind the panels on modern cars but amplifiers still need to be anchored properly and speakers mounted in an acoustically sympathetic manner. The first thing we do is thoroughly sound treat as many panels on a vehicle as we can access. This gives us a good starting point for a great sounding car. Bit products from Audison allow us to create systems around the original system in the car meaning that drivers have exactly the same functionality as before but with fantastic sound but we are also able to add extra functionality such as Bluetooth, reversing sensors, iPod connectivity etc."

A trip to Accutek is an education and you needn't fear a hard sell. Stuey describes the sales process; "By the time a customer gets to us, they have a basic idea of what they want in terms of performance but rarely in terms of specific equipment or installation. We have the facility to sit them down and show them images of work we have done. We keep an enormous gallery of images online and can select those that fit any brief we are given. As far as equipment is concerned, customers tend to trust my judgement. I have been in this business for a long time and like to think I am in a great position to advise. Most people have a budget figure in mind and wherever possible I work hard to meet it. Sometimes, I may need to coax them to consider increasing it in order to avoid too much compromise but I never do this for the sake of making more money. It is what makes the difference between visiting a specialist enthusiast and a salesman!

In order to demonstrate the extremes of budget we use our demonstration stands and our demo car. The car has quite a high-end system in but is by no means silly. I find the sound of it quite inspiring actually and during quiet times Chris and I can often be found sitting in the car with our eyes closed!"

Whilst at Accutek, I thought I would take the opportunity to sit in the demo car for myself. The car is a VW Beetle, which I have

seen in several incarnations before. The car interior has had a complete overhaul and new equipment installed. Stuey was quick to point out the sound system is still in a fairly raw state and the speakers not yet run in or set up. It features Audison Voce but with a twist. A pair of Voce woofers has been dismantled and the basket and cone salvaged to form a pair of passive radiators, which share enclosure space with the active ones.

As with all Voce installations, the positions of the speakers seem to be completely at odds with where the sound is coming from! Close your eyes and listen to a familiar piece of music and you can see the artist on stage. Point to where you think a particular instrument is coming from then open your eyes and you will be amazed with the perception of space presented by these speakers. We listened to a good selection of music ranging from the acoustic noodlings of the legendary Mike Hedges to the doobie-doobie-doo of Frank Sinatra with extracts from Matt Bianco and others in between. Everything was handled brilliantly and I cannot wait to hear the car again after a good set up.

To find out more or to book a demo or put your car in the hands of consummate professionals, visit: www.accutek.co.uk or call: 01962 886900