

Digital voice control for vehicle workshops

TecAlliance and Continental have developed the first voice assistant for workshops: the innovative voice assistance system supports mechanics in the initial vehicle inspection, including access to TecAlliance's Repair and Maintenance Information (RMI) with voice commands. The goal is to further optimise workshop processes.

Digital technologies, the associated changes in customer needs, driving assistance systems, e-mobility and increasing interconnectivity are among the greatest challenges in the field of mobility.

The technology firm Continental is currently developing solutions, products and service concepts to guide companies in their automotive spare parts business into the future. One of the latest developments is a digital voice assistant for vehicle workshops. "We wanted to find out how innovative technologies from the B2C sector could be brought into B2B with real added value," says Matthias Rödler, Head of Business Process Development at Continental. The smart voice assistant supports mechanics during initial vehicle inspections. TecAlliance and Continental developed the concept as part of a joint innovation initiative.

Based on past experience, the experts at TecAlliance implemented a fully functioning beta version of the voice control system within three months.

200 voice commands in German and English

The voice assistance system is based on Cortana for desktop and mobile; it currently understands over 200 voice commands in German and English that control 24 different actions. Users can also access 22.8 million labour times and 3.9 million repair instructions. This is possible due to an interface with TecAlliance's repair and maintenance information (RMI).

For the technology firm Continental, the voice assistant is an exciting component of its digital offensive for workshops. "The collaboration with TecAlliance has been very inspiring, and the implementation was prompt and competent," says Matthias Rödler.

"The smart voice assistant is a good example of how we work together with customers to develop innovative solutions to meet the challenges of the digital automotive aftermarket. Such innovation initiatives have the potential to flow into new business models," says Jürgen Buchert,

Managing Director of TecAlliance, the provider of leading expert data and process management solutions in the automotive aftermarket.

Possible integration into a workshop management solution

The preferred use case for the smart voice assistance system is vehicle inspection by



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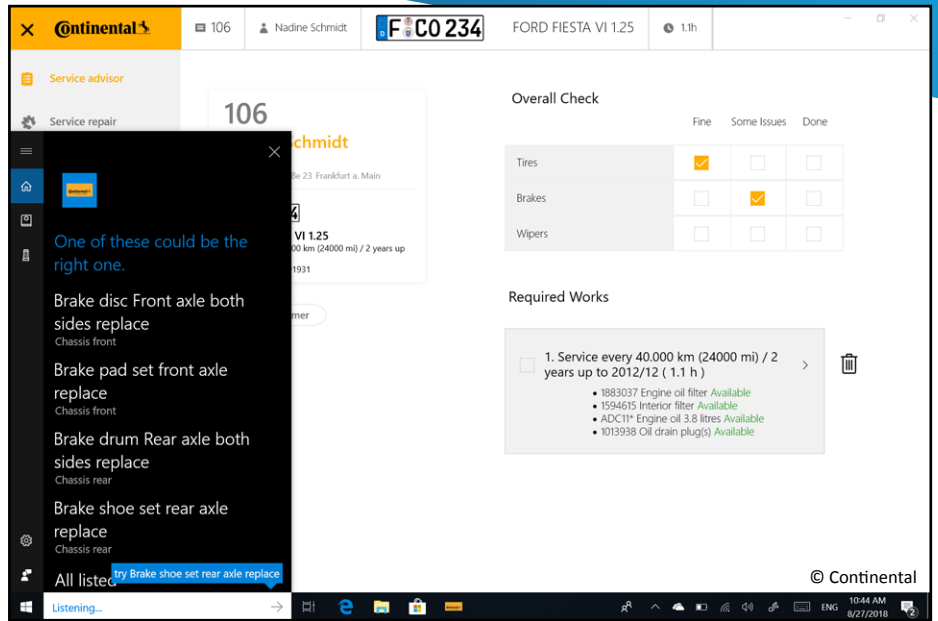
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Proof of concept: this is what the smart voice assistant's GUI currently looks like on a tablet.

Always hands-free: labour times and repair instructions by voice command

A conversation with the new digital colleague could go like this: “Workshop, what’s the schedule for today?” The “colleague” then lists all the day’s appointments and their expected labour times. The mechanic selects an order using the tablet or voice command; the smart voice assistant reads out all the work to be done for that order and lists the spare parts required. At the vehicle, the mechanic gives the voice command, “Workshop, I’m doing a visual inspection.” – “I’ll guide you through the test. Look at the interior. Is it OK or not OK?” – “Not OK.” – “Are any repair jobs needed?” – “Yes.” – “Looking for jobs...” The voice assistant system then proposes a series of possible jobs and standard labour times, which the mechanic can add to a to-do list with a voice command. “Which repair job would you like to carry out?” – “Replace dashboard” – “OK – replace dashboard. Requires approximately 0.4 hours. – Is any other job required?” – “No.” – “OK.” If the mechanic gives the voice command, “Everything fixed,” the digital colleague will reply with, “Great, everything fixed!”

the mechanic, but there is a wide range of other conceivable applications in the workshop. The voice assistant’s full potential could be brought out by integrating it into a workshop management solution, where it could display prices or spare part availability or transfer the completed order to bookkeeping for invoicing. “The availability of and access to vehicle and product infor-

mation are crucial to success in the workshop,” explains Jürgen Buchert. “With the smart voice assistant, processes in the workshop such as vehicle inspection can be optimised further, with check-in and access to relevant repair information right at the vehicle.”

The future of the digital colleague in the automotive aftermarket and whether it

will have an interface to Continental’s “Remote Vehicle Data Platform” depends, among other things, on how the industry responds to the proof of concept.

Why TecAlliance?

With data, processes, integrated solutions and comprehensive consulting services, TecAlliance provides a portfolio for the market participants in the digital aftermarket that makes you more successful in the long term.

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