

Kohler Engines: Service becomes 2.0

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Having designed the family of KDI engines, technologically advanced and the bench mark for industry standards within the sector, Kohler Engines is implementing sweeping innovations in the field of technical assistance. This approach includes new digital tools as well as modern methods for providing training and technical support, for the full utilisation of such systems . The tools and methods take complete advantage of a service network which effectively covers the entire planet.

The introduction of the KDI family of power plants - Kohler Engines' crown jewel in the diesel engine market segment - has not only represented a radical leap forward in technology, but has also triggered a corresponding evolution in other departments, including services and technical assistance. Given the significant investment made by the company, this evolution was natural and necessary in providing users of the new KDI engines with support that meets their expectations and is in line with the technological sophistication of the products.

A radically innovative approach was taken by Kohler Engines when it took this step. In addition to providing traditional training to the technical staff, a decision was made to adopt a new philosophy that led to the development of supplementary services and resulted in an upsurge in quality. Thanks to the enhanced technical support offered to dealers, workshops as well as OEMs. This has been achieved by introducing innovative digital learning and training tools that offer the remarkable advantages of teleworking.

The new approach is based on a solid, essential foundation: an organisational framework in which all matters associated with assistance with diesel engines are coordinated from Italy and communicated to company headquarters in Wisconsin (for the USA) and Shanghai (for Pacific Asia), and to branches in Europe (France, Spain, Germany and England).

Given the "youthfulness" of the KDI product line and due to its exceptional technical features, the Technical Assistance Division of Kohler Engines has drawn up a series of special requirements for workshops that look to join the network of "KDI Qualified" service centres, whose technical personnel receive training which is specifically targeted for this product line.

From Italy, and in particular from its Reggio Emilia headquarters, the Technical Assistance department provides documentation, initial training and technical support to all branches around the world, which in turn cover their specific territories and create networks of dealers and authorised workshops. In doing so, they

directly supervise OEMs that intend to perform repairs and service on KDI engines directly through their own dealer networks. This highly structured service organisation now includes some 1500 service locations in Europe, which are flanked by those OEM dealers that directly service the engines in their machines.

At the heart of this new service philosophy developed by Kohler Engines, is the concept of training, now carried out in both traditional forms and with modern digital tools. The former includes courses offered not only to the service network, branches, distributors and authorised workshop networks, but also to trainers at dealers and at authorised OEM workshops. Courses are available at both at the Reggio Emilia headquarters as well as distributors' locations. They consist of a technical unit and a practice section that involves installation/removal and dynamic testing. The duration of each course depends on the model of engine involved. Traditional courses in the classroom are accompanied by an innovative "Distance Learning" section - a remote training tool included in the "iService" multimedia platform. It combines traditional viewing of technical manuals with the enhanced usability offered by advanced digital technology.

Initially created exclusively to support the KDI product line, but then gradually extended to all families of diesel and petrol engines produced by Kohler Engines, iService is designed to meet the needs of the service network and of end users, as it contains user-friendly interactive content that is easy to access and navigate on PCs, smartphones and tablets. It's a unique platform that contains the entire gamut of after-sale materials offered by Kohler Engines, such as operation and maintenance manuals, workshop manuals, parts catalogues and warranty programs. Most importantly, it provides the opportunity to take advantage of the "Distance Learning" on-line training tool.

The Distance Learning section can be accessed at www.lombardinigroup.it, specifically in the iService section on the Service menu, where the user can choose from a number of training programs, according to the engine in question (Academy section). Training is subdivided into seven sections: introduction, safety, cleanliness, maintenance, systems, operational groups, and checks. Each of these sections in turn contains an additional, extensive list of chapters and sub-chapters whose content ranges from general information to advanced technical know-how. The chapters are accompanied by an on-line final test that must be passed to gain access to subsequent chapters, so the user can easily determine the level of skills acquired. Courses are structured into levels of training in order to provide each user with the course that best meets his needs. Of course, the iService Academy is specifically intended for the Kohler Engines qualified service network. End users, on the other hand, can take advantage of the network of Kohler Engines dealers and authorised workshops. Their locations in local areas can now be found using a new app for mobile devices.

Source: Kohler Co.