ATTACK OF THE CLONES: ROGUE ENGINE TUNERS WRECK THOUSANDS OF CARS

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- **Cloned and fake tuning tools are causing serious problems for drivers looking to modify their car's performance**
- **Replacement ECUs are costing drivers up to £2,000**
- **Viezu issues five simple tips to help drivers avoid costly tuning mistakes**

Rogue engine tuners who use cloned tools in an attempt to boost a car's performance are wrecking thousands of engine ECUs a year with repair and replacement costs setting owners back up to £2,000 each.

The warning has been issued by the UK's leading engine remap services provider, Viezu, who is providing drivers with a series of top tips to help them avoid such damage.

"Responsible engine remapping is a fantastic way for drivers to modify the performance of their vehicle so that they can lower their fuel costs, reduce their emissions or enhance its driveability," comments Paul Busby, CEO of Viezu Technologies, who has been responsible for successfully remapping thousands of vehicles in the UK and overseas. "However, the problem is that a fake or cloned tool looks exactly like the real thing, but the result of them being used on your car, can be disastrous and very costly."

While cloned or fake tuning tools can look identical to genuine tools, under the surface there can be a considerable difference. Cloned tools often run on very old, out of date or hacked software causing instability or incompatibility issues for the user. However, perhaps more importantly this can result in the tool crashing (or 'bricking') where it locks up during the tuning process and the car simply will not start again.

In some instances it is possible to recover an ECU that has lost communication but if the ECU has been bricked it is often not possible. In many cases like this, the vehicle owner will simply take their vehicle to a garage or main dealer who will diagnose a replacement ECU as the most economically viable solution as the intricacies of identifying specific software issues could take months to resolve with significant labour charges. Replacement engine ECUs normally cost owners in excess of £1,000 each.

"The horror stories are always the same; 'Someone came out and tuned the car on my driveway,' with no business card and only a mobile number or email address. Getting hold of a rouge tuner when something has gone wrong is impossible," adds Busby. "There are many legitimate tuning Companies around so make sure you chose the right one using genuine tools in licence.

"When things go wrong, it's not unusual for cowboy tuners to run for the hills and never be seen or heard from again and this really gives our industry a very bad reputation. Drivers should remember these guys are often carrying out work without any insurance, warranty backup or technical support from the genuine tool manufacturer so you really can be taking a major risk by using one of these unscrupulous operators. However, thankfully by taking just a few careful precautions and asking some simple questions it's actually quite easy to avoid this potentially costly mistake and safely get the modified performance you were hoping for."

To ensure an engine tuner is reputable, has the appropriate back-up and genuine tools, Viezu is recommending drivers ask these five simple questions before handing over their car keys:

1. What tuning tool are they using and is it genuine? Ask the tuner to provide proof of this and ask the tuner to show you their tools software information screen. Take a screenshot and send it to Viezu if in doubt who can verify if the tool is genuine, within license and very importantly who it's registered to.

2. Is the tuning tool still in licence? The real software will show its licence expiry date. It is not advisable to use software that is out of license due to potential compatibility issues.

3. Ask to see the insurance policy that covers not only the workmanship, but also the tuning service. If there's no insurance, quite simply, don't book. If you're in doubt about the insurance policy, call the insurer to check that the policy number is real.

4. If your tuner claims to have a warranty ask to see proof of this. Don't be fooled by a fake glossy

booklet. Ask to see the details of the real warranty policy underwriter and again, call them directly if you are in any doubt.

5. Finally, ask to see the training certificates of whoever will be carrying out the tuning service to ensure they have been appropriately trained by a reputable Company with the right credentials.

With all of its top UK dealers trained to IMI standards, equipped with genuine tools running licenced software and full insurance backup, Viezu is committed to responsible remapping.

Drivers wishing to get more genuine advice on how to avoid rogue operators or to know more about its remapping services can contact Viezu on 01789 77444 or visit www.viezu.com.

Notes
Queens's Award winning Viezu Technologies is one of the world's leading providers of vehicle tuning and remapping services with a network of more than 600 dealers located in 64 countries around the world.

Its team of in house engineers have developed an extensive range of engine ECU remap files and services which range from fuel economy tuning for light commercial vehicles and cars to high end performance tuning for the more spirited driver. Viezu is probably best known for its fuel economy tuning BlueOptimize utilised by many fleet operators on the UK road, helping users reduce their fuel bills, lower their emissions, including rev and speed limited. Indeed, since its inception in 2008 the company has helped drivers reduce their CO2 emissions by more than 300,000 tonnes.

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