

DYNAMIC THINKING



When you're the boss of a successful car audio shop your demo should speak volumes. The owner of this custom-styled E46 323Ci is the brains behind Dynamic Sounds and with a veritable minefield of gadgets and top-notch ICE this is, indeed, one seriously dynamic Three.

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Some stories need to be told, be it a tale of heroic struggle, unrequited love, incredible bravery or human sacrifice. Forever embedded in our minds, other people's hope, devotion and fortitude can often inspire and are shining examples of what we are all capable of. Peter Sonu's rag-to-riches story is enough to enthuse all of us that a



childhood dream can be realised.

From his humble beginnings as a market trader flogging domestic appliances in south-east London, Peter and his brother Bob have spent the last 12 years building up their car entertainment, navigation and security business, Dynamic Sounds. The siblings' product knowledge, experience and energy teamed with its qualified engineers

have made the company a very reputable one indeed.

You could call Peter's BMW a reflection of his early struggle trying to break into the highly competitive world of business. Born an unassuming E46 323Ci, the car has moved up in the world; it's hardly surprising though, especially when you've had your car featured in *PBMW* before. As regular readers

may recall, his Rieger-styled E36 325i with big rims and serious ICE, graced these very pages in the January/February 1999 issue.

After completing his first feature car Peter needed a new challenge. Following a brief flirtation with a fully tuned Toyota Supra and Renault 5 Turbo, it wasn't long before he started dreaming about his first love: BMW. Life has a funny way of repeating



itself. Peter acquired his E46 323Ci back in 2000 having endured a two-year wait – it was, after all, the most powerful 3 Series available at the time.

From day one the car was by no means standard. The option box for a brushed aluminium interior finish was ticked and much to the dismay of the technicians it left the dealership with front and rear window tints, clear indicators and AC Schnitzer 18” wheels. This is one serious modifying bug that’s got hold of Peter, and inevitably he found it hard to satisfy his cravings to have a ride that’s truly original.

When you own a successful car audio shop, your other ride is a Ferrari and you live in Chelsea it’s hard to set your sights on anything other than perfection. This E46 is just that. Taking nearly six years to complete, having gone through several

different phases, Peter’s 323Ci is now as menacing as they come. It may not have the most powerful engine in the world, but if you saw this fill your rear view mirror you would almost certainly let it pass, not forgetting to take an admiring glance, of course.

Peter puts the success of his creation down to his patience and attention to detail, as he explained. “Achieving a look like this doesn’t happen overnight, I thought long and hard about every piece of kit on here.” Without rushing into any part of the modifying process, he spent endless nights perusing BMW forums, talking to enthusiasts at shows and conferring with various styling specialists. Hunting far and wide for ideas Peter began to look to the US circuit for inspiration, a scene

he feels is leaps and

bounds ahead of that in the UK.

However, it wasn’t until he sold his Ferrari 348 that Peter started to get serious about modifying the E46. Instead of using the money from the sale to finance one top-notch car, he decided it could be better spent on customising his 323Ci. We couldn’t agree more. Oh, and it also meant he had enough cash left over to upgrade to a Ferrari F355 Berlinetta. Not a bad life then?

His first real investment was transforming the exterior. Despite using an amalgamation of parts from different tuners, the bodystyling flowed surprisingly well. An M-Tech front bumper, Club Sport splitter, Hamann lower eyebrows and shadow kidney grille completed the facelift, while the flanks benefited from a set of aggressively styled Razor side skirts from Rieger and E46

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Innovative mods from various different tuning specialists combine well to produce one unique, subtly styled E46 323Ci. From the carbon fibre roundels and the CSL replica boot add-on to the 19" DPE wheels finished in matt liquid cinder black with polished lip and rivets, every detail has been carefully thought out and well executed



M3 replica mirrors. Out back the Hamann rear bumper, M3-style boot lip and AC Schnitzer roof spoiler combined well to give the car extra depth of character and help set it apart.

Complemented with a replica version of the very beautiful CSL wheels, Peter still wasn't happy with the finished result. It seems a true modder never rests. Believing that it looked too mainstream, he wanted something more exclusive, something that would also showcase his company's broad range of brands. So, it was back to the drawing board – a drastic rethink was in order.

Peter turned to his good friends at Mototech (020 7701 6675). Together they decided that the bodystyling needed some reworking. At first Peter replaced his boot lip with a CSL replica boot add-on, the Club Sport splitter was similarly binned to make way for a Rieger item, as were the Hamann lower eyebrows and replica M3 mirrors for a set of classier AC Schnitzer ones. The look is subtle but exquisite. Totally seamless, the aftermarket parts look unquestionably factory fitted.

The icing on the cake, however, was still to come. Fed up with the replica CSL rims and troubled by their increasing popularity Peter set out on a mission. He wanted

something that was one of a kind, and he would stop at nothing to get

them. After spending hours researching on the Internet and experimenting with different sets of wheels using Photoshop he eventually opted for DPE's R07 custom forged Variant S rims. To ensure their exclusivity, Peter asked Jojo at Dynamic Performance Engineering if he could have the centres finished in matt liquid cinder black with polished rivets and lip, and fortunately he agreed.

The alternative finish is stunning – they definitely have the wow factor. Measuring 8x19" up front and a substantial 10x19" out back, you won't find these wheels on any other car in Europe. Lowered 20mm and 35mm respectively on Eibach springs and AC Schnitzer shocks they're positively bulging from the E46's arches. It's the type of car that, if it could, would take you aside and give you a jolly good slap.

Under the bonnet, Peter has incorporated





lashings of carbon fibre. From the replica Gruppe M induction kit, which helps to improve power and torque, to the engine covers he has considered functionality and aesthetics throughout this entire project. A Superchip provides more mid-range poke, while an Eisenmann stainless steel quad exhaust system produces a deeper burble at idle and a throatier growl at top end.

The ICE is first class, as you would expect from the owner of a car audio outlet. It's no wonder they've taken orders from the rich and the famous, the skill and level of craftsmanship employed in Peter's car is astounding. The install is discreet, stylish and practical, whispering rather than screaming about its power. Peter's enviable position also means he can get his hands on technology wizardry we thought was the stuff of legend.

Take the Alpine VPA-B222R Vehicle Hub Pro for example: at the time of going to print Peter claimed to be the only person in the world to have one. The device integrates with your OEM system and allows you to add Alpine audio, video and navigation upgrades, as well as speakers, amps and subs, without altering the in-dash display. Peter has set up the VHub utilising an Alpine TME-M770S

touch-screen monitor which enables him to control the entire system, and has been seamlessly integrated into the centre console with a custom-designed surround trimmed to match the interior.

The speakers have been upgraded to Alpine SPX-137R items front and rear, while the boot build has been designed to prove you can improve your car's audio without having to sacrifice space. The Directed amps have been sunken into the floor, and the Alpine subs are cleverly mounted behind. You can certainly tell this stealth system has been well planned and designed. Peter can even access the spare wheel if he wants to.

While casually talking to Peter I ask him if he has any tips for other budding enthusiasts: "Take your time, know what you want and where you're going with the car. Don't just go for a kit that's popular at the time and don't be afraid to mix and match different manufacturers' parts. Make something original and most importantly something that reflects your personality." In my opinion Peter's done just that, and is someone we should all aspire to ●

DATA FILE

ENGINE: 2.3-litre straight-six M54 with Gruppe M replica induction kit, Superchip and Eisenmann stainless steel quad exhaust system, AC Schnitzer oil cap, carbon fibre engine covers

CHASSIS: 8x19" (front) and 10x19" (rear) DPE R07 custom forged Variant S wheels finished in matt liquid cinder black with polished rivets and lip shod in 235/35 (front) and 265/30 (rear) Falken FK451 tyres. Eibach Prokit springs and AC Schnitzer shocks lowered 20mm at the front and 35mm at the rear, AC Schnitzer strut brace. Pagid Fast Road pads front and rear, standard brake discs

EXTERIOR: M-Tech front bumper, Rieger splitter, Hamann shadow kidney grille, Rieger Razor side skirts, AC Schnitzer mirrors, Hamann rear bumper, CSL replica boot add-on, AC Schnitzer roof spoiler. SSDD Motorsport 8000k angel eye headlights, clear LED indicators, side repeaters and LED rear lights, SSDD Motorsport carbon fibre roundels, de-badged, with xenon reverse bulbs, tinted front and rear windows

INTERIOR: Standard BMW Sport black leather seats with brushed aluminium trim, M3 steering wheel, AC Schnitzer handbrake and pedal set

ICE: Alpine TME-M770 touch-screen integrated into the centre console with a custom-designed surround, Alpine VPA-B222R Vehicle Hub Pro, Alpine SPX-137R front and rear speakers, Alpine TUE-T112 TV tuner, NVE-N099P Navigation, custom boot build with Directed amps and two Alpine SWR-1242D subs

THANKS: Jojo at Dynamic Performance Engineering (001 562 424 3344/www.dpengineering.co), Teddy Hsu at SSDD Motorsport (07920 575052/www.ssdd-motorsport.com), Eddie at Formula Image.com (001 212 423 0600/www.formulaimage.com), Mem and the guys at Dynamic Sounds (020 7252 6061/www.dynamicsounds.co.uk)

Used as a demo car for Dynamic Sounds it's hardly surprising the ICE is first class

