

WANT MORE FROM ATRA? START A CHAPTER!

Since its inception more than 50 years ago, ATRA has provided its members with the strength of numbers. And ATRA still uses the strength of its numbers to provide Members with benefits that no one single shop could ever afford on its own; benefits such as:

- a coast-to-coast warranty program
- technical HelpLine support
- discount credit card processing
- special pricing on Mitchell On-Demand

...and dozens of other members-only programs and services.

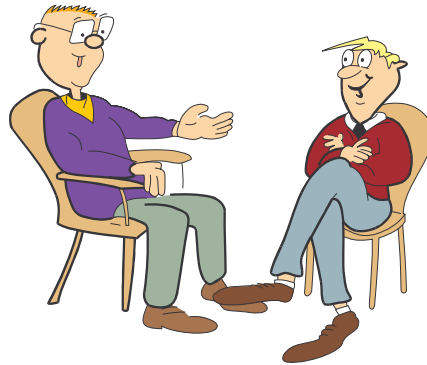
And while bigger has its advantages, sometimes you're better off with the personalized service that only a smaller, local group can provide. Sometimes you need the benefits of your local ATRA Chapter.

What, you don't have a Chapter in your area? Well, maybe now's the time to consider starting one.

Why Start A Chapter?

ATRA Chapters offer Members opportunities they couldn't realize from the Association as a whole. The primary purpose of a Chapter is to engage in *local* activities that directly affect and enhance your business. These activities may include:

- Working with local technical schools and community colleges to help train automotive students, and to help those students find positions within the industry... preferably in ATRA Member shops.



- Purchasing local advertising to promote the ATRA Members in your Chapter.
- Meeting with local ATRA Members to discuss business topics affecting your area, and to help develop solutions that will benefit everyone in your Chapter.
- Sponsoring technical and management training seminars and programs.
- Helping to identify and recommend shops in your area for ATRA Membership.
- Helping identify ATRA members in your area who aren't living up to ATRA's standards and Bylaws.

In general, the ATRA Chapter serves to promote the general welfare of ATRA Members within your area. Of course, by strengthening the Members within your Chapter, you are, by default, helping to strengthen ATRA as a whole.

Who Can Start a Chapter?

Any ATRA Rebuilder Member may initiate the process of creating a Chapter. Chapter funding comes primarily from the proceeds of the annual ATRA Technical Seminar. Is your area large enough to support a Chapter? In

general, if your region is busy enough to support an annual ATRA Technical Seminar, you probably have enough local ATRA Rebuilder Members to form a Chapter, and you'll have the funding from the seminar to afford Chapter functions and projects.

Is there a larger Chapter that already covers your area? You can still consider a sub-Chapter, to provide more responsive support within your local region. Or maybe you'll want to consider splitting your region into two separate Chapters. Call the ATRA home office and ask to speak with the Membership Department; they'll be glad to discuss your ideas, and help you get started in the right direction.

How do I Start a Chapter?

Each ATRA Chapter must be incorporated, which means it must have a president, vice president and secretary/treasurer. If you have an interest in forming a Chapter, contact other ATRA Rebuilder Members in your area and see whether you can generate enough support for a Chapter. Keep in mind that the smaller your region is, the fewer members you'll need to support a Chapter; if your region is larger, you'll need to have more members to keep the Chapter afloat.

If you can get enough ATRA Rebuilder Members interested in forming a local Chapter, complete the application and submit it to the ATRA International Business Office (IBO). The ATRA Board of Directors will vote on whether to accept your application.

If your Chapter application is accepted, you'll receive a grant to begin the legal aspects of forming your Chapter, including incorporation. ATRA can help with this, and can offer support for just this purpose. Simply complete the Incorporation form and submit it to ATRA. ATRA works with an outside organization that specializes in helping

Associations and Chapters incorporate, and does so for far less than most legal organizations will charge.

Once your Chapter is incorporated, you'll want to assign your initial Board of Directors, open a checking account in your Chapter's name, and adopt Chapter By-Laws. Once again, your ATRA Membership Department can help provide you with the background information you need for these tasks.

Who Can Become a Chapter Board Member?

A good size for a Chapter Board ranges between three and seven members. The more members on your Board, the more projects you're likely to be able to accomplish. Consider the size of your Chapter region and the number of Members you have; both of these conditions will have an effect on the size of the Board you'll need... and the size of the Board your Chapter will be able to support.

The members of a Chapter Board should be primarily ATRA Rebuilder Members. A Chapter *may* invite Supplier Members, but keep in mind that a Supplier Member will have a different set of goals and alliances than a Rebuilder Member will.

You might even consider inviting retired ATRA Rebuilder Members as part of your Board. As past ATRA Members, these retirees will have a strong grasp on your business needs. And being retired, they'll have plenty of time on their hands to invest in operating your Chapter.

In no case should there be more than one Chapter Board Member from any one shop or business. More than that can lead to the Chapter being run for the benefit of a single shop, instead of for the good of all of the Members the Chapter.

Once We Form Our Chapter, What's Next?

Now it's time to get to work: Each Chapter should get together to create a list of activities its members wish to engage in, and the goals they wish to accomplish. These activities and goals *must* be for the betterment of the Chapter Members.

From there, individual committees should be established to begin working on the goals set forth by the Chapter. These committees should meet regularly to provide progress reports to the Chapter Board, who in turn should provide ongoing reports to the Chapter Members.

In general, the Chapter should plan on meeting at least once a year; more often if possible. This is where a smaller region has a decided advantage over larger ones: Meetings are far less difficult to arrange when there are fewer Members involved, and no one has to travel far to get there.

How are Chapters Funded?

Funding for ATRA Chapters is primarily paid for by sponsoring seminars. Chapters who participate in ATRA

Technical Seminars are entitled to a portion of the proceeds of that seminar.

Chapters may also sponsor other seminars or activities, and charge a fee to those who want to participate. These activities must be authorized by the ATRA Board of Directors.

Consider the fund-raising activity sponsored by the Gulf States Chapter just this past year: They organized a barbecue for their Members. They invited non-members to attend and used it as an opportunity to solicit for new members. They even invited ATRA CEO Dennis Madden to join them and say a few words; an invitation that he was happy to accept.

Bigger is often better, and a larger Association can provide you with additional purchasing power and regional support. For times like those, no one provides more support than ATRA.

But sometimes you need to work closer, with just the shops in your area... sometimes you want to work with your local ATRA Chapter.

To learn the details of the Chapter in your area, or to request assistance in starting your own ATRA Chapter, contact the ATRA Membership Department.



ATRA News Quote - March

"Good will is the one and only asset that competition cannot undersell or destroy." - Marshall Field



Members Directory Updates

A1 American Transmission
5506 Bissonnet
Houston, TX 77081

Transmission Service & Auto Repair
261 North Ave
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Crown City Transmissions
1373 E Walnut St
Pasadena, CA 91106

Kentucky's Best Transmission Co
RR3 Box 300C
Mount Vernon, KY 40456

The Real Deal Transmissions
177 Lincoln Ave
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

TLC
3721 Overlook Rd
Raleigh, NC 27616

Transmissions By Bill
810 S Twin City Hwy
Nederland, TX 77627-4208

Valve Body Pro
16870 Joleen Way Ste 4
Morgan Hill, CA 95037-4608

The firms have been accepted into ATRA membership. Please add their names to your directory.

If you know of any valid reason these firms should not be members of ATRA, please contact ATRA Member Services at 805-604-2000.