

Rhpoint Detailometer and Paint Depth Gauge / ~£2000

Rhpoint have been making instruments to measure appearance since the mid 1980's and we've relied upon a number of their tools for our various Megatests to measure everything from the orange-peel on paint to the darkening effect of trim dressings and the transparency of glass coatings.

While their tools have been available for detailers to buy for a while now, they haven't built a tool specifically for detailers – and they've now created two. The first is a FE/Eddy current paint depth gauge, it looks similar to some others on the market but the dual screen system and software is all new and unique. We've been testing it for a couple of weeks and it works well – the high contrast mini screen at the top is particularly useful and the readings are consistent, tallying with those on our Delfesko Positector 200. Although prices are yet to be confirmed, it is currently around £120 in the USA.

The big news though is the release of the "Detailometer" – a gloss meter designed specifically for detailers. It takes the features of some of the other machines, like the iQ we use, and combined them to offer pretty much everything a detailer would need. First there's gloss, measured at 20 degrees to suit the sort of range one would expect on painted surfaces and give you measurable metrics to your correction.

Then there is Reflected Image Quality (RIQ) which measures everything from orange-peel to overspray, putting numbers to the interpretations the human eye makes. There is also Distinctness of Image, perhaps best described as clarity – how clearly an image would be reflected in paint. Haze is another metric it uses, and this can be used on things like clearcoat failure and coating curing. Finally there is Peak Specular Reflectance, or RSPEC for short, which looks at waviness, and larger texture variations than Haze. It all seems very technical and you might be thinking "why would a detailer be interested?"

For many years this tech has been out of financial reach for most detailers - it's a tool that you can use to demonstrate scientifically something people can realistically judge for themselves - has the paint become shinier?

We've got the high-spec IQ model for Megatesting, and it's proved invaluable when we're looking for marginal separations, but we would struggle - as awesome as they are - to justify £6k for a one man detailing business to buy one for anything other than their own personal satisfaction. But the Detailometer brings more than just gloss to the table. You can demonstrate a correction's results across an entire vehicle not only through gloss, but orange peel, haze and coating improvement, all in an easy to communicate report to the customer, coupling seamlessly with a depth gauge report built for you in their accompanying app for phones or tablets.



The companion app allows detailers to record all of the above metrics before and after they've detailed a car – with this tool you can assess a vehicle with the customer in expert detail, and then show how it has been improved after paint correction. The best bit is, you only have to use these two meters to achieve everything it used to take a suite of tools and the best part of two hours to write a report on.

Despite the complexity of what it is measuring, even we could use, and we are not particularly bright, Bert even has an official report to prove it – he's what we used to call a 'special' at school. The app is straightforward, intuitive, and provides professional looking reports that is sure to impress any customer. For the Detailometer and PDG it is quite spenny - £2k is a scissor lift or a new floor for most detailers, but for those working in the upper echelons on supercars daily, where small changes can make progressive improvements, it's very good value.