

Hey all...

I'm going to try to get as many questions answered as possible, but if I should have missed one or two let me know. I also want to try to provide some insight as to what our goals are and what we hope to see accomplished with providing all you 7.3L guys the ability to tune your own vehicles.

First, I want to make absolutely clear that if you are interested in purchasing this type of package and you have any concerns or are in any way uncertain of your ability to safely tune your vehicle, then this is not the option for you. As with most tuning software packages, there is a large degree of flexibility in which it is entirely possible (and actually not too difficult) to manipulate the data enough to cause major engine damage, transmission damage, or other drivetrain related failures. This is a risk that must be considered and if you aren't willing to take that risk, you may decide to consider other alternatives. There are certainly enough qualified individuals in this industry that would be more than happy to provide you with custom tuning for your Power Stroke. Okay, now we've got that out of the way. Let's move on to more interesting things.

As most people know, I've been tuning the PSD for about 12 years now and in that time I have seen A LOT of changes in this industry. From a tuning standpoint, automotive engine management systems have increased significantly in complexity, especially over the last few years. When you look at where the industry was when I started at Superchips all those years ago, you'd be amazed that we ever got these things running the way we did. At that time, 3D graphical tuning didn't even exist and we had to tune in hexadecimal using some of the most archaic software you could ever imagine -- not to mention the fact that we had nothing to go off of back then. It was all new to us. Nowadays everyone looks at everyone else's tuning in order to figure out who is doing what for this mod or that mod, but back then we had to figure it out for ourselves. In fact, much of the tuning available today is based in no small part on the tuning we did at Superchips back in the 90's and it really hasn't changed all that much over the years. Fortunately, development tools have managed to keep pace with the automotive manufacturers and today there are more tuning options for the 7.3L than you can shake a stick at. The argument is that much of the 7.3L stuff is usually quite overpriced and just doesn't offer the flexibility that some of the more serious enthusiasts need. Well, that's going to change.

Now, the reason for the brief history lesson is to give you an idea why the 7.3L performance community has always suffered and lagged behind the Cummins and Duramax communities. One thing that I have always griped about is the fact that the 7.3L guys always seemed to have this sort of "Secret Squirrel" club mentality when it came to sharing modification information, ESPECIALLY when it came to tuning. Sure there were the "Zoodad" modifications, Regulator Fuel Systems and all that business, but when it came down to what was really going on under the hood most guys would button right up. In all honesty, I, too, was very secretive when it came to tuning. Not so much WHAT I was doing, but more about HOW I was doing it. Of course, after years of having companies copying the files that I and a few other engineers at Superchips had spent years developing, I was always a little bitter about the whole thing. Besides, I had to make a living too, right? Well, here we are years later, and it's time to finally put all that foolishness to bed.

There are plenty of competent folks out there who can handle tuning their own trucks. I know because I've talked with many of them over the years. Folks that would call me up and say they needed a little more fuel here or a little less timing there. They know what they needed, but just didn't have the means to make the changes themselves. What was always disappointing was to see these individuals throw away hundreds or even thousands of dollars getting their vehicles custom tuned when they could have handled it by themselves. Even worse is the fact that even the "custom tuners" sometimes have problems and years of experience doesn't always mean they won't break something. Tuning isn't something you rush through in an afternoon, but when you're spending \$75, \$100, \$150 or more an hour sometimes things get rushed. Heck, I blew up one of Casey and Zane's first engines with twins (cracked a cylinder). It happens to the best of us. :pointlaugh: Incidentally, that stupid thing crushed my perfect record of zero engine failures. Thanks Zane!

So the purpose of the Minotaur package is to have a way for people to make small tuning changes and do it at their own pace. This way they can tweak one modification at a time and determine what modifications are really working and which ones are junk. It can also help eliminate drivability problems resulting from certain modifications such as Dual HPOPs and B-Codes. You'll no longer have to wait for hours or days for your new files only to find out that they still aren't quite right. Plus, you'll have everything you need to reprogram your chip so if you do need a custom file made, it can be e-mailed to you and you've instantly got a new file to work with. Think of the savings in shipping!

Additional binary files are available although some might require an additional charge. Also, additional definition files will be available for an additional charge.

The definition files we provide are pretty well populated and we will not be blocking access to any of the functions, maps or parameters, although they will be encrypted and are not editable. You will be able to create your own definition files of which you will be free to share with whomever you desire. Any original binaries we provide with the software will not be encrypted but they are copyrighted and are for personal use only. However, any binary files that are generated (even those from our base files) are considered individual works and you are free to do with them as you wish. The binaries are pre-formatted to 224K (the TS format) and the definition files are addressed to work with them. If you need different file formats, call us and we can arrange something for you.

If you already have a TS Performance burner AND chip, you may purchase the software and RDT file separately. If you only have a TS chip, then you'll need to purchase the whole kit including a new chip. This has to do with the fact that the burner we sell has our own specific dealer code and is not compatible with chips purchased through other dealers.

The instruction manual will be as detailed as time permits. I will be more than happy to offer advice on what tables or function you may need to look at in order to tune for a specific modification such as B-Codes, Twins, HPOPs, etc., but I will not be able to get into any great detail about how much to add or subtract and what areas to modify. If there is enough local interest, I would definitely consider offering a training session (for a fee, of course) but there would have to be enough people to make it worthwhile to close down for 3 days.

One thing that I will say is that you can learn a great deal by comparing the modified files against the original files. This is the easiest way to get a good idea of what to change and how much to change it in order to achieve certain performance characteristics. When making your own files, make 1 or 2 small changes at a time and then see how they work. Work on 1 table or function until you've exhausted the combinations and have a good understanding what you're changing. Like any other tuning software, there is a learning curve to building good tunes and it doesn't pay to rush it.

The PHP Forum provides a place for people to be able to swap tune files and share their tips and tricks. After all, that's the whole reason for offering this package in the first place. It is my sincere desire to see the 7.3L guys work together and finally put the 7.3L back on the map and keep it alive!

If you have any questions, please check the website or the PHP Forum. If you are not able to find what you are looking for, feel free to drop us an e-mail or give us a call; we'll answer your questions as quickly as possible.

- Bill