

Reduce your windscreen costs and still stay safe

By [Filum Ho](#)

28 Jul 2020

Times are tough, and every South African is looking to save money wherever they can. For the local auto industry, falling car sales along with a hard lockdown have also resulted in a sharp downturn.



Filum Ho, CEO at Autoboyz

With the industry and the consumer under severe strain, it's crucial that we allow free and fair competition in the market — especially as this can boost quality and reduce pricing.

Yet we've seen long-established anticompetitive behaviour in the local auto industry get worse with a growing number of Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) threatening to void car owners' warranties if they decide to go with Original Equipment Equivalent (OEE) glass. This is despite the fact that OEE glass offers exactly the same high standards of design and safety, but at more than half the cost.

In Europe, it's illegal for manufacturers to void warranties if car owners go with OEE glass. As a result, OEM glass makes up only around 2-3% of the European market, while OEE glass makes up the rest. In South Africa, the picture is different as we've found that OEM glass makes up about 10% of our customer base. This clearly demonstrates the impact that OEMs in South Africa have in dissuading their customers from using OEE glass.

However, as a car owner, you are within your rights to explore the OEE route to gain from its high safety standards and better pricing.

Here are three key pieces of information to be aware of if you are considering the OEE route.

1. No carmaker makes their own glass

Carmakers are not auto-glass makers, and they rely on products produced by manufacturers such as Saint Gobain, AGC (Asahi Glass Company), Pilkington, Guardian Glass, Xinyi Glass, Korean Autoglass, Magna International, and others.

These companies typically co-brand their names onto the OEM glass products in the market - if you go look at your windscreen, you should see one of these companies' logos alongside your carmaker's badge. It's important to know that OEM and OEE glass are also made in the same factory. If you go the OEE glass route, we recommend that you only use products made by a company that works with OEMs.

2. SABS stamps are important, but limited

Some glass manufacturers will talk up the fact that their glass bears the SABS stamp of approval. It's important to note that the SABS mark is not a quality certification - it is a product safety certification.

The SABS's ambit focuses on aspects such as measuring how glass breaks and if it is within certain tolerances. However, the SABS doesn't measure quality in terms of form and fitment. If the form and fitment aren't correct, then there is a greater chance of wind noise and leaking.

Poor form and fitment further impact calibration, which will negatively affect the centering of your vehicle as well as its sensor-driven lane and distance control. Top-quality factories will use robotics to fit your calibration sensor to ensure that it fits onto the windscreen within the accuracy of millimetres.

3. Quality adhesive installations are crucial

Irrespective of the type of glass you fit (OEM or OEE), it's important to make sure your provider is using the correct adhesive. OEE adhesive brands - such as Dow Chemicals' Betaseal, Sika, and Saint Gobain's Tekbond - work in collaboration with vehicle manufacturers, and they will be properly equipped.

Taking all of this into consideration, it's important to remember that windscreens are a key part of the structural integrity of your vehicle. It's vital to make sure that your glass is correctly and safely installed.

But in this tough economy, you can still keep safe while saving money with the wide array of highly regarded OEE brands out there.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

FilumHb, CEO at Autoboyz

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>