

Centre Of attention



Snap-on has again showed its leadership in the automotive service industry by opening a unique new high-tech training and sales centre in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The Snap-on Center is a one-stop facility where customers can find total *Snap-on*® solutions — from training programs to t-shirts — under one roof. It's designed to cater to the specific needs of technicians, shop owners and auto enthusiasts in New Mexico and West Texas.

The centre is the first of its kind in the world. It was officially opened on Feb.

22. Snap-on officials, Dealers — including the entire U.S. National Dealer Advisory Council, local dignitaries and plenty of Snap-on customers were on hand for the big event. CART (formerly IndyCar) Driver Al Unser, Jr., was also on hand at the event to mingle with Snap-on customers and sign autographs.

"This is a landmark occasion for Snap-on and for the automotive service industry as a whole," Fred Hay, Senior Vice-President of Snap-on Incorporated, said at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

One of the focal points of the

Snap-on Center is technician training. The centre has training classrooms, and also offers technicians the chance to get hands-on experience with new *Snap-on* tools and equipment.

The centre features a 10-bay Snap-on garage fully equipped with the latest technology, with two bays dedicated to technician training.

The 13,000-square-foot centre also showcases *Snap-on* and *Sun* products. It

A first for Snap-on and the world, this unique facility is geared for technical training and retail sales

gives Snap-on customers an opportunity to see product demonstrations and test-drive new products before purchasing items from their Dealer or at the Snap-on Center retail store. Everything from hand tools to licensed merchandise is available at the retail store.

"We're excited about the retail display in Albuquerque," Lee Karlson, Southwest Regional Manager, told newspaper reporters covering the

opening of the Snap-on Center. "It represents a whole new way for the company to support its Dealer network."

The retail concept at the Snap-on Center is designed to help Snap-on Dealers enhance their sales.

While they continue to make regular calls on customers, the centre gives Dealers a chance to bring their customers to the Snap-on Center and to see more products than Dealers and Tech Specialists can stock on their vans.

"This will help our Dealers support their customers with the larger shop equipment purchases, thereby improving the Dealer's profitability," Albuquerque Branch Manager Ed Vickers told *Frontline*.

Dealers receive the credit for a retail sale when their customers make a purchase at the Snap-on Center.

Snap-on chose Albuquerque as the site of its first retail facility because motorsports is popular in the city.

Snap-on isn't planning to open any other facilities like this in the near future.

"We want to see how successful this one is first," said Lee Karlson.

Initial reaction to the concept is very positive. "The reaction from both Dealers and customers has been outstanding — overwhelming," affirms Ed Vickers. ♦



Customers browse in the retail display area; the crowd gathers for the opening of the Snap-on Center; a view of the Snap-on garage.