

## Tool Review: Ranger DST64T wheel balancer

BY CRAIG TRUGLIA  
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Reviewer observes quick balance time, high ease of use.

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Craig Truglia

Mejia reported that set-up with the Ranger DST64T wheel balancer was a breeze. The user simply pulls out the arms to the left and right of the balancer and touch the rim snugly. They automatically...

Ranger Products' DST64T wheel balancer comes equipped with revolutionary DataWand and an inner data set arm allowing operators to quickly and automatically enter wheel parameter settings in less than three seconds, for exact balancing every time. A soft-touch key pad and display panel includes dynamic, static and variable alloy settings and features dynamic tire and wheel graphics to help guide technicians through balancing procedures. The weight optimization feature automatically calculates the minimum amount of weight needed to achieve an optimal balance so shops use less weight and increase profits.

### The review

Maverick Mejia, a technician at Car Clinic, a repair shop in Mahopac, NY, was used to balancing tires with an economy wheel balancer.

"The old balancer was pretty good," Mejia remembers. "It didn't take that long to set up and we really did not have that many comebacks, even on big wheels.

"It was the balancer I learned on, so to me its the standard every other balancer I'll use will be compared to."

When the new Ranger DST64T was brought into the shop, he noticed that his boss had to bring in an electrician to hook it up to a 220V outlet. The machine also looked a lot larger.

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"At first we were all wondering, is this thing going to fit? Are we going to have to reorganize the shop?" says Mejia. "But it somehow fit in the same amount of space."

Mejia reported that the machine is much easier to use than a standard wheel balancer, because it automatically measures rim size and tire width. He said that all the user has to do is calibrate the machine, which is easy because the instructions are right on it, and then extend the calibration arms to the far ends of the rim. The calibration was accurate, though over time he did find recalibrating the machine every month or so helped with accuracy.

Mejia also noted that the machine "takes a lot less sticky weights" than the old one and it "spins much faster."

"Automatic measurement, quick spin time, that LED that lights under the rim when you step on the foot brake -- all of these things make balancing a tire much quicker," Mejia says. "It probably makes me twice as fast now.

"My boss even had me shoot a video of him using the DST64T racing against (another tech) using the old balancer. You can see it for yourself. He's much worse at balancing tires and yet thanks to the balancer he comes out ahead."

When asked what parts of the machine he would like improved, he said that the accessories should be easier to find in the package.

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"My boss was going crazy looking for the accessories, he even contacted the magazine about it," Mejia explains. "Then, when we finally picked the machine off the crate we realized the machine has a large hollow compartment inside where all the accessories were hiding. Nothing in the instructions or anywhere told us this."

Otherwise Mejia rates the balancer as a "perfect 10," at least when compared to the other balancer he used. "It's quicker, it uses less weight, it requires less set up," Mejia says. "It must be what a dealership uses. It's

really awesome."

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