After addressing the “big” issues such as adapting the engine/chassis electrical interface, modifying fuel delivery and engine-mount systems and the addition of the oil reserve tank, Bob Ashlock successfully installed a ’70 911T engine into his ’66 912. A few details remained that would need attention. The original 4-cylinder gauge package on the car would be usable with the exception of the tachometer. He knew there would be a compatibility problem that would result in a 1.5X faster rpm reading with the “new” 6-cylinder engine. The tach would indicate 6000 rpm when the engine was only turning 4000. This could have been remedied by substituting a vintage 6-cylinder tach (and associated ballast unit), but Bob wanted to preserve his original gauges as they were modified with white-faces, contributing to the ‘renegade’ theme of his 912.

The objective was to come up with an “adapter” that could read the 6-cylinder pulse rate from the distributor and accurately output the correct rate the 4-cylinder tachometer needed to display correctly. That way the original tachometer could remain in the car. An initial prototype was developed based on an analog solution. It worked quite well but was somewhat complex and required calibration by using another known-good 6-cylinder tachometer. Still, it was a very satisfactory “one-off” solution.

The story would have ended there, but Bob continued to discuss his engine swap with enthusiasts on the usual Porsche forums where the subject of the tachometer-fix kept coming up. Turns out that there are a lot of people out there swapping engines (typically, later model Porsche flat-sixes and Chevy small-block V8’s) and that resulted in regular inquiries about the device. Consequently, Bob moved forward in the development of a design that could be produced in volume… one that would digitally “nail” the correct pulse rate and could serve more applications. For example, address a variety of engine-size and tachometer combinations, as well as solve a few other application problems that are common with the use of vintage tachs on later model ignition systems (not only on Porsche, but on many different cars and engines).

Thus the product Tach-Adapt came about. It is simple to set-up, works on 4, 6 or 8-cylinder engines and can provide an ‘adapted’ tach output signal to drive a 4, 6 or even an 8-cylinder tach. For example, a 4-cylinder Porsche 356C, 912 or 914 tach can be used with a 6 or 8-cylinder engine. Likewise a 6-cylinder Porsche 911 tach can be used with 4 or 8-cylinder engines. A few dip-switch settings on the back of the unit offer combinations to digitally convert the incoming pulse rate to the exact needed outgoing rate. An additional (and important) feature of the product is that it is capable of “re-generating” the high voltage pulse needed by vintage tachometers that were originally designed to work with...