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VOLUME 52 | NUMBER 9
SEPTEMBER 2013



TRENDING

NACE 2014 MOVES TO DETROIT

I-CAR, CIC AND NACE WILL COMPRISE INDUSTRY WEEK 2014, JULY 28-AUG. 2

OPERATIONS

FINDING THE KEY TO CYCLE TIME

DATA IS NECESSARY, BUT HOW THAT DATA IS USED IS MOST IMPORTANT

COMMUNITY

HARTFORD INSURANCE APPEALS RULING

FIGHTS AGAINST INCREASED DAMAGES

TECHNOLOGY

Tackling hybrid ELECTRIC VEHICLE REPAIR

EV, HEV REPAIR CAN BE DANGEROUS IF PROPER PRECAUTIONS ARE NOT TAKEN

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

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NEWS ANALYSIS, INSURANCE MATTERS & LEGISLATION ISSUES



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ANALYSIS

MITCHELL OPENS NEW RESEARCH CENTER

BY ABRN STAFF

Mitchell's new Technical Research Center in San Diego focuses on the next generation of vehicle data.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

EMPLOYER MANDATE DELAYED UNTIL 2015

10The Affordable Care Act requirement that employers with 50+ full time employees offer health insurance has been delayed until January 2015.

TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENTS

CCC LAUNCHES MOBILE APPRAISER

10The CCC One Mobile Appraiser is a new mobile app that helps insurance appraisers capture damage information at the vehicle site.

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FEATURE

HARTFORD INSURANCE APPEALS RULING ON PUNITIVE DAMAGES

BY BRIANALBRIGHT | ABRN BLOGGER

After a judge upped the damages awarded in a class action suit against The Hartford insurance company, the insurer is appealing the decision to the Connecticut Supreme Court.

COMMUNITY PULSE

BEST OF THE BLOGS AUDIO WEBCASTS TOP HOW 2 VIDEOS READER PHOTOS INDUSTRY CALENDAR MESSAGE BOARDS INDUSTRY GROUPS VIDEO WEBCASTS



FEATURED COLUMNS

THE SHOP OWNER

BY CAMILLE EBER

YOGA OF BUSINESS

20The mental skills from this ancient practice — focus, empathy, equanimity and presence — may help you in running your business. Yoga is about learning, mindfulness and looking within yourself, which can carry over well into everyday life and business.

THE LAST DETAIL

BY MIKE ANDERSON

FIGHTING THE DASH LIGHT MYTH

70Is your shop catching the post-crash problems that don't trigger an idiot light? There are many things that may need to be addressed following an accident that may not, if left undone, trigger a dash light.

WHAT IS ABRN COMMUNITY? The ABRN community is an online NETWORK for your business. It's a place to go to post articles, blogs, videos, photos and audio clips to share ideas with other collision repairers. Community content is used in ABRN's twice weekly e-newsletters. Check it out at <http://workshop.search-autoparts.com>



Dedicated to
Promoting Quality
Collision Repair of
Toyota, Lexus and
Scion Vehicles

Summer 2013



New Model Previews

THE EXCITING NEW 2014 TOYOTA COROLLA AND LEXUS IS

Non-Reusable Parts

Toyota's Policy on Non-Reusable Parts

Welding Tips

Building in Corrosion Prevention

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"As I was putting together this issue of *Collision Pros*, I realized that the theme of learning and continuing education runs through all the stories."

– Kathy Capozza

Learning Is a Lifelong Pursuit

With the smell of freshly sharpened pencils in the air and my kids mourning the end of summer vacation, I know the new school year is about to start. This time of year always reminds me of the excitement of heading back into the classroom to learn new things. As I was putting together this issue of *Collision Pros*, I realized that the theme of learning and continuing education runs through all the stories.

In this issue of *Collision Pros*, you will learn about the all-new Toyota Corolla and Lexus IS, best practices for building in corrosion prevention during collision repair and the advantages of using the Technical Information System (TIS) and Techstream. You can also view the upcoming Collision Repair & Refinish training schedule.

At Toyota, we are always focused on learning new things and continuing education. As much as my kids might sometimes like to believe that their schooling will stop when they graduate, we know otherwise. Learning is a lifelong pursuit. Turning the pages of this issue is a reminder that no matter how long you've been in the business, there is always something new to learn. For me, this is what keeps my job interesting. There are always exciting possibilities on the horizon.

So, what are you doing to get into the back-to-school spirit? Will you be teaching yourself a new skill, learning about new technology or attending instructor-led training?

Another thing you discover at Toyota is that learning is a two-way street. With that in mind, we encourage you to check in—tell us what you think about the magazine and let us know what you've learned recently. We look forward to hearing from you!

Kathy Capozza
Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.
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DID YOU KNOW: The latest information about Toyota and Lexus training, including class schedules and registration information, can be found at www.crrtraining.com

Is it time to learn a new skill or refresh an old talent?

Toyota offers basic to advanced collision repair & refinish courses at three training centers across the country.

THE TRAINING CALENDAR



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- 10/10 460 Structural Body Repair Techniques
- 10/23 101 Paint Finish Repair
- 11/12 908 IS C Collision Repair
- 11/13 504 Air Conditioning for Collision Repair
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- 10/08 300 Welding Techniques for Collision Repair
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- 10/15 300 Welding Techniques for Collision Repair
- 10/16 460 Structural Body Repair Techniques
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- 10/07 300 Welding Techniques for Collision Repair
- 10/08 301 Non-Structural Body Repair Techniques
- 10/28 503 Steering & Suspension Analysis & Repair
- 10/29 300 Welding Techniques for Collision Repair
- 11/04 301 Non-Structural Body Repair Techniques
- 11/06 300 Welding Techniques for Collision Repair
- 11/07 460 Structural Body Repair Techniques

Non-Reusable Parts: What You Need to Know

Q. If a part involved in a collision appears undamaged, is it OK to reuse it when repairing the vehicle?

A. **Not always.** Some parts—classified as non-reusable parts by Toyota—are acceptable for one-time use only. This means that if the vehicle is being repaired, these parts cannot be reused during the repair, but instead must be replaced with new parts.

The access door glass window is commonly designated as non-reusable in Toyota vehicle repair manuals.

At the beginning of the repair process, evaluate all parts affected by the repair to determine if any are non-reusable.



If you are replacing the FJ Cruiser's exterior access door, note that the weatherstripping is a non-reusable part.



Safety & Quality

“Estimators and technicians should take note: this is an issue of safety and quality. Following the manufacturer-recommended repair procedure will help maintain the quality and safety of the car. Also, following this guideline is about customer satisfaction. When the car is fixed properly, the customer is happy.”

– Rick Leos, Collision Business Development Consultant, Marketing Division, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.



NON-REUSABLE PARTS 101

Non-reusable parts can be primary parts, but they are most often secondary parts, such as the moisture shield or impact absorber. It is common for these parts to sustain little to no damage in the event of an accident, and, for this reason, it may be tempting to remove them from larger damaged areas and then reuse them when these areas are repaired. However, reusing these parts may compromise the integrity of the repair.

The reasons why these parts have been designated as non-reusable vary, but they frequently have to do with issues of quality, safety, functionality and appearance.

“Everyone thinks you can reuse the part if it looks undamaged,” says Rick Leos, Collision Business Development Consultant, Marketing Division, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc., “but it may not be reusable for several reasons—sometimes the moisture shield doesn’t reattach as well as it did the first time around or the part will not function the same way if it is reused.”

GETTING IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME

Making sure that parts marked as non-reusable are replaced during a repair is important because it helps ensure that the repair is safe and done properly the first time. Shops can have confidence in their work because it has been done according to the standards of the original manufacturer. Lastly, customers will be satisfied with the quality and durability of the repair.

“For example,” explains Leos, “when replacing or performing R&I on the left rear lamp lens on the 2013 Avalon, the rear combination light seal is a non-reusable part and must be replaced. Replacing these components during the repair can save shops the headache of a customer returning a few months later and complaining that moisture is seeping into the trunk. Doing it right the first time builds customer loyalty and saves time and money.”

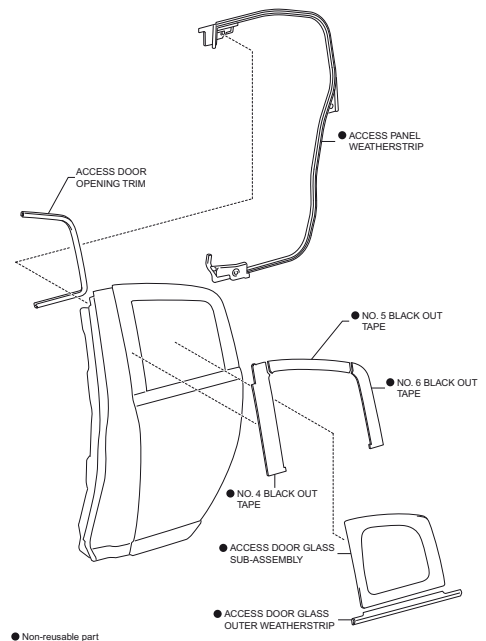
Replacing non-reusable parts can also help reduce cycle time and improve efficiency in your shop. Technicians will not have to spend time transferring or re-taping parts that don’t quite work properly the second time around.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE TIS

Information about whether a part is non-reusable can be found in Toyota’s Technical Information System (TIS) under the Components section in Vehicle Repair Manuals. In the component illustrations, non-reusable parts are distinguished by a black dot next to their name.

Making sure that all parts designated as non-reusable are replaced during a repair starts with the estimator. At the beginning of the repair process, estimators should do a thorough evaluation of all primary and secondary parts affected by the work to determine if any are one-time-use parts. This information should be noted in the estimate and communicated to technicians.

This is a good example of why estimators and technicians cannot use general repair methods. If you are using general repair procedures, you most likely will not have access to this crucial information. 📄



→ Toyota Corolla

The all-new 2014 Corolla enters the scene with eye-catching elements of design and craftsmanship. Available in four distinct grades—L, LE, S and the new LE Eco—this iconic compact updated for a new age has an energetic appearance that will appeal to long-time Corolla drivers and new buyers alike.



Introducing the All-New 2014 Toyota Corolla and Lexus IS

Two charismatic new sedans will be in your customers' driveways soon—the 2014 Toyota Corolla and Lexus IS. Learn about new features, technology and design elements. Get the scoop on what to look out for from a collision repair and refinish point of view when they come into your shop for repairs.



→ Lexus IS

Meticulously engineered to deliver superb dynamic capabilities and an exceptional driving experience, the completely new Lexus IS sedan features bold exterior styling, an LFA-inspired driver-focused cockpit and a fun-to-drive feel. These qualities, combined with true sport sedan dynamics, state-of-the-art onboard technologies and an innovative new design, make it look fast, even when it's standing still. To read more, see page 8.

Corolla

On the inside, the new Corolla offers an inviting, airy interior space that creates a more intuitive way to interface with vehicle controls.

MEET THE ALL-NEW NEXT-GENERATION COROLLA SEDAN—EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

APPEARANCE AND PERFORMANCE

The new sedan is 3.93 inches longer overall, but presents a more compact appearance thanks to a shape that tapers at the front and rear of the vehicle. Pronounced, flared wheel arches and cleanly sculpted surfaces lend an exterior elegance. And, with wheels pushed toward the corners, the new Corolla styles itself as a sleek, dynamic compact sedan.

The 2014 Corolla also offers enhanced fuel economy ratings, thanks to its advanced Continuously Variable Transmission. And, available on the LE, S and LE Eco models, Continuously Variable Transmission Intelligent-Shift works to help boost efficiency and driving performance with discrete shift points that help create a sensation similar to a traditional automatic transmission.

INTRODUCING THE NEW LE ECO

A more efficient 140-horsepower 1.8-liter engine with Valvematic technology differentiates the new LE Eco grade. Featuring improved aerodynamics and low rolling resistance tires, the Corolla LE Eco is rated by the EPA to achieve an estimated MPG of 30/city, 42/highway, 35/combined. That's courtesy of the new Valvematic engine combined with a newly developed Continuously Variable Transmission.

Corolla L, LE and S grade models are all powered by a 1.8-liter, four-cylinder engine with intelligent Variable Valve Timing (VVT-i), producing 132 horsepower.



INTERIOR

Depending on interior color theme, blue, black or amber pinstripe accents are used in conjunction with dash and door panel ornamentation, enhancing the interior's premium ambience. Additionally, considerable legroom is gained for rear passengers, courtesy of the longer wheelbase. Corolla's interior is designed to muffle exterior noises through the use of an acoustic glass windshield, improved carpet insulation and an instrument seal between the cowl and windshield, along with fender and inner dash silencer pads.

An expanded range of interior choices includes seat fabrics that create an appealing contrast with the piano black and metallic accented surfaces. Depending on trim level, seating surfaces are trimmed in premium detailed fabric or a durable, upscale SofTex™ material.

REINFORCED BODY STRUCTURE



The Corolla unibody features extensive use of lightweight, high-strength steel, which provides the vehicle with many advantages.

- Handling and steering are enriched thanks to a rigid underbody that takes advantage of enhanced suspension tuning.
- Extensive use of high-strength steel enhances structural rigidity and helps keep vehicle curb weight under 2,900 pounds for all grades.
- Use of high-tensile-strength steel allows for reduced thickness and optimized shape of structural panels, while increasing strength to help collision performance.
- Additional unibody bracing (tunnel brace and rear floor brace) helps platform rigidity.

SUSPENSION

The front Macpherson strut design features a new rigid control-arm design, while a torsion beam arrangement is used for the rear. Both suspension layouts are designed to take advantage of the additional body rigidity to help provide enhanced handling response and steering control.

- Spring rates on Corolla are optimized for ride comfort.
- The S model, equipped with 17-inch wheels, includes unique coil, damper and bushing tuning for sportier driving characteristics.
- Rear torsion beam attachment points are now fastened to the body at a slanted, diagonal angle for its bushings, in contrast to the straight attachment orientation. This diagonal attachment point layout contributes to enhanced rear handling, grip and control.

Find Lexus IS on page 8

Lexus IS

“I adopted an entirely different approach to the development of the all-new IS. Specifically, it was to make an entertaining driving experience a major premise behind all aspects of performance.”
—Junichi Furuyama, IS Chief Engineer, Lexus

ENGAGING. ENTERTAINING. DYNAMIC.

BODY STRUCTURE

The 2014 IS sedan uses extensive structural adhesive bonding, totaling 82 feet throughout the body, enabling body panels to be joined over a large area. Additionally, laser screw welding (targeted laser welds between spot welds) helps enhance steering response, control, comfort and agility, contributing to significant improvements in



body rigidity. Other features include the following:

- The revised body platform includes a new rear sub frame, increased underbody bracing and a reconfigured rear floor.
- Hemming of wheel arch edges reduces distances between wheel arch and tire from 20 mm to 11 mm, allowing wheels to be set 5 mm farther out.
- Use of laser brazing to connect the roof and sides of the IS eliminates the need for roof drip molding.
- New advanced 1,500 MPa high-strength steel was added to the roof and b-pillars and incorporates laser and screw tailored blank welding. Refer to CRIB # 181 for updated welding information.

A HOST OF NEW FEATURES AND INNOVATIONS

- The 2014 IS features the first Lexus transmission to adopt G-Force Artificial Intelligence (G-AI) in SPORT mode, which maintains the current gear in cornering, preventing a shift that could disturb the car's balance through the corner.
- The standard dual-zone climate control system features capacitive touch control switches, enabling users to easily set their desired cabin temperature.
- Navigation-equipped IS vehicles allow the Enform App Suite (now with eight apps) to be reordered according to user preference.
- 2014 IS models are the only current-production Lexus sedans equipped with a 60/40 split folding rear seat.

- The tire pressure monitoring system can display tire pressures and locations at any time on a multi-information display.
- IS 350/IS 250 F SPORT models feature an intake sound generator that gives the vehicle a deep, resonate engine sound.
- Available Adaptive Variable Suspension—a first for IS models—features constantly adjusting 3G sensors. Unlike other Lexus vehicles with this system, all system adjustments are based on the driver's selection of a drive mode and inputs from vehicle sensors.

NEED TO KNOW

- The Lane Departure Alert (LDA) system camera attaches to the inside windshield. In the event of a damaged suspension component, special tools are required to calibrate the camera and ensure proper orientation. Unlike previous LDA systems, this system memorizes the LDA switch state when the engine switch is turned OFF, resuming its former state after IG-ON.
- The Lane Departure Warning Camera—also used for the Smart Beam system—has a vertical detection range of approximately 30 degrees and a horizontal detection range of approximately 50 degrees.



- Camera axis adjustment needs to be performed if the camera assembly is removed or replaced, or if toe is adjusted.

SUSPENSION

- Re-engineered front double wishbone-type suspension delivers a 20 percent increase in sway rigidity.
- The coil spring and shock absorber are now separated and the toe control arm moved to the back, which can enhance cornering tire grip by 15 percent while increasing overall trunk space.
- The IS features a multi-link rear suspension. 📄



TOYOTA'S POSITION IS SIMPLE: Under no circumstances should salvage or recycled parts be used in collision repair. Any salvage or recycled parts or adjoining systems that may corrode or fail because of their use are not covered by a Toyota transferrable warranty.



Just Say **NO** to Weld-On Salvage Parts

RECYCLING CAN HELP conserve resources and protect the environment, but when it comes to collision repair, it is a dangerous idea. Customers or insurance companies that ask you to save money by using recycled parts may not know it, but they can be asking you to compromise occupant safety and could expose your shop to serious liability.

PARTS THAT DON'T PAY OFF

Recycled parts, also known as salvage parts, are parts that are removed from a previously damaged vehicle, cleaned up and then installed on a different vehicle. These parts might have been exposed to rust, flood damage, fire loss, prior collision damage, or other unknown damage or inferior repairs.

"When a car goes to the wrecking yard, it is there for a reason—it's probably been totaled," says Joe DiDonato, Collision Training Administrator, Technical & Body Training Department, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. "It is impossible to know if the part has been previ-

ously damaged, or if it will perform as originally engineered by Toyota in another accident."

These parts also require a replacement procedure that deviates from Toyota standards. "To separate the weld on salvage parts, you have to remove adhesives, sealants and various factory corrosion-protection coatings and drill out factory spot welds—things that are normally not done with a brand-new part," explains DiDonato.

Some of the most dangerous uses of salvage parts are supplemental restraint systems, steering and suspension components, as well as weld-on body sectioning. The installation welding used with these parts can reduce the strength and safety of the original design, and so can seriously compromise crashworthiness. It can cause poor fit and alignment in the body and drivetrain components and set the stage for undesirable squeaks, rattles, water leaks and corrosion.

Toyota's position is simple: under no circumstances should salvage or recycled parts be used in collision repair. Any salvage or recycled parts or adjoining systems that may corrode or fail because of their use are not covered by a Toyota transferrable warranty.

FULL DISCLOSURE

If the customer insists on using recycled parts, make sure they read the Toyota Parts Statement regarding use of salvage or recycled parts and sign the disclaimer on the back. That may help offer you some protection against liability for any failures or serious injury if the vehicle is involved in another accident.

Returning vehicles to their pre-accident condition is the goal of every collision repair. Only Genuine Toyota Parts ensure you and your customer that the replacement parts will provide the same safety advantages—with the same specifications and tolerances—as the original parts.

To find out more about Toyota's policy on the use of non-OEM parts, see Toyota CRIB #180 and #157 and the Toyota Collision Parts Position Statement Regarding Collision Repair, available at Toyota Information Systems (TIS) at www.techinfo.toyota.com.



Essential Tools for Your Trade

Technical Information System (TIS) and Techstream Special Service Tool



Technicians + TIS/Techstream = "A" Game

Save time and money—equip your technicians with ready access to model-specific diagnostic and repair information.

► From Mechanics to Technicians

Today's collision repair professionals are called "technicians" instead of "mechanics" for good reason. Modern vehicles are equipped with cutting-edge technology and an abundance of on-board electronics systems. Collision repair technicians need to know about these components and how to safeguard them during repairs, as well as how to return them to their proper functioning state if they become part of a repair. ►

► The "B" Game Doesn't Cut It!

"Collision repair shops have to bring their 'A' game when they work with today's technologically advanced vehicles," says James Meyer, Senior Technical Training Administrator, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. "The old way of doing things—just transferring repair techniques from one make or model to another—is not a sound repair plan today. There are just too many things that cannot be transferred from one model or manufacturer to the next. Collision repair techs need to have current manufacturer-specific, model-specific information to complete repairs right the first time." ►

► The Easy Solution

Toyota offers an easy solution for the proper repair and servicing of Toyota-built vehicles. Called TIS/Techstream, this special service tool integrates all the on-board diagnostic functions of a scan tool with the network-based Technical Information System (TIS) at the point of repair. Technicians can view on-board diagnostic information and access TIS service information to get the job done more accurately and efficiently.



Advantages of the Toyota Technical Information System (TIS) and

TIS contains a wealth of information to help collision repair professionals get the repair done right, the first time, on time.

TIS: AN ARRAY OF RESOURCES FOR TECHNICAL RESEARCH

Repair Manuals for Collision Damage, model-specific Repair Manuals, Bulletins, Technical Tips, Electrical Wiring Diagrams and Quick Training Guides.

REPAIR MANUALS FOR COLLISION DAMAGE

Virtually all the information needed to properly replace welded components, such as precautions to be taken, locations of high-strength steel and ultra-high-strength steel, body and trim component illustrations, wheel alignment specifications, welded body and frame component replacement specifications, panel fit standards, body and frame dimension specifications, body component seam sealing specifications, and corrosion prevention specifications.

EASY, 24/7 ACCESS

All of these technical resources are available with just a few clicks on Techstream or a computer keyboard.

▶ Prevent Costly Mistakes

Without TIS and Techstream, the potential for costly mistakes is much higher, according to Meyer. "For example, electrical steering and other safety system components on Toyota vehicles may require zero point calibration after service. Without access to TIS/Techstream, a vehicle may have to be sent to a Toyota service department to complete the repair. And, it's possible that the technician won't even realize that the repair is incomplete until a malfunction indicator light is displayed."

Technicians may also need to diagnose and service systems like airbag, pre-collision, dynamic cruise control, parking assist, and blind spot monitor systems while performing collision repairs. A simple bumper cover replacement may require aligning and calibrating the radar cruise control or the parking assist system. Reading and clearing diagnostic trouble codes, locating components, initializing systems, and verifying proper operation can all be done at the point of repair with TIS/Techstream.

"When we use TIS/Techstream in our Collision Repair & Refinish Training classes, techs typically comment about how they wish they had access to it," says Meyer. "The fact is they easily can."



Save Time and Money

"Shops can realize significant efficiencies by using TIS and Techstream," says Meyer.

Most importantly, TIS/Techstream equips your technicians with all the information they need to get the job done right the first time. "Fixing it right the first time yields maximum profitability. Fixing it right the second time is counterproductive," notes Meyer.

Quick Return on Investment

TIS/Techstream starts generating ROI for your shop from day one. "The system can easily pay for itself with the first costly mistake that it prevents," explains Meyer.

For more information about TIS/Techstream, including how to purchase the tool and pricing, call 800-368-6787 or visit www.techinfo.toyota.com.



Techstream for Collision Repair Professionals

The model-specific technical information contained in TIS is comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date.

ADVANTAGES OF TECHSTREAM TO COLLISION REPAIR PROFESSIONALS

Techs will be able to read and clear Diagnostic Trouble Codes, calibrate advanced operation systems (radar cruise, blind spot detection, lane departure warning, parking assist, etc.), conduct Active Tests (which simulate vehicle and system operations in the work stall), and depressurize brake accumulators.

TOYOTA-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Generalized Diagnostic SSTs may not be capable of working with the majority of Toyota-specific technologies. Only Techstream with TIS provides complete, accurate and up-to-date information on all Toyota-built models.

TECHSTREAM NEEDED

Collision repair technicians should either have access to Techstream themselves or a Toyota Service Department with Techstream to complete the repairs on electronic systems that have been damaged or must be recalibrated after a collision. 📞

Corrosion Prevention for Welding

ENHANCE THE LONGEVITY AND SAFETY OF THE REPAIR

Corrosive hot spots—accelerated rusting—can occur when metal is weakened during welding. This may lead to slight structural changes, making the metal more susceptible to oxidation or rust. It may also cause rust to fester, which could become a problem and may go unnoticed until the damage is already done. Building in corrosion prevention during the welding process can help prevent corrosion damage to the vehicle and help preserve the integrity of your repairs.

“Corrosion damage is often behind the curtain, so to speak,” says James Meyer, Senior Technical Training Administrator, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. “You don’t see the damage because you have paint coatings and sealers on it, but that doesn’t stop it.”

A SIMPLE SOLUTION

You can build in corrosion prevention during welded component replacement by taking a few simple precautions during the repair process:

- Reduce corrosive hot spots caused by gas-metal arc welds/metal inert gas plug welds by substituting squeeze-type resistant spot welds when appropriate, as outlined in CRIB #181.
- As much as possible, leave electrophoretic-deposition primer (e-coat) in place on mating flanges. This simple approach helps ensure a higher corrosion prevention standard.
- Apply weld-through primer to mating surfaces/flanges at weld locations.

- Replace/repair damaged or removed e-coat exterior coating with a high-quality two-component epoxy or direct-to-metal primer, which is a good substitute for OEM e-coat.
- Apply seam sealer and cavity wax where specified only after confirming e-coat is intact or has been properly restored.

Technicians who build corrosion prevention into the welding process ultimately

help enhance the longevity and safety of the repair. In addition, most facilities offer lifetime warranties on their work. If corrosive hot spots become customer concerns, technicians may end up fixing them for free, taking many times the amount of effort and materials to repair than if it were built into the process initially. 📌



COLLISIONPROS is published four times a year by Toyota Marketing Division. Contents may be reprinted with permission.

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MDC# 00117-00601-AUG22

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TOYOTA

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MINDING YOUR BUSINESS

THE KEY TO CYCLE TIME

BY KEVIN MEHOK | CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Data is necessary to improve cycle time, but how that data is used is most important.

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Are you spending enough time reviewing DRP agreements to really know what you're signing?

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ABRN (USPS 437970) (Print ISSN: 2166-0751, Digital ISSN: 2166-2632) is published monthly, 12 times per year by Advanstar Communications Inc., 131 West 1st St., Duluth, MN 55802-2065. Periodicals Postage paid at Duluth, MN 55806 and at additional mailing offices. Subscription prices: U.S. one year, \$66; U.S. two year, \$99; one year Canada, \$74; two year Canada, \$148; one year international, \$104; two year international, \$208. For information, call (888) 527-7008 or (218) 723-9477. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ABRN, P.O. Box 6018, Duluth, MN 55806-6018. Please address subscription mail to ABRN, P.O. Box 6018, Duluth, MN 55806-6018. Canadian G.S.T. number: R124213133/001. PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40612608. Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: IMEX Global Solutions, P. O. Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2, CANADA. PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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PRODUCT FOCUS



44 Quest Automotive Products introduces two new European-style clearcoats for its Matrix System brand: MS-78 and MSV-23 2.1 VOC Euro Clearcoats.

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Get a closer look at highlights of the SkillsUSA 2013 National Championships in collision repair and automotive refinish technology.

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AMI WELCOMES RISLEY TO BOARD

The Automotive Management Institute welcomes Dan Risley, executive director of the Automotive Service Association, to its Board of Trustees.

»» ABRN.COM/AMIBOARD

CCC LAUNCHES MOBILE APPRAISER

The CCC One Mobile Appraiser is a new mobile app that helps insurance appraisers capture damage information at the vehicle site.

»» ABRN.COM/CCCAPP

EMPLOYER MANDATE DELAYED UNTIL 2015

The Affordable Care Act requirement that employers with 50+ full-time employees must offer health insurance has been delayed until January 2015.

»» ABRN.COM/ACADELAY


TECHNICAL FACILITY LAUNCH

Mitchell opens new research center

Mitchell, a provider of technology, connectivity and information solutions to the property & casualty claims and collision repair industries, announced the opening of its new Technical Research Center (TRC), located in San Diego, Calif. The TRC's main initiative is collection of vehicle dimension information to focus on the next generation of accurate, interactive vehicle data.

Mitchell collects automotive frame measurements and chassis diagram data to provide to various industry constituents, including repair shops, collision and body shop centers. Mitchell collects its own data, ensuring flexibility and responsiveness for customers who want more than yes or no answers to queries on specific repair procedures or parts. The new center, equipped with 3D scanning technology from FARO, the world's most trusted source for 3D measurement technology, will provide Mitchell customers with the broadest set of dynamic data, rather than only static vehicle dimension data.

"Today's vehicles incorporate the newest technologies and require highly accurate information in order to repair them back to pre-accident condition. Repair shops recognize the importance of quality to insure a proper repair, and Mitchell's accurate, up-to-date databases enable them to do this," said John Backman, manager, auto physical damage at Mitchell. "Our new center now

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BREAKING NEWS
SALARY STUDY

IATN TECHS REPORT HIGHER SALARIES THAN AVERAGE

A recent poll of members of the International Automotive Technicians Network (iATN) found that the average 2012 salary for iATN member technicians working in the United States was \$51,000, comparing very favorably to the \$39,000 average salary reported by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in May 2012, for all technicians and mechanics in the country.

iATN's poll asked for responses from those working full-time as a technician, though responses from all members were permitted. From the 6,338 total responses, 1,617 chose to abstain, and the average salary for the remaining 4,721 responses was \$54,000. After excluding those not working in the United States and

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Mercedes-Benz

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

MITCHELL OPENS NEW RESEARCH CENTER

includes 3D scanners, which allows us to start building databases for the future. We're the only company in the industry to leverage this next-gen technology, and we're excited about the potential it brings to the claims and repair process and beyond."

"We rely on Mitchell's robust information in its TechAdvisor solution to ensure we accurately repair any car that comes into our shop. More than almost any other industry, customer service and reputation are the lifeblood of a shop's growth, and we need a partner who focuses on these values to ensure we're able to keep our credibility high," said Corky Deenik, Collision Repair Manager at BMW of Escondido. "We see the next-gen technology provided by the TRC as being the future of the industry. This data will enable us to repair cars and trucks to original condition,

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

IATN TECHS REPORT HIGHER SALARIES THAN AVERAGE

those with a title other than exclusively "technician," 1,420 responses remained. Accounting for differences in per-capita income by state using data from the 2010 U. S. Census yielded an adjusted average salary of \$51,000.

Since 1995, iATN has provided automotive professionals from around the globe the opportunity to network with each other to solve difficult and rare vehicle issues. Members also use iATN to discuss shop management techniques, technical theory of automobile diagnostics, best practices for service and repair, and automotive industry issues in general.

"The results of this poll are not surprising to me, nor likely to any of our members," said iATN President Scott Brown. "Although it's difficult to make a direct comparison between our results and the data reported by BLS, due to differences in how the data was collected, it would make sense that there is a strong correlation between iATN membership and higher salaries. By virtue of their activity on

NEW SHOW LOCALE

NACE 2014 IN DETROIT

BY KRISTA MCNAMARA | MANAGING EDITOR

NACE 2014 will be held in Detroit, Mich., in July, announced Automotive Service Association Executive Vice President Dan Risley during the Collision Industry Conference in Boston.

NACE (the International Autobody Congress & Exposition), I-CAR (Inter-Industry Conference on Auto Collision Repair) and CIC (Collision Industry Conference) will comprise Industry Week 2014, July 28-Aug. 2, 2014 at Detroit's Cobo Center.

"Cooperation with the industry and being located in the Motor City will result in an event the industry has yet to experience," Risley says. "It shows the commitment to produce an industry show for our industry, by our industry."

The preliminary schedule of events is:

July 29 - CIC Meeting & Reception

July 30 - I-CAR Conference & Reception

July 31 - Collision Repair Education Foundation Golf Outing

due to the accuracy provided to us by Mitchell."

In addition to providing 2D and 3D data to the repair industry, Mitchell's proprietary database can be used for the following cases:

- *Consumer-facing car buying sites* – projects a 3D image of a car so an individual can look at a vehicle from all angles;
- *Auction companies* – provides the ability to validate whether a report on the status of the car is accurate or not;
- *Accident reconstruction* – gives the ability to scan parts or wreckage pieces to help law enforcement identify the make and model of a car; and
- *Infrastructure improvements* – assists in improving the safety of roads by quickly giving highway patrol the average heights of cars in order to properly update guard rail heights.

iATN, our members have shown that they have a strong interest in staying at the leading edge of their field and learning the latest diagnostic techniques and trends in shop management. At every level, our members have a strong desire to improve our industry."

iATN was founded in 1995 and is the largest online community of automotive technicians, repair shop owners and other allied service professionals in the world with more than 76,000 active members from 160 countries. iATN members exchange technical knowledge with their peers around the globe, collectively sharing over 1.8 million years of experience.

The iATN Mission of Excellence is to promote the continued growth, success and image of the professional automotive technician by providing a forum for the exchange of knowledge and the promotion of education, professionalism and integrity. For additional information about iATN or to join, visit www.iatn.net.



ASA Executive Vice President Dan Risley at CIC in Boston.

July 31-Aug.1 - NACE Education & Expo

Saturday, Aug. 2 - Education & Hosted Industry Tours

More information will soon be available at www.naceexpo.com, www.i-car.com, and www.cic.com.

John Van Alstyne, I-CAR CEO & President, shared his enthusiasm. "Industry Week will present excellent educational, knowledge-building and networking opportunities."

"The Collision Industry Conference looks forward to meet-

ing during this time when all groups come together," stated Jeff Hender, founder, CIC. "The more often that all entities attempt to share the calendar with the varying functions of meetings, educations, trade displays, and networking opportunities, the better it is for those who attend. Everyone and every entity stands to benefit."





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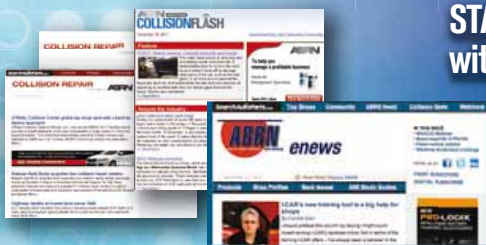
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COLLISION REPAIR INDUSTRY Stats & Trends

iATN member techs reported a salary of **\$51,000** annually, compared to **\$39,000**, as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in a May 2012 report.



Hartford Insurance appeals ruling on punitive damages

Insurer fights labor rate judgment

BY BRIANALBRIGHT | ABRN BLOGGER

After a judge upped the damages awarded in a class action suit against The Hartford insurance company, the insurer, as expected, is appealing the decision to the Connecticut Supreme Court.

Connecticut body shops sued The Hartford in 2003, claiming that the insurer's DRP program forced depressed labor rates.

The class of shops in Artie's Auto Body, Inc., et al v. The Hartford Fire Insurance Co. — part of The Hartford Financial Services Group — swelled to 1,500 shops since its original filing. The Auto Body Association of Connecticut (ABAC), which comprises more than 1,000 auto body shops, is a main plaintiff in the suit.

The body shops claimed that The Hartford's DRP program artificially lowered rates by putting pressure on independent auto appraisers to write lower than market value estimates.

The Connecticut shops prevailed, and in 2009 were awarded \$14.7 million in damages by a jury, which said the insurer engaged in a practice that resulted in a loss to the repair shops.

In June of 2013, Superior Court Judge Alfred Jennings ordered The Hartford to pay \$20 million in punitive damages in addition to the original judgment. This is believed to be the largest unfair trade practices award ever issued in the state, and now totals nearly \$35 million.

You can read more about the decision in the Connecticut Law Tribune.

According to the ctpost.com coverage, the judge said the award was meant to send a message to The Hartford and other insurers that violating fair trade rules would not be tolerated.



continues



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Estimating guides as a tool

DEGART

How often do you review the P-Pages or estimating guides? During my tenure as an estimator, I reviewed the P-Pages or guides very often and thought I had a "complete" understanding of how they are written and what is in them. I had copies in my desk and when challenged, I could reference the guides and have documentation of why something is in the estimate. Now I am with the DEG and understanding the guides and the methodology of how they are written is a critical part of my job. I now realize I was using the guides as a "reference" when challenged and not using the guides as an actual tool to write my estimate or repair plan.

Each information provider or estimating system has their P-

Pages or guides that are written to help us understand how the estimating system builds the labor time that you see in your estimate. Mitchell has the Collision Estimating Guide, CCC has the Guide to Estimating, and Audatex has the Database Reference Manual. The DEG website is a good source to help us understand how these guides are written. For instance, Mitchell and CCC calculate the labor time from the "outside in," meaning that the labor associated with replacing an inner part does not, by default, automatically include the labor associated with any related outer part that must first be removed and later reinstalled. Audatex uses an "inside out" approach instead. When replacing an inner part, such as a radiator support or apron, Audatex calculates the labor

associated with related outer parts, and attaches much of that labor to the inner part.

Understanding the guides for the estimating systems you have is very important, but as important is understanding the guides for estimating systems that you do not have. Several times a week, the DEG receives inquiries questioning a process or labor time and the shop cannot reproduce the estimate because they do not have the estimating system in the shop. On the DEG website, you can review and download the estimating guide for each of the three information providers. At anytime if you do not understand or have a question in reference to one of the guides or a specific problem, please don't hesitate to email the DEG or submit an inquiry.

PLNs

BWRENCH

Over the 4th of July for the last 11 years, my wife and I have hosted a group of iATN technicians and their families to our house. This all started back in 2002 as I was wanting to expand my technical learning. I got the idea of inviting the whole iATN crowd to my house for a campout. Yes, I put out an invite to all 25,000 members. Luckily only about 15 of them showed up that first year. Since then, the number has grown, and many lasting friendships have been made.

This year, we had 35 people show up on our doorstep — men, women, boys and girls from across the U.S., Canada and Australia. Keep reading at abrn.com/PLN.



“I have designed and built three major collision repair centers on the East Coast and Midwest...all three I purchased Blowtherm paint equipment.”



“I learned early on that to be successful you had to have great equipment - especially in the paint department. Simply put, the materials and the technology that Blowtherm puts into their equipment is state of the art.

BodyWorks is a recognized leader in certified collision repair. We cannot have less than perfection and these Blowtherm paint booths are just that, **PERFECTION!**”

~ Tim Perry, Director of Auto Body Operations

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THE SHOP OWNER

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Yoga of business

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PROFIT MOTIVE

TOM MCGEE

Give customers a quick response

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MIKE ANDERSON

Fighting the dash light myth

Hartford Insurance appeals ruling on punitive damages *continued*

According to the plaintiff's attorney David Slossberg, of Hurwitz, Sagarin, Slossberg and Knuff in Milford, "The problem with all of this is that insurance companies have an inherent conflict of interest. On the one hand, their insureds need and expect that they will get a quality repair and get their car returned to pre-accident

condition, and on the other, the insurance company desires to spend as little money as they can making that happen."

Slossberg said he expects The Hartford's appeal to be resolved within the next 12 to 18 months.

Connecticut shops have also sued Progressive in U.S. Federal Court. ❏

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Noteworthy

READER FEEDBACK TO ONLINE ARTICLES

LinkedIn discussion started by Shawn Mostyn: "Is having a sales contract for refinishing supplies with a jobber saving or costing your business money?"

From George Stanley: It's ALWAYS more costly than you shopping around and acquiring the best individual bang for your material buck. Jobbers don't offer the best price to anyone; they have a sliding scale for shops, depending on how much you beef about their prices and how much you spend. You pay — dearly — for the privilege of having someone come running every time you call.

From Kelvin Campbell: Having a good jobber has definitely helped my business. I would recommend, if you sign a deal, that you take a rebate as opposed to the prebate. As your business grows, so does your rebate. Also, independent jobbers tend to work harder than the big brand stores.

From Larry Miller: Having a great jobber is an asset. However, the underlying question is always about

prebate or rebate. If you marry for money to expand or upgrade, it is easy to jump in, even if you don't get the best price or service. If you go for the rebate, run your business strong and utilize their value-added services properly, everyone's a winner.

From Carl Garcia: It's all about using the right products on the right job at the right costs. In 2005, I almost went out of business from taking advice from a supplier. I spent hours learning how to run my business after hitting rock bottom. We are in business to make money, so the more we know, the more money that the business can make in the right ways. Know your products and know what they cost.

From Ron Fraley: There can be winners and losers. Price is very important, but not at a sacrifice for service and support. As in any contractual agreement, you need to be careful about what you are signing. If it was all about the lowest price, everyone would be buying from the big box vendors. It should not always be about the lowest price, but the best value for your business. As your business grows, so does your rebate.



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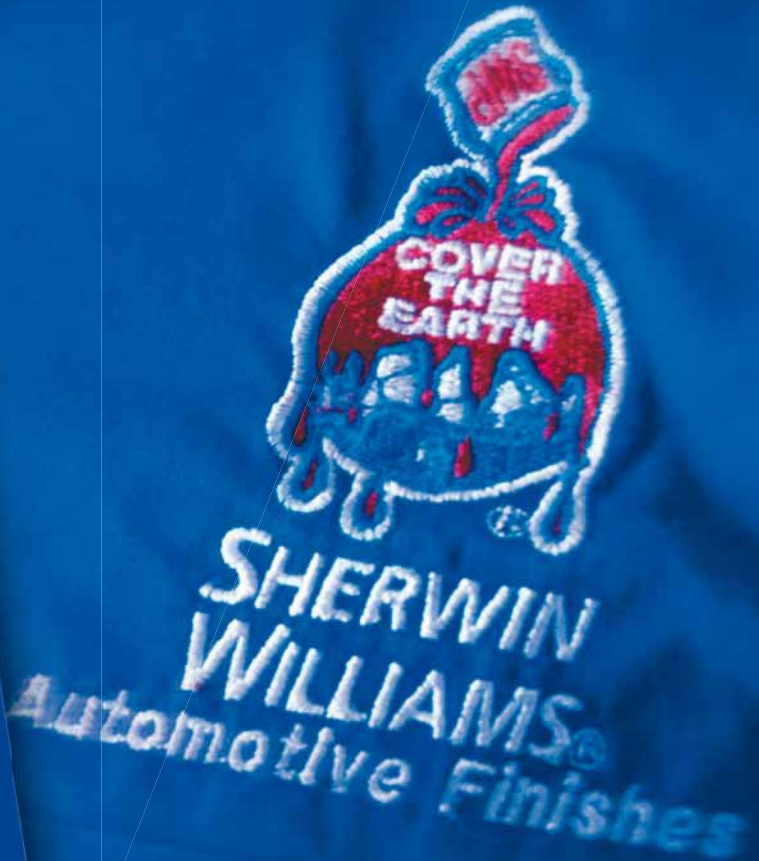
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Q+A WITH

MICHAEL BENNETT

NORTH AMERICA MARKETING DIRECTOR,
AXALTA COATING SYSTEMS

AXALTA'S NEW CORPORATE BRAND IDENTITY AIMS TO CAPTURE THE SCOPE OF ITS BUSINESS AROUND THE WORLD

BY KRISTA MCNAMARA | MANAGING EDITOR



Axalta Coating Systems, a global supplier of liquid and powder coatings, recently rolled out a new corporate brand identity that captures the scope of its business around the world. Michael Bennett, Axalta's North America Marketing Director, spoke with *ABRN* about the effort and what is ahead.

ABRN: What is the purpose behind the Axalta rebranding effort?

MB: As we are becoming a freestanding company out of DuPont, we wanted to properly define who we are now, not only for employees, but also for customers — what the strengths are of our company and what we're going to be as we move forward. Internally, it helps with decision making. It is an affirmation to our customers about what we are continuing to be going forward. It is both for internal guidance and external communication.

We're still the same company in that we have all the same people, products and training, but since we are no longer tied to a larger corporate entity, our new identity helps show how we are going to be different and act different in the marketplace now that we are focused 100 percent on coatings.

ABRN: How is this effort being communicated to shops?

MB: We've spent a lot of time and effort communicating to employees what this means and providing them with information — short videos and extensive marketing materials — so they can communicate it to customers. We are spreading information through NASCAR and linking our product brands to the corporate logo across a broad avenue of mechanisms. In addition to our product websites, which are still undergoing rebranding, we now have a new corporate website at www.axaltacoatingsystems.com.

ABRN: How does Axalta work to help shops improve productivity?

MB: What is clear from our perspective is if we are able to make our customers more successful, we will be more successful. This extends from products that we offer — Standox, Spies Hecker and DuPont Refinish. For example, Standoblue from Standox is our newest version of water-borne, and we help customers cut cycle times through the use of this technology. The productivity is built right into the product. Both the products and services we provide to the customer are designed to assist in their productivity.

**ABRN:** What is ahead for Axalta in the refinishing segment?

MB: We have a few new releases. As far as the product brands that people are used to — Standox, Spies Hecker and DuPont Refinish — the actual products will all remain. We will go through a renaming and rebranding of DuPont Refinish product line, so the name and look for the packaging will be different, but the products remain the same.

We have new products that will be coming out to help our customers achieve what they need. Both new regulated and non-regulated products will be coming out very soon. Our products will stay; the names may differ, but our quality is not going away. As an independent company focused solely on coatings products, we'll be more responsive than ever to listening to what our customers want. 



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Yoga of business

Mental skills from this ancient practice may help you in your business

Yoga is something I enjoy doing and would like to do more often because it complements my ballet classes and helps me stay nimble in mind and body. You may be saying to yourself, "So wait, what does that have to do with business?" It's the nimble-minded part that I think overlaps well with business (aside from the fact that when you're also in reasonable physical shape, you normally feel better all around, which helps make you more productive).

Yoga is much more than just stretching and bending. It's about learning, mindfulness and looking within yourself for what you need. Whether it encompasses health, relationships, attitudes or overall well being, there are lessons and skills in yoga that carry over well into everyday life and business. Here's a few of them that I am practicing:

Focus. The physical and mental aspects of yoga will serve you best when you are able to maintain an uninterrupted state of attention on at least one aspect of your practice, whether it's breathing, holding a position, balancing or thinking.

Small business owners wear multiple hats every day and have to switch gears quickly and frequently. This can make maintaining focus on any one thing challenging. But when you are faced with important decisions, being able to focus is critical. Thoughts that race from here to there may fuel creativity, but don't usually aid in solving problems.

If an increase in your ability to maintain focus could improve your business, consider some simple meditation techniques. Check out *Meditations to Change Your Brain* by Rick Hanson and Richard Mendius.

Empathy. Yoga respects all living things. Empathy is huge in the business world because it is imperative to providing over-the-top service and making an

emotional connections with your customers and employees. We are in business to provide a service to someone, and by practicing empathy we can understand what it feels like to be that someone. I know when I make an emotional connection with a service provider, I'm more likely to do business with them. Honing this skill will serve you well in business and in life.

Equanimity. This is a fundamental skill for self-exploration and emotional intelligence, and it is often misunderstood and confused with suppressing feelings and apathy. Equanimity is a state of extreme calm and inner balance, a continuous relaxed state over your whole body as sensations of all kinds – pleasant and unpleasant, physical and emotional – are allowed to wash through. When you're able to intentionally create equanimity in your mind, you'll let go of negative judgments about what you're experiencing and replace them with an attitude of loving acceptance and matter-of-factness. Imagine how this would help the stresses that come your way each day at the shop.

Presence. As simple as it sounds, being present is one of the most challenging concepts to get your head around, and often is difficult to accept and practice. This requires an understanding that the past is the past and cannot be changed. You only have the moment that is "now." It is literally the only time you can do anything – in the here and now. Coming to grips with this fact can make monumental differences in the way you approach your business and other aspects of your life.

Gaining a grasp of what presence is can be difficult; don't be discouraged if it doesn't come easily and quickly to you. After all, it is considered a life-long practice. If you want to delve into this topic in greater detail, I encourage you to look into the works of a couple of modern-day practitioners, like Jack Kornfield and Eckhart Tolle.

These are centuries-old ideas, and you certainly don't have to practice yoga in order to use them as tools. Think of them as yoga for the brain – keeping you flexible in the way you think – even if you can't negotiate lotus position or touch your toes.

Namaste. 🙏

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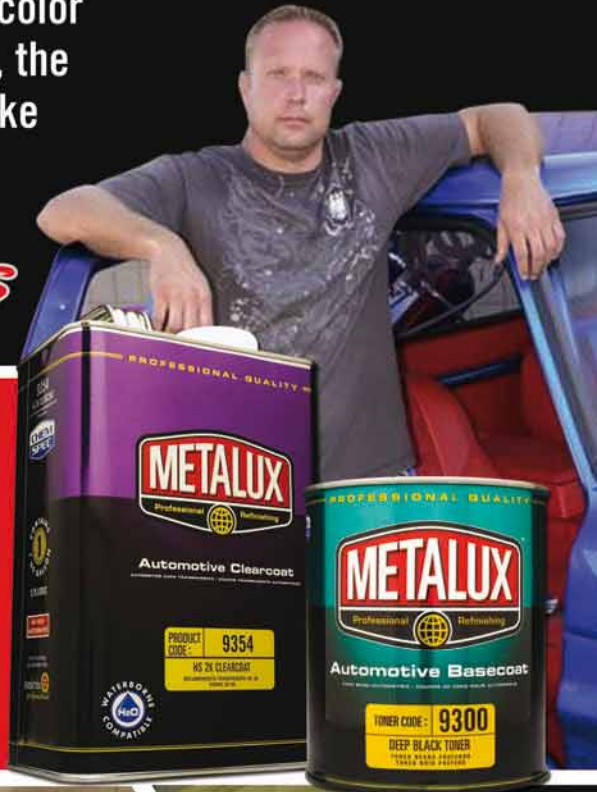
Camille Eber is the second-generation owner of Fix Auto Portland East in Portland, Oregon.

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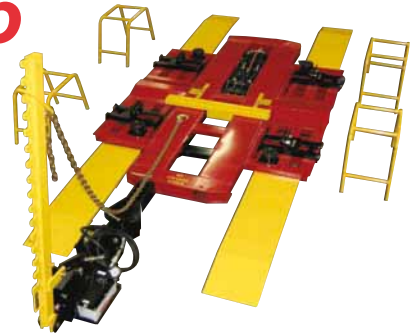
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MINDING YOUR BUSINESS


 FINDING THE
KEY TO
CYCLE TIME

BY KEVIN MEHOK | CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

THOSE OF US in this industry are aware of the buzzwords surrounding the metrics which all shops are measured by — CSI, severity, close ratio and cycle time, to name a few. Cycle time is one of those metrics that we all know is important, but do we really know why, or understand the implications that improving cycle time bring? My guess is no based on my own experiences in dealing with the metric.

Years ago, when the industry first started to measure cycle time, it was considered a very important measurable that set apart great shops from average ones. It remains significant, but over the years the industry has fluctuated about where it should land on the importance scale. Some years, it's at the top of the scale, and others it's at the bottom. I felt cycle time was so important to the industry, that I developed a 24-hour repair process that actually works. I tried presenting the process to insurance companies, thinking I would have DRPs clamoring for it. It didn't happen. No one really seemed to care, so I offer the process to my customers that need to have their repairs done super-fast.

It doesn't mean cycle time isn't important; it means it was just less important, at that point in time, than other measurables. Remember this: the faster you can move a vehicle through the shop, the faster you can get paid for the repair, and the faster you can bring in another job.

Sounds pretty important to me.

Some shops know their cycle time numbers and others do not. In fact, you can measure your cycle time as a shop, and an insurance partner can measure it, and come up with different numbers. How can that be if you are using the same data?

The way the data is used is the key.

I have always believed you should measure your performance, document it and use those numbers to help you get better. You should do this in every measurable category, not just cycle time. What numbers do you use as a basis to improve? Whose numbers are the most accurate? Yours as a shop owner or those of an insurance partner?

Let's look at the idea of cycle time in simplistic, common sense terms. So many different things can affect it. Generally, when a shop has a lower-than-average cycle time, the per-

ception is that shop is better performing than another shop with higher cycle times. This may not be the case. What if the shop with the lower cycle times did lots of smaller, bumper jobs that take less time to do, and the "poorer" performing shop did a large volume of train wrecks? Wouldn't it make sense that the shop doing the lighter work would have better cycle times, even if they did the same number of repairs?

No one can control severity. Whatever comes in your shop comes in. Severity greatly affects cycle time; therefore, it must be taken into account when calculating your numbers. Generally, most measurements are lump sum, including all the different sized jobs as an average. This works, but doesn't give you the numbers you need to improve. Unfortunately, the lump sum measurement is what most insurance companies use when gauging your performance. Again, these numbers can vary greatly depending on the manufacturer of the vehicle you are working on. Manufacturers with great parts distribution systems, like Toyota, will net far better cycle times than Subaru, who have a less efficient parts distribution system. So, you need to measure your cycle times based on manufacturers as well.

Another difference is the points you are using as reference for your measurements — keys to keys, parts arrived to repairs completed, repair start to repair completed? What metrics make the most sense? Each one is important, but each one carries a different level of importance to different people. Think about it like this: You're in a fast-food drive-thru and you're hungry. Do you care if your experience is measured at each station in the process, or do you just care how long the entire process takes? As a consumer, you really only care how long it takes once you pull in to the time you begin eating your purchase. Management cares about each step of the process so that they can help speed up the overall experience. They measure them all and try to improve on each step in the process individually. The same holds true in the collision industry. If you measure your cycle time using several different starting and ending points, you can look at which areas need the most help and focus on improving them. Herein lies an-

other problem. How long should each of these measurements be? What is the industry standard? Is there an industry standard? There may be, but you can also use your own numbers as a basis to track improvement. Measure yourself and work to improve upon that.

We have established that cycle time is affected by many factors out of your

control. What can you do to improve cycle time within your control?

1. Cycle time starts with the most accurate estimate. I have seen many estimators that take a quick look at a vehicle, write a skin sheet and move on. This results in missed damage, parts delays, supplemental delays and so on. Take as much time as you need

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up front to really write a blueprint for repair. Disassemble the vehicle, take measurements of damaged structural components and look closely at all the damaged components to see what can be repaired and what need to be replaced. Source used parts accurately; don't just guess at them. Verify that they exist at the yard and can be purchased. This goes for insurance company writers as well! I have seen countless estimates with used parts on them that don't exist and never have. The price is merely provided as a reference to get the estimate written. This practice hurts the entire industry and slows down cycle time tremendously.

Even when writing an estimate for a cash customer, it is important to look at the vehicle carefully when they come into your shop looking for an estimate. I know many of us deal with customers that push you to hurry, but it's always best to explain why you need to take time up front to write an accurate appraisal, as this will save time later on.

2. Schedule your work as wisely as possible. Since all of us have experienced a drop off in business over the past few years, the natural tendency in any shop is to grab the job and worry about how you are going to finish it later. This practice isn't smart business, and isn't necessary. When a customer comes to you for an estimate, they are looking for a resolution to a problem. If they leave the vehicle that day, or they schedule the repairs for a day when you

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have specified, you have achieved the same result — you have offered a resolution to their problem, with one difference. By scheduling the repairs when you have the parts and the manpower to complete the job with the maximum efficiency, you can guarantee better cycle times. Since you have written a complete estimate, ordered the correct parts and checked them before the vehicle arrives for repairs, the process will naturally go much more smoothly.

3. Check your parts. This sounds almost elementary, but is an often overlooked step in the repair process. The parts may be correct, but may be damaged, so I suggest opening every box to verify the part is correct and undamaged on every delivery. The parts drivers might not like it, but I would rather have a driver mad at me than a customer or insurance partner. This takes discipline and organization, but is an important element in speeding up the repair process.

4. Clean, declutter and organize. All of us have a great tech in our shop, one that can do anything and is better than all your other guys. Look at your techs' toolboxes tomorrow. Is your best tech the messiest one in your shop, or is he or she the most organized? My guess is he or she is the most organized and that is part of the reason he or she is the best. The same holds true for your shop overall. A cluttered, disorganized shop is not going to perform, in any measurement, as well as a highly organized and clean one.

5. Efficiently distribute your repair work. This is sometimes difficult, since all of us have techs with different levels of ability. It is possible, however, to make sure the right tech gets the right mix of repair work. This goes back to scheduling as well. If you only have one or two heavy hitters in the shop, don't schedule five heavy repairs for one week. You will fail before you ever get started. Also take into account your equipment and facility restrictions. If you only have one frame rack, how are you going to complete multiple structural jobs all at one time? Production management is key here. I try every day to give instruction to my staff regarding in what order jobs need to be done. I produce a paint list and a delivery list, and everyone gets a copy. We communicate clearly what

needs to be done and when in production meetings, and elicit feedback from the techs regarding those projections. Obviously, your work mix will change daily, especially if you get tow ins and unexpected drop offs. Do the best you can to work these jobs into your schedule, following the accurate estimate guidelines, parts check ins, etc.

The real benefit to measuring and improving your cycle time is to you and your shop's customers. Don't do it because an insurance company wants you to. Do it because it will make you better as a collision repairer. You will have more satisfied customers and more repeat and referral business as a result. ■

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**BUILDING
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The architectural footprint of the shop area was designed in an “open configuration” that includes repair stalls dedicated to specific repair processes and six empty parking stalls that remain open for use as a staging area.

AKZONOBEL TEACHING CUSTOMERS 10 KEYS TO MORE EFFICIENT BUSINESS, STREAMLINED CULTURE AND A MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

BY KRISTA MCNAMARA | MANAGING EDITOR

THE SECRET to boosting shop efficiency and profits should be no secret at all, says Michael Giarrizzo, president of DCR Systems in Mentor, Ohio. Simply develop a predictable work process around a very unpredictable product. Giarrizzo has built his five-location business around this mantra.

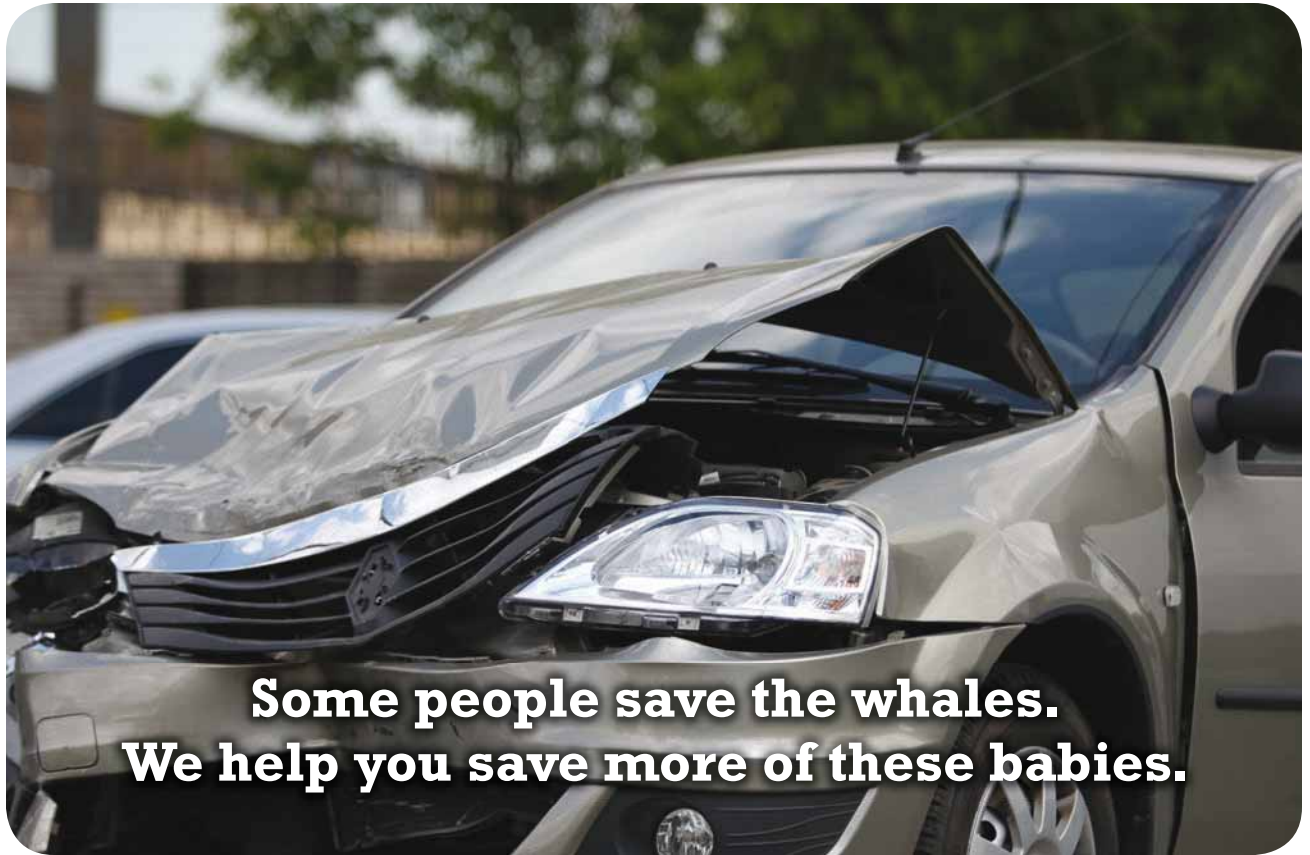
One of the principle founders of the Process Centered Environment (PCE) program with AkzoNobel — created in 2008 — he has used his experience to combine the methodologies of Lean Production, Six Sigma and the Theory of Constraints into a teachable process shops can implement within their own walls. At its core, PCE aims to help shops increase customer satisfaction, develop a team-oriented business culture, reduce

waste in the repair process and ensure sustainable profitability through 10 key building blocks, which work together cohesively, or individually, based on a shop's needs.

“There is no roadmap. PCE takes principles and brings them together in a work environment. We teach the thought process so the task is applied organically and differently to different environments,” Giarrizzo says. “The goal is to inspire others about how to bring the ideal of sustainability to their own shops. There is no perfect answer in a random work environment. So you need to break down your repair process and strip out the variables.”

Regardless of whom the shops are working to satisfy, the principles remain applicable. “There is always a debate about





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CODE	DESCRIPTION	SPEAKER	TRACK			
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16			C	M	M	T
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM						
IC01	Aluminum Intensive Vehicle Repairs (ALI01)	I-CAR Instructor	Add-On Education			
IC02	Stationary Glass (GLA02)	I-CAR Instructor	Add-On Education			
8:30 - 10:00 AM						
WE01 *	The Four Components of Success	Bob Keith - CARSTAR	■	■	●	
WE02 *	Executing with Excel - How to Think Like a CFO and Use Excel to Make Key Business Decisions	John Walcher - Veritas Advisors, Inc.	■	■	●	
WE03 *	Master Your Future, Master the Internet!	Danny Sanchez - Autoshop Solutions	■	■	●	
WE04 *	Certified Collision Repair Programs	Joseph Blanton - Car-O-Liner	■		●	
WE05 *	Putting Customers in the Driver's Seat: Self-Service in the New Era of Collision Repair	Neal Lowell, Rick Tuuri - Audatex North America, Inc.	■		●	
WE06	Introduction and Challenges to Advanced High-Strength Steel Repairability	David Anderson - Steel Market Development Institute	■			●
WE07	Triage Quick Check Diagnostics - Part 1	Jim Wilson - Bosch Automotive		■		●
8:30 AM - 6:00 PM						
MS0	MSO Symposium		KEY EVENT			
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM						
WE10	E Parts Procurement Panel	Roger Wright - Sterling Autobody Centers	■		●	
WE11 *	Financial Best Practices	Mike Anderson - CollisionAdvice.com	■		●	
WE12 *	Using Your CSI to Improve Business in the Social Media Age	Rochelle Thielen - Mitchell International	■		●	
WE13 *	How Have We Gotten Where We Are Now?	Tony Passwater - AEII	■		●	
WE14 *	Simple Cycle Time Solutions	Ron Kuehn - Collision Business Solutions	■		●	
WE15	Identifying and Correcting Structural Damage	Tim Morgan - Spanesi Americas, Inc.	■			●
WE16 *	Increasing Sales Success	Scott Wheeler - Automotive Consultants		■	●	
WE17	Triage Quick Check Diagnostics - Part 2	Jim Wilson - Bosch Automotive		■		●
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM						
PCI01	Insurance & Collision Repair - Issues 2014	Robert Passmore - Property Casualty Insurers Association of America	Add-On Education			
WE20 *	Hire the Best and Avoid the Rest	Norm Bobay - hireMAX	■	■	●	
WE21 *	Consumer Marketing and Selling	Steve Trapp - Axalta Coating Systems	■		●	
WE22	Are You "Repair Planning" or Are You Still "Estimating" and Calling It "Repair Planning"?	Bob Gilbert, Scott Wheeler - Akzo Nobel	■		●	
WE23 *	Creating a Results-Driven Business	Tom McGee - Automotive Training Institute	■		●	
WE24	Introduction and Challenges to Advanced High-Strength Steel Repairability	David Anderson - Steel Market Development Institute	■			●
WE25 *	Profit Structuring and Business Analysis	Maylan Newton - Educational Seminars Institute		■	●	
WE26	Deciphering Vehicle Networks - Part 1	Bob Augustine - Christian Brothers		■		●
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM						
IC03	Replacement of Steel Unitized Structures (SPS10)	I-CAR Instructor	Add-On Education			
IC04	Steering and Suspension Damage Analysis (DAM06)	I-CAR Instructor	Add-On Education			
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM						
WE30 *	The Art of the Deal - Navigating the Acquisition Process	John Walcher - Veritas Advisors, Inc.	■	■	●	
WE31 *	Effective Social Media Management for Business	Mark Claypool - Optima Automotive	■	■	●	
WE33 *	Simple Financial Solutions to Survive in a Consolidating Industry	Ron Kuehn - Collision Business Solutions	■		●	
WE34	Improving Shop Efficiency and Profitability	Dean Fisher, Rick Miller - CARSTAR	■		●	
WE35	Compressed Air Requirements for Body Shops	Mike Camber - Kaeser Compressors, Inc.	■			●
WE36 *	How to Conduct a Job Interview and Find a Winner	Becky Witt - George Witt Service, Inc.		■	●	
WE37	Deciphering Vehicle Networks - Part 2	Bob Augustine - Christian Brothers		■		●
WE38	The ABCs of Aftermarket Parts	Robert Frayer - NSF International	■		●	











All sessions, speakers and times subject to change.

LEGEND

COURSE TRACK

Many sessions appropriate for both collision and mechanical attendees

C Collision Focus	M Mechanical Focus	M Management	T Technical
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CODE	DESCRIPTION	SPEAKER	TRACK			
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17			C	M	M	T
8:00 AM - 9:15 AM						
CF	Opening General Session/Collision Forum	 Mike Anderson - Collision Advice.com				KEY EVENT
MF	Opening General Session/Mechanical Forum	Kevin McCartney - Automotive Support Services				KEY EVENT
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM						
IC05	Steel Structures Damage Analysis (DAM12)	I-CAR Instructor				Add-On Education
IC06	Wind Noise and Water Leaks (WNW01)	I-CAR Instructor				Add-On Education
9:30 AM - 4:30 PM ASRW EXPO OPEN						
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM						
TH01 *	Business Continuation Planning	Dan Gilley - RLO Training		■	●	
TH02	Diagnosing the Connected Vehicle	Ben Johnson - Mitchell 1		■		●
12:00 PM - 5:00 PM						
IC07	Blueprinting Process and Damage Discovery (BLU01)	I-CAR Instructor				On-Floor Activities
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM						
IC08	Sectioning of Steel Unitized Structures (SPS11)	I-CAR Instructor				Add-On Education
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM						
TH10 *	Facebook 101 for Repair Shops	Sheri Hamilton - ASA Midwest	■	■	●	
TH11 *	Utilizing QuickBooks in the Collision Repair Industry ... The Right Way!	Tony Passwater - AEII	■		●	
TH12 *	Advanced Production	 Steve Trapp - Axalta Coating Systems	■		●	
TH13 *	Write-it-Right Best Practices - Mechanics of Estimating	Mike Anderson - CollisionAdvice.com	■		●	
TH14	Today's Advanced Vehicle Materials & Safety Systems	 Jason Bartanen, Jamie Boettcher - I-CAR	■			●
TH15 *	Handle the Phone Like a Pro	Becky Witt - George Witt Service, Inc.		■	●	
TH16	Service Readiness	 Mark Olinger - CARQUEST Technical Institute		■		●
TH17	Repair Standards Panel	Lou Dilisio - Automotive Industry Consulting	■		●	
4:30 PM - 6:00 PM						
WR	ASRW WELCOME PARTY					KEY EVENT
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18						
8:00 AM - 9:30 AM						
FR01 *	Benchmarking Your Star Performers	Norm Bobay - hireMAX	■	■	●	
FR02 *	Reputation Management	Mark Claypool - Optima Automotive	■	■	●	
FR03 *	Health Care Reform: 2013 Decisions for Employers	Constantinos Panagopoulos, Brian Pinheiro - Ballard Spahr LLP	■	■	●	
FR04 *	Negotiation Best Practices - Educate, NOT Alienate	Mike Anderson - CollisionAdvice.com	■		●	
FR05 *	Paint & Material Compensation	Rick Palmer - ComputerLogic, Inc.	■		●	
FR06	Toby's Insights on Toyota Collision Repair	Toby Chess	■			●
FR07	Sales Improvement Through Vehicle Inspections	 Mark Olinger - CARQUEST Technical Institute		■		●
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM						
IC09	Replacement of Steel Unitized Structures (SPS10)	I-CAR Instructor				Add-On Education
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM						
IC10	Squeeze-Type Resistance Spot Welding (WCS04)	I-CAR Instructor				On-Floor Activities
9:30 AM - 4:30 PM ASRW EXPO OPEN						
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM						
FR10 *	Hybrid Electric Vehicle Technology: Engage It, Embrace It, and Profit From It - What Are You Waiting For?	Mark Quarto - Automotive Research & Design, LLC	■	■	●	
FR11	State of the Art Cooling System Maintenance	Donny Seyfer - Seyfer Automotive	■	■		
4:00 PM - 5:30 PM						
FR20 *	Health Care Reform: 2013 Decisions for Employers	Constantinos Panagopoulos, Brian Pinheiro - Ballard Spahr LLP	■	■	●	
FR21	Are You "Repair Planning" or Are You Still "Estimating" and Calling It "Repair Planning"?	Bob Gilbert, Scott Wheeler - Akzo Nobel	■		●	
FR22 *	Advantages of a Single, Open System Repair Shop Platform	Greg Hqrn - Mitchell International	■		●	
FR23	Does the Government Really Affect Collision Repair?	Toby Chess	■			●
FR24 *	Marketing to the Connected Consumer	David Niemiec - Mitchell 1		■	●	
FR25	Combustion Chemistry & 5 Gas Analyses	Jim Kemper - CO. Dept. PH & E		■		●

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who your customer really is. But whether you are talking about the insurance company, the dealer or the consumer, they all want the same thing — a repair that is timely and cost competitive,” Giarrizzo says.

“The principles are simple, but a change from what we’ve been doing. It is a front-end loaded process. In health care, it is called pre-op. You make sure you have all the equipment, medicines, sutures and tools you need, because stopping in the middle of surgery isn’t an option. You need to create a continuous flow of work. From a snuffle to a heart attack, from minor to critical condition, each patient is handled in the same way. The same is true of the automotive industry.”

From the classroom to the shop

PCE training offers information and theory in the classroom, then owners or shop managers must take it back to their business for implementation. “As a leader, you can’t have someone else do this in your shop. The owner has to embrace the change,” Giarrizzo says.

“Each step can be tailored to an individual business. It’s about knowing what your business needs and how to interpret these concepts,” says Bob Gilbert, AkzoNobel Service Coordinator, who oversees all 15 service managers who facilitate PCE training in the U.S. and Canada.

Service consultants organize three to four two-and-a-half-day training sessions per year, and roughly 200 shops have taken the PCE course. About half of those have fully embraced the PCE culture, while the other half has applied specific steps, rather than the entire program, to address trouble areas in their business, Gilbert says.

Some of the training sessions take place right on location in Giarrizzo’s Mentor shop.

“We open our doors to those in training so they can see implementation of these ideas. It can help them strategically and sequentially to put the ideas in place. Many shop owners want to hold on to what they are accustomed to doing. But we really want you to think less about what you are doing, and more about why,” he says. “The goal is to inspire you to make change and create your own vision.”

Giarrizzo encourages all PCE attendees to stay focused on the thinking behind the process. It is a concept he learned while growing up in his family’s shop, which opened its doors in the 1940s and was later acquired by Sterling Auto Body in 1999.

“The thinking must precede the doing. People doing the work have to understand why they are doing it a certain way,” Giarrizzo says. “The thought process is simple. Prepare it up front. You need to believe, ‘I can discover everything up front’ and then all the building blocks work. Whether parts, materials, technology, skills or resources, when you find what you need up front, you strip out tons of waste and redundant steps.”

The people perspective

Learning the PCE principles is only half the battle — shop owners and managers need the support of their technicians and employees before any success will be seen, Gilbert says. And it takes strong leadership and determination to implement changes, despite employee resistance.

“At times the training can be counter-intuitive to what they are used to do-



The Alpine Auto Body shop team conducts a daily Production, Standards and 5S audit. On the wall (upper left) is the Re-assembly Processboard; with the Production Process board (middle) showing all of the cars currently in process and where they are in production.

IMAGE: ALPINE AUTO BODY

ing. The industry hasn’t changed that much, so it can be hard to contradict or dispute what they have been doing in their business or shop for many years with a new concept or idea. There is some resistance to change,” he says. “We need to understand how to fix the people who fix the cars so that the benefit from a morale standpoint, as well as the business, wins financially when this happens.”

Once employees are on board, turnover often grinds to a halt, says Wheeler. “The people that succeed have very little turnover. These are the owners that get their employees involved — they may change their pay, educate them, let them have input, and therefore have an impact on the process going forward. But the biggest challenge is employee buy-in. In this industry, if an owner gets enough pressure from his or her employees, they tend to go backwards. You have to be persistent,” he says.

Alpine Auto Body, a three-location operation in Vancouver, Wash., sent General Manager Jim McCoy to the PCE boot camp in November 2008. He returned with new ideas and used determination to conquer the staff challenges.

“We were determined to start our PCE journey with a collaborative team mentality, not as a ‘forced’ change. Together with Alpine’s owner, Rod Cook, we met with our staff from each shop location and began sharing the value that PCE could bring to the team,” said McCoy. “We told them if we could lower our cycle time, we might get addition-



Inside the lobby area of the 40,000-square-foot Universal Collision Centre facility.

IMAGE: UNIVERSAL COLLISION CENTRE



al work from our insurance partners, or gain new ones who would hear about our improvements. That is exactly what has happened and the payoff really got the team excited to continue on.”

Through joining an area PCE User Group in 2009, and other hands-on training gained through AkzoNobel’s National Performance Group meetings beginning in 2011, Alpine has steadily added PCE components to its operations. The benefits reaped through PCE aren’t just about time and costs savings.

“We want to completely change our customer’s perception about the stereotypical body shop they are accustomed to and help them see Alpine as a professional, clean and organized facility where they can bring their vehicles and feel confident the job will be done right the first time. We actually use our shops as a selling tool because when we tour customers around, we can see their perceptions change right in front of us,” McCoy says.

Repair focus

For shops not looking to completely immerse themselves in the PCE ideals and training, they can focus solely on improving their repair process.

The training is designed to educate shops on the proper implementation of repair planning — one of the PCE building blocks — and how to maximize production. AkzoNobel created the training session blueprint by reaching out to champion PCE shops for repair planning best practices, says Scott Wheeler, North American Western Region Services Manager with AkzoNobel.

“PCE training focuses on the concepts. Repair planning teaches best practices, and as a result, these shops are learning some of the PCE concepts and gaining exposure to PCE that way,” he says.

Amending the repair planning process has been especially beneficial at Alpine. With a repair planner stationed at each shop location, Alpine has effectively reduced insurance supplements by 75 percent and re-assembly cycle time by 50 percent, Manager McCoy says.

Driving global change

The PCE program is not limited to North America — AkzoNobel offers services in Europe, Asia and Australia, and is now

looking to enroll shops in Mexico, Brazil and South America, Wheeler says.

But the U.S. and Canada have returned the greatest implementation, he says. “North America has probably done the best job of driving these sustainable ideals into their collision centers. Here we have a lot of opportunities to change things, engage differently, and a lot of business owners are looking for a better way of doing things. The program has responded.”

Universal Collision Centre in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada began its formal PCE training during construction of a new facility to house their two dealership locations and a body shop. A longstanding relationship with Robert DuBreuil, AkzoNobel Canadian Senior Services Consultant, had led co-owner P.J. Morris to implement small 5S steps over time — which would become some of the building blocks of the PCE program. The changes yielded both labor and material savings, and eventually led to opportunity for Morris, with insight from DuBreuil, to build a brand new shop as a flagship PCE operation.

During construction in 2008, Morris attended a PCE boot camp at DCR Systems in Mentor, Ohio, and began sending his employees to AkzoNobel boot camps held at Kelowna Performance Collision in Kelowna, BC, owned by Pete Facinek — the first adopter of the PCE program in Canada and passionate supporter of other owners who are interested in learning how to implement PCE in their own shops.

“There is no magic bullet to PCE and it takes a lot of hard work and at least one-and-a-half to two years to see the full scope of change,” said Morris. “But with the help of AkzoNobel’s ongoing support, I can tell you that the methodical implementation of each PCE component has not only brought everyone’s stress level down, but has created a predictable flow to our work environment that promotes an open, honest culture of trust and communication among employees, consistency in customer satisfaction, and a measurable increase in our bottom line year-over-year.”

The success of the PCE program continues to gain traction both among independent shops and especially with MSOs. “Every major consolidator, every MSO, is looking at this. They are

PCE'S 10 BUILDING BLOCKS

- 1. Continuous flow** enables work to flow without interruption
- 2. In-process quality** embraces self inspection, successive inspection and standards
- 3. Standardization** reduces variability by applying uniform criteria and practices
- 4. Waste reduction** through strategic identification and elimination of waste
- 5. Continuous improvement** is a way of thinking that forms the basis of your business culture
- 6. Pull production** is when work is drawn through the repair process with the use of deliberate signals to upstream operations
- 7. 5S** is a systemic approach to creating and maintaining a clean, organized and logical workplace
- 8. Visual management** uses displays, controls and fail safes to promote efficiency, safety and quality
- 9. Real time administration** is the synchronization of administration activity with production activity
- 10. Total productive maintenance** optimizes equipment availability and utilization

working to figure out, ‘How do we do this with the least resistance?’” says Wheeler, who has worked as an ABRA consultant and is currently onboard with Caliber Collision. AkzoNobel also does all the repair planning training for the Toyota certification program.

They are also getting a lot of interest from insurers about the benefits of the process, Giarrizzo says. “It is about how we create sustainable value for both customers in the long term and for the employees by removing the waste,” Wheeler says.

With the touted benefits does come challenges — engaging in the PCE journey requires both mental and financial fortitude, McCoy says. “It is not an easy transition to go from a traditional shop model to a true PCE culture, but it’s certainly worth it. AkzoNobel continues to provide ongoing support at every turn, and we’re always stretching and growing as a team. We have been on a four-and-a-half-year journey that will never end; and we enjoy our work all the more because of it.”





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SHOP PROFILE

A snapshot of one of the industry's leading shops

D'S PAINT AND BODY SHOP / PEORIA, ILL.



Pushing the envelope

Shop stays current, implements new repair technologies

BY JAMES E. GUYETTE | CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

With expansion plans in play amid two existing collision repair centers serving America's heartland, D's Paint and Body Shop in Peoria, Ill., embraces modern technology while maintaining an old-time-style friendly atmosphere that attracts satisfied customers.

"We treat our employees like family; they are not just a number like in most other body shops," says owner Denny Boulton. "They are treated like the professionals they are. We cater lunches as we meet and exceed our goals, and we also provide a great benefit package."

These approaches have netted considerable success. The company is on track to ring up \$4 million in sales this year, representing a 13 percent uptick over 2012's tally.

"Since we opened our second location in 2009, we have more than doubled the size of our business and employees," Boulton points out.

He goes on to explain that "people don't see what goes on behind the scenes – they only see the results of our efforts. In business, just like in sports, there are those who excel at what they do. We have learned



Dwayne Bayer

to play the game through relationships."

Leveraging the learning experiences gained through active participation in an Axalta (Dupont) 20 Group and seeking advice from a lineup of industry mentors that includes Jimmy Lefler, Dave Dunn and Aaron Marshall, Boulton's strategy is to "take what has worked for others, tweak it a bit and make it work for your environment."

Established in 1979, D's started out as a detailing shop in Boulton's two-car garage. After a few forays into doing body work on the used cars being brought in, Boulton soon discovered that collision repair was a more lucrative pursuit, and he set about to obtain the necessary skills, education and business acumen.

"Not having to unlearn bad habits, Denny was open to new ways and new technology, which is his philosophy even today," says Dwayne Bayer, manager of the 10,000-sq.-ft. Pioneer Park location. "Denny is always pushing the envelope to improve procedures to make things better and faster – which makes it good for the customer.

"We are not afraid to spend money on

AT A GLANCE

D's Paint and Body Shop
 Name of shop
Peoria, Ill.
 Headquarters
Denny Boulton
 Owner
2
 Number of shops
34
 Years in business
28
 Number of employees
32
 Number of bays
22,000
 Square footage
\$2,043
 Average repair order
Axalta
 Paint supplier
Chief
 Frame machines used
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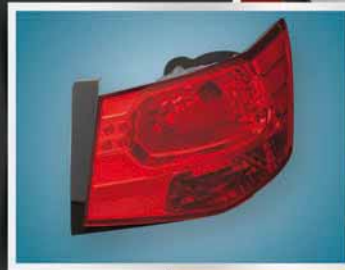
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Standing out from the crowd

Situated on the local "auto row," each day some 25,000 cars drive by the Pioneer Park shop, making it highly visible to potential patrons.

"Dwayne has done a wonderful job of getting his touch time to 7.3 hours per day," Boulton reports. The Peoria Heights location – the company's original shop designed for body repairs – has 12,000 square feet of production area. A series of procedural upgrades are currently being implemented, he adds, "so our touch time isn't quite as good as Dwayne's, but we're

improving each month."

Boulton is particularly proud of the operation's painting abilities.

"Whether you want your vehicle to stand out from the crowd with graphics or you need lettering for your company car, we have certified auto paint specialists who will do the job right," says Boulton, noting that painter Kelly Riggs has been with D's for 24 years. As word of their specialty paint prowess has spread, the company's flare for custom finishes, flames and designs is also applied to motorcycles, antique tractor parts, steel doors, refrigerators, furniture and numerous other items.

The Pioneer Park location carries I-CAR Gold designation. Peoria Heights is in the process of qualifying its newer staff members. Having previously picked up the costs incurred with the I-CAR training programs, the company is shifting to a policy that requires a recipient to agree to stay on for at least a year.

"In the past we paid for all of their training, which actually makes them targets for other body shops to steal and take advantage of all the time and money spent on them," Bayer says.

"We have implemented a department called repair planning, which includes a 100 percent tear down that creates an actual blueprint of the job," he continues. "It is a very detailed department looking for the small pieces often missed during the repair process. It's not the hoods, fenders or other large parts that give you trouble, it's the small headlamp plugs, washer nozzles or circuit breakers that give you trouble. I call it part of the 90/10 rule: 10 percent of the parts create 90 percent of the problems."

Staffers are continually encouraged to offer their insights into how operations can be improved.

"Most of the good ideas come from the employees themselves," Bayer says. "We all get together and ask the question,



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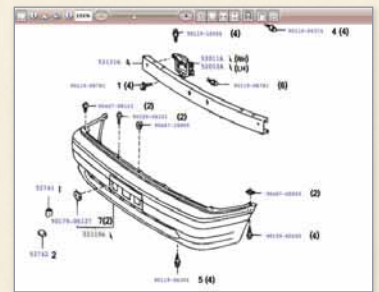
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Bayer has been the subject of a glowing Audatex case study, which lauds his ability to bring the work "down to a science, allowing him to run a lean, mean and efficient operation."

The report describes how Bayer "will commit to working on no more than four jobs on any given day, and (he) schedules out the week in such a way that his team can complete repairs faster, breaking down the repairs by heavy, medium, small and extra-small."

"We do consider our facilities to be 'lean,'" Bayer tells *ABRN*, "although you

never arrive at being 'lean' because it is an ongoing process."

Bayer is equally complimentary of Audatex in return. "Audatex has led the industry in really looking out for the shops. They are always on our side. The use of Audatex systems has been phenomenal, from parts location, to frame dimensions and downloadable estimates. What helps

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make us successful are programs like those from Audatex," Bayer says.

Making it happen

The company's concept of developing personal connections has brought significant results when applied to procuring the necessary components.

"We have a great relationship with

our parts vendors. They work really hard to get us the right parts as soon as possible. They know we are a 'make-it-happen' type of shop, so accuracy and speed is important to us," says Bayer.

"You should see the look on their faces when we take them cookies," Bayer continues. "They say they should be bringing us the cookies for doing business with them."

Bayer observes that "the biggest challenge is used parts, or rather, I should say getting good used parts. We consistently have to return them."

Thus, the business now strives to obtain new aftermarket components that are absent any signs of rock chips, gouges or rust that require additional efforts to meet customer expectations.

"The challenge of this industry is dealing with a third-party payer. I am envious of the electricians or plumbers that get paid for what they do and can charge for what they can get," says Bayer. "When you have an insurance company paying for someone else's repairs, it gets really messy. They are only concerned about the cost of the repairs and leave all the leg work for us to try and find the cheapest parts.

"I wish the insurance companies would hold the used-parts vendors to a higher standard, because getting junk parts does affect cycle time."

"All that being said," Bayer adds, "we do have respect for the adjusters we work with; we know they have a job to do and to follow orders from above. Inevitably, we do get the job done for the customer. Our goal is to build relationships with the insurance companies because if you have that relationship you're not going to take advantage of them and hopefully they won't take advantage of you."

In addition to gaining customers through word-of-mouth referrals, advertisements are placed on the Internet and in the Yellow Pages, along with running a series of spots on the area's television and radio stations.

Boulton, the owner, extensively participates in numerous civic, industry and charitable endeavors outside of the shop. He sits on the Better Business Bureau's area board of directors and has been an arbitrator for the National Center for Dispute Settlement since 1999.

He is a past-president of the local Automotive Service Association chapter and is heavily involved with raising funds for the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Boulton's son Casey, manager of the Peoria Heights shop, has recently custom-painted a Harley-Davidson motorcycle to be auctioned off in support of St. Jude's.

In addition, D's recently was the recipient of a car from an insurance company, and staff is currently in the process of repairing it so it can be given away to a local family who is in need of a vehicle. ☐

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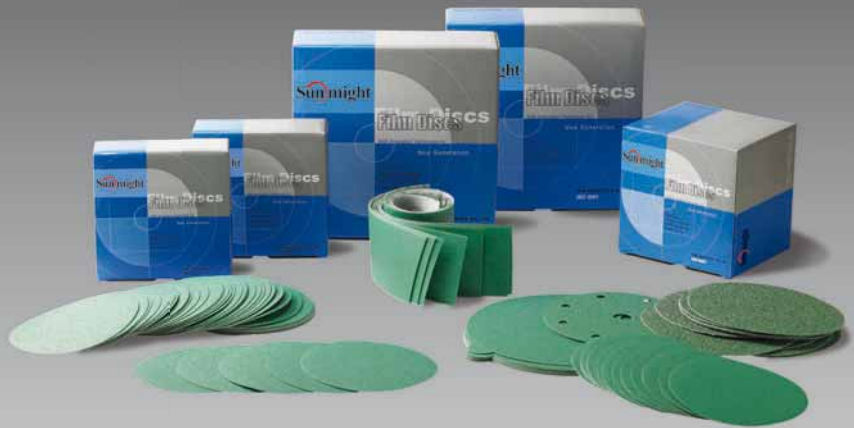
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PROFIT MOTIVE: YOUR COMPASS TO FINANCIAL SUCCESS

Give customers a quick response

QR codes can offer an immediate connection to business information

BY TOM MCGEE | CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Just about everywhere you go today, you can probably find one of those funny-looking squares in an advertisement, on a vehicle wrap, on a product, on a business card or on social media business pages.

QR (short for “quick response”) codes are a type of barcode that can be scanned and read by smart phones. Once read by your phone, they will redirect you to a website, play a YouTube video, send a text message or provide directions via Google maps, among other tasks, depending on what the QR creator set up.

With the number of people that have smart phones today, a QR code can be a valuable tool in your collision repair business. If a QR code reader isn't pre-installed on your smart phone, there are many QR code reader apps that are available for free or for a minimum cost. I use an iPhone, and I've installed a QR app reader on it.

If you see a QR code, just take out your smart phone and use any free app for scanning the QR codes like you would use your camera phone; it's just like snapping a picture.

I also purchased a QR code generator app that allows me to make my own QR codes. The app was about \$10 and can generate QR codes in a variety of colors. The codes can:

- Imbed a company logo
- Make a phone call
- Send a text message

- Generate a map
- Provide contact information
- Create a calendar event
- Provide Wi-Fi network connection information
 - Generate a code that includes plain text
 - And perform other customized functions

You can also find plenty of websites that will allow you to create QR codes for free. You just need to provide the URL you want to send people to, the message you want to share, or whatever other information you'd like to put into the QR code.

Although I've seen QR codes used in email marketing, on websites and on Facebook business pages, QR codes are most useful in the physical world. This is because a QR code placed in a direct mail piece, on a pizza box or on a street sign allows the viewer to quickly connect to all types of information simply by scanning the QR code.

Here are a few examples of how a collision repair business can use QR codes:

- Short welcome video from the owner
- Map to your business
- Link to your appointment scheduler

- What to do following a collision
- Early-bird vehicle drop-off information
 - Links to follow you on social media sites
 - Promote a contest or community event
 - Describe your warranty information

There are also many ways that you can use a QR code in the shop for easy-to-access information such as vendor information, equipment maintenance information and training videos.

You can visit <http://www.atonline-training.com/abrn1309/> to see some examples of different uses and styles of QR codes. QR codes will continue to gain in popularity with the increased use of smart phones. They are easy and inexpensive to create, and easy for consumers to use. Consider using QR codes as another way to engage and communicate with both your future and current customers, drive traffic to your website and build your business. You are only limited by your imagination on how you want to take advantage of QR codes.

Tom McGee is Director of ATI Collision for the Automotive Training Institute, founded in 1974. ATI's 108 associates train and coach more than 1,150 shop owners across North America to drive profits and dreams home to their families. You can contact Tom at tmcgee@auto-training.net and visit ATI's website at www.autotraining.net. Check out "Profit Matters" for mechanical repair management tips in Motor Age by ATI's CEO Chris "Chubby" Frederick. ☞

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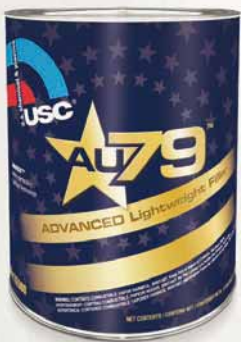
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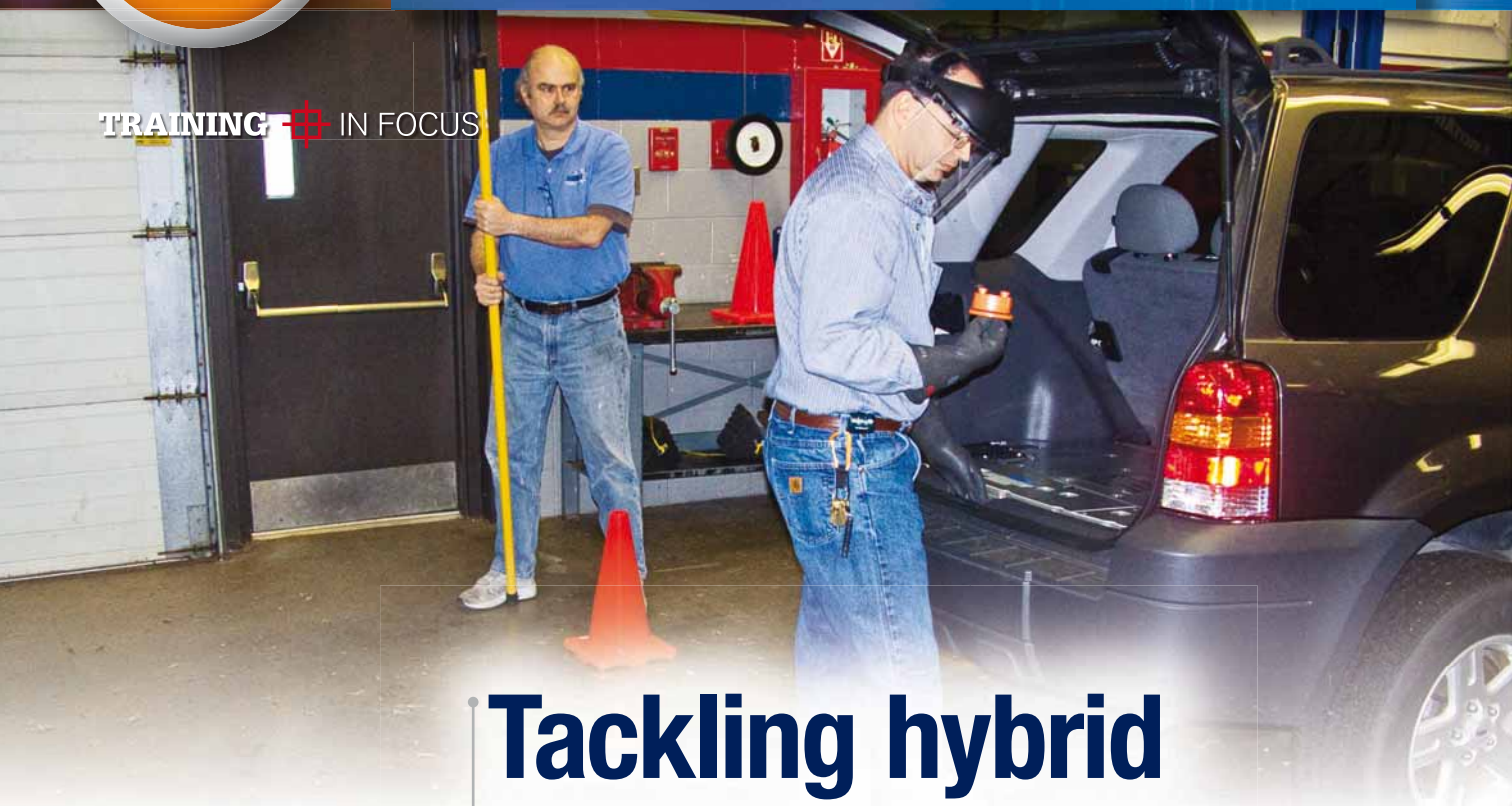
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EV, HEV REPAIR CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS IF PROPER PRECAUTIONS ARE NOT TAKEN.
IS YOUR SHOP PREPARED?

BY **ALFRED THOMAS** | CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Though hybrid vehicles have been around for more than a decade, each year new variations are introduced. In some hybrid electric vehicles, a small gas engine produces the electricity, which drives the vehicle. In others, an electric motor assists the gas engine, which propels the vehicle. There are plug-in hybrids; they can be plugged in at home or at public charging stations (though there are not very many of these yet) to charge the high voltage battery, thus giving the vehicle a longer range and much better gas mileage. (Some claim over 100 miles per gallon.) There are pickups and trucks with electric-assisted transmissions, and also full electric vehicles (without any gas engines to charge

the batteries), and even high performing, high speed full electric sports cars.

In short, there is a staggering array of electric vehicles (EV) and hybrid electric vehicles (HEV) that collision repair technicians will encounter. The good news is the skills needed to repair the bodies and frames of such vehicles are not much different than those needed to repair any other vehicles, though new types of equipment must be checked. The bad news is EV and HEV repairs can be dangerous, even life-threatening if proper precautions are not taken. High voltage batteries (300 volt or more, depending on the vehicle) can kill a technician who has not disarmed the high voltage

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system properly. Regenerative breaking systems, even with the battery disconnected, can produce enough electricity to injure a tech, just by his or her pushing the disabled vehicle around the shop. Heat from the booth can damage or reduce the life expectancy of a high voltage battery if the manufacturer recommendations are not followed. Even the equipment that keeps us safe as we disarm a high voltage (HV) battery must be tested and handled properly, or it may fail.

High voltage PPE

As technicians, we are familiar with personal protective equipment (PPE), such as glasses, gloves and respirators; but with HEVs and EVs, the PPE gloves take on a new dimension of importance. First needed, and possibly most important, is a set of rubber-insulated lineman's gloves. The gloves should be rated at 1000V AC (class 0) (**FIG 1**) and tested before each use. Some simple but vital cautions should be observed when using lineman's gloves. Because they are rubber and will be used around metal, they could become damaged. Even a pinhole could allow high voltage in. Before they are used, they should be checked for leaks by rolling them up from the cuff and inflating them (**FIG 2**). Also, if they get wet or your hands are damp when using them, they may not provide the proper protection. I have even seen a recommendation that a second pair of work gloves be worn over the lineman's gloves to protect them from damage while in use (**FIG 3**). In Figure 4, orange high voltage gloves are being worn for electrical protection, with leather gloves over them to protect the electric gloves from damage as a high voltage fuse is being removed.

Other PPE needed for HV vehicles are standby safety persons armed with a tool, which looks like a giant shepherd's hook (**FIG 5**) that can be used to pull a tech away from high voltage danger, in case of emergencies. High voltage wires have been marked with a bright orange outer sheath (**FIG 6**) to let anyone working on a vehicle know they carry high voltage current. Caution should be strictly observed if the



vehicle's high voltage system is not disconnected.

High voltage PPE

Generally, the vehicle is always assumed to be live unless you have disconnected it yourself. The vehicle should have the key removed; many

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technicians place it on the dashboard so that it can be easily seen through the windshield (FIG 7). Before removing the key, one should check the high voltage malfunction indicator lamp (MIL), which is usually separate from the engine MIL. This may indicate a malfunction in the high voltage system that will need to be investigated. The parking brake should be set and all the trim removed to access the high voltage disconnect switch. The high



voltage switch and cables are marked with bright orange color for ease of identification. This Ford Escape switch is round and found in the back hatch (FIG 8). With personal safety equipment on, the technician can rotate the switch to the left to the unlocked position and then lift it to remove (FIG 9). Then it can be put back in the service shipping position to keep debris out during repairs, and the vehicle will have no voltage coming from the HV



battery. Switches on other vehicles, such as the Toyota (FIG 10) are also easy to find and disable. On this one, the lever is pulled down and then pulled straight out.

Even after the switch is off and high voltage is blocked by system condensers, technicians should maintain a waiting period followed by checking with a high voltage meter to confirm that the system is safe before any additional work is performed. If the vehicle has been damaged and the switch in the back is unreachable, most vehicles can be disabled by removing a fuse, (FIG 11) relay or service plug. This alternative method can be found in a vehicle's service manual.

If the HV MIL was on before the system was disconnected, the HV wires should be checked for breaks, cracks and potential shorts. The wires are all bright orange and on the underside of the vehicle, with a plastic protective cover over the orange wire protector.





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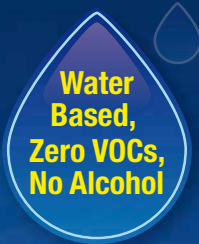
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If the high voltage wire is in need of repair, the manufacturer's recommendations should be followed. Most recommend not using vinyl electrical tape for permanent repairs. The specific vehicle's service manual should always be consulted.

Heat effect on HV batteries

The next precaution is one that many may want to disregard. However, it not only is physically dangerous, but if the precaution is not followed, it may severely impact the HV battery life expectancy.

High voltage batteries, especially Nickel-Metal Hydride (NiMH), are sensitive to heat. In fact, in some vehicles, a separate air conditioner system is installed to cool the battery during normal operating conditions (**FIG 12**). Because of this sensitivity, manufacturers recommend that the HV battery be removed before the vehicle is placed in the paint booth. Most HV batteries are heavy and difficult to remove, often needing special lifting tools and always with very specific directions so that the expensive (\$4,000 and more) battery is not damaged.

Keep in mind that although the battery is disconnected from the vehicle, high voltage remains stored in it, and caution must be followed. Intuitively, a vehicle that is painted but not baked should not overheat the battery if heat is the only condition at work. A call to the manufacturer's tech line for confirmation is a prudent alternative. Most of the recommendations have been changed to not have the temperature exceed 140 degrees F for more than 40 minutes. An alternative is to let the vehicle cure without baking. Of course, the vehicle manufacturer's recommen-

dations should be read, understood and followed.

Regenerative braking systems

A regenerative braking system is a way of slowing a vehicle and converting the kinetic energy into another form of energy, which could be immediately used or stored into energy to be used later. In other words, instead of slowing a vehicle by applying friction to the wheels as in a normal hydraulic braking system, the vehicle is slowed by using the forward movement to turn generators on the wheels to produce electric power that is stored in the HV battery. Though this is a great advantage in energy savings, it can pose a problem for a disabled vehicle. An EV or HEV vehicle that is pushed in a shop will generate electricity and pose a potential danger to persons around it, even if the battery is disconnected. Therefore, if a vehicle must be moved, the wheels should be placed on a dolly so it can be moved without turning the wheels.


Acid vs. alkaline batteries

Though we have become very accustomed to lead acid batteries and how to neutralize them with bicarbonate soda (common baking soda); the batteries in some hybrids, such as Nickel-Metal Hydride (NiMH), are alkaline, and pose as much of a health hazard as lead acid. Therefore, an alkali- and acid-resistant face shield needs to be worn in addition to your safety glass-

es. Some recommendations state that if any fluid leaks that is suspected to be battery electrolyte, synthetic rubber coveralls or an apron and boots should be worn, along with the lineman's gloves and face shield. The fluid could be acid (from the 12V battery) or alkaline (from the HV battery), and unidentifiable until it is tested. Each requires different neutralizing and cleanup. If a battery leak is suspected, a respirator should be worn and a fan used to remove the potentially explosive gasses. The vehicle's high voltage system should be disconnected before cleanup or any other work is performed.

Once it is confirmed that the vehicle has been disabled, the battery leak can be tested, neutralized and cleaned up. First, while wearing protective equipment, the technician needs to test the fluid with litmus paper by dipping the paper into the leaking fluid. If the fluid is acid, the paper will turn red and when compared to the chart will give a number from 6 to 0. If the paper turns blue and results in a match from 8-14, it is base, or alkali. An acid spill, such as with the 12V battery, is neutralized with baking soda or ammonia. If the spill is alkali, it is neutralized with boric acid or vinegar. Once the spill has been neutralized, the remaining liquid can be cleaned up and disposed of according to local, state and national restrictions.

Though these many procedures and precautions might sound complex and cumbersome, it truly is no more difficult to protect yourself from the risks of a hybrid vehicle than it is to protect you from isocyanides in paint. With a little investigation, training, some added safety equipment and a few new tools, soon we will be repairing hybrid vehicles like they were old school.

However, keep in mind that the repair procedure becomes truly dangerous as we become accustomed to the dangers and possibly lax with our safety precautions. So, as I have been telling my fellow workers for the past 40 years, "Let's go to work and be safe out there. I want to come to your 100th birthday party!" 



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TRAINING  IN FOCUS

Often overlooked is physical damage to the condenser. A good visual inspection offers clues to hard use.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS ON FINDING REALLY DIFFICULT AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM LEAKS.

BY VANESSA ATTWELL | CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

One of the smartest techs I know always checks customers' air conditioning systems during the winter months, long before the first hot day arrives. By quickly checking a system to make sure it operates, he figures he'll find any problems in a system long before the customer does, which keeps customers happy and keeps any possible repairs in his service bay.

It's a great idea, but the thing about checking an A/C system months before anyone will use it is that he has to be absolutely sure he's found any refrigerant leaks on the vehicle. Otherwise, the refrigerant he puts into the system will gradually leak out over the cold months, and he would then have to fix the vehicle again when he would likely be busy doing other things. So he has to be absolutely sure he's found even the smallest leak and that he's fixed the problem properly. That can be tough, because some refrigerant leaks are really difficult to find.

No doubt, locating really tough refrigerant leaks can be a nightmare, and unfortunately fixing-by-guessing just isn't an option, because (among other reasons) refrigerants are

so strictly regulated. But it really is possible to find even the smallest, slowest leaks if you use a systematic approach of forming suspicions and then proving or disproving them and some real-world testing techniques. If you're sure an A/C problem indeed is due to a low refrigerant level because of a leak (and not because of an electrical problem, belt problem or some other problem) and you can't find that leak using the typical testing methods in your diagnostic arsenal, here are a few ways you might not have thought of to find even the toughest leaks, keep your customers happy, your wallet full and keep vehicles from coming back with their air conditioning systems empty after you've repaired them.

Always start with fundamentals

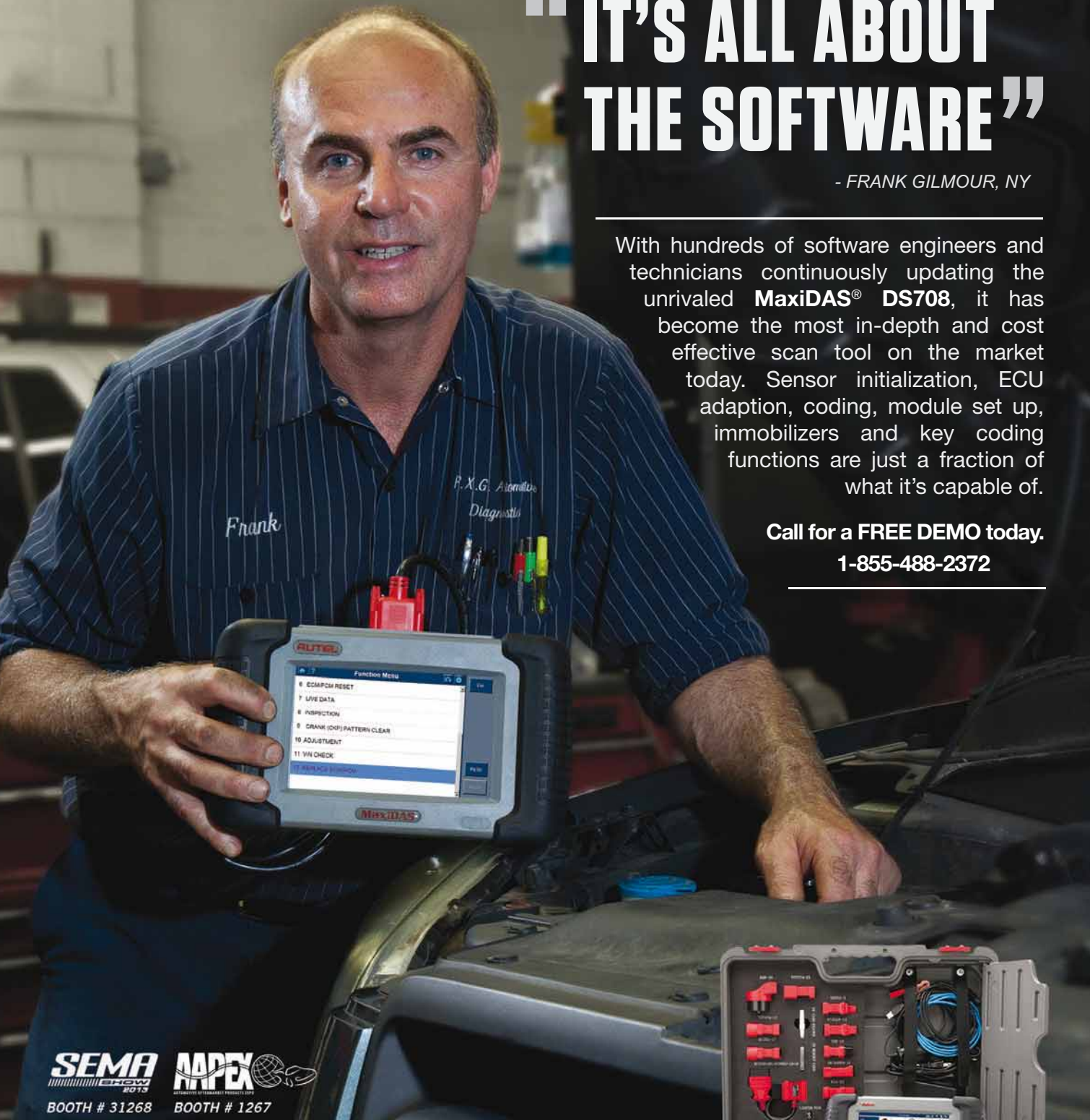
As with pretty much every other diagnostic strategy, visually inspecting the system for anything obvious at the beginning of a diagnosis can save quite a bit of time. In this case, you're looking for signs of trouble such as stone chips on the front paint, recent body work, new components near air conditioning parts, oil stains or even signs of corrosion

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(Left) It's not unusual to have a slight leak at a charge port. That's why it has a seal with an O-ring cap. (Right) Fin damage and debris lodged in between the fins can reduce the condenser's ability to release heat.

on or under components. Check the front of the vehicle particularly carefully – a rock through the condenser

is common. If the front has a lot of stone chips or dead bugs, then it's quite possible that something hit the con-

denser, causing a leak that let the refrigerant out.

Also check for components that might have rubbed or vibrated against something else and caused a leak, or signs that something has punctured or contacted one of the delicate A/C pipes or components. Note, though, that this isn't the stage where you identify the cause of leak and order replacement parts. This is the stage where you try to develop a suspicion about the cause of the problem – you'll prove or disprove those suspicions in the next few steps.

Next (unless you found an obvious leak during the preliminary step that needs to be repaired before further testing), completely fill the A/C system, allowing for lines and rear components, if applicable. Check the service information to find out how much refrigerant is supposed to go in the system if you're not sure or have any doubts (and don't forget the compressor oil if required – you don't want to cause more problems during the diagnosis). When the system is full, let the refrigerant circulate through the system for at least a few minutes before you start looking for the leak (this gives you the best chance of finding the leak).

If you identified anything suspicious during the preliminary inspection, this next step is when you confirm or disprove those suspicions by testing the suspicious area and finding out for sure.

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Start by making sure the leak detection tool is working correctly. Assuming you're using the "sniffer" tool, follow the manufacturer's recommendations on calibrating the tool, make sure its batteries are OK, and check to make sure its tip is not contaminated (or covered in dirt) – and that it's set to detect the correct refrigerant.

Then, using the sniffer, check for leaks systematically, inspecting one component at a time, moving along the system and paying particularly close attention to the bottom of components, connections or fittings because refrigerant is heavier than air and will tend to sink. The reason for checking the components systematically, in order, is so that you don't accidentally overlook anything and you can be absolutely sure you've tested everything involved in the system. If you're checking the system while it's operating, make sure that the condenser fan isn't blowing away the evidence of a leak.

There are two things to be mindful of at this stage if you're looking for a tough-to-find leak in addition to confirming or disproving your suspicions. First, just as with electrical systems, connections can be weak spots in A/C systems, so checking areas such as O-rings, hoses that flex, welds, clamps and connections very carefully really can pay off. The other thing is that the components you can't easily see, such as those under the dash, rear A/C components, valve cores, under clamps and the like can be challenging to test. But if you're trying to find an elusive refrigerant leak, you need to expose and check those hidden components

carefully. Odds are good that if you can't find the leak after carefully checking the exposed components, then it's probably in something that's hidden from view. Additionally, even if you've found a leak in the previous step you still need to make sure that it's the only leak in the system.

An alternative to sniffing

If, after testing all the components in the fully charged system with a functioning sniffer tool, you still can't find the leak – or if you don't use a sniffer tool – a good way to find an elusive leak is to use A/C tracer dye. Be sure to use the correct amount of dye for the system you are testing and stay away from using oil with a dye added. That might be OK when you are doing a component replacement, but not as the means to getting dye in the system. Be sure to run the A/C and allow enough time for the dye to circulate through the system and leak out. Then inspect the system carefully for leaks.

If you still can't find the leak – or if you can't use dye or a sniffer – charge the system to its maximum capacity, taking into account what the A/C systems lines hold, and then (borrowing a method commonly used to check for tire punctures) spray all connections with soapy water and look for tell-tale bubbles or sputters that indicate leaks while the system operates and also when it's shut off. It might take a while for the leak to show up using this method, so you might want to park the vehicle somewhere and move on to another task for a while, then come back to it. The reason for doing the soapy



(Left) Always make sure you are charging the proper amount of refrigerant into the system. Often, TSBs are issued that alter the original charge specifications. (Right) An evaporator core leak is one of the hardest leaks to nail down. Use the drain tube or remove the blower motor resistor to gain better access to the interior of the case.

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water test after doing the sniffer and dye tests is because the soapy water will wash away any dye or oil stains that could have helped you out with those other two tests.

Repair made?

After you do finally locate and repair the leak, you're not done. There are two important steps to make sure that the vehicle is fixed properly and doesn't return in a few weeks with the A/C inoperative again. The first step in verifying your repair occurs during the recharge of the system. Pull the system into a full vacuum and let it sit for at least five minutes. If vacuum is lost, odds are there still is a leak somewhere.

The second step in verifying the repair was successful is to go back over the leak area you found originally and retest it. In most cases, there is still enough dye in the system to indicate any problems if you didn't get it corrected or you can use the sniffer to recheck. Be sure to check over the entire system. Sometimes you can fix one leak, only to have another appear that you didn't, or couldn't, detect the first time around.

The other thing seems obvious, but it's well worth mentioning to make sure that there's enough compressor oil – and the correct oil for the system – in the A/C system after the repair. One parts representative told me very recently that close to 100 percent of compressors that fail after an A/C repair do so because there wasn't enough oil in the system, and the resulting debris is almost impossible to remove from the tiny orifices inside the air conditioning system. Be sure to follow the OEM service guidelines on adding oil after a repair or component replacement.

No doubt, finding elusive leaks can be a real diagnostic challenge. Sometimes conventional testing methods don't work, and guessing and hoping are just not acceptable repair methods. But with a systematic plan of attack, some diagnostic tricks and sometimes a whole lot of patience, you can find any leak and confidently repair A/C systems at any time of year, keeping your customers happy – and keeping you busy making money, rather than fixing previous mistakes. 

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Windshield warnings

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Windshields don't just provide a clear, open view of the road. They are a key part of a vehicle's occupant protection systems.

IMAGE / GMI

BY **TOBY CHESS** | CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Just the other day, I heard about a multi-million dollar lawsuit involving a Toyota dealer who contracted out a glass repair on a 2005 Toyota Tundra. The vehicle later was involved in a rollover accident in which the windshield allegedly “separated from the pickup.” Two people died.

The glass repairer contends they handled the claim and contracted the work to an independent glass repairer to perform the actual installation, and therefore are not at fault.

So who is? Could your shop be held liable?

For some clarification, I'll direct you to Barrett Smith, president of Auto Damage Experts. He wrote: “Just because you engage another's service doesn't exempt you and your company from liabilities that may arise from a tragic loss such as this. Even recommending another service could land you in enough trouble to cost you tens of thousands in dol-

lars proving you have no liability,” Smith said. “This is why it is so very important to be very careful and selective when choosing a sublet glass replacement company and other outside vendors to provide services for your business.”

While I'm not going to comment on the merits of the case, I do want to point out that it's a reminder of the importance of correctly installing windshields and glass. Let's take a look at the critical protection windshields provide, along with glass and repair information you'll need to protect your customers and business.



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In a rollover, the windshield provides as much as 60 percent of the structural support for the vehicle roof.



Replacement windshields with rain sensors aren't yet available from manufacturers. You'll need to recover the sensor for the old windshield and re-mount it.

IMAGE / SUBARU

Engineered protection

Pop Quiz: What is the function of a windshield?

- A. It's part of the vehicle structure.
- B. It's part of the frontal air bag system.
- C. It helps restrain passengers in the vehicle during an accident.

D. It keeps the bugs off your face.
The correct answer is E – all of the above.

One reason rollovers are particularly dangerous is the potential for the roof to collapse, causing crushing damage to occupants that can result in brain and head trauma, paraplegia and death. Today's vehicles are engineered so that windshields provide much of the stiffness necessary to keep the roof from collapsing. In some cases, the windshield can account for up to 60 percent of the cabin's structural integrity during a rollover.

Windshields also play a key role in front passenger protection during a collision. In some vehicles, the passenger's side frontal air bag is deflected off of the windshield and the front passenger seat.

These two examples alone, I hope, are enough to remind all of us that properly installing a windshield involves far more than a call to a local vendor.

Glass facts

Your involvement with glass repairs starts with knowing as much as possible about windshields and other glass parts. In fact, you should know as much about this part as you already do about any other part you repair.

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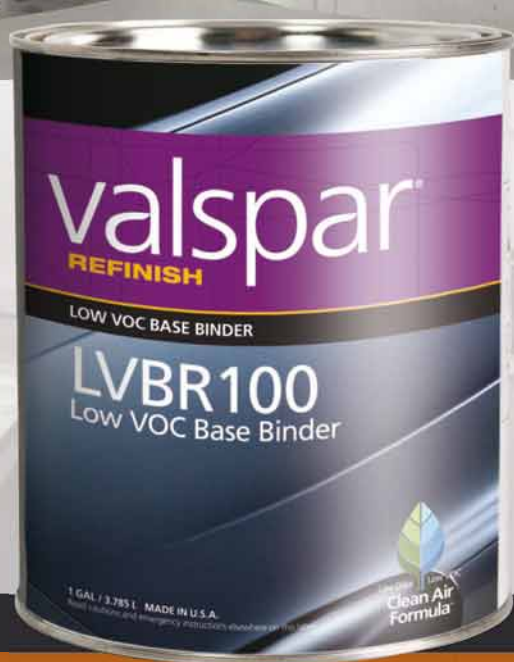
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Automotive glass comes in two types: laminated and tempered. Laminated glass is constructed of two or more layers of glass with interlayers of another material — polyvinyl butyral (PVB) — bonded between them. This construction keeps the glass from shattering.

Tempered glass is created using thermal or chemical treatments that increase its strength over standard glass. Tempering creates balanced internal stresses that cause the glass, when broken, to crumble into small granular chunks instead of splintering into jagged shards.

You can tell which type of glass you're dealing with using the notations printed on it. All windshields are marked with two letters: AS (American Standard). The AS is followed by a number that indicates the position in the vehicle where the glass, based on its optical clarity, can be used.

AS1 is the clearest glass, providing at least 70 percent light transmission. It's laminated and can be used anywhere in a motor vehicle, though it's typically found only in windshields.

AS2 also provides at least 70 percent light transmission. Unlike AS1, it's tempered and can be used anywhere except the windshield.

AS3 provides less than 70 percent light transmission. It can either be laminated or tempered and is used throughout a vehicle. AS3 also is known as Privacy Glass.

Proper bonds

One of the keys — probably the key — to a safe windshield installation is the proper manufacturer-recommended use of the urethanes that bond the windshield to the rest of the vehicle.

To give you an idea of just how important this bond is for vehicle safety, let me direct you to the black band that runs around the edge of a windshield. This band is known as a frit. Its job is to block UV rays from reaching the urethane bond because urethanes, when left exposed to sunlight for prolonged periods of time, turn yellow, chalky and weaken. Vehicle manufacturers take steps like this to help ensure the bond stays as strong as possible, for as long as possible.

Manufacturers also have been turning to a new, more sophisticated generation of urethanes whose bonding strength allows them to contribute to efforts to reduce vehicle weight. Manufacturers today are using special, high-modulus polyurethane (PUR) adhesives to bond the windshield. Because these urethanes are more rigid when cured, they actually allow the manufacturer to minimize the thickness of some of the steel in the vehicle.

Notable here is the fact that not all high-modulus polyurethanes, or other urethanes, are the same. In fact, it's critical that you remember that each urethane uses a unique set of primers integral to the bonding process. Each urethane also has its own cure time, which establishes when the vehicle is safe to drive. If the urethane is not cured, the safety of the vehicle will not have been restored.

Other factors also affect the urethane bond. For example, a pinch weld that has been repaired or replaced needs an epoxy primer or a similar product applied to the bare metal surface. Some vehicle manufacturers allow refinishing of the surface, while others only want the epoxy primer applied. All OEMs state that there should be no body filler applied to the pinch weld where urethane is used, due to the fact urethane will not adhere to the substrate. As with repairing/replacing any other part, working with glass means turning to OEM repair instructions.

Other repair considerations

The addition of electronic systems to the windshield has created new repair requirements. Working on these systems often involves turning to non-conductive urethane, which do not interfere with sophisticated electronics.

Many windshields and backlites today feature embedded antennas and defroster grids. If the adhesive contacts the antenna or defroster lines when the part is installed, a non-conductive adhesive should be used. Non-conductive adhesives prevent interference with antenna systems and heated defroster systems that are contained in the glass.

Many new glass parts have the antenna, defroster connections or buss bars around the edge of the glass in the same area that the adhesive is applied when installing glass. Using a conductive adhesive will affect the performance of the electrical system. Again, this means turning to a non-conductive product.



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If you contract out your glass work, make sure your vendors are properly trained and use the latest products and equipment. You could be liable for any problems that occur because of their failure to perform a proper repair.

IMAGE / GUARDIAN AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS

Vehicles featuring rain sensor modules in the windshield also require spe-

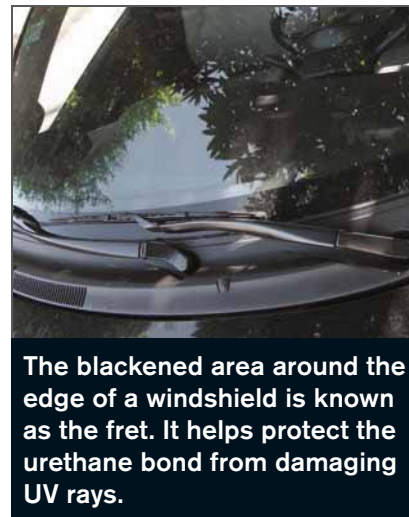
cial repair considerations. Currently, rain sensor modules are not featured on replacement windshields. The electronic sensor on the existing windshield must be removed and re-mounted onto the replacement windshield.

Remounting these modules requires special re-attachment kits, available through local dealers. The Cadillac kit consists of tape, cleaners and primers for replacing the Cadillac module. The Mercedes/BMW kit contains the tape and a new lens. Instructions for application are included in all the kits.

You'll also have to take special steps when working with encapsulated glass, which has the molding permanently attached to the glass. Most of the time when the glass is removed, the molding is damaged, making new glass and molding necessary.

Eye opening, life saving

In terms of complexity, windshield and glass repairs have moved light



The blackened area around the edge of a windshield is known as the fret. It helps protect the urethane bond from damaging UV rays.

IMAGE / TIM SPANICK

years from where they once were. Keep informed. Make sure your vendors perform top-of-the-line repairs and receive the best possible training. Help protect your customers, business and industry. ☺

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THE LAST DETAIL [✓]

Some people won't like my saying this, but I'm not as worried as others are about some of the things happening in the industry. I'm not saying that parts acquisition systems aren't a legitimate concern. I'm not saying you shouldn't worry about the privacy of your customer and shop data. If those are the things you decide to focus your attention on, that's fine.

While I understand people's concerns about such things, these issues aren't what keeps me awake at night. What keeps me awake is this: Are shops fixing cars properly? And unfortunately – and this is what some people won't like hearing – I'm not convinced the majority of shops in our industry are fixing cars properly.

For example, at some of the seminars I conduct, I'll ask: "How many of you have done a zero-point calibration on a Toyota after completing collision repairs?" Hardly anyone raises their hand. They don't even know what I'm talking about. Yet, it's a required step on many vehicles with electronic stability control.

Or I'll ask, "How many of you know you shouldn't weld within 12 inches of any electronic component?" Most hands will go up for that. Yet, when I'm out in shops, I frequently see welding taking place less than 12 inches from airbags or other electrical components.

This is the stuff that concerns me.

Part of what goes along with this problem is a common myth I hear: If there are no warning lights on the dash, it's all good. But there are many things that need to be addressed following an accident that may not, if left undone, trigger a dash light. But they will show up in a scan of the vehicle and may affect the vehicle's performance down the road.

Take that zero-point recalibration of the steering angle sensor that is part of the electronic stability control system, for example. Skipping this step won't result in a "trouble light" on the dash. The vehicle may even handle properly under normal driving conditions, even if the system is not calibrated. But the electronic stability control function may not work properly when it's needed most — in a subsequent "emergency maneuver."

Other disabled systems don't always trigger a dash light. And some warning lights can be cleared with a certain number of cycles of the key — even if the system is not repaired. Still other dash lights will only illuminate after the vehicle has been driven a specific distance after the fault code has been triggered.

“What often concerns me is a common myth I hear: If there are no warning lights on the dash, it's all good.”

FIGHTING THE DASH LIGHT MYTH

Is your shop catching the post-crash problems that don't trigger an idiot light?

I've previously written about the necessity of your shop having access to (and using) automaker repair information. But the "dash light myth" points to the importance of also being able to scan vehicles to check for fault codes and other information vital to restoring the vehicle to pre-accident condition.

Automaker scan tools are not inexpensive, particularly for a shop working on a variety of vehicle makes. But just like the OEM repair information, they are becoming a crucial tool for repairing vehicles properly.

Aftermarket scan tools are an alternative, though they don't always access all of the modules of each vehicle.

I've also seen some demonstrations of a relatively new tool and service (called ASTech from Automotive Electronic Solutions) that may offer another alternative for shops diagnosing vehicles during blueprinting or doing quality control post-repair. The tool connects to the vehicle's diagnostic port and to the Internet. Codes from the vehicle can then be read (and even reset) remotely through the Internet by the company's team of trained technicians who are using the automaker's scanner and software.

I saw one demonstration during which the remote tech found a seatbelt sensor that was bad; it hadn't triggered a dash light, yet could have affected the firing of the airbag in a subsequent collision.

So I'm not saying you're wrong if there are other industry issues you're concerned about. But I think it's even more important to make sure you have the tools and information you need to ensure you're fixing vehicles fully and correctly. And if part of your system for doing so is relying solely on the warning lights on the dashboard, that may be why those sometimes go by the nickname "idiot lights." 📱

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