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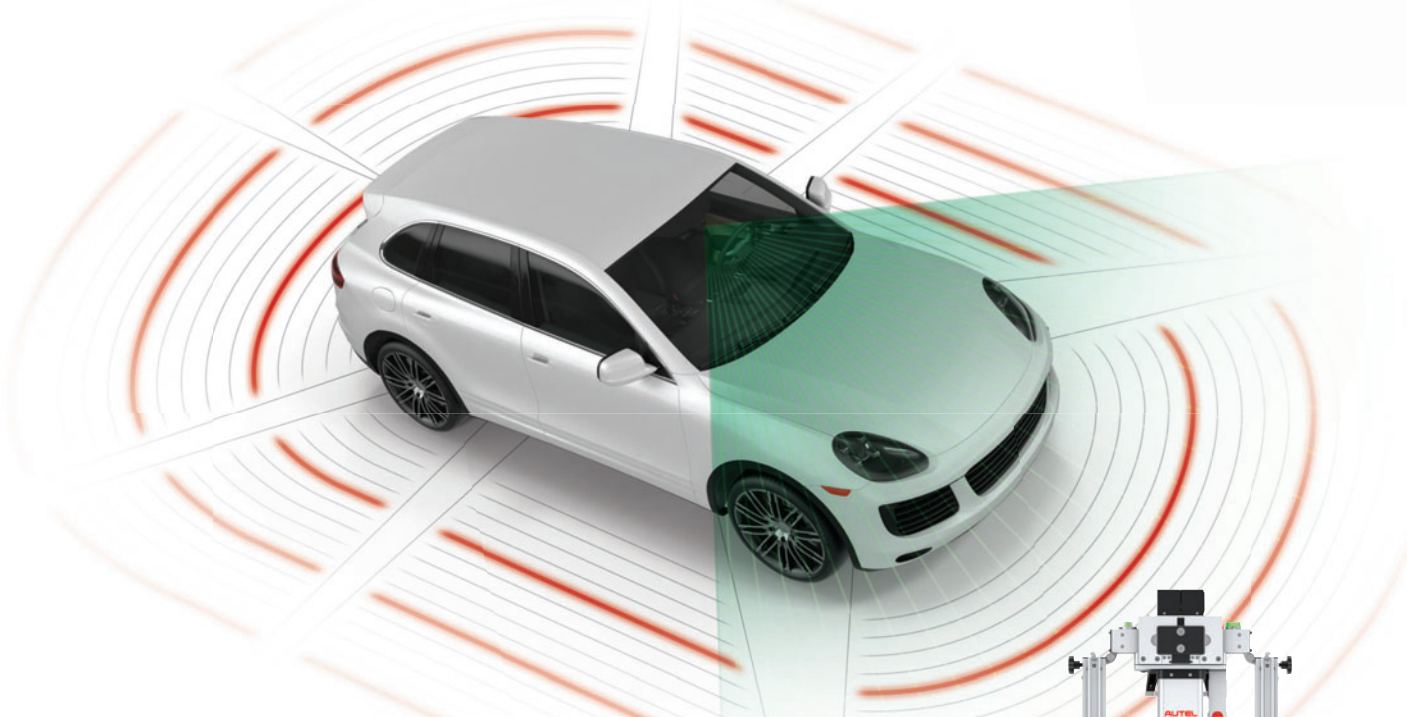
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CORRECTION

PartsTrader and OEConnection's CollisionLink, a parts procurement system, have had an integration since 2016 that enables quote requests and orders from PartsTrader to be processed in CollisionLink. This was incorrectly reported in a previous article, "Procurement possibilities" (October 2019). We apologize for the error.

WEB EXCLUSIVES // ABRN.COM

BUILD AN APPRENTICE PROGRAM

Keith Manich with ATI can help you get a head start on a new 2020 approach with Building a Meaningful and Productive Apprenticeship Program. Manich will identify the steps to create an apprenticeship program that when followed will provide excellent employees.

ABRN.COM/APPRENTICEATI

HOW TO FIND AND DEVELOP YOUR OWN PAINT TECHNICIANS

Hard to find painters? This informative article provides tips, resources and details on how to find, recruit and cultivate your own skilled paint technicians. Learn how to get involved with refinish programs at local tech schools, support organizations that develop young painters, and help young people see painting as a rewarding career. Ease your current automotive refinish tech shortage and find your next painter.

ABRN.COM/FINDPAINTERS



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NEW PRODUCT

INDUSTRIAL FINISHES INTRODUCES PHOENIX CURING SYSTEM

JAY SICHT // Contributing Editor



There are a number of methods that can gain greater paint department throughput. A shop may add a booth, or it may use speed clears, accelerators and other refinishing products, some of which may not be recommended or come with durability or appearance drawbacks. And curing systems speed up the time required to get a vehicle or parts out of the booth and ready to assemble.

Portland, Ore.-based Industrial Finishes & Systems Inc., with distribution centers around the U.S., recently introduced the modular U.S. Autocure Phoenix medium-wave gas catalytic curing system, which works with existing paint booths and is designed to provide a rapid cure on even multi-angle surfaces. As the exclusive distributor of the new system, Industrial Finishes partnered in its development and marketing.

Development of the new system was

started by two body shop owners. Byron Davis, owner of Autobody Specialties in Springfield, Ore., and Tim Beal, owner of Beal's Autobody and Paint, in Prescott, Ariz., were experienced with other infrared curing systems. But frustrated with some of those systems' limitations, they saw an opportunity to improve upon them with their own design, said Mike Duncan, director of marketing for Industrial Finishes & Systems.

Beal and Davis enlisted the aid of aerospace engineer Mickey Meyer to develop the system to the point of having working units.

"They were looking for a partner to help them take the project to the next

>> CURE CONTINUES ON PAGE 8

BREAKING NEWS

VIRTUAL REALITY

VR WELDING COULD SPEED TRAINING, ATTRACT NEW HIRES

JAY SICHT // Contributing Editor

The collision repair industry continues to face a shortage of trained technicians. Virtual reality has not been widely embraced by collision repair training programs, but it could potentially attract more people to the industry and more quickly get them welding proficiently. Lincoln Electric introduced its VRTEX (pronounced "vertex") welding simulator more than 10 years ago, and the latest models, the 360+ Dual and the Transport+ Dual, expand the accessibility of that technology.

"The Dual reduces the cost per user and allows more users to train at the same time using independent processes," said Denise Sirochman, product manager at Lincoln.

Virtual reality (VR) training does not replace traditional welding training. But proponents of the technology say that blended training — combining VR with actual hands-on welding — allows for more

>> WELD CONTINUES ON PAGE 9

TRENDING

CLASS ACTION SUIT IN NEW JERSEY MOVES FORWARD

A motion to dismiss a suit filed against New Jersey Manufacturers Insurance has been rejected. Plaintiffs allege violations of the RICO Act and Consumer Fraud Act, among others.

ABRN.COM/NJM

REGISTRATION OPENS FOR HD REPAIR FORUM

Registration for the HD Repair Forum, set for March 24-25 in Fort Worth, Texas, is now open. The program will feature presentations from OEMs, insurers and other industry leaders.

ABRN.COM/HDFORUM2020

CIC RELEASES SEEBACHAN'S VIDEO

The Collision Industry Conference released an interview of Marcia and Matthew Seebachan, owners of the Honda Fit involved in the Seebachan v. John Eagle Collision Center case.

ABRN.COM/SEEBACHAN

PRE-REGISTRATION OPEN FOR NORTHEAST 2020

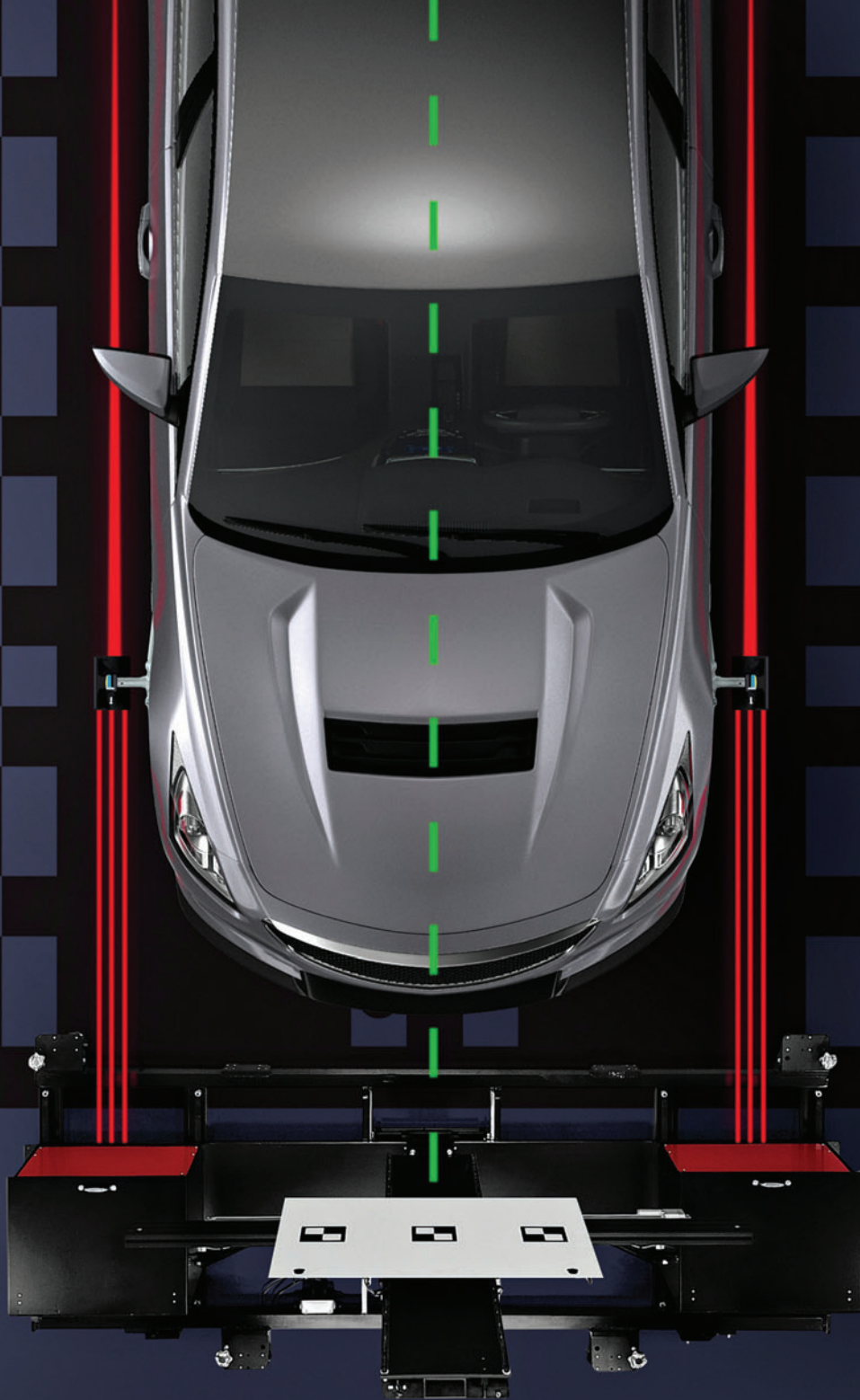
The Alliance of Automotive Service Providers of New Jersey announced that pre-registration is now underway for NORTHEAST 2020 Automotive Services Show, set for March 20-22 in Secaucus, New Jersey.

ABRN.COM/NORTHEAST20

TECHFORCE ANNOUNCES TECHS ROCK WINNER

TechForce Foundation announced Melina Algier, a tech at Farnsworth Chevrolet in Canandaigua, New York, has been named the 2019 People's Choice Grand Prize Winner of the Techs Rock Awards.

ABRN.COM/ALGIER



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>> CURE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

level, provide distribution and be able to assist them with getting production up and running. We saw that as an opportunity to get involved in new technology that we think is going to be good for our customers,” Duncan said.

New design overcomes line-of-sight restrictions

Gas-catalytic curing systems burn either natural gas or propane for infrared curing, but there’s no open flame. The problem with previous competitive gas-catalytic curing systems is they are often arch designs that pass curing energy over the component from a fixed, nonadjustable distance. It’s a problem the Phoenix overcomes by using infrared emitters with 11 points of articulation.

“I don’t think there’s any piece of a car that’s flat anymore,” Duncan said. “Think about the difference in distance on a truck between the hood, the roof and bed. And if one is 36 inches from the energy source, the other is 48 inches away and the other is 60 inches away, those won’t all cure evenly. By allowing the emitters to articulate and cup around the components, we greatly reduce or eliminate that as a concern.”

This design also means a speedier cure, as the dwell time, or amount of time the energy is focused on a particular portion of the component, can be decreased for the far-away panel.

Curing is more rapid and thorough

In addition to shorter curing times, the technology allows for a more thorough cure, which better mimics an OEM oven-baked finish, Duncan said.

“In a typical booth, at what we historically considered to be full-cured, it might be 45- to 50-percent-cured. With this machine, you get on the order of 80 percent. So it makes the cut-and-buff stage easier, it allows for a little bit closer match to the factory finish, and there’s

less opportunity to introduce contaminants to the component or vehicle after it’s left the booth.”

Because the Phoenix needs to heat only panels and not the entire spray booth cabin — and for a shorter time period — it uses less gas than would a booth air makeup unit to heat and maintain a bake cycle, said Duncan, who noted that the more throughput there is in a day, the more considerable the energy cost savings.

Validation included input from refinish manufacturers

Industrial Finishes Chemist Pat Mormile logged more than 100 hours of testing of 20 products from three key refinishing materials manufacturers, Duncan said, to make sure the Phoenix delivers the desired results, regardless of what product is used in the booth.

“We’ve had a lot of tremendous support from the major paint companies. They’ve been very eager to come in and lend product support and personnel to validate the findings we have with the technology.”

The modular design fits booths of various configurations, and it’s also certified to be in compliance of Canadian and U.S. Fire Prevention Class 1, Division 2 standards.

“It was a lot harder to get than what anyone had anticipated. The takeaway from that is it can go in an existing booth without being in a separate enclosure, with everything that goes along with getting a separate enclosure like that certified from your fire marshal.”

Competitive units that do not have the Class 1, Division 2 certification are technically illegal, and the shop owner incurs a potential liability should a problem occur, Duncan cautioned.

U.S. manufacturer means quick after-sale support

One of the frustrations experienced by Beal and Davis was in trying to get speedy and effective after-sales service



and maintenance from a European manufacturer, Duncan said. The Phoenix is made in the United States.

“We’re available and we’re 24 to 48 hours away from being able to get out into the field and initiate a repair,” he said. “Plus, our machine has a lot of cloud-based diagnostic tools, which allow for a lot of service updates. A little bit of the maintenance can be done remotely without having to have a tech onsite. People want to invest in a piece of equipment and feel like they can rely on it. Relying on it sometimes means that if there’s an issue, I can make a call, and somebody’s going to respond.”

Distribution will begin with existing customers

Duncan said the company’s roll-out plan includes identifying shops with which Industrial Finishes already has a relationship. Industrial Finishes representatives will identify customers who would benefit the most, including not only collision repair facilities but others, such as RV and specialty vehicles and manufacturers.

“We think in the long-run, that represents only a fraction of the available markets and applications for which we can produce technology.”

>> **WELD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6**

repetition, which reduces training time and accelerates the training process. With real-time feedback and a realistic weld puddle and arc sound, VR also allows students to learn “muscle memory” of proper welding technique, which transfers to real-world welding.

A two-week study in 2010 by Iowa State University included a test group of 11 students, combining a 50/50 mix of traditional and virtual welding. A control group of 11 students used only traditional training. The VR group showed a 41.6 percent increase in overall certification and a 23 percent decrease in training time.

Classroom or career fair can host realistic simulation

With no sparks, fumes or metal coupons required, the VRTEX welding simulator can be used in a comfortable environment, such as a classroom. The compact Transport models can even be used as recruiting tools at events such as career fairs, which allow those who may not have considered welding — or welding as part of collision repair — as a career to try it out in a relaxed setting.

The VRTEX equipment offers realistic simulation of gas metal arc welding (GMAW, also known as MIG/MAG, the one used in collision repair), shielded metal arc welding (SMAW, or “stick”) and gas tungsten arc welding (GTAW, also known as TIG) welding processes.

It consists of five components: the machine, with adjustable settings, similar to “real-life” welding machines; VR goggles; a stand for the simulated welding coupons; and the stick, MIG and TIG devices. The simulation also offers various welding environments, including a motorsports garage, the one closest to collision repair offered by Lincoln. Six standard coupons are included, including a tee joint and groove joint, while a lap-joint coupon, which would be needed for collision

repair, is available as an option.

Traditional welding instruction requires the instructor to watch as the student welds, critiquing after the weld is complete and trying to determine what was wrong with it. If correction is needed, it generally requires a new coupon, which

costs money and setup time.

But VRTEX allows the computer to display real-time feedback within the student’s goggles that shows how to correct the angle of the welding torch, adjust the travel speed, or correct the

>> **WELD CONTINUES ON PAGE 12**



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SCRS TO LAUNCH BLUEPRINT OPTIMIZATION TOOL

JAY SICHT // Contributing Editor

When writing repair plans and final billing, it can be difficult for an estimator to catch all of the repair operations and services performed by collision repair technicians. In 2011, the Society of Collision Repair Specialists (SCRS) introduced its Guide to Complete Repair Planning in print and free to the industry as a PDF download from its website. That document, more than 25 pages long, was designed to serve as a checklist of more than 1,000 operations that could potentially be overlooked.

The evolution of this product, the Blueprint Optimization Tool, has converted the PDF into an automated software version. It was unveiled at the recent SEMA Show, where it was also named Best New Collision Repair & Refinish Product. It's expected to launch in the first quarter of 2020.

"It provides collision repair facilities with an intelligent and easier-to-use estimate-analysis tool," said SCRS Executive Director Aaron Schulenburg. "It immediately identifies labor operations, line items, and customizable charges that could be overlooked on an estimate. This leading-edge technology takes advantage of the machine-learning process and robotics automation to achieve the highest levels of user-efficiency and accuracy."

Working with a team at NuGen IT led by owner Pete Tagliapietra, SCRS spent more than a year developing and refining the new product, incorporating feedback from members on how they've used it and how they desired to make the guide more user-friendly, he said.

"The Blueprint Optimization Tool was designed taking those suggestions into account, really looking to build some automation into the process, rather than this very manual approach of comparing the estimate to a static document. Once we had the program pulled together, we

solicited a small focus group of shops who fleshed out the usefulness of the programming and gave added feedback. That touchpoint with estimators helped us and the development team clarify how to ensure value

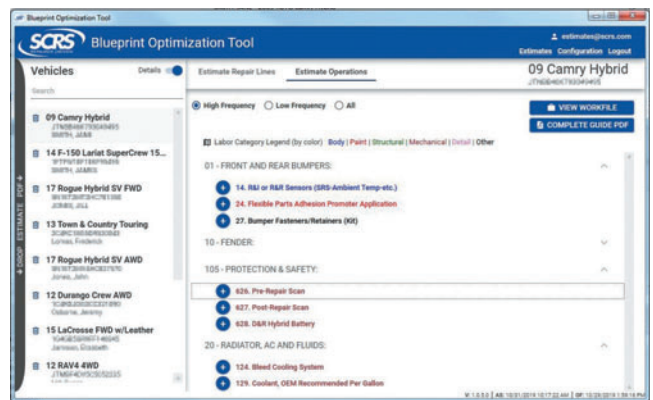
in the product, and it led to the product that then went to another group of beta-testers. Truly, this is a program built for repairers — by repairers — and I think that makes it really unique."

Development of the PDF product, which launched in April 2011, was started by Toby Chess, the late March Taylor, and other contributors with the idea to standardize and simplify the estimating process, Schulenburg said.

"It was always intended to be a 'living document' that would adapt and evolve over time. And even in its launch release, our chairman at the time, Aaron Clark, commented that the hope was if we open it up to industry, we would be able to harness even more input and suggestions to improve it with future editions — while delivering on our overarching desire to provide resources that help the industry grow and succeed."

How the tool works with estimating systems

The Blueprint Optimization Tool removes the need to manually reference and navigate the guide. Instead, when an estimate is saved in the shop's estimating system, it is automatically imported into the Blueprint Optimization Tool and audited for potentially overlooked operations. (CCC will be the first to be added, with all major estimating systems planned.) The application then identifies the relevant operations, based on the ve-



hicle type, such as truck, SUV or passenger vehicle.

The Tool's screen overlays that of the estimate, and the imported estimates are displayed in the left-hand column. Only relevant repair lines from the estimate are imported, and clicking on "Estimate Operations" presents only the operations that were missed on the estimate. Those can be selected between high-frequency operations, with a higher likelihood of being necessary, low frequency, or all.

And consistent with the Guide to Complete Repair Planning (which is also in the application as an attachment,) operations are color-coded, such as blue for bodywork, red for paint and refinishing and more. Then the estimator can select which operations will be performed by repairers. Part codes allow an estimator to manually override a database item to allow for standard shop procedures, such as aftermarket clips being used at a set rate, which will be remembered by the application in the future. Manual items can be added with a single keystroke.

There are other scrubbing platforms on the market. "But we see the SCRS Blueprint Optimization Tool as the first software tool of its kind to perform automated, intelligent tasks previously required to be completed as manual tasks by the end-user," Schulenburg said, noting the application will:

- Immediately identify overlooked re-

>> **TOOL CONTINUES ON PAGE 12**

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Lane Departure Warning



Collision Warning



Adaptive Cruisecontrol



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Automatic Parking



Blind Spot Detection



>> **TOOL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10**

- pair operations and dollar amounts
- Simultaneously import overlooked operations and line items into the estimate
- Support individual and multiple shop profiles with customization for unique business needs
- Audit in-house estimates before repairs to minimize supplements
- Audit external insurance estimates to identify overlooked repair procedures
- Establish consistency and uniformity with multiple users as part of the repair-planning process

- Promote self-training for new employees to write complete and accurate estimates

The Guide to Complete Repair Planning will still be available for free. Pricing for the Blueprint Optimization Tool will be \$139 per month retail for one computer access per location, plus \$29 per month for each additional computer per location. SCRS members receive a discounted price of \$99 per month for one computer access per location, plus an additional \$21.75 per month for each additional computer per location.

“It’s a product that answers the re-

quests that repairers have been making for years,” Schulenburg said. “It’s a resource designed to help the shop meet their own objectives and allow them to customize their charges in a way that can establish consistency across their locations and their estimators. Most importantly, it helps to not leave charges for necessary and performed operations on the table when building the repair plan. I think the feedback we’ve received to date has been really validating, but honestly, we just can’t wait to get it released and into the hands of shops, where it can start helping in the real world.”

>> **WELD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9**

distance of the welding tip to the material. VR also easily allows student groups to critique their classmate’s performance, because the weld shows on the monitor in real-time. The instructor can also rotate the view of the coupon during welding to check for proper angles. The replay mode allows the instructor and student to identify proper and improper technique during the simulation, building confidence for when it’s time to head to the shop for “live welding.”

“Skilled welders cannot be trained on simulators alone and need real arc time to fine-tune their welding skills,” commented a Lincoln Electric representative on a demonstration video on YouTube. “However, VR welding training can provide a fun and beneficial educational experience.”



CIECA ADDS SCANS TO BMS FMOL MESSAGE

CIECA announced that the First Notice of Loss (FNOL) Implementation Guide and Appendix C have been updated to include instructions on how to include a scan to the Business Message Suite (BMS) First Notice of Loss (FNOL) message.

No changes were made to the BMS, only the expansion of the message’s use.

Clint Marlow, chairman of the FNOL Committee, said the committee recently recognized the need to include a scan with the FNOL message. The committee is responsible for developing and maintaining the processes

related to FNOL business flow.

“An increasing number of OEMs have incorporated telematics data capabilities into their vehicle offerings,” said Marlow. “Leveraging connected car technologies, many current model year vehicles have the capability to generate a vehicle health scan that includes diagnostic trouble codes (DTCs).”

Marlow said that having DTCs at FNOL can help determine degree of damage, repairability and potentially even begin to form the repair plan.

“CIECA remains ahead of the curve

by updating its current FNOL message suite with the ability to include a vehicle scan,” he said.

The FNOL message was first added in the 2017R1 Release of the CIECA Standards. “FNOL messages provide business partners the ability to notify and be notified of accident information to and from multiple parties,” said Charley Quirt, CIECA’s project manager. “These FNOL messages are focused on shortening the claims process.”

Quirt said all industry segments will benefit from this update, including insurance companies and agents, repair facilities, fleet companies, information technology providers and third-party administrators (TPAs).

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What to expect and get from working with a consultant

Make sure your investment in hiring an outside expert pays off for your business

In previous columns, I outlined a handful of reasons why working with an outside consultant can be of value to almost any collision repair business and shared recommendations on how to choose the right consultant for you.

So once those things are checked off, it's time to get to work. What should you expect from the consultant, and what should you do to make the most of your resources invested in outside consulting?

I will preface this by saying that individual consultants will follow their own practices in terms of interaction with you and your business, and a consultant may even offer you several different options for that interaction. But explaining how I generally work with collision repair businesses offers one example you can use as you discuss options with consultants you are considering.

Once I have been hired, I generally spend two days in the shop itself, touring the facility and talking with owners, managers, production employees and even detailers or lot attendants. A good consultant understands that everyone within a business knows important things about that business that others may not.

Old-school consultants might then dump a 150-page comprehensive report on your desk, maybe along with a flashy PowerPoint presentation. I don't see that leading to much getting accomplished. Instead, I offer an action plan with maybe five or six items on it. I start with the "low-hanging fruit," the things I see that will lead to the most business improvement relative to the investment of resources they will entail for the business. I look for the most prominent "profitability leaks."

On a rare occasion, there may be a few more items than that on that action plan. I recall at the end of my initial visit to one shop, the owner asked me if I would return in six months. "No," I had to tell him, "Because you won't be here." The business was that much upside down.

I think my rebuke shocked him but also motivated him. He got to work on the 13-point action plan I gave him. That's much more than I would normally ever put on someone's plate, but it had to happen if that business was going to survive. He got it done, so in six months I was back.



NEVER AGREE TO DO MORE THAN YOU WILL REALISTICALLY DO.


That experience is a good reminder to never agree to do more than you realistically will do. I go through the initial action plan with the shop to make sure it addresses items they see as most important, that they are willing to work on, that they see value in. I make sure everyone agrees with what needs to happen and who will do what.

The "how" is also just as important. Owners and managers need to have the tools or resources they will need to do their part. Any employees involved in the action plan need to feel they have support from management. You can't just tell employees to get the production area cleaned up and organized, for example, all while performing their regular job duties. Support their efforts by bringing in the outside help they need.

It's also important to set a realistic timeline for those actions. It must take into account that everyone still needs to be fixing cars or running the business. It shouldn't place a ticking clock above the priority of getting the items done right the first time.

A good consultant will check in with you between visits to ask about your progress, offer coaching or encouragement, and answer any questions that may have arisen. My clients say knowing I'm available for this guidance gives them peace of mind as well as confidence that they can accomplish what's needed.

At the end of the timeline we established, we review what has been accomplished and see if anything on the list remains to be done. Presuming the business is seeing value (business growth, higher customer satisfaction, improved financial or other KPIs, a more engaged workforce, etc.) in the process, new items can be added to the action plan and another timeline established.

You may find that one or two of these cycles is sufficient, and thus take a break until the next "business health check-up." But many successful collision repair businesses see value in making this an ongoing process, continuing to work with a consultant to improve the business until they sell or retire. 

STEVE FELTOVICH of SJF Business Consulting, LLC, works with dealers, MSOs and independent collision repair businesses to make improvements and achieve performance goals.
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BE EXCELLENT TO EACH OTHER

A peer-to-peer networking structure can bring endless benefits to your business

MANDEE BRADSHAW // Contributing Editor

That's what it's all about, right? Supporting the people around you. That's what Bill & Ted did in 1988 in the movie *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*. They were in a spot. They needed to graduate, and they relied on one another and they got it done. There were a few bumps along the way, but they did it.

To get things done, to move forward, to have a profitable and productive business, relying on your peers is the most impor-

tant tool a business owner will develop. These relationships and friendships will produce benefits for your shop — and for you personally — for years to come. In many industries, including the automotive aftermarket, a 20 group is a terrific peer-to-peer networking structure. The shop owners referenced here are members of the DRIVE TOP 20 group.

To have a productive program of networking, here are a few key elements that are crucial.

Trust

Everyone in the group must trust one another. Because they will be exchanging ideas that could be confidential, trust is imperative. Without the building blocks of trust, any peer-to-peer group won't work. If this group is to function properly, all members will be exchanging ideas, talking about personnel issues, even sharing each other's P&L and KPIs. To get the most out of the group, each member must hold these meetings and conversations in

confidence. It's the only way it will work. If trust isn't part of each person's reason for joining, the group will fall apart.

"The relationships you build are instrumental in trusting the person giving you the feedback," said Daniel Antonelli of Antonelli's Advanced Automotive, Grand Junction, Colo.

Structure and rules

Ground rules need to be set. What are the qualifications to be a member? Do the members rotate in and out? A regular schedule of group calls and face-to-face meetings needs to be established. Is there an outside objective and neutral facilitator to keep topics, meetings and members on the right path? These are important initial questions that need to be addressed and solved.

Some groups will start organically with no structure or ground rules. This is a terrific start, but for the group to grow, some organization is needed.

In addition to structure, be sure to set the guidelines. Is there a term limit for each member or a required level of participation? A group needs members eager to participate. Business owners who don't speak up, don't offer solutions and don't participate in calls and meetings should not be part of a peer-to-peer group.

Social media

Social media platforms and networking groups are a natural pairing. For DRIVE, a technology and one-on-one business consultancy firm, the robust participation in the TOP 20 Facebook group is invaluable. This private platform is a daily check-in for many of the TOP 20 members, even a few times a day. The exchange of issues — both big and small — in an environment that all members know is confidential, is invaluable to developing the deep relationships needed for a successful group.

Different perspectives

It's easy to get stuck in your own view of

things and your way of doing things in the shop. Maybe there's a different and more productive procedure that you haven't thought of. Being able to access a network of your peers is great for bringing new or fresh ideas to your business.

"I recommend to anyone who is serious about improving their shop that they need to network and learn from others," said Gabe Christian of Import Performance USA, Bend, Ore.

Transfer of knowledge

Basically, this means don't keep it to yourself. If you have a proven process that has increased profits, why not tell your peers? The concept of sharing is what networking is at its most successful. So if you discovered a great way to onboard a new employee, share it with your group.

"When we get to help another shop owner with an issue, it empowers and inspires us," said Phil Webster of Webster Tire & Auto, Teutopolis, Ill.

Face to face

While phone calls, emails and social media connections are great, having face-to-face meetings on a regular basis is key. It will elevate any group to a level of productivity and comradeship that otherwise will not be realized. A top 20 group should meet quarterly and in the auto aftermarket business, the meetings should take place at a member's shop. Nothing can replace the experience of meeting the business owners you have talked to or with whom you have exchanged posts on Facebook.

"It's fun and beneficial to travel and visit with other shops. It's very valuable seeing their shops and using some of their ideas. And hopefully, helping them institute some of my own ideas to make their shops better. This situation is nearly impossible to replicate in any other way," said Antonelli.

Encouragement

The most successful shop has its own ups and downs. After all, that's why you keep


your eye on your KPIs. If you start to see an issue, that's the time to address it and not ignore it. Being proactive is the sign of a first-rate shop owner. If you're lucky enough to be a part of a group you know and trust, this is a great resource for those instances when you need a bit of encouragement. Are you making the right decision? If not, they'll be straight with you and give their unvarnished opinion.

"Running a successful shop is hard work and having a team of shop owners to lean on when big issues arise is like having the greatest and most supportive parent on your side. We push each other to make decisions we have been putting off," Webster said.

Marketing

The tools of marketing are ever-evolving in terms of new software, new platforms and new opportunities for a business owner. Your peer-to-peer group is the place where you can talk through if something is valuable. Have other members used it and what did they think? Have other members researched similar tools that they think are better? Your networking group is the place to talk through the benefits and costs of any new initiative.

If you don't have access to a networking group, start your own. Start small with clear and simple objectives. Having a group of peers that you can talk to, and maybe even vent a bit to, will prove to be one of your most successful tools for a prosperous and enduring business.

"Networking for me has been without a doubt the single most important thing that I do consistently that keeps me successful," said Christian. 



MANDEE BRADSHAW

is the Vice President of Marketing & Business Development for DRIVE. Her diverse background in business and 10 years

of experience in the in the automotive aftermarket contributes to her unique skill set, focused on communications, relationship management, marketing and leadership. mbradshaw@driveshops.com



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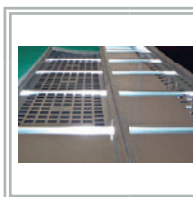
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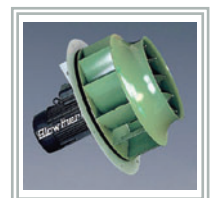
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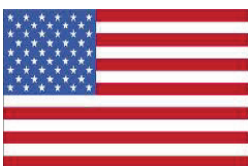
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Ensure your documentation doesn't work against you

Don't let it be the evidence someone needs to show you did it wrong

Over the course of three days during SEMA in Las Vegas last fall, I heard the moving interview with the Texas couple injured in a car that had been repaired with adhesive rather than welds; I moderated a panel of automakers discussing their welding requirements; and I may have saved the lives of five people by showing a shop how they had completely inadequately welded the unside of a late-model Toyota Sienna.

The Sienna was repaired by a Chevrolet dealership shop near Las Vegas for a woman just prior to her husband taking a job with Microsoft. So shortly after picking up the repaired car, she and her husband and three kids drove it from Nevada up to Washington. When they arrived, she took it to a dealership there, because she had a warning light on the dash, and she'd noticed her seatbelt didn't seem to be retracting correctly.

That dealer could tell the seatbelt wasn't quite bolted-in correctly and saw the door wasn't quite aligned, so they sent it to their preferred body shop. That shop took one look at the car and called my company. One of our inspectors took a look at it, and quickly realized there were problems.

I called the dealership that repaired the vehicle, and asked the manager to send me the paperwork for the job. They had replaced the rocker, the B-pillar and the quarter panel. But the first thing I noticed was that none of the Toyota safety checks, like resetting the occupant weight sensor, were listed on the invoice. The manager of the shop insisted they had done them, but I was skeptical. Would a Chevy dealership sublet that work to a Toyota dealership and not bill for that?

I told him there was some serious issues with the welding, and he said he wanted a chance to look at the car with me. He wasn't defensive, but he said they were an I-CAR Gold Class shop, certified by some automakers (though not Toyota) and do good work. So I told him he could come to Seattle to see the vehicle, or if he could get the car to Las Vegas by the next week when I would be there for SEMA, we could go over it together.



IF YOU'RE GOING TO DOCUMENT EVERYTHING YOU DO ON A VEHICLE, YOU ALSO BETTER MAKE SURE THAT IT SHOWS YOU ARE DOING IT RIGHT.

So he had it transported back to Nevada.

The morning I got to the dealership, we opened up the door and removed the weather strips to show him the welds. They were small and had kind of a triangular shape to them. One of them was even cracked. And when you looked at the back, you could tell they had used a single-sided weld — not the squeeze-type called for by Toyota — to attach the entire unside of the car.

They had excellent welding equipment. But when we opened up the welder, the spool of wire had no label. I suspect they didn't use the type of welding wire Toyota calls for. And when I asked the technician where the arms were for the welder, he told me, "We don't use those. It's one-sided welding because it's a smart welder."

You can't make this stuff up.

I couldn't tell exactly where they had sectioned the vehicle, so the manager pulled up the photos from the job file. Those showed that not only was it sectioned incorrectly, but also that the technician used a cut-off wheel to remove every single weld on the inside, destroying the base metal. This would require a major re-repair to make the vehicle safe again.

The dealership bought that car. Thank goodness the woman who owned it had noticed the minor problems before she and her family were in another accident in that vehicle. They could have easily been killed.

I tell this story because right now this industry is talking a lot about documentation systems for repair. I've talked about the "bulletproof file" for years, making sure it accurately reflects what you did to the vehicle and why. But, folks, if you're going to document everything you do to a vehicle — and I think you should — you also better make sure that it shows you are doing it correctly. This shop's own documentation showed that they didn't, putting a family at risk. 🚗

MARK OLSON is the founder of Vehicle Collision Experts, LLC (VECO Experts), a consulting firm that takes a holistic approach to working with shops on repair quality and business performance. mark@vecoexperts.com

WHY CONSISTENCY MATTERS

Make sure your customers and partners know what to expect

JOHN SHOEMAKER // Contributing Editor

Consistency in your business will bring you the support you did not realize was right in front of you all along. Whether it comes from that stubborn technician, the irritable insurance adjuster or the disappointed customer, you can build champions in your business just by being consistent.

What do I mean by being consistent? Ask yourself if the people around you know what to expect from you as you

manage your business day to day. I talked about this in my article, "Implementing non-negotiables can help set standards for your shop" (November 2018), where I discussed sending the same signal about your business to those around you.

I recently spoke with a dealership general manager about some concerns he was having with his collision center. His main concern was that insurance companies would not talk to him about their programs. He said he did not under-

stand why; he had a well-equipped shop on a major highway and was repairing customers' cars insured by the people he was trying to talk with, but he was not gaining any traction in their negotiations. I explained to him that even though he had a great facility, the insurers' main concern is customer satisfaction, and they need to make sure the shops they get involved with will provide their customers with quality care. Looking at the shop history, I could see that over the

last five years there were several manager changes. Relaying that to him as an issue was a bit difficult, but insurance companies look for consistency in every business they work with. Sadly, multiple manager changes in recent years does not illustrate consistency. While I realize management changes occur, the resulting inconsistency can hurt business and should be evaluated when considering a change.

You have heard me time and time again discuss the need to be consistent in your damage documentation. Inconsis-

tency in damage documentation affects your technicians, customer satisfaction and insurance relationships. Realizing there is only one way to repair a vehicle should help build consistency, but that is not always the case. Recently I was at a shop waiting to talk to the manager when I overheard a conversation between an insurance adjuster and his supervisor. The insurance adjuster was telling his supervisor that he generally doesn't have this problem with "Joe," but he was on vacation, so "Mike" wrote this particular appraisal. My first thought was, why are Mike's appraisals different than Joe's? It's the same shop, so shouldn't the damage appraisers be consistent with each other? When I met with the manager, I told him what I had heard while I was waiting. This also piqued his interest, so we looked at a couple of Joe's appraisals and compared them to how Mike was documenting damage.

What we found was that Mike was very thorough, documenting everything with good line notes and accounting for many associated products (seam sealers, corrosion protection products and adhesives) within the body of the appraisal in the required area of the repair. He also specified quantities and necessary labor to apply these products.

Joe, on the other hand, put everything at the bottom of the appraisal where it looked more like a wish list than required items and operations. We also noted that in most cases there was not any labor allowed, and Joe was using low-ball generic pricing.


As we continued to discuss the damage appraisals, I explained how that affects technicians as well as his parts people. He replied, "You know, I get more complaints from the techs about the appraisals Joe writes than the ones Mike completes." I shared that the techs are getting the information they need to complete the repair from Mike as well as the right associated items and they are getting paid to apply them. I also

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shared that on the appraisals they get from Joe, there are a lot of unanswered questions. For example, which "corrosion protection" are they supposed to use and where does it go? I'm sure most technicians know what to use, but do you want to leave the decision up to them? Do you want them wandering around the shop looking for the right product? Consistency in damage documentation will bring harmony to the shop as well as improved performance.

Consistency in your business will also pay huge dividends in customer satisfaction. If you have better relationships with those connected to a repair, you will increase productivity, which in turn means less downtime for your customer. When customers get their vehicle back quickly, it is proven that they are happier. Happy customers share their experiences in the form of referrals. Reducing downtime equates to more capacity for your business to handle those referrals, making consistency the centerpiece of a successful, profitable future for the long term. 

GREAT PROCESSES DRIVE QUALITY MANAGEMENT

In this Remarkable Results podcast with Carm Capriotto, he speaks with Louis Altazan, President of AGCO Automotive Repair Service - Baton Rouge, La.

Louis has also studied under Dr. W. Edwards Demming, the father of Quality Management. He has a lot of expertise and experience to show us regarding the processes that we need to run a successful quality shop.

This episode shows you the importance of a quality system in place. It is also useful to use Demming's quality revolution as pointed out by Louis, who served as a student of Dr. W. Edwards Demming, a renowned father of Quality Management. Louis also shares with us the 14 principles of Total Quality Management.

Listen to the podcast by going to MotorAge.com/qualityprocesses.

The podcasts bring you insights, trends, best practices and stories of personal achievement.



JOHN SHOEMAKER is a business development manager for BASF North America Automotive Refinish Division and the former owner of JSE Consulting.

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Congress takes next step with data privacy protection

Why does this matter to independent automotive repairers?

The U.S. Senate Commerce Committee convened a hearing entitled, “Examining Legislative Proposals to Protect Consumer Data Privacy.” There have been a number of privacy hearings in the 115th and 116th congresses. Both the Chairman of the Committee Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS) and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell (D-WA) have introduced separate bills on data privacy. Chairman Wicker’s legislation, the United States Consumer Data Privacy Act of 2019 (USCDPA), and Ranking Member Cantwell’s bill, the Consumer Online Privacy Rights Act of 2019 (COPRA), will be on the main stage as consumer data privacy is considered in the second session of the 116th Congress.

Witnesses for the data privacy hearing included: The Honorable Julie Brill, Former Commissioner of the Federal Trade Commission, Microsoft; The Honorable Maureen Ohlhausen, Former Acting-Chair of the Federal Trade Commission, Co-Chair, 21st Century Privacy Coalition; Laura Moy, Executive Director and Associate Professor of Law, Georgetown Law Center on Privacy & Technology; Nuala O’Connor, Senior Vice President and Chief Counsel, Digital Citizenship at Walmart; and Michelle Richardson, Director of Privacy and Data, Center for Democracy and Technology.

Witnesses encouraged policymakers to move forward with a federal framework of privacy legislation as technology continues to advance and with it, data collection guideline needs. Suggestions included the use of restrictions, transparent, simple choices for consumers and the selection of a regulator, i.e. the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

The Automotive Service Association (ASA), as part of the U.S. Vehicle Data Access Coalition, submitted comments for the hearing. The Coalition highlighted several important points about the consumer data access legislation:

- Both drafts address “access” to data by individuals, but ignore the direct, secure, real-time, bidirectional and standardized



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motor vehicle data access that motor vehicle owners must have to manage and control their motor vehicles — both now and in the future as motor vehicles become more autonomous.

- Both drafts address how “covered data” and “sensitive covered data” can be used (or not) by a “covered entity,” but neither draft addresses the key issue of guaranteeing a vehicle owner’s right to direct, real-time, secure and bidirectional access to the data. The Coalition suggests that both drafts must address vehicle data access; without a guarantee of data “access,” the regulation of data “use” is moot.

The second session of the 116th Congress will likely determine how vehicle data access is addressed.

In the U.S. House, Representatives Anna Eshoo (D-CA) and Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) introduced H.R. 4978, the Online Privacy Act of 2019. The bill grants every American the right to access, correct or delete their data. It also creates new rights, like the right to impermanence, which lets users decide how long companies can keep their data.

The bill also minimizes the amount of data companies collect, process, disclose and maintain, and bars companies from using data in discriminatory ways. Additionally, companies must receive consent from users in plain, simple language.

- The bill establishes an independent agency led by a director who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate for a five-year term. The DPA will enforce privacy protections and investigate abuses.

Consumer data privacy policy matters to automotive repairers because this issue will likely be a determining factor in the process for vehicle data access as well as the path forward for independent repairers relative to new vehicle technologies. 📡

ROBERT REDDING is the Automotive Service Association’s Washington, D.C. representative. He has served as a member of several federal and state advisory committees involved in the automotive industry. rredding@reddingfirm.com



WHAT IS WIN ALL ABOUT?

The network aims to encourage women in all facets of the industry

CHERYL BOSWELL // Contributing Editor

Throughout the 20-year history of the Women's Industry Network (WIN), we have driven industry sustainability by supporting and developing women. The Women's Industry Network is devoted to becoming THE network that drives the future of collision repair by attracting, developing and advancing women through education and connections.

WIN offers education and leadership development opportunities to build critical skills for success. We recognize excellence, promote leadership and foster a network among collision repair professionals, especially women.

Networking

With our vision driving our day-to-day operations, our network has created extremely valuable opportunities for anyone looking to enter collision repair and for those looking to advance in this field. In what has traditionally been a male-centric industry, we are dedicated to providing multiple opportunities for women, sharing career path options and supporting women who want to enter, move up and remain in collision repair. Through our networking and mentoring programs, our members connect with others throughout the country to share experiences, job opportunities, and best practices in their markets.



In order to further our mission and vision, WIN hosts an annual Educational Conference where members come together to discuss market trends, network and to give back to the host community. Last May, our conference “Navigating Tomorrow Together” was held in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Programming included “Change Your Mind to Change Your Results”, effective communication styles, industry trends and “Technical Challenges for a New Generation of Technicians.” For our service project, we partnered with “Headbands for Hope” to create head-

bands for children who have lost their hair due to chemotherapy treatments. While making the headbands, we furthered our professional and personal relationships.

The 2020 Annual Conference “Driving the Future” will be held May 3-5 in Newport Beach, Calif. We hope to see you there!

Leadership

WIN provides members a chance to take an active role in the organization by chairing committees and joining the organization’s Board of Directors. Through

these valuable leadership opportunities, members further their careers and extend WIN’s reach by becoming an influential voice and recognized leader across the marketplace.

To recognize these leaders, WIN honors members who enhance the role of women in the industry with the Most Influential Women (MIW) Award. To date, WIN has recognized more than 90 women for their professional accomplishments and for going beyond requirements of their positions to give back to their communities. Our 2019

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- Yen Hoang, CEO of UYL Color
- Kathy Mello, CEO of TGIF Body Shop
- Erica Schaefer, Mopar Collision Marketing Manager, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles

Scholarship

At WIN, we recognize that we are paving the way for tomorrow's professionals. WIN is active with high school students considering career paths in collision management and students who are attending vocational schools. Supporting today's youth and showcasing the career advancement opportunities is critically important — to them and to our industry. WIN's scholarship program provides tuition assistance and educational opportunities for students. Additionally, each scholarship recipient is connected with a mentor and receives a one-year membership to WIN to further support their journey and provide a sense of community as they pursue their professional goals. This process has allowed many young women to be more confident in starting their career in a primarily male environment and contribute toward their professional success.

Growing the industry

We work with many women and men in management roles who want to learn how to improve retention for female employees. This shows us that the industry is continuing to accept women in many different positions and seeing their importance to the market. Even with this progress, there is always room for improvement, and that is why WIN plays an important role in the overall structure of the collision repair industry. Through our focus of attracting and retaining women, we are able to sustain a dialog that will continue to enhance the marketplace as a whole.



Sponsorship

We have many supportive sponsors because we provide a unique industry setting where members connect with peers in the industry, share different perspectives, discuss challenges and exchange ideas for improvement. WIN supports everyone from women starting in their careers to C-suite level executives. Our sponsors recognize the importance of continuing to develop women in the industry on all levels.

Overall, WIN has provided a platform for many women to advance. Our organization provides development opportunities to those who are collision repair owners and industry service providers by helping them understand the true value of women in this line of work. Women are an underutilized resource,

and from a consumer standpoint, women influence the majority of buying decisions in households. Understanding this, WIN and its work with women plays an important role in promoting industry sustainability, addressing technician shortages and the shrinking traditional labor pool, as well as promoting and creating diversity.


To learn more, become a sponsor, apply for a scholarship — and especially join us as a member — please visit <https://thewomensindustrynetwork.site-ym.com>. 📧



CHERYL BOSWELL is the president of the Women's Industry Association. She also serves as the Corporate Chief Financial Officer and

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IDENTIFY TRIALS IN YOUR SHOP AND GET THROUGH THEM



There are three benefits to facing hardships and overcoming

CHRIS “CHUBBY” FREDERICK // Contributing Editor

Have you ever gone through a very difficult period or time at the shop? You know, that time when nothing seems to go right — customers are upset, employees are disgruntled, sales aren't where they're supposed to be, and so on? It's very possible that you could have been going through a trial. Let's listen to Head Coach Mike Haley explain how we help ATI members implement action steps to overcome trials successfully.

Trials are various difficulties, hardships or problems, especially those that test one's courage, endurance or resolve.

How do you handle trials, disappointments, hardships and curveballs? Are you aware you are in a trial? Do you ignore them? We all deal with different types of trials, sometimes many at once. There are relationship trials, marriage trials, physical trials, financial trials, business trials and so on. I believe you're always in one of three stages of trials: coming out of a trial, currently in a trial or getting ready to go through a trial.

Nobody likes trials, and nobody invites trials, but there is definitely a purpose for them. Most are due to decisions we made that differ from our values, or in

other words, poor decisions. These trials cause a lot of pain and heartache. They sometimes appear out of nowhere, and believe it or not, are not caused by us directly. But we are all going to have trials, and we need to face them head on and not bury our heads in the sand.

We've got this weird love/hate relationship with trials. We love to watch other people go through trials, but we hate to go through trials ourselves. Think about how often we watch people go through trials all the time on TV. Netflix has all kinds of series on people going through different kinds of trials. We even

have the show “Naked and Afraid” — about couples who are dropped off in the middle of the jungle naked and we watch them try to survive! In this case, naked isn’t a good thing. Then, there’s Facebook. Someone submits a juicy or controversial post. You read it, then go and get a bowl of popcorn, and just sit back and watch all the comments firing back. We like watching trials because we know it produces something. It produces a winner or a loser — a person who either meets our expectations or exceeds our expectations or falls below our expectations. You’ll find out if their character stands true, or are they all show and no go?

When it’s our turn, we want nothing to do with trials. But we need to understand that there’s a purpose in the trial. If you don’t first see the purpose, you’re never going to motivate yourself through it. To help you out, I’m going to give you the three primary purposes of a trial.

1. Trials bring revelation

A trial will prove to yourself and others that what you believe is truly in you and not just something you say. For example, when an engineer builds a motor, he will test that motor to ensure it can fulfil its purpose. He will put that motor on a stand and hook it up to a dynamometer. He doesn’t just break it in; he pushes that motor to its limit and beyond to ensure that it will deliver what’s promised. Afterwards, the engineer can state with confidence that his company sells motors that are built to last. Likewise, the trials that we go through prove to us that we are, too.

2. Trials bring refinement

Think of refinement like a trainer. I wish we could get bigger, faster and stronger by just wishing it. I would love to get all my vitamins and minerals by just looking at a picture of vegetables. I wish I could go to the gym and sit on a bench and yuk it up with the guys and then leave 15 minutes later all “swolled” up. It just doesn’t work that way. A few years ago, I went to

a trainer. He was a handsome man who was positive and energetic and who motivated me that I could change, so I signed up with him. I remember feeling excited that I was going to lose weight and get stronger. I remember going home and telling my wife that I have found the guy who is going to take me to the promised land. The next morning after my first workout I was discouraged and defeated after he put me through the paces. I found out quickly I was never going to get the results without doing the work. You must put in the work and break a sweat. Trials are a process and you must go through them. It’s also done to course-correct us.

3. Trials bring reward

So now that your beliefs are tried and true, you get to enjoy the rewards of being a trial survivor. As I was writing this article, a show on Navy Seal training was playing in the background on the History channel. Ironically, the timing was perfect in proving my point. The sole purpose for Navy Seal training is to find the top one percent of service men and women who can serve within this elite special operations force. So many soldiers think they can go through these trials to become a Navy Seal. The trials are designed to test whether they can do the physical, mental and emotional work to endure the toughest circumstances. All the while, the instructors are trying to get them to surrender and ring the bell. They tell them: “Just ring the bell and we’ll get you a warm shower, a hot meal, and a comfortable bed . . . Just ring the bell and it will all be over.” The soldiers who truly believe that they are meant to be a Seal try to push themselves past their full potential. The soldiers next to them, while doing the drills, are saying “Don’t you dare ring that bell . . . you can do it; you have what it takes.” Finally, soldiers who don’t ring the bell get the rewards. They are now the best of the best. They know they received the best training in the world and gain instant respect and gratitude in the world because

they are a Navy Seal.

Hopefully this advice helps with clarifying why it’s important for you and your business to go through trials and that they shouldn’t be ignored. Recognize that there are reasons for the trials and, if identified correctly, there’s a reward at the end. Remember, our instinct is to ignore or deflect them, but doing so won’t help your employees or customers, nor will it make you the best repair shop around, or a true leader that people will follow. You must truly believe that what you are going through is for the very best. It’s only when you test and refine your beliefs that you can build confidence and gain a sense of peace. You can then rest your head on the pillow at night knowing you have done the work necessary and feel good about the trial you just went through.

When it comes to going through trials or hard times in general, do you face them head on or rather try to ignore or deflect them? If your answer is the latter, you’re missing out on an opportunity for growth. If you want to simplify going through trials, just go to www.ationlinetraining.com/2019-12 and download the worksheet to find out how to embrace trials as a learning experience and come out better for it. It will give you a new perspective by helping you identify:

- The primary purpose of your trial
- What you will learn from your trial
- Action steps needed to overcome your trial successfully
- Potential rewards from overcoming your trial. 📄



CHRIS “CHUBBY”

FREDERICK is the CEO and founder of the Automotive Training Institute. ATI’s 130 full-time associates train and coach more than

1,700 shop owners every week to drive profits and dreams home to their families. Our full-time coaches have helped our members earn over 1 BILLION DOLLARS in a return on their coaching investment since ATI was founded. This month’s article was written with the help of Head Coach Mike Haley.

chubby@autotraining.net

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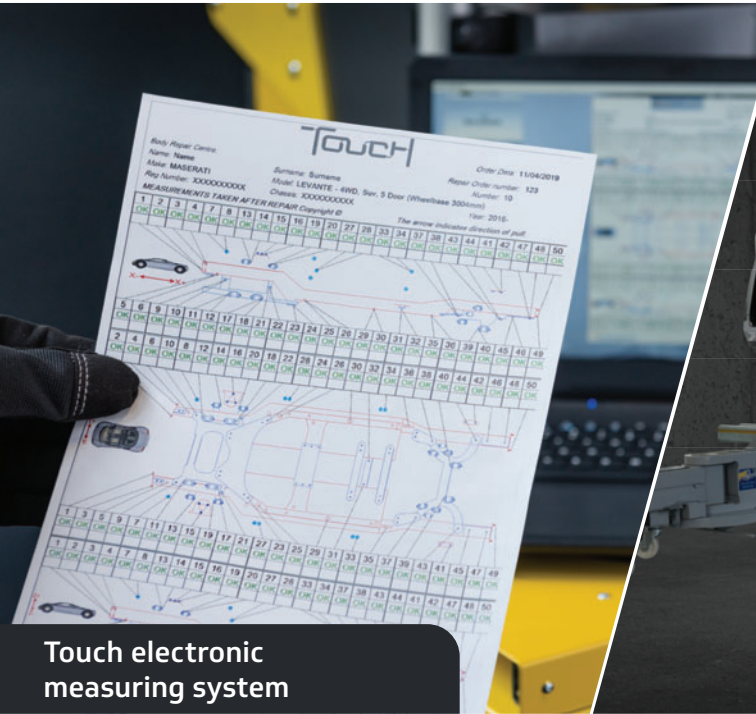
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Going with the flow

Shop follows a factory-like manufacturing flow to ensure efficient repairs

JAMES E. GUYETTE // Contributing Editor

California's Eurotech Refinishing and Collision Inc. operates more like a manufacturing production facility than a traditionally commissioned shop. Under the direction of CEO Keith Myers, "consistency and a predictable outcome every time" is the goal in this unique approach to collision repair. Employees are trained for specific roles and staff is totally focused on repair processes and workflow throughout the shop.

With its main location in Bellflower, Calif., and a second site in Cerritos, Calif., the company was recently honored as the ACE Award winner by VeriFacts Automotive, designated as the top-performing collision repair facility in the nation.

"It is all about effectiveness and efficiency," explains CFO Debbie Hoenecke. "We have a separate building for disassembly, mechanical repair, re-assembly, parts management and storage. That way none of those parts are exposed to dust from sanding operations, which saves clean-up time and delivers better results for our vehicle owners. And the tear-down process is a step-by-step SOP, followed the same way by each employee, every time."

Staffers specialize in a specific area of the process as the vehicles are run through each department much like a manufacturing plant. "Each employee becomes an expert in the job that they perform, increasing their speed and quality," according to Hoenecke. "Every operation is done exactly the same way every day, based on the SOP for that area."

"There are many benefits from this approach. One is consistency. We strive to produce a predictable outcome every time, and our philosophy is to repair each vehicle as if it were our own," says CEO Keith Myers. "Another benefit is that whenever we have a bottleneck in the workflow, we can load-level the people instead of the vehicles, because each person simply follows the process and SOP for that area."

A unique parts system is utilized to track and organize the parts as they flow through the system. "We are able to identify issues earlier in the process in order to reduce any delays when the vehicle is ready for reassembly," he points out.

"Of course, we still run into parts delays, back orders and miscommunication with our vendors like everyone else," adds Myers. However, "a continual-improvement mindset" allows the company to greatly "streamline our internal process."

As part of this unique approach to the repair process, "Our work-



EUROTECH REFINISHING AND COLLISION, INC.
Bellflower, Calif. // eurotechinc.com

Keith Myers
CEO

23,450
Total square footage of shops

2
No. of shops

5
No. of DRPs

31
Years in business

BASF
Paint supplier

60
No. of employees

\$10.5 million
Annual gross revenue

flow, SOPs and specialization — combined with a philosophy of continuous improvement — allow us to deliver consistent quality to our customers, and that is our biggest strength," he notes.

Referencing receipt of the coveted VeriFacts Automotive 2018-2019 ACE Award for Outstanding Shop of the Year, Myers further observes that "we have worked hard to arrive at this point and recognize that we still have many opportunities for improvement."

Problem solving together

"Our customers are very important to us. We spend time understanding the customers' needs and expectations so that we can communicate those to our technicians. Our goal is to repair every vehicle as if they are our own," Hoenecke says. "We work very hard to stay current with all the latest equipment and technologies, and

our partnership with VeriFacts Automotive helps us do that. Our No.1 goal is our customers' safety and satisfaction."

Based in Newport Beach, Calif., VeriFacts Automotive provides high levels of collision repair business coaching, evaluation and verification, serving thousands of shops across North America. The company reports that these services assist their clients as they adopt advanced technologies, deliver higher quality repairs, showcase their quality with a third-party review process, achieve OEM certifications and ultimately provide higher customer satisfaction.

The firm helps shops stay up to date on the latest techniques, including the training of technicians and obtaining the proper equipment needed to correctly and efficiently repair vehicles with advanced technology. Their coaching team works closely with repairers across the continent to conduct facility evaluations, offer hands-on and virtual guidance, and provide technical support.

"VeriFacts is a great partner for us and has made a big impact on our business," according to Hoenecke. "Over the years we had developed a good process, but once we partnered with VeriFacts Automotive, it just continued to get better. They come in and evaluate the process and are continually looking for opportunities for us to improve it. Many of the suggestions they make we incorporate into our SOPs — most of which they helped us to create.

"Everyone knows that there is a technician crisis in our industry, and while we experience it as well," she continues, "we believe it is to a lesser degree because of our process."

With the complexity of today's vehicles, "it's difficult to find and train people on the entire repair process, but much easier to train on a specific part of the process. So we hire good people who can follow procedures and become specialists and experts in their area," Hoenecke says. "Our culture encourages our

employees to contribute to the solution and utilizes their expertise in their area."

"We value the creativity of our people because we understand that they are the ones working in the process and they have creative solutions. We seek and develop leaders who are also team players and can work with integrity, holding to their word and supporting the overall goal of the company."

Training workers from within the company "ensures that our processes are preserved and our employees are well-versed as they move through the organization. In turn, our employees feel valued and enjoy working with us," says Hoenecke.

"We value and have worked hard to build a loyal relationship with each of our primary vendors, sending them the majority of our parts orders. In turn, they have provided us with excellent service."

"We have designed our ordering system for our materials to minimize deliveries from our vendor," adds Hoenecke, bringing about an upgrade that reduces emergency deliveries while "streamlining the process for both parties involved. We found that a system that benefits everyone will be sustainable in the future."

Insurance providers are viewed as "our partners in serving our mutual customers," according to Hoenecke.

"If we can create an exceptional experience for our customers, it is a win-win for everyone in the process," she says. "Our estimators and CSI representatives are in constant communication with our insurance partners, working through issues that may arise in order to minimize any surprises at the end. Our goal is to prevent issues with open communication and problem-solving together."

A need to be creative

Eurotech was established in 1988, by Keith Myers and Kevin Kirchner, across the street from its current Bellflower location. "Over the years, our business grew at a steady rate; our focus on quality and customer

service started to build a good reputation in the surrounding community," Myers recounts.

"In 1998, we needed to find more qualified technicians, which was difficult. We knew we needed to be creative and find a better way to run the business without the dependency on as many metal technicians — thus began our journey," he reports.

"In 2002, we needed to work on our supporting systems as well to yield a higher production rate. We realized our way of thinking about production would have to change, so that started the transformation of our core systems."

Upon opening the Cerritos shop in 2010, their new systems were immediately implemented. In the meantime, "We were outgrowing our Bellflower location and we knew we needed to make that location more efficient. This came at a time when many of the OEMs were opening up their certification programs," says Hoenecke.

"We were able to utilize this information to further enhance the capabilities of our new facility. After a year of planning, we began construction in 2018. It has not been an easy road but to see the progress has been very rewarding," she points out.

"We have been in business in the local community for more than 31 years and have worked hard to build a good reputation. We have a strong customer base that continues to utilize our facilities as well as refer many of their friends and family to us," says Myers.

"However, we realize that the landscape is changing and we have recently started communicating on social media," Hoenecke notes. "As the technology continues to advance, we find ourselves updating all our processes and marketing techniques to stay current with our customer." 📱



JAMES E. GUYETTE is a long-time contributing editor to *ABRN*, *Aftermarket Business* *World* and *MotorAge* magazines. JimGuyette2004@yahoo.com



HOW TO CREATE A PATH TO LEADERSHIP

Leadership development 3.0

DAVID ROGERS // Contributing Editor

Leadership means something different to everyone, and everyone responds differently to various leadership techniques. “Bossing” and “managing” are two very different concepts and being able to negotiate the middle ground between them is a skill as important as any you’ll learn in your career.

My personal leadership style has changed drastically over the years. Just like anything else, people adapt and evolve over time and I’ve gone from being an authoritative figure to much more affiliative and diplomatic. It wasn’t easy and it didn’t happen over-

night, but being able to see how people react to different styles has given me a better understanding of what good leadership is all about — getting the most out of your team and doing what’s best for your shop.

You’ve heard the expression “leaders are born,” and that’s true to a certain extent, but leaders are also developed by enhancing an employee’s natural abilities and setting them up to succeed by unlocking their potential to lead. To do this you need to (a) know what to look for when you’re hiring someone, (b) train them properly and (c) establish good internal

measurement systems that set people up to become better employees and, ultimately, quality leaders.

When you’re looking for employees who can help take your shop to the next level and provide good direction and leadership for your business, it starts before they even set foot in the door — it starts when you’re still in the hiring process.

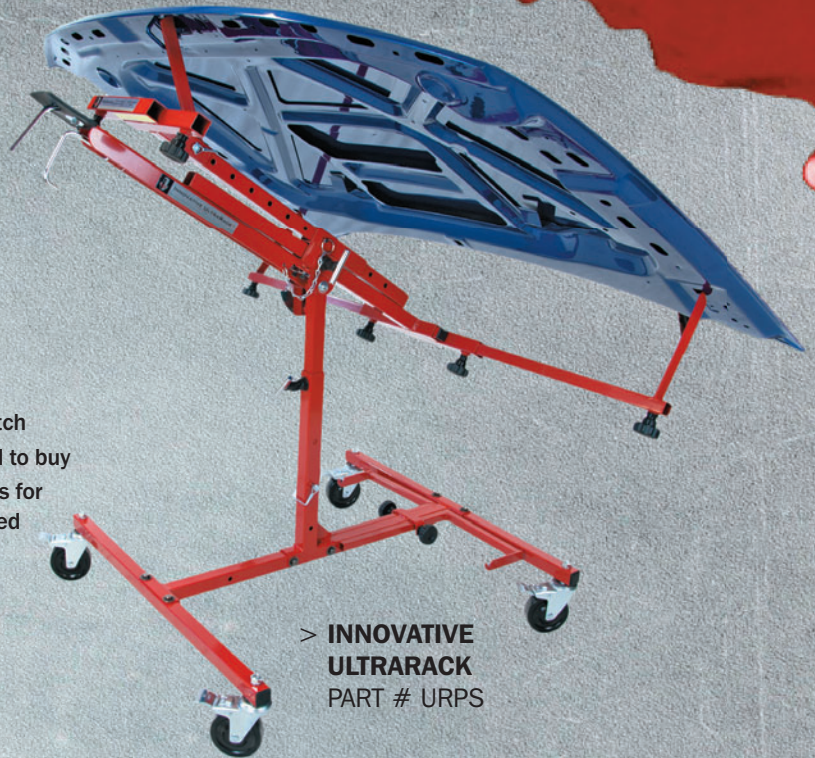
Be diligent

The one ingredient that does go into every great leader (and team member for that matter) is character. Character is something you either have or you

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don't — and it's not something that can be taught.

As such, when you're looking to hire someone who you can build into a leader at your shop, character is the biggest thing you're looking for in a candidate.

A major mistake I see a lot of shop owners making nowadays is hiring what I call "basketball employees." These employees bounce around from job to job, never really staying in one place long enough to make a difference or learn anything that will help them advance to the next level in their career. This is, usually, a sign of poor character.

We all know all too well that we're dealing with a serious labor shortage in our industry, but that's no excuse to hire substandard employees. I could go on and on about why there are fewer and fewer people entering the auto repair field nowadays, but at the end of the day, we can't let that interfere with the critical matter at hand. You still need to have quality people on your team if you want to run a quality business.

Back when I was the on-site manager at Keller Bros. Auto Repair in Littleton, Colo., we'd only interview a handful of candidates out of every 100 resumes we received and from there, we'd only make an offer to a single individual. In today's market, I'm not sure any of us see 100 applicants in a year. Obviously not every market has the luxury of being so picky, so the temptation to hire someone quickly is even greater today, but should be avoided at all costs.

You should always use a set of written questions when conducting initial job interviews — you need to have consistency in what you're asking the various applicants you're sorting through and the more you're able to learn the better. In addition to learning about their work history and such, you're also on the lookout for red flags. If every job they left was due to poor management, this should be a huge red flag.

If they waver when you ask them about having an up-to-date ASE certification? Red flag. If they're immediately asking about recreational drug use policies? Red flag. If they're reluctant to explain why they left their previous job? Red flag.

The more interviews you do the better you'll get at intuitively picking up on who will be a motivated, hard-working staff member and who will be a liability.

Be meticulous

Once you've hired a new employee, you should spend as much time as possible training them during their first couple of weeks on the job. Training is the best way to bridge the gap between the skills an employee has and the personality traits you felt might make them a good leader during the interview phase.

A new employee needs to learn both what and why you do things the way you do. People aren't pets — you can't just tell them to get off the furniture or to stop barking. You need to explain the reasons why your shop does things a certain way, especially if they're veterans of other shops and have picked up some poor habits over the years.

For example, at our shop, we do a thorough inspection of every car we service no matter how small the repair job might be. The reason? If that customer gets in an accident after leaving our shop, we could end up being proven liable — it's been proven in the courts on countless occasions.

Conveying things like this to your new hires is imperative if you want them to be motivated team players and develop into leaders moving forward.

Be committed to the process

In addition to having your policies and procedures outlined and explained meticulously, you need to establish a culture of employee empowerment

that new hires are able to buy into once they've been trained properly.

Empowering your employees starts with establishing a dynamic performance measurement system. Measuring productivity helps you retain good employees, plain and simple.

Imagine playing a game of football where you can't see the field and don't know the score. You probably wouldn't play, would you?

Knowing how they're doing versus their peers instills a healthy sense of competition within your shop.

Just like a quarterback knows how many touchdowns he's thrown for and a cornerback knows how many interceptions he's snagged, your employees need to know what their stats are and how they stack up against the competition. Ticket average, repair times, comeback rates, etc. — everything needs to be tracked and shared in order for motivation to be optimized in your shop.

In my experience, good workers want to be held accountable and a shop-wide measurement system is the best way to achieve a level of accountability that effectively motivates workers and builds the leadership skills necessary to know how to win the profit game — week in, week out!

Give your people these tools and they'll be in position to do great things more often than not — and you'll be in position to hand off more responsibility to the effective and productive leaders your shop has developed. ■



DAVID ROGERS is chief operating officer of Keller Bros. Inc., president of Auto Profit Masters and president of Shop 4D, the industry's first Artificial Intelligence (AI)

-enabled, self-learning system for proactively managing repairs, customers, marketing, profits and employees. Reach David via email at contact@shop4d.com, toll-free at 1-866-826-7911, or [online at https://shop4d.com/](https://shop4d.com/).

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How to build a destination automotive repair business

MAKE YOUR SHOP ONE WHERE TALENTED PEOPLE WANT TO INVEST THEIR CAREERS

CHRIS CHESNEY // Contributing Editor

Don't let the title of this installment fool you; I'm going to focus on ideas that will help make your business a place where talented people will want to invest their careers. In the last episode of this byline, I attempted to lay open the "way we've always done business" with the goal of helping us stay in touch with changes in our society, community and technology. I laid open the status quo that we find ourselves in with respect to the way we do business and the way we treat talent. Now, I'd like to suggest solutions.

There is a transient nature of techs in our industry and a challenge to attract new talent to our bays. Creating a pipeline of talent assumes we get folks in the pipe to begin with and keep them there for their entire career. More important is the idea that what's in the pipe must always be in motion. Let's apply it to a few examples. Let us first start with an issue that affects all techs and is a huge barrier of entry: tools! The tool requirement needed to properly service today's vehicle mix is massive and unending. The cost of diagnostic technology and the variety of suppliers prevent you from being able to control processes and outcomes for your customer. Does everyone have all the special tools needed to service the vehicles you maintain?

Speaking of toolboxes, take inventory of those in your shop. I'm betting at least one tech has that big box full of tools. They are probably proud of ac-

cumulating \$60,000 worth of tools over their career. But I'd like to remind you their box still has wheels. And if you don't provide a career vision for them and reduce their cost of doing business, you're going to see those wheels roll on out of your shop.

If you look at any new shop built in this country by new vehicle dealers and progressive independents both large and small, you'll find built-in tool boxes complete with the necessary tools and diagnostic equipment, along with the required lifts and other associated items needed to equip their business for success. The technician brings nothing to the bay except a great attitude and their talent.

Imagine being a technician who gets to work in a high-tech space and feels a sense of worth because everything in the building is focused on enabling their talent in a way that provides value to the customer. They don't have to spend their earnings on tools that benefit the business, but get to use the tools provided by the business that enable them to succeed. If you were a high school student looking at our industry as a career option, what would you think of this industry if you walked into the shop I just described? What would you think if you walked into your shop?

Let's take the scenario one step further. To keep the talent flowing through the pipeline there must be a means of energy to move them along, as well as an end game. This energy is best provided by a structured education program that

engages everyone in your business. If your business is going to survive the next 25 years, you need to have a growth plan that includes adding locations through greenfield or acquisitions. By far, the best way to instant success in a new location is to have talent in your current building that can take the reins and drive your business model to perfection instead of hiring an all-new crew and trying to instill your model in them. With that in mind as you create your education program, the idea of installing career pathways for each role in your business begins to make sense. For a technician who at some point in their career wants to own a shop, you can create a pathway that, over time, immerses them in all aspects of the business via working in every role so they are proficient in your business model. When you build or acquire a new location, that former technician is now ready to extend said model in lock step with your vision.

At the end of the day, this in an industry that is changing rapidly. The advancements in vehicle technology are mandating the way we do business, grow people and invest in assets. The future is bright for those who recognize the fact that you must grow in order to scale the cost of technologies, systems and talent needed to serve your customers. ■



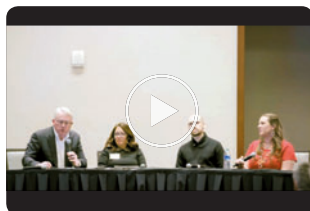
CHRIS CHESNEY is the Senior Director of Customer Training for Carquest Technical Institute (CTI) and Advance Professional. chris.chesney@carquest.com

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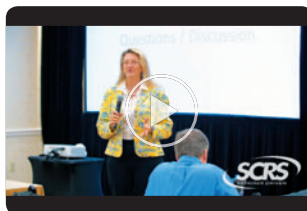
Stop enabling those who are not committed to training

ABRN.COM/Stop



An interview with the Seebachans

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Repairer Roundtable: Attorney Erica Eversman

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MECHANICAL MOMENT

SERVICE REPAIR PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS THAT JUST MIGHT BENEFIT YOUR SHOP TECHNICIANS

CADILLAC CTS CRANKS, NO START — MIL ON

VEHICLE: 2006 Cadillac CTS, V6-3.6L, VIN 7, Automatic Transmission

MILEAGE: 122,009

PROBLEM: The vehicle came into the shop for a crank but does not start issue.

DETAILS: The tech connected a scan tool and pulled numerous Diagnostic Trouble Codes (DTCs) related to the even-numbered cylinders on the left bank (see DTCs below). He checked those cylinders for spark with a spark tester and injection pulse with a noid light and found none. The tech also noted that the fuse designated as the "EVEN INJ/COIL" fuse kept blowing as soon as the engine was cranked.

DTCs STORED:

- P0264 Injector 2 Control circuit Low voltage
- P0270 Injector 4 Control circuit Low voltage
- P0276 Injector 6 Control circuit Low

voltage

- P0300 Random Misfire Detected
- P0302 cylinder #2 Misfire Detected
- P0304 cylinder #4 Misfire Detected
- P0306 cylinder #6 Misfire Detected

The Tech-Assist consultant suggested disconnecting the harness connectors to the injectors and coils on the left bank, then begin plugging each connector in one at a time while cranking the engine until the coil(s) or injector(s) that was causing the fuse to blow was found.

The technician followed the instructions and found the coil on cylinder #2 would blow the fuse.

CONFIRMED REPAIR: The tech replaced the #2 coil and its wiring pigtail and the Caddy is fixed!

This tech tip and others come from ALL-DATA Tech-Assist, a diagnostic hotline of ASE-certified Master Technicians. Learn more at ALLDATA.com.

TRAINING EVENTS

JANUARY 15-16

Collision Industry Conference
Hilton Palm Springs
Palm Springs, California

JANUARY 27-30

Heavy Duty Aftermarket Week
The Gaylord Texan Resort
Grapevine, Texas

FEBRUARY 19-20

Women in Auto Care Leadership Conference
Omni Charlotte
Charlotte, North Carolina

FEBRUARY 24-27

The Truck Frame & Axle Repair Association Spring Meeting
Georgia World Congress Center
Atlanta, Georgia

MARCH 20-22

NORTHEAST 2020
Meadowlands Exposition Center
Secaucus, New Jersey

APRIL 8-9

Collision Industry Conference
Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront
Jacksonville, Florida

MAY 3-5

Women's Industry Network Conference
Hyatt Regency Newport Beach
Newport Beach, California

MAY 3-6

ACPN Knowledge Exchange Conference
Hyatt Regency Seattle
Seattle, Washington

NEW YEAR'S REVOLUTIONS

START 2020 WITH YOUR PAINT MANUFACTURER'S LATEST AND GREATEST CREATIONS

TIM SRAMCIK // Contributing Editor

It's entirely appropriate that SEMA convenes each year right before the holidays. Forget about the dry, hot Las Vegas location. This world-famous exhibition is a kind of holiday dreamscape where manufacturers tear the wrappings off hundreds of new parts, accessories, vehicle models and repair solutions in front of wide-eyed automotive service professionals. Among the shiny new objects promising to transform the repair industry are the latest offerings from the paint manufacturers you've partnered your business with for years.

While many shops are content with mulling over these high-profile innovations during a course of months, market leaders tend to dive right in. Make 2020 the year you joined them. Consider early adoption of new products and services that could give a much-needed kick in the pants to your business and potentially set it on a fresh, more lucrative repair course.

Check out the latest from your paint provider or the provider you might want to switch to in the New Year.

AkzoNobel: Celebrating history and the future

AkzoNobel chose SEMA to showcase the introduction of seven new colors in its Modern Classikk line of automotive paints developed in collaboration with

Dave Kindig, star of television show "Bitchin' Rides." Garnering particular interest was Redical, which AkzoNobel has slated as a red finish designed to stand out from other candy apple paints. The new color took a starring role as the finish of choice on the 1964 Pontiac Tempest built by Kindig for the company's show booth.

Also in the SEMA spotlight was AkzoNobel's homage to the long history of its brands. Sikkens celebrated 227 years and the Wanda line celebrated 85 years. The Lesonal line turned 160 years and used the occasion to unveil a new look that includes color-coded labels providing a better visual representation of its products to customers, according to Product Manager Bevan Perkowski.

While celebrating its history, AkzoNobel shined a light on the future with its shop management tool, Carbeat, designed specifically to help increase a body shop's efficiency and growth. Carbeat provides customers access to workflow software via the Cloud, along with a production-analysis dashboard, a large touch-screen monitor, onsite set-up and training and quarterly progress review. Shops use the touchscreen, which notes work that must be performed along with other updates such as parts delivery, to track repairs. The system is customized for each shop and provides critical analytics to keep owners and others updated on key business information.



PHOTO: AKZONOBEL

AKZONOBEL'S LESONAL LINE CELEBRATED 160 YEARS of business at SEMA and used the occasion to unveil a new look that includes color-coded labels for a better visual representation of the product.

Axalta: The need for speed

Axalta Manager Steffen Apollo says his company has used SEMA as a launch point for truly "game changing" innovative products. This year was no different with the arrival of the Permahyd 2K Sealer 5650. The new sealer, which also is a waterborne product, is all about speed, speed, speed.

"Productivity makes 5650 stand out," says Apollo. "Industry-wide, the standard for a sealer has been a 20-minute flash time following application. The 5650 provides a flash time of just 3-5 minutes, a 15-minute savings that I would argue

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is like adding another car through your booth every day.”

Apollo says speed and increased productivity aren't the sealer's only selling points. He notes that as a 2-component system, the 5650 offers a “traditional, quality, dense fill. Also, the 5650 offers a true “visual gauge” for painters since its appearance lets them know it has successfully flashed, a factor not possible with other sealers.

“What happens is that with sealers that take 20 minutes to flash, painters can think they're finished at 15 minutes when actually much of the sealer is still mushy. They go ahead and add the basecoat and clear, sacrificing quality and appearance,” says Apollo.

The 5650 offers one further benefit — it helps complete Axalta's Single Visit System. This system incorporates base and clearcoats that require just 1 ½ coats per panel and offer shorter flash times as well. With the new 5650 sealer, Apollo says a vehicle can be finished with the Single Visit System (including booth time) in just 40 minutes. “That's less than half the time of the 100 minutes it often takes with other systems,” he says. “Not only are you being more productive, you're cutting the use of other resources like fuel for the booth.”

Ultimately, the combination of product quality, speed and environmental quality and safety are what matter most to Axalta, says Apollo. “In an era of MSOs and completing as much work as is manageable, it's all about being as productive

as possible, in a way that doesn't compromise quality or environmental safety.”

BASF: Rolling out a lucky seven

BASF introduced seven new offerings as part of SEMA's New Product Showcase. They included:

Glasuret 285-15 Black and 285-25 White Direct to Metal Primers — The next generation of DTM Primer technology is engineered to provide ultra-smooth finishes and excellent leveling with fast sanding. These primers also offer all L- Shade tinted undercoats.

Glasuret 151-170 UV Primer Grey Aerosol — A new addition to Glasuret UV Primer line, the 151-170 UV Primer is an aerosol 1K product, yielding 2K results. BASF says it dries exceptionally fast, allowing shops to get more cars out the door with lower energy and labor costs. It's also designed to be safe and easy to use.

R-M 910 Universal Prep Cleaner — BASF calls R-M 910 Universal Prep Cleaner a next generation, improved final wipe waterborne cleaning technology. Like other R-M products, the 910 cleaner promises to offer peak efficiency to high-productivity collision centers and restoration shops alike.

Limco LP790K White, LP800K Grey and LP810K Black Primer Surfacer — White, Grey and Black surfacers provide shops a complete 2K urethane primer surfacer series solution that can be mixed to create L-shade groundcoats and enhance hiding and topcoat holdout.



PHOTO: AXALTA

AXALTA HAS LONG USED SEMA TO INTRODUCE its “game changing” products. Their most recent offering is the Permahyd 2K Sealer 5650, a waterborne product that flashes in just 3-5 minutes, cutting the industry standard sealer flash time of 20 minutes by 75 percent.

Limco 151 General Purpose Cleaner — The first waterborne cleaner in the Limco brand, 151 General Purpose Cleaner cleans light-duty and water-soluble contaminants from painted parts, raw or painted plastics and gelcoats. Because it features anti-static properties, the product can be used as a pre-paint cleaner as well.

PPG: Sealing the deal

PPG debuted a pair of sealers — its EC-S8X A-Chromatic Sealers, engineered for use with the company's Envirobace High Performance basecoat automotive refinishing system, and P565-318X HS Wet-on-Wet Sealers, intended specifically for



PHOTOS: PPG

PPG SPOTLIGHTED NEW SEALERS for its Envirobace High Performance and Aquabase Plus automotive refinishing systems.

use with the Aquabase Plus automotive refinish system.

Both sealers are available in three A-Chromatic shades: G1 white, G5 gray and G7 dark gray, which can be blended into shades G3 and G6. PPG says the sealers provide exceptional leveling and blend edge characteristics to produce a smoother finish for the basecoat layer.

Both also are ready to topcoat in 15 minutes and can be applied over unsanded OEM e-coats, sanded original finishes and/or properly prepared and treated bare steel, aluminum, fiberglass and plastic. The sealers are intended to generate a level surface with minimal texture in the blend edge, allowing their associated basecoats to lay flatter. The improved foundation, coupled with the appropriate gray shade undercoat, can produce an “invisible” repair using less basecoat material, which translates into lower costs.

“Collision centers using the ECS8X A-Chromatic Sealers will experience a noticeable enhancement in Envirobase High Performance results,” said Tim Jones, PPG manager, collision segment, automotive refinish. Jones also praised the ease of use of P565-318X HS Wet-on-Wet Sealers, declaring that, “Painters will quickly notice how trouble-free these sealers are, and shop managers will appreciate increases in productivity.”

The ECS8X A-Chromatic Sealers will replace the ECS2X and ECS6X sealers. The P565-318X sealers are compatible in all markets using the current ECR reducers with full temperature options, eliminating the need for additional compliant reducers. Both sets of sealers are compatible with DELTRON DBC 2000 and GLOBAL REFINISH SYSTEM reducers in National Rule areas.

Sherwin-Williams Automotive Finishes: Matrix reloaded

Sherwin-Williams Automotive Finishes (SWAF) spent significant booth space and SEMA time focusing on art, notably

paying tribute to the auto painter — refinishers, pinstripe artists and airbrushers — with a gallery-inspired space displaying unique works of art showcasing its paint and products.

Those weren’t the only works of art on display as SWAF featured custom vehicles built by Jesse James with West Coast Choppers, Ryan Evans and Lonny Speer with Count’s Kustoms, and motorcycles by a number of artists from Justin Nichols with Nichols Paint & Fab to Jace Hudson with Fast Life Garage.

Also taking central stage was Matrix Edge, the newest Matrix system and one that combines 21st century technology with old-school moxie. Ryan Evans likens the new system to Matrix circa 1983. “It instantly time-warped me,” he says. “Basecoats are just naturally delicate, but not with the old system and not with Edge. You don’t have to worry about tape tracking or bumping into the paint and scuffing the metallics. The basecoat is super durable even without any clear on it.”

Matrix Edge offers a complete line of system products including prep products, primers/sealers, basecoats, toners, sealers, clearcoats, activators/hardeners and reducers.


SWAF says Matrix Edge clearcoats remain unchanged with this new system. Formulas, everything from AG-40 Euroglas Design Clearcoat to MS-52 Universal Clearcoat, are original. Color tools include color retrieval software (Color Focus 2.0), color books with domestic and import colors, a color map system



PHOTO: SHERWIN-WILLIAMS AUTOMOTIVE FINISHES

SWAF SHOWCASED ARTWORK CREATED USING ITS PRODUCTS – here Javier Soto and Juan “Munch” Gonzalez create a panel portrait of the late drag racer Katrina “Kat” Moller. SWAF also showcased its latest Matrix system, Matrix Edge.

(with chips, including OEM colors) and a camera (or spectrophotometer).

Whether your shop is looking for increased productivity, improved efficiency, superior finishes, more environmentally friendly, safer products or solutions to bring the past alive, the industry’s paint manufacturers had something for everyone at SEMA 2019 that also could make 2020 a breakout year for shops ready to buy into a year of change. 



TIM SRAMCIK has written for *ABRN* and sister publications *Motor Age* and *Aftermarket Business World* for more than a decade. tsramcik@yahoo.com

COLLISION PRODUCT GUIDE

WATER-BASED COLOR SYSTEM

Blucrom meets the demands of those users that seek the best paint solutions: effective, precise and versatile. In short, the high quality historically associated with Roberlo's putties, primers and clear coats. Now also available in color. With this new product, the brand, which for decades has focused its R&D&I on complimentary products, is further extending its range to close the complete vehicle refinishing cycle by offering a water-based color system.



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WELDER

Lincoln Electric® introduces the POWER MIG® 140 MP® multi-process welder, a lightweight and portable welder that connects to 120 volt power. This machine is an excellent choice for MIG, Stick, Flux-Cored and DC TIG welding applications. The intuitive user interface, easy setup and full list of accessories helps the welder get the job done in no time. The POWER MIG 140 MP welder provides versatility with MIG, TIG and Stick welding capabilities, allowing for a MIG weld at 30-140 Amps, a DC TIG weld at 10-120 Amps and a Stick weld at 25-90 Amps.



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WORKBENCHES

Ranger Design announces newly redesigned workbenches, which are great for storage and organization within the mobile technician's work vehicle. The new workbenches have not changed drastically, as the smooth, wood-top design is timeless. The end panels have been altered slightly to accommodate our new brackets; however, they will still remain aluminum for increased payload and overall durability.



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Body Shop Requirements

FROM PULLING TO PAINTING

Take action by asking for what you want

It is your obligation to ask for the funds to repair vehicles to pre-accident condition

Action is defined on dictionary.com as “the state or process of doing something.” Sometimes to accomplish a goal that you have set, you must act. In an old video I watched recently, Steve Jobs states, “Most people never pick up the phone and call. Most people never ask, and that’s what separates the people who do things from the people who just dream about them.” Back when Jobs was 12 years old, he called Bill Hewlett, who was co-founder of Hewlett-Packard, and told Mr. Hewlett that he wanted to build a frequency counter. Jobs asked Mr. Hewlett if he had any spare parts that he could have. As Jobs describes, “he laughed and gave me the spare parts.” Mr. Hewlett also gave him a summer job and the rest was history. The lesson that Jobs learned from this experience was that he needed to take the initiative and ask for what he wanted. He used this trait to help him become one of the most successful business leaders of our time.

Jobs had to act. It has been eight years since his death and he still provides lessons, by example through his life work, that we can utilize in our business and personal lives.

You may ask yourself, “How does this relate to my collision repair business?” Sometimes as managers and owners, we need to let go of our reservations and put forth the effort to ask for something in which we may think the answer would be “no.” The truth is how will you ever know unless you ask? Let me give you an example shop owners can relate to.

When we receive a customer’s vehicle, we write a complete blueprinted repair plan as the first step. During the blueprinting stage, we need to document by telling a story of the repair plan with detailed photos. After this stage, we need to make sure all the necessary parts are on the repair plan. This includes the one-time use parts and other parts that may be missed in the initial stages. The simple fact of asking can mean more money to safely repair our customers’ vehicles. What do I mean by this? This next part can be missed in our business.

When we send a supplement to be paid, we are asking for items on the supplement that are required to repair the vehicle



THE SIMPLE FACT OF ASKING CAN MEAN MORE MONEY TO SAFELY REPAIR OUR CUSTOMERS’ VEHICLES.

back to pre-accident condition. This can be construed sometimes as items that are not necessary. This is not so. These items are needed to make a safe repair. In our business we need to be professional and write our estimate per manufacturer specifications. The engineers design vehicles to react in such a way that when there is a collision, the vehicle will do the job of keeping the occupants safe, and we are not to change any safety aspect of the design in our repairs.

I have heard my dad say things like, “I have to fight for everything I get.” You may think this too. It’s frustrating. But we should not shy away from getting what we need to perform a safe repair for our customers. This is a prime example of where you must be straightforward and ASK. This will mean money paid for the customer’s vehicle to allow for scans and other necessary items. Be sure to thoroughly document what you need, through use of manufacturer procedures and photos.

What if the answer is “no?” If you are one of the unlucky ones who have documented and asked, but don’t get what you need to repair the vehicle correctly, then it’s time to involve your customer. As much as you don’t want to ask your customer to help, you may need to have them call the insurer and be an active participant. Let your customer know the process collision repair shops and insurance companies use, the obstacles in the process to get repairs paid for, and they should happily do so. After all, they want their repair to be safe and paid for.

At the end of the day, there is an obligation to your customers to repair their vehicle back to pre-accident condition. It is your obligation to ask for the money to do so. It may take some negotiation, but asking respectfully and being firm, you should get what you set out for...and your shop or customer won’t be out of any money in the process. 📧

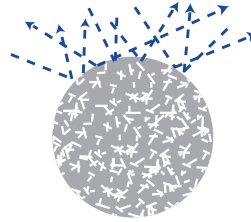
PATRICK PORTER is a 3rd generation shop owner at Porter’s Body Shop in Brookhaven, Miss. He is an I-CAR instructor and has his AMi Accredited Automotive Management and Collision Repair Estimator Certificates. patrickdporter@gmail.com

PRO SPOT

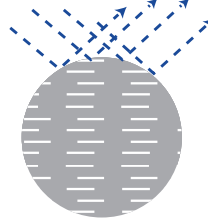
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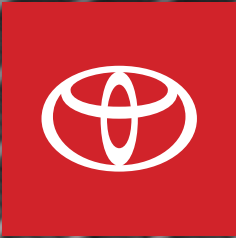


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