

SHOP and PRODUCT SHOWCASE

June 2018 // autobodynews.com

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3M Collision Repair Products Deliver Quality, Efficiency for Lexus Dealership Shops



by Autobody News Staff

Quality and efficiency are the most important things a busy shop can demand from the products and materials utilized in collision repair.

This is especially true at *Lexus of Pembroke Pines* in Florida and *Lexus of North Miami*, where **Brian Martin** has served as Director of Auto Collision for more than a decade. Both high-volume shops use a wide variety of 3M collision repair products and solutions because “they allow us to get the job done right the first time,” Martin explained.

The 35,000-square-foot repair facility at the Lexus of Pembroke Pines dealership is owned by the Craig Zinn Automotive Group, and repairs an average of 350 vehicles each month. Martin also serves as Collision Director of Craig Zinn Automotive Group’s North Miami Lexus body shop, a 45,000-square-foot facility that repairs around 275 vehicles each month. Combined, the shops generate \$1.8 million monthly. The two shops employ nearly 200 collision professionals, and all of Martin’s technicians operate at over 150 percent efficiency. Martin largely attributes this productivity to the use of 3M collision repair products throughout the shops.

In addition to abrasives, seam sealers and safety equipment, Lexus of Pembroke Pines and Lexus of North Miami use 3M™ Cubitron™ II abrasives and top-of-the-line 3M™ Platinum™ Select body filler. Their detail department uses Meguiar’s products, eliminating many labor hours and increasing profitability because the metering system saves time and prevents mixing errors. Recently, the shop converted to the 3M™ PPS™ Series 2.0 Spray Cup System, which features a new lid-locking system that makes for easier cup assembly and has a new hard cup included in every lid and liner kit.

“Our distributor always recommends 3M collision repair products, and I wouldn’t use any other brand,” Martin said. “In addition to offering the best-functioning products, 3M provides training and support for all of their products, processes and procedures to ensure we’re maximizing their potential as well as our team’s productivity and profitability.

“3M often calls on us to pilot new products, and we always appreciate



Technician **Roberto Trejo** utilizes 3M’s new PPS 2.0 system to make his job easier every day.

the opportunity because 3M stays on the cutting edge and continually improves the products on the market to offer the best quality and efficiency imaginable. Implementing their new products is very simple because of the support that 3M provides when they roll out something new.”

This relationship is important because customer service is an area in which both of these Lexus dealership shops pride themselves.

Martin shared, “We believe we’re in the hospitality industry, not just the automotive industry. We’re here to make sure our customers are well cared for. A collision is the lowest point of vehicle ownership, so we need to take care of the customer as much as we take care of their car and focus on treating them better than they’ve ever been treated in the past.”

Lexus of Pembroke Pines and Lexus of North Miami extend their focus on customer service to include an emphasis on community involvement. The shops sponsor a number of local sports teams and “adopted” 10 children for Christmas through His House, a Catholic ministry. Shop employees also run in the annual ANF Tour de Broward, which benefits the Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital.

The shops also watch out for the environment, exceeding all EPA requirements and “constantly seeking improvements as we expand,” Martin explained.

Lexus of Pembroke Pines and Lexus of North Miami also put a lot of emphasis on proper repairs based on OEM specifications, rather than insurer recommendations. The shops consistently appear in the upper ranking of Lexus-certified collision centers, and they are also I-CAR Gold-certified. The shops have also received OEM certifications through Honda/Acura, Nissan, Infiniti and

several other manufacturers. Their technicians also receive extensive training and are all certified through ASE, Lexus, Toyota and I-CAR.

Lexus of Pembroke Pines participates in one direct repair program, while Lexus of North Miami participates in two programs. The shops spray with Axalta Standox paints due to the high humidity in their state.

Martin understands that repairing vehicles to the manufacturers’ standards is imperative because “the future holds more OEM involvement as the cars being produced are increasingly complex. This has led to the collision repair industry receiving more support from the OEMs as they encourage safe repairs to [bring the car back to its] pre-loss condition. I’m hopeful that insurance companies will follow their example in the near future.”

In the meantime, 3M helps support shops wanting to do the right thing for the consumer through its CRIMP program. The program allows Lexus of Pembroke Pines and Lexus of North Miami to document the products used to make proper repairs so that they can be reimbursed by insurance companies. The program provides information about why certain procedures are necessary, showing the company’s support for safe and proper repairs.

Martin shared, “We never have product failure with our 3M materials. They are high quality and allow us to be extremely efficient in all of our repairs. I’ve used 3M my entire career because of how effective their products are and because of the great support they provide—our local support team does a great job providing whatever product training we need. Our team members love 3M’s products and prefer them over everything else on the market!”

Lexus of Pembroke Pines

Location: Pembroke Pines, FL
(954) 379-8712
www.lexusofpembrokepines.com

Lexus of North Miami

Location: North Miami, FL
(305) 372-1400
www.lexusofnorthmiami.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 200

In Business Since: 1998

Number of Locations: Two

DRP Programs: One

Combined Production Space: 80,000 square feet



Lexus of North Miami produces a vast quantity of repairs. Collision Director **Brian Martin** largely credits his team members’ productivity to the use of 3M products.



Lexus of Pembroke Pines and Lexus of North Miami both utilize a wide variety of 3M products, including abrasives, seam sealers and safety equipment.

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Great Neck Collision Enjoys Mix of Classic Values, Modern Technology With Accudraft Italia Booth



by Autobody News Staff

Great Neck Collision has been located in the incorporated village of Great Neck, NY, since 1993, but both the owner and the shop itself have much more extensive histories in the collision repair industry.

Anthony Marchetti, owner of Great Neck Collision, has been repairing cars for more than 50 years—since he was just 17 years old. His shop originated as part of Lamont Cadillac in 1927, according to Marchetti.

Marchetti's father managed a shop in Jamaica.

Marchetti recalled, "As a kid, I didn't want to go to high school—I wanted to work. So my dad took me to the shop, introduced me to his two tough managers, and told them to teach me the business from the bottom. They started me out cleaning the bathroom."

As an adult, Marchetti worked at his brother's shop, Carriage House Collision, in Flushing, but dreamed of owning his own shop. In fact, he once stood on the corner of Middle Neck Road and Elm Street, thinking he'd "love to own this shop," he said.

"That was in the 1970s, 20 years before it was available for sale. When the opportunity for this shop came up, I pounced on it!"

Great Neck Collision is a small 6,500-square-foot shop that employs six collision repair professionals and repairs an average of 40 vehicles each month. They spray with Spies Hecker and utilize a variety of equipment, including an Accudraft Italia downdraft spray booth.

With all the changes in technology, Marchetti realized he needed to upgrade his paint booth five years ago.

"Before, we had an antique booth from the 1960s," he said. "It wasn't even heated. We shopped around and found that the Accudraft booth offered the best value for the money. It's a high-quality booth and there's just no comparison. We saw a huge improvement right away; it was like night and day."

"The Accudraft Italia booth allows us to cut out all the wet sanding and polishing, saving us at least two hours on the average job, but it's important to bring the car in



Great Neck Collision owner **Anthony Marchetti** has class values. The collision repair shop has been in business since 1993.

clean for optimal improvements and performance. We also save labor costs because of the time savings. The booth also recycles the heat, so it saves a lot of energy and is ridiculously reasonable to run cost-wise. At the height of winter, we spend no more than \$300 in gas for the booth."

Training was not really necessary for the booth because it's so easy to use.

"It's very simple," Marchetti said. "You just hit a button for each function, but if you have a problem, support is just a phone call away. We actually bought the booth from a distributor but started using Accudraft North America directly because their client service is so excellent. I was really impressed when they recalled a defective part a year after I bought it. I hadn't had any problems yet, and they made sure to replace it before I did!"

Marchetti recommends buying filters from Accudraft directly because "the aftermarket filters don't fit right and are only cents cheaper. Also, we booth-wrap twice a year to keep things cleaner, and it's important to remember that a quality installation is imperative."

Founded in 1977 by **Guy Pippa**, family-owned-and-operated Accudraft boasts a strong reputation for durability, performance and product support. The organization is now run by Pippa's three children: **Guido Pippa**, **Giovanna Helton** and **Lorena Markov**. With manufacturing in New Jersey and Italy, Accudraft paint booths use extraction fans and specialized ventilation systems to remove chemical fumes, dust particles, overspray

and other contamination while simultaneously regulating temperature and humidity for proper paint application.

Marchetti's shop, which employs Marchetti's two sons, also recognizes the value of family.

"We say we treat people like family, and we mean it!" he said. "We'll do whatever is necessary for our customers. You need to love what you do to be good at it. There's more to this industry than just money; it's all about attitude. You have to be passionate about repairing cars and keeping customers safe."

Marchetti noted how rapidly vehicle technology is changing,

"When I was 45, a friend said God is wise in only letting man live on Earth for 100 years, because we couldn't handle all the changes we'd see in 300 years," he said. "I didn't get it then, but I sure do now! In addition to the multitude of technological advancements, prices for parts and materials have increased exponentially, while labor rates have not. Insurance companies aren't keeping up with rising costs."

Great Neck Collision is I-CAR Gold-Certified and is certified by Honda/Acura. The shop offers towing for customers and has had a DRP relationship with AllState for the past 20 years.

Marchetti is also heavily involved with the local community, donating turkeys to the Chamber of Commerce during the holidays and contributing to Handful of Keys.

Laughing, he said, "I like this small town. Everyone is nicer here. I was born in Brooklyn so this is like the country to me."

Great Neck Collision

Location: Great Neck, NY
(516) 829-9499
greatneckcollision.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair
Facility Employees: Six
In Business Since: 1993
Number of Locations: One
DRP Programs: One
Combined Production Space: 6,500 square feet



Marchetti said the high-quality Accudraft Italia booth has improved productivity and profitability.



Great Neck Collision wraps the interior of its Accudraft booth to keep things cleaner, and Marchetti stresses the importance of a quality installation.

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AkzoNobel Products, Processes Help Pride Auto Body Group Grow, Sustain Business



by Autobody News Staff

In 1982, childhood friends **Randy Stabler** and **Robert Turchan** founded *Pride Auto Body* after graduating college and deciding to go into business together doing something they loved: working on cars.

They opened a two-man operation and worked hard until they were able to grow into a larger facility with other employees. They expanded their footprint every few years to eventually include seven California locations that employ 165 collision repair professionals who repair an average of 1,200 vehicles monthly. Most of their shops are I-CAR Gold-certified and each shop has acquired several OEM certifications. The specific manufacturers vary by location.

"We cater to discerning customers who want their vehicle fixed at a shop that is certified to perform correct repairs," said **Steve Morris**, Director of Operations for the Pride Auto Body Group.

"It's impossible to grow a business to this extent without people and processes in place to help sustain it, and AkzoNobel has been right there. They're well-versed in the daily aspects of a collision repair business, and they've been tremendously helpful in developing our processes and people. AkzoNobel isn't just a paint company; they're more interested in helping us implement our growth strategy [and] strengthening our team's leadership skills."

Pride Auto Body's relationship with AkzoNobel originated with paint, and the shop's employees now spray with Sikkens waterborne system. Paint shop manager **Paco Arias** relies on Sikkens for its ease of use and superior color-matching qualities.

"AkzoNobel has always looked to simplify systems for their customers, and their Sikkens line is very easy to mix due to its simple two-to-one ratios," Arias said. "The waterborne basecoat is easier to spray than solvent, and the primers' dry time is amazing. The system is more standardized, allowing us to deliver a high-quality product in less time. It's simpler for anyone to use and has yielded huge improvements in throughput."



Pride Auto Body has expanded from one shop to seven locations since it was founded in 1982.

When AkzoNobel introduced Automatchic for digital color formula retrieval, *Pride Auto Body* was among the first shops to invest in the time-saving technology.

"We saw the benefits right away," Arias shared. "You take a photo and it provides options immediately. The system is very efficient and accurate, plus it's super easy. Our paint technicians see it as a huge time-saving benefit."

"AkzoNobel is great. They provide anything we need, when we need it, and it's invaluable to have that level of support. Our AkzoNobel service consultant is basically family, and we work together to develop our goals and processes. I just can't imagine doing everything we do without AkzoNobel's support."

As a long-time Sikkens user, *Pride Auto Body* also enjoys access to the Acoat Selected program. The National Performance Group consists of a dozen shops across the country that get together several times annually to discuss their challenges and potential solutions.

Morris noted, "The Acoat program is a great way to network and get to see a bunch of different perspectives. As the moderator, AkzoNobel offers timely topics and potential solutions. Participating in the National Performance Group has been extremely valuable."

Additionally, *Pride Auto Body* participates in the Process Center Environment (PCE) Users Group, which is focused on best practices pertaining to lean implementation.

According to Morris, "We helped AkzoNobel design the PCE concept, but realizing the importance of growing people, the recent focus has become a people-centered

environment. AkzoNobel has supported us by providing coaches and mentors. They understand the value of developing a positive environment where people can grow. This past year has been really rewarding, and AkzoNobel's support has been great throughout this exciting venture."

Morris and Arias agree that they've had nothing but good experiences collaborating with AkzoNobel. *Pride Auto Body* often tests new products and provides feedback.

Arias noted, "They take what we say into consideration and make adjustments before putting the new products on the market."

Morris added, "You have to respect a company that listens to their customers."

Pride Auto Body is also environmentally conscious. In addition to spraying with waterborne paints, all locations have converted to LED lighting and participate in a waste-reduction program.

"Taking care of the planet is something we all need to do, and there is a lot of social awareness in our demographic about how important that is," Morris said.

In addition to their focus on OEM certifications, proper repairs and lean processes, Morris feels that one thing that differentiates *Pride Auto Body* from other shops in the area is its focus on its people.

"This is a people-centered environment. We spend a lot of time and energy investing in our team's skills and leadership abilities," Morris said. "Most of our employees have been here for a long time and grown through the ranks, and our goal is to keep them engaged and excited to be at work."

Pride Auto Body Group

Location: Van Nuys, CA
(888) 300-4441
www.prideautobody.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: MSO
Facility Employees: 165
In Business Since: 1982
Number of Locations: Seven
DRP Programs: Three
Combined Production Space: 70,000 square feet



Pride Auto Body relies on Sikkens from AkzoNobel for its ease of use and superior color-matching qualities.



Participating in AkzoNobel's Process Centered Environment Users Group has allowed *Pride Auto Body* to implement lean processes to improve productivity in its shops.

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Autel Diagnostic Products Help NY Body Shop Decrease Cycle Time, Repair Vehicles Properly



by Autobody News Staff

At *Depalo and Sons Auto Body*, the motto has always been: "If we wouldn't put our family back in the vehicle, then we won't put yours back in the vehicle."

The family-run business has operated that way since 1972, when **Michael Depalo** set up a body shop in Huntington, NY, with three bays. Through the hard work and dedication of Michael and his employees, over the next 20 years the business grew from three bays to 30.

"My father and grandfather laid the groundwork, thus installing the core values that have poised us for 'bursting at the seams' growth with more than 40 years of new and repeat business," said **Vito Depalo, Jr.**

As a result, the business opened a second location in Huntington Station four years ago.

In addition to auto body and collision repair work, Depalo and Sons offers painless dent repair, automotive detailing, spray-on bedliners, auto glass replacement, window tinting and pre-lease inspections.

From the onset, within every aspect of the business, Vito Jr. said Depalo and Sons does things the "right way."

"We painstakingly take the time to streamline our operations, keeping up-to-date with industry trends," said Vito Jr., who runs the business with his father, **Vito**, and two brothers, **Edward** and Michael.

He said this includes taking the time to train employees as well as continually reinvesting in state-of-the-art equipment and products, including those from Autel, a leading manufacturer and supplier of professional diagnostic tools, equipment and accessories for the automotive aftermarket.

The collision repair business first learned about Autel products about seven years ago and now uses multiple products from the company. These include the Autel TS508 tire pressure monitoring system and the MS906TS scan tool. Not only has he found that the innovative products are easy to use, but he also said they are cost-effective.

Depalo and Sons uses the tire pressure monitor system on a daily basis, which allows the body shops to quickly test all vehicles with a light-



Autel's MaxiSYS MS906TS scan tool is regularly used by *Depalo and Sons Auto Body*.

weight, wireless, touch-screen tablet.

"I like everything about the product," said Vito Jr. "It's user-friendly, quick and very accurate. It does its job."

Vito Jr. said the Autel product can be used in many vehicles in which certain machines can't be used.

Another diagnostic tool used regularly by Depalo and Sons is the MaxiSYS MS906TS scan tool. In addition to pre-scanning and post-scanning the vehicle, the complete service tool can reset the airbag lights, service engine lights and do recalibrations.

"When a car comes in, we pre-scan it to make sure there are no faults," explained Vito Jr. "After the car is repaired, we then do a post-scan."

He said Autel products have helped them make sure the vehicle has a clean bill of health before it is returned to the customer.

Vito Jr. said the tool has been very dependable and has helped decrease cycle time.

"We are able to identify issues early on with the repair process as well as increase our CSI index," he said.

For the past 12 years, Autel has evolved its MaxiSYS diagnostic tools to meet the needs of collision repairers. The MaxiSYS MS906TS can perform pre- and post-scan auto scans to diagnose vehicle DTCs and then generate vehicle diagnostic reports. Images of needed parts information and the associated repair costs can be attached before sending the reports to insurers.

The wireless device includes AutoVIN, which instantly retrieves

the vehicle ID, make, model and year of the vehicle. The AutoSCAN feature enables a shop to retrieve information from all modules in the vehicles' systems. A single screen list displays all detected faults and trouble codes, and complete TPMS features include read, activate, relearn and program Autel MX-Sensors. In addition, there is four-mode live data viewing/printing/storing/playback.

As Autel's most affordable bi-directional scan tool, it performs the coding and activations collision repair shops depend on. This allows Depalo and Sons to use one tool to quickly diagnosis what is wrong with a vehicle and repair it properly. Autel plans to release its ADAS calibration tool package later this year.

Since using Autel products, Depalo and Sons has had great support from the company and receives regular training. Vito Jr. said Autel is very responsive and eager to learn about their needs.

An active member of the community, the body shop is affiliated with the *Long Island Auto Body Repairmen's Association* as well as the Huntington Chamber of Commerce. Continuing education is also an important priority for Depalo and Sons. The business regularly shares its knowledge and expertise in collision repair by offering free continuing education classes to assist auto insurance agents and auto claims adjusters maintain their licenses.

"We cannot over-emphasize our commitment to the communities we serve and live in," he said. "Using products like those from Autel have helped us best serve the greater Suffolk County area."

Depalo and Sons Auto Body

Location: Huntington, NY
(631) 423-2950
depaloandsonsautobody.com

Company At A Glance...

- Type: Collision Repair
- Facility Employees: 20
- In Business Since: 1972
- Number of Locations: Two
- DRP Programs: Eight
- Combined Production Space: 18,000 square feet



The body shop says Autel's products are cost-effective and easy to use.



Depalo and Sons Auto Body continually reinvests in state-of-the-art equipment, such as the products from Autel.

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Gabe's Collision Remains Loyal to Axalta After 53 Productive Years



by Autobody News Staff

When *Gabe's Collision* owner **Jeff Mucciarelli** finds a product that will help him, he isn't afraid to stick with it.

That's precisely why the MSO has been spraying with Axalta for the past 53 years without interruption. *Gabe's Collision*, a second-generation MSO with three locations near Buffalo, NY, repairs 6,000–7,000 cars annually.

Eight years ago, Mucciarelli switched over to Axalta's Cromax Pro Waterborne basecoat and has been singing its praises ever since for producing a stunning, planet-friendly, finished product.

Mucciarelli was proudly born into the collision repair industry.

"While most kids were out playing after school, my mother used to drop me off at the shop just to hang out with my father, **Gabe Mucciarelli**, while he worked," he said. "It was a one-man shop back then, and my dad was a great combination technician, so it was an education to see him in action. I actually started playing around with cars when I was 10 years old, but when the time came, I went off to college to study business management. I had no doubts about eventually being a part of the family business, and now I've been here a total of 30 years. Dad still comes here regularly and we give him jobs to do, because he still loves this industry as much as I do."

Now with 86 employees and a dozen DRPs, Mucciarelli, 53, still enjoys the industry as much as he did when he was kid, he said.

"I really enjoy watching the cars after we've repaired them and seeing the product we've created," he said. "I still get a rush every time I see the final product and watch the customers' reactions. They often tell us that the new paint job is better than the original paint!"

By switching over to Axalta's Cromax Pro waterborne in 2010, Mucciarelli tried to stay ahead of the local laws that had been forecasted but never came to fruition, he said.

"The State was telling us that all lead-based products were going to be illegal at some point, but to be honest, we're still waiting," he said. "We purchased a sophisticated USI



(l to r) **Gabe Mucciarelli** founded the business 53 years ago. Now his son, **Jeff**, runs the show.

spray booth that is ideal for waterborne paint, so we were moving in that direction already. Creating a safer climate for our employees and cutting down on the smell were two big goals, and we achieved both of them with the Cromax Pro."

After seeing a few cars painted with Axalta's Cromax Pro, Mucciarelli and his paint crew were sold almost instantly, he said.

"When I saw it lay out so beautifully, we fell in love with it," he said. "The color matching is great and we have very few issues dialing them in for every vehicle, even if the color is not mainstream. The cars come out looking great and we've had literally no comebacks, because the finish is impeccable."

As a collision repair veteran, Mucciarelli knows that all products have to come with great customer service in order for him to work with them.

"We call it the service behind the product because anyone can sell us paint, but without support, it just won't work," he said. "The support we get from Axalta is over-the-top, and that's why we've been with them for 53 years. We work with **Rick Rinaldi** from Axalta and our jobber, **Joe Dadario** at *GD Auto Supply* in Niagara Falls, is excellent. If we have any issues, [which] is rare, they are right here giving us answers and treating us like we're their only customer."

Part of the incredible support that Mucciarelli mentioned includes

world-class training provided by both the manufacturer and his jobber.

"When we first made the conversion to waterborne, they sent three people here who worked with our painters and preppers at all of our three locations one-on-one," he said. "They now come back twice a year, and it's great to refresh our skills or learn new things about the product."

They have not had any issues using the Axalta waterborne product, even when the weather changes.

"A first-rate product takes all of the problems right out of the equation, so we have zero problems curing these cars," Mucciarelli said. "It does get humid around here during the summer, but it's never an issue and the finished product is always pristine."

Mucciarelli walks the walk when it comes to being a green member of the three communities where he owns shops.

"A few years back when we were looking to open our third location, the neighborhood surrounding the facility was concerned about the amount of pollutants we were going to send out into the environment," he said. "We did a study and showed the neighbors that the fast food place down the street was producing 90 percent more pollution than we were, and they were surprised. We want to be a good community partner, and spraying a waterborne product is definitely one way to achieve that."

Gabe's Collision and Claims Center

Location: Buffalo, NY
www.gabescollision.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair
Facility Employees: 86
In Business Since: 1964
Number of Locations: Three
Combined Production Space: 76,000 square feet (combined)



Painter **Chris Goff** works in a high-production environment at *Gabe's Collision* and relies on Axalta's Cromax Pro every day.



Gabe's Collision has three locations near Buffalo, NY, and repairs 6,000–7,000 cars annually.

Axalta Coating Systems

Company Contact: Heidi Stilwell
heidi.stilwell@axaltacs.com
(610) 358-5353
www.axaltacs.com/corporate/en_US.html

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Legendary Dealership's Collision Center Embraces BASF Waterborne



by Autobody News Staff

In an industry with an incomparable ratio of males to females, a value chain dominated by women is practically unheard of—but not at Fairlane Ford in Dearborn, MI.

Julie Walker, president of Fairlane Ford, and **Tammie Tietz**, manager of Fairlane Ford, have developed a rare relationship with paint supplier BASF account representative **Brenda Getz**, BASF sales manager **Tonya Boddie**, distributor Micro Auto Paint & Supply CFO **Tammy Packer** and Micro account manager **Becky Giles**. But that was not why Fairlane Ford decided to convert to BASF's R-M Onyx HD paint line.

Personal recommendations and low-VOC options were primary factors that drew Walker to BASF. Fairlane Ford is receiving competitive pricing, high quality, outstanding support and much more through its new relationship with BASF and Micro.

"Our contract expired, so we decided to look at other suppliers and weigh all of our options," Walker said. "At the same time, we hired **Joe Sanfilippo** as our new painter and he gave us a great review of the BASF waterborne product. The timing was ideal, because we were looking for ways to be a greener and more environmentally responsible company. I was skeptical and really wasn't considering BASF initially, but after we sat down with representatives from BASF and Micro, I was convinced. Joe's input was important and one of the main reasons for going with BASF."

As a veteran painter with more than four decades of experience, Sanfilippo has sprayed a lot of different paint—both waterborne and solvent. He gives BASF's Onyx HD line, which can be used as water or solvent, five stars across the board.

"When it comes to the final result, there is no difference between using Onyx as solvent or as waterborne, except for the fact that it's better for the environment," Sanfilippo said. "On occasion, we will need to use our blowers in the booth, but in the end it doesn't take any longer to dry the cars, compared to a solvent-based paint."



From left: Collision Center Manager **Tammie Tietz**, Head Painter **Joe Sanfilippo** and President **Julie Walker** at Fairlane Ford.

Because he paints a lot of aluminum Ford vehicles, Sanfilippo is enamored with BASF's direct-to-metal process.

"Their new system saves us an entire step and allows us to use fewer products. In the past with another paint line, we had to first apply an acid etch primer to the aluminum, but no more," he said. "Thanks to R-M Onyx HD, we have been able to work faster and more efficiently, which is instrumental for any high production shop."

Another benefit of embracing the BASF R-M system is that it doesn't involve a wide assortment of products to achieve great results, Walker said.

"We don't need to use a lot of toners, undercoats, reducers, primers and sealants, which is nice," Walker said. "[Using] fewer products simplifies the process and saves us money. With our former paint company, we had to invest in more than \$20,000 of products to put on the wall, but now with BASF, it's much more affordable and more efficient."

Growing up in car dealerships, Walker was inspired to enter the industry at an early age.

"My father, **Marv**, worked at my uncle's dealership as a GM, so I started going there when I was young. He would work until 9 p.m. most of the time, but when he got home I loved the way his clothes smelled—like motor oil. It was intoxicating. When my father started working for Mr. Ford in 1978, he let me come to work with him over summer

breaks. That's when I began thinking about my future in this industry."

After graduating from college, Walker and her brother, **Joe**, co-managed the family dealership that is now called Fairlane Ford.

"He ran the collision center and the new and used car departments, and I was in charge of the office parts department in service for a decade," she said. "In 2008, I bought my brother out and took 100 percent ownership of the dealership in 2013."

The dealership now has three separate buildings situated on seven acres, but more than 95 years ago when it opened its doors, it was a modest facility.

"It was originally established by Henry Ford's nephew, and he named it R.W. Ford," she said. "In 1951, he passed it on to his son, who re-named the dealership Bob Ford, Ford, Inc. before my family purchased it from Ford in 1983."

Today, the collision center at Fairlane Ford repairs 70–75 vehicles every month with seven employees, which means it's a busy scene. Walker is pleased that Sanfilippo is able to get his job done using less product than before.

"We have only been using BASF products for a short time, but we can already see that we're able to get sufficient coverage on all of the vehicles using only 1.5–2 coats. It's going to equal significant savings over time, so using the BASF R-M Onyx HD line will help us in several ways."

Fairlane Ford Collision Center

Location: Dearborn, MI

(313) 846-5000

www.saveatfairlane.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 76

In Business Since: 1968

Number of Locations: One

Combined Production Space: 10,000 square feet



Fairlane Ford has an entire support team to help during its conversion to BASF. From left: **Tammie Tietz**; **Brenda Getz**, Account Representative, BASF; **Tammy Packer**, CFO, The Micro Group; **Tonya Boddie**, Regional Manager, BASF; **Julie Walker** and **Becky Giles**, Account Manager, Micro Auto Paint.



Julie Walker holds a photo of the original dealership in front of the facility's original sign.

BASF Automotive Refinish

Company Contact:

Mary Ann Short

(Associate Manager, Communications)

(248)-948-2253

maryann.short@basf.com



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CAR-O-LINER

by Autobody News Staff

Trust, integrity, quality and reliability are what *Ed Rinke Chevrolet Buick GMC Auto Body Center* describes as the cornerstones of its business.

The family-owned-and-operated company, based in Michigan, was established by **Ed Rinke, Sr.** in 1917.

At that time, in order to qualify to be a dealer, you had to sell five cars a year, according to **Rodney Gajewski**, Ed Rinke's body shop manager. He said the first few cars sold relatively quickly and the fourth car was sold 10 months later. Eventually, the family had to pitch in to purchase the fifth car to keep the franchise alive.

The business continued to operate through the Great Depression and two world wars. During tough economic times, the dealership asked employees how much money they needed to earn, and they were later rewarded following the wars.

"During the 1950s, the business really started booming and it has just blossomed from there," said Gajewski, who has worked at Ed Rinke for 24 years.

Ed Rinke, Jr. is currently operating the company and Ed's nephew, **Fred Rinke, Jr.** is expected to be the successor.

In the early 1980s, Ed Rinke operated two separate locations—Ed Rinke Chevrolet and Ed Rinke Buick. When the economic downturn came in 2006, GMC asked its dealerships to revamp operations. Ed visited neighboring dealerships that were also going through facelifts to gain some ideas on how to re-construct his dealership. He also investigated new frame machines because the body shop's current equipment was obsolete.

"We weren't really sold on anything until we saw some shops with multiple Car-O-Liner frame benches," said Gajewski.

For the past 40 years, Car-O-Liner has provided technologically advanced collision repair equipment to the automotive aftermarket. The company provides 3D measuring systems, benches and workstations for structural and cosmetic repair, welders and riveters, and workshop solutions that include wall



Ed Rinke Chevrolet Buick GMC in Center Line, MI.

and tool carts, anchoring and holding products, and aluminum repair tools and equipment.

After contacting Car-O-Liner in 2010, several Ed Rinke employees traveled to Ohio to tour body shops that were using the equipment. They also visited Car-O-Liner's home office in Wixom, where they had the opportunity to talk to **Jeff Kern**, Car-O-Liner's president.

"We took a look at their facilities and they showed us various machines as well as the warehouse and a demonstration of how they measure cars onsite," said Gajewski. "We really saw the commitment to the product. We were a handful. We asked a lot of questions and I give them credit for their patience."

As a result of that research, Ed Rinke purchased two Car-O-Liner bench racks, one measuring system, a resistance spot welder and a workspace solution where they could hang chains, clamps and other accessories for their new location, which has been under one roof since 2011.

"This way, it was all organized and you know when the 'kids' are putting away their toys," said Gajewski. "Rather than having everything left around the shop, the next guy can come up to the rack and be ready to work."

Soon after purchasing the equipment, Gajewski said production in the shop went up and they were able to take on heavier hits. They also noticed that technicians had a more positive attitude. This prompted them to set up a second frame repair area. They purchased two additional benches and another measuring system.

"Production went up again and the attitudes of the technicians were very positive," said Gajewski. "We had an atmosphere where they were fighting to get on the rack."

Gajewski recognizes that change is often hard, especially for older technicians.

"Sometimes, they get set in their ways, but as they started watching people fix cars quicker, the quality of the equipment and the ease of the repairs ... they jumped on the bandwagon," he said.

The company recently purchased a fifth rack, another measuring system and a second resistance spot welder. They are also setting up an aluminum repair area with Car-O-Liner equipment. Not only has the equipment helped with cycle time, but he said it is also very dependable.

"Our profit has gone up every time we've added a machine," said Gajewski. "Every time you use it, it never lets you down."

As industry standards for repairing vehicles have changed, Gajewski said it is critical to utilize the best technology.

He said that having an owner committed to keeping up with the latest equipment, such as Car-O-Liner's products, and a great working atmosphere enable Ed Rinke to run a successful operation.

"The way our shop is set up with Car-O-Liner equipment makes a statement to the customer, the insurance company and also the level of professionalism that you are putting into your repairs," he said. "We now have a great combination of Car-O-Liner and technicians. It is an unbeatable combination when you go up against your competition."

Ed Rinke Chevrolet Buick GMC Auto Body Center

Location: Center Line, MI

(586) 754-7000

www.edrinke.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 220

In Business Since: 1917

Number of Locations: One

DRP Programs: 10

Combined Production Space:

24,000 square feet



Ed Rinke Auto Body Center featuring the Car-O-Liner Bench Rack, Workspace Solution, Measuring System and Resistance Spot Welder.



The Car-O-Liner Bench Rack, Workspace Solution, Measuring System and Aluminum Repair Station at Ed Rinke Auto Body Center.

Car-O-Liner

(800) 521-9696

car-o-liner.com

A woman with long, wavy brown hair is smiling warmly while looking down at a black smartphone she is holding in her hands. She is wearing a light pink, long-sleeved button-down shirt. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor setting with a white geometric shape on the right side.

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by Autobody News Staff

Celebrating its 45th anniversary this year, *Nagy's Collision Centers* in Ohio strives to serve customers' needs while fixing their vehicles correctly.

"We always try to be the best repair facility that we can for the customer," said **J.R. Noe**, general manager of the MSO's 10 collision shops, one express/corporate location, a powersports location and one detail center. "This is an emotional experience for them and we have to be mindful of that."

Dave Nagy established Nagy's Body and Frame in 1973 in Doylestown, OH.

"We started out in a garage that Dave Nagy had, and he moonlighted doing body work during the 1970s," said Noe. "He had a great passion for it and cashed in his entire retirement—with six kids at home—and decided to go for it."

Two of Dave's sons, **Ron** and **Dan**, purchased the business in 1995 and opened a second shop in April 2005. Since then, the Nagys have established 11 additional locations within a 75-mile radius, including nine collision repair facilities, Nagy's Power Sports and a detailing company.

Although Dave is no longer involved on a day-to-day basis, the original location is behind his house, so he often comes in and offers suggestions on how to operate the company.

"It's always good to have him around," said Noe, who has worked at Nagy's for 12 years.

Throughout its history, Nagy's has taken pride in responding to customer and industry demands by constantly upgrading equipment, education and training. Noe said this includes using forward-thinking products such as the ones from CCC.

Prior to switching to CCC ONE in 2010, Nagy's used CCC's Pathways estimating product.

"When the company came out with CCC ONE, it saved so much time," said Noe. "The accuracy was much better and made everything easier."

Last year, Nagy's began using CCC Direct and CCC Engage, both of which work within the CCC ONE® Total Repair Platform.



Nagy's customers can go online and schedule an estimating appointment using CCC Engage.

CCC® Direct is a repair management tool that helps shops manage standard operating procedures (SOPs). Two key features include "Checklists" and "KPI Dashboards." Noe is implementing the checklist feature on all iPods and laptops at the shops to document the repair process. Before this, Nagy's quality control sheet was on paper.

"Now it's on an iPod that I'm able to track everything on, and it's tied directly to that repair order," Noe said.

As a result, technicians can take photos when the repair procedure is complete and added to the repair order.

"This new process saves a ton of time and it's very smooth," Noe said.

Noe previously prepared several reports daily to determine sales, key-to-keys and KPIs. With CCC Direct's dashboard, he can access information with a couple of clicks and measure performance. This has helped him be more efficient and allowed the locations to utilize the information. The dashboard can be tailored to each shop and offers the option to add goals.

"This feature helps them run their locations better," he said.

In addition to the front office using CCC Direct, they have made it accessible for technicians.

"It is much easier for technicians to document the repair," said Noe. "We're very big on that through the repair process ... so we never have issues down the road of anybody questioning the repair."

Nagy's began using CCC® Engage at the same time as CCC Direct. The add-on package offers two main features: Online Appointments, which allows for customer schedul-

ing, and Lobby, a consumer check-in-process.

In the past, Noe said that shop employees encouraged customers to stop in at their convenience, but that would often cause a rush.

"Now, we can book the appointment in CCC Engage and it tracks everything. This helps us determine high-traffic times and we can space it out, so we have more time with customers," said Noe.

In addition, there is no manual rekeying or double-bookings. The Lobby experience allows customers to check in, which saves the front office time.

When the office has more people in it than estimators, it is easy to hurry through the process and miss details.

"CCC Engage has really helped solve some of that," he said.

Nagy's has had a very good response from customers using the products.

"We've had a lot of older people who you wouldn't think [would be] computer savvy use them," said Noe. "However, we've found that it's very easy for them."

He said CCC Engage has helped overcome the public's perception of a typical repair shop being a dirty, antiquated environment.

"When they see they can schedule online or get text updates of the repair process, it helps set us apart as an industry that collision repair is not what it used to be," said Noe. "It means a lot when you can send a link to watch the repairs online and see the estimate. Having that transparency puts them at ease."

Overall, Noe said CCC Direct and CCC Engage have enabled Nagy's to fulfill its ultimate goal: to best serve customers.

Nagy's Collision Centers

Location: Orrville, OH

(330) 642-1010

www.nagys.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 120

In Business Since: 1973

Number of Locations: 10 collision, 13 total businesses

DRP Programs: 5–10 depending on location

Combined Production Space: 93,500 square feet



J.R. Noe said CCC Checklist is one of the product features on the company's app that demonstrates the professionalism of the industry.



Nagy's operates 13 locations in the Northeast Ohio area.

CCC Information Services

www.cccis.com

877-208-6155



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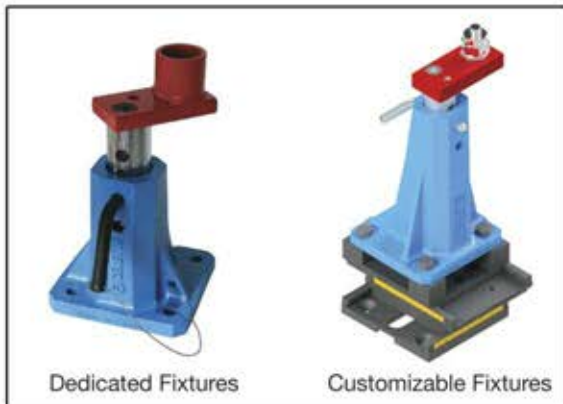
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Celette Benches Help TX Shop Repair Vehicles Properly According to OEM Specifications



by Autobody News Staff

The number one goal at *Park Place BodyWerks* is to provide first-class service by treating customers like no other collision repair facility in the Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) Metroplex.

With locations in Dallas, Fort Worth and Grapevine, BodyWerks is part of the Park Place family of dealerships, which was founded by **Ken Schnitzer** in 1987 with a single Mercedes-Benz dealership on Oak Lawn in Dallas. Over the last 30 years, the business has grown to include 14 dealerships that represent luxury brands, such as Rolls-Royce, Bentley and McLaren.

Park Place has received numerous awards for being one of the top employers in the nation, as well as for its outstanding service and customer satisfaction. **Eric McKenzie**, director of body shop operations, said Park Place also has the number one volume collision repair and paint and body shop facility in Texas.

"The reason we have been so successful as a dealer group is because of our reputation in customer service," said McKenzie.

Since the company was first established, the Park Place team has always strived to provide the greatest experience for customers. An important part of this is repairing vehicles properly according to OEM specifications.

The company is highly certified for all of the luxury brands they sell. These include Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, Volvo, Porsche, Bentley, Bugatti, Jaguar, Maserati, Rolls Royce, Lotus, McLaren, Sprinter and Land Rover.

"Those names ring out to consumers as high-end and not the easiest to obtain," he said.

He said this demonstrates the company's efforts to stay on top of training and ensure technicians are prepared to work on the vehicles their clients drive.

"We have no DRPs and receive all of our work from the dealer network," he said. "I think the fact that we have so many high-end OE certifications and keep up with the latest training and equipment sets us apart from most."

The company also ensures it utilizes the best equipment available on the market to restore vehi-



Celette benches have eliminated the guesswork when technicians are doing a repair.

cles to their pre-loss condition. He said Celette benches have been instrumental to their business.

When McKenzie began working at Park Place 11 years ago, the flagship location in Dallas/Fort Worth was using one Celette bench. Since then, they have added two more to that location and purchased a Sevenne XL Celette bench at each of their new locations.

"The technicians wouldn't want to do the kind of structural repairs that we do without the Celette benches," McKenzie said. "Every technician who uses them absolutely feels they are crucial to proper structural repairs."

He said the use of a Celette bench with dedicated fixtures eliminates the guesswork when doing a repair.

"The structural components can be replaced without any question, unlike non-dedicated fixture systems, which don't have that sense of security," McKenzie said.

As a result, he said technicians can be 100 percent confident that the structural components they are replacing are going in exactly where the OE has specified.

More than anything, his technicians like how precise the equipment is, and they have no concern of any error.

"It is a phenomenal product," he said.

McKenzie said Celette has provided the collision centers with excellent support and been very good about coming to the shop to conduct annual bench inspections and providing training refresher courses

as needed. This is important to Park Place because several of the OE shop certifications require annual bench audits to ensure they have all of the components they need and that everything is in working order.

In addition, Celette provides training at its own locations in Illinois, Michigan, Arkansas, New Jersey and Northern and Southern California.

"They have plenty of support to cover any section of the country," he said.

In addition to the support and training provided by Celette, technicians attend Mercedes-Benz training on a yearly basis. During the instruction, the luxury brand allocates a portion of the course to setting up a vehicle on a Celette bench, so the technicians are well-versed and refreshed on how to set up the vehicles on the bench.

Currently, the company's top priority is to follow OEM procedures 100 percent of the time. This includes scanning every vehicle before it leaves the shop and ensuring the vehicle is safe and restored to pre-loss condition.

"We feel as collision repairers, it is our duty to 100 percent, unequivocally follow the manufacturers' guidelines at every step of the way, no matter what anyone else says," said McKenzie.

That means replacing parts with those that the OE specifies and following every single procedure while depending on state-of-the-art equipment, such as the Celette benches.

"It's important to us that our clients return to a safe vehicle that won't put them at risk," McKenzie said.

Park Place BodyWerks

Location: Dallas / Fort Worth Metroplex, TX

(214) 443-8250

www.parkplace.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 150

In Business Since: 1987

Number of Locations: Three

Combined Production Space: 170,000 square feet (combined)



Park Place BodyWerks operates three collision repair facilities in the Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) Metroplex.



The company is highly certified for all of the luxury brands they sell.

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Third-Generation Shop Smiling Ear-to-Ear With ChemSpec USA



by Autobody News Staff

Josh Walsh, 34, has been working at Walsh's Auto Body & Sales, the family shop, since he was 19. As a combination technician, he can do it all.

Operating as a family-run business since 1964, he prides himself on doing exactly that as he continues the Walsh legacy at the third-generation body shop in Providence, RI. Josh works with his father, **Mark**, and his aunt, **Kim**, at the busy shop, which repairs an average of 100 vehicles monthly.

Walsh's is excelling and doing it all without a single DRP by targeting fleet businesses such as Enterprise, Brink's and local high-tech companies, which have been a good source of business for many years. Fleet repairs require quicker turn-around times than standard insurance work to limit downtime and avoid idle vehicles—an expense their business cannot afford. By stressing efficiency and looking for the best methods to repair fleet vehicles in a fast-paced production environment, Walsh's is always looking for top-tier tools and products to make its numbers.

Roughly two years ago, Walsh's began spraying ChemSpec USA's Metalux® polyester basecoat to improve processes and maximize productivity while producing a quality product each and every time.

After using the product for just a short time, Josh discovered that the Metalux® system provides him with a precise match on thousands of colors.

"The color matching with the Metalux® has been very good, and they're definitely on the money with all of the GM cars," he said. "Every once in a while, we might need to do a spray-out or possibly do a little blending, but overall, the color matches we're getting with this product are outstanding. ChemSpec USA® has now been added to the Axalta system, which means we'll be getting a camera to do an even better job at matching those tricky non-factory colors very soon."

Formulated with the highest-quality range of lightfast pigments to meet OEM color standards, the Metalux® basecoat guarantees excellent coverage and flow, according to Josh.



Walsh's Auto Body & Sales in Providence, RI is a family-run shop that repairs an average of 100 vehicles monthly.

"The system does not come with a lot of different toners, which makes things a lot easier," he said. "We don't have to carry a lot of products, which is also nice. With our fleet work, we want to be able to move quickly, so getting full coverage the first time through is a big plus. When I get a bunch of bumpers, I need to spray and move on, and I can do that with the Metalux®."

The Metalux® line features a full complement of hardeners, primers, specialized toners, clearcoats, solvents and accessories—all of which are backed 100 percent by ChemSpec USA's exclusive 4Life™ quality guarantee, giving Walsh's that much-needed peace of mind.

"The support we've received from ChemSpec USA® and our jobber, Rainbow Supplies in Cranston, has been very good," Josh said. "I make a list of what we need and I send it to them and, in most cases, I get my order that same day. The people from ChemSpec USA® came here to the shop and helped me install the Metalux® system. They suited up, jumped in the booth and sprayed the product with me. It helped me a lot."

ChemSpec USA® began in 1976 when **Pete Peterson** founded Montana Products, Inc., a manufacturer and distributor of value-branded automotive coatings, in rural Burbank, OH, per the company's website. He strongly believed that if he could make a quality product that was affordable for body shops of all sizes, he could succeed. So, with the help of his family, Peterson began formulating and selling new paint products as part of his vision to improve the automotive refinish market.

Initially, Pete and his family manufactured their products on a small

farm in Ohio, loading the truck each evening for next-day deliveries. However, Peterson's dedication to providing on-time deliveries and personal support quickly helped the company flourish. As more people came to recognize Montana Products as a premier automotive refinish paint manufacturer, the company was able to grow significantly over the next two decades and establish a strong reputation for quality and service.

In 2005, a partnership was formed between Montana Products and Chemical Specialties, Ltd., a South African coatings manufacturer of automotive, industrial, fleet and architectural coatings. In 2006, the company officially launched its Metalux® Automotive Refinish System at the NACE show in Las Vegas, NV.

Today, as part of the Axalta Coating Systems family of brands, ChemSpec USA® provides refinish paint systems for the automotive refinish, fleet, OEM and industrial markets. The company features a wide range of basecoats, single stage, pre-metal treatment, primers, toners, clears, solvents and specialty products under the brand names of Metalux®, Montana® and Metacryl®. The company continues to work on innovative ranges of quality products for now and generations to come.

Is there going to be a fourth generation to take over the reins at Walsh's Auto Body & Sales when the time comes?

"Well, my 6-year-old daughter has been coming to the shop for almost three years now, and she has shown some interest," Josh said. "I put food coloring and water in my spray gun and let her spray, so maybe she will be a great painter one day. Who knows?"

Walsh's Auto Body & Sales

Location: Providence, R.I.
(401) 785-3560

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 5

In Business Since: 1964

Number of Locations: One

Combined Production Space: 5,000 square feet



In 2016, Walsh's began spraying ChemSpec USA's Metalux® polyester basecoat to improve processes and maximize productivity.



The shop was founded by **Norm Walsh** in 1964 and now performs a wide range of fleet work for companies such as Enterprise and Brink's.

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Shop Owner Calls Upon Dominion Sure Seal Multiple Times Daily



by Autobody News Staff

While some fathers are proud to have their children following in their footsteps, **Carl Garcia's** dad wasn't crazy about the idea of his son working at *Carl's Collision*, the family body shop. In fact, after high school, he literally pushed him out the door and insisted that he go to college.

"I grew up in the body shop and my mother would drop me off there after school," Garcia said. "But education was important to my father and he wasn't offering me any options, so I went to college. It was a wonderful experience and I use a lot of what I learned in school every day here on the job."

After attending college, Garcia went back to his dad and convinced him that the collision repair industry was well-suited for him and would be a smart career move.

"Let's just say he didn't exactly welcome me with open arms," Garcia explained. "I had to start at the bottom, making six bucks an hour and after a while, I was asking myself, 'Is this the dumbest decision I've ever made?' I started out sanding cars and did all of the entry-level jobs that exist in a body shop. I found out that I am a lousy body man, so I took some estimating classes and learned everything I could about running a shop. I've been here ever since!"

Today, Carl's Collision employs 50 people and repairs approximately 150 cars weekly out of two buildings totaling 40,000 sq. ft. By stressing quality and garnering top reviews for providing over-the-top customer service, Garcia is thriving by embracing things such as OE certifications and is always looking around for better tools and products to improve his business.

"We are an I-CAR Gold facility and have 15 certifications, including Tesla," he said. "In any business, it all comes down to cheaper, faster and better, and people say to pick two. But my theory is this: Why not give them all that they want and deserve—all of it!"

To keep his customer base happy, Garcia and his crew need world-class products to stay on top. So when he finds companies such as Dominion Sure Seal that will positively impact his production, he isn't



Technician **Aaron Ferreira** at *Carl's Collision* uses a wide range of Dominion Sure Seal products literally every day.

afraid to give them a shot. Established in 1972, Dominion Sure Seal Ltd. is a leading manufacturer of sealants, protective coatings and adhesives primarily for the automotive paint, body and equipment industry. Dominion Sure Seal is headquartered in Ontario, Canada and has a strong presence in the U.S. Its products can be found in shops from LA to NYC and everywhere in between.

Garcia painstakingly researches any product prior to using it, he said.

"I am a research fanatic and always talking with other body shop owners to find out about the most cutting-edge stuff out there," he said. "About one year ago, we started trying the Dominion Sure Seal line after being introduced to it by one of our jobber's reps. We've added more and more of their products to our weekly orders and each one has proven itself to be the real thing. We love their panel prep products, spray gun cleaner, seam sealers, primers, rust removal/anti-corrosion products, double-sided tape—you name it. We now order at least 20 different things from them and are always trying out new items to see if they will help us."

One of Garcia's go-to Dominion Sure Seal products is its 3-in-1 Primers, which are perfect for metal, aluminum, SMC, plastics and fiberglass.

"It works well over body filler and other sanded areas prior to painting without sacrificing flexibility, and our guys are using it more and more all

the time," he said.

Another Dominion Sure Seal product that Garcia and his painters are enamored with is its Spray Gun Paint Remover, which quickly dissolves paint to keep paint guns running smoothly, saving time, labor and material.

"It goes directly into the gun and when it comes out, the gun is clean. It's that easy," he said. "It's so simple to use and so effective that we're not using anything else."

By calling upon all of his Dominion Sure Seal products over and over and watching them perform well in every situation, Garcia is now able to rely on these products and is always looking for new applications for them.

"We get our money's worth out of anything we use here, and if they can pass that test, they become a part of our production," he said. "With every company we work with, we also need them to be highly responsive and provide us with exemplary customer service, and Dominion Sure Seal has surely done exactly that."

Even though Garcia's father is pleased about his son's success in the collision repair industry while continuing his family's legacy, Garcia is always looking to be better.

"We want to always be forward-looking and continually improving every aspect of this business," he said. "This is a very exciting time to be in this industry, and the shops that embrace these changes will flourish and be rewarded as a result."

Carl's Collision

Location: Fall River, MA
(610) 446-4744
www.carlscollision.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair
Facility Employees: 50
In Business Since: 1961
Number of Locations: One
Combined Production Space: 40,000 square feet



Carl's Collision repairs approximately 150 cars weekly out of two buildings totaling 40,000 sq. ft.



Painter **Kevin Daluz** loves Dominion Sure Seal's Spray Gun Paint Remover.

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Voelkers Auto Body & Glass Has 15-Year Relationship with Equalizer®



by Autobody News Staff

Voelkers Auto Body & Glass is located in Newcastle, WY, a town with a population of fewer than 4,000 and well-known for oil, coal mining and ranching, in addition to its incredible hiking trails and mesmerizing sunsets.

In a small market where everybody knows one another, shop owner **Ryan Voelker** knows that he has to do a better job on each repair. That's why he stresses customer service and uses the best tools he can find to achieve his goals.

To be a full-service shop, Voelkers Auto Body & Glass also has a mechanical shop and does car restorations. Offering a wide range of services that complement one another just makes sense when the next shop is located more than 80 miles away, Voelker said.

"Four years ago, we added a couple bays and hired two mechanics and a service director, and now it's approximately 25 percent of our total workload," he said. "I was tired of subbing out mechanical work and relying on another shop to do our diagnostics, for example, so now we're able to keep it all in-house and get additional non-collision work as a result."

For more than 15 years, Voelker has been using two particular glass tools made by Equalizer®: the Viper™ and the Ambush™. He has been getting consistently excellent results across the board.

"We remove and replace at least 8–10 windshields every week, so we use these tools a lot and they never let us down," he said. "The Equalizer® Viper™ is a wire removal device designed for small quarter glass removals, but can also be used on windshields and back glasses. It's small, light and easy to maneuver. We use a half-inch drive ratchet with a 1-1/8-inch socket slipped over the shaft of the tool to rotate the wire reel. The double direction capability of the reel allows for optimum use and the magnetic points on the ratchet shaft ensure that your ratchet stays firmly attached to the tool, even in steep/vertical situations."

Window replacement season in Voelker's neck of the woods is spring-



By using Equalizer's Ambush™ reciprocating cutting tool, the crew at *Voelkers Auto Body & Glass* can cut through the toughest urethane quickly and easily.

time. That's when his Equalizer® tools truly pay for themselves, he said.

"The state of Wyoming uses sand instead of salt on the highways here, which leads to a lot of cracked windshields," he said. "During the winter, people around here catch rocks from the road a lot, but then they normally wait until spring to get their windshields replaced. They don't want us to replace their windshield until the weather gets better, because they might just pick up another stone the very next day. So that's when we get a ton of window work all at the same time, but with the Equalizer® tools, we can handle it and get it done quickly."

"The Viper™ allows us to do our work without damaging the pinch welds or anything else, and it's really easy to use. When I get any tool or piece of equipment, I don't want to have to worry about whether or not it's doing the job, and with my Equalizer® glass tools, it's one less thing to worry about. All of our technicians can use these tools and we have one guy that we dedicate 100 percent to doing our glass work, so that helps. Equalizer came here and trained everyone. They became good at using the Viper™ and the Ambush™ fast, because they make it so simple."

The Equalizer® Ambush™ is a reciprocating cutting tool designed to cut through the toughest urethane out there while getting into those tight and tricky areas where

other cutters can't. It comes with a heavy-duty 20-volt motor that provides the power to quickly remove the most difficult glass with the convenience of the battery and has a rubber over molded comfort grip and a quick release blade clamp.

Global Education Director **Gilbert Gutierrez** at Equalizer® has seen more and more body shops adding glass services to their menu of services because it makes sense on many levels.

"To save time and money, Voelkers is doing a considerable amount of glass work and it's become a significant part of their revenue," Gutierrez said. "But just as importantly, Ryan is keeping it all under one roof and able to control every aspect of the repair in-house, which puts both the customer and the insurer more at ease. In addition, it can help them with their cycle time, because they're not relying on another company to finish their work before they can return the car to the customer."

Now 44 and having worked in the collision repair industry since 1999, Voelker likes what he's doing, but also has an exit plan for when the time comes, he said.

"I would love to be able to retire in six years when I'm 50, because working 60–80 hours every week can get old after a while," he said. "But I still enjoy doing a good job for our customers and helping people, so I'm not going anywhere anytime soon."

Voelkers Auto Body & Glass

Location: Newcastle, WY
(307) 746-9378

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 10

In Business Since: 1999

Number of Locations: One

Combined Production Space: 40,000 square feet



Equalizer taught the crew at *Voelkers* how to use its Viper™ and Ambush™ glass tools to achieve optimum results.



When the window replacement season happens every spring in Wyoming, *Voelker's* Equalizer® tools truly do pay for themselves.

Equalizer

Company Contact: Monique Stearns
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Body Shop Delivers Quality Repairs With Florida Pneumatics' State-of-the-Art AIRCAT Professional Air Tools



by Autobody News Staff

When **Johnny Ding** was growing up, his father, **Johnny Sr.**, a retired construction worker, always told him to "buy the best and buy it once."

"I've been doing that since my career started when I was 17 years old," said Ding, the body shop manager of *Law Auto Body* in Illinois. "I would buy a tool and do my research to make sure it was the best one, so I wouldn't have to buy it ever again."

Ding began working in the industry as a porter for *Gerber Collision & Glass*.

"It fascinated me; I loved seeing a car in its different stages of repair," he recalled.

After being employed there, he decided to take a break and spent the next decade working as a paintless dent repair (PDR) technician and master technician before returning back to the body shop industry.

"I always loved painting cars, so I decided to get back in the body shop business," said Ding.

He ran his own shop, *Body Boss*, in Addison for 10 years before merging with *Law Auto Body* in the neighboring community of Bensenville in 2015. The parent company, *Law Auto Group*, also runs two high-end used car dealerships owned by his sister-in-law, **Tanya Povorozniouk**. *Law Auto Group* is in Bensenville and *Lux Cars Chicago* are located in Buffalo Grove.

Povorozniouk and Ding decided the timing was right. He dissolved *Body Boss*, merged with *Law Auto Body* and now runs the shop with his sister.

"Originally, it started out for us to fix our own cars, but word spread like wildfire and we now have a consistent customer base and steady flow of insurance work," said Ding.

Since joining the company, Ding said he has been awakened by the fact that vehicles are being built and repaired very differently than the way they were a decade ago.

"There is a right way and a wrong way of fixing these vehicles," he said. "The more complex these cars are becoming, [the more] we have to invest in more equipment and more tools, and we've found that it's [about] quality, not quantity."



Florida Pneumatic's AIRCAT 6700-6-336 6-inch Orbital Palm Sander has a lubrication-free air motor.

Ding first learned about AIRCAT Pneumatic tools from **Steve Packer**, the sales rep for the company, and recalled what his father had taught him about purchasing first-class tools. Ding has purchased a variety of products from AIRCAT Pneumatic Tools and said they are of good quality and dependable. The AIRCAT brand is Florida Pneumatic Mfg.'s corporate line of professional mechanic/body shop air tools. Florida Pneumatic Mfg. Corp., a subsidiary of P&F Industries, Inc., is a global manufacturer and distributor of more than 1 million products, which include air tools, pipe threading equipment and intake compressor filters every year. Established 50 years ago, the company prides itself on supplying products that offer superior quality and performance. The tools are constructed of steel, aluminum and composites that are heat-treated where applicable and 100 percent performance-tested.

Some of the tools *Law Auto Body* uses on a regular basis include 1/4 and 3/8 ratchets, angle and straight air grinders, belt sanders, file sanders and polishers.

"You know you are getting a quality tool. They are balanced and just have a good feeling in your hand," said Ding. "They are strong and hands-down, they are the most powerful."

A few months ago, they purchased the 1/2 inch impact wrench.

"We found they are every bit as good or better than the competitors in the market," he said. "The warranty is better too, although I've

never had to use the warranty."

Over the years, Ding said he has owned tools from other companies that break down right away. Even if they are under warranty, it doesn't help because technicians need the tools at the shop rather than the repair facility.

"I'd rather spend more and have quality tools that last than rebuy tools every six months or even sooner," said Ding. "All of our tools make us money. Having broken tools or frustrated technicians isn't helpful for the shop."

Although there is usually no training necessary to operate the tools, Ding said Packer is great at demonstrating the products and explaining the differences between them.

As an I-CAR platinum-certified technician and being ASE master-certified in collision repair, Ding recognizes the importance of continually retraining and relearning.

"Once you say you know everything, it's time for you to retire because every day things are changing," he said.

Within the last few months, the shop has done a lot of post-repair inspections.

"It's important to do post-repair inspections because so many poor repairs are being done," said Ding. "It's all about customer safety and bringing the car back to a crashworthiness state."

Using tools such as the ones from Florida Pneumatic has helped the shop repair cars properly and put customers' best interests first.

Law Auto Body

Location: Bensenville, IL

(630) 347-0347

www.lawautogroup.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

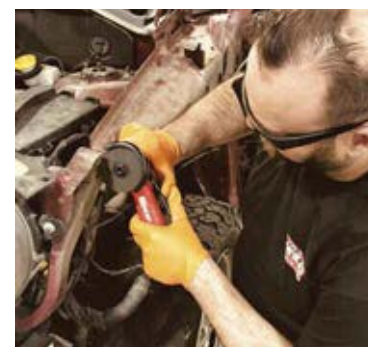
Facility Employees: Eight

In Business Since: 2011

Number of Locations: One

DRP Programs: Zero

Combined Production Space: 10,000 square feet



The 0.6 HP motor on the AIRCAT 6525-A In-line Cut-off Tool provides non-stall operation and has 18,000 RPM.



The AIRCAT 802 3/8 inch Composite Twin Pawl Ratchet has 90 ft-lb loosening torque and 280 RPM.

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GYS Welding Products Deliver Great Value to IL's Crash Champions



by Autobody News Staff

Crash Champions began as *New Lenox Auto Body* in 1999, but after 15 years of owning a small collision repair facility, President and CEO **Matt Ebert** bought out his partner because he wanted to expand the business and bring high-quality repairs to other towns near Chicago.

Ebert renamed the company to embody his goal of being champions for his customers and opened additional locations. Currently, there are seven *Crash Champions* facilities in Illinois.

With 137 employees repairing an average of 1,000 vehicles monthly and nine DRPs, it's important that the 160,000 square feet of production space at all of the *Crash Champions* locations is stocked with the best equipment in the industry for the business's success.

"Technology is advancing, and with it, the need for training and equipment is coming at a much faster pace than it used to," Ebert said. "The technician shortage pushes their pay higher, while we also contend with increasing training and equipment costs to ensure we keep up with the changing needs of vehicles today and we have what we need to properly repair vehicles as they change. To have our shops continue to do well in the future, we have to make sure we keep up with all of these changes in the present."

These advancements in vehicles include changes in materials by many OEMs as they strive to create lighter weight vehicles without compromising durability and safety. As a company that has acquired 10 OEM certifications with more in progress, *Crash Champions* knows that obtaining the right equipment for the job is essential.

"After doing some extensive research on many equipment suppliers and OE requirements, we decided to invest in multiple GYS products," said **Pete Callaway**, one of the directors at *Crash Champions*. "We use the GYS Neopulse 300 T-2 pulse welder for our aluminum and silica bronze needs. The GYSPOT Inverter Spot Welder is [also] great because it has many arms that are quickly changeable, plus it can perform a self-calibration."



Founded as a single location in 1999, *Crash Champions* has expanded to become a seven-location MSO since 2014 (Pictured: Plainfield location, opened in May 2017).

Combining power and ergonomics, the Neopulse 300 T-2 is a double pulse mig/mag 270A welding machine featuring connectors for push/pull and spoolgun torches, plus two integrated wire feeders that enable one of two wire types consecutively. It also features two bottle supports for two different types of gas. The GYSPOT Inverter Spot Welder, a single-sided gun that is lightweight and easy to handle, is ideal for welding requirements of high-strength steels with 550 daN electrode arms force at eight bars and 13,000 amps of welding current.

Crash Champions also purchased a GYS Speedliner Combi 230 Deluxe Steel and Aluminum Dent Repair Station, designed for any size repair, which allows them to remove dents without disassembling vehicle fittings and to repair without replacing.

According to Callaway, "The Speedliner Combi dent repair kit has really expedited the repair process and assisted us in repairing panels that would have required replacement in the past. It reduces downtime and improves profitability."

Founded in 1964, GYS is a French family-owned group that operates worldwide. The company engineers, designs and sells arc welding, collision repair and automotive battery service equipment.

"**Mike Hildebrand** and his team at GYS are committed to excellent customer service and have executed other projects with which we've tasked them," Callaway said. "The transition to the new equipment was seamless, and after the initial equipment installation, Precision Equipment Systems has visited

our shops several times to deliver continuous training.

"The employees at *Crash Champions* are extremely happy with GYS Welding's equipment and are working more efficiently as a result. With the ease of use, quality and service, I can say the GYS products, along with the support we receive from Mike Hildebrand's team, make the purchases a great value!"

Ebert hopes to provide value at each *Crash Champions* location.

"We are a local MSO with an owner who is very involved every day," Ebert stated. "We work hard to be able to provide the same efficiencies as the national MSOs, but we offer the benefit of being small enough that our employees and customers never become 'just a number.' We strive to ensure that all of our new facilities are inviting for customers and set up for an easy workflow. I want to provide facilities and a working environment where customers want to do business, insurance and dealer partners want to send their employees, and just as importantly, people want to work for us."

Crash Champions actively supports its local community by hosting an annual golf event to benefit the Make a Wish program in Illinois. The shop also collaborated with One Warm Coat to collect more than 100 winter coats for the less fortunate. The facilities also make an effort to be environmentally friendly. Each location sprays with PPG waterborne paints and the newer locations are all energy compliant, boasting LED lighting and comprehensive recycling initiatives.

Crash Champions

Location: New Lenox, IL
(877) 846-9500
www.crashchampions.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: MSO
Facility Employees: 137
In Business Since: 1999
Number of Locations: Seven
DRP Programs: Nine
Combined Production Space: 160,000 square feet



Crash Champions has found that GYS Welding's products offer a great value, promoting efficiency and profitability.



"The Speedliner Combi dent repair kit has really expedited the repair process and assisted us in repairing panels that would have required replacement in the past," said **Pete Callaway**, director of *Crash Champions*.

GYS Welding USA

Company Contact: Mike Hildebrand
(636) 405-2800
www.gysweldingusa.com

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www.lusid.biz

Coleman Subaru & Kia Switched to Lusid Technology and is Loving the Results



by Autobody News Staff

Things at the collision center at *Coleman Subaru & Kia* are looking up—the business is getting better and better every month.

Dennis Ippolito, collision center manager, is proud of what the company has achieved since he took the position at Coleman approximately two years ago, but there is always room for improvement, he said.

“We’re constantly striving to improve, and that means using the right products, eliminating waste and being a responsible member of the community here in Trenton,” Ippolito said. “Part of that progression led us to Lusid Technology’s GEN20 waterborne product, and we’re happy we did. It was a smart move for the business to make the switch and we’re seeing the positive results of it already.”

Ippolito, 28, is not a collision repair lifer, but by learning as much as he could about the industry and empowering his people to do a superior job, he has been on a fast track. Four years ago, he was hired as a service department greeter at another dealership. Two years later, he was named as the collision center manager at Coleman Subaru & KIA.

When Ippolito took over the shop in 2016, he saw several things he wanted to change. His paint department was high on his list.

“We started streamlining processes, writing better estimates and cutting expenses,” he said. “We looked at our paint system and we realized we were paying too much for our paint, so we began looking around to cut costs without compromising the work.”

Coleman Subaru & KIA has not been using the Lusid system for very long, but Ippolito has already seen huge savings since making the change.

“We’re spending 40 percent less on the Lusid basecoat as opposed to our former paint system, 71 percent less on our primers and sealers and the clearcoat is saving us at least half,” he said. “We’ve learned that you don’t always have to pay a lot of money to get a quality product, and Lusid is a very good example of



The collision center at *Coleman Subaru & Kia* is reaping the myriad benefits of spraying Lusid GEN20, including one-coat coverage.

that.”

In addition, Ippolito’s painters are getting better coverage with the Lusid GEN20.

“We used to have to go with a three-to-four step process, and now we’re getting it done with just two,” he said.

Lusid Technology’s technical representative, **John Panto**, came to the shop and spent three to four days making sure that everything transitioned smoothly.

“We have received a ton of support and hands-on training from Lusid and our jobber BKE Distributors,” Ippolito said. “We don’t have to travel to a school; they come here and take our people through all of the steps. They have the experience in the industry and know their products inside and out, so relying on them has enabled us to be successful with Lusid GEN20.”

How does Ippolito like using a waterborne product?

“The transition to GEN20 one-coat coverage means less booth time [and] the results are excellent,” he said. “We’ve had zero issues and our crew is comfortable working with it, which is exceptional. We could have saved a lot of money if we had decided to go with a solvent paint, but we opted for the Lusid GEN20 because we wanted to be a green business.”

Ippolito also likes the fact that Lusid GEN20 doesn’t have a strong toxic smell and is better for his employees’ and neighbors’ health.

“We are located right next to a

large, highly populated area here in Trenton and we don’t want our neighbors smelling our fumes,” he said. “We want to be a responsible business that cares about the community, and the waterborne product has eliminated that smell completely.”

By leveraging the fact that they spray a planet-friendly paint, Coleman Subaru & KIA is gaining much respect for doing things right.

“I have had customers ask us if we use waterborne paint, and we are happy to explain the product and the process to them,” Ippolito said. “We have signage here that advertises the fact that we use Lusid GEN20, and I do believe people care. I tell them that their car was originally painted with a waterborne paint, so we’re basically just returning it back to its original condition.”

When it comes down to any paint brand, support from the manufacturer backed by local support from a solid jobber is always a formula for success.

“Our jobber, **Brian Elmer** at BKE Distributors, is very numbers-oriented and has helped us cut costs in many areas,” he said. “He has been a jobber serving Coleman Subaru & KIA since 1984 in one capacity or another and has always made the well-being of the shop number one. **John Panto** from Lusid has also been incredible and comes up with all of the answers to our questions. As we get better and better at using this product, we’re going to become even more efficient as we accommodate continual growth.”

Coleman Subaru & Kia

Location: Trenton, NJ

(609) 883-2800

www.colemanbodyshop.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: Five

In Business Since: 1967

Number of Locations: One

Combined Production Space: 30,000 square feet



Manager **Dennis Ippolito** said that switching over to Lusid Technology’s GEN20 waterborne product has proven to be a smart business move on many levels.



Painter **Mario Czaplá** is dialing in even the most difficult colors with the Lusid Technology system.

Lusid Technologies

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The Gen2o and GenMax ranges have been a winning combination for this long established bodyshop. Only Lusid Technologies, America's sole remaining independent full line coatings manufacturer can offer a better product range at a better cost point with zero compromise.



Lusid Technologies is proud to be partnered with Parkway Autobody together with their local jobber BKE Distributors.

Together we are committed to delivering value and performance to our customers and their communities, continuing the excellent reputation for quality that Parkway Autobody has built up over many years

Many thanks for your business Jerry, we wish you and your team success with a long and prosperous future.



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www.lusid.biz

NJ Shop Is Saving 25% Without Sacrificing Quality With Lusid



by Autobody News Staff

Shop owner **Jerry Strak** has been fixing crashed cars since 1975. Although he is hoping to retire within the next few years, he still loves the industry and is proud of the work he's done at *Parkway Auto Body of Ewing* in Ewing, NJ, since 2006.

To survive in an extremely competitive market, Strak's bread and butter is repeat business and referrals, which is why he wants to use products that save him money without compromising his stellar reputation. He's all about keeping an eye on the bottom line, but is more interested in doing a spectacular job for every customer who comes through his doors.

After coming to America in the late 1980s from his native Poland, Strak worked as a body technician for a series of shops and quickly earned much respect for his outstanding work. Now a U.S. citizen and shop owner, he can look back at his days in Poland and reminisce.

"It is a totally different industry there, with no DRPs for one," Strak said. "The customer settles the claim with the insurance company, and then they have to take the vehicle first to a body shop and then later to a separate paint shop to get the job done. We would work on the car and then send it to the paint shop, and then it would come back for final assembly. It wasn't very efficient, but it seemed to work back then."

Repairing 450–500 vehicles annually with a very talented crew of four employees, Strak is all about quality and won't use any product that doesn't perform well, even if it will save him money. In fact, his paint department is so well-known in his region that he often gets paint work after other shops in his area stumble along the way.

"There are some shops around here that tell customers they can get their car painted for \$300, for example," he said. "But, you get what you pay for. They bring their cars here after the fact and then we have to redo the work. It happens all the time. When they see what we've done to their vehicles, they're delighted and realize you can't get a decent paint job for \$300."



Parkway Auto Body of Ewing is saving 25–35 percent by using Lusid Technology's waterborne GEN20.

After spraying another waterborne product for more than a decade, Strak began to look around for another paint company. The costs were burying him, but he wasn't willing to switch unless he saw a comparable product out there. After meeting with several reps and talking to his jobber, **Brian Elmer** of BKE Distributors, Strak decided to sign on the dotted line with Lusid Technology. He has been enamored with the company ever since for a wide range of reasons.

"When we switched over to the Lusid product, it was seamless because we had been using another waterborne paint already," Strak said. "We stopped using the old product on a Friday and had the Lusid GEN20 here the following Monday; it was that fast. Our veteran painter, **John Wolak**, knew the ins and outs of using it because the application and curing process were somewhat similar. The quality is comparable. The only real difference is the price, so we are making more profit out of our paint department, and that's exceptional."

With any vendor, support is a big deal and responsiveness is key.

"The support we get from Lusid is excellent. If we ever have any questions, they're quick with the answers," Strak said. "We rarely have any issues with the Lusid system, but if we do, there's no problem. We

rely on the people at BKE Distributors and our rep is great, so it's a good relationship."

When it comes to color matching, Parkway is cruising along with a nearly perfect record, Strak said.

"We use their 4 Angle Spectrophotometer to get accurate color matches," he said. "They have a catalog of more than 70,000 formulations, so we can match even the newest colors. By spraying a test panel, we can make sure that we've got it down, but we rarely have to re-paint anything, which of course saves us more money. Comebacks can slow us down, so Lusid's camera system is a lifesaver."

By spraying a waterborne product, Strak can sleep better at night knowing he is using the safest product on the market, he said.

"We switched to a waterborne product back in 1998, long before anyone else was doing it in this area," he said. "New Jersey was talking about mandating waterborne back then, so we wanted to already be using it when the time came. It's better for our employees and I feel better using a product that is better for the environment. We work around a lot of toxic things around here, so using a planet-friendly paint like Lusid's waterborne GEN20 is a big deal, and the fact that we're saving 25–35 percent is also a huge bonus!"

Parkway Auto Body of Ewing

Location: Ewing, NJ
(609) 882-1144

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: Four

In Business Since: 2006

Number of Locations: One

Combined Production Space: 4,000 square feet



Head Painter **John Wolak's** life has been a lot easier since the shop switched to Lusid.



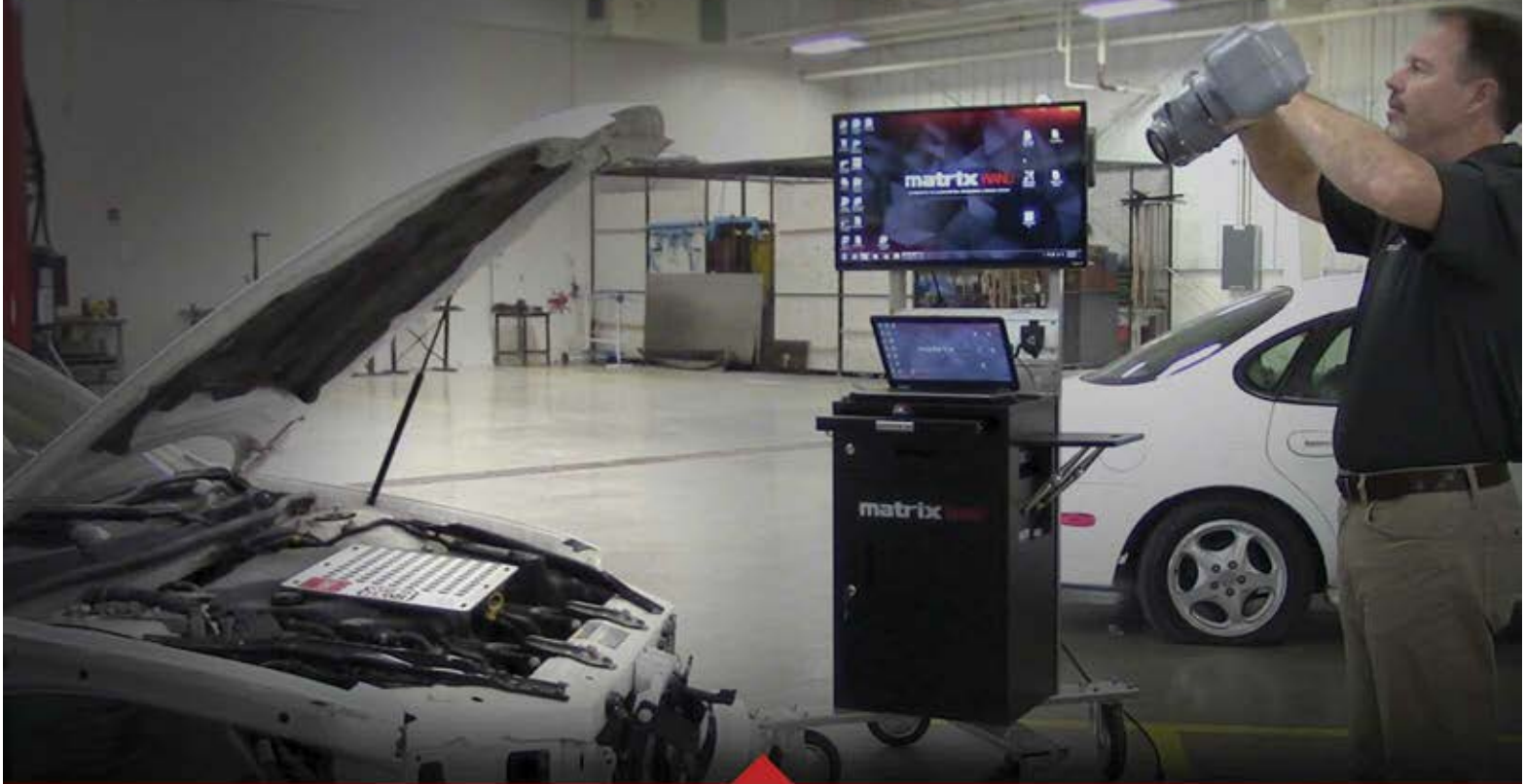
Wolak is highly impressed with the dead-on color matches he's getting with the Lusid Technology system.

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by Autobody News Staff

While many body shop managers don't become managers until they're in their 30s or 40s, **Brian Inman**, the General Manager at *CARSTAR Right Choice Collision Center* in Tucson, AZ, was managing a busy shop at age 23.

By working as a car detailer, body man and shop foreman, Inman (now 44) has excelled in literally every aspect of the collision repair industry over the years. So when he finds a piece of equipment like the Matrix Wand that can set him up for even more success, it's an absolute no-brainer.

Inman has only been using the Matrix Wand for six months, but he is already happy that he decided to acquire the device.

"I was actually doing some research about different measuring systems and looking for something that could be part of my upfront process," he said. "I wanted something that was affordable, easy to use and didn't require a full set-up in order to operate. When we heard about the Matrix Wand, we called them and set up a demonstration. It was exactly what I needed, because I wanted to be able to set up a vehicle on a two-post lift, perform a quick measurement and then move on."

Once Inman acquired the device, he was ready to integrate it into his production without hesitation.

"I immediately made the Matrix Wand part of my upfront process," he said. "Now I could catch all of those little bumper hits that don't ever look like they've moved over, but there is definitely some structural movement there. With the Matrix Wand, we can capture more repairs and keep more money in the shop while also cutting down on comebacks. It's definitely become an integral part of our upfront process. First we map the car, then scan it and then we use the Matrix Wand as soon as it comes into the shop. Within one year, the Matrix Wand will pay for itself—no doubt in my mind."

The Matrix Wand plays a pivotal role in every repair at *CARSTAR Right Choice Collision Center*.



The Matrix Wand plays a pivotal role in every repair at *CARSTAR Right Choice Collision Center*.

"We always continually re-measure the vehicle along the way and do a post-measurement as well," Inman said. "The Matrix Wand is so easy to use. It takes approximately 15 minutes to set it up and shoot a picture to verify that you've done your pulls and that everything measures out within the specs. Even if we get a car here with only minor side impact, we use the device and in many cases, we find more issues with the Matrix Wand."

Comprehensive training provided by Matrix helped Inman's crew learn how to use the device effectively, he said.

"Matrix came here to the shop and gave us a two-day training that was really beneficial," Inman said. "Everyone here went through the training, but four of us use it on a regular basis. Sometimes, I will use the Matrix Wand out in the parking lot while I'm writing a sheet, even if the car is not being dropped off, because if I can find something another shop can't, I have an advantage."

Being a CARSTAR shop is another distinct advantage for Inman and his business, he said.

"They're one of the largest MSOs in the country right now—larger than Service King or Caliber," he said. "CARSTAR gives me a nationwide warranty, a national presence, MSO platforms and DRPs, like with our State Farm program. We also get preferred access to products and discounts on materials, group buying advantages and

many other things across the board, so it's an incredible organization and we're very happy to be a part of it."

Inman values solid customer support, but with a great product like the Matrix Wand, he hasn't required a great deal from the company.

"They have a great support team at Matrix, but to be honest we haven't had to use their services very much, because the device performs well and hasn't had any issues at all," he said. "They call me all the time just to make sure that everything is going right—that we're still happy with the product and that it is still working well. We deal directly with them and most of the time, I deal with **Jan**, the owner of the company, which means a lot."

CARSTAR Right Choice loves using the Matrix Wand to find repairs it wouldn't find normally, even though the shop has only been using it for less than a year.

"It pays for itself every day," Inman said. "Even if I can show that we measured a vehicle with the wand and there isn't any structural damage, I'm still charging for that initial digital setup and measurement and providing a printout for the insurance company. That way, they get that peace of mind as well, and we're all covered."

"We can all sleep better at night by using the wand, because we have the data right in our hands and in this industry right now, documentation is key."

CARSTAR Right Choice Collision Center

Location: Tucson, AZ
(520) 668-2823

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: Seven

In Business Since: 2014

Number of Locations: One

Combined Production Space: 10,000 square feet



From left, Technicians **Victor Schmit**, **Bert Gastellum** and **Kenneth Nuckolls** are all adept at using the Matrix Wand at *CARSTAR Right Choice Collision Center*.



CARSTAR Right Choice loves using its Matrix Wand to find repairs it wouldn't find normally.

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MT Body Shop Finds Norton's High-Quality Products Dependable, Economical



by Autobody News Staff

When **Mark Mortensen** opened *Action Auto Body South* in 2008, the body shop owner didn't hesitate when choosing a name.

Prior to establishing his own business in Hamilton, MT, Mortensen worked for another body shop for 14 years in Missoula with the same name—*Action Auto Body*. The collision repair facility, owned by **Darr Riggert**, had just opened when Mortensen was hired. With a background in body work and a passion for old cars, Mortensen helped Riggert build the shop from the ground up.

"He knew the paint end of it and I knew the body end, so we worked in conjunction with each other," said Mortensen.

Over the years, he learned about the business side of things, which included how to effectively talk to customers, write estimates and the ins and outs of running the front office.

"Darr really helped me make the final decision to open my own body shop and use the same name," said Mortensen.

Since then, Mortensen has run *Action Auto Body South* in the small town of Hamilton with the assistance of three full-time employees; his wife, **Marianne**, who helps with bookkeeping; and one part-time high school apprentice. He takes pride in operating his shop with top-of-the-line products he can depend on, such as the ones from Norton|Saint-Gobain.

Norton|Saint-Gobain, based in Worcester, MA, is a leader in abrasive and non-abrasive products for grinding, cutting, blending, finishing and polishing products for a wide array of markets, materials and applications. The company has delivered abrasive solutions for more than 130 years and has a strong presence in communities across the United States and Canada. This has enabled its customers to shape and surface-finish all types of materials, even in the most complex and challenging applications.

Mortensen first learned about Norton|Saint-Gobain products in high school while working at a local body shop for six years, and has continued using them throughout his career. When he opened *Action Auto Body*



Action Auto Body South purchases a wide variety of Norton products for its business.

South, Norton|Saint-Gobain representative **Grady Howard** helped Mortensen purchase cabinets and other needed items to set up his business and get organized.

The shop now purchases a wide variety of Norton|Saint-Gobain products from its distributor, National Coatings and Supplies (NCS), including sandpaper, adhesives for glue panels, tape, masking paper, seamsealer and Norton|Saint-Gobain's buffing system for polishing cars.

Mortensen said the employees have been very happy with the training they have received on the company's adhesive line of products, as well as the support from Norton|Saint-Gobain.

"I've been really pleased with the quality, said Mortensen. "What I like most is the economical pricing of the products. We've found that they cost half the price of similar products on the market, and last just as long in my opinion."

Recently, *Action Auto Body* began using the Norton VAC RACK™, a new customizable, truly portable vacuum system introduced to the market in the spring of 2018 by Norton|Saint-Gobain.

"It's a really good product," Mortensen said.

The portable vacuum unit can be easily moved throughout the shop and runs two dual action sanders in

addition to a manual setting to block sand. The system features a wet indicator to help prevent potential unit and tool damage and an automatic filter cleaning system for the ultimate dust removal—all in an extremely quiet and powerful system.

"Before using Norton's VAC RACK, we had sanders without the dust collection, so dust would collect on the floor and form a cloud around the technicians while they were sanding," said Mortensen. "VAC RACK sucks up the dust really well and is simple to use."

After using the product over the last several months, he has found that it keeps the shop cleaner overall, which is safer for employees. Being safe and environmentally responsible are important focuses for the body shop, which uses Axalta Coatings Spies Hecker water-based paint line.

Looking forward, *Action Auto Body South* plans to keep its business growing.

"That's always the main goal—to keep growing," said Mortensen. "It's a struggle when you're in rural Montana working in a limited geographical area."

He does this by staying current with industry information and training, attending tradeshows and using dependable products, such as the ones from Norton|Saint-Gobain.

Action Auto Body South

Location: Hamilton, MT

(406) 375-2595

www.actionautobodysouth.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: Six

In Business Since: 2008

Number of Locations: One

Combined Production Space:

6,700 square feet



Norton's VAC RACK™ helps keep the body shop cleaner, which is safer for employees.



Mark Mortensen has run *Action Auto Body South* in the small town of Hamilton, MT, since 2008.

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NRD Anti-Static Device Saves Time, Money for Hi-Tech Auto Body



by Autobody News Staff

Daniel Markarian, the owner of *Hi-Tech Auto Body*, is young for being a shop owner at just 33 years of age.

However, by making smart decisions and expanding on the business his father created, he is succeeding in a market that is changing every day.

In 1990, Daniel's father, **Jack**, opened Hi-Tech Auto Body and quickly turned it into a flourishing business by stressing customer service and quality. The shop currently specializes in repairing high-end vehicles such as BMW, Mercedes, Lexus, Porsche, VW, Audi, Toyota and Honda, and does a large amount of dealership work as well. In addition, Daniel recently opened a shop right next door called *Absolute Body Works* that does strictly fleet work for a national rental car company.

Jack is retired and living in Florida now, but his path to becoming a shop owner wasn't easy.

"He came here from Lebanon when he was only 15, but he learned the business and after a while, he wanted to start his own shop," Daniel said. "So he borrowed \$10,000 from my grandfather. In 2013, my father retired. I owe everything to the man, because he was a smart businessman and taught me everything I know."

Daniel has embraced doing fleet work because none of the repairs are extensive. By working fast and turning cars over, he can make money drama-free.

"It's the same cars, same parts and only one client when it comes to fleet work," he said. "Most of the repairs are dented doors, hoods and cosmetic work and average \$800–\$1,200, so it's a comfortable niche for us."

In the automotive industry, electrostatic discharge is a constant challenge in a world where perfection is the only option. Static attracts dust and unwanted particles, making it very difficult to keep surfaces clean and causing blemishes in paint finishes and other work surfaces. It's absolutely essential to eliminate static from the environment—at every stage of painting—



Hi-Tech Auto Body was established in 1990 and serves the entire Cambridge, MA, area.

in order to avoid costly reworking.

NRD manufactures specialty ionizers for the auto body industry to eliminate surface contamination. These ionizers allow you to keep the surface clean so you can avoid unnecessary reworking and buffing, saving both time and money.

The Neutralizer® AC Auto Body Refinishing Anti-static Gun Model 6500 incorporates the efficiency and power of an air amplifier with the proven technology of corona ionization to produce a highly effective anti-static blow-off gun. It's perfect for automotive surface prep in collision or restoration shops.

Daniel was convinced when his jobber demonstrated NRD's Neutralizer® AC Auto Body Refinishing Anti-static Gun for the first time, he said.

"**Richie McMahon** from Stone Auto Body Supply came here and said to check it out. He put a strand of hair on a bumper and it stuck, but when he used the gun on it, that hair ran away. We tried to place the hair back on the bumper, but it wouldn't do it," Daniel said. "That's when we realized that we needed to get this device."

By using the Neutralizer AC Auto Body Refinishing Anti-static Gun by NRD, the crew at Hi-Tech is able to prevent dust and debris from getting on a vehicle during the painting process.

"We use the device on the car before we paint it and after each

stage," Daniel said. "We do it after the basecoat, following the second coat and then again when we apply the clear. It also eliminates fisheyes and the finished product is amazing—it looks like glass!"

Daniel is delighted with the result because he is saving time and money by using the AC Auto Body Refinishing Anti-static Gun Model 6500.

"In the end, it adds maybe two minutes to the entire painting process, but it saves so much more time overall because we don't have to wet sand and buff the cars, which means that we can get them back to the customers more quickly," he said. "It saves us time on our prep work and also cuts down on labor and materials, which is what you always want from any piece of equipment."

Daniel likes the fact that NRD makes tools and equipment that are used in laboratories and clean rooms because he looks at his paint booth the same way, he said.

"We do everything we possibly can to create a dust-free environment, but the bottom line is that body shops create dust," he said. "I am always working with my painters to keep dust out of the booth. We do a good job of it, but it still gets in there. That's why we need the AC Auto Body Refinishing Anti-static Gun by NRD. After using it for just one week, it already paid for itself and now it's become a huge part of our overall production process here."

Hi-Tech Auto Body, Inc.

Location: Cambridge, MA

(617) 876-9545

www.hitechautobodyinc.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 15

In Business Since: 1990

Number of Locations: One

Combined Production Space: 25,000 square feet



Shop Owner **Daniel Markarian** loves NRD's Neutralizer® AC Auto Body Refinishing Anti-static Gun to keep dust and grime away from his finishes.



The NRD Neutralizer® AC Auto Body Refinishing Anti-static Gun paid for itself after just one week, according to **Daniel Markarian**.

NRD, LLC

Company Contact: Colleen Clancy

Product Marketing Manager

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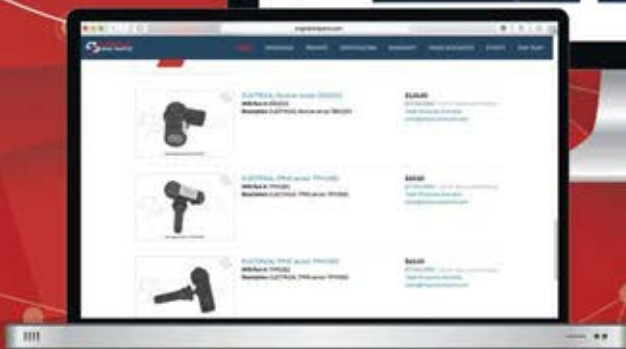
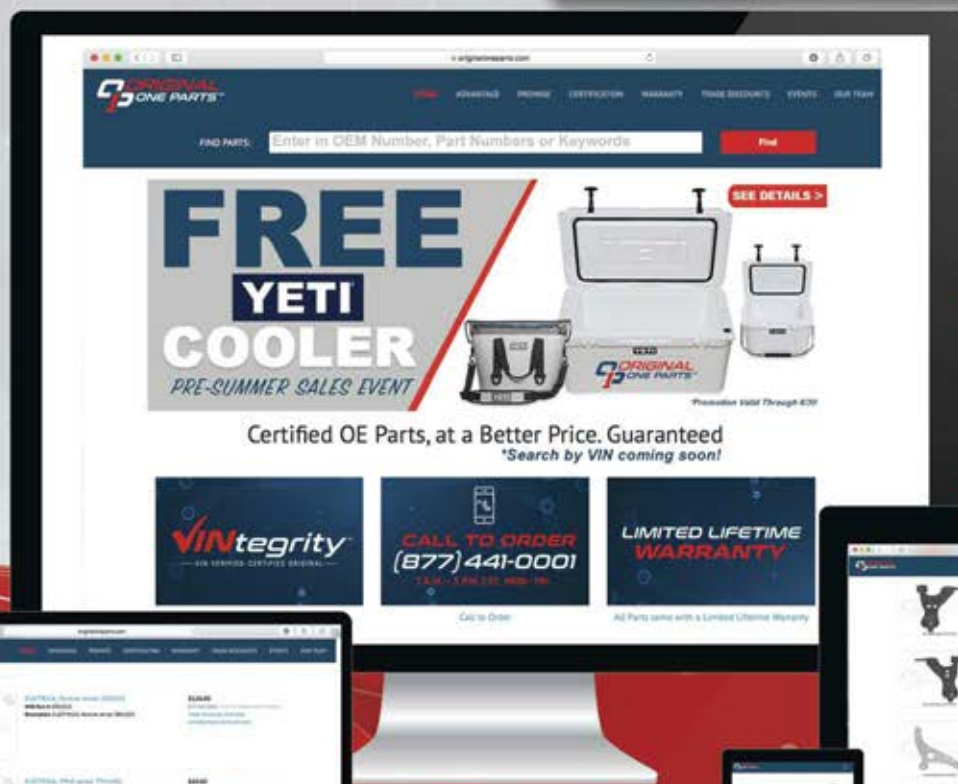
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Original One Parts' Certified Original OEM Parts Allow MO Shop to Provide Customers Better Repairs



by Autobody News Staff

When repairing vehicles for their customers, **Josh Lineberry**, manager at *James Auto Body and Glass*, said it is paramount to use the best parts possible.

"We try to use OEM parts, not just because of what the insurance company recommends, but [for] a better repair overall," said Lineberry. "All changes in parts are approved first by the customer and the insurance, when needed."

Based in Missouri, James Auto Body and Glass attributes part of the success of its three locations to using high-quality parts, such as those that can be purchased from Original One Parts. Headquartered in St. Louis, MO, Original One Parts provides reconditioned 100 percent certified OEM parts nationwide. They are harvested from vehicles across the country and then aggregated at the company's refinishing facilities where they undergo a rigorous clean-up and certification process. Lineberry said the result is a like-new OEM part at an after-market price.

"Several months ago, an insurance company had written one of their parts on an estimate and we decided to use it since the company was somewhat local to us," said Lineberry, who manages the company's Cape Girardeau location. "It came in and we found that it was actually a fantastic part."

Since then, James Auto Body and Glass has been ordering parts regularly from Original One Parts through CCC ONE. These include a trailer hitch, impact bars, control arms, engine crossmembers, tow hooks and spare carriers.

"It has been fantastic," he said. "From the very first time we ordered from them, they were very informative on the phone and let us know exactly what we needed, when it would be here and how it would come. It came as promised, and honestly it was better quality than what we were expecting."

The company also followed up to ensure James Auto Body and Glass was satisfied with the parts and service.

"For the type of parts you are ordering, most companies charge



The technician finishes installing the Original One Part lower control arm and pulling the frame back to specifications, using an electronic measuring system.

you some form of freight or shipping," said Lineberry. "Original One Parts doesn't."

The shop has received free ground shipping and freight on everything it has ordered, and there is also a 24-hour delivery option.

Original One Parts developed an exclusive "Vintegrity" certification process, which ensures all the parts are genuine OE, specifically matched to the VIN and are the same specifications for form, fit, function and finish as they were when the part was new. They also offer a lifetime warranty.

Lineberry said the parts require no clean-up and have fit well, which has saved both time and labor in the shops, helping reduce cycle time and increase productivity.

That has been a huge benefit for the company, which was established in 1930 by **Joe James, Sr.** James operated *James Wrecker Service* and *James Garage* under one roof in Cape Girardeau, MO. By the mid-1950s, he had expanded the business to include glass work and eventually moved into collision repair. He started *James Glass Service* in 1980.

James began phasing out the wrecker service and devoted more time to what had become the business's primary focus—collision repair and glass work. He dissolved James Wrecker Service and James

Garage became James Auto Body and Glass in 1990.

James Auto Body and Glass continued to grow over the years, and currently has three locations in Cape Girardeau, Sikeston and Ste. Genevieve. The full-service shops primarily focus on in-house body work, frame work and collision-related mechanical, paint and glass work.

"We're very similar to the way Original One Parts operates," said Lineberry. "We strive for basically perfect customer service and try to do the job right the very first time, instead of having it returned and then redoing it because the insurance company wanted to use a lesser part."

"The main thing about Original One that they are surely awesome about is how they recondition parts that nobody else does. It's really good that someone is out there reconditioning control arms and safety-related parts, where before you had no other alternative—it was either new, aftermarket or used."

He said an insurance company might write an estimate for an aftermarket part, but James Auto Body can "...use that money, with the customer's approval, and put it toward Original One Parts and get a reconditioned OEM part that is going to hold up better and ensure a better repair for the customer."

James Auto Body and Glass

Location: Cape Girardeau, MO
(573) 334-8000
www.jamesautobodyandglass.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair and Glass
Facility Employees: 30
In Business Since: 1930
Number of Locations: Three
DRP Programs: Seven
Combined Production Space: 58,000 square feet



A technician at *James Auto Body and Glass* preps a vehicle for the installation of an Original One Part lower control arm.



James Auto Body and Glass operates three locations, including one in Cape Girardeau—shown here.

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MN Shop Fishes Around for Top Waterborne Product, Catches PPG Envirobase HP



by Autobody News Staff

It's an exciting time for **Dylan Maki**, VP of *Maki Body & Glass* in Grand Rapids, MN, as he continues his family's legacy by taking over the shop from his father, **Brian**, who is getting ready to retire.

In addition, Dylan and his fishing partner, **Joe Bricko**, recently won the Minnesota State Fishing Championship on Lake Vermilion and are currently preparing to compete in Nationals.

There's a lot going on for Dylan, 25, because the shop is constantly busy and he often wears several hats to keep things rolling along.

"I'm the head estimator here and I also act as the shop's production manager," he said. "I also do payroll and will pretty much do anything around here when needed. If we're real busy, I'll jump in and help with the production by fixing a bumper or whatever else it takes."

Rayno Maki started the business 66 years ago, back when cars were not computers on wheels. Today, his grandson knows that to repair today's vehicles correctly, it comes down to extensive training and using the finest tools and products available.

"We stress training here a lot, and all of our techs frequently attend classes learning how to improve," Dylan said. "Everyone here is I-CAR certified and two of our body men are I-CAR Platinum. We want to be at the forefront and ahead of the curve, because this industry is changing at a crazy rate."

Dylan learned that hard work pays off back when he was 9 years old and helping out at the shop when he wasn't in school.

"I was in the shop one day and announced that I needed a new bicycle because the other one was too small for me," he said. "My father told me that if I wanted a new bike, I better get to work, so I came in every day for a while to sweep the floors, and that's when I started realizing that I really like this business. I got my new bicycle, but most importantly, I found a career!"

Almost two years ago, Dylan and his father decided to make the switch to PPG's Envirobase® High Performance line, a water-



From left, **Brian Maki** and **Dylan Maki** run a shop that was established by Dylan's grandfather **Rayno** more than 66 years ago.

borne basecoat system that has helped their entire operation in several important areas.

"**James Feickert**, our local PPG Territory Manager, called us one day and then came here to do a demo of the PPG finishes," Dylan said. "He gave us a great presentation and showed us how the system works from basecoat to clearcoat, and we were sold after that. After we signed the contract, PPG provided fantastic training. They showed us how to maximize the production out of our paint department, along with educating our painter about how to effectively spray the product. We were extremely impressed by the entire process."

Dylan loves using a waterborne product and hasn't encountered any issues, which has allowed him to concentrate on other important things, he said.

"The quality of the Envirobase High Performance system is consistently excellent and we haven't had any problems curing the vehicles either," he said. "Even when it gets muggy here in Minnesota, our painter has been trained on how to deal with it, and we never need to re-paint a vehicle as a result."

The color matching that Dylan is getting from his PPG system is also saving him time and of course, money.

"Our color matching now from

PPG is second to none, especially when we're dealing with tricky three-stages," he said. "Our least favorite color used to be the Ford RR three-stage red that comes in about 12 different variances. It took us only two to three paint jobs with the PPG waterborne system to dial in this color."

Dylan loves the product, but the knowledge he has received through the company is just as important, he said.

"James Feickert has really helped us organize our shop better and get things flowing by introducing us to the lean '5S' system," he said. "It contains five steps and we did them all, and we can see the results here every day. Flow is really critical, because we only have one booth. Last year, we set a goal to paint two more cars a week and we surpassed that number, so that proves that PPG is truly enabling us to be a more productive shop."

Now that his paint concerns have disappeared, Dylan can now focus on winning the Fishing Nationals later this year.

"Fishing is a lot like painting a car—there's a science to it and you need to figure out patterns," he said. "You have to develop a game plan, and PPG has exceeded our expectations in that area because their product is excellent and their advice has been amazing."

Maki Body & Glass

Location: Grand Rapids, MN
(218) 910-1015
www.makibodyandglass.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair
Facility Employees: 14
In Business Since: 1952
Number of Locations: One
DRP Programs: 11
Largest Production Space: 40,000 square feet



Head Painter **Greg Peterson** loves spraying PPG Envirobase at *Maki Body & Glass*, because the finished product is always spectacular.



When **Dylan Maki** isn't running a busy shop, he is winning fish tournaments by landing fat walleyes like this one.

Automotive Refinish PPG

Company Contact: Cathy Rusnak
(440) 572-2800
rusnak@ppg.com
www.ppgrefinish.com

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Rapid Tac Saves Star Body Works Collision Centers From Sticky Situations



by Autobody News Staff

Star Body Works Collision Centers is a four-shop MSO located in Oregon that offers collision services for everything except restoration, in addition to running a 24-hour towing company.

Company-wide, Star Body Works repairs an average of 300 vehicles monthly, and a significant amount of its refinish work includes stickers, decals and graphics. According to **Tyler Reinhardt**, body shop manager for Star Body Works' Grants Pass location, the job is made much easier with Rapid Tac's Cleaner and Application Fluid.

"I've used Rapid Tac for as long as I can remember," Reinhardt said. "It makes the job easier for one person to do it right. When you add graphics without using the application fluid, it's stuck as soon as you apply it, but spraying Rapid Tac on the back of the sticker allows it to cling without fully setting, giving us time to adjust and reset it so that it's in the perfect position. Then, I just squeegee the area to remove any fluid, and the sticker sets. Aligning larger graphics used to be a two-man job, but with Rapid Tac, I can do it myself, plus it reduces the risk of wrinkles, bubbles or other distortions. Rapid Tac is like miracle juice for putting on stickers!"

Besides saving money on labor costs, Star Body Works has seen the financial benefits of Rapid Tac in the increased accuracy of its applications.

"Rapid Tac reduces the likelihood of a mistake, which means we don't have to pay to replace something that we may have messed up without it. It's so easy to use too—you just spray the product out of the bottle, so no training was required," Reinhardt said.

Because Rapid Tac is so reliable and easy to use, Reinhardt has never had the need to utilize the company's customer service department. However, he recently ran into the owner of Rapid Tac, with whom he held a conversation about how the product works for the shop.

"His genuine interest speaks volumes," Reinhardt said. "The product just makes the process so much easier by tenfold. Our employees feel the same way I do. Rapid Tac's



Star Body Works strives to bring value to its community.

Cleaner and Application Fluid is the only product of its kind, and it really helps us avoid some sticky situations."

Star Body Works Collision Center was founded in 1948 in its original Medford location. After changing hands a couple times, it was purchased by **Arthur Lamensdorf**, who has since bequeathed the business to his sons and current owners, **Mark and Art Jr.** Under the Lamensdorfs' ownership, the company has expanded to add three new shops in Ashland, Grants Pass and Rogue River as well as its 24-hour towing company. They are currently building a new location in Medford, set to open later this year, in order to expand their 18,000-square-foot shop to a 30,000-square-foot facility.

The shop is also environmentally conscious, spraying with PPG Envirobase waterborne paints and conserving as much energy as possible. It also disposes its waste through Safety Clean.

Star Body Works Collision Centers is I-CAR Gold certified, and each location has obtained a variety of OEM certifications.

"We are all fully equipped with everything needed to do the job at hand," Reinhardt said. "There is nothing we need to turn away because we aren't equipped for it."

Reinhardt feels that it's important to be properly equipped these days because of constant enhancements in technology.

"Everything is getting smarter," he said. "We are outsmarted by our cars every day and see mind-blowing stuff like On Star integrations, preliminary diagnostics scans, crash mitigation

and so much more. So much technology is being put in place, and this industry is becoming so electronic and computerized that almost every vehicle has to be plugged into some kind of scanning system.

"With all the technological advancements, it's becoming more and more complex and more expensive to repair vehicles. Vehicles are engineered to give in upon impact and parts are made to crumble, so it's becoming more about replacement than repairs these days, and I see that trend continuing into the future."

The number one thing that makes Star Body Works stand out, according to Reinhardt, is that the shops are "100 percent community-involved. Our owners put a lot of emphasis on doing right in the community, and there aren't many businesses like that. This is the first place I've ever worked that doesn't spend their marketing budget on ads. Instead, they use it to focus on bettering the community we live in."

Star Body Works Collision Centers allows the local police agencies to train their narcotics dogs in the shops' impound lots, and are very supportive of the Boys and Girls Club. In addition to participating in Toys for Tots annually, the Lamensdorfs took over the Rogue Valley Toy Run with **Mark Daley** at Thunderstruck last year. The shops have also donated three vehicles to NABC's Recycled Rides since 2016.

Reinhardt stressed, "We want our community to have a good impression of our shops, and we want Star Body Works to be a good name they know they can trust for the repairs they need."

Star Body Works Collision Center

Location: Grants Pass, OR
(541) 479-1191

www.starcollisioncenters.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: MSO

Facility Employees: 50

In Business Since: 1948

Number of Locations: Four, plus towing company

DRP Programs: 14 Medford, 6 Grants Pass, 10 Talent, 4 Rogue River

Combined Production Space: 30,500 square feet



Reinhardt demonstrates how easy it is for one person to use Rapid Tac.



Rapid Tac helps *Star Body Works* apply graphics easily, saving time and manpower.

Rapid Tac

Company Contact: Jeff Bailey
(541) 474-1113

jeff@rapidtac.com

www.rapidtac.com

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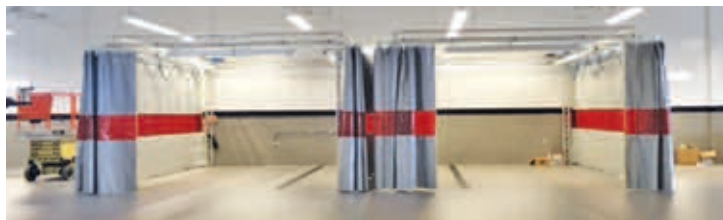


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NJ's Ultimate Collision Depends on Reliable Automotive Equipment for Everything Needed for Proper Repairs



by Autobody News Staff

Ultimate Collision in Edison, NJ, opened its doors for business in 1988.

"I grew up in this industry, and there's nothing I can't do," said shop owner **Jerry McNeer**. "My focus is on correctly repairing cars. We stand up for our customers behind the scenes and make sure the work is done correctly as advertised."

The 10,000-square-foot facility employs 28 industry professionals, most of whom are I-CAR Platinum-certified and ASE Master Technicians. They repair an average of 130 vehicles monthly, servicing six DRPs. *Ultimate Collision* also offers towing, storage, paintless dent removal and car rental services.

"We're equipped with everything you can imagine needing," McNeer said. "From welders and frame machines to our measuring system and aluminum dent pullers, we have it all."

McNeer depends on Reliable Automotive Equipment for all of the best products in the industry to enable him to do what he does best—repair cars. In addition to being I-CAR Gold and ASE-certified, *Ultimate Collision* has received more than a dozen OEM certifications and training from Honda/Acura, Audi, Bentley, Cadillac CT6, Chrysler, Ford F-150, Porsche, Tesla, VW, Nissan, Nissan GTR, Jeep, Fiat, GMC, Hyundai BMW and Volvo.

In fact, McNeer said, "Ultimate Collision has more OEM certifications than any other shop in New Jersey, according to the Variable Rate System."

The quest for OEM certification led McNeer to strengthen his relationship with Reliable Automotive Equipment, which began sporadically almost two decades ago.

"I dealt with **Dave** here and there over the years, but in the past 10 years, I've really started relying on him because he holds the keys to a lot of equipment needed for OEM certification," McNeer said. "The majority of Reliable's tools are approved by multiple OEMs, so it saves us time and money because we don't have to invest in similar products that aren't used on as many vehicles."

McNeer believes OEM certification is a huge part of the indus-



Ultimate Collision offers high-quality repairs and is certified by more than a dozen OEMs.

try's future.

"Over the next 10 years, I see a decrease of 10,000 to 18,000 shops in the U.S. because they won't be able to keep up with the technological advancements, tooling and equipment needed for OEM certifications," he said. "Nearly 80 percent of shops in this country are not properly equipped, and the manufacturers noticed what's taking place. Inadequate aftermarket parts are used, and repairs are improperly performed. This hurts the OEMs' and industry's reputation, so they are taking a proactive stance—and it's going to put shops out of business."

"OEM-recommended procedures have been the biggest thing on the industry's mind since the John Eagle case. Yet the insurance companies and adjusters don't seem to know or care; it's a bean-counting situation coming from upper management at an insurance company. We fare better than most because we educate our customers and appraisers, but most shops eventually give up because the insurance companies continually ignore market conditions."

Restoring vehicles to their pre-accident condition is the top priority at *Ultimate Collision*. McNeer has even been utilizing VeriFacts for a random monthly audit of vehicles since 2012.

"They check the disassembly, repairs, storage, equipment and use of OEM procedures, all of it, and provide coaching as needed," he said. "Not many shops are willing to open themselves up to that level of scrutiny, but we police these cars as if they were our own, following all repair procedures.

"It's imperative that we offer top quality repairs to ensure our customers' safety, and in order to do that, we must have the proper tools. When we need something, we call Reliable Automotive Equipment. Dave is always eager to bring us what we need and to provide the necessary training on the equipment. He's always there for us when we need something, and my team really likes the products. It does wonders when you have the right equipment for the job."

Ultimate Collision also makes sure it has the right equipment to stay on the cutting-edge of eco-friendly efforts. In addition to spraying with BASF Glasurit 90-line waterborne paints, *Ultimate* sprays with nitrogen-enriched air and utilizes LED lights throughout the facility. McNeer has also installed 98 solar panels on the roof to provide an environmentally conscious means of powering the facility.

McNeer initially studied welding during his voc-tech education, but switched to auto body and found that it came easy to him. After graduating in 1981, he worked in a few shops and was eventually in line to be promoted to management. However, questioning the security of the position, he realized, "If I could do it for someone else, under those conditions, I could certainly run my own shop for myself!"

McNeer opened *Ultimate Collision* in 1988, driving an hour to work each day and building his business from nothing. Eventually, he built his new location in 2000 and started expansion plans six years ago, finishing his addition, a truly start-of-the-art facility, in March 2017.

Ultimate Collision

Location: Edison, NJ

(732) 494-1900

www.ultimatecollisioninc.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 28

In Business Since: 1988

DRP Programs: Six

Number of Locations: One

Combined Production Space:

10,000 square feet



Reliable Automotive Equipment provides *Ultimate Collision* with the industry's best to ensure proper, safe repairs to OEM specifications.

Reliable Automotive Equipment

Company Contact: Bill Nortrup

Bill@rae1.com

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Loid's Collision Center Finds Incredible Value in Relationship With Robaina Direct

robaina1.com

by Autobody News Staff

Chris Loidolt, owner of *Loid's Collision Center* in Albuquerque, NM, first became familiar with Robaina Direct in 2015 when BMW announced its intention of requiring certified shops to use Robaina's Eco Repair System kit for steel and aluminum panel repair.

Loidolt said, "Although the BMW requirement didn't go into effect until 2017, we started buying products from **Bryan** at Robaina Direct in 2016 for the BMW CRCC program. We purchased the EcoRepairSystem.com steel and aluminum systems, and since then, the quality and speed of our repairs have increased significantly.

"Robaina's panel repair tools made an incredible difference in our business. It allows us to fix parts we would have needed to replace in the past. Using the Eco Repair System kit allowed us to speed up our technician stall throughput, reducing cycle time and touch time while increasing overall gross profit. From 2015 to 2016, our revenue increased by \$400,000, and much of that increase can be attributed to Robaina's product."

Loidolt feels that BMW made a wise decision when the manufacturer decided to require the use of Robaina Direct's Eco Repair System kit.

"The Robaina Direct Eco Repair System panel repair program has definitely helped our business in tremendous ways," he said. "It has influenced production workflow very positively, and we've seen an incredible increase in vehicle fast-tracking on small and medium damage repairs, especially with the use of PDR tools to push things out faster. It allows us to keep our repairs smaller while also speeding them up."

In addition to offering high-quality products, Robaina Direct delivers outstanding service to its valued customers.

"Robaina's knowledge and customer service is incredible. When we purchased the EcoRepairSystem.com kits, Robaina sent a trainer to our shop for three days to train our technicians on the use of the equipment, and once the tech-



Robaina Direct's Eco Repair System steel and aluminum systems have increased productivity, throughput and profitability at *Loid's Collision Center*.

nicians spent some time working with the machine, they loved it," Loidolt recalled. "Robaina's follow-up and follow-through after the sales process is great as well. Our rep at Robaina is excellent. Any time I reach out with a question, I get a response within minutes."

Loidolt said he has observed "a definite growth in the vendor/client relationship. I'm trying to convince them to open a location out here. Customer service is a huge deal, and when you have a vendor that takes care of you the way Robaina Direct does, they have won my business for life!"

Loidolt and his wife, **Christine**, founded Loid's Collision Center in 2006, but Loidolt began his career in the collision repair industry as a painter in 1986.

"I was 16 years old and wrecked my VW," Loidolt said. "It had to be fixed, so I convinced a restoration shop to give me a job, and I just stuck with it through college and afterwards. When the need to look for a new job arose in 2006, my wife encouraged me to open our business. She has been very supportive over the years, and our son, **Chris**, now manages the front office since he graduated college with a degree in business."

Since opening his shop just over a decade ago, Loidolt has seen an amazing amount of growth, starting with \$300,000 in sales his first year and ending 2017 with nearly \$2.2 million in sales. The increase in business led to the decision to expand his shop, a two-year project that is now nearing fruition with a grand opening date planned for May

9, 2018.

Loidolt said, "We could easily double our capacity at our new location, and there's a lot of room for growth."

As Loidolt prepares to move into his new facility, he has also expanded his ownership of equipment from Robaina Direct.

"We purchased seven work stations so all our technicians have the same station," he said. "We also bought the WRDSpider.com tool for cutting glass and HotboxPDR.com products, and just two weeks ago, I ordered two more of Robaina's newest steel machines for the new shop so the techs don't have to wait to use it. Robaina's newest MWMtools.com panel repair systems are even more affordable, which means a higher return on the investment.

"The collision repair industry is coming out of the 'dark ages of backyard body shops,' which requires highly qualified technicians and specialized tooling to repair the ever-increasingly technologically advanced automobiles.

"That's why we use Robaina's products. Vehicles need to be repaired precisely, and Robaina's cutting-edge technology speeds up our ability to perform high-quality repairs. Robaina's knowledge of what's going on in the industry and what we need to be successful enhances the value of our relationship immeasurably. I would highly recommend that other collision repair centers, both independent and OEM-certified, consider Robaina Direct as their first choice for their preferred equipment supplier."

Loid's Collision Center

Location: Albuquerque, NM
(505) 345-5643
Loidscollisioncenter.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 18

In Business Since: 2006

Number of Locations: One

Combined Production Space: 17,000 square feet



Robaina Direct's Eco Repair System steel and aluminum systems have increased productivity, throughput and profitability at *Loid's Collision Center*.



In addition to offering high-quality products, Robaina Direct provides the best customer service imaginable and has earned Loidolt's "business for life."

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Painter of High-End Cars Works Efficiently With His 23 SATA Guns



by Autobody News Staff

Tony Rivera is the lead painter and paint shop foreman at *Fields Collision Center*, a high-end shop that repairs some of the finest luxury brands in the world.

By specializing in Rolls Royce, Bentley, Lamborghini, Land Rover, MINI and BMW, Rivera and his paint crew have to do an exemplary job, without exception, to please their astute customers.

“People who own these types of top-tier vehicles know a lot about them and expect only the best,” Rivera said. “We have had customers here who bring their own mill specs to check out how thick the paint is on their vehicles after we’ve painted them. We have even had some customers who ask us to put their cars on a rack so that they can inspect underneath the vehicle. They love their cars and that’s why we can’t ever compromise the quality of our repairs and paint jobs.”

While the clients at *Fields Collision Center* are meticulous about their cars, Rivera is just as particular about his equipment—which is why he only uses SATA spray guns. It’s a productive and happy relationship that has spanned more than 12 years, he said.

“When I moved to the paint department, a painter by the name of **Jason Phillips** taught me how to paint,” he said. “That’s when he introduced me to SATA. He sold me my first three SATA guns (base, primer and clear). They were 15 years old at that time, but they’re still in great shape today.”

Since then, Rivera has been spraying high-end cars with strictly SATA guns, although he did experiment with a few others for a brief period of time.

“A few years ago, I tried some other brands just to see what’s out there, but I sold them and now I only use SATA guns,” he said. “Once you get accustomed to a SATA gun, it’s difficult to use another type of gun.”

Rivera began his career at the bottom, but was able to learn a lot about luxury cars every step of the way, he said.

“I started out as a detailer at a Lamborghini dealership, detailing



Tony Rivera, the lead painter/paint shop foreman at *Fields Collision Center*, has been using SATA guns for the past 12 years.

the cars and taking many of them to out-of-town car shows,” he said. “One day, I painted my car, an old Impala, in my car port. Even though I didn’t know what I was doing, I watched the painters at work and imitated their mannerisms. I drove the car into work the next day and they asked me who painted it. When I told them I did it, they were shocked, and two months later I was painting cars for them by myself.”

Over the years, Rivera has acquired new SATA guns for varied applications, and now he owns a grand total of 23.

“I love the way they atomize and the fact that their spray pattern just works for me as a painter,” he said. “With the other guns I’ve tried, you have to change your technique and slow down to accommodate the gun, but that’s just not for me. The amount of paint the SATA guns spray is ideal for my style and the type of work I’m doing.”

At a busy shop like *Fields Collision Center*, Rivera has to be fast and smart with his work, and his SATA guns help him achieve both.

“Sometimes we get so busy [that] I will load up the booth with five different bumpers that are five different colors, and just start spraying away,” he said. “With one booth load of bumpers, I can do 30 hours of work in just two hours. The fact that my SATA guns will never fail me allows me to work quickly and keep moving.”

Rivera is on a personal phone call basis with the people at SATA and values the company’s over-the-top customer support.

“**Jason** is my main guy at SATA by Dan Am Company, and I talk to him all the time,” he said. “If I ever need any parts expedited, have any technical questions or want to talk about a new gun that I want to get my hands on, Jason is right there. Every time I want a new gun, I let him know and he sends it to me right away—the support at SATA is the best.”

To improve himself as a painter, Rivera is always looking for the newest SATA gun on the market to add to his arsenal.

“Their new Phaser gun is by far the best one out there right now. In fact I now own two of them,” he said. “SATA is always developing new guns and coming out with amazing products, so I’m always anxious to see what they’re doing next.”

With sturdy construction and a limited amount of moving parts, Rivera has never had a SATA gun fail him, and he isn’t expecting that to change.

“If you clean them, they do the job, and that’s what you expect from any gun,” Rivera said. “I want tools that can help me do a better job, and that’s what I get from my SATA guns. It’s a great company to work with and that’s why I was delighted when they asked us to be featured in this article.”

Fields Collision Center Orlando

Location: Orlando, FL

(407) 521-5882

www.collisioncenterorlando.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 22

In Business Since: 1999

Number of Locations: Two

Combined Production Space: 50,000 square feet



Rivera is always looking for the latest SATA gun to add to his collection.



Fields Collision Center specializes in repairing brands such as Rolls Royce, Bentley, Lamborghini, Land Rover, MINI and BMW.

Dan-Am Company

One Sata Drive

P.O. Box 46

Spring Valley, MN 55973

(800) 633-7282

www.sata.com



“Spanesi’s products, with the filtration and airflow, and the technology of the booth far exceeded the spray booths we had and will prepare us for the future.”

- Brian Martin



Brian Martin
Director of Auto Collision
Lexus of Pembroke Pines and Lexus of North Miami



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Award-Winning Lexus Franchise Offers Customers “AmaZinn” Automotive Experiences With Spanesi Equipment



by Autobody News Staff

Lexus of Pembroke Pines often tells customers that it offers “AmaZINN automotive experiences.”

Founded in 1999 by **Craig Zinn**, CEO of the Craig Zinn Automotive Group, Lexus of Pembroke Pines is currently the number one Lexus franchise in the world for new vehicle sales. *Lexus of North Miami*, another one of the company’s five dealerships in Florida, is number two in the world.

“One of the biggest changes we see every year is that car manufacturers change the technology of the vehicles,” said **Brian Martin**, director of auto collision for Lexus of Pembroke Pines and Lexus of North Miami. “As the technology changes, we must stay at pace with that as far as training and equipment is concerned.”

The collision center first learned about Spanesi equipment in 2016 during the SEMA show in Las Vegas, NV. Martin had the opportunity to meet **Orazio Spanesi**, the founder of the company, and Orazio’s daughter, **Cristina**, the international marketing manager.

“After vast research and testing of the competition, meeting who builds the equipment and who is behind the company was the final reason I chose to purchase their equipment,” said Martin.

He arranged to have some of the collision center’s painters fly to Spanesi America’s headquarters in Chicago to meet **Tim Morgan**, managing director and chief operating officer (COO), and see the spray booths first-hand.

“They were very impressed with the filtration as well as with the airflow coming through the paint booths,” said Martin. “Spanesi’s products, with the filtration and airflow, and the technology of the booth far exceeded the spray booths we had and will prepare us for the future.”

As a result of that meeting, the dealership purchased four Michelangelo spray booths and a heated double prep station for Lexus Pembroke Pines’ collision repair facility to replace their existing booths. All of them are custom-designed with oversized glass and height compared to the older models they replaced.

He said the operation of the booths has been “excellent” and the painters really like using them.

“The jobs are coming out ex-



Spanesi’s frame machines and technology enable the collision center to determine what is wrong with the vehicle and repair it to pre-loss condition.

remely clean,” said Martin. “The energy efficiency is saving us a lot of profit when it comes to the cost of natural gas and electricity. We were advised that it would be a savings, but seeing our natural gas bill go down is great.”

The technicians at the Lexus of Pembroke Pines collision center have also found that the booths have helped their efficiency with production, allowing them to move vehicles through the paint process more quickly. Martin said they are getting approximately two more cars painted per day, per booth.

“The filtration allows the jobs to come out a lot cleaner without dirt in the paint, and the efficiency of the paint booths has certainly allowed us to be more efficient with cycle time,” added Martin.

The large project required a lot of coordination to keep production interruption to a minimum. There was also a hurricane they had to deal with.

“Brian and the Zinn team, along with our crew and trades, have worked closely to keep things moving at a pace that shop production has seen minimal slowdowns,” said Morgan.

In addition, when Morgan and Martin looked at the current maintenance costs and upkeep, they found it was cheaper long-term to upgrade to better, new, efficient equipment.

Martin said customer service has been outstanding. The nine painters have all been trained by Spanesi on how to utilize the products.

“It’s very simple,” he said. “A touchscreen operates all of the controls to the paint booths. They absolutely love the product.”

When they want to check on the maintenance of the booths, they are able to easily dial in from anywhere

in the world and receive an update on the systems as well as any maintenance issues there may be.

The automotive group is building a new collision center in approximately one year.

“We’ll certainly put Spanesi as a preferred vendor in that location,” said Martin.

In addition to the paint booths, Lexus of Pembroke Pines and Lexus of North Miami also purchased Spanesi Multibench frame machines and Touch Measuring System.

“They are far better than the ones we bought in the past from the competition,” said Martin.

“The Bluetooth technology being utilized with easily recognized graphics allows for easier and simpler inspections. This is a game-changer for us. In our blueprinting process, we like to get a unibody measurement for an accurate account of the damages to the vehicle. It’s a lot easier set up for unibody measurements and unibody repairs.”

This helps the facility determine exactly what is wrong with the vehicle up front in order to repair it to pre-loss condition. The collision center is certified by Lexus, Honda, Acura, Nissan, Hyundai, Chrysler, Fiat, Kia and Infinity.

“The manufacturers understand there are certain equipment requirements that are necessary to be part of these programs, and the Spanesi equipment certainly meets the criteria of those manufacturers,” Martin said.

He said the team has been very involved with the purchase of Spanesi equipment, which has elevated morale in the shop.

“We’re here to provide good quality equipment for our customers and Spanesi is helping us do that,” said Martin.

Lexus of Pembroke Pines

Location: Pembroke Pines, FL

(954) 520-7747

www.lexusofpembrokepines.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 110

In Business Since: 1999

Number of Locations: Three

DRP Programs: One

Combined Production Space:

31,000 sf - Lexus of Pembroke

50,000 sf - Lexus of North Miami



Prior to installing one of the custom double prep stations at *Lexus of Pembroke Pines*.



Brian Martin, director of auto collision for *Lexus of Pembroke Pines*, shown with one of the custom double prep stations at the collision center.

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Mike's Auto Body in FL Offers 'Old-Fashioned Service With Today's Technology' From Spanesi



by Autobody News Staff

John Gannon often tells customers that *Mike's Auto Body and Repair* offers "old-fashioned service with today's technology." Part of that technology includes the Spanesi equipment he has added to his growing business over the last two years.

The body shop owner and his wife, **Elizabeth**, purchased Mike's Auto Body in 1999. Back then, it was a small facility in Spring Hill, FL, with just a few employees. The Gannons expanded the business and a second building was constructed on the original property in 2007. The collision center is in one building and the other houses the company's service and mechanical department.

The team opened its second location in Brooksville in November 2017. The modern facility includes the latest in tools, systems and products, featuring those from Spanesi.

"We're excited about building the shop from the ground up that had all of the Spanesi equipment lines," said John.

As one of the largest independent body shops serving Hernando and Pasco Counties, Mike's Auto Body focuses on repairing late model vehicles. John said they take pride in providing quality, transparency and integrity.

"The goal for every repair is for customers to have a positive experience," he said.

Utilizing Spanesi equipment has allowed the collision repair shop to diagnose and repair damaged vehicles according to OEM specifications quickly and effectively.

The shop learned about Spanesi equipment in 2015. After hearing about the benefits of the European-designed products and conducting some research, Gannon purchased six 106 frame benches with universal fixtures as well as a multibench. Since then, he has found many advantages to using the equipment.

"I like the frame machines a lot because you get full 360 accessibility to any part of the car that is damaged," said John. "They've been fantastic for us."

In addition to improving the shop's cycle time, the frame machines have



Mike's Auto Body opened their second location in Brooksville, Florida in November of 2017. The facility features Spanesi prep areas, spray booths and six 106 frame straightening benches.

helped save space. The previous frame machines used drive-on racks, which took up a good portion of the floor space. The new Spanesi frame machines offer the option of sitting flush with the floor, so the team built pits for the new equipment.

"I was able to spread them throughout the shop and everyone was able to get a little more elbow room," he said.

The frame machines also have a track so a car has the option to move forward and backward for ease of mounting. "It's definitely unique in the way you can move the car in the clamps on the tracks," said John.

After experiencing success with the frame machines, John bought additional equipment, including Touch measuring systems and aluminum repair equipment. He said the innovative products offer excellent performance.

When it was time to decide what equipment to purchase for the new location in Brooksville, John knew immediately that they wanted to fill it with Spanesi equipment. When the facility opened, it included two Spanesi downdraft spray booths, two downdraft prep stations, frame machines and welders.

"The new shop has everything from start to finish with Spanesi. We're pretty excited," said John.

Regarding training and support, he said Spanesi has been top-notch.

"Our local rep, **Steve Smith**, [with] Automotive Collision Equipment of Florida, is definitely a guy who is committed," said John. "When he sells us products, he does everything to ensure that he is around until everyone is satisfied."

The new spray booths will also be beneficial in the new shop. "We paint all of our cars in pieces as much as we possibly can," said John. "It tends to fill up the booth quickly and this design is going to help with air flow."

Using waterborne paint, you need as much air flow as possible, he added.

John said the shop employees are highly trained and certified technicians. Many of the 55 employees have been part of Mike's Auto Body for a long time and have come up through the ranks.

"We really work hard to keep our employees," said John. "We try to add all of the perks that some of the bigger shops do as well." This includes offering health insurance, a 401K plan and providing uniforms.

"That's very important nowadays because there are not as many young people joining the industry as we would like," he said.

One way the shop is addressing the shortage of employees is by partnering with local technical schools. "It's an important thing to do," said John. "You have to start somewhere. If these kids aren't going to college and they are going to work, they should start right away and learn a trade."

In the meantime, John is focusing on running both locations and providing excellent service to customers.

"We stand behind all of our work and provide a lifetime warranty," he said. "We are able to offer this warranty because we utilize the finest equipment available in the collision industry, such as the equipment from Spanesi. We have been very impressed with their products and support."

Mike's Auto Body and Repair

Location: Spring Hill & Brooksville, FL
(727) 862-9474 / 352-688-0889
www.mikesautobodysh.net

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

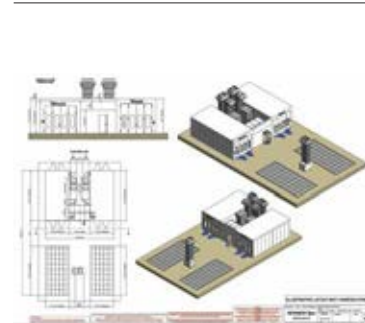
Facility Employees: 55

In Business Since: 1999

Number of Locations: Two

DRP Programs: Eight

Combined Production Space: 60,000 square feet



Drawing of Spanesi booth area at new location.



Steve Roller at Mike's Auto Body is setting up to pull a frame on a Spanesi 106 Universal Fixture Bench.

Spanesi Americas

Company Contact: Tim Morgan
(Managing Director)
tmorgan@spanesi-americas.com
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Car Deets Creates Winter Market for Car Detailing With Steamerics' Optima Steamer™



by Autobody News Staff

With all the snow and salt on Alaska streets, vehicle paint is absolutely brutalized by road conditions in the northernmost state, especially during winter and break-up.

The frigid weather had always prevented detailers from serving customers throughout those months—until **Jim Beach** of *Car Deets* changed that in 2013, creating a brand new local market demand in the off-season.

"Before us, other detailers closed during the winter months because it was just too difficult, but we found the solution: the Optima Steamer DMF, manufactured by Steamerics," Beach said.

With the Optima Steamer, Car Deets employees can completely wash the interior and exterior of a vehicle with just seven gallons of water, despite the extreme weather conditions found in Alaska. It accesses hard-to-reach places with the product's steam and also sanitizes the vehicle. In most climates, the Optima Steamer only requires two to three gallons of water to clean the entire vehicle, and in drier climates, a complete detail job can be accomplished with less than two gallons of water.

"Alaskans spend an above-average amount of time in their vehicles since everything is so far apart, and germs are problematic, but the Optima can sanitize the car's inside better than any cleaner available, killing 99.9 percent of germs," Beach said. "We end up with a cleaner [and] better product for the end user, and we even use less water to do it!"

Car Deets was founded as an effort to hire and train homeless youth. It employed 175 teens and young adults between 2013 and 2015 and taught them job skills before they transitioned to other jobs. The creation of a detailing market was a by-product of Beach's philanthropy. Now, Car Deets supports other programs for youth, such as My House, which provides housing and guidance for homeless teens.

Beach purchased an Optima Steamer just two months after opening his business's doors. As the company expanded to include two more locations, he purchased an additional steamer.

"Alaska has the worst economy,



Car Deets in Alaska created a detailing market where none had previously existed during the winter with the use of Steamerics' Optima Steamer.

crime rate and unemployment rate in the country, so we've been very blessed to expand over the past few years," he said. "Steamerics' Optima Steamer revolutionized our business and was a huge factor in our success."

In 2013, Beach learned about the Optima when it was featured on "Jay Leno's Garage." Intrigued, he researched the product and made the investment that changed the course of his business.

"My team and I absolutely love Steamerics' Optima Steamer. In addition to reducing the use and cost of harsh soaps and chemicals to almost nil, it reduces labor costs while simultaneously increasing production," Beach shared. "We can easily clean a vehicle with the Optima Steamer in half the time it would take us to do an inferior detailing job using cleaners with harsh chemicals that hurt the environment. The efficiency of dealing with steam allows us to double our output, so we detail more vehicles with less manpower while reducing our carbon footprint.

"Steamerics uses 'dry' vapor steam technology in the Optima, and it's amazing. Besides detailing everything internal and external, it removes pinstripes, decals and vinyl wraps—it lifts all kinds of adhesives without damaging the vehicle's paint. It also cleans engine compartments. It comes with lots of attachments that allow the steam to reach small, difficult places. Engine cleaning is one of Car Deets' signature services, and I can't imagine how we'd accomplish it without the Optima Steamer."

Steamerics has provided Car Deets with many helpful videos and unlimited phone support due to the company's distance.

"They don't have any distributors in Alaska, but their customer service department is phenomenal," Beach said. "When we've needed something, they've actually gone to the factory for us and developed workarounds for our climate. We're just a small mom-and-pop shop, but they treat us like we're their biggest, best customer. If a company models its customer support after Steamerics' team, they'll have done an outstanding job."

Ten employees work in the three Car Deets facilities located in Palmer, Anchorage and Fairbanks. They offer detailing, windshield chip repair, paint correction and paint protection. They serviced the needs of 3,400 customers in 2017.

According to Beach, "My guys would pick the Optima Steamer over all our other equipment. If they had to detail a vehicle using only a rag and one tool, they would choose the Optima every single time. It makes everything quicker and easier, and it can be used to clean and sanitize everything from upholstery to engine compartments."

At SEMA, Beach introduced a couple to the Steamerics booth, and in February, he flew to Michigan to train a collision repair facility on using the Optima Steamer and maximizing everything it does.

"I can't express how much I believe in this product. It's a total game-changer," he said.

Car Deets

Location: Palmer, Anchorage and Fairbanks, AK

(907) 229-2860

cardeetsak.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Detail Shop

Facility Employees: 10

In Business Since: 2013

Number of Locations: Three

Combined Production Space: 8,500 square feet



The Optima Steamer cleans the exterior and the interior of a vehicle with seven gallons of water.



Engine cleaning is one of *Car Deets'* signature services, made possible by the small attachments and the effectiveness of cleaning with steam.

Steamerics

Company Contact: Yujin Yoo Anderson
(310) 327-8900

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Martin's Collision Center Acquires USI America Booth, Now Reaping Benefits



by Autobody News Staff

Rich Lendino is the head painter at *Martin's Collision Center* in Sanford, FL. The company also owns and operates its sister location, *Sanford Body & Paint*.

In many ways, Lendino was born to be a painter and knew early on it was the right path for him to take.

"I painted my first car, a Ford Escort, when I was 13 years old, and after that I was hooked," he said. "My dad was an insurance adjuster in New York, where I'm originally from, and we spent a lot of time together out on the road visiting shops. I started working at a shop as a clean-up guy, and then one day a painter didn't show up for work, so I got my chance. They had me doing cut-ins, and then after a few weeks they stuck me in the booth and said, 'Go at it.' I haven't stopped painting since."

When Lendino started in the industry 23 years ago, there were a lot of veteran painters out there, but now many of them have retired and there aren't enough new people to fill the void, he said.

"If you're a young person and want a great career, this can be it, because you can make good money and a decent painter will always be employable," he said. "We have people here who started out as drivers and preppers, and now they're painters. My advice is to develop an eye for detail; stick with it and be passionate about whatever you're doing and you will succeed. Get the training from the old school guys the way I did. You can spend hours and hours in a classroom, but the best way to learn is by doing it yourself in the booth with a good teacher. That's why I'm a huge believer in hands-on training."

Lendino played an integral role in finding his company's new booth when their former booth was ready to retire.

"When I first got here, we had a few older booths, but the owner, **Dave**, told me that we were going to be getting new booths within two years," he said. "Sure enough, about two years later, he asked me to start calling booth companies and talk to all of the manufacturers."



Lendino (left) and owner **Dave Martin** went all-in with USI America by purchasing a custom booth system designed to their specifications.

"We met with the reps and went to local shops to see each booth in action. USI North America has a great reputation for making the ultimate spray booth. We were immediately impressed by their durability and construction, not to mention all of their high-tech features."

At a shop that fixes more than 150 vehicles every month, Lendino needed more than just one booth. He needed a system, and USI helped him fulfill all of his specific needs, Lendino said.

"USI allowed me to set up the booths the way I wanted them, including the lighting packages and several other features that are ideal for our production process," he said. "One of our USI booths is a Chronotech (14' x 30'), so I can fit dualies and larger trucks in there with an upgraded lighting package, including corner lights. My other booth is a double booth (26' x 27'), where we can do even larger jobs. We have a curtain in the double booth, which means that we're never limited by space, because we can paint three cars at the same time if we're really busy."

USI North America's EPS System is saving Lendino a lot of time, which is quite important to any high-production shop, he said.

"Per vehicle, we're saving roughly 25 minutes every cycle, which is definitely significant," he said. "Essentially, you enter the job's parameters

in the system and it tells you the best way to paint the car."

In Florida, one of the most humid states in the country, a booth's airflow is vital, especially for a shop that sprays a waterborne product.

"I hate those standup blowers and I'm so happy that we don't ever need them with our USI booths," Lendino said. "A lot of other booth manufacturers want all these fans and blowers all around, and all they do is really just spread dust throughout the booth. The great thing about these booths is that they accelerate the cure cycle and it cures the paint through proper airflow, which is all you need with water. It allows me to get the cars in and out of the booth faster and I never have to worry about whether they're dry or not. It's not even an issue."

Backed by strong support and customer service from USI North America, Lendino knows that when he encounters any issues, he will get prompt and precise answers every time.

"Chris is our technical guy and he has the ability to diagnose any problem remotely, which is a big deal," Lendino said. "He can get into our system and diagnose the situation without having to come here. He can guide me through things, educate us and get us back up and running right away. If there's an issue that we can't solve that way, they send me the parts the next day and we never miss a beat."

Martin's Collision Center

Location: Sanford, FL
(407) 323-7075

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 20

In Business Since: 2001

Number of Locations: Two

Combined Production Space: 20,000 square feet (combined)



Head painter **Rich Lendino** at *Martin's Collision Center* uses USI America's EPS system to save at least 25 minutes per paint cycle.



Martin's Collision Center is well-known for high-quality work, which is why it chose USI America for its spray booths.

USI of North America

Company Contact: Stefano Moretto
s.moretto@usius.com
(201) 405-7760
www.usius.com

Autobody News produces the Shop and Product Showcase (SPS) insert twice yearly, **June and October**

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