

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

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