

Mike's Auto Body Happily Inherits USI Booth at New Location



by Autobody News Staff

When *Mike's Auto Body*, a Northern California MSO with 16 locations, purchased an existing shop in Alameda, they were delighted.

When they discovered that the shop was already using a USI Chronotech spray booth, they were even more excited.

Mike's Auto Body founder **Mike Rose** and his family, who have been repairing damaged vehicles since 1972, have built a company that is well-known for being an outstanding business partner in every city it serves.

Mike's Auto Body acquired what was formerly known as Alameda Classic Collision Center, a restoration/collision shop that was opened in 2007 by **CJ Miller**, earlier this year. Taking over a body shop and instituting their company culture is not always an easy task, but Mike's Auto Body has been doing exactly that for many years. By stressing quality and retaining many of the existing employees at each location, the company has succeeded with every acquisition.

Having the right tools and equipment is critical to the process, which is why the shop's manager, **Lester Branson**, values the shop's Chronotech paint booth, manufactured by USI North America.

"We've been pleasantly surprised by how this booth performs and what it has enabled us to achieve," he said. "Its design is pretty amazing, and the technology is second-to-none. When our painter starts the job, he knows the spray time and the curing time exactly, and that has really helped our production and the shop's flow. We came in here, started using the booth immediately and haven't stopped since. We have had zero comebacks and have been able to adhere to our company motto, 'Where Quality Counts!'"

With 13 employees operating out of a 13,000-square-foot facility, Mike's Auto Body in Alameda is repairing approximately 100 vehicles monthly as Branson learns the area and the market.

"We anticipate growing every month, so we need to be able to accommodate the increased volume,"



(l to r) Head painter **Ismael Acosta**, painter's helper/prepper **Jose Vasquez** and manager **Lester Branson** at *Mike's Auto Body* in Alameda, CA.

he said. "That means we need to rely on the booth to hit those numbers month after month. It's going to be asked to perform without any issues on a daily basis, and we're confident that it's going to handle the load because it's well-built and designed to withstand heavy use."

Branson sees a great future for the new location and their USI Chronotech.

"You just punch the parameters into the computer, and it spells everything out for the painter," he said. "As our volume increases, we know that we can handle the work without sacrificing any of the quality we're known for. When it comes to a booth, you just want to let it do its job because there are so many other things going on here all the time. As our painter learns more about the booth and becomes even more comfortable using it on a daily basis, he will be even more effective and a valuable member of the team."

Head painter Ismael Acosta is a new hire at Mike's Auto Body but has a total of 15 years of experience in the collision repair industry. He has used a wide range of paint booths over the years, and USI is at the very top of his list, he said.

"This booth has made my life a lot easier in many ways, so that I can spend more time concentrating on other things," Acosta said. "I have

only been using it for a short time, and I'm learning more about it every day. The application process and the curing process are totally different, and they're saving us time."

Curing the cars with their USI paint booth has allowed Mike's Auto Body to save significant time and helped cut down on their cycle time.

"The car comes out of the booth, and we go right to reassembly," Branson said. "We never have to use blowers because the air movement in that booth is incredible. With other booths I've worked with in the past, we would sometimes have to wait a full day for the car to dry completely, but with the USI booth, we're able to start working on it immediately. We haven't had to polish a car since day one, and that's pretty incredible."

Miller is happy to know his business is in good hands—partly thanks to the USI booth he purchased in 2017.

"I'm so happy that Mike's acquired *Alameda Classic Collision*, and my employees feel the same," he said. "I've been in this business since I was 16 and washing cars for my father, so it's been a great journey, and now I am looking for my next opportunity. I'm confident that the shop will succeed because they have the right people, tools and equipment to get it done."

Mike's Auto Body

Location: Concord, CA

(925) 689-1739

www.mikesautobody.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 200+

In Business Since: 1972

Number of Locations: 16

Combined Production Space: 480,000 square feet



Acosta relies on USI's patented EPS, which gives him all of the parameters he needs to paint every car.



Branson, an industry veteran, is lauding his USI North America booth for its efficiency and the overall quality of its impact on the finished product.

USI of North America

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