

by Autobody News Staff

Owner **Mark Martin** of *Ankeny Auto Body* in Iowa is a big hockey fan. A few years back, his shop even customized a Zamboni to seat 10 people. It is used by the Iowa Wild hockey team to give fans free rides at games. As a second-generation operator, Martin took over the business in 1990 after his mother, father and brother ran it for more than 12 years. Much of their success is credited to using top products and tools to fix roughly 80 vehicles per month. Part of their winning formula revolves around the fact that Ankeny Auto Body began using Sikkens, a leading AkzoNobel vehicle refinishing brand, in 1992 and its Autowave waterborne product since 2011 to provide incredible finishes while protecting the environment.

A graduate of Iowa State University with a degree in Business Management and Construction Engineering, Martin worked as a contractor for five years before entering the family business.

"I was playing pond hockey with a long-term friend of mine one day and all of a sudden he told me that I should take over the family shop," Martin said. "It seemed a little out of the blue at the time, but it made me think and convinced me that I should enter the collision repair industry."

Soon after, Martin broke the ice with his family and told them of his decision. "Both of my parents had retired from the business and my brother was running the shop," he said. "But, when I told them I wanted to take it over, my mother came out of retirement after 20 years and ran the office until she finally retired at age 88."

Over the years, Martin has worked hard to make all the right moves, and has received many accolades from his customers as a result. When he entered the picture, Ankeny Auto Body had two employees and operated out of a 3,000-square-foot facility that was repairing an average of 20 cars per month. Today the shop has a dozen employees to fix 80 cars monthly out of a 15,000-square-foot building.

When Martin made the switch to spray Sikkens Autowave almost two decades ago, he did it for several rea-



(l to r) CSR **Shelli White**, blueprinter **Jim Schafer**, GM **Phil Ulvestad**, owner **Mark Martin** and parts manager **Brenna Tomlin** are part of the success of *Ankeny Auto Body*.

sons that have paid off on many levels, he said. "We knew that the City of Ankeny was going to grow and that our volume was going to increase, so we wanted a reliable paint that would help us to accommodate our steady growth. In addition, we wanted to work with a company that would be a good partner for us by helping us in every aspect of the business, and that is exactly what AkzoNobel has done for us."

One of the smartest things Martin has ever done was joining the Acoat Selected 20 Group and utilizing its G5 cutting-edge lean production system, he said. "These business improvement programs have made us a better company, because we interact on a regular basis with top shops and meet in person with them at a different location every six months," Martin said. "We've learned about best practices, doing financial analysis, developing marketing and business plans and getting technical information that we can't get anywhere else. Part of our success is due to the fact that we continually work on our business, as opposed to working in it."

For his color matching, Martin's crew uses AkzoNobel's Automatch Vision to precisely measure and match the existing color on any area of a vehicle. It consists of two elements— Automatch Vision, the latest generation of AkzoNobel's hand-held device that digitally analyzes color, and the Automatch Smart Search, a color retrieval software that provides the optimum color

formula to get dead-on matches every time.

Another sage decision that Martin made less than a year ago was acquiring AkzoNobel's Carbeat™ system, a highly intuitive and practical tool that visually represents work in production and identifies the status of a repair at a glance.

"We have an 80-inch computer touch screen that blows away anything else that exists," Martin said. "It gives us real-time vehicle status information so that we are all on the same page all the time. It's a cloud-based user-friendly application, and all of our technicians use it daily. We're still learning more about it and finding new ways to improve our workflow, efficiency and communication by painting a clear picture of what we're doing in real-time."

Enamored with Sikkens Autowave and delighted with all of the great tools and advice that come with it, Martin also appreciates the support he receives from his jobber, the *Body Parts Store* in Des Moines, IA. "When we switched to Sikkens, we began working with **Kim** and **Jon Snyder**, the owners of the *Body Parts Store*, and it's been wonderful. They know our business plan and our goals here and provide us with outstanding support."

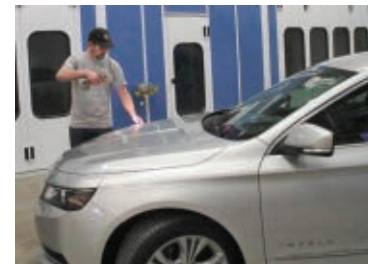
A great product, amazing support and some of the newest technology in the industry today—it's a hat trick that Mark Martin and Ankeny Auto Body are using to score and get winning results consistently.

Ankeny Auto Body

Location: Ankeny, IA
(515) 964-7291
www.ankenyaubody.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair
Facility Employees: 12
In Business Since: 1978
Number of Locations: One
DRP Programs: 10
Combined Production Space: 15,000 square feet



Head painter **Jordan Hoffman** loves the finished product that he gets every time with Sikkens Autowave by AkzoNobel.



Mark Martin, owner of *Ankeny Auto Body*, is always ahead of the game, which is why he is using Sikkens Autowave by AkzoNobel.

AkzoNobel
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