

Spanesi 360-Degree Concept Provides Versatility & Efficiency to Shannon's Auto Body



by Autobody News Staff

With an avid interest in cars, **Shannon Christian** started in the automotive industry in 1992, when he began working at a GM dealership in Brainerd, MN. Christian was finishing a two-year degree at the tech college and employed at another shop when the dealership recruited him. Four years later, he opened his own shop, *Shannon's Auto Body*, five miles out of town in a 2,000-square-foot horse barn in his backyard. The shop specialized in restoration and collision repair. As business grew, Christian realized the need for space and ultimately added a second and third garage on the same property.

In addition to operating his original 17,000-square-foot facility, Christian opened a second location in July 2023, about five miles from the shop. The 40,000-square-foot facility has better visibility and a layout designed to better accommodate collision repairs.

Christian and his team pride themselves on providing outstanding customer care and quality repairs in the Brainerd Lakes area in Minnesota. The business services nearly every make and model.

"We utilize the latest repair technology and are committed to fixing vehicles safely and correctly to their pre-collision condition," said Christian. "We want to put customers back on the road in a safe vehicle."

Vehicles often come in that have been previously repaired incorrectly at other facilities. Christian and his team do post-collision inspections and fully blueprint the car to write a complete repair plan per OEM requirements and determine the calibrations required.

Christian said they are proud to be an I-CAR Gold Class shop and active members of the Society of Collision Repair Specialists (SCRS) and the Alliance of Automotive Service Providers of Minnesota (AASP-MN). As an AASP-MN board member, Christian is dedicated to improving the industry and educating other shops.

Educating employees is also a priority. "We are constantly training staff and updating our procedures to keep up with industry changes," said Christian. Several of the Shannon's Auto Body staff are I-CAR Platinum and ASE-certified technicians.



In July 2023, Shannon's Auto Body opened a 40,000-square-foot shop in Brainerd, MN.

The education process includes bringing estimators and technicians to the SEMA Show in Las Vegas, NV, to learn new repair methods and see the latest equipment and tooling.

About six years ago, Christian was looking for a paint booth to purchase while attending SEMA.

"I just fell in love with Spanesi's full glass doors and touch panels," he said. "It was like comparing a Ferrari to a Ford."

Christian was drawn to Spanesi's high-quality Italian products.

"It set them apart from everybody else," he said.

As part of a performance group Christian belongs to through the company's paint manufacturer, he toured other shops and noticed they used the Spanesi Touch. After testing it, he realized how quick and easy it was to set up and do the measurements.

"That really interested me," he said. At the 2019 SEMA Show, the team looked at frame equipment and priced out a Multi-Bench and a Touch Measuring System. While attending a team bonding experience, Christian discovered they had won the Spanesi Touch as part of an SCRS contest the equipment provider was holding. In 2022, the shop won the contest again and received a Spanesi Q5.2 welder.

Christian was impressed with Spanesi's 360-Degree Concept, which includes all equipment needed to outfit a body shop for a complete repair. This consists of a spray booth, measuring system, pulling benches, welders, vacuums and sanders.

With the addition of a second shop, Christian worked with **Tim Morgan**, Spanesi Americas' COO, and the Spanesi team to lay out the shop most effectively. Morgan visited multiple times to ensure

everything was set up correctly and working properly.

Since then, the shop purchased an additional Spanesi Touch, six Multi-Benches, a double and single spray booth and a welder for the new location.

Christian said the equipment has provided the business versatility, which has helped with shop flow and efficiency so vehicles are delivered on time.

"Spanesi equipment is state-of-the-art," he said. "The Multi-Benches are very versatile, the spray booths are large, utilize a side load track system and full glass doors, have excellent lighting and airflow is as good as it gets. The mix room was custom-built with full glass windows, tiled floor and cabinets. It is a painter's dream to work with this equipment."

Christian is impressed with the training and support his team has received. In addition to Spanesi's in-shop training, technicians travel to Chicago, IL, for classes.

Having modern, up-to-date equipment has helped when hiring new technicians.

"Any technician who comes in and sees the equipment wants to work here," said Christian. "We've never had such a high volume of employees to pick from just by having the Spanesi equipment."

Christian said many shops have been repairing vehicles the same way for 30 years and don't realize the importance of staying current with the changes on cars.

"We always hear about 'industry standard,'" he said. "We want to set the bar and show the industry what the standard should be."

A key element is researching OEM repair procedures and having dependable equipment, such as Spanesi's.

Shannon's Auto Body

Brainerd, MN

218-829-6764

shannonsautobody.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 43

In Business Since: 1996

Number of Locations: Two

Combined Production Space:

57,000 square feet



Shannon's Auto Body owner Shannon Christian said Spanesi equipment is state-of-the-art.



Spanesi equipment has helped Shannon's Auto Body with shop flow and efficiency, so vehicles are delivered on time.

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