

Indiana Body Shop Relies on ALLDATA's User-Friendly Repair Planner to Speed Workflow, Access OEM Procedures

ALLDATA

by Autobody News Staff

TAG Auto Group has been serving communities throughout Indiana and eastern Illinois for more than four decades. The group is comprised of three brands: *Tom & Ed's Auto Body and Towing*, *Riley & Son's* and *Prime Body and Paint*.

The company traces its origins to 1983. Now owned by CEO **Andy Tylka**, whose father **Tom** and a former partner founded Tom & Ed's in Schererville, IN, the group has experienced significant growth. There are now 15 facilities occupying a total of 165,403 square feet, with a staff of 170 companywide.

The shops perform a range of services, from wheel repair and alignment to frame straightening, dent and scratch repair to collision repair and more. For an inside look at one facility, Autobody News spoke with **Eric Hagenow**, general manager of Tom & Ed's in Cedar Lake.

Hagenow grew up repairing cars with his grandfather in the family garage. After graduating from Universal Technical Institute, he worked for a large collision repair center, rising from apprentice technician to general manager. He joined Tom & Ed's six years ago.

Hagenow describes the shop as being "very diverse." Case in point: he works with an upfitter that outfits Ford Explorers for law enforcement agencies. The company funnels vehicles to his shop, where the doors and roofs are painted white or silver. Nearly 400 Explorers have passed through in the past few years.

The shop also performs warranty work on Jeep Wranglers and Ford Escapes. As a Chrysler preferred body shop, Tom & Ed's replaces rusted door and hood hinges and paints and installs new hoods. "We do three to four Chrysler corrosion warranties a month and recently started doing warranty door replacements on Escapes through a local Ford dealer. These are good jobs."

Given its roots in collision repair, the company has long been known for its quality workmanship and top-notch customer service. As Hagenow sees it, their commitment to safe and proper repairs is the key ingredient. And it



TAG Auto Group consists of three brands: Tom & Ed's Auto Body, Riley & Son's and Prime Body and Paint. This Tom & Ed's facility is located in Cedar Lake, IN.

starts with the estimate.

"Our customer experience stems from the estimate. It's the foundation that everything else is built on. If you don't do an estimate correctly or know the right procedures and processes, the entire process won't go well from the start.

"The company does a great job of giving us the equipment we need to follow the repair processes. Whether it's frame racks, welders or software, we have access to everything we need to do high-quality, safe and proper repairs."

To ensure repairs start off on the right foot, the shop uses CCC ONE's estimating software, which syncs with ALLDATA's Repair Planner, the software company's newest addition to its integrated collision repair platform.

"Once you write the estimate and import it into Repair Planner, it automatically goes through the estimate and lists all the OEM procedures and repair information line by line. If it's a front bumper, it tells you what procedures to follow when removing the bumper and if there are any special OEM alerts, such as a radar sensor," noted Hagenow.

In comparing ALLDATA's new software to earlier platforms, he said, "Repair Planner is very user friendly and efficient. Before, you would write the estimate and then have to manually search for each procedure and know what you were looking for. It was very time-consuming.

"With Repair Planner, you don't

waste time searching for information or doing a library request. It takes all the guesswork out of knowing what to look for."

From a workforce perspective, Repair Planner is an asset to the shop's team. As both he and his estimator, **Summer Ahlquist**, are able to prepare estimates more efficiently and correctly, it helps to improve workflow.

"I can get cars to my technicians more quickly. They have access to ALLDATA and can get all the information they need to complete a safe repair the way the OEM wants the vehicle repaired. It's as simple as logging in, finding the car they're working on and viewing the estimate in real time where it shows all the procedures."

Repair Planner is also a viable training tool, helping a team member learn new skills. "We are training our parts manager to write estimates," said Hagenow. "Now he can run the estimate through Repair Planner and identify the OEM procedures and operations. He doesn't need to ask me questions. Repair Planner is user friendly, so he can learn on his own."

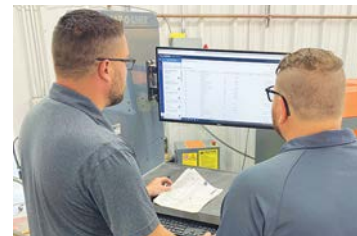
In summing up his experience with the ALLDATA Repair Planner, Hagenow emphasized the program's unique breakthrough benefits. "It's been a gamechanger. It simplifies our operation. It puts all the information at your fingertips to do a safe and proper repair the way the manufacturers want their vehicles repaired and returned to their pre-collision condition. It doesn't get any better than that."

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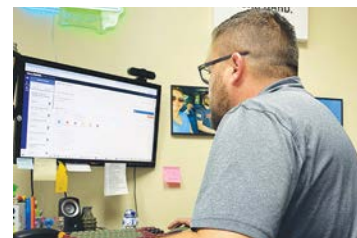
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Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair
Facility Employees: 170
In Business Since: 1983
Number of Locations: 15
Combined Production Space: 165,403 square feet



Parts Manager Nick Falaschetti and General Manager Eric Hagenow review ALLDATA repair procedures.



Eric Hagenow scrubs an estimate using ALLDATA Repair Planner.

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