

Shelton Collision Trusts AkzoNobel for Performance, Support, Growth

AkzoNobel

by Autobody News Staff

When **Brad Shelton** says he grew up in the shop, he means it. *Shelton Collision*, located in Derby, KS, has been family-run since 1976, when his father opened the doors. "It's the only job I've ever had," Shelton said. He didn't necessarily plan to spend his whole career there, but in the early 1990s, when crisis hit in the form of a massive hailstorm, Shelton put his college education on hold to manage the shop.

Even while stepping into management, Shelton remained committed to his education. "I'd stepped out of college for a while, but I eventually went back and finished my degree," he said. That balance between formal learning and hands-on experience would become a defining theme in his professional growth.

He and his wife officially purchased the business from his parents in 1999. He has overseen multiple expansions, including more than doubling the original building in 1993 and constructing a new facility in 2013. Today, Shelton Collision repairs approximately 75 vehicles per month and serves customers from Derby and the greater Wichita area.

"Derby is a bedroom community to Wichita, and we're not a metro location by any stretch," Shelton said. "You could even call us more rural than suburban. So what's kept us successful over five decades? Taking care of the customer. Treating people the way you'd want to be treated and doing quality repairs. That's what we're known for."

Shelton Collision has also been a longtime customer of AkzoNobel, having used the company's Sikkens product since 1992. "Sikkens is known as a really high-end paint line, and that's what initially drew us in," Shelton said. The decision to invest in the product coincided with the shop's first major expansion. "That's when we got the new bank and the new mixing room," he said. "Before that, we had kind of hodgepoded it."

Decades later, the product has more than lived up to its reputation.



Located in Derby, KS, Shelton Collision prides itself on customer care.

"From longevity to quality, the gloss of the clear, the booth times, the service and support behind it — it's all there, and it's incredibly reliable," he said. "What we want is to get a car as close as possible to pre-accident condition, and Sikkens helps us get there."

Over the decades, Shelton says, AkzoNobel has stood behind the product. "We don't have a lot of issues, but if something comes up, there's always someone local I can call, and they're always there for us," he said.

That reliability translates into technician confidence as well. "There are technicians that are as loyal to Sikkens as the owners are," Shelton said. "They don't want to work in a shop that's not a Sikkens shop." At least part of the reason for that is the precise color matching. "Generally, if we've had an issue with the color matching, it's because we haven't prepared the panel quite right or maybe the camera wasn't working quite right," he said. "As soon as we fix that, the color match is perfect."

But it's not just the product that's had an impact on Shelton's business. The shop has also been involved with Acoat Selected Business Services, AkzoNobel's business development platform, for nearly three decades. Shelton first joined Acoat in the mid-1990s and remains an active participant today. "That's what changed our business," he said. "The product works great and our guys love it, but the business side of things — the coaching, the teaching moments, the relationships —

that's what propelled the business forward."

Through Acoat, Shelton has attended twice-yearly national performance group meetings and networking events with shop owners, trainers and AkzoNobel representatives. "The people I've met through Acoat — other shop owners, AkzoNobel employees — they've helped me grow," he said. "It's like school. You get out of it what you put in. But if you're all in, you'll get more than you can handle in terms of improvements."

Other members of Shelton's team have participated in training as well, from local sessions to regional boot camps. "They've gone to estimator training, production management courses, even sessions on improving accounting practices," Shelton said. "If we could get our hands on it, we took advantage of it."

That forward-looking support is particularly valuable as the collision repair industry continues to evolve. "AkzoNobel is usually ahead of the curve," Shelton said. "At our Acoat meetings, they bring in speakers on everything from AI to EVs. They help us see what's coming and prepare for it."

Asked what he'd tell a fellow shop owner considering the investment, Shelton didn't hesitate. "If you're looking for the cheapest product, this isn't the line for you," he said. "But if you want an excellent end product and the support to grow your business along the way, then Sikkens and Acoat are the best way to go."

Shelton Collision

Derby, KS

316-788-1528

www.sheltoncollision.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 17

In Business Since: 1976

Number of Locations: Two

Combined Production Space:

10,000 square feet



Shelton Collision has been using AkzoNobel's Sikkens product for more than 30 years.



Shop owner Brad Shelton says Acoat Selected Business Services has helped fuel business growth.

AkzoNobel Coatings

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