



Does Being a Green Shop Improve the Bottom Line?

Known as the Greenest Shop in the USA, *Selecta Body Shop* in San Francisco's Mission District has received major praise, top reviews and now a prestigious award for running an environmentally responsible business. But, the burning question that probably every body shop owner anywhere wants to know is does being green increase profits or in the end, or does it just help the owner to sleep better at night? Do customers care and maybe more importantly—do the insurance companies care?

sible member of the business community. Part of being a green operator in a very environmentally-conscious city like San Francisco and maintaining the B-Corp certification means that I can hopefully make money, but also we want everyone to win—my customers, my family, my neighbors and my employees.”

It took two years of hard work to turn an old building into *Selecta's* new 10,000-square-foot facility and it ate up just about all of Hubbard's funds to make it a reality, he said. But since starting business in April 2013, the numbers have slowly edged up, to the point where he can say that November 2014 was his first profitable month after fixing 65 cars.

“We still want to do 100 cars monthly, because we can handle the volume and that's been our goal,” Hubbard explained. “The numbers are improving every month and the future looks solid. We picked up two great DRPs during the last four months of 2014 and now we have a total of three. We easily absorbed the increased workload during the fourth quarter and now we're excited about 2015.”

Last November, *Selecta Body Shop* won a significant award at the 2014 SEMA Show in Las Vegas, when AkzoNobel Automotive & Aerospace Coatings Americas (A&AC) announced that three North American companies were selected as winners of the fifth annual FIT Sustainability Award, an industry recognition program honoring businesses and organizations that are ac-

“Being green is definitely a plus, especially when it comes to marketing,” Hubbard said. “It all works hand in hand and awards like the FIT Sustainability Award from AkzoNobel are a huge deal. To be honored at a show

in every room of the shop so the lights turn off when the room is not in use and uncovering the building's skylights and front windows to use natural light whenever possible. He also mounted more than 350 pothos plants on the wall to bring fresh air to the shop. He purchased an oversized Global Finishing Solutions downdraft heated spray booth so that he can paint more cars and parts simultaneously, thereby saving time and materials. The shop features two curtained-off areas, one dedicated for prep and the other for detailing work.

Hubbard is also gearing up for the collision industry's rush to aluminum. “We know that aluminum is coming, but to what degree nobody really knows.” Hubbard said. “So, right now we have an area dedicated for aluminum work when we get it. We don't

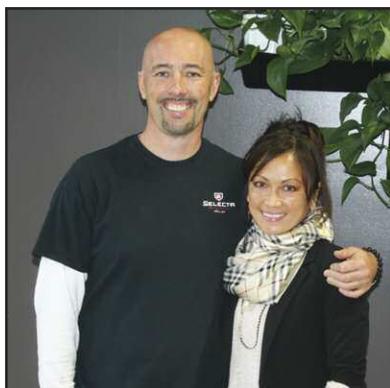
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Later last year, *Selecta Body Shop* started turning a profit and being green has definitely played a pivotal role

like SEMA and having other shops interested in what we're doing, that's beneficial for us and the industry as a whole.”

Hubbard truly walks the walk when it comes to being green. Some of the more notable things he's done to his shop include installing motion sensors



Owners **J.R. Hubbard** and his wife **Jackie** have watched as their business has grown without compromising their beliefs about running a business that is better for the environment

Being in it to win it when it comes to being 100% green from the first day he opened his doors, **Jeremy “JR” Hubbard**, the owner of *Selecta Auto Body* has now been in operation at his current location for almost two years. Since opening, he's refined his processes and further embraced the green way of doing things, while trying to be a fair employer in every aspect of his business. To this end, *Selecta Auto Body* is the only collision repairer in the country today that has achieved B-Corp certification, by meeting rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency. Sure, Hubbard wants to make money and fix cars right, but more than anything else he wants to run his business “with a conscience.”

“I'm a father and an employer obviously and I want to be able to make a profit,” Hubbard said. “But, I also want to do be a fair employer and a respon-

tively engaged in practices that advance the concepts of sustainability. *Selecta* took one of the three coveted spots, which was a big deal for a lot of reasons.



In operation since April 2013, *Selecta Body Shop* in San Francisco is called an “ultimate green shop”, featuring the newest, cutting-edge techniques for saving materials and energy, among other things

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Green Shop

have a ton of extra space here and we're taking full advantage of what we currently have, but when aluminum becomes a significant amount of our volume, we're ready."

There was definitely an added cost to building what Hubbard describes as "the ultimate green shop," but once it was up and running, it was all worth it, he said. "Some shop

owners may think it costs a lot more to be green, but it's really not that more expensive overall, because we've cut our waste and it is definitely showing up in our bottom line now. We don't waste anything and we're coming from that mindset, so once you get into being green, the benefits start to become apparent."

By using more natural light whenever possible and painting all of his floors with reflective paint, insulating his ceilings to retain heat and installing motion sensors on all his lights. Se-

lecta's utility bills are lower. And of course, by saving paint, clear coat and sealers with every car painted, it adds up to offset his original investment. "It starts to make more and more sense after you've done it for a while," Hubbard said. "We're using fewer products to fix our customers' cars without sacrificing quality and that's the important thing."

Do customers in San Francisco really care about the fact that Selecta Body Shop is a green shop and did it help him to land his most recent

DRPs? "I would say yes to both questions," Hubbard said. "I believe 100% that our customers care. If they don't know it initially, we let them know and most of them say very positive things. If we do a good job on their car and on top of that we're a green shop, yes—I believe they will come back. And do the insurance companies see any value in the fact that we're doing things with the environment in mind? I definitely do—if they can align themselves with a forward-thinking, responsible company—why not?"

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