

ABAC NEWS

July - August
2018

The Official Newsletter of the Auto Body Association of Connecticut



“Real Change Begins With Us!”

**“NAME THAT CAR” CONTEST - INSIDE
WIN A \$200 GIFT CARD**

Your Car, Your Choice - Find us at www.abaconn.com

Also In This Issue

President's Message: "Real Change Begins with Us!"	2-3
Industry Friend & Leader Retires	3
Mike Anderson Presents All-Day Seminar in Cromwell, CT.....	4
Social Media Update	5
Understand What's Leading to Inefficient Scheduling at Your Shop	6-7
A Simple Technique from Improving Your Shop's Scheduling.....	7-8
"Name That Car" Contest	8
Oxford Automotive wins Lawsuit Against Allstate!	9
Vendor Spotlight: The Hoffman Group	10
Legal Counsel John PArese: The Need for Physical Inspection...	11
Tech Tip Toolbox.....	12-14
Find Your Next Star Tech..	15-16
Data Access is the New Information Availability.....	17-18
State of CT Towing & Storage Rates	18
Your ABAC Officers & Board of Directors.....	20

President's Message

Bob Amendola

Real Change Begins With Us



If I had been asked some years ago where I thought the industry might be today, I would have painted quite a different picture than our current reality.

Quite honestly, I'm surprised to see that in 2018 many shops are still writing estimates at labor rates that are simply unsustainable for their business.

Why? The answer is simple. We are part of an industry that has allowed a third-party interest to dictate what work we will or will not be compensated for and how much our services are "worth".

Despite my astonishment, I understand why this continues to be our reality. As an industry, we have grown accustomed to feeling as though we have to negotiate with insurers.

We have forgotten how to say no. Continuing to tolerate this is the recipe for failure.

The first step begins with calculating your true cost of business with fair markup and adjusting your rate accordingly. Having two rates (i.e. customer-pay rates and insurance rates) is not functional.

Understand your true cost and do not deviate from it. The second step is having your paperwork completed in advance. Gather all corresponding supportive documents ahead of time (i.e. OEM repair procedures, positions statements, photos etc.) and know what you need.

Change isn't easy but the old adage "fail to prepare, prepare to fail" rings true.

Continued on Page 3

Continued from Page 2

As a shop owner, I understand how it is to be constantly pulled in 10 different directions and the feeling that there are never enough hours in the day but making the time to prepare ahead of time will ultimately make things smoother in the long run.

Have your paperwork completed in advance, know what you need and push for it. If you never ask, the answer will always be no. Get paid for what you do and do what you get paid for.

The start for change comes from ourselves, no one else is going to do it for us. If you do not fight for what you need, how can you ever obtain it?

Complaining only creates negative energy. Instead, try to be the most positive person you know.

Be the change.

Thank you,

Bob

**Bob Amendola - Autoworks of Westville
President - Auto Body Association of Connecticut**

Announcement: ABAC Friend & Industry Leader Retires

Dave Kapitulik - Educational Consultant - Transportation Technology Programs at CT Technical High School System is retiring!

The ABAC recently received this letter from Dave,

To my business partners and professional friends:

As you may know, I am retiring effective August 1, 2018. MY last day in the office will be Friday, August 28th. There will be an instructor who will take over some of my responsibilities as a consultant "intern", but the candidate has not yet started. If the position is filled before I leave, I will contact you to "introduce" them.

For 40 years I have been involved in automotive education, technical education, and technical training in a corporate setting. I guess you could say I have "gasoline in my blood". My varied career has provided me with the opportunity to meet many people in the automotive industry (and in career-technical education) around the state of CT, around the USA and from other countries. I feel fortunate to have had the career opportunities I have had. Because of this, I plan to stay connected to the automotive industry and technical training in some capacity. So – our paths may cross again.

While I may not miss working full time, I will certainly miss the PEOPLE I have worked with, and the great relationships we have developed over the years.

It's been great working with you. All the best.

Dave Kapitulik



Mike Anderson Presents All-Day Seminar in Connecticut

On June 26th at the Radisson Hotel in Cromwell, Mike Anderson of Collision Advice presented an all-day seminar to a packed house full of repair professionals, shop owners, managers and estimators alike. As always, Mike's presentation was phenomenal, informative and very well received by attendees. The seminar was sponsored by Albert Kemperle and Axalta with a special thanks to Rich Perry who made it all possible.

The day's agenda included estimating, negotiations, scanning best practices, OEM repair procedures, "Who Pays for What" survey results and an open Q&A with Mike along with a bit of humor and war stories shared throughout.

Mike is well regarded throughout the industry nationally as a wealth of knowledge and source of information in all aspects of the collision repair industry. Not only were the topics that Mike covered extremely relevant to the current state of the collision repair industry, but the discussions that stemmed from each topic proved to be equally as valuable to attendees. A key point in the presentation, Mike stressed to the audience the importance of utilizing manufacturer repair procedures and explained how to access the information on various manufacturer's websites.

With the complexity of today's vehicles, obtaining and following repair procedures is absolutely imperative.



With regards to estimating, Mike explained his systematic approach to ensuring that all "not included" items are included in the repair plan. Furthermore, he emphasized the importance of planning ahead through education and gathering information to achieve a positive result in negotiations with insurers.

Breakfast and lunch was provided and the seminar proved to be equally as enjoyable as it was informative.

The next time Mike comes to town, be sure you don't miss out! It is a truly a great investment for your business.

Submitted by Ashley Burzenski





Social Media Update

Although it seems to be passing by at lightning speed, this summer has been one for the books! We bring you this update on our social media campaign with a couple of exciting announcements.

The Auto Body Association of Connecticut is officially on Instagram, an extremely popular photo and video based social media platform. Follow us @autobodyassociationct and invite your friends to do the same! We already have over 480 followers and 45 posts (and counting) jam packed with useful information, safety tips and FAQs.

Our Facebook page continues to grow too! We reached a big milestone this month as we hit over 3,200 followers! That's a big jump from the 542 followers we had when we first set out on our campaign last year. We've had great success in reaching more and more people through boosted posts and advertisements. We combine informative content with creativity to put together posts that are brand cohesive and consumer friendly.

As always, please be sure to like and share our posts to help us reach as many people as we can. Every little bit helps us to spread awareness and education. If you have any topics you'd like to be covered or ideas for content, please email them to ashleyburzenski@gmail.com

Until next time!



Understand What's Leading to Inefficient Scheduling at Your Shop

What if there was a way to improve your shop's performance – and possibly dramatically improve it – without making any capital investments or buying anything? What if there was a way to improve productivity and flow, relieve stress on your employees and improve your key performance indicators including customer satisfaction, all without spending a dime? Would you do it?

I've seen all those things happen – often in just 30-45 days – in shops that have taken some simple steps to improve how they schedule jobs into their business. These are shops that have said the thing that would most improve their business performance was having more customers, more repair orders. Yet when I first went into their production area, I could quickly count that there were far more vehicles than technicians, with many sitting untouched needlessly.

Now, I know some of those are vehicles were waiting for insurer approvals or other unavoidable delays. But too often out of concern about running out of work or losing a customer who may have been willing to wait a week, shops have stuffed as many jobs into the production area as they could without considering how many were coming out each day, completed and delivered on time (as promised).

Think about all the downsides to poor scheduling: a chaotic, stressful environment for employees; customers potentially driving by and seeing their vehicle unmoved from where they dropped it off a day or two previously; missed delivery dates (still the biggest customer complaint about this industry); and added rental costs (for you, your customer or an insurance company).

So what leads to the poor scheduling I see at most shops? There are four root causes. First and foremost, shops overestimate their production capabilities. They don't really know how many units they can produce in a day, a week or a month, so they bring in more than they actually can handle.

Greed can play a factor as well: Let's get that car and keys right now rather than risk losing the job. This fails to keep in mind that trying to make a customer happy by getting their car in sooner often results in that customer (or others) disappointed when poor scheduling leads to missed delivery dates.

A third cause of poor scheduling is that too many shops fail to leave space in their schedules for vehicles that are towed in or dropped off unexpectedly. I hear it all the time: "Things were flowing really smoothly until three more jobs came in 'on the hook' that we hadn't expected."

Fourth, despite all the years of discussion related to how problematic "in-on-Monday, out-on-Friday" scheduling is, too many shops continue to do it. I'm writing this column just a week after I was teaching a seminar in Atlanta where a representative from an MSO acknowledged his location continues to bring in nearly all the work for the week on Monday.

I also can attest to how easily poor scheduling can be resolved. The beauty is it doesn't require a digital solution. There are a number of scheduling software systems out there that can help you track and improve what you're doing and produce nice reports. But they aren't necessarily going to fix the problem. Poor scheduling is really a management behavioral problem. All it requires is a decision that your shop's performance will improve with consistent, even flow. Even flow moves faster. Jamming too much work into your system just creates speedbumps.

Continued on Page 7

Continued from Page 6

Next month, I'll explain a simple system you can use with information you already have to improve scheduling at your shop. It's a system I've seen shops use with almost immediate improvements in their business. One New York shop I worked with last May called me in late June or early July to say in a matter of just those few weeks, the shop had gone from stressful chaos to controlled calmness and even flow.



Steve Feltovich of SJF Business Consulting LLC, works with dealers, MSO's and independent collision repair businesses to make lasting improvements and achieve performance goals, based on his more than three decades of automotive industry experience.

Source: www.abrn.com

A Simple Technique for Improving Your Shop's Scheduling

Improving scheduling at your shops starts with something you should have at your fingertips: historical data. Unless you've radically overhauled your production system in some way, data from your last year or two will show you the amount of work your shop actually produces, rather than what you just THINK it produces.

For each month of your historical data, add up how many jobs (or "units") you actually completed. Also divide this number by the number of work days in that particular month. Run these numbers for at least the last 12 months, and to get a good basic average of how many units you actually produce per-day, per-week and per-month.

The other number you should pull from your historical data: How many of those jobs on average each month were unexpected tow-ins or drop-offs.

Running these numbers for more than one year also can help you spot seasonal differences. If you're in the Northeast, for example, you know you're likely going to have more tow-ins in December than you do in August.

That's really all you need to get started. Now take out a calendar page for next month. You know how many jobs on average your shop can produce for each week of that month, so that's how many jobs you should schedule in for each week.

But you also know how many tow-ins or drop-offs to expect, on average. Will this vary a bit, week-by-week? Of course. But to not allow space on the schedule for those, when you have historical evidence of how many to expect, is just foolish. If you've typically seen an average of eight such jobs a month in the past, put two a week on your calendar, and schedule your drivable vehicles in around those. If those tow-ins show up, they won't create chaos and missed deadlines.

Continued on Page 8

Continued from Page 7

If they don't show up, you can always call a customer scheduled for later to see if they want to bring their car in early. Few customers would ever complain about that.

I'm sometimes asked if looking at just average "units per month" is sufficient for good scheduling, or if shops should look at the number of labor hours on those vehicles, or the type of hit (light, medium or heavy). I'm a believer in just sticking with car-count. Unless a vehicle has been fully blueprinted, the number of labor hours on a preliminary estimate isn't likely accurate enough to help with scheduling. An average number of units per month, if derived over a year or more, will include a mix of small, medium and heavy hits. It's a simple system that likely will get you a lot closer to efficient scheduling that most shops currently are.

But here's the other important aspect of better scheduling. Stop bringing everything in on Monday morning. Think about the stress that puts on your administrative staff, having all those cars arrive at nearly the same time. Meanwhile, your paint department may be staring at the four walls of an empty paint booth – until later in the week when that whole glut of vehicles is ready for paint.

Instead, use the historical average daily number of units your shop produces, and work to schedule in a consistent number of those each day of the week. I know what you're thinking: Insurance companies won't let us schedule work in on a Thursday or Friday. That's just not true. Some cars are going to carry over a weekend regardless of when you bring them in. I can assure you some shops are scheduling work in later in the week. Not with every car and every insurer, but enough to help improve scheduling and flow.

It also may help to get some professional sales training to help your frontline staff have effective conversations that enable them to determine if you risk losing a customer by scheduling them further in the future, or if a particular customer would be fine dropping off on a Thursday or Friday.

The beauty of all this is you are bringing into the shop the right amount of work for what your system can handle rather than bringing in vehicles that just sit. Once you have this dialed in, you and your employees can then focus on making other improvements to your processes that will allow you to schedule in and produce even more jobs per week and month.

Steve Feltovich of SJF Business Consulting LLC, works with dealers, MSO's and independent collision repair businesses to make lasting improvements and achieve performance goals, based on his more than three decades of automotive industry experience.

Source: www.abrn.com



Name That Car Contest!

What Classic Car Does This Logo Belong To?
Send Your Answer to abacnews13@gmail.com

On September 30th, we will choose a
winner from all of the correct answers
Winner will receive a \$200.00 Visa Gift Card
One Entry per person, please!

Oxford Automotive wins lawsuit against Allstate Superior Court Judge finds Allstate in breach of contract, ordering it to pay the bill in full

On June 6, 2018, Superior Court Judge Trial Referee John Moran issued his decision in the case of Oxford Automotive, LLC v. Allstate Fire and Casualty Insurance Company. The case involved the following facts. In June of 2013, Stephen Reyher sustained front end damage in a one-vehicle accident involving a deer strike. Reyher was insured with Allstate. Reyher hired Oxford to repair the damages. Repairs were completed, but Allstate did not pay the full invoice, leaving a deficit of \$4,804.21. Oxford returned Reyher's vehicle in exchange for a legal assignment, giving Oxford the right to stand in Reyher's shoes and pursue a breach of contract claim against Allstate.

Allstate took the position that it paid all fair and reasonable charges. The primary bone of contention was hours of labor and labor rates.

Oxford submitted evidence that it expended 68.2 hours to repair the vehicle. Citing to the American Heritage Dictionary, the court held that:

a definition of 'reasonable' is 'Within the bounds of common sense. Not excessive or extreme, firm.' Also, a definition of 'necessary' is 'Needed to achieve a certain result or effect, requisite.' The court finds that 68.2 hours were a reasonable and necessary number of hours to repair Reyher's automobile.

As for labor rates, Oxford submitted evidence that it charged \$75/body; \$85/structural; \$80/Paint; \$90/mechanical. John Welsh testified that he consulted with his accountant and it was determined that his overhead cost was \$52.00 per hour. He accordingly set his labor rates consistent with that determination, adding a profit factor.

Allstate, on the other hand, argued that the reasonable labor rate was a flat non-negotiable rate of \$50/body labor and \$26/paint labor. Allstate argued that the labor rates established by Oxford were not reasonable because they were not set at precisely the \$50.00/hr. and \$26.00/hr. rates paid by Allstate.

The court flatly rejected Allstate's argument, holding that: "Reasonableness entails a broad, wide spectrum. Albeit on the high range of this broad spectrum, this court concludes that the labor rates utilized by [Oxford] were reasonable."

The court rejected Allstate's attempt to argue that the reasonable labor rate for auto body work is precisely \$50/hr. Not more or less. The court held that "This cannot be true. Reasonableness employs a wide range to accommodate particular situations." The court held that Allstate's "self-generated statistical analysis of labor rates charged among auto repair shops served by Allstate ... was not validated and therefore does not support its contention that \$50.00 or \$26.00 was reasonable."

The court entered judgment in favor of Oxford awarding full payment. This decision is helpful for shops seeking to pursue short pay claims. It was a first-party action brought for breach of contract. The case was brought by assignment. The court held that Oxford's labor rates and hourly charges were reasonable, and that Allstate's flat \$50/hr. and \$26/hr. argument was not legally valid.

In short, Allstate did as it often does: it took an unreasonable position and tried to bully a small business into accepting an unreasonable sum for its services. The court did not buy it, instead seeking to fix the injustice.



Hoffman

Driven by trust. SM



Our Vendor Spotlight this issue shines on our ABAC News' Diamond Sponsor, The Hoffman Group

The Hoffman Group is one of our long time Supporting Advertisers and we had a few moments to talk with Wholesale Parts Manager, Mark Hutchinson. Known to most of his customers as "Hutch", he has been the driving force at Hoffman Wholesale Parts for the last 10 years in his position.

"I have been in the automotive business for the last 26 years, where my word is the promise to you even before the Hoffmans "Driven By Trust". My goal is to provide all of the Hoffman customers with the best service possible. Here at Hoffman we understand your needs and will provide you with the excellent service that you deserve. If you are looking for a company that truly cares about your business and the importance of getting the correct parts in a timely manner, then look no further", says Hutchinson.

Each of Hoffman's dealership's parts departments are run by individual parts managers with Mark handling all of the wholesale operation. Working alongside "Hutch" is his Wholesale Parts Representative, Eddie Ravetto, long time face of the wholesale parts industry and has been at Hoffman for the past 5+ years nurturing relationships with his customers. Now, no wholesale operation can run efficiently without a qualified Dispatcher and Hoffman has one of the best in Dennis Covini who oversees the 26 Wholesale Delivery Vehicles. Dennis has been at Hoffman for the past 10 years and is very happy doing his job out of the spotlight.

Hutch tells us that all of his drivers are cross-trained so that there is no drop off when there's an emergency run, or vacations arise. Hutch gave me info on the way he has his drivers coming from the west, picking up various lines of products then coming east to Ford and dispatching from there. It's quite an elaborate process.

This article would not be complete unless we mentioned the efforts of Hoffman BMW Parts Manager, John Musco. John is the every-present face at many, if not all, of the ABAC events and has been a force in the support that he and his Hoffman Team give to the Auto Body Association of Connecticut.

The ABAC would like to thank the Hoffman Auto Group along with their amazing wholesale team for their support and dedication to the ABAC and the businesses they serve.



Submitted by Don Cushing

The Need for Physical Inspection.



I recently had a client whose vehicle was totaled in a crash. The vehicle was in a tow yard awaiting processing. When I got the total loss report, it contained a number of “condition adjustments” to the tune of about \$1,800 (on a \$7,000 vehicle). My client was upset because she felt that many of those deductions were in error. I called over to the shop owner to ask about this. The shop owner told me that the vehicle had been locked the entire time and that no one ever entered the vehicle. This struck me as odd seeing as many of the condition adjustments pertained to the condition of the interior of the vehicle. The shop owner then told me that a young lady with a camera phone came by and quickly took a few photos of the outside of the vehicle then left. It is unlikely that she was even an employee of the insurance company. Rather, she was probably just a hired gun, brought in for pennies to take a few cell phone pictures to justify exorbitant deductions from a total loss payment.

I reviewed the State of Connecticut regulations on the need for a physical inspection. Despite the growing custom away from physical inspection and what the DOI has seemingly blessed, the language and spirit of our laws clearly seem to contemplate the need for physical inspections.

According to 38a-790-4, for example, an appraiser is required to “leave a copy” of the appraisal with the shop. The rule doesn’t say: “mail” a copy or “send” a copy; it says “leave” a copy, implying that the appraiser is actually at the shop. 38a-790-5 requires that any competitive estimate be completed by personal inspection: no photographs, telephone calls, etc. 38a-790-7 similarly requires a licensed appraiser’s physical inspection on any requests for supplement. These rules make sense, but it wouldn’t make sense that a physical inspection would only be helpful in the context of a competitive estimate or request for supplement. What about all the preliminary safety considerations that are ignored without a physical inspection? Or the deficiencies in attempting to apply condition adjustments without ever actually seeing the car? There is no way the legislature sought to disregard those considerations. Finally, 38a-790-8 makes it clear that an appraiser must make a fair and impartial appraisal, disregard any efforts on the part of others (including insurance companies) to influence the appraiser’s judgment and to prepare an independent appraisal.

The industry’s trend away from physical inspections appears to be growing. This is in the context of repairs and total loss claims. Consumers will suffer greatly from this as evidenced by what happened to my client. Were she without the assistance of a lawyer (*a damn fine lawyer*) and informed shop owner, she would have no way to know that she was being scammed. In my case, once I cited to the laws requiring physical inspection, the adjuster agreed to pay the fair price. It was like catching a kid with his hand in the cookie jar. I’m sure that I haven’t even heard the worst. I recently heard about an insurer using an Uber driver to take pictures. Who knows, maybe this young lady in my case was an Uber driver. Either way, it’s a problem.

The insurance companies seem to be getting more and more aggressive in utilizing whatever tools and technologies they can to cheat consumers and body shops. Stay vigilant.

John M. Parese, Esq. is a Partner with the law firm of Buckley Wynne & Parese and serves as General Counsel to the ABAC. Buckley Wynne & Parese maintains offices in New Haven, Hartford and Stamford, and services clients throughout all of Connecticut. The opinions set forth in Attorney Parese’s articles are for education and entertainment purposes only, and should not be construed as legal advice or legally binding. If you have any questions or concerns about the content of this or any of Attorney Parese’s articles, you are encouraged to contact Attorney Parese directly.

Not-included masking, draining gas and oil, extra tinting time: 5 more tips from the DEG



The Database Enhancement Gateway, which allows repairers and insurers to make inquiries and suggestions of the Big 3 estimating providers at no cost, was augmented in 2015 to offer weekly tips for repairers on the Audatex, Mitchell and CCC programs online and through the Society of Collision Repair Specialists' email list.

If you haven't used the free service before to submit questions about estimating collision repair work or just browse responses to other carrier and shop questions, check it out. It's a good way to find IP best practices and help write the most accurate estimates or appraisals possible.

Here's some areas spotlighted as tip-worthy by the DEG. To receive the tips as soon as DEG releases them, like/follow the DEG's Facebook and Twitter feeds. (It also posts videos to a YouTube channel once in a while.) Or just browse the more than 10,000 inquiries and responses in the database and see what else you learn.

CCC, Mitchell: Not-included masking operations

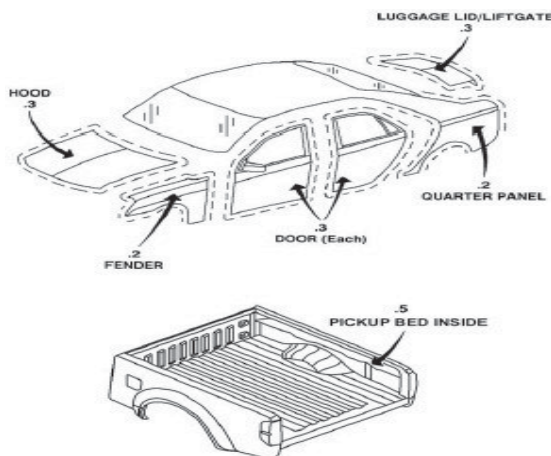
The DEG in April and May drew repairers and insurers' attention to some masking procedures which aren't included in Mitchell and CCC labor times, respectively.

It highlighted Mitchell's guidance in the "Mask Vehicle to Prevent Overspray Damage" P-pages entry:

MASK INTERIOR, ENTRYWAYS, ENGINE COMPARTMENT AND TRUNK OPENINGS

Interior masking may be necessary when refinishing exterior surfaces to stop overspray damage that is not prevented by adjacent panel perimeter masking which includes back taping or application of foam tape. Interior masking may also be used when exterior panels (door, hood, etc.) are removed while applying refinish material. The performance of this operation is NOT INCLUDED in the Mitchell refinish labor time. (Emphasis Mitchell's.)

A Mitchell illustration offers not-included interior masking locations and labor times for them, explaining, "Labor time includes all pillars, jambs, weatherstrips, edges, entryways and openings as necessary. Deduct .1 hour overlap for each interior masked adjacent panel and/or opening."



"As always, Material cost are NOT INCLUDED in labor times," the DEG stressed. It offered this guidance about CCC labor times as well.

A variety of CCC entries involve not-included masking, according to the DEG.

The "Bagging (Cover Entire Vehicle Exterior)" section states, "Published refinish times include time necessary to mask exterior surface adjacent the refinish area to a perimeter of 36 inches, or 3 feet. When the process of perimeter masking is substituted for an entire vehicle bagging procedure, then no additional time should be added."

Continued on Page 13

Continued from Page 12

If the body shop needs to mask the perimeter and bag the entire car, CCC states a formula of "Add 0.2 each time a cover is applied and removed" for applying and removing the vehicle cover "may be considered."

The "Basic Color Coat Application" entry breaks down other masking that is and isn't included, according to the DEG.

Included items include "Back tape opening (handle, lock cylinder, mirror)," "Mask adjacent panels (3 foot perimeter)," "Mask / close gap between adjacent panels up to foam tape (over spray)," "Mask glass opening," "Mask / protect grille radiator opening (over spray)," "Mix paint (color with necessary solvents)" and "Remove masking," according to CCC.

Not-included items include "Cover mask engine / compartment to prevent overspray," "Cover / mask entire exterior of vehicle to prevent overspray damage," "Cover / mask for prime and block," "Cover / mask for cut-in," "Cover / mask recessed edges / jambs," "Cover / mask trunk / compartment to prevent overspray" and "Cover / mask interior of vehicle to prevent overspray damage," CCC states.

The DEG also reported that the "Color Blend (Adjacent Panels)" and "Three-Stage Color Blend (Adjacent Panels)" CCC entries both declare "Masking of attached parts" not-included. Interestingly, CCC lists "Cover / mask recessed edges / jambs" as not-included in the "Color Blend" entry but included in the "Three-Stage" section.

Finally, the DEG explained what to do regarding "roping" in what might be a quote from CCC:

In the event a facility decides roping or "lifting" window seals are best repair option for the vehicle repairs, Published refinish times are for one color applied to new undamaged OEM replacement components, without exterior trim, interior trim or other attached components. Roping or lifting seals would require an on the spot evaluation for labor time if required.

Audatex: Refilling, topping off or draining

The DEG in May called repairers' attention to how taking care of a vehicle about a quart low would be a not-included operation in certain cases.

Audatex's labor exclusions include "Drain, refill and/or top off engine oil"; "Drain or refill fuel tank"; and "Drain, refill and/or top off transmission fluid."

"An example would be vehicle with oil, transmission coolers built into the radiator or separate cooler requiring to be disconnected, drained and refilled using the appropriate fluid," the DEG wrote.

The estimating service also excludes "Bleeding of brake, cooling, or hydraulic systems ('Additional Labor' for brake bleeding)."

"An example would be having to bleed or purge air out of a cooling/ radiator during the refill process, or filling and bleeding a brake system after opening the fluid lines to disconnect," the DEG wrote.

Mitchell: Refinishing the underside of a truck bed

The word "Complete" in the Mitchell operation "Refinish Complete Bed Assy Including Tailgate" can be misleading, for it doesn't include the underside, according to the DEG.

Continued on Page 14

Continued from Page 13

“Refinish Complete Bed Assy Including Tailgate” does not include labor to refinish the underside bed assembly,” the DEG wrote of Mitchell in a May tip. “A separate refinish selection needs to be added from the Mitchell database.”

“Depending on the paint manufacturer, the underside refinish may require a flattened or matte clear to be used over the underside color for additional protection. This is not an included operation and the clear coat labor for the underside would need to be manually entered following the clear coat formula in the CEG guide under page 28 Refinish Section.”

Audatex, CCC, Mitchell: Labor times don't include researching procedures, diagnosing

Any time you spend accessing OEM repair procedures — as well as the cost to subscribe to each OEM site — isn't included in any of the three estimating services' labor times, the DEG explained in May.

“OEM information website access cost is NOT INCLUDED in developed labor times in all three estimating systems,” the DEG wrote. “OEM technical information sites offer multiple subscription options available to end users depending on their specific needs and time. Research and diagnostic labor time is also not included in published labor times.

“Both labor and subscription cost would require and on the spot evaluation to be added on the repair plan/work order.”

Audatex: Sometimes you need more tinting time

You get a single “standard tint” operation included within Audatex's two-stage refinish setup, according to a P-Pages entry shared by the DEG in June.

The estimating service defines “standard tint” as “the initial mix, check, one tint cycle, and check.”

Sometimes, that won't be enough time, Audatex agrees.

“Audatex's studies revealed instances where additional time was required for the tinting process,” Audatex wrote in its Database Reference Manual. “The range of this additional time was commonly between 0.1 and 1.0 hours with an average of 0.5 hours per estimate per color.

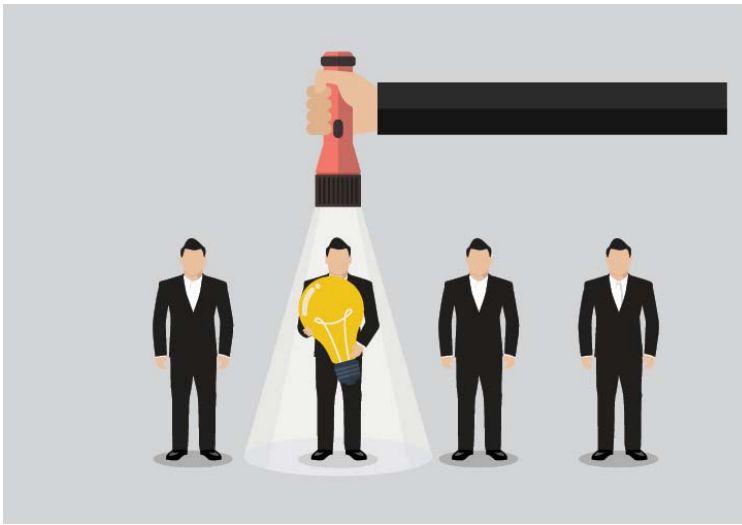
“The appearance of color match can be difficult enough to require both color tint (tinting to adjust the color) and blending. I-CAR Finish Matching (Module 2, Topic 3) recommends planning and preparing for blending before the work begins. Per I-CAR, tinting should be done only to achieve a blendable match.”

Source: www.RepairerDrivenNews.com

Written by John Huetter



Find Your Next Star Technician



Last month, I took a look at how one shop approaches recruiting. But one of his other sources leads into another part of our story on a company that is trying to solve our recruiting issues.

That company is Find a Wrench, which Jay Goninen founded. Jay grew up working in his family's automotive shop in Wisconsin. He found his skillset to be better served in the management roles, but he kept coming into issues regarding recruiting good technicians. He tried recruiting companies, which was a good solution for other businesses but the pay rates and knowledge needed for properly recruiting in our space always led to frustrations on both sides. Jay knew from recruiters that the need

for boots on the ground, industry knowledge and the fee structure prohibited owners from really being able to utilize this opportunity. Jay then decided to combine industry knowledge, high-quality recruiters and an affordable fee structure to found the company called Find a Wrench.

With the industry knowledge and experienced recruiter knowledge they found that a one-size-fits-all strategy was not the right answer. Therefore, they looked at how technicians of all ages and expertise looked at information or found new jobs. They created a combination program of boots on the ground, Facebook, texting, automotive sites, career sites and proactive calls to go into a market and actively recruit for the technicians needed for shops.

One of the best tools they found was through Facebook. According to Jay, there are over 2.2 billion active users each month and using ads that grab people's attention has been one great solution for recruiting in their communities. They work to target the right demographic and get consistent results with the right campaigns. However, many shop owners will spend money in the wrong areas and take time away from much-needed operations.

Jay said that many shop owners start by not putting out ads or employment opportunities on their own websites. Today, most valuable potential employees will start their research of your company on the website. If there's not an easy way to apply or find open positions, then the search will end right here. The second biggest mistake that shops make is that they stop recruiting when they are slow and start recruiting when they are really busy. This is the worst approach to take. You need to be recruiting all the time but especially when all shops are slow. This is when technicians are looking because that's usually when they may not be getting the hours they want and are more willing to look at other options.

If you are busy and your competitors are busy, the technicians you want are probably getting more than enough hours. Also, when you are finally blown out, you don't have time to recruit or train the right way. So, you are potentially setting up a new technician to be thrown in the fire and possibly have cultural issues along the way, which will perpetuate a bad reputation in the area and kill future recruiting (we all know it's a small world).

Continued on Page 16

Continued from Page 15

Jay said that if you just plan to recruit with a basic focus on, “what do you want to make,” then you probably won’t recruit well in your area. All techs want a fair pay plan with great opportunities for a lot of hours. However, they can get that anywhere; so why are you different? Technicians want options for pay on billable hours, benefits, days off, great reputation shop, investment in training, engagement to grow the business, fair pay for hard work and more. The main thing to remember is that you need to know all pay plans, reputations and benefits that are being offered in your area, find out what’s important to each of the potential candidates you are talking to and then figure out how to think outside the box to help them accomplish those goals at your business.

Jay does suggest that you should be involved in your community and in front of future talent. You should be a known face at tech schools, unemployment office, the military recruiting groups in your area, and at some vendor training programs. Each community is different, so by being active in all facets, you will have a chance to touch every possible manager and technician in your area.

Finally, beyond using Find a Wrench’s full recruiting program, owners can take advantage of the new assisted self-recruiting program.” This hybrid plan means they will post ads on all networks, weed through the candidates and only provide owners with resumes that meet minimum qualifications.

The main thing to remember is that recruiting never ends and a one-size-fits-all approach won’t work. Employees are different ages, have different goals, come to you from different places, and want different options. If you are active in your community, consistently recruit every week, offer flexible pay/benefit plans based on technicians goals, then you will probably be better than 60 percent of the shops in your area. However, if you plan to engage your team, train your team, get involved in the community, and become the place where people want to come to work, then you will be in the top 99 percent of shops in your area and recruiting issues will be a thing of the past.



Rissy Sutherland is an auto care industry lifer, having grown up in her family’s automotive franchise business and later implementing the training and operational systems for all 300 auto repair franchise locations for Moran Industries—the automotive giant that purchased her family’s shops. She has opened more than 400 shops in her career as the executive for nearly a dozen automotive brands. She is one of the industry’s foremost experts in shop operations.

Source: www.ratchetandwrench.com



**Fixed Ops
Business**

DATA ACCESS IS THE NEW INFORMATION AVAILABILITY

Why should repairers be interested in what's going on with autonomous vehicle policy, data access and cybersecurity? Because having the right tools and the right information to repair vehicles are critical elements to the longevity of a successful automotive repair business.

Those reasons apply to both mechanical and collision repairers. Without access to important data, repairers will struggle to provide consumers the level of service necessary to sustain their businesses.

At the center of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) legislative debate was the issue of service information, or better known as "information availability." The Automotive Service Association (ASA) worked diligently to get language into the CAAA that required, "manufacturers to provide promptly to any person engaged in the repairing or servicing of motor vehicles or motor vehicle engines ... with any and all information needed to make use of the emission control diagnostics system ... including instructions for making emission related diagnosis and repairs." "No such information may be withheld ... if that information is provided (directly or indirectly) by the manufacturer to franchised dealers or other persons engaged in the repair, diagnosing, or servicing of motor vehicles or motor vehicle engines."

It required several attempts by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to get a workable information availability regulation, as well as an industry agreement to assure new automaker websites included nonemissions information. Most industry experts agree that the current process works for the independent repair industry.

With the onslaught of new vehicle technologies and much public policy focus on autonomous vehicles (AV), automotive repairers are again at a critical juncture for the future. The term in the early 1990s was "information availability," but today's terminology is "data access." ASA is an active member of multiple coalitions addressing new vehicle technologies, data access and cybersecurity, including:

- Ad Hoc HAV Data Access Coalition
- Aftermarket Telematics Task Force
- Coalition for Future Mobility
- Global Alliance for Vehicle Data Access

Several states have moved quickly to address research and deployment policy for autonomous vehicles. Although the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has issued guidelines on many of these issues for states and the industry, the U.S. Congress has yet to finalize legislation in these same policy areas. The U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed House Resolution (H.R.) 3388, the SELF DRIVE Act, which clarified state and federal roles in the autonomous vehicle policy arena. However, the SELF DRIVE Act did not address the data access issue for independent repairers.

The U.S. Senate Commerce Committee did address data access in its AV START Act, S. 1885. U.S. Sen. James Inhofe, R-Okla., offered an amendment addressing data access during the Committee markup, which was agreed to. The Inhofe Amendment establishes a HAV Data Access Advisory Committee at NHTSA. And the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which has shown much interest in the vehicle cybersecurity policy area, was also included in the advisory committee at NHTSA. This stakeholder committee provides for automotive industry participation, including "independent vehicle repairers."

Continued on Page 18

Continued from Page 15

The Senate bill has not been considered on the floor of that body to date. It is important for independent repairers that the Inhofe Amendment be included in the final AV legislation sent to the president. If the Senate does not approve S. 1885 by the August break, it will become increasingly difficult for final passage before Congress adjourns for the year due to the brief fall congressional schedule and the November elections.

As important as information availability was to the repair industry, data access is taking an even larger public-policy role. This issue does not have to be contentious and hopefully will be resolved by the automotive industry. ASA will continue to be part of this conversation.

Source: www.abrn.com

State of Connecticut 2018 Non - Consensual Towing & Storage Rates

CHARGES AND ADDITIONAL MILEAGE RATES			
	LESS THAN 10,000 LBS. G.V.W.R.	HEAVY DUTY 10,000 TO 26,000 LBS. G.V.W.R.	HEAVY DUTY OVER 26,000 LBS. G.V.W.R.
	TOW	TOW	TOW
BASE CHARGE	TOW CHARGE \$105.00 Includes mileage to scene and two loaded miles.	HOURLY RATE (Recovery Included) \$240.00/hr Minimum 1 hour charge (15 minute increments charge thereafter.)	HOURLY RATE (Recovery Included) \$390.00/hr Minimum 1 hour charge (15 minute increments charge thereafter.)
MILEAGE CHARGE	\$4.75 Per mile in excess of two (2) loaded miles.	NONE	NONE

The rates and charges posted cover NONCONSENSUAL TOW charges based on distance and vehicle weight.

NONCONSENSUAL TOW - Means the towing of a motor vehicle, in accordance with the provisions of Section 14-145 of the Connecticut General Statutes (trespass tow), or for which arrangements are made by order of a law enforcement officer or traffic authority, as defined in Section 14-297 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

BASE TOW CHARGE - Means charges including preparation of the vehicle for tow to the ultimate destination and two miles with the vehicle in tow (loaded miles). Hourly charges for vehicles 10,000 lbs. and over, include vehicle recovery and all mileage while towing or transporting a vehicle.

STORAGE CHARGES PER 24 HR. PERIOD	LENGTH OF VEHICLE	INSIDE BUILDING		OUTSIDE (Fenced, Lighted, and Protected)		OUTSIDE
	LESS THAN 20 FEET	5 DAYS OR LESS	MORE THAN 5 DAYS	5 DAYS OR LESS	MORE THAN 5 DAYS	5 DAYS OR LESS
		\$30.00 PER DAY	\$37.00 PER DAY	\$26.00 PER DAY	\$31.00 PER DAY	\$23.00 PER DAY
	20 FEET THROUGH 32 FEET	\$35.00 PER DAY	\$48.00 PER DAY	\$30.00 PER DAY	\$37.00 PER DAY	\$25.00 PER DAY
	OVER 32 FEET	\$43.00 PER DAY	\$63.00 PER DAY	\$35.00 PER DAY	\$46.00 PER DAY	\$30.00 PER DAY

The Coalition for Collision Repair Excellence presents..... 2018 Seminar

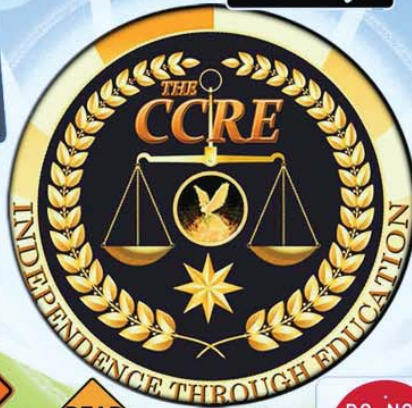
Friday & Saturday
September 28th-29th
8am - 5pm each day
Embassy Suites
(@Atlanta Airport)
4700 Southport Road
Atlanta, GA 30337

**Independence &
Profit**
Next Exit ↗

ONE WAY →

**PROFIT AREA
AHEAD**

phone
for info:
877-700-7743



Topics include:

State of the Industry

Contracts & Documents

Strategies and Word Tracks

Implementing the CCRE Process

Damage Analysis & Job Costing

Time Based vs. Value Based Services

Roundtable discussion....much more!

visit **www.theccre.com** for registration link

ABAC EXECUTIVE OFFICERS 2018

PRESIDENT

BOB AMENDOLA

Autoworks of Westville - New Haven

SECRETARY

MARK WILKOWSKI

Stanley's Auto Body - Waterbury

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

TONY FERRAILOLO

A&R Body Specialty - Wallingford

VICE PRESIDENT

ASHLEY BURZENSKI

Autoworks of Westville - New Haven

TREASURER

MIKE WILKOWSKI

Stanley's Auto Body - Waterbury

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

HEATHER ROMANIELLO



The goal of the ABAC News is to provide a forum for the free expression of ideas. The opinions and ideas appearing in this publication are not necessarily representations of the ABAC and should not be construed as legal advice.

ABAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

GEORGE ATWOOD

Atwood's Auto Appearance - Deep River

WILLIAM DENYA

Denya's Auto Body - Meriden

SABRINA INDOMENICO

Santostefano Auto Body - Middletown

DEAN McCOY

Dean Autoworks - Durham

STEVE SBALCIO

Dean Autoworks - Durham

JOHN WELSH

Oxford Automotive - Oxford

TONY CATAPANO

Walt's Auto Repair - No Branford

MARIO DIMICHELE

Jake's Auto Body - Waterbury

CAROL LUPINEK

Eddie's Auto Body - East Haddam

JOE MIANO

Friendly Auto Body - Hartford

JOANNE SERKEY

A&R Auto Body - Torrington

TONY CAVALLARO, JR.

Airport Rd. Auto Body - Hartford

ADRIANNA INDOMENICO

Santostefano Auto Body - Middletown

ED LUPINEK

Eddie's Auto Body - East Haddam

RONALD POIDOMANI

Town Line Body Shop - Monroe

RANDY SERKEY

A&R Auto Body - Torrington

JOHN M. PARESE, Esq.

ABAC Legal Counsel

Law Offices of Buckley, Wynne & Parese



Your ABAC Board of Directors

Advertising & ABAC Sponsorships Available

*Want to be a Sponsor?
The ABAC has many different
Sponsorships available to fit
any advertising budget!*

*Advertise and support the
Auto Body Association of
Connecticut by placing your company ad
in the Supporting Advertisers Directory
found as a pull-out in this newsletter*

*Corporate, Affiliate and Meeting
Sponsorships also available*

For more information contact:

Dave @ 860-227-0653