

bodyshop

June 2018

bodyshopmag.com



IN THIS ISSUE

CULTURE COUNTS

How do businesses grow while retaining their own identities?

RIDING A WAVE IN CORNWALL

Success stories come in all shapes and sizes

IBIS IRELAND 2018

We report on events from Dublin



industry interviews, reports, news, vehicle tech, six pages of product, plus much more

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IBIS GLOBAL SUMMIT

The IBIS Global Summit 2018 aims to bring the industry together under one roof. Here, we look ahead to the hottest ticket in town

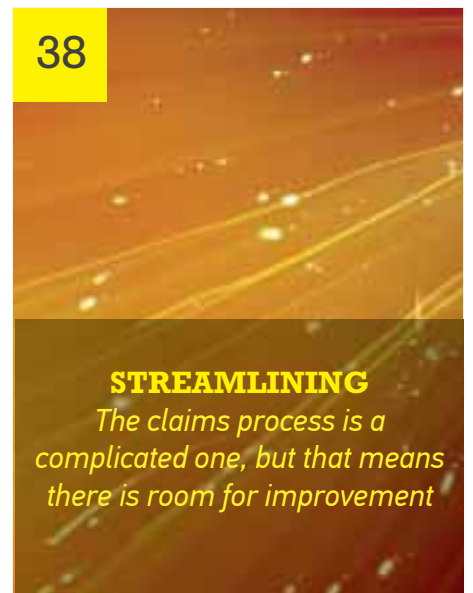
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GROW YOUR OWN WAY

With skills such a sought-after commodity the world over, we ask how companies can grow while retaining quality and culture

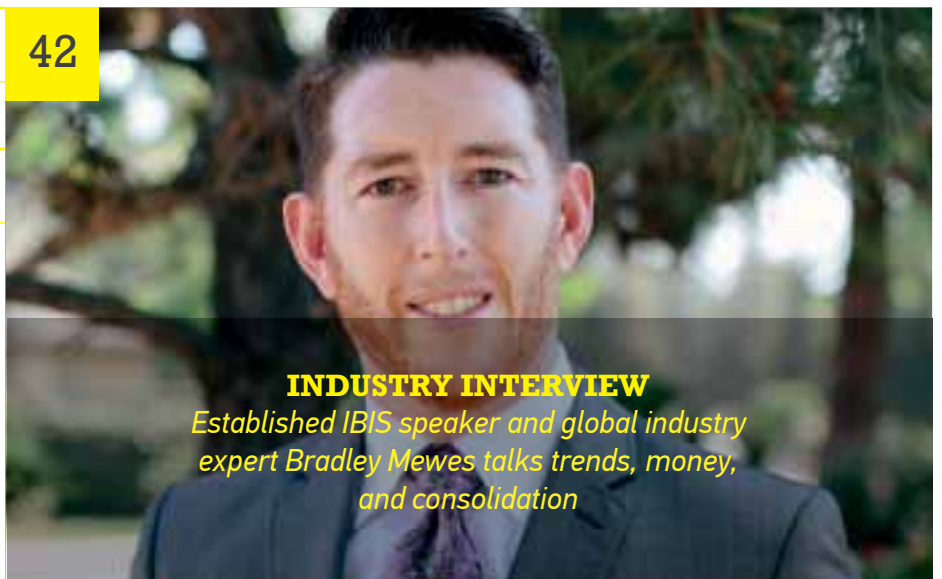
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STREAMLINING

The claims process is a complicated one, but that means there is room for improvement

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INDUSTRY INTERVIEW

Established IBIS speaker and global industry expert Bradley Mewes talks trends, money, and consolidation

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ED'S LETTER

Whoever I speak with and wherever I look at the moment, people are busy...

Bodyshops are at capacity, or over it, and rapidly becoming technology experts; insurers are hurriedly trying to streamline processes; suppliers are introducing new time-saving products and services; and the vehicle manufacturers are introducing state-of-the-art products and delivering the aftersales services to match. It really is an exciting time to be involved in this industry.


So why are staff and skill shortages an inherent issue the world over? Well, on the whole our industry does a very good job of underselling itself to the outside world. That's changing, and rightly so. This industry is now about engineering, electronics, technicians (not panel beaters or painters), innovation, lean processes and systems – and that should be embraced.

With the IBIS Global Summit taking place this month, and drawing leading influencers from across the globe together, it will once again provide a chance to elevate the status of this industry for benefit in the future.

Enjoy the issue.

 @mark_bodyshop

 mark-hadaway

 mark@bodyshopmag.com

WHAT'S TRENDING

1. Steve Abrahams gains GQA certification
2. Motofix reveals expansion plans
3. Bodyshop management systems impacting repair



SPEAKERS SET FOR IBIS GLOBAL SUMMIT

The IBIS Global Summit will host more than 350 delegates from across the globe at The Hilton, Munich Park, Germany, from 11-13 June.

Taking place under the banner, 'Challenging Perspectives', the two-day event will provide the perfect mix of culture and insight, allowing delegates to develop new and existing relationships, to help drive their business forward.

Partnered by 3M, AkzoNobel, Audatex, Axalta, Enterprise-Rent-A-Car, Fix Auto and Symach, it is established as one of the most prestigious events in the automotive repair industry, the IBIS Global Summit 2018 will cover topical issues ranging from the customer's increasing influence on the industry through to how established stakeholders are evolving to cater for shifting operational dynamics.

The summit will shine a spotlight on key themes, including the changing nature of collision repair across the world. Michael Wilmshurst, chief executive, Nationwide Accident Repair Services, will join Frank Liu, CEO of Fix Auto China, to discuss the polarised nature of repair markets, while Jim Muse, Axalta sales director, North America and director of global refinish accounts, will discuss the pressing issue of the skills gap with John Van Alstyne, CEO and president, I-Car.


Focus will also be centred on future mobility insights with Dirk Utman, senior manager automotive, Deloitte, looking at the key findings from its Future-of-Mobility research, as well as its EU- and North American fleet management study.


The high-quality list of speakers also includes Bradley Mewes, principal of Supplement; Jennifer Boyer, global collision business and strategy manager of Ford Motor Company; president and chief operating officer of Caliber Collision Centers, Mark Sanders; Steve Young, managing director, ICDP; and TrustPilot's sales director – DACH, Paul Steele.

#BE2018

The *bodyshop* Event and Awards will return to the Hilton Metropole, Birmingham on the 27-28 September. It is partnered this year by headline partners AkzoNobel and Enterprise Rent-A-Car, along with partners Audatex, Autoflow, CAPS, Car-O-Liner, Ezi-Methods, IAEA, IBIS, Mirka, NBRA, S&B Automotive, Sikkens Autocoat BT, Symach, Thatcham Research, VBRA and Vizion Network.

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 BodyshopMagazine

JUNE 2018 | VOLUME 31 | NO.06

COVER STORY

The technical experts working in Thatcham Research's fully equipped and ultra-modern Repair Technology Centre produce a wide range of vehicle repair data, ranging from light structural research to full body methods. This data is used by the automotive industry to help facilitate the safe and effective repair of modern cars.

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RG19 4NR
UK

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·Main switchboard: +44 (0)1635 868855



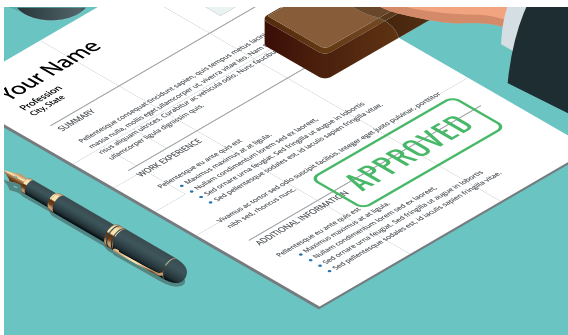


NVSA UPDATES ANNOUNCED

Thatcham Research has updated the New Vehicle Security Assessment (NVSA) programme, centred on securing cars against the growing threat presented by digital compromise.

The new criteria will be designed to shut down the keyless entry vulnerability, while anticipating other potential methods of digital and cyber-compromise.

Thatcham Research has identified vulnerabilities in on-board electronic systems and criteria covering these areas will be included in the new standards. In addition, police authorities have drawn attention to the increase in 'chop shops' – illicit garages where cars are dismantled to be sold on the spare parts market – and therefore criteria related to parts identification will also be carefully reviewed.



MOTOFIX REVEALS LATEST PLANS

Motofix has unveiled its expansion plans for the next five years. The company is embarking on a major £2m investment programme to both increase its market reach and develop its sites as it continues its objective of becoming the supplier of choice.

Motofix has also won approval from Volkswagen Group UK for its state-of-the-art accident repair centre in Oxford. The accreditation follows an intense series of checks to ensure compliance with VW's strict centre approval criteria.

The Oxford site joins Motofix Group's other centres in High Wycombe, Swindon and Exeter in gaining manufacturer approval by VW, which includes Audi Seat, Škoda, Volkswagen and VW Commercial Vehicles.

STIGMA AROUND MENTAL HEALTH

More than half of van drivers and owners say there is still a stigma attached to discussing mental health at work. More than half of the 2,000-plus van drivers and owners asked said it was because it is a 'male-dominated industry'.

IN BRIEF

Insurers and brokers have launched new Guiding Principles and Action Points to help tackle excessive premium differences between long-standing and new customers.

A Connected and Autonomous Vehicles Showcase will form part of Cenex-LCV2018 this year, where companies and consortia will demonstrate their latest technologies and research.

Renault UK is supplying Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) with its first electric cars as SNH begins its move towards a fully electric car pool fleet.

Milton Keynes based Mirka UK Ltd raised £1,787.29 for local charity, Willen Hospice during a fundraising football match at MK Dons stadium.

Drivers and insurers are losing £1m a month repairing damage to vehicles caused by potholes, according to the AA.

Audi aims to sell approximately 800,000 fully electric cars and plug-in hybrids in the year 2025.

Inchcape UK has introduced Technician Tool Insurance for vehicle technicians.

Mercedes-Benz Trucks Dealer City West Commercials has opened a new service centre in Exeter.

The UK new car market grew 10.4% in April, with 167,911 new units registered, according to figures released by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT).

Birmingham North and Sutton-in-Ashfield are both celebrating 10 years as part of the Fix Auto network.

Plans for the launch of a new medium-term rental fleet has been announced by Meridian Vehicle Solutions.

Fix Auto UK has launched a new online platform enabling retail customers to request an estimate for repairing their vehicle from their smartphone.

Smartdriverclub Insurance has seen a 14% rise in policies that have been ghost-brokered over the past year.

TOOTLE PARTNERS WITH HPI

Tootle is aiming to enhance the service it provides to consumers with a new partnership with hpi. The partnership will see users on Tootle now able to access the platform directly from hpi valuations.

Commenting on the move Ian Denny, head of digital media at hpi, said, 'Tootle is an innovative business that is committed to ensuring users get the best price and experience from their vehicle sale. A new feature built into our own valuations tool means we are able to ask if car owners would like to get offers from interested dealers at our partner Tootle.'



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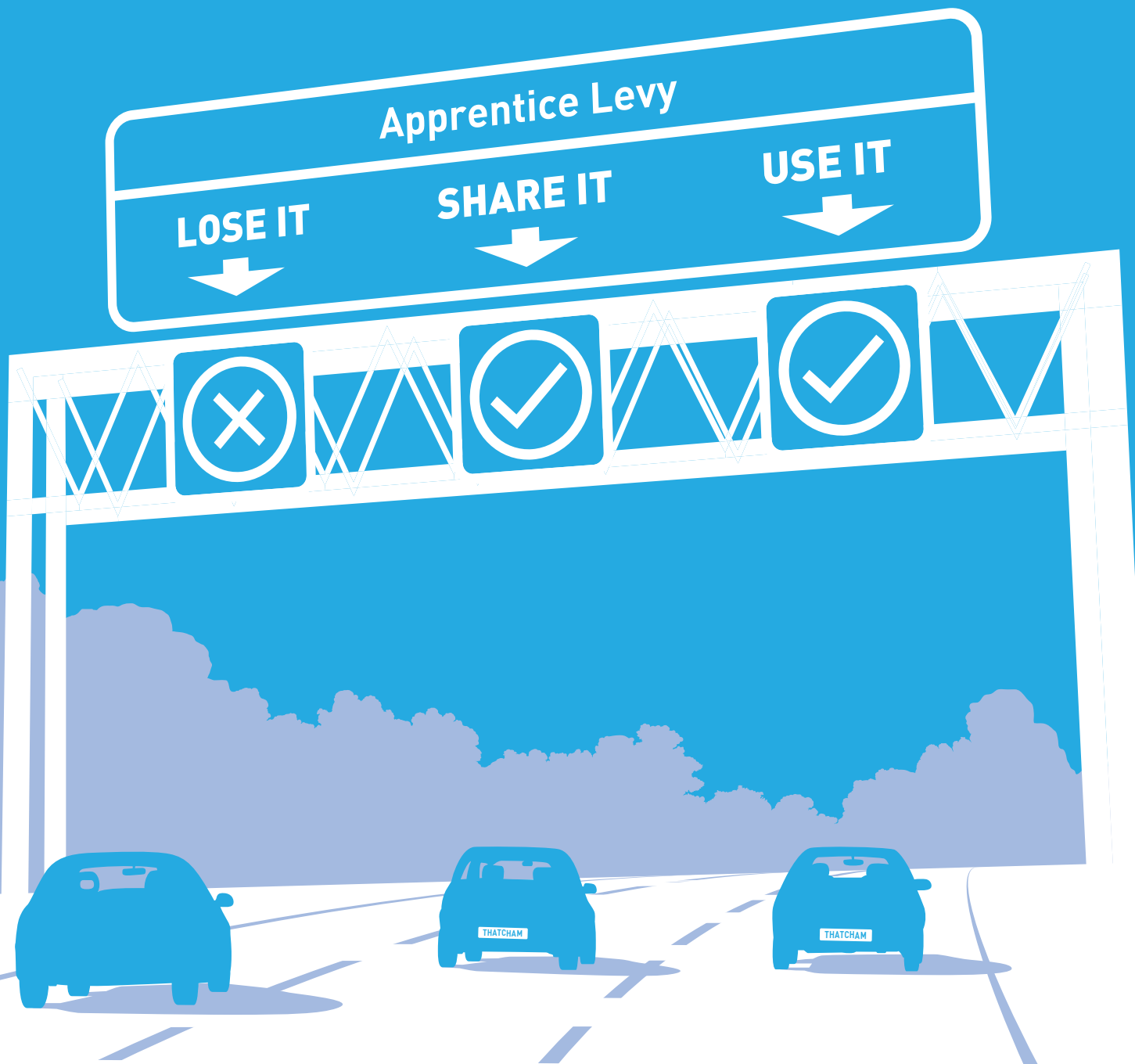
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AUTO WINDSCREENS TAKES EV STANCE

Auto Windscreens, working with ChargedEV, has become the first UK provider of vehicle glass repairs and replacements to introduce electric vehicle (EV) charging points across its network.

Auto Windscreens's Chesterfield headquarters is now fitted with three 7.4kW dual charging points. Several more locations nationwide will go 'live' with the equipment, including the flagship fitting hub in Milton Keynes.

The nationwide installation is currently in progress with sites in Cardiff, Coventry, Crayford, Leeds, Leicester and Tunbridge Wells all being looked at presently.



HAMMER TIME

Kevin Fenn, a Great Yarmouth panel technician, has retired after 50 years in the industry.

Kevin began working at Drudge Road Garage in Gorleston at 15 years old. He spent 21 years there before moving to Trimoco in 1990. Since then the company has been sold on multiple occasions – it is now operating as East Bilney Coachworks – but Kevin has remained throughout all the changes.

After half a century employed, Kevin said, 'I have mixed emotions as it has been most of my life. I've enjoyed it.'

Branch manager, Chris Browne, who presented him with a golden hammer on his last day at work, said, 'He is such a fantastic, lovely person, full of skill and knowledge. From everyone at East Bilney, thank you.'

“

He is such a fantastic, lovely person, full of skill and knowledge. From everyone at East Bilney, thank you

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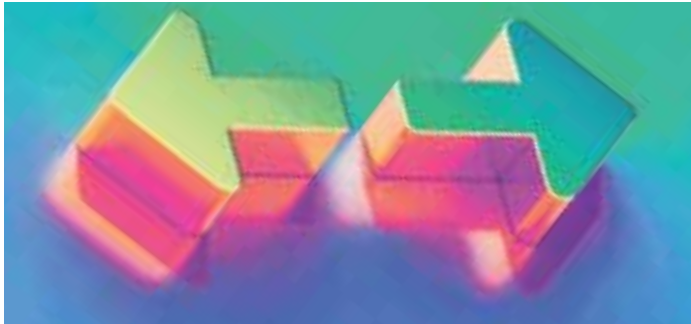
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LD AUTOVOGUE MAKES A MOVE

LD AutoVogue Ltd, based in Norfolk, has expanded its facilities.

The small but growing company has moved from a five/six bay workshop building to a 10,000 sqft modern workshop. The new location is within the same industrial estate in Hingham, with secure parking for staff and clients.

Established in 1999, the team at LD AutoVogue prides itself on customer service, high quality repairs and accountability for safety. The business claims to have 'a modern, fresh approach to accident repairs and the industry as a whole'.

LD AutoVogue has invested heavily in new equipment including a GYS welder and chassis alignment jig.

TIDAL ANNOUNCES NEW PARTNERSHIPS

The TIDAL Alliance has welcomed Colourtone Ltd and Martin Brown Paints Ltd as official TIDAL Alliance partners.

Paul Blunt, director TIDAL, said, 'The TIDAL Alliance continues to develop at a considerable pace. The appointment of both Colourtone and Martin Brown Paints strengthens our proposition throughout the north west and sees us well on our way to achieve one of our key objectives of national coverage.

'The TIDAL Alliance is built on like-minded industry people, running like styled businesses, working in unity to deliver a competitive market relevant solution to today's busy accident repair centre whilst adding value to our Cornerstone supply partners.'

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APPOINTMENTS

Mercedes-Benz Vans UK Ltd has realigned its client-focused teams under the leadership of Simon Neill, UK sales director, with Andy Eccles new head of fleet and Ricky McFarland head of rental and leasing.

Seat UK has bolstered its fleet team with the addition of Lindsay Ephgrave, who joins as the new area fleet manager for the east. Meanwhile, Gemma Briggs joins as product affairs manager.

The Road Safety Trust has appointed Sally Lines OBE as its new chief executive.

Industry Insights has confirmed the appointment of insurance service professional, Adele Brownsell, as client solutions manager.

iRG has appointed Jim Thomas as its new group operations director.

Stewart MacAulay, Arnold Clark director, has become group autoparts director, based at its head office in Glasgow.

Jonny Miller has been promoted to the newly created role of Volvo national leasing and residual value manager.

DMT Group has appointed former MG Motor UK head of sales and marketing Matthew Cheyne to take the role of director, national and major accounts.

Quantum Technical has confirmed Julie Eley as its newly appointed operations director for the group.

Hella has strengthened its UK aftermarket team with the recruitment of Martin McGreevy as the company's new national sales manager.

David Neave has been appointed chair of the CAPS National Advisory Council (NAC) following John O'Roarke's 18-month tenure.

Citroën has announced that Karl Howkins will take over the role of UK managing director.

Ring has appointed Charles Maltby as technical and new product development director.

Suzuki UK has appointed three new business development directors. They are Joe Skinner, Louise Kelly and Tim Whitworth.

GMRL OBTAINS FOUR NEW SITES

Go Motor Retailing Ltd (GMRL) has acquired four additional Vauxhall sites from Now Motor Retailing.

The new sites are in Kingston, Heathrow, Hayes and Staples Corner. They will be incorporated into the existing Go Vauxhall London portfolio and will grow the manufacturer-owned group to 12 locations nationwide with an increasing presence in London.

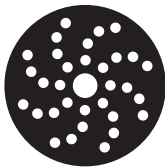
The group now operates 41 dealerships nationwide with a current total of 27 Peugeot, 14 Citroen, seven DS and 12 Vauxhall franchises and a 2017 turnover of £885m.



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With Dr Antonio Pagliuca

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You will understand the key differences between the major adhesive types to help make a more informed decision and achieve the best possible results in adhesive bonding applications; this includes the bonding of polyolefin based composites.

This webinar will also discuss how adhesive technology can help with light-weighting and the repair of multi-material body structures. Finally, Dr. Pagliuca will review influencing factors from product design, to environmental conditions and mechanical loads, on long term performance and durability.

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GLASS REPAIRER EARNs FIRST EV CERTIFICATION

Auto Windscreens technician, Steve Abrahams, has become the first UK vehicle glass repairer to complete vital electric vehicle (EV) training to gain a new certification from GQA Qualifications.

GQA is committed to providing up-to-date courses and, working directly with Auto Windscreens, has introduced two NVQ modules to address electrical hazards faced by technicians working on EVs and hybrid vehicles, which both use high voltage systems.

Understanding the technology and related risks are essential, according to Tony Green, Auto Windscreens' technical and innovation manager. He said, 'EVs pose new dangers and it is important that technicians are equipped with the knowledge and practical skills to handle windscreens in them.'

GQA's automotive glazing qualifications have been used across the industry for years to benchmark the skills and expertise of technicians, while also satisfying manufacturer and legislation requirements.

Sean Hayes, GQA's technical manager, said, 'Partnering with Tony and his team, we used knowledge gained from an electric and hybrid vehicle awareness training course as a starting point to develop the units, which have now been added to the GQA Level 2 NVQ Diploma in Automotive Glazing.'

Due to the flexibility of the awarding body's registration and certification system, technicians who already hold qualifications, like Steve, can achieve either or both new modules as standalone units or as an add-on to an existing NVQ.



AKZONOBEL INSPIRES APOLLO APPRENTICES

AkzoNobel has helped inspire the vehicle repair industry 'talent pipeline' in the south of England at the Apollo Motor Group academy open day.

The open day gave school students an insight into a fully operational bodyshop and the wide array of career options available in the vehicle repair industry.

Apollo Motor Group's academy offers career opportunities for young, aspiring students to gain valuable work experience – while honing essential skills designed to prepare them to take up an Apollo Motor Group apprenticeship once they have left school.

Bradley Eyles, group commercial analyst at Apollo Motor Group, said, 'Events like this help put foundations in place to build a local talent pipeline for youngsters entering the vehicle repair industry.'

Representatives from AkzoNobel were on hand to answer questions, give career advice and put on live product demonstrations throughout the day using the latest cutting-edge AkzoNobel technology.

AUTORAISE ANNOUNCES NEW PARTNERSHIP

AutoRaise has formed a partnership with I Love Claims (ILC). The partnership is designed to benefit each company and, in turn, the companies affiliated to AutoRaise and ILC.

As an initial benefit to bodyshops who support the AutoRaise charity, a discounted price is being offered to attend the I Love Claims Motor Conference on 19 June 2018.

AutoRaise has also welcomed spraygun manufacturer DeVilbiss Automotive Refinishing, as a Platinum Partner.

DeVilbiss are committed to promoting the world of vehicle refinish as a highly skilled and exciting career. AutoRaise believes it's essential that the industry gets behind addressing the skills shortage, whether it be taking on new apprentices, or simply helping to spread the word.

“

EVs pose new dangers and it is important that technicians are equipped with the knowledge and practical skills to handle screens in them.

SMALL CLAIMS

MPs on the justice select committee have urged the government to impose a £1,500 small claims limit rather than the higher levels proposed

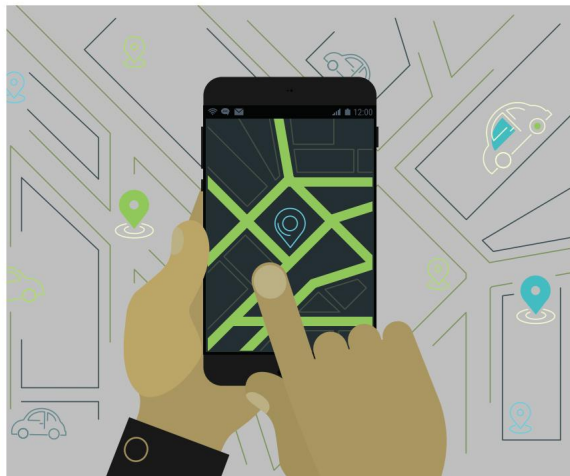
VOLVO ENHANCES GOOGLE TIES

Volvo Cars is planning to work much closer with Google to enable future Volvo cars to offer more connected services.

Volvo will embed the voice-controlled Google Assistant, Google Play Store, Google Maps and other Google services into its next-generation Sensus infotainment system, which will be based on Google's Android operating system.

Since the next generation of Sensus will run on Android, new apps and software updates will be available in real time and can be automatically applied. This allows future Volvo cars to react to customer needs and offer drivers up-to-date information and predictive services.

The Google Assistant provides a central voice interface for the car that allows drivers to control in-car functions such as air conditioning and use apps to play music and send messages. This integration contributes to reducing driver distraction, helping drivers keep their eyes on the road at all times.



CARSHARING SET FOR INCREASE

The overall carsharing vehicle scheme is expected to expand from 983,000 (2017) to nearly 1.24 million in 2018, driven by motorists' desire to use alternative modes of transport, the rise in employee mobility options and environmental concerns.

Existing providers of recent mobility solutions like carsharing, ridesharing, ridehailing, on-demand responsive shuttles, and integrated mobility are already scaling its operations through consolidations and partnerships.

Smaller players are trying to retain their marketshare by either forging partnerships with bigger players or by expanding their business models. New synergies in the market are fostering converged mobility solutions, creating a new space for mobility integrators and Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) providers.



GLOBAL TRENDS BOOST EV SALES

The electric vehicle (EV) market has experienced rapid growth due to several global trends.

Increasing city regulations, a decline in lithium-ion battery prices, and high demand in China are expected to push global EV sales to 1.6 million unit sales, with China leading the market at 49.5% marketshare, followed by Europe with 25.6%.

Frost & Sullivan expects solid-state batteries to be a game-changer, potentially opening up significant growth opportunities for future battery chemistries due to manufacturers' claims of an energy density 2.5 times higher than lithium-ion batteries.

The Global Electric Vehicle Market Outlook 2018 analysis identifies growth factors, market opportunities, challenges and barriers to success across key sectors, including EV battery, EV motor, retail sales, launches, incentives and subsidies, fuel cells, charging stations infrastructure, and logistics and eCommerce.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT VOTE DALTON REPORT

The European Parliament has adopted the Compromise Package on the Vehicle Type-Approval Framework Regulation during the Plenary session held in Strasbourg.

The text adopted includes clarifications on access to repair and maintenance information (RMI); for example, the continued possibility to communicate with the vehicle's technical information/data via the standardised on-board diagnostic connector, when the vehicle is stationary and in motion.

The new EU regulation aims to create more rigorous checks on the automotive sectors with stricter requirements for emission tests and heavy fines for cheating companies.

MEPs voted in favour of rules reinforcing the procedures for the type-approval of motor vehicles and enabling the European Commission to check the work of EU countries regarding this and impose sanctions on manufacturers breaking the rules.

Every new vehicle must have a certificate of conformity to an approved type before it can be sold in the EU. This is why new types of vehicles are tested by national authorities on about 70 different criteria, ranging from safety to emissions.

SHOW STOPPER

The 25th Automechanika Frankfurt takes place from 11-15 September. Last year the event attracted more than 133,000 visitors from 170 different countries. For a report on Automechanika Birmingham, see next month's issue of *bodyshop* magazine.

1.24m

The number of cars expected to be involved in carsharing schemes by next year

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STANDOX

The Art of Refinishing.

STANDOX HEADLIGHT REPAIR KIT

The Headlight Repair Kit gives bodyshops the opportunity to restore minor damage and signs of wear and tear on headlight lenses in a professional way with high quality, premium refinish products in a spray can.

The kit comes with application guidelines and contains a 400ml can of Standox Cleaner, a 250ml can of Standox 1K Headlight Primer and two 250ml cans of Standox 2K Crystal Clear.

The repair can be carried out in a few simple steps at a suitable, dedicated workstation outside the spraybooth, without having to dismantle the headlight.



MIRKA ACE

Mirka has extended its range of paper backed abrasives by introducing multi-hole discs in its Gold and Q Silver Ace ranges.

The new multi-hole pattern reduces clogging of the abrasive surface, increases the speed of cut and produces an improved surface finish.

Q Silver Ace is a premium ceramic abrasive with excellent performance on more demanding applications. The new multi-hole Gold and Q Silver Ace 150mm discs have 37 holes for coarser grits and 121 holes for finer grits.

BODYSHOP MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS LTD PII & DRM

Bodyshop Management Solutions Ltd has introduced two new data management tools to provide bodyshops with control over how customer data is collected, processed and stored either online or locally: Personally Identifiable Information (PII) data tool and a Data Retention Management (DRM) tool.

The PII data tool enables repairers to enquire about data held for specific individuals, to manage this data with a range of functions and to record the specific actions taken for future reference.

The DRM tool enables bodyshops to set up specific data retention rules for different data types.

AKZONOBEL SIKKENS WARRANTY

Bodyshops using Sikkens refinishing products have been offered an additional advantage with the introduction of a lifetime warranty programme.

The kit includes a leaflet explaining the Sikkens Lifetime Warranty's advantages to vehicle drivers and owners. A short animated promotional video is ready to show in bodyshops' reception areas and via their digital channels. The message is also highlighted in a poster, roll-up banner, shop sign and sticker, and in a mirror hanger for repaired vehicles. A qualification certificate can be displayed to show that the bodyshop fulfils all of the programme's requirements. Bodyshops will also receive advice and support to help them make best use of these and other resources.





HELLA GUTMANN
MEGA MACS 77

Hella Gutmann Solution (HGS) has launched its new mega macs 77 to help speed workshop processes.

The mega macs prominent features include high-speed reading and fault code interpretation, precise measurements with multimeter/oscilloscope, interactive coloured wiring diagrams, an extra-large 15.6in full-HD touchscreen and a wireless charging docking station.

The HGS mega macs 77 allows fault code diagnosis to be made fast and reliable, which makes this new diagnostic device the ideal tool for all workshops. Product lifespan is another major advantage of this new top model as its high-speed processor and numerous interfaces ensures it is well equipped for a wide range of future add-ons.

AUDATEX
PLANMANAGER

Audatex UK has unveiled its new bodyshop management solution, PlanManager.

PlanManager streamlines the entire crash repair and customer fulfilment process for bodyshops and their customers, from first notification of loss to final payment.

The cloud-based vehicle repair and claim management tool enables bodyshop technicians and administrators to be increasingly efficient in repairing vehicles, by improving workflow and reducing key-to-key times.

This strategic approach helps bodyshops maximise repair volume and minimise errors through the seamless integration of workshop utilisation and planning tools, including damage assessment, cost estimation and finance, parts ordering and job scheduling.



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3M

CITROËN 2CV

A Citroën 2CV has been transformed into the world's smallest food truck with help from 3M, to celebrate the model's 70 anniversary.

The tiny vehicle, nicknamed Dotty, has been revamped into a state-of-the-art kitchen on wheels, complete with sous-vide charcoal oven and bar. 3M led the car's exterior overhaul, together with Coastline Graphics.

Experts at Coastline wrapped the car using 3M wrap films, turning it from a dated off-cream colour to a dark grey with psychedelic highlights.

They completed the work using Satin Dark Grey and Gloss Flip Psychedelic wrap films by 3M.

SUN

WHEEL BALANCER

The latest wheel balancer from Sun – the SWB340L – provides users with pinpoint accuracy, faster measuring and balancing times, and a wide range of other benefits to the workshop.

Sun's easyWEIGHT laser indicator helps users of the SWB340L locate the exact spot on the wheel that they need to apply the weights, aided by a rim light to improve vision.

The SWB340L also features Wi-Fi connectivity, so users can connect to their own networks and transmit data to and from computers for display and printing.

The SWB340L allows technicians to split the position of weights and hide them behind wheel spokes, creating a better visual finish for the customer.

CROMAX

CHROMAVISION PRO MINI

Cromax has introduced a new, small and powerful spectrophotometer to its stable of digital colour tools: ChromaVision Pro Mini.

The full colour, pressure touch screen on the ChromaVision Pro Mini can be used with a stylus or with a fingertip, even inside a work glove. The device's special LED light technology assists the optics for accurate colour measurement during use.

The device's new coloured LED lights keep the refinisher informed of what the device is doing: blue indicates the reading is in progress, green means the reading has been successful and red means the measurement should be taken again.



NEXA

MATT BINDER

PPG Refinish UK and Ireland have announced the introduction of a new matt binder into the Nexa Autocolour Turbo Vision commercial transport product range.

The matt binder can be used alone to achieve a matt finish or mixed together with premium high flow binder to achieve a full range of matt, semi-matt or semi-gloss finishes.

The Turbo Vision range offers significant enhancements through innovation, process optimisation and colour excellence, whilst also being fast-drying, easy to apply and a durable finish.



AKZONOBEL AUTOMATCHIC IN MIXIT

A new standard in quick and reliable advanced colour-matching is available to vehicle bodyshops after AkzoNobel combined two of its innovative tools into a single system.

The new offering combines the Automatchic hand-held spectrophotometer with its Mixit digital colour retrieval technology. Now known as Automatchic in Mixit, the system creates a seamless workflow which allows customers to precisely identify any colour from a database of more than two million.

Tailor-made to streamline operations, Automatchic in Mixit's ability to improve both accuracy and speed helps to increase profitability and throughput while reducing waste.

KNIPEX RAPTOR SPANNER

Knipex has launched the Raptor Multiple Slip Joint Spanner, ideal for metric and imperial nuts and screws with widths from 10 to 32mm.

The Raptor Multiple Slip Joint Spanner combines the convenience of a comfortable push-button adjustment on the workpiece with the function of an all-purpose tightening tool. Jaw gripping with zero backlash prevents slipping on the bolt head or rounding edges.

The Raptor Multiple Slip Joint Spanner replaces the need for a whole set of wrenches and enables the quick tightening of bolted connections using the ratchet action. The pliers are comfortable to use and fine adjustment is possible with the push of a button.



SEALEY SUMMER PROMO

Sealey has launched its 56-page Summer Promotion. This promotion has nearly 600 products on offer inside, over 30 of which are new. It also contains products with up to 59% discount off list price.

Sections contain ranges of pressure washers, fans, storage solutions, garden and leisure items as well as vehicle service, motorcycle, bicycle and bodyshop tools. There are pages featuring jacking and lifting devices, hand, air and power tools in addition to welding, workshop, vacs and valeting products, and more.



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HELLA LED MATRIX HEADLAMPS

Hella and Volkswagen have jointly launched the LED Matrix Headlamp.

Through the targeted control of its 128 LEDs, these headlights provide precise, optimised light distribution and luminous intensity. The LED Matrix Headlamps increase safety and comfort, since it will enable the driver to recognise road details and possible obstacles earlier and more clearly.

The headlights operate with individually controlled LEDs that respectively combine into a matrix of light spots in both low and high beam modules.

For the targeted activation of each LED, the respective control unit will analyse the vehicle's front camera signals, as well as the digital card data and coordinates of the GPS unit.



SNAP ON ETHOS EDGE

The new Snap-on Ethos Edge full function scan tool takes entry-level diagnostics to a new high in performance and coverage.

Time-saving features include auto vehicle ID to read the VIN and one-touch code scan and clear, which reads all available vehicle systems to help technicians.

Special functions, such as brake bleeding, steering angle reset, battery relearn and service light reset, help accelerate maintenance tasks.

The steady-charge battery system in the Ethos Edge charges the lithium-ion battery from the vehicle, eliminating downtime and the need to change or charge batteries.



CLARKE COMMERCIAL DRUM FANS

Clarke's drum fans are ideal for commercial and industrial applications, providing a solution for fast cooling in large workshops, garages, factories and more.

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All models include two handles and are mounted on large rubber wheels for easy transportation to wherever it is required.

Main features of this range include: a robust steel frame, a steel guard, large rubber wheels, and two speed control.

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RUPES SKORPIO E

Rupes has introduced the new Skorpio E random orbital electric sander.

Skorpio E is a compact, silent, and innovative orbital sander engineered with perfect ergonomics. The new design is comfortable and easy to use, featuring an innovative design that provides optimised manoeuvrability and balance.

Skorpio E is also quiet, lightweight, and operates with low vibration levels to maximise operator comfort and safety.

The high efficiency brushless motor of the Skorpio E delivers power and performance for any application, maintaining speed even under heavy load conditions. The simplicity of internal components and the absence of brushes like those found in traditional electric tools guarantees low maintenance, durability, and reliability.

JEWELULTRA ONE CUT AND ONE FINISH

Jewelultra has launched two new paint refinishing products for bodyshops and valeters. The silicone-free products – comprising the One Cut cutting compound and the One Finish finishing compound – remove scratches, swirls and polish in two stages.

Jewelultra's One Cut is a coarse polishing compound formulated for the fast reworking of heavily-weathered paintwork and elimination of deep scratches. One Finish is a liquid compound micro polish that removes light marks, streaks and fine scratches on all paint types leaving a deep gloss even under extreme light conditions. One Finish is quick and easy to use.

COLAD ADHESIVES

Colad has introduced a new range of adhesives. The range includes solutions for plastic repair, glass repair, sealants and panel bonding. The adhesives are fast drying, strong, permanent flexible, sandable and paintable.

For plastic repair, there is the two-component (PU) structural adhesive for a fast and strong bond. Suited for bonding windscreens to the car body is the MS polymer, one-component. Whilst to panel bond, Colad offers the two-component epoxy adhesive capable of bonding steel and aluminum panels of the same or different metal compositions together.

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SPOTTED

bodyshop's own Mark Hadaway reminding Gareth Southgate what he's overlooked during a charity game at Stadium MK.

Michael Massey of Alton Cars Ltd showing off his stage presence at IBIS Ireland.

Frank Byrnes of Frank Byrnes Autobodies demonstrating how to ride a mechanical race horse.

Steven Hames of Audatex discussing his plans to wear a gold bow tie on a daily basis.

Fix Auto Loughborough's Paul Smith jumping at the chance to get in front of the camera.

Thatcham Research's Dean Lander giving *bodyshop's* editor a behind the scenes tour of Thatcham HQ.

Morelli's Mike Rowley digging a hole in the middle of MK Dons' pitch.

Peter Randhawa of Baldwins Group looking every bit like Messi until he started running.

Steve Shore of Shorade Accident Repair Centre giving BT Sport a run for their money with his videography skills.

Movac Group's Andy Mansfield somewhat ruining the film Frozen with his own 'interpretation'.

bodyshop

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\$10 billion

The amount of Tesla's debt at the end of 2017



1.67m

The number of cars that were built in the UK in 2017

'A business that makes nothing but money is a poor business.'

Henry Ford



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Percentage of the global population using Facebook in 2017



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The number of new cars registered in April 2018, according to SMMT

'Ideas shape the course of history.'

John Maynard Keynes



The number of worldwide social media users as of April 2018



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The number of EV charging points in the UK to date

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THE EVOLUTION OF VEHICLE THEFT



2015 saw the first reported increase in vehicle thefts since 2003, a trend that has continued throughout 2016 and 2017 with some regions recording increases of up to 189%. Covéa Insurance's Barry Knight examines how vehicle technology has changed the nature of car theft.

Do you remember the 1980s and 1990s and the 'joyriding' craze? Cars were stolen and driven at high speed before being dumped or set alight, either before they ran out of fuel or when the driver got bored. During this period vehicle security was very basic; most cars could be broken into with a flat head screwdriver and simply hot-wired, or have their ignition lock broken.

Home Office figures for 1990 showed the most stolen models were the Ford Capri, Ford Cortina, Ford Escort and Vauxhall Astra. These were by no means 'high end' or high value cars, but they were cars people enjoyed driving. During this period, 'crook locks' became the main line of defence. These were mechanical devices that locked in place over the steering wheel or gear stick.

However, in 1998 it became mandatory for new vehicles sold in the UK to be fitted with electronic immobilisers, significantly reducing vehicle thefts as it was no longer possible to hot-wire a car, you actually needed a key. But this reprise was short-lived. New legislation in 2008 created a new opportunity for thieves – Euro 5 legislation required the On Board Diagnostic (OBD) port to be freely accessible for repair and maintenance with the consequence of allowing the OBD port to be accessible to anyone.

Further legislation compounded this, stipulating that the equipment to gain access to the OBD port also had to be freely available, effectively giving open access to OBD ports through the unrestricted sale of equipment to reprogramme a blank key.

With ready access to OBD ports and programming software, thieves and criminals soon seized the opportunity. 'Stolen to order' became more common, with gangs targeting specific makes and models of cars

for ready buyers waiting in the wings. They operated internationally, shipping vehicles all over the world. This trend gave rise to defensive 'OBD blockers' and aftermarket devices preventing the transmission of data from the OBD port unless the owner 'unlocks' it, for example, for servicing.

Unfortunately, a new theft trend is now on the rise – 'relay theft,' so called because it usually involves two people and takes advantage of the push-start ignition common on many newer vehicles. This sees thieves using a booster to increase the signal from the car key while in relatively close proximity to the vehicle, usually inside the home. The car can then be electronically unlocked. Once inside the vehicle, the signal is again boosted enabling the push start button to be used and the car driven off, with a new key programmed away from the vehicle owner's property.

So how can motorists guard against this? Initially, the advice given was not leave car keys near the front door. Early boosting devices had a range of about 10m so this worked, however, signal boosting devices are now effective at much larger distances, potentially up to 100m.

The answer is to store your key somewhere that blocks the signal. A faraday box or an radiofrequency identity pouch can be purchased online for less than £10 which will block the signal coming from your key. Failing that, a refrigerator will do an equally good job.

So where will car thieves go next? The never-ending cycle of theft trends and defences could reach a new level with the arrival of driverless cars on our roads. Ironically, against high-tech car theft, the most old-fashioned low-tech defence in the form of crook-lock style devices could still prove among the most effective.



INSURANCEFOCUS

THE HANDS-OFF APPROACH

While many people accept the benefits of a fully autonomous car parc, especially in terms of safety and congestion, there are serious and justifiable concerns about the period of transformation.

Not only is the prospect of manual and autonomous vehicles sharing the road a worrying one, there are also fears about the 'handover' period – the time it takes for a driver to regain control of a vehicle coming out of autonomous mode.

Manufacturers recognise this. Mercedes-Benz has described the handover as technically the most difficult stage of transition to autonomous driving, while Ford plans to skip it almost entirely by going straight to level four.

A number of trials are taking place looking into this, trying to calculate handover times and consider the potential implications for drivers, manufacturers, insurers and legislators. Conducted by Venturer, which brings together academics with public and private sector organisations, the trials involved simulators and road experiments to test a driver's ability to retake control of their car.

It found that while there were better performances for frequent switchovers, there were still delays. The length of delay depended on the speed of the vehicle, but tests from 20mph to 50mph all recorded delays of up to and over two seconds. At 50pmh, that is 45m (half a football field, two lengths of a typical swimming pool, or nine parked cars). These tests were carried out when the driver was anticipating taking over; it's likely they would be even longer when the driver was not expecting involvement.

Based on these findings, Venturer says there needs to be a managed process of handover which allows for slower responders, and systems can't be developed to disengage immediately and expect drivers to be instantly in control. It suggests systems with phased handover periods dependent on speed, or ones which automatically reduce speed before handover.

'It is important that driver assistance features such as lane keeping are retained and functioning within vehicles, particularly during handover,' Venturer

45m

The distance a car moving at 50mph will travel during handover from autonomous mode

“

Rather than handover being from autonomous system to human driver, in practice it might be from autonomous system to human driver supported by driver assistance

said. 'Rather than handover being from autonomous system to human driver, in practice it might be from autonomous system to human driver supported by driver assistance.'

It said that a system not dependent on a human driver's split-second decision-making is likely to produce safer results.

Apart from safety, there is also confusion about liability during the handover. The trials not only uncovered a time lag in drivers taking back control, but a further lag in the time it took them to return to a baseline driving performance. The government has already said that insurers will pay compensation to the non-fault driver regardless of the mode, and then claim back from the manufacturer where appropriate. But deciding what a reasonable amount of time is to expect a driver to regain full control is difficult.

It also asks where responsibility lies if the driver is unable to regain proper control during the handover, or if the handover is completed successfully but the driver is then unable to manage the stricken vehicle.

Venturer believes that, while standardisation can provide some framework, defining the boundaries between driver and system liability will be a work in progress – 'It will be for the courts to determine where the limits of human control end and where the liability of OEMs begins, in much the same way as the courts establish whether a driver is at fault now.'

Among the other findings of the trial, Venturer also predicted that the move to self-driving could at last bring some good news to young drivers in the form of lower premiums, if their reaction times result in a shorter handover period and then less risk.

Overall, annual premiums could reduce by up to £265 by 2020, with Venturer warning that drivers of manual cars could even find themselves being priced out of the market.

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ADAS CALIBRATION NEEDN'T BE AN OBSTACLE

Advanced Driver Assist Systems are already standard features on new models from Ford, Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen and Volvo, and increasingly popular options on many more.

Workshops have a duty of care to calibrate the sensitive camera and radar heads before returning the vehicle back to the customer, even after relatively minor repairs and procedures such as wheel alignment, axle geometry or windscreen replacement. However until now only main dealers have had the tools to perform this essential procedure.

Thankfully, the CSC-Tool from HELLA GUTMANN SOLUTIONS now enables technicians to calibrate both camera and radar-based ADAS. It's cost-effective and easy to use, compatible with a wide range of vehicle models and integrates with mega macs diagnostic devices, so results to be saved and printed as a permanent record that ADAS calibration has taken place.

So don't let ADAS calibration be an obstacle in your business, call 01295 662402 or email hgs.support@hella.com

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VEHICLE TECH

FCEVS ROLL INTO EUROPE'S CITIES

Hydrogen-fuelled cars are being rolled out across three major European capitals. London, Paris and Brussels have each been identified by ZEFER (Zero Emission Fleet vehicles for European Roll-out) for the deployment of large fleets of 60 hydrogen fuelled vehicles. The €26m European initiative will introduce 180 fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEVs) into a combination of taxi, private-hire and police fleets.

These vehicles will be in regular use each day, creating hydrogen demand from each vehicle roughly four times that of a normal privately-owned car. The project will gather data and disseminate results to demonstrate the business case for future FCEV adoption and test the performance of cars and infrastructure under high-mileage conditions.

ZEFER will be delivered by a consortium led by Element Energy, including hydrogen suppliers (Air Liquide and ITM Power Trading Ltd), vehicle end users (Green Tomato Cars, HYPE and the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime), observer partners (BMW and Linde AG) and partners supporting the analysis and policy conclusions (Cenex and the Mairie de Paris).

ROBOTS CHANGING THE WORKING WORLD

Workers around the globe have rated the fact that 'colleague robots' can take over work that is detrimental to health or handle hazardous materials positively.

However, employees are worried about how their own training can keep up with the pace of the working world according to findings from *automatica Trend Index 2018*.

When it comes to their own country, only about one in four employees is convinced that training and development already plays a key role in the workplace of the future. This new collaboration with robots is regarded by the majority of all seven countries surveyed as an opportunity to master higher-skilled work.

People expect that robotics automation will provide added impetus to further their vocational training. The number of higher-skilled and better paid jobs will rise in the future with the new human-robot teams.

VW AND DIDI SHARE COMMON GOALS

Volkswagen is understood to be considering a partnership with Chinese ride-hailing firm Didi Chuxing, with the longer-term goal of developing autonomous cars together.

According to *Reuters*, the partnership would initially see VW manage about 100,000 vehicles of Didi's fleet, while the two companies would also jointly acquire more cars and develop their own 'purpose built' vehicles.

Didi has already said it is aiming for an all-electric fleet, and has recently been granted a permit to test autonomous cars in California. This follows months of self-driving tests already carried out in China.

Meanwhile, VW has set aside \$18.2bn to invest in ride-hailing, autonomous driving, digitalisation, and electric mobility in China by 2022. An executive told *Reuters*, 'We will explore additional business models with Didi. We don't need to have all the answers. The money we plan to put into the first phase should help us find some.'

Didi also has international partners with other manufacturers including Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi and Toyota.

EV INITIATIVES CAUSE CUSTOMER CONFUSION

Colliers International believes that banning the sale of new hybrid cars, as well as petrol and diesel by 2040, will create even more confusion and uncertainty in the marketplace, and drive down buyer confidence.

The combined under-supply of charging points both at home and 'on the move' alongside apprehension over lengthy charging times is contributing to a lack of buyer confidence and 'range anxiety' from existing and potential EV owners.

Meanwhile, concerns over the ability of the current UK energy supply to meet future demand and the lack of guidance for landlords and developers for integrating charging points in to commercial premises is causing confusion.

John Roberts, head of automotive and roadside, said, 'Further infrastructure will need to be built and created, particularly at existing petrol filling stations and arterial route locations.'



REPORT THE CV SHOW

CV SHOW UNDERLINES ITS VALUE TO UK ECONOMY

The 19th CV Show proved another huge success as the sector proved again how it keeps the UK moving.

More than 20,000 visitors attended the largest commercial vehicle show in Britain, held at the NEC in Birmingham in the last week of April.

Approaching its 20th year, the CV Show provides a showcase for the industry with an international cast of 460 leaders from the automotive aftermarket and CV sector exhibiting the very latest innovations and technologies.

CV Show director Rob Skelton, said, 'CV Show 2018 has proved that our industry really is open for business. With crowds of people coming through the doors, it demonstrated that the show really is the go-to event for anyone involved in the transport, logistics and associated industries.'

This year's event provided the platform for a number of new product launches and significant announcements, including an initiative from Highways England to train commercial vehicle drivers in the use of smart motorways, which are expected to become even more widespread throughout the UK in the coming years.

It has also introduced a virtual reality app to educate drivers about blind spots and how better to manage them. John Walford, commercial vehicle incident prevention team leader, said, 'Blind spots most commonly occur when trucks change lanes or attempt to overtake and using this technology allows us to provide a realistic environment for commercial vehicle drivers so that they can experience the impact of not using their mirrors to check blind spots. It's just one of the steps we're taking to help improve safety for this valuable group of drivers and ultimately everyone who uses our network.'

Further, manufacturers such as Citroen, Ford, Mercedes-Benz, Mitsubishi, Peugeot, Renault, Ssangyong and Volkswagen all launched new models.

Rob said, 'With all of these manufacturers using the CV Show as a platform to launch major new light commercials, it proves just how much importance the industry places on the show. It's a delight and an honour to see these companies using the CV Show to make major new product announcements.'

Meanwhile, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) used the event to present the results of a survey carried out to establish British consumers' reliance on commercial vehicles. According to the SMMT, 88% of people said their lives would be negatively impacted by a restriction in CV services; 46% said they had directly benefited from a commercial vehicle in the last 24 hours alone, and that figure rose to 79% when the time span was stretched to the previous week.

However, it's likely even these figures under-estimate the role of the CV industry. There are 1.8 million sole traders who depend on a van for their livelihoods, about five million people are taken to hospital in one of the UK's 17,228 ambulances each year, and utility and delivery vans and trucks together move three times more goods than water and rail combined – contributing some £27.5bn to the UK economy. Much of this is consumer goods, with the UK now the EU's largest online retail sector buying about £67.3bn worth of product in 2017, or 17.6% of all retail sales.

Mike Hawes, SMMT chief executive, said, 'There are five million commercial vehicles on Britain's roads and they play a vital role in powering our essential services. Britain's CVs are the backbone of our economy, and manufacturers invest heavily in technology, with the latest CVs on our roads today the cleanest, safest and most advanced in history. For the sector to grow and continue to drive investment and jobs, government must maintain the right economic conditions, and help promote fleet renewal through the right policies and incentives.'

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GLOBAL FOCUS

With the IBIS Global Summit taking place this month in Munich, Germany we thought it opportune to highlight some of the industry feedback we receive from our media partners from around the world. Welcome to the world of collision repair.

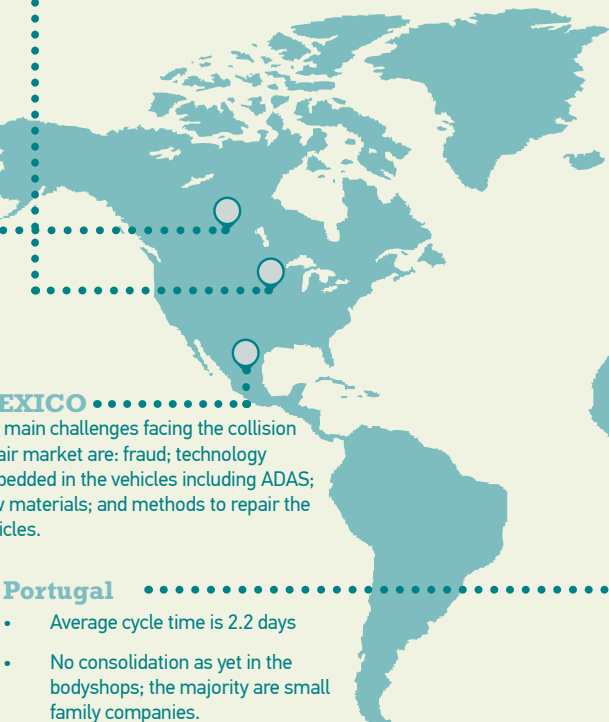
Canada

The biggest news in the Canadian market has been the acquisition of the Ontario-based banner Assured Automotive by a Manitoba-based financial firm – The Boyd Group. More than doubling its Canadian presence, the \$193.6m sale saw another 68 locations come into the firm's portfolio, bringing its total number of Canadian shops to 110. It also has 474 locations within North America.

USA

Total accident repair market value: \$35.7bn / 40,962 collision repair centres.

Consolidation remains a driving issue in the industry. At the 2017 MSO Symposium during NACE Automechanika in Chicago, Vincent Romans, founding partner of The Romans Group, predicted that in the next four years the top four MSOs and those with revenue of \$10m or higher would encompass nearly 45% of the collision repair market (\$16.7bn of what will be an estimated \$37.6bn industry).



MEXICO

The main challenges facing the collision repair market are: fraud; technology embedded in the vehicles including ADAS; new materials; and methods to repair the vehicles.

Portugal

- Average cycle time is 2.2 days
- No consolidation as yet in the bodyshops; the majority are small family companies.

Spain

Car manufacturers are trying to develop special programmes in order to increase their marketshare for collision repair, but it is quite difficult as previously they have not paid attention to this market and now it is in the hands of workshops without relationships with car manufacturers. Some vehicle manufacturers are reaching agreements with car insurance companies packaging insurance and collision repair services.

Netherlands

Top three motor manufacturer brands by volume sold 2017:

- 1 - Volkswagen
- 2 - Renault
- 3 - Opel

Germany

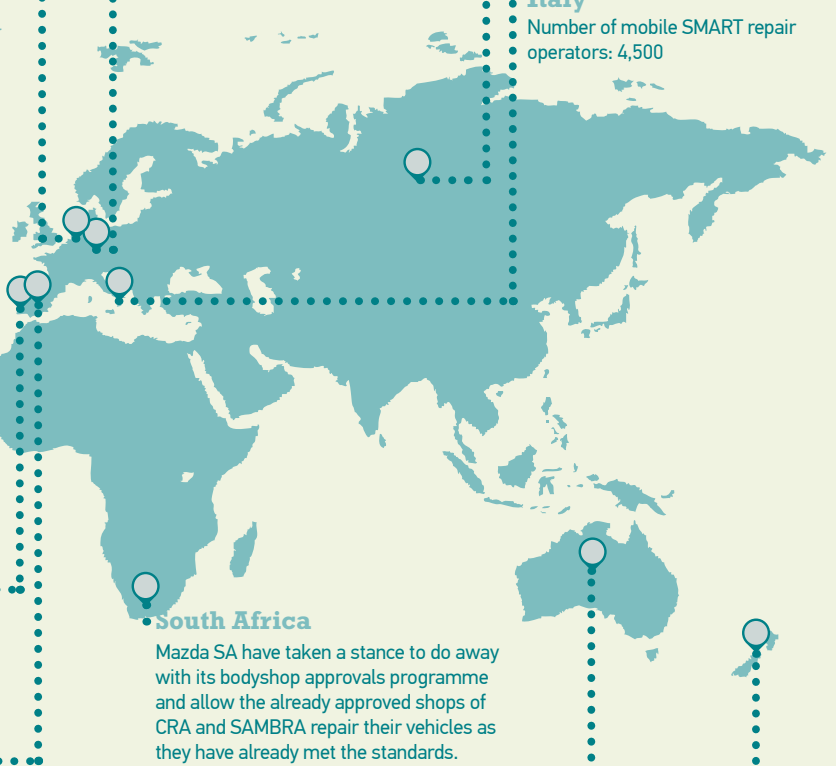
Over the past few years, some independent repair shops started to grow their own business and now have three to 10 locations. Some of these independent bodyshops are also starting to create buying groups. New repair companies and concepts like Fix Auto or Fixico are also entering the market.

Russia

For the first time in 2017 there was an exhibition of car detailing in the country. It was a specialised event for market professionals and it showed an increasing interest in the topic of fast and smart repair, and technologies for restoration of vehicles. These technologies are now developing in Russia as a separate area and are usually offered in specialised centres.

Italy

Number of mobile SMART repair operators: 4,500



South Africa

Mazda SA have taken a stance to do away with its bodyshop approvals programme and allow the already approved shops of CRA and SAMBRA repair their vehicles as they have already met the standards.

Australia

The repair landscape in Australia is shifting at an unprecedented pace. The two main groups (AMA and CapitalSMART) have had a profound effect on the market both in terms of adopting a rapid repair mindset and methodology and the realisation that insurers like to deal with MSOs.

New Zealand

A definite trend that has been gathering momentum over the last year has been the significant investment made by a large number of repairers in their facilities. A number are definitely setting themselves at a level way above what has been previously considered a good collision repair facility.

STRONGER TOGETHER



Valspar's merger with Sherwin-Williams last summer continued a trend of consolidation within the industry that shows no signs of abating. While it was the only game-changing deal to be signed, sealed and delivered, many of the other leaders in the paint sector – AkzoNobel, Axalta, Nippon and PPG – were all at various times during a period of intense speculation embroiled in discussions about mergers and acquisitions of their own.

What the industry will look like this time next month, next year, or in two years' time, is anybody's guess, but the complexity of technology is forcing a convergence in sectors, meaning it's becoming increasingly difficult for one company, no matter how big, to have all the answers.

Theo Wemmers, executive general manager automotive, EMEAI (Europe, Middle East, Africa and India), Valspar, explained, 'Our merger with Sherwin-Williams was huge. Between us we have 60,000 people, so transition takes time, it's a long road, but we both benefit from extra knowledge, availability, technology and products. The beauty of this merger is that we now have much greater research and development capabilities, so we can develop more products for our customers, faster.' The merger also works for both parties on a cultural and geographic level, and follows the successful incorporation of DeBeer Refinish into Valspar in 2004.

Theo said, 'Just 15 years ago we were a family-owned business. When Valspar came on board with a larger European footprint we were able to set up offices in the UK, Italy, Germany and France. Now with Sherwin-Williams we have even more capability. But it's a constant challenge to grow within a global corporation while still

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Our merger with Sherwin-Williams was huge. Between us we have 60,000 people, so transition takes time, it's a long road, but we both benefit from extra knowledge, availability, technology and products

keeping the good things about being a family company. That's what we're aiming for. You have to keep the good from the past while still embracing the new world.'

Although, the benefits of economies of scale and shared expertise make a compelling business case for further consolidation. At bodyshop level this has been happening in northern Europe for well over a decade, with repairers in the UK, France and Germany all seeking safety in numbers. The trend has filtered down to southern European countries like Spain and Italy in the last few years.

But how much consolidation is too much? Industries dominated by too few players often go stale, losing touch with the customer and laden down by long-established systems and practices that restrict innovation. The insurance sector was a case in point, until an army of start-ups emerged to disrupt it. Is there a possibility of a similar story unfolding elsewhere in the industry?

Theo concluded, 'Consolidation is happening, that's no secret. But bigger isn't always better. It can also have a negative impact in terms of speed, flexibility, and agility and often you will find innovation comes from the smaller players.'

'But then once a start-up reaches a certain level it's difficult to go to the next step alone, while the bigger companies are great at logistics and in providing a one-stop-shop solution. You need the balance. The small need the big and the big need the small.'

'What will others do with their refinish companies? We'll have to see, but there are not many paint companies left.'

IBIS IRELAND 2018

The Irish automotive collision repair industry:

Circa 800 repairers
Circa 2.5 million registered vehicles
An average of 72,000 insurance claims pa
Average cost of repair circa €523.40
Overall market value estimate €56.5m

IBIS headed to Dublin in May for IBIS Ireland 2018 which saw the key influencers of the regional collision industry, and beyond, gather to network and discuss the latest happenings within the local market. Here, we provide an insight into the event as it unfolded.



Jason Moseley, CEO of IBIS, opened IBIS Ireland 2018 by reiterating the three key pillars of IBIS – safety, skills and standards.

Addressing an audience of over 100 delegates, Jason spoke of how IBIS acts as a catalyst in bringing key local stakeholders together. Jason said, 'Since we were here last year the IBIS brand has been around the world – and what we are doing today is combining that global experience with local market knowledge.'

'There are three things we would like you to take away from IBIS Ireland 2018: knowledge and new connections; an understanding of others' viewpoints; and use IBIS as a catalyst for change.'

Barry Sheehan, PhD researcher, Limerick University told IBIS Ireland 2018 delegates that autonomous driving vehicles are coming – like it or not.

Barry pointed at how there has been much attention given to the development of autonomous vehicles but little focus on the actual risks they pose – the greatest risk to the development of autonomous vehicles, according to Barry, being malicious hackers.

With 250 million connected cars predicted by 2020 cyber risk will increase and Barry pointed to figures suggesting that cyber risk is estimated to generate up to \$12bn in new premiums in 2025. In closing, Barry suggested his key takeaways are the need for standards, vulnerability thresholds, collaboration – 'closer collaboration between insurers and manufacturers' – and proactive risk assessments.



The big story to emerge from IBIS Ireland 2018 (see below) was the announcement that Fix Auto and Novus Auto Glass are set to enter the Irish market.

The news was delivered during the session 'The business of repair' which saw Roy de Lange, head of business, Fix Auto Deutschland GmbH share the views of global collision repair network, alongside Frank Byrnes, owner, Frank Byrnes Autobody Repair – a leading, local independent repair operation.

Frank emphasised how the Irish market has evolved greatly in the past 18 months, which has highlighted the necessity for the right 'mix' of work – specific to the bodyshop business.

In discussing the role of vehicle manufacturers within the market, Frank suggested he saw it as becoming increasingly critical whilst Roy pointed at how Fix Auto has a firm belief that repair segmentation will be crucial for future success.

In rounding out the session, both Frank and Roy agreed that the ability to adapt and change is a key credential for the future.

An exclusive

IBIS Ireland 2018 saw Fix Auto World formally announce its plans to develop a comprehensive aftermarket services solution in Ireland across its two franchise network brands, Fix Auto and NOVUS Glass.

Operations for both brands will be led by market operations director for Fix Auto and NOVUS Ireland, Jonathan Penny, in partnership with network director, Denis Dineen. David Lingham, head of business for Fix Auto World said, 'The Irish aftermarket space understands the need for consolidation and seems to be ready to embrace a service offering like ours. We are pleased to bring our proven business model to Ireland and to do so by integrating both our bodyshop and glass brands from the very start.'



David O'Connor, head of aftersales, KIA Motors Ireland told IBIS Ireland 2018 delegates that in the next 18 months 'the supply of electric vehicles is set to explode'.

In his session 'open your mind to change' David pointed to how the total automotive market will be valued at \$7.8tn by 2030 with established vehicle manufacturer brands' share of that overall value decreasing from circa 70% in 2015 to around 40% by that time. He referenced brands such as Dyson, iCar and Uber as being challenger brands likely to absorb 60% of the marketshare. A key change in the make-up of the market value will be digital services making up 20% of the value and shared mobility a further four per cent whilst vehicle sales values will reduce from 41% to 29%.

Aftersales is another area expected to decrease in total market value terms from 16% in 2015 to 10% in 2030 – 'filling the aftersales gap is a real concern at European and global level – and that is a huge challenge for dealerships too' said David.

In closing the session, David commented, 'How much change will we see and when? Who knows. But we need to be prepared for change.'



During a panel discussion at IBIS Ireland 2018 focusing on the industry skills gap it was claimed the industry 'forgot the future' with regards to developing future generations.

The session featuring Colin Hagan MBE, managing director, Riverpark Training and Development (NI) Ltd; Michael Massey, vehicle paint and refinishing technician, Alton Cars Ltd; and Dave Reece, Ford collision project manager saw the panel debate the challenges and opportunities faced by the industry.

Dave suggested the UK industry 'forgot about the future', whilst Colin highlighted the problem of attracting young people to the sector was two-fold: the focus on academic study and the stigma still attached to apprenticeships.

Providing an alternative perspective, Michael described how there are young people out there who have the skills and right mindset to excel. 'Colleges and training providers can set you up so far but you've got to also gain real life experience because it can be challenging at times,' said Michael who explained how his employers Alton Cars now have some 40 apprentices on their books.

The new ABI code of practice in relation to the management of salvage was proposed as 'worthy of a conversation' at IBIS Ireland 2018.

With the Irish salvage market still, in many cases, operating the 'old' code of practice, the session highlighted the potential benefits of the ABI code and how it could ensure salvage decisions were based more on structural integrity of the vehicle rather than financial metrics of repair.

Explaining the new code and its workings, Darren Power, motor claims subject matter expert, IAEA highlighted how the new code potentially provides more 'accountability and transparency' to the system.

Alongside Darren, Justin Kavanagh, managing director of VMS highlighted how online salvage and auction systems are helping to provide compliant, transparent processes for the benefit of all stakeholders. 'By analysing the data within these systems it can benefit all stakeholders within the industry,' said Darren.



Understanding local culture is a vital ingredient to success even in the highly advanced claims market of today. That was the message to emanate from Morgan Stewart, chief motor engineer/claims supply chain manager, RSA Ireland.

With 50 approved repairers throughout the country – mostly independent sites – Morgan explained how the culture in Ireland is such that 'people like to deal with people they know – that's why we have a really high conversion rate.'

Highlighting the insurer's focus on technological advancements, Morgan pointed to RSA's involvement in the Gateway, autonomous transport, project. Morgan said, 'Our involvement is giving us great insight into how autonomous transport could become part of our customers' lives and we can adapt our services and products for the future.'

In closing, he said, 'One thing for certain within this industry right now, is that nothing is certain.'



FEATURESKILLS

YOU CAN GROW YOUR OWN WAY

High hopes for a shiny new site can be undone very quickly if the skills aren't there on the ground to support it. Here, we ask how businesses are tackling the human resources challenges posed by expansion.

The skills crisis is a difficult one to manage even for businesses aiming simply to maintain the status quo. For those organisations looking to expand into new territory to reach a wider customer-base, the challenge is ramped up the nth degree.

Finding the personnel with the relevant technical capabilities is just one part of it; finding people with the right attitude, work ethic and culture to fit into your business is, according to many, of far greater importance. While this has been the case for years, it is more true now than ever. This is because of two key factors: technology and employee power – and each is as significant as the other.

Regarding technology, the rapid evolution of the industry demands technicians with open minds and flexible approaches. No company can hope to keep up if they have to drag their workforce kicking and screaming into a new age, with new products, new processes and a new focus.

Employee power comes at it from a different angle, and asks, 'Will this person fit in with our culture and deliver it, or will they be looking for another job inside six months?'

Regardless of the level of recruitment, be it one paint technician or an entire workforce for a new site, the issues are the same – the only difference is scale.

Scale

Paint giants Valspar are near the top end of the equation. With a workforce of more than 60,000 since its recent merger with Sherwin Williams, and plans afoot for expansion throughout Europe, it knows that the success of new sites will be determined by the people it employs.

Suzanne Brans, HR director, explained, 'We are expanding

in several locations, but to do that successfully it's vital to understand the local market inside and out. There are so many differences in each country with regards to labour markets, existing talent, and market dynamics, so we are convinced that taking the local approach is best. So we will work with HR teams in the region to make use of the local talent and knowledge already there to help us get our feet on the ground.'

This approach speaks to Valspar's focus on customer intimacy, which means understanding their customers well enough to provide a personal service. Again, that requires a certain mindset.

Suzanne added, 'Valspar also looks for people who are the right fit, and we have included that in our recruitment by assessing candidates not just on competence but culture. So if we say teamwork is important to us, how a candidate scores in teamwork assignments is also measured.'

Acquisition

Closer to home, MG Cannon has sustained steady growth throughout the south west of the UK by following a similar principle of looking at the person behind the skill set. It has four main bodyshops and five fast repair sites. These were added to the group via acquisition, meaning they came fully staffed, but that doesn't mean close attention wasn't paid to the people they were incorporating into the fold.

Robert Snook, group director, said, 'We always ensure a lot of work is done in the due diligence and consultation phases before the acquisition is completed. We spend as much time as possible talking personally and informally to every single team member about them, MG Cannon



and the immediate path ahead. This is so important because it is not really the certificated skills we are looking for; they are taken largely as read and any skills certificate gaps can normally be filled over coming months. No, we are looking for people skills, team spirit and positivity in people who genuinely and passionately want to delight customers, suppliers and business partners as much as we do.

'It takes anything up to six years to eliminate completely a bad culture in a business, so we look for the cultural fit in the team joining us, before we look at anything else.'

Robert added, 'We have taken on core teams who had the skills and the cultural fit each time, but if we were to open a brand new site in a new area then we would definitely focus on this a lot more. And we would probably have to look at innovative ways of recruitment rather than the old methods, so that we had both a short and long term skills plan in place. The old ways of recruiting don't work and are not sustainable.'

New ways

The old ways of recruiting include newspaper adverts, online job sites and recruiting agencies. While they still serve a purpose, and can remove some of the pain and effort of recruiting, more and more businesses are dropping them in favour of new, innovative approaches that appeal directly to the type of candidate they are looking for. For example, Jaguar Land Rover, with 5,000 vacancies to fill in 2017, adopted a 'radical rethink' of how it recruited. By teaming up with Gorillaz, it introduced an app presenting a two-part challenge. The first was an electric vehicle tutorial where people assembled a Jaguar I-Pace and learned how it worked as they went; the second part used a virtual reality game to pose numerous puzzles to 'test their curiosity, persistence, lateral thinking and problem solving skills.' Those who did well were accelerated through the recruitment process.

Not everyone is in a position to collaborate with Gorillaz, but everyone can still use technology to find the right people in more efficient ways.



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BUILDING TRUST





Social media is often quoted as the perfect recruitment tool as the business owns the content, the audience can be huge, and it's all completely free. With six sites, East Bilney Coachworks is just one bodyshop group that has taken the time to understand the medium, and is now reaping rich rewards.

Bodyshop manager Chris Browne explained, 'If used correctly, social media can provide businesses with an excellent free platform. We have been using it over the last few years to promote our brand and recruit new members. We are always looking to attract highly motivated employees and trainees, we have recently advertised and run campaigns for an MET technician, panel technician and a collection/delivery driver.

'Our strategy has been to use four platforms: LinkedIn; Twitter; Facebook; and Instagram, as each offers something different to us. It could be said this approach has created fewer responses, but also a higher quality of applicant and we have quickly been able to source new staff by using these methods.'

Its new panel technician was scouted on LinkedIn, while both MET technician and driver vacancies were filled on Facebook.

'We will continue to use this method as we feel from our previous campaigns it is bringing us success,' added Chris.

Other bodyshops are looking for more immediate results and tapping into the travelling army of contract technicians, with AutoTech Recruit reporting a rise in both numbers and demand.

Gavin White, managing director, said, 'For any bodyshop to flourish in a new area it needs to be working to optimum capacity. Bodyshop owners are realising the financial implications of un-manned bays and are willing to take on a temporary, highly skilled, on-tap workforce without committing to costly overheads, to fulfil potential. We are seeing a rise in demand across all UK regions.'

But whatever the recruitment method, successful expansion can only be achieved on the back of a talented workforce – and it needs to be in place and on message from the word go. First impressions count and, ultimately, it's the customer who gives you your reputation – be it good or bad.

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WINNER'S INTERVIEW

AND THE WINNER IS...

This month Ian Pugh tells us what winning *bodyshop's* Training Provider of the Year 2017 award meant to Fix Auto UK, and how it reaches a network of more than 100 sites

What did winning the Training Provider of the Year award mean to you?

We were delighted to win the award as we see it as acknowledgement of the significant investment, not just financially, but the time and effort of the whole team in strengthening the support we provide our franchisees in a number of key areas. These directly influence the profitability and sustainability of each business. It is also recognition for the network who have all actively engaged with all the learning plans available on the platform.

What marks out your training programme as special?

We believe our training package stands out for two reasons – the content and the delivery method.

In terms of content, our online delivered training has been designed to meet the individual needs of our franchisees and the specific nature of their businesses. For example, we appreciate many of our *bodyshop* owners and senior managers began their careers on the shop floor and progressed up through the company. We have introduced several management courses (strategy, finance and personnel to name three) to help them become more profitable and sustainable.

We also recognise some owners are nearing retirement age and identify the need to develop the next generation of leaders. We offer a range of management courses to make progression seamless, including an Institute of Leadership and Management Team Skills course which comes with a formal qualification – more than 70 people in our network have already completed this.

The content is also very varied and covers a wide spectrum of topics – even those less conventional ones such as Mental Health in the workplace and Communicating Effectively as a couple of examples.

With the platform, courses can also be undertaken at any convenient time, reducing the amount of time employees are out of the business which they would be if they attended a formal offsite course.

How do you reach a network of more than 100 separate sites?

Our online portal, Fix Auto Online Learning, is constantly evolving with new modules being added almost on a weekly basis. These modules range from 10-45 minutes and therefore do not have a major impact on workload.

There are now more than 600 courses available across 28 learning plans. These plans cover accounts, business owners and managers, customer handlers, health and safety and vehicle damage assessors as a few examples. We have also introduced four bespoke GDPR modules ahead of the 25 May deadline. Across all our repair centres UK-wide more than 2,500 people have access to our portal.

We then also host regional VDA and customer service courses, which are mandatory for all new franchisees.

Meanwhile, all our business owners and senior managers are invited to regional quarterly business meetings where they can share best practice and gain an insight from the Fix Auto UK team and the rest of the network.

How does Fix Auto UK manage training across such a wide network?

Fix Auto UK is a network of almost 100 independent franchisees, each with their own varying number of individual employees. This would make it very difficult for every employee across the network to access training at a central location.

However, with the Fix Auto Learning Platform, each franchise has immediate access to all the Fix Auto Learning plans. Each franchise also has a power user, who can assign learning plans and modules to individual team members, based on their training requirements. This is followed up by support from the head office administration team as well as training time on the platform being provided by our regional operations team, when it makes its quarterly visits to our franchisees.

FEATURE EXPANSION

SUPPLIERS IN DEMAND

Never has collaboration been more important in the collision repair industry. But if a bodyshop is going to invite a third party in to provide expertise and guidance, its got to make sure it chooses wisely.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* describes a distributor as 'an agent who supplies goods to retailers.' But that is to vastly undersell their role in the collision repair industry. In the same way that Amazon is far more than just a delivery company, distributors also go far beyond the limited perspective some have of their services.

In truth, the leaders in this sector have evolved their culture to such an extent that their customers are more akin to business partners.

It stands to reason then, that in this symbiotic relationship, success for one equals success for both. By the same token, investment in the customer – be it in time, expertise, or finance – could also be considered self-investment.

Support

Paula Huesca De Crean, chief commercial officer, Euro Car Parts, said, 'We understand how important our customers are to the health of our business. As a result, we move mountains to support them, whether that is through technical support, health and safety certification, project management or financial services. Because we can calculate cost versus profit and return we are very happy to support bodyshops financially. We offer a wide range of options including interest free loans for equipment and tooling.'

For bodyshops, this support is crucial. Those with brand approvals will often need different tooling for each, while the likes of ADAS and electric vehicles (EV) also require repairers to invest small fortunes in equipment and training. Many are now having to specialise in specific brands or propulsion technologies, unable to cover all bases anymore. But knowing where to put their money is not always straightforward. Again, support from industry partners plays a vital role here and more than ever it is the complete service package that bodyshops are seeking.

Paula continued, 'We have noticed bodyshops are looking for more of a consultancy service from distributors, rather than one-off purchases particularly as equipment and training requirements become more specific. This is largely to meet demands of the next generation of electric and hybrid technology that require bodyshops to invest in additional process, safety procedures and equipment.'

She added that, as more vehicle manufacturers focus on ADAS, investment in diagnostic and calibration systems becomes increasingly complex – and also increasingly important. For a small independent repairer, deciding where to place its £20,000 can feel a little like standing at a roulette wheel. A good supplier should provide clarity, enabling the bodyshop to make an informed decision.

'Time is money,' Paula continued. 'We will sit down with a business and calculate work volumes and profit versus expenditure. So when we say it will cost you this, productivity will improve by this amount and you'll pay it off completely in this many months, that's exactly what they want to hear.'

Variety

That sort of intimate relationship is not what typically springs to mind when thinking of suppliers and customers, but it's exactly that which can give both a competitive advantage. Additional support could come in the shape of negotiating on behalf of the repairer and managing installations and upgrades to ensure workflow is not disrupted and key-to-key times don't take a hit.

'Service is still a key differentiator in our sector,' said Andrew Moring, marketing director of Morelli, which offers customers everything from financial analysis to data compliance to real-time insights into job costings. 'It's great to see a successful account expand, we take



any investment opportunity on a case-by-case basis. Any long-term agreement we sign with a customer needs to be right and offer the correct level of return for all involved.'

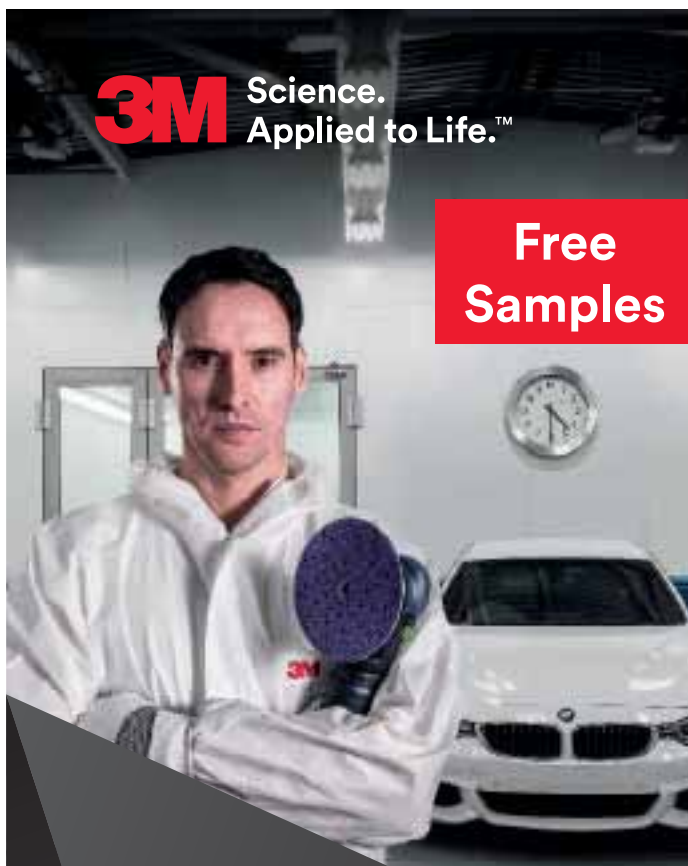
It's that note of discretion that bodyshops should heed, however. Under constant pressure to upgrade and upskill to keep pace with a fast-moving market, there is a danger that cash-strapped repairers might find themselves lured by the promise of financial investment, and make rash decisions in order to secure it.

It's something that Graham O'Neill, CEO of ACIS, has seen happen all too often. He said, 'We have seen many instances where the offer of the chequebook has tempted bodyshops into making decisions which perhaps aren't in their best long-term (or even medium-term) interests. I liken it to the days of taking the king's shilling and waking up on a very, very bad voyage.'

He said that responsible suppliers should take investment on an individual basis, and consider the business implications before deciding if to support, and what that support should look like.

Graham added, 'We will look at supporting our customers in order to help them grow and become more profitable. This support may take the form of financial support, but equally may be by way of equipment upgrades or even training. It depends on which will benefit the bodyshop best.'

The repair sector has advanced its skills and capabilities exponentially in the last decade – it has had to – but with the average profit per job hovering just above the £30 mark, it's not difficult to understand why bodyshops want and need every bit of help they can get. Caution is still key though. When opening their doors to outside influences, bodyshops should be seeking the knowledge to make better decisions themselves, not someone to make those decisions for them.



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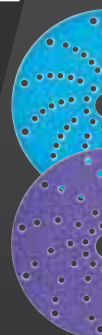
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COMMON GOALS

The relationship between vehicle manufactures and insurers can be a fraught one. But a partnership between Volvo and Covéa is proving there is another way. Here, we ask Darren Bedford, Covéa claims motor engineer manager, and Steve Plunkett, Volvo paint and development manager, to explain more.

Briefly describe what the Covéa and Volvo partnership approach looks like?

Darren Bedford: Volvo has a well-deserved reputation for safety and innovation, so this is a great opportunity for us to work alongside a forward-thinking vehicle manufacturer to deliver great service to our mutual customers, whilst naturally extending our repair network to match customer demand. This partnership also builds on our reputation for finding innovative solutions to meet our customers' needs, whilst remaining focussed on providing safe repairs on vehicles that have increasingly sophisticated technology.

Steve Plunkett: At Volvo we have been engaging with the insurance industry since we started the body and paint programme in 2012 and Darren was supportive in joining up the relationship that we had built up the past few years and actually turn it into a mutually beneficial commercial business relationship that benefits everyone.

How did it come about and what have been the outputs/results to date?

Darren: Steve and I met whilst doing some networking at an industry event. We hadn't met before but we hit it off and kept in touch and our dialogue lead to us sitting down and discussing how we could get to the point that we are at right now.

Steve: From the outset the outputs have been really very positive to both partners. For us we are seeing increased repair volumes into the network year-on-year across the various retention initiatives that we have associated to the body and paint programme and Covéa is valuably contributing to this.

Darren: As I mentioned, it [the partnership] enables us to offer our Covéa policyholders greater customer choice and a vehicle manufacturer (VM) approved repair with greater efficiencies of repair for all parties

“

We both saw the need for an insurer and vehicle manufacturer to engage as, historically, neither party would have talked to each other, so it was an opportunity to break new ground

concerned. The initial customer satisfaction index (CSI) scores are very encouraging indeed.

What got you both to the point of initiating the project?

Darren: We both saw the need for an insurer and vehicle manufacturer to engage as, historically, neither party would have talked to each other, so it was an opportunity to break new ground. This is a very unique way for an insurer/VM to operate over and above a VM/insurer white label insurer scheme and one we were keen to explore. Steve presented us with this superb opportunity.

Steve: When I joined Volvo in 2012 I could see the depth of technology in our cars and it struck me that we really did have a big job on our hands to not only ensure that our own network was able to repair these cars to our Volvo standards, but to also ensure that all work providers had an opportunity to get to understand Volvo technologies. Darren and the Covéa team really got behind it and were as keen as we were to get the project off the ground.

This was very much a 'first' for the industry, what challenges did the project present initially for both parties? And how were these overcome?

Darren: We took the opportunity to introduce new technology to the operational claims team at our Halifax office, something that we felt we needed to do to support this new initiative. We worked with Audatarget to develop Audatarget; this enabled us to have greater flexibility for deployment of repairs into VM networks starting, of course, with Volvo.

Steve: There really were no barriers or challenges from our side; 99% of our approved network saw the opportunity to work with Covéa. They embraced it as an important next stage of the body and paint programme's development.



If you were to choose a single ‘success factor’ for the partnership – what would it be and why?

Both: We both feel that the biggest success to date has been how easy it is, when working with like-minded people that share the same values and are determined to make something a success. We both sat down at the beginning and set about understanding each other’s needs. This openness helped to create trust and transparency from the minute that we started.

Darren: The project’s success has given us at Covéa Insurance the opportunity to successfully roll this out to other VMs.

Steve: I would like to think that other work providers will take a leaf out of Covéa’s book and have a desire to develop a line of communication with us and other VM’s. There is a saying that if you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got.

You are now operating similar schemes with other VMs of various scales/structures. What learnings are you taking from these partnerships?

Darren: Proof that the barriers do not exist if you approach the relationship with a flexible ethos and are prepared to work together to deliver the customers’ preferences. We have found that all vehicle manufacturers have been excellent to work with,

A stigma still exists surrounding the ‘direct costs’ associated with VM approved repairs – what would you say to anyone still harbouring this sentiment?

Darren: We have found that the cost differential is not as great as perceived and we believe the other service benefits the customer receives offset any disparity. There are many great repairers delivering a superb customer experience; it’s sometimes the customer choice and their emotional trust that needs to be fulfilled and less about customer differences.

“

We want to ensure that our customer wants to buy another Volvo in the future... I believe that any insurer would also want to see their policyholder renew with their brand too. What price do you put on that?

Steve: There may well be differences, but unless people ask they will never know. It’s about taking time out to look at the overall picture; everyone should have a desire to reduce overall claims costs, while not sacrificing a safe repair or a bodyshop’s profit. At Volvo we have aligned ourselves to like-minded programme partners such as Covéa, MS Amlin, NFUM, Verex and White Room Consortium.

They also want to remove unnecessary claims costs. We also have a managed network of repairers, so there are many crossovers to what a work provider requires. At the end of the day a Volvo customer driving on any insurance policy is not only a Volvo customer, but also a customer of that particular insurer.

We certainly want to ensure that our customer wants to buy another Volvo in the future as a result of a positive ownership experience. I believe that any insurer would also want to see their policyholder renew with their brand too. What price do you put on that?

What is in the future for both the Covéa and Volvo brands?

Steve: Both brands’ continued growth will naturally present increased reciprocal business opportunities.

Darren: We have a clear vision to grow our business by putting customer experience at the heart of everything we do. Our purpose is to protect our customers from the worst happening and help them put it right if it does. A high-quality repair network that offers choice is essential to us being able to deliver this, and it’s really delivering results for us – we were awarded Personal Lines Insurer of Year for the last two years and industry customer benchmarking surveys consistently rank us top. We want to keep pioneering innovative solutions and working with like-minded businesses to ensure we continue to deliver the highest standards for our customers.



REPORT **SYTNER** GROUP

INSIDE THE UK'S BIGGEST BMW DEALERSHIP AND BODYSHOP

Car dealer Sytner Group has opened the largest BMW dealership in the UK. Based in Sheffield, the new multi-million-pound premises was five years in the making. *bodyshop* magazine was offered an exclusive first glimpse.

BMW has a new focal point in the UK, following the opening of what is now the largest of its dealerships in the country. The purpose-built facility covers a staggering 196,325sqft, spread over three floors. As well as housing new and used car showrooms, it contains a 'Stage Three' bodyshop that takes up the entire top level.

The bodyshop is divided into a Smart facility for cosmetic repairs, a paint shop and a panel shop. Together, these areas are operated by 12 production staff, four non-productives and one apprentice.

On the ground floor are separate new and used BMW showrooms, as well as a service workshop where mechanical work is carried out, a bodyshop reception and a drive-through vehicle drop-off point. Above that, the first floor houses a MINI showroom and the only one in the UK to showcase all of BMW's iconic M models.

The opening has been some five years in the pipeline. Previously, the company had operated separate MINI and BMW dealerships in the city. Both were significantly



smaller and the company had outgrown them. Staff from these sites have moved to the new one, joined by new recruits.

James Pickett, bodyshop manager at Sytner Sheffield BMW, said, 'It's been a lot of hard work, but this opening is something we are really proud of. The scale of the building is out of this world. What's more, as we are on the same site as the retailer we can give the bodyshop customers the same 'wow' as all our customers get, which we see as a perfect model for the future.'

The opening of Sytner's new premises is illustrative of just how far the company has come over the decades. Sytner was established by Frank Sytner, who would later win the 1988 and 1990 British Touring Car Championships (BTCC) with BMW, and his brother Alan, who had previously owned the world-famous Cavern Club music venue in Liverpool.

In 1968, the pair opened their first used car dealership in Nottingham. Just two years later, the brothers were awarded the BMW franchise for the city.



After winning his BTCC titles, Frank decided to focus his energy on expanding the BMW business. In 1993, the company acquired a second BMW dealership, in Leicester, which was quickly followed by a third, in Sheffield. But they didn't stop there. Expansion continued apace and by 1997 the number of Sytner dealerships had reached double figures. At this point, the business began to diversify, working with other prestige brands, such as Audi, Ferrari, Land Rover, Mercedes-Benz, and Porsche.

Later that year, the company floated on the UK stock market and became Sytner Group plc, with long-term Sytner director Laurence Vaughan taking on the role of CEO.

By early 2002, Frank and Laurence had rapidly expanded the company to make it one of the largest and most successful car dealership groups in the UK.

It was at this point that it came to the attention of Roger Penske, the prominent US businessman, legendary motorsports team owner and former award-winning racing driver. Roger was looking to further grow his successful US-based car dealer group, Penske Automotive Group (PAG), by expanding into Europe.

Given Frank and Roger's shared passion for motorsport, it was perhaps inevitable that the two companies would join forces later that year.

In 2003, Gerard Nieuwenhuys, a long-standing Sytner director, took over from Laurence, who became chairman. With the resources of PAG now at his disposal, Gerard continued the company's expansion and 2016 Sytner Group became the UK's largest motor dealer by revenue.

Now, with CEO Darren Edwards at the helm, the company boasts state-of-the-art dealerships across the UK and is the number one retailer for many of its manufacturers. By working together with its manufacturer partners, the company is now looking beyond the UK to Europe, and is developing a growing presence in key European markets, including Italy, Germany and Spain.

According to Simon Woodford, bodyshop development manager at Sytner, the vehicle repair side of the business has been doing particularly well lately. In 2011/12, the company's BMW division operated just four bodyshops. Today, that number has swelled to 14 BMW-approved bodyshops, as well as three Smart repair centres.

**196,325
sqft**

The size of the
new Sheffield site

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The scale of the
building is out of
this world

Simon said, 'The past few years have been really exciting for us, not least in the bodyshop arena, where we've seen a big growth in a short period of time. This is a side of the business that we will continue to focus on going forward, alongside our dealerships.'

Key to this success has been the business' association with science-based technology company 3M, which provides equipment and training for all Sytner facilities. The two companies have been working together for many years, but their relationship strengthened significantly in 2006, when 3M began providing support for a Sytner site in Solihull. Since then, 3M has continued to support Sytner at all its bodyshops and Smart repair centres, providing everything BMW-trained technicians need to carry out their work to the highest standards.

As part of this partnership, 3M provides Sytner with first-class equipment for all its facilities, including abrasives, masking tapes, compounds, polishing products, the innovative paint preparation systems and even personal protective equipment (PPE).

In addition, 3M's technical experts train all Sytner's bodyshop technicians at its state-of-the-art automotive refinishing centre (ARC) in Atherstone, Warwickshire. As well as covering processes ranging from pre-panel preparation to dry sanding, this training extends to equipment storage and safety procedures.

Simon said, 'Our relationship with 3M has really helped with our growth. Every time we've opened a new bodyshop or otherwise expanded our business, they've supported us with equipment and training, which has been invaluable. 3M is known for the quality of its products and training. It is probably the best on the market and the company has a very good relationship with BMW too. These are the reasons why we've always used them.'

As a result of the two company's close and long-standing relationship, Jason Stephens, business development manager for the 3M automotive aftermarket division, was one of the first to set foot inside the new Sheffield facility.

He said, 'The scale of the premises is mind-blowing. It's almost like a BMW-MINI supermarket. You've got all the old and new models in one place. It's incredible. You could get lost in there for days.'

He added, 'We can't wait to see what the future holds for 3M's relationship with Sytner.'

STREAMLINING THE PROCESS

The claims process is a complex one, involving many industry stakeholders. From the claims handler within the large corporation right through to the workshop technician within the independent business – there are myriad communication channels, touchpoints and, ultimately, room for improvements. Here, we take a look at what products, skills, systems and innovative thinking can do to enhance the process.

Without getting drawn in on legal terminology (of which there appears to many interpretations), the overriding aim of the claims process is fairly straightforward – to ensure the customer is provided with a high level of service which returns their cars to a pre-accident status.

As simple as that may sound, it's a complex series of events – involving manpower, materials, machines, methods, and money – that triggers processes, products and services within the supply chain. And that complexity is only increasing as vehicle technology takes hold, the skills gap widens and business models continue to evolve.

But despite the moving target, constant tweaks and more grand scale changes to the claims process are reaping some major benefits for all – especially the customer. Right first time job pricing, lean operational processes, smart tooling and skills utilisation are leading to improved cycle times and higher levels of customer satisfaction.

Spectrum

At one end of the spectrum individuals are changing the way they do things. Chris Georgiou, vehicle damage assessor at Paint & Body in Beckenham, Kent, and Cooper Croydon has 'developed' a novel way of assessing vehicles and communicating necessary repair procedures with insurance engineers – he uses his smartphone on 'selfie mode' to get under bumpers and sills to photograph 'hidden' damage. 'It's just something I have done for a while now,' explained Chris who was informed that his idea was somewhat 'innovative' by an insurance engineer partner. 'I had never even thought of it in that way, it simply makes the process a lot smoother and transparent for our customers which in turn allows us to get on with what we do best – repair vehicles to manufacturer approved standards.'

At the opposite end of the spectrum, technologies such as artificial intelligence are making headway into the claims process with the likes of Aviva and Ageas having

used the systems now for well over 12 months. Back in April 2017, Solus, the nationwide network of accident repair centres owned and operated by Aviva, reported it was working with Thatcham Research and Emergent Network Intelligence (ENI), a Verisk Analytics business, in developing artificial intelligence (AI) to speed the repair process. The system uses state-of-the-art image recognition and analytics data to identify when cars are write-offs or repairable and essentially puts the claims process back in the hands of the customer.

Passing through

More latterly, speaking at a motor insurance conference, Rob Smale, transformation director at Ageas spoke of how all motor claims were now passing through the Tractable AI system.

He highlighted how already the system was proving more accurate than traditional assessment processes, freeing up engineers to focus on cases which require human intervention/skill. Rob suggested that very soon Tractable will be able to provide a fully structured assessment and rhetorically then asked what will happen to repair networks and will an insurer even need a network?

In his opinion, AI with its real time capabilities can and should revolutionise the insurer/supplier interface to provide a far more efficient and smooth claims process – 'if it doesn't, we've missed a big opportunity,' said Rob.

Simple

GT Motive is a business which in the past 12 months has also made headway within the UK market, much of it thanks to its 'simple' and effective approach to providing the claims sector with an 'advanced, end-to-end' technological solution.

'Unfortunately, I think this industry is responsible for losing sight of the most important component within the process – the customer,' said Richard Taylor, UK business director, GT Motive. 'And that has led to a

general overly-complex way of doing business. What we aim to provide is a collaborative solution that connects all parts of the industry in order to streamline processes and therefore provide efficiencies not available today.'

One way GT Motive does that is through cloud technology, providing instant access to its systems and the content within – be it, for example, estimate creation, real time parts ordering or invoicing – and crucially, storing records of any updates or amendments within one platform. It's what Richard simply labels as 'utilising today's technology'.

Four walls

But it's not all about the front end of the claims process, it's the entire process which really counts and that includes anything that happens within the four walls of a bodyshop. Paula Huesca De Crean, chief commercial officer at Euro Car Parts, points to how the business understands and focuses on working 'extensively with repairers to help them specify their workshop, from helping choose the right equipment, project managing the installation and even providing assistance with finance.'

She continued, 'We also support repairers with a robust business health check of their garage, looking into areas such as staffing levels, current overheads and where improvements can be made to free up some funds to invest in the workshop and stay ahead of the game.'

A turnkey aspect of any successful bodyshop operation

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The next five years will be a period of major change for the automotive industry. It is therefore vital that bodyshops stay ahead of the market and evolve their management techniques, processes and equipment

is management and bodyshop management systems today are incredibly agile, interconnected programmes linking all elements of the business and, importantly, the overall claim together. Systems such as AutoFlow boast major advantages when implemented within a bodyshop business, whilst the recently introduced PlanManager from Audatex asserts to seamlessly connect all parties in the crash repair ecosystem. And according to David Shepherd, regional managing director at Audatex UK and Africa, 'it provides full transparency to bodyshops, insurers and customers, helping to streamline the claims process from start to finish by unifying all data in one, easy-to-access location.'

Streamlining

So, with so much activity afoot it would seem that streamlining the claims process is simply just another element of the industry today and all stakeholders within the process are responsible for making it happen – from the grassroots of the bodyshop to the top of the tree within insurance operations.

And as Paula of ECP puts it, 'The next five years will be a period of major change for the automotive industry. It is therefore vital that bodyshops stay ahead of the market and evolve their management techniques, processes and equipment.'

'One thing is clear to keep key-to-key times down, bodyshops must move with the times to remain successful.'

HONDA (UK)

2017 ESTIMATOR OF THE YEAR AWARDS EVENT

HONDA

The Power of Dreams

The Honda (UK) 2017 Estimator of the Year Event was launched in April 2017 with 110 estimators from the Honda Approved Bodyshop Network participated in the challenging competition which was run in conjunction with Audatex. Those taking part first had to complete a vehicle assessment followed by a MaRIS (Maintenance and Repair Information System) questionnaire at the certification day. The results from the benchmark assessment, the MaRIS questionnaire and the certification score were added together to generate an overall score, with the top ten being invited to attend the final assessment which was held at ITAS's Training Academy in Milton Keynes on the 15th & 16th November 2017.

The top ten were then put through their paces where they had to carry out an assessment on a live vehicle, complete two technical questionnaires; the first on Honda repair processes and repair techniques using MaRIS and the second on the use of the Audatex System. Finally they had to negotiate with an Insurance engineer and explain the repair process to the customer all under the scrutiny of judges.

Andy Johnson of Brooklands Auto Body Centre (Lincoln) took first place, ahead of runners-up, Rikki Mansfield, Balgores Motor Group (East Anglia) and Daniel Ogborne of Brin Jones Ltd (Bristol)

The seven Estimators that just missed out on the top spot were:

- Daniel Meredith of Fix Auto Wrexham (Oswestry)
- Paul Goddard of Chaplane Accident Repair Centre (Colchester)
- Andy McIndoe of Phoenix Body Centre (Paisley)
- Peter Chatterjee of Crown Honda (Hendon)
- Stephen Lilley of Barrett Accident Repair Centre (Canterbury)
- Nick Gaskell of Gaskell Motor Bodies (Great Harwood)
- Steve Clarke of Perfect Paint Centre Ltd (Milton Keynes)



The Awards ceremony took place on the 11th April 2018 at Rockingham Castle in Market Harborough, where the 10 finalists, their Bodyshop Manager and Honda Dealer partner attend an awards dinner, presentation and activity day where they got to drive and ride Honda products from ATV's, Pilots, Pioneers, Honda Motorcycles and the Type R simulator.

PROFILE FIX AUTO PENZANCE

RIDING A WAVE IN CORNWALL

Fix Auto Penzance was crowned *bodyshop's* Small Bodyshop of the Year last September. But it hasn't always been an upward curve. We spoke to owner Stuart Cameron about the journey.

From humble beginnings come great things. That is so often the case in the collision repair industry, where so many successful businesses setting the pace today began life in another form, operating out of tiny facility on a shoestring budget driven, in many cases, by a single person's passion.

That is certainly the case for Fix Auto Penzance, which came of age in 2017. In truth, it came of age a few years before that but last year was one of recognition, with Stuart Cameron's company taking two prestigious gongs – *bodyshop's* own Small Bodyshop of the Year award plus Fix Auto's Customer Services award.

The two accolades recognised the work that had gone in to reinvent the business and move to another level.

Stuart said, 'We received both awards within two weeks. It was quite humbling. I'd never considered entering the *bodyshop* Awards – that was all Joel's idea and his hard work. I thought nobody would be interested in this little workshop from Penzance. So it was good to find out I was totally wrong. We're actually a well-respected name within the industry, which I'd never have imagined.'

Turning points

One of the key turning points for Fix Auto Penzance came a few years earlier, when Stuart's son Joel joined the business, bringing with him fresh ideas and new vigour.

Stuart said, 'He came at the right time. I'd run a successful business all my life and was doing a good job. I have a fantastic workforce, many of whom have stayed with me for years, and I'm really grateful for that, but anyone who runs a small company will know it's a struggle and I wasn't really making the money I should have been. I am a hands-on man, so running the business was never really my thing. But then Joel joined me and that gave me the enthusiasm back.'

“

We received both awards within two weeks. It was quite humbling

The decision to join Fix Auto was the second decisive turning point, enabling Stuart to tap into the business nous of director Ian Pugh and finally start to turn the profit he felt his business was always capable of.

'It's helped up focus and look at the running of the business. Profit has always been a dirty word in the industry, but you need to make a profit. The money we spend on re-equipping every single year – it has to be paid for.'

With such renewed impetus, Fix Auto Penzance has flourished; so much so that it's now in the midst of an expansion that should elevate the business to another level again. But expansion in Cornwall is not straightforward. Apart from the chasm in skills in the area, it is also next to impossible to find land.

Growth

For more than two years Stuart has been negotiating with the owner of a large plot adjacent to his own workshop. The site is little more than a tip, with items taken from dumps in the process of being restored – or waiting to be restored – and sold on. But after three decades of 'collecting', the site was chaotic and the owner making very slow progress in clearing it.

Stuart said, 'The sale was agreed in 2016 but it's taken this long to exchange contracts – and that's for only half of the yard. The other half will be ours within 12 months. We're desperate for the land, but I realised the only way we're going to get it was by agreeing to a half-and-half deal. I might have walked away from the deal, but there is no industrial land for sale or even for rent here. Cornwall is a very difficult place to find business properties. I don't want to wait 12 months, but we've got no choice.'

However, with half the plot secured, he's wasted no time getting to work. It has already been converted into a



carpark for work-in-progress jobs and the benefits have been immediate.

'Over the years we continued expanding on our own plot, but we simply couldn't do any more. Every time we did something it ate into our parking, and at the moment we're renting two other yards for parking and own a third. The cars just had to be jammed in and there was just so much lost production. Now our workshop controller is also our carpark attendant, making sure the cars are parked in the right order so everyone can go to the vehicle and get what they need without having to move 10 other cars first. We've already seen an improvement in production and efficiency.'

Redesign

Perhaps the real gains will be in the coming few years though, once all the land has been acquired and the extra space utilised in the most efficient way. Spraybooth manufacturers Todd Engineering is helping to redesign the workshop to improve flow, and the weekly average of 30 jobs is expected to reach and pass 40.

The key improvements will see an extension added for the panel technicians with six additional bays. In turn that will free up a dedicated area for paint preparation – they are sharing a space now. In total the workshop will increase from 8,000sqft to 12,000sqft, creating room also for a new express centre. It would operate as a separate entity with two or three dedicated staff, turning around cosmetic jobs in two to three days.

That though, brings a new yet familiar challenge – staff. Cornwall, with its high cost of living and limited employment opportunities, is like a no-man's land of skills and Stuart has come to the conclusion that to get quality technicians they will have to cultivate them themselves.

He explained, 'I've been here for 30 years and we're all

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If my idea helps other bodyshops then that's good, because I want to share their ideas too. And as part of Fix Auto we do share information.

getting older. Joel is only in his mid-20s but is now my bodyshop manager and I'm looking to hand over the reins to him. Part of our succession plan is building a new team of younger people around him. Those people aren't here, so we need to bring youngsters in while the more experienced people are still here to train them.'

It won't be easy, but these are clearly exciting times for Fix Auto Penzance – not least because of the owner's willingness to try new things and innovate. After taking inspiration from the way schools use overhead projectors, he took the bold move to install a 65ins touchscreen monitor in the workshop, running the Autoflow management system to allow everyone to see ongoing jobs, pull up images and download repair methods. So successful has it been that Fix Auto asked him to produce a video for the rest of the network, and deliver a presentation at its annual conference.

He said, 'If my idea helps other bodyshops then that's good, because I want to share their ideas too. And as part of Fix Auto we do share information. We all do the same job, we all want to be the best we can be, and we all want to succeed – so let's help each other do it.'

Stuart concluded, 'I'm quite optimistic. We've got nice work, a good team, and the opportunity to keep improving. I don't want to give up just yet; I'll probably carry on until the bitter end because I've always had that dream to chase. But we're in a good place now.'

'The insurers for many years have beaten us up, and been short-sighted in that. Now they're finding they need us as much as we need them and here in Cornwall it's turned to our advantage as we can pick and choose who we work with; not for, but with.'

Stuart Cameron



INDUSTRYINTERVIEW

BRADLEY MEWES

This month, to tie in with the IBIS Global Summit taking place in Munich, Germany we caught up with returning IBIS presenter and collision repair industry financial expert Bradley Mewes, principal and founder of Supplement Advisory to talk global trends, money and ask just how far will consolidation go.

For those who might not yet know of Bradley Mewes and Supplement Advisory, please could you provide a brief overview of your activities.

I am the principal and founder of Supplement Advisory – which provides strategic and financial advisory services to companies across the world. Our business is set up in two key areas: the bespoke strategic consultancy side where we really focus on growth advisories – companies that wish to grow and expand and build a larger business; and the other side of the equation which is what we call the transaction advisory which is where we help companies sell or acquire, working through the transactional nature of the business. We tie it all together based on what the business owner or the client needs.

You are presenting at the IBIS Global Summit 2018 having last spoke at the event in 2016. Much has changed during those two years – what has this meant for the sector?

It's been a busy time, especially in North America where we have seen the 'big four' continue to grow and expand. We have also seen their growth strategy evolve – a few years back it was all about acquisition but now it's far more strategic growth. From a broader, global perspective we are really seeing the automotive aftermarket become a very hot place to invest and there have been a couple of major international transactions. Going forward we are going to see more of a 'global nature' to what has been in the past really a very provincial industry. You only have to look at the

activity of long-term IBIS partner Fix Auto to see how its footprint has spread. There really now is a theme and trend towards globalisation.

How will this globalisation impact the industry?

When you look at the franchise models it makes a lot of sense; then consider the likes of Copart and LKQ, for example, who are large, multi-national suppliers with multi-national supply chains; then look at the vehicle parc, for example, in China and its rate of growth; and then there's the OEMs investment into Asia... it's a very interconnected, global marketplace. One of the challenges that we face in the US is that most US insurance providers are solely US based. Get outside the US and many of the insurance providers are multi-national. That plays a major role and my prediction is that the countries and companies leading the multi-national charge will be the ones that have a presence outside of the US rather than inside it.

The paint market has been rife with merger and acquisition activity in recent years – is this likely to continue?

For some time the paint manufacturers have all been stating there is more room for consolidation in the industry. They would like to see initial consolidation which would offer a reduction of capacity and enhanced pricing control. I recently presented to an investment banking company on exactly this subject and the results of that meeting were that additional consolidation needed to take place – but what was uncertain was the exact path it would take.

If we dial back a notch and look at the distribution market in North America, a lot of private investment has flooded in and as a result there has been very aggressive growth and expansion overseas. So when public companies do well, for example Uni Select, parent company of FinishMaster, Boyd or LKQ, it tends to attract additional investment and I think that's what we are seeing in the paint industry.

What other factors are impacting on the sector globally?

I think the big thought in everyone's mind right now is the role of ADAS and is this an industry which is eventually going to disappear. I'm not convinced that is the case. I'm not so cavalier as to say that it's not going to have an impact – it certainly will – but I am not convinced that in the short to medium term it is going to have a material impact.

What is likely to have the biggest impact on the industry over the next three to five years?

The biggest issue is labour and I think the companies that come up with the solution to address the labour shortage will be the ones who have a competitive advantage. But problems are always going to change and the companies able to systematically reinvest



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are the ones who are going to create that win. So whether that's reinvesting in training, labour, equipment, growth or whatever it is... the key theme is reinvestment.

It's interesting how we are surrounded by all this evolution in access to finance and technology yet ultimately it all boils down to the human asset...

Absolutely, and shameless plug here but that's really what we are here to do – to work with companies and identify areas where they should or could reinvest right now. There is always a challenge, so that's what we help business owners think through – how do you systematically think through that investment decision.

We are in a market now with some large, well known entities but, at the same time, there are some very big brand names making inroads into the sector, for example, Amazon selling and delivering cars now. Will we see those names become further embedded within the market any time soon?

There are two thoughts: one is that Amazon is a threat to every business, but the other is that our industry isn't big enough to warrant Amazon's attention. I think that's a legitimate viewpoint because the larger the company, the larger the investment fund. Collision is a niche market, we are still a relatively small area, and I think that will create a bit of a barrier around the sector.

That said, US investor Carl Icahn is heavily investing in the automotive aftermarket and obviously Warren Buffet has invested through Berkshire Hathaway Automotive which owns one of the largest repairers in North America. So the 'big names' are here but this part of their business portfolio is relatively small. But that's not to say that either of those will not acquire a collision repair business tomorrow, they may, but there are plenty of other very smart, aggressive and talented owners and investors out there who may disrupt the industry.

What can we expect from Bradley Mewes at IBIS this year?

I am very excited to be back – it's a great line-up and a fantastic opportunity to get in front of a global audience. We're going to be talking about the evolution of the industry and how it has developed in the past couple of years and where it might go. I'm actually going to take a couple of slides from my 2016 presentation and highlight where I was right and where I was wrong.

The title is 'Is Consolidation Dead?' and that really is the key thing; it's more than just buying to build now and there has to be some logic and strategy behind it, so the idea is look at how that growth has changed over the past few years.

Also, take something like ADAS, just two years ago not many people were talking about it and now it's one of the hottest topics across the globe. A lot has changed so it's going to be compare, contrast and future forecast.



SPECIAL THE FUTURE

THE FUTURE FOR... PANEL TECHNICIANS:

In the latest in our series from the shopfloor, we ask panel technicians how their working lives are changing.

How do you expect the role of the panel technician to evolve in the next 12-24 months?

Jon Jones, panel technician, MG Cannon,

Dorchester: The role of a panel technician has already changed and this will continue at a fast pace, mainly as a result of the complexity of technology now being used and the growing trend towards car manufacturers now using aluminium instead of steel. Aluminium is generally more lightweight than steel, but much harder to repair. The main change will be to 'replace rather than repair' more advanced safety systems such as radar sensors, cameras and other safety components which are generally located in bumpers and other areas prone to impact damage. This is because the fillers used to repair these areas may affect the performance of the sensors, and also the manufacturer's processes and methods often do not allow for filling near sensors for this reason.

Richard Adams, panel technician, Fix Auto

Croydon: Repairs are becoming more and more technical and we will have to move with the times. Today, we are constantly being told how to repair a car by the vehicle manufacturers, as well as by Thatcham, rather than using the skills and methods gained over time. Repairing a damaged quarter panel today, as an example, for some cars is a far cry from the way we would naturally have repaired them five years ago, and that is because of the methods stipulated to us. Before, it would be what's best for the car using skills and methods handed down by highly skilled tradesmen but today we have to follow blueprints. So, in a way, some of those old skills are becoming redundant. I can see a time when you won't be welding a car, it will be done by adhesives and rivets.

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Evandro Zitkowski, group master panel technicians, Baldwins Repair Group:

With different types of materials on the vehicles (plastic, riveted, bonded, welded, aluminium) and different joining methods, the panel technician's role is becoming very challenging. Education will play a massive part of the development of this role. With electric vehicles, panel repairs and replacement has changed. You must be careful when using electric panel pin pullers, along with repair plastics, as radars will not operate with excessive paint/filler depth of repair. I think a big change is coming, maybe not in 12-24 months, but certainly in the next five years.

Peter Leaman, panel technician, Poole Accident Repair:

The role of a panel technician is rapidly changing, particularly in the prestige market. Vehicle manufacturers' need for weight reduction to boost fuel efficiency is continuing to drive changes in repair materials and joining philosophy. The introduction of multi-material builds is increasing year on year. Customer knowledge is also rising as they are showing an interest in the multi-material repair methods.

What attributes do you think a successful panel technician will need to have in the longer-term?

Jon: Being adaptable will be very important, plus a desire to continue learning and to keep up-to-date with new makes, models, and technology. Technicians will also have to know how to interpret and follow each manufacturer's process correctly and safely, and to understand the importance of working to manufacturers' agreed timescales. Manufacturer training and access to the specialised tools and repair methods needed for each manufacturer brand will be



essential to repairing modern complex cars back to their pre-accident condition.

Richard: For me, having pride in your work and the patience to keep working on something in order to restore the vehicle to its showroom look are two of the key skills for the role. I believe that will always be the case. You simply cannot afford to produce something that isn't 100% perfect. But, as I've outlined, the methods in which we repair which are dictated to us will undoubtedly change our core skill set. I think repairers will have to learn how to follow detailed instructions rather than just go with their natural ability using tried and tested skills.

Evandro: I think in the long term the panel beater and MET will become a joint role. It will improve the skill level and efficiency of repair. For example, if you repair a front end on a Ford, you will replace all the plastic panels/crash bars and sensors behind the bumper and then fit the bumper (it comes painted). So, the car may not even see the paint shop. It becomes a start-to-finish job for the panel/MET technician.

Peter: A successful panel technician is required to be versatile, with a passion to learn and keep up with the ever-changing future technologies and manufacturer repair methods. The safety of the passenger is in our hands and we will be faced with many sophisticated joining techniques to invisibly weld very different substrates back together safely and attractively.

Going forward, the greatest challenge to a panel technician will be... And why?

Jon: The challenge will be keeping up with the continuing complexity of modern cars, understanding

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I think in the long term the panel beater and MET will become a joint role. It will improve the skill level and efficiency of repair

the new joining and repair techniques necessary to work with steels, aluminium and other composites, plus managing the time out of the bodyshop – which is needed to keep up-to-date with training and the special tools required. Many manufacturers use very different processes; you could be working on a Vauxhall one day, BMW the next and an all-electric Tesla the next.

Richard: Evolving with the times; I'm 33 and I was taught how to meticulously repair from what many would call an old school repairer using techniques gained over a lot of years. Vehicles are constantly evolving and the materials they are made out of are being developed. As the methods in which we are told how repair them are enforced, those guys who still have a lot of working years left in them will struggle if they are stuck in their ways.

Evandro: Gaining experience of the growing evolution of car structure will be an ongoing challenge, and recognising when automated components are situated behind damaged panels. Technicians will also have to keep up with repair/panel changing techniques, and appreciate the safety implications of repair or replace, particularly when it comes to safety and automated systems. I think it will be an education for us all.

Peter: Panel technicians will need to be able to move with the times, I believe the multi material strategies and the increase in composites and plastics will prove to be the bigger challenges. We are also required to educate and adapt to using new tooling, controlled working environments, adhesives, and hybrid joining processes to ensure we are consistently keeping up with the manufacturers exacting repair methods and technologies.

bodyshop

event & awards 2018



Get ahead and tell the world
how good you are!

In this day and age we all need a competitive edge, and what better way than entering and becoming a finalist or winner in the *bodyshop* Awards 2018.

We are still taking nominations for the following awards

- Apprentice Paint Technician of the Year
- Apprentice Panel Technician of the Year
- Paint Technician of the Year
- Panel Technician of the Year
- NEW! Apprentice MET Technician of the Year
- NEW! MET Technician of the Year

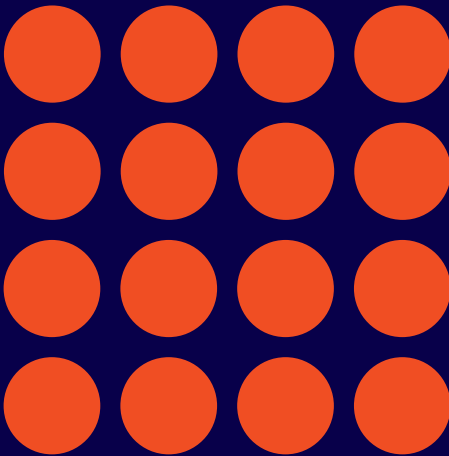
Closing date

- Apprentices 6th June
- Technician 25th June
- Email emily@bodyshopmag.com for further details

BOOK NOW

We are now taking bookings for the *bodyshop* Event & Awards 2018 taking place on the 27-28 September 2018 at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole, go to www.bodyshopmag.com/event to book your place today.

Any queries or for further information please contact **Nicola Keady** on nicola@bodyshopmag.com



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SYMACH OSVALDO BERGAGLIO



Newly onboard as an IBIS Global Summit partner for 2018, Symach is a business which has been earning a reputation for its efficient processes and solutions the world over. Here we catch up with Symach president/owner, Osvaldo Bergaglio, to find out more.

Please provide a brief overview of Symach and its business within the collision repair sector?

Everything started in 2001 when I developed the DryTronic technology to dry paint in a few seconds, instead of the hours taken by the conventional method. From the outset I invested in processes and solutions, without focusing only on products.

With that I developed the Symach Paint Process, to use it with DryTronic, which allows the flash off time to be skipped, reducing 50% of the paint and preparation time.

This is the reason why one painter and one preparation technician can produce more than double the cars compared with a painter and preparation technician that work in conventional booth or bay. Today, Symach has a comprehensive range of products to build a complete new bodyshop. It also has the knowledge to design new shops with a new process called FixLine.

Symach is working directly worldwide, without middlemen, to build complete new repair shops, either on greenfield or brownfield sites. We work with several teams of installers and trainers to support the customer from the actual installation through to the use of the machinery and new repair processes to optimise the efficiency and quality.

How would you describe the business to a potential new customer?

Symach doubles efficiency using the same number of painters and preparations technicians compared to a conventional bodyshop process. For example, in a conventional booth one painter can produce a maximum of four job cycles per day in an eight hour shift – with Symach one painter in one booth with a robot produces more than eight job cycles per day.

In a conventional bodyshop you need two preparation bays and two preparation technicians to prepare four cars per day. With Symach's system you need only one preparation bay and two preparation technicians to do eight jobs per day.

You have installations in various countries/regions around the world – what are the differences in repair cultures you encounter?

Symach is working in North America, Europe, Middle East and Australia. Repair is the same because damages, cars and consumables are the same everywhere in the world, therefore there is no technical difference; the only difference is the way technicians are paid between Europe and North America.

With the above in mind, what challenges and opportunities do you see globally within the collision repair sector?

The collision repair industry started to change probably no more than five years ago, when financial companies started consolidating big groups of bodyshops. The process of change is probably at 40-50% so I don't yet see the final picture, but the direction is clear. The consequences (good or bad) that this new era will have are not yet clear.

The utilisation of innovative technology is a major aspect of the Symach philosophy – how much further do you feel technology could enhance the repair process?

Very much. Symach is a company founded on innovation and technology – we are the only player in the world that in the last 20 years has introduced something new and different in the field. Symach has just approved a large project to invest in hiring six more mechanical engineers and more software to realise new products to change the way to repair cars in the collision field.

Lastly, you're an IBIS partner in 2018 – what do you aim to achieve from the partnership?

Symach is selling a completely new kind of collision shop with an innovative technology and for the future the purchase process will not be the same than buying a welding machine or a car lift, it will require a new kind of customer, so IBIS represents the connection point for contacting these new prospective customers.