

bodyshop

December 2017

bodyshopmag.com



IN THIS ISSUE

SUMMIT SPECIAL

Stephen Hawking speaks at WebSummit

MEDALS OF HONOUR

UK apprentices shine at WorldSkills

FOLLOW THAT DRIVER

Why the customer now controls the claim



Right first time, cybercrime, business expansion, insurance focus,
bodyshop profile, news, product reviews plus a lot more



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CONTENTS

NEWS

- 05 news
- 10 international news

TECH

- 13 the specialist
- 14 digital marketing

OPINIONS

- 16 insurers need to win at robot wars
- 20 summit special
- 26 right first time damage assessments
- 46 business bites

REPORTS

- 18 driving forwards
- 22 Skill Auto finds UK's best
- 24 medals of honour
- 34 a problem shared

FEATURES

- 28 When only the best will do
- 30 expansion: things to consider
- 32 follow that driver

PRODUCTS

- 37 products

MARKETPLACE

- 49 marketplace

charity of the year



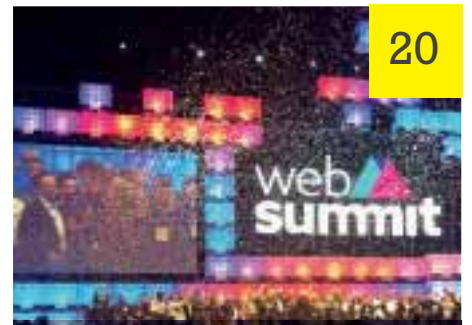
16



ROBOT WARS

Insurers are warned to embrace AI and robotics, or risk being overtaken by new players.

20



SUMMIT SPECIAL

Professor Stephen Hawking topped a star-studded bill of speakers in Portugal.

24



MEDALS OF HONOUR

We review the 44th edition of WorldSkills in Abu Dhabi, and hear from the UK's two medalists.

26



RIGHT FIRST TIME

Dave Shepherd explains why the estimating process is the first and most important domino, and how it is changing.

30



BUSINESS EXPANSION

Is more always merrier? We look at the key considerations to make before deciding whether to take the plunge.

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ED'S LETTER

As I write it's late November, the sun is shining and so far this 'winter' I can only remember a hint of seasonal weather.

No, this isn't me moving into meteorology but just another indicator that dependency on historic trends does not cut it anymore – and our industry is a perfect example.


At the recent WebSummit (see p20) BMW, Mercedes-Benz and VW were all explaining how they have, figuratively speaking, 'reinvented the wheel' when it comes to customer engagement, product delivery and service provision.

And the VMs aren't the only ones undergoing great transformation; we see it amongst the supply chain too – what were once very specific supply lines are becoming blurred with innovative new approaches to market.


All this movement can prove a challenge yet within it lies great opportunity, and there are plenty of businesses who view it as positive and are looking forward to very different, yet lucrative times.

What does 2018 have in store? I would guess a little more of the same... if not a lot more.

Merry Christmas everyone – enjoy the festive season.

 @mark_bodyshop

 mark-hadaway

 mark@bodyshopmag.com

WHAT'S TRENDING

1. Hat-trick for Fix Auto
2. AkzoNobel and L&I continue momentum
3. South Street celebrates prestige approval

Challenging perspectives

IBIS 2018 IS GERMANY-BOUND

After many successful years of delivering unbiased and world class content from across the globe, the IBIS Global Summit 2018 is heading for Munich, Germany. Directed at key industry players from every sector, the event, will encourage collaboration and idea sharing, offering a great platform for networking and relationship building.

Discounted tickets are available until 12 December 2017 at the early bird booking rate of £1,795.

Offering excellent value, this ticket will include two nights' accommodation at The Hilton, Munich Park; access to the Welcome Reception on 11 June; the full day conference, including lunch and refreshments; followed by the International Dinner on the evening of 12 June. The event will finish on 13 June, after a half day conference and an inclusive lunch. If that's not enough, you will also be sent a wealth of information for future reference, including presentations and audio links.

To take advantage of this rate, please contact Nicola at nicola@ibisworldwide.com or call 01296 642 826.

PAINT CALCULATION CHANGES EXPLAINED

Following industry 'noise and confusion' regarding the changes made to paint calculations, Audatex has issued a statement to clarify the updates.

David Shepherd, regional managing director, Audatex UKSA, said, 'In readiness for launching Audaenterprise gold 4.0 on 11 September 2017, we implemented updates to the paint calculation module within our software, which has led to changes in the calculation of the paint labour and material costs.

'This update was introduced following a database update from our third-party data partner, AZT Automotive GmbH. The latest updates to its paint calculation system reflect the material mix and paint procedures used in modern repair practices, whilst also taking into account new vehicle models, materials and methods. Audatex's paint calculation module now reflects the most up-to-date research in vehicle paint repair, as provided by AZT.'

DECEMBER 2017 | VOLUME 30 | NO. 12

COVER STORY

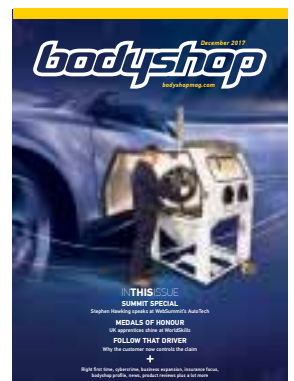
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FIX EXPANDS UK NETWORK

Fix Auto UK has announced another addition to its bodyshop network in Scotland with the launch of Fix Auto Fife.

The development has been made after Michael and Paul Paton, owners of Fix Auto Perth, bought RB Bruce Coachworks earlier in the autumn. They have since turned the 8,000sqft bodyshop into their second Fix Auto repair centre, which already holds vehicle manufacturer approvals for Vauxhall, Suzuki and Chevrolet and repairs up to 2,000 vehicles annually. Further investment plans are already underway.

Meanwhile, at the opposite end of the UK, Fix Auto Portsmouth owners Terry and Chris Clemens are investing £260,000 to develop a new site on the Isle of Wight. It's hoped that Fix Auto Fix & Go Isle of Wight, a 4,000sqft site, will be open by Christmas.

In addition, Fix Auto has added to its Welsh coverage by naming D Sims Crash Repair Centre as its latest franchisee. Five miles from Pontypridd, the 25,000sqft bodyshop includes five spraybooths and repairs more than 2,000 vehicles each year.



AUTORAISE HEARS RALLYING CALL

AutoRaise has announced that it is officially partnering with the REAL Rally and that registrations for the 2018 event are now open.

Next years' REAL Rally will head off from Worcester for a three-day tour of north Wales, taking an overnight stop at four-star hotels in Portmeirion and a second night in the historical town of Chester. An initiative of the Essex-based children's charity, REAL – the Ethan Rees Linwood Memorial Fund, in partnership with AutoRaise, the funds raised by the industry will support activities to directly address the skills shortage.



SIX OF THE BEST

Six new apprentices are ready to launch their new career with AW Repair Group.

In partnership with AutoRaise and Emtec Training, the youngsters – Harvey, Charlie, Jack, Ryan, Joshua and Leon – follow in the footsteps of Georgie, Kane and Joe who are now year two and three apprentices with AW Repair Group.

The 16-19 year olds will be training in a variety of panel, paint and MET roles as well as the new multi-skilled apprenticeship trailblazed by AutoRaise and now government approved.

Meanwhile, the group has also announced that prestige repair centre at Sleaford has been appointed to the BMW/MINI Approved Bodyshop Programme, making it the only fully compliant independent BMW and MINI approved repairer in Lincolnshire.



MAKING A MOVE

C&D Services (UK) Ltd has invested more than £1m in a new 12,000sqft repair facility in Basildon. The business is now fully operational with 17 vehicle manufacturer approvals, along with BS10125 accreditation.

Managing director Steve Willson started the business in 1998 in a 1,500sqft site. A number of site relocations followed as the business continued to grow, culminating in this seven-figure investment.

Steve said, 'I would like to say a huge thank you for all those that have helped make this happen. This is a very proud time for C&D Services UK Ltd.'

3
The number of new Fix Auto franchisees to join the network in November

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COLORVATION

GOVERNMENT BACKS EV REGULATION

A new clause is being added to the Automated and Electric Vehicles Bill which will require government to bring forward regulations for technicians working on these vehicles.

This will ensure they are properly trained, accredited and licensed to carry out repairs and maintenance.

The amendment follows evidence from the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI), which cited a 400% rise in the number of electric and hybrid vehicles in the last five years and pointed out the dangers of working on them without the proper training.

Steve Nash, chief executive at the IMI, said, 'The IMI's campaign, which is backed by businesses and experts across the sector, has been underpinned by a new research report that presents the case for regulation around the dangers of technicians repairing and maintaining automated and electric vehicles without sufficient training.'

GEMINI ACQUIRES DUDDINGSTON

Gemini has acquired Duddingston Coachworks in Scotland, which will now become Gemini Edinburgh. The new bodyshop will take the total number of Gemini sites to 20, with the new addition marking the group's first venture into Scotland.

David Sargeant, managing director of Gemini ARC, said, 'For us to expand into Scotland is exciting and it puts Gemini firmly on the map. We have even changed the Gemini logo to put in a flavour of Scotland.'

SOPP BOARDS AGL BANDWAGON

Activate Group Limited (AGL), the insurer solutions, fleet and risk management provider, has announced that Peterborough-based Sopp Parts is joining the group.

AGL is bringing together skilled service providers to support a growing nationwide customer base of clients in the vehicle fleet management and motor insurance sector. The purchase of a shareholding in Sopp Parts follows recent acquisitions of Car Repair Network, Sopp+Sopp and Vigilance, plus an investment in RVM Assist. Cleo Darler has been named as managing director for Sopp Parts.

Mark Woods, executive chairman at AGL said, 'This investment supports our strategic plan and I'm delighted to welcome Cleo to the group. Her in-depth knowledge of the fleet management sector means she is extremely well placed to understand the current and future needs of the Sopp Parts customer base.'

400%

The rise of EV and hybrid vehicles in the last five years

“

For us to expand into Scotland is exciting and it puts Gemini firmly on the map

IN BRIEF

Aviva plc has reached an agreement to acquire Irish insurer Friends First Life Assurance Company dac for a cash consideration of €130m.

Ben's vintage and classic vehicle tour of Ascot and Windsor Great Park raised over £6,000.

Autoglass Specials has become the exclusive provider for vehicle glass repair and replacement services to ground support equipment (GSE) supplier TCR UK.

Google's imminent Mobile First index will see websites ranked on the mobile version of their webpage, rather than the desktop version.

Used vehicle database Cazana.com has received investment totalling £1.75m to continue its rapid growth trajectory.

Mercedes-Benz has been recognised at this year's Princess Royal Training Awards for its dedication to training and skills development.

Covéa Insurance has become one of the first UK insurers to offer cyber cover as standard for its high net worth customers.

Chancellor Philip Hammond has allocated an extra £2.3bn for the research and development of new technologies in his Autumn Budget, with a further £540m supporting the growth of electric cars.

VW apprentice Rhys Hider from Summers Motors has passed his full welding assessment at the first attempt during his first year as an apprentice.

APPOINTMENTS

Mirka UK has named Steve Smith as national sales manager.

Ralf Maurer is the new managing director at PE Automotive GmbH & Co KG. He becomes chairman on 1 March.

Fix Auto UK has appointed Paul Siemonek as head of key accounts and Paul Smith as key account manager, while Simon Nash will oversee Fix Auto franchisees in the south east of England. Also, Fix Auto UK has appointed Michael McLaren to the newly created position of head of operations.

Domenico Mariconda has joined the FMG board as sales and marketing director.

The Warranty Group has named Damian Tyler as head of business development for its automotive division. David Robertson joins as business development director in Scotland and Northern Ireland, while Philip Nelson becomes business development director in northern England.

Cazana.com has appointed Rupert Pontin as director of valuations.

CitNOW has appointed Ollie Parsons as UK head of sales and client services.

NEW TRAILBLAZER STANDARDS IN PLACE BY 'FIRST QUARTER'

New single-skilled trailblazer apprenticeship standards in MET, panel and paint have been published by the Institute for Apprenticeships.

Each has been awarded an indicative £15k funding band and the first assessment plan, MET Technician, has been submitted to Ofqual, which the group is confident will accept the role of external quality assurance body. Due to review cycle timing, this means submission of the assessment plan to the IFA will be delayed until January and the development group will use this time to enhance the Panel and Paint assessment plans ready for submission in a similar timeframe.

The expectation is to have the standards and plans in place by late in the first quarter of 2018 allowing training providers to gear up for delivery in the fourth quarter. In the meantime, the existing apprenticeship standards continue to be used.

Tom Hudd, single discipline Trailblazer chair said, 'This success is a direct result of industry-wide collaboration while working with the various government agencies. From the early days when we met with the DFE at Westminster to gain approval to proceed to more recently working closely with our relationship manager to improve the drafts ready for publication, we have built positive relationships with all involved. This has been a long journey for all individuals involved in this trailblazer group and I thank them all for their efforts in this regard.'



REVIVE'S SUCCESSFUL SOLENT CROSSING

Revive! has opened its first site on the Isle of Wight. Managed by Ryde local Josh Willis, the business opened in September and is experiencing high levels of demand.

Josh said, 'Nobody was offering a full, professional, mobile service [on the island]. Revive! is very popular on the mainland, and together with my business partner Keith Betteley we saw the opportunity to set up Revive! Isle of Wight here. We are already working with several of the main dealerships and the diary is almost fully booked.'

Mark Llewellyn, managing director of Revive!, said 'We are continually looking to expand the Revive! network so we can provide the highest level of service to our customers. We have been wanting to have a presence on the Isle of Wight for some time, but were prepared to wait until we found the right franchisee. In Keith and Josh, we have the perfect match of business acumen and ambition.'

The All New Civic

Under The Skin

HONDA
The Power of Dreams

In May 2017 the Honda Approved Bodyshop Network embarked on a journey; a journey of knowledge, training and understanding of the new 10th generation Honda Civic.

The training provided them with the knowledge and understanding of the new body structure and the technical ability required to repair the vehicle correctly. To bring the training to life we, in association with our Bodyshop Training Partner ITAS, developed a three dimensional model, where all the body parts are colour coded according to the tensile strength of the steel. The bodyshell has also been designed so that the technicians can remove and refit the outer panels thereby enabling them to gain a better understanding of the internal structure of the bodyshell and parts that cannot be viewed until the outer panels are removed.

Training the network was the first step within the process; the second was how to

impart this information to our customers and stress the importance of bringing their vehicle back to the Honda Network, thus ensuring their vehicle is repaired correctly following an accident.

The route we have chosen is digital film which, we believe is one of the strongest forms of media available. Therefore, we have developed a short film focusing on the advanced technology within the New Honda Civic, and why it is important for them to bring their Honda back to an approved Honda facility.

The film poses two key questions:

- What makes the New Civic special?
- Why go to a Honda Approved Bodyshop?





TESLA TRUCK'S SURPRISE PACKAGE

“

Driving a gasoline sports car is going to feel like a steam engine with a side of quiche

Tesla is aiming to break boundaries again with two new products – its first electric articulated lorry and a new Roadster that will be ‘the fastest production car ever made’.

With a range of 500 miles and able to achieve 0-60mph in 20 seconds when pulling 36,287kgs (80,000lbs), the Tesla truck will go into production in 2019. Range will be 400 miles after 30 minutes of charging at one of Tesla’s new mega-chargers.

Chief executive Elon Musk claimed that if driven in convoy, these trucks would be cheaper than shipping goods by rail.

The Tesla boss then stunned guests by also unveiling a new Roadster, which was driven out of the back of the Tesla truck. Able to hit speeds of 0-100mph in 4.2 seconds with a range of more than 600 miles, the Roadster will be ‘the fastest production car ever made.’

Elon Musk added, ‘The point of doing this is just to give a hardcore smackdown to gasoline cars. Driving a gasoline sports car is going to feel like a steam engine with a side of quiche.’

Meanwhile, Tesla has pushed back targets for its new Model 3 car after admitting it is months behind schedule. It now says it will reach its production target of 5,000 cars a week by early 2018 and not December.

UBER INVESTMENT

£7.6bn

The amount of extra funding secured by Uber

Uber is understood to be on the cusp of agreeing a multi-billion pound investment to fuel expansion and further investments in technology – which could include flying cars.

The reported £7.6bn investment comes via a consortium led by Japanese conglomerate Softbank and San Francisco group Dragoneer. It is claimed the deal could lead to a corporate restructure and see a share listing by 2019.

The news was followed shortly afterwards by the announcement by Uber CPO, Jeff Holden, that UberAir has partnered with NASA to develop software that could result in flying taxis in Los Angeles by 2020.

But it’s not all good news. Uber has admitting concealing a data hack that affected 57 million drivers and users for a year, and paying the two hackers £75,000 each to delete the personal data they’d attained.

AUTONOMOUS TIMELINE SET

Chinese internet giants Baidu has said it will release level three autonomous vehicles for the mass market by 2019.

It already has a tech partnership with NVIDIA, and is now partnering Chinese automaker BAIC to deliver the cars, with level four autonomous vehicles expected to be released around 2021.

Baidu has outlined a roadmap for its line of self-driving cars with scheduled goals: by the end of 2018, BAIC’s self-branded vehicles will carry Baidu’s Apollo connectivity features along with the internet giant’s DuerOS voice assistant, with plans to produce one million of those cars by the next year. Both companies also collaborate on a cloud-based ecosystem of products and services like crowd-sourced traffic.



PAINT PARTNERS?

Nippon Paint Holdings Co Ltd has made an all-cash offer to acquire US coatings company Axalta.

Nippon Paint confirmed it has made ‘a proposal’ to Axalta but declined to give details, adding there is no assurance the two will reach any agreement.

The move comes as talks between AkzoNobel and Axalta came to an end over a potential merger without agreement. The two had been in ‘constructive discussions’ since the end of October over a ‘merger of equals’ but were unable to reach terms.

Nippon Paint, is Japan’s biggest paint supplier and 39% owned by Singapore-based investment company Wuthelam Holdings Ltd.

Meanwhile, AkzoNobel continues to focus on its strategy of accelerating sustainable growth and profitability through the creation of two focused, high-performing businesses and remains committed to its 2020 financial guidance.

The separation of the AkzoNobel Specialty Chemicals business and return of the vast majority of the net proceeds to shareholders remain on track.



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PREVENTING ANY CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

As the end of the year approaches, excitement in the workplace can begin to build as the countdown begins to Christmas festivities. However, these events can and have been known to cause legal issues for companies, who have been held responsible for the misbehaviour of staff. Here, we seek the advice of an expert.

Tina Chander, employment lawyer at leading UK law firm Wright Hassall warns, 'No-one likes to play the Grinch, but not taking necessary precautions to prevent problems occurring can land businesses in hot water later down the line.'

She suggests that from an employment law perspective, just because the staff party takes place away from the premises and outside of normal hours, there is still the risk of being held accountable for the behaviour of staff.

Alcohol

Tina said, 'These alcohol-fuelled events can create a range of issues, mostly relating to harassment or discrimination claims, with individuals behaving in a way they would never dream of when sober.'

'Sexual harassment is usually the most common problem at one of these parties, but instances of discrimination on the grounds of age, race or sexual orientation have been known to occur too – I'm sure we can imagine the unsavoury scenario.'

'When large amounts of alcohol are consumed, emotions can run high, and this can sometimes cause existing workplace tensions to boil over, resulting in a physical or verbal altercation between members of staff.'

'Such behaviour could lead to claims for potentially unlimited compensation against both the employer and the employee responsible. The time and effort required by management in dealing with any grievance and/or disciplinary issues arising from any such incident, should also not be forgotten.'

Christmas gifts: choose wisely...

Given the inevitable gifts and invitations to other organisations' Christmas festivities it is important for employers to be mindful of their potential liability under the Bribery Act 2010, as failing to prevent bribery in the workplace is strict liability.

Tina suggests liability arises from both offering and receiving bribes. 'Reasonable gifts and hospitality, such as a bottle of wine or an invitation to dinner should not raise too much concern,' said Tina, 'but if employees are whisked away on a private jet, sipping champagne to meet Father Christmas in Lapland, questions may need to be asked.'

Finally...

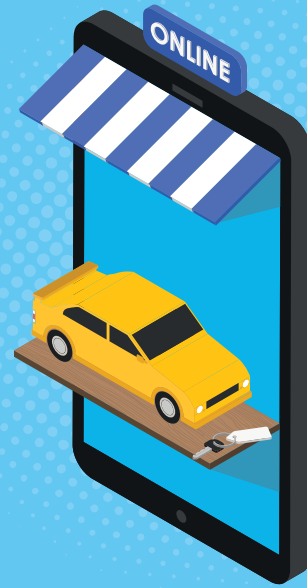
And when it comes to planning the work Christmas party, it is important for organisers to exercise caution when deciding upon a free bar. Offering staff limitless amounts of alcohol can increase the likelihood of serious issues occurring and could potentially threaten the reputation of the organisation.

'Although a free bar may seem like a good festive gesture, and perhaps the key to an unforgettable party,' Tina said, 'abusing the availability of free alcohol can create serious legal issues that make it unforgettable for all the wrong reasons.'

To lessen the risk of party-related issues occurring, Tina suggests employers should firstly recognise the potential for problems and then take the following steps:

- Everyone must be invited, regardless of whether they are ill or on leave – not inviting certain individuals could result in claims of discrimination;
- When employees can bring partners, do not discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation and assume all partners will be of the opposite sex;
- Ensure that you have an equal opportunities/anti-harassment policy in place;
- Remind workers before the party that the same code of conduct applies, and that any instances of harassment, discrimination or violence will not be tolerated under any circumstances;
- Remind them that inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated and could result in disciplinary action;
- If hired entertainers tell racist, sexist or offensive jokes and the employer does not fulfil its duty to protect employees from this unwanted conduct, it could be liable for harassment claims;
- Consider limiting the bar tab. Providing limitless amounts of alcohol to employees, without monitoring who is drinking what is irresponsible, and can increase the likelihood of a serious issue occurring;
- Consider appointing a senior, responsible employee to stay sober, monitor behaviour and step in if necessary.

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF DIGITAL TRENDS



With the UK's car market witnessing a slight downturn in 2017, technology playing an ever increasing role and the unveiling of plans to ban the sale of both diesel and petrol cars and vans by 2040, the industry is unquestionably facing a major shake-up. So how can businesses begin to secure the foundations for a strong digital presence in an ever-shifting landscape?

A new white paper from Mediaworks called *Driving Digital: the Digital Forecast*, has outlined the key digital trends impacting the automotive industry now and in the future.

It revealed that 46% of potential car buyers use their smartphones during the purchasing process, with 71% of digital interactions taking place on the platform. If you are neglecting your brand's mobile presence, you're essentially limiting how visible your brand is.

Google has announced the imminent launch of its new Mobile First algorithm, which will see websites ranked on the mobile version of their webpage, rather than the desktop version. If your website is not mobile friendly, your bodyshop could potentially fall off the Google radar.

The paper also found that almost all (97%) car buyers research potential vehicles online before even visiting a dealership. Put this in the context of a bodyshop and the same rules apply. It's important that your brand creates the type of content people are looking for in the correct format. Despite work providers typically directing a large segment of work to bodyshops, there is a great chance that the customer will look online first. Due to this, it is important to ensure that you have useful content about your business available online.

Businesses can further establish what potential buyers are searching for through keyword research and create in-depth content based on this. Experiment with alternative formats – YouTube influences 69% of car buyers. Why would it not do the same for your business? Trust is the name of the game after all.

The popularity of YouTube adds further support to the value of video as being an essential part of the car buying process. Research by CitNOW has found that using video can extend the reach of a dealership by up to 65%, with 80% of customers finding visual demos helpful.

In terms of creating effective content marketing, which prioritises awareness, personalised campaign videos have become increasingly popular. Expected to account for half of social media spend in the UK by 2018, it comes as no surprise that 61% of businesses currently use video as a marketing tool.

Further content marketing initiatives that have proven successful include infographics, blog posts and white papers. It is important to remember that when it comes to content marketing, it is less about the sale and more about the story. Due to this, businesses should aim to create engaging, personable and shareable content that the consumers will find interesting. Think: is talking about an accident of interest to people or would they like to know more about the story behind your business? Make it personal.

The paper also found that when researching a car purchase, customers consider 14 brands initially, before whittling them down to six. The same 'decision making' process applies for anyone researching online – be sure you stand out for the right reasons.

Not surprisingly in this age of peer-to-peer, 84% of people trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation. It takes under 10 reviews for 90% of customers to form a negative opinion, so if your brand has poor online coverage, it could hinder success.

Online reputation management can help. Monitor the conversation around your brand online, and create social accounts to respond to any issues customers may have. Promote positive content about your brand to counter negative sentiment.

Not only does social media allow for rapid responses to consumers, but it is also imperative in creating a personable dialogue behind brands, which ultimately serves as a central platform to communicate videos and other forms of digital content.

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INSURERS NEED TO WIN THE GAME OF ROBOT WARS

The Future of General Insurance 2017 was held in London at the start of November, when innovation was the key theme – and particularly the role that AI and robotics will play going forward. *bodyshop* magazine went along to find out more.



A rising chorus of voices is warning against the doomsday threat posed by artificial intelligence (AI). Great minds from Professor Stephen Hawking to Elon Musk all believe that, if mishandled, AI and robotics could spell the end for humanity.

For insurers, though, the potential benefits of this technology are myriad and simply too persuasive to ignore. Moreover, their customers are increasingly migrating to automation – 65% of all internet communication now involves bots in some way – meaning they simply can't afford not to follow suit.

And not just their customers. Competitors, too, from outside industries, are muscling in on the insurance patch and if insurers don't use the data now available to better understand their customers, and to mould their services to suit what they want rather than what insurers want to offer, then they will be replaced. A growing number of auto manufacturers now offer car insurance, John Lewis provides household cover, and how long until Amazon follows suit now it's developed a keyless home entry solution? Once the likes of Amazon, Facebook and Google take an interest in a particular sector, the threat to those already in that space becomes, overnight, clear and present.

'The people with the cleverest robots will win,' said Stephanie Smith, chief operating officer at Allianz. 'If the traditional insurance world doesn't take hold of this technology it will get gobbled up.'

But what exactly does taking hold of the technology mean, and where, specifically, should insurers hope to reap the rewards? Stephanie believes the three key benefits on the table are reducing business risk by more informed underwriting, reducing cost, and



The people with the cleverest robots will win. If the traditional insurance world doesn't take hold of this technology it will get gobbled up.

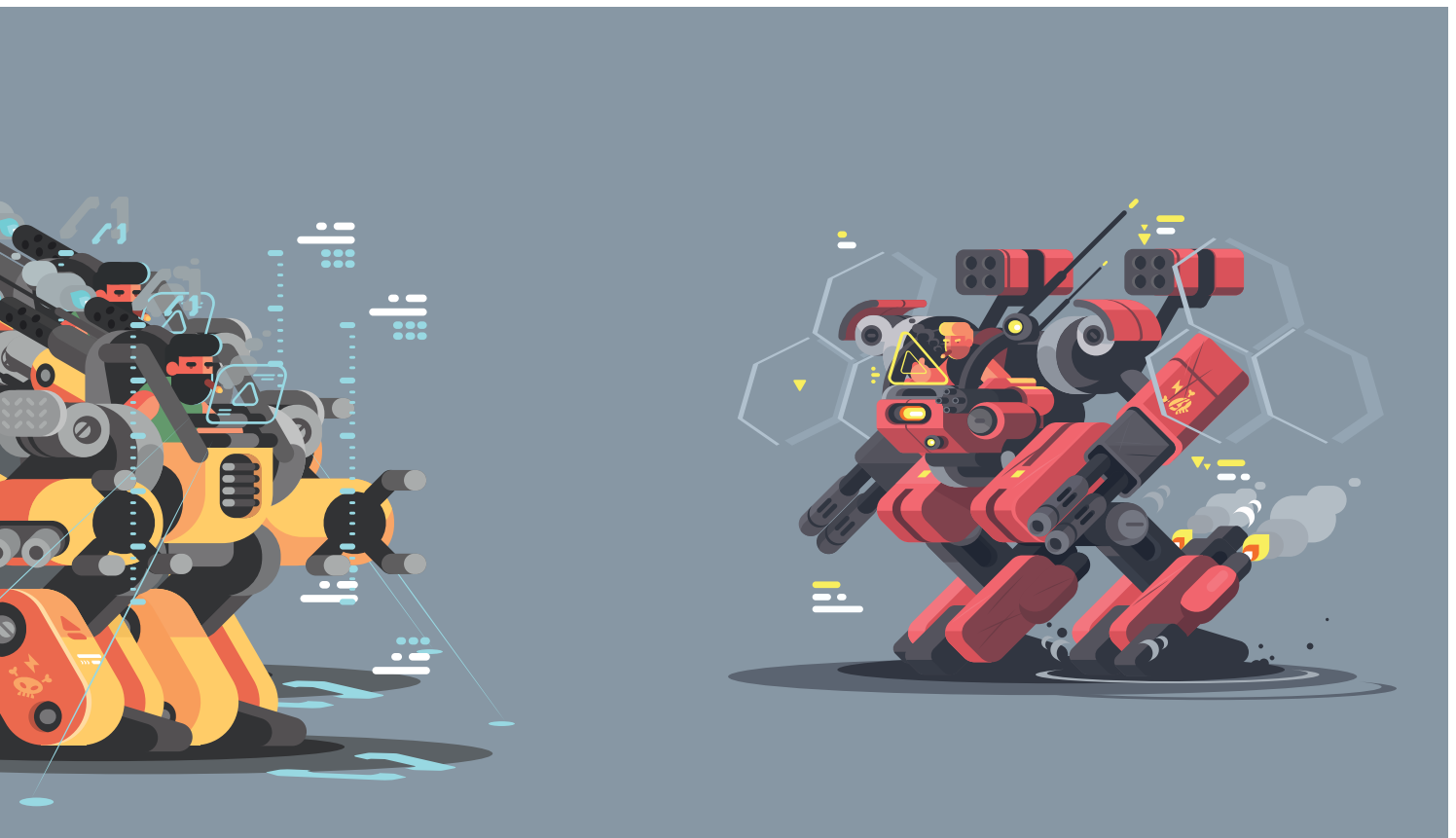
speeding up processes. All three are attainable by gathering, interpreting and acting on the vast swathes of data now being generated. But, she insists, you need robotics to do that.

She said, 'It will require initial investment, but the business case really is quite compelling. However, before you invest, you need to have a clear idea what you want from robotics.'

Meanwhile, in this world where the customer holds sway, insurers can – and must – use the technology to change their relationships with their clients. According to Adam Beckett, product and proposition director at Aviva, insurers need to reinvent themselves. No longer can they afford to be regarded only as the company that fixes things when they go wrong. Instead, they need to be service-oriented, with services tailored to prevention instead of cure.

He believes there are three end-goals insurers must remember: reactive to proactive; fix to prevent; low engagement to high utility. He urges insurers to be proactive and try to generate a relationship with their customers rather than simply waiting for their customers to contact them. He says the industry can do this by introducing a range of services which will make their customers' lives easier, while minimising the risk of things going wrong. Doing this successfully, he continued, would increase the engagement points and move the insurer from a negative to a positive in the mind of the customer.

Adam said, 'What does the customer want? To avoid hassle and disruption. We need to move from simply fixing things when they go wrong, to helping them run their homes and cars more effectively to prevent things going wrong in the first place. We must create



regular, intimate moments with customers that are not intrusive, but useful to them and not always to do with a claim. Introducing this gives customers more reasons to engage with us regularly, and we've seen customers deepen their level of service with us as a result.'

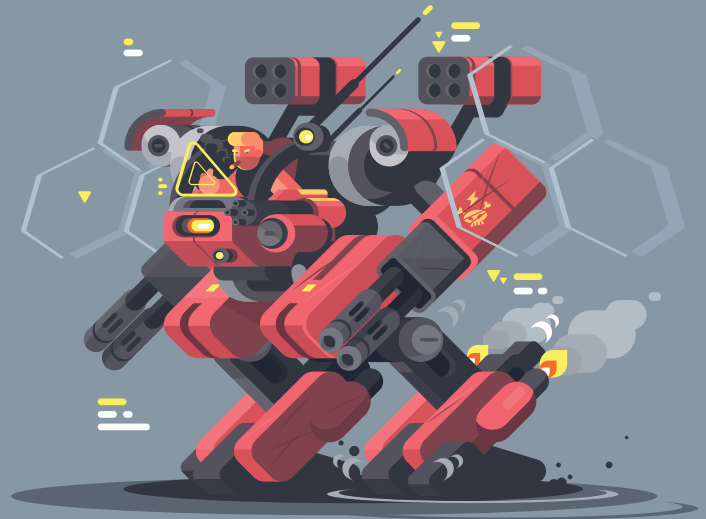
Installing sensors in the home and notifying the customer before a drip becomes a leak is just one simple solution.

There could, Adam continued, be another benefit to this new relationship between insurer and customer. He admitted that the insurance industry is among the least trusted industries out there, but believes that could change if they positioned themselves in a more positive space of the customer's life.

However, the Internet of Things (IoT) is double-edged sword and brings a range of new risk. Those monumental – and legitimate – worries of Professor Stephen Hawking and Elon Musk might be too broad for insurers to face down on their own, but they have other issues to contend with. Clare Lunn, director of fraud, LV=, warned that the IoT creates a number of new doors through which fraudsters can infiltrate a process. She points out that with three billion people in the world already connected, and 90% of the UK population, the scale of the threat should not be underestimated.

She said, 'People say we won't be talking about fraud in three years. That's very optimistic. I don't think fraudsters go away. I think they evolve, and often quicker than us.'

Clare pointed to ATMs, identity threat, account takeover, source coding, and false documentation as emerging and significant opportunities for fraudsters,



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The IoT is moving insurance from fixing to prevention; that's where we need to go with fraud too

with insurers particularly vulnerable at the point of quote, sale and claim.

She said, 'The IoT is moving insurance from fixing to prevention; that's where we need to go with fraud too. We need to look at frontline tools we're using and ask if we're doing enough to prevent fraudsters coming onto our books in the first place. There are tools available. Also, do we have the skills necessary in our industry? Do we have cyber specialists? If not, we need to get them, or partner with companies that do have them.'

Clare added that by astute use of the IoT, and accurate interpretation of its data, insurers would also be able to gain a clear picture of the customer and therefore be better able to spot fraudulent actions.

Going beyond daily risk, however, Kathleen Sullivan, vice president, head of insurance, IBM UK & Ireland, believes the sector is actually facing more profound threats than it realises. She agrees that trust is fundamental to the future of insurance, but fears trust could be a casualty of AI and robotics, if it comes with increasing cases of fraud. No one wants to be the company in the headlines following an incident of cybercrime, but she says it's trust in the entire industry that is eroded by these bad news stories.

'It's an existential threat,' she said. 'It's not a threat to an individual company, but to the industry as a whole. So insurers should be more prepared for IoT than any other industry.'

In many ways, this emergent technology – or has it emerged? – harks back to the creation of the internet, and faces the same conundrum. It can be anything, both a force for good and a force for evil, and only how we use it will decide that.



REPORT FIX AUTO UK CONFERENCE

DRIVING FORWARD

Athletics, marketing, pizza and The Stig might not spring to mind when talking about the vehicle accident repair industry but they all had significant influence in making this year's Fix Auto UK Conference a success. Mark Hadaway was one of more than 300 delegates from as far afield as China in attendance to witness it all.

A record-number of franchisees, guests from leading insurance companies and suppliers took part in Fix Auto UK's Conference 2017 held at the Hilton St George's Park hotel. With the theme 'Driving Forward' the event included a line-up of inspiring presentations from top influencers from within the sector as well as those not typically associated with the trade.

The event – moderated by the original BBC *Top Gear* 'Stig' Perry McCarthy – began with a brief introduction from Bob Kirstiuk, owner of Fix Auto UK who spoke of the dramatic growth of Fix Auto World which is now present in nine countries. 'When we first started out as Fix Auto UK 12 years ago I remember Jean Delisle telling me: 'This business is simple – you need the right people and consistency across the business.' We now have that,' said Bob. 'We are all entrepreneurs and the magic happens when we all work together to continue to improve and share best practice.'

Head of Fix Auto UK, Ian Pugh then took to the stage to announce 24 consecutive quarters of growth for the business, and predicted the network would deliver £250m worth of repair work to its franchisees within the next three years.

'I view our continued growth as one of solidity and permanence,' said Ian, 'While I attribute our continued success to our core values of honesty and integrity, let's make no mistake, it has been achieved by the tremendous hard work, dedication and determination of every Fix Auto UK family member.'

He continued by highlighting the numerous initiatives accomplished over the past 12 months and others underway which include continued development of its

digital strategy; the emergence of new relationships; new training developments; personnel appointments; and trials involving artificial intelligence. 'The most pressing challenge for our franchisees at present,' said Ian, 'is compliance with the pending GDPR rules. This area of business is only going to get more involved and our job is to ensure we provide the expertise and support to our network.'

Insight

Motor claims consultant Ian Guest provided delegates with a fascinating insight into the world of insurance highlighting how a combination of rising claims costs, regulation, and major technological disruptions are forcing insurers to rethink their claims strategies.

'The old days of annual insurance policies is starting to fade,' Ian told delegates as he referenced the InsurTech companies such as teambrella and Lemonade. However, he also suggested the big insurers were 'fighting back' with a number of tech start-up investments of their own. 'Digital as a strategy is happening now within the sector – this is real and will only continue to multiply in the future,' said Ian.

David Lingham, head of business at Fix Auto World, said the business now encompassed 560 collision shops in nine countries with further growth imminent. 'I anticipate we will be present within 12 countries by the end of Q2 2018,' he said, listing Ireland, New Zealand, Portugal and Spain as current targets. Referring to the purchase of Novus Glass earlier this year, David suggested his role had been 'complicated' as the challenge was now to 'find trusted master franchise partners who could cater for two brands.'

£4,665

raised for industry charity **AutoRaise**



David continued, 'At the moment Novus is not in the UK but could it fit here in the future? On the flip side of this, Novus has a fantastic network at present in New Zealand but no Fix Auto. Driving together with dual brands is key.'

David then stated that by October 2018, Fix Auto would have a presence in 15 countries with another seven 'ready to go'.

Proliferation

Chicago-based industry expert Sean Carey provided a detailed analysis of the proliferation of connected cars, the emergence of autonomous vehicles, and their likely effect on damage severity and accident rates.

'We are way past ADAS,' Sean told delegates citing how the industry is already at level three on the autonomous drive continuum. 'There's a storm brewing and we need the OEMs – they are perfectly positioned for the future and with a significantly greater stakeholder interest in this business than the models we currently see.'

With that he also suggested repairers should not be afraid of the paradigm shift within the industry as 'those who come through will do very well'.

Beyond the industry contributions, the icing on the cake at the Fix Auto UK conference was hearing from inspirational characters from the worlds of athletics, marketing and pizza.

Olympic medallist and relay champion Kriss Akabusi MBE provided an incredibly passionate, animated and rousing motivational presentation. The 1991 World Champion spoke first-hand about how teamwork

succeeds against all the odds – 'there will be moments when you need help to get across the line'; encouraged the audience to look to millennials for alternative perspectives – 'you need young people to challenge your thinking; and advised everyone to 'dream big'.

Experience

Branding expert Alex Hunter – who oversaw Sir Richard Branson's personal digital strategy along with the Virgin Group's global policy – provided a thought-provoking and colourful insight into delivering a tailored customer experience. He called this the 'Wow!' factor and he discussed the direct success that it generates in terms of customer loyalty. 'It's the small stuff that counts,' Alex explained, 'move from a transaction mentality to a relationship mindset. Unlock opportunities of customer delight by creating the magic and maintaining the illusion.'

Picking up on this theme, David Wild, CEO of Domino's Pizza Group, provided the background behind how the UK's largest pizza franchise has used consumer insight and digital strategies to grow its annual revenues beyond £1bn. Offering some simple customer insights, David suggested convenience is key, the customer should be in control, and be 'top of the mind'. He added, 'Do not resist change – the best way to win in business is by accelerating the change.'

Reflecting on the success of the conference, Ian Pugh said, 'From the feedback we have received, we have achieved our objective of delivering another inspiring and industry-leading conference. Thanks to our speakers, sponsors and guests, we were again able to deliver an event we are truly proud of.'

Fix Auto UK 2017

Awards:

Outstanding Customer Service Award 2017
Fix Auto Penzance

Fix Auto Bodyshop of the Year 2017
Fix Auto Kettering

Fix Auto Region of the Year
Region 1

Outstanding Contribution from a Fix Auto Team Member 2017
Tom Hadfield & Gary Churcher

Fix Auto Online Learning Award 2017
Fix Auto Blackpool & Fylde

Fix Auto Allianz Insurance Bodyshop of the Year 2017
Fix Auto Sutton-in-Ashfield

Fix Auto Covéa Insurance Most Improved Bodyshop of the Year 2017
Fix Auto Edinburgh West

Fix Auto Co-op Insurance Bodyshop of the Year
Fix Auto Petersfield

Fix Auto AXA Insurance Bodyshop of the Year
Fix Auto Luton

Fix Auto LV= Insurance Fix Auto Bodyshop of the Year
Fix Auto Luton

REPORT WEBSUMMIT

SUMMIT SPECIAL

Labelled as the world's leading technology conference, WebSummit's AutoTech focused on autonomous vehicles, connected cars and the Internet of Things. *bodyshop* was on hand to bring you all the latest.

Opening night

Keynote speaker for the occasion, Professor Stephen Hawking, spoke of a 'precarious but exciting' future.

Hawking said, 'We cannot predict what we might achieve, when our own minds are amplified by AI. Perhaps with the tools of this new technological revolution, we will be able to undo some of the damage done to the natural world by industrialisation. We will aim to finally eradicate disease and poverty. Every aspect of our lives will be transformed.'

Despite his optimism, he urged caution in the development and use of AI. Hawking said, 'We must ensure AI does what we want to benefit humanity. We stand on the threshold of a brave new world.'

Also speaking during the opening ceremony was Margrethe Vestager, European Commissioner for Competition, European Commission. In her address, Vestager made the case for European competition law, arguing that market monopolisation stifles innovation. 'Competition-law enforcement can help to show that no company is above the law,' she said. 'No company has the right to close down competition or disable the innovation of each and every one of you.'

She continued, 'Companies have to put fairness and trust at the core of their business to ensure society (is) served by technology and not the other way around.'

One supercomputer to rule the roads

Opening the AutoTech conference programme, Martin Hofmann, group CIO, Volkswagen spoke of a super computer that would not only allow cars to talk to each other but to infrastructure and signals, coordinating the transportation clutter and virtually eliminating traffic. This, explained Martin, was the aim of pioneering work VW was doing in quantum computing.

Martin highlighted how in March this year, through a



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We cannot predict what we might achieve, when our own minds are amplified by AI. Every aspect of our lives will be transformed

combination of 'brute force (super computers) and intelligence', VW became the first company to use a quantum computer, out of Canada, to solve a traffic jam in Beijing before it even happened.

He announced a major partnership with Google to develop quantum computing and machine learning capabilities. 'It's highly experimental but we have the first algorithms on the way. With quantum computing we are also looking at enterprise applications in supply chain management systems using a quantum machine to optimise supply chain – for planning services but also for material science to simulate battery development.'

Autonomous driving and handling the handover

Zach Barasz, partner at BMW i-Ventures told delegates the business was investing in great tech companies that are 're-imagining transport mobility manufacturing'. 'When it comes to autonomous vehicles we are looking at everything from the full stat company building autonomous shuttles to those who make sensors. We're also looking at big data companies and others outside of the autonomous vehicle sector.'

Karen Francis, board director at Nauto – a retro fit safety device video tool that uses AI to prevent distracted driving and coach drivers to be better – described how technology and humans need to interact in order for the technology to flourish. 'We must marry the psychology with the technology,' said Karen.

Zach suggested autonomous vehicles will make their way to market in the form of fleets first. 'People won't own these vehicles initially. They may first experience it through a mobility solutions provider and those people are focused on cost – electric mobility being critical to this.'

Hack your way to a self-driving car

George Hotz, a notorious hacker, and the founder of



comma.ai revealed his plans to take on the auto industry giants in the autonomous driving game.

Showcasing his aftermarket hardware and software – Openpilot – which can effectively provide certain vehicles with self-driving characteristics, George said, ‘The reason car manufacturers are going to lose and we are going to win is because they do not update or understand software.’

He continued, ‘In fact the car companies who are the furthest advanced today and think they have the best shot at autonomy will lose the hardest. Why is that? Because the phone companies who were furthest along in 2006 – Nokia and Blackberry – are dead.’

‘My prediction now is watch as Kia and Hyundai embrace the future and ship Openpilot or similar systems on their cars.’

Beyond cars: Daimler's digital revolution

Sabine Scheunert, chief digital officer, Daimler offered WebSummit attendees a world premiere by introducing its first chatbot – Ask Mercedes – a cognitive assistant.

‘We work in one of the most rapidly changing and challenging environments – new competitors, new technologies and new consumer behaviours,’ Sabine told the audience.

‘Building the best cars is not enough anymore – customers want the best product and are expecting that we deliver technological products and mobility solutions that fit their lives.’ She explained how, since 2016, Mercedes Benz has created an ‘intuitive digital ecosystem’ within its Mercedes Me app. ‘It has allowed us to truly enhance the customer experience. Today we can be in daily contact with our customers.’

Sabine closed her session, stating: ‘The car industry is currently undergoing one of the biggest transformation processes ever – let’s shape our digital future together.’

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Our ultimate aim is to bring self-driving technology to more cities in the US and around the world. Fully self-driving cars are here

A new way forward for self-driving cars

Taking to the centre stage, John Krafcik, CEO of Waymo revealed how Waymo was now testing on public roads, fully self-driving cars without a human driver able to ‘takeover’. ‘It’s not happening in 2020, it’s happening today,’ said John whilst showing a video of the vehicles in action. ‘What you are seeing now is the start of a new phase for Waymo and for the history of this technology.’

He explained how the vehicles were currently being tested in a part of Phoenix, Arizona and that over time it will expand the tests to cover the entire Phoenix region (an area much larger than Greater London).

‘Our ultimate aim to bring self-driving technology to more cities in the US and around the world. Fully self-driving cars are here,’ said John. He stated that within the next few months, members of the public will get to experience Waymo’s fully self-driving rides via its early rider programme.

Uber reveals flying ambition

Uber’s CPO, Jeff Holden revealed the ride sharing service UberAir has partnered with NASA and is set to take to the Los Angeles skies in 2020.

Speaking at WebSummit and providing a world exclusive visualisation of the UberAir experience, Jeff announced UberAir has signed a partnership with NASA to work on an air space agreement in order to accelerate its development.

The company also revealed its first LA Skyport – UberAir’s landing stations – partner as Sandstone which has earmarked 20 sites for development.

‘Uber is on earth to radically improve urban mobility,’ Jeff told attendees. ‘Every major innovation requires someone to step in and lead the charge, and that is us. We are partnering with the right people via the Uber Elevator Network to crack the urban air mobility code.’



REPORTSKILLAUTO

SKILL AUTO FINDS UK'S BEST

Cillian John Campbell and Conor Mckevitt, both students of Riverpark Training in Northern Ireland, took gold in the automotive body repair and automotive refinishing categories at Skill Auto – WorldSkills UK.



The UK's most talented young tradeswomen and men and skilled professionals were crowned the nation's number one at the climax of The Skills Show at the NEC which saw some 80,000 visitors over its three days.

The IMI Skill Auto competition is for students and apprentices currently studying an automotive qualification. The top apprentices from Automotive Body Repair and Automotive Refinishing are all set a series of tasks to demonstrate their talent.

In the Automotive Body Repair competition, Cillian John Campbell of Riverpark Training, Northern Ireland (*above right*) took the top honours with Scott Patterson, also of Riverpark Training, claiming silver whilst Michael Kilner, Chesterfield College secured the bronze.

In the Automotive Refinishing category, gold went to Riverpark Training's Conor Mckevitt, with Callum Green of Gateshead College in second and Dylan Russell of North West Regional College, Northern Ireland in third spot.

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We saw an incredible performance from all of our automotive competitors. Each and every one of them rose to the challenge

Davie Massie, IMI Skill Auto competition manager, said, 'We saw an incredible performance from all of our automotive competitors. Each and every one of them rose to the challenge to set themselves apart, and it makes me extremely proud to see them on stage to be recognised for their talents.'

Dr Neil Bentley, CEO of WorldSkills UK said, 'This has been a wonderful showcase for UK skills. The competition was fierce and the standards very high – all the finalists have done brilliantly well just to get this far. All their hard work and dedication has been rewarded and we at WorldSkills UK salute you.'

Minister for skills, Anne Milton MP, who attended the event with several other Cabinet colleagues said, 'WorldSkills UK is without doubt one of the most important organisations within my portfolio. Skills have never been higher on the government agenda.'

Almost 500 young apprentices, exponents of 55 disciplines took part in the National Finals.



REPORTWORLDSKILLS

MEDALS OF HONOUR

Two stars of the UK accident repair sector shone bright in Abu Dhabi recently, securing silver and bronze at the 44th edition of the WorldSkills competition.

In the car painting competition, Daryl Head, paint technician from Nationwide Crash Repair Centre Swindon and trained by Thatcham Research took silver and in the autobody repair competition, Andrew Gault, student of Riverpark Training and employee at Glenn Allen Accident Repairs took bronze.

The two were part of Team UK which retained its top-10 position at WorldSkills, after competitors bagged one gold, three silvers, three bronzes, and 13 medallions of excellence in Abu Dhabi. The competition took place from 15-18 October.

It was the first time the event had taken place in Abu Dhabi which saw 1,300 young people from 59 WorldSkills Member countries and regions showcase their talent across 51 skills competitions. China led the medal table with 15 gold medals, seven silvers and eight bronzes. Korea came second on medal points with eight golds, eight silvers, and eight bronzes. Switzerland was third on points, winning 11 golds, six silvers, and three bronze. The hosts, the United Arab Emirates, won three Medallions for Excellence.

Car painting

Under the supervision of car painting expert, Richard Wheeler, lecturer at Coleg Gwent, Daryl secured silver in the car painting competition which saw him tasked with repairing a damaged vehicle panel and producing a 'perfect finish' by matching colours, shades and effects – all of which was done under the close scrutiny of judges marking competitors on a number of performance measures. Competitors were required to demonstrate

professional competence in: bringing bodywork back into shape with filling and sanding; application of filler and primer; matching the colour, shade and texture of the adjoining panels; and refinish of the vehicle under timed conditions.

Daryl's journey began in 2012 when he started his apprenticeship at Nationwide just days after leaving school. He was scouted to join Team UK at the NEC during the Skills Show in 2015, and since then it has been full steam ahead preparing him for the competition in Abu Dhabi. Daryl has gained valuable experience in competitions held in Denmark and Northern Ireland over the past two years, whilst being supported by Nationwide.

Nationwide CEO, Michael Wilmshurst, said, 'Daryl is the embodiment of one of our company values 'to always strive for continuous improvement'. This is an incredible achievement for him, he has worked extremely hard and is very deserving of his medal. He has a very bright future at Nationwide and we look forward to supporting his career development. From myself and the team at Nationwide, congratulations Daryl.'

Car painting competitors, were also competing for another award which was created by Glasurit and 3M – the first ever WorldSkills Sustainability award.

This award measured how efficient the competitors worked with the resources provided, and how little waste they generated, and was won by Maurus von Holzen of Switzerland. Enzo Barragato from France was second ahead of Shahad Manzil from India.



Autobody repair competition, Andrew Gault, student of Riverpark Training and employee at Glenn Allen Accident Repairs



Daryl Head, paint technician from Nationwide Crash Repair Centre Swindon and trained by Thatcham Research

Autobody repair

In the autobody repair competition Andrew Gault, student of Riverpark Training and employee at Glenn Allen Accident Repairs took bronze. The competitors were required to demonstrate their professional competence in: performing the correct diagnosis and correction of vehicle damage; replacing damaged or broken welded-on panels and parts; complete autobody related repairs such as electrical diagnosis; and return the vehicle to a condition where it is ready for refinish.

Andrew said, 'I went out to Abu Dhabi hoping to win a medal but really wasn't sure if I would. I've done a few competitions nationally but I'd never seen anything like that before. It was much more than I expected. It's a massive show and the competition was very strong – I was actually surprised by how high the standard was. So to win bronze, I'm very proud of what I achieved.'

Partnerships

Commenting on its partnership with WorldSkills, René Lang, vice president automotive refinish coatings solutions Europe at BASF, said, 'Over the past several years, a dramatic lack of young people in the area of automotive refinishing has been emerging for the entire value chain in the automotive repair industry. We are committed, for example by sponsoring the WorldSkills, to promoting a sustainable development of the entire value chain and helping our partners search for highly qualified apprentices.'

Adib Ketuly, director at Car-O-Liner EMEA, which



With the development of complex materials within the body of a modern vehicle, the development of skills in this section is becoming critical to ensure the safe repair of vehicles

provided the tooling for the autobody competition, said, 'With the development of complex materials within the body of a modern vehicle, the development of skills in this section is becoming critical to ensure the safe repair of vehicles using the correct repair equipment, tooling and methods are employed by a skilled technician.'

'We believe that WorldSkills plays an important part in this and compliments our strategy to support the autobody repair sector.'

Closing

Following three days of intense competition, the closing ceremony at the du Arena in Abu Dhabi – saw 10,000 international visitors, and a global audience online – watch as competitors discovered who had won gold, silver, and bronze WorldSkills medals.

'You came here as the best in the skills that you have made your own in your countries', said Simon Bartley, president of WorldSkills. 'Whether you are leaving here with a medal or not you all leave here as champions; individuals who have reached higher than you could ever have imagined when you started your journey three years ago. I salute you, everybody in this arena salutes you, the world salutes you.'

The closing ceremony of WorldSkills Abu Dhabi 2017 ended with the handover of the WorldSkills flag to the next hosts, WorldSkills Kazan 2019. The 45th WorldSkills Competition will be held in Russia from 29 August – 3 September 2019 in Kazan, Russia. See page 22 for the UK team.

THE VALUE OF RIGHT FIRST TIME DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS

By David Shepherd, regional managing director at Audatex UKSA

With the number of drivers rising constantly across the UK, almost 38 million vehicles are now taking to the nation's roads. The inevitable increase in the likelihood of motor incidents has led to the escalating amount of damaged vehicles entering bodyshops in need of repair after accidents occur. As a result, UK motorists are now spending £21.1bn on servicing and repair each year.

The additional need to reduce the weight of a vehicle, increase fuel efficiency, and the growing focus on occupant safety has also increased the complexity of vehicle body construction, which has led to the development and inclusion of elaborate advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) and safety restraint systems. As vehicles become smarter and their systems more complex, the process of assessing damage and conducting the repair is becoming ever more intricate, and the need for right first time assessments is also rising.

Right first time assessments

Now more than ever, delivering accurate initial assessments is essential to satisfying the expectations of the owner/driver and to the overall success of bodyshops. While the assessment of vehicle damage may be viewed as one element of the overall repair cycle it can, if executed correctly first time, reduce downtime, improve cycle time and add huge value to a bodyshop's service.

One of the biggest advantages is reducing waste and delivering time savings. If a damaged vehicle is accurately assessed first time, they will simply not have to revisit the vehicle to make any further evaluations. This not only saves time for bodyshops, it saves time for the insurance companies involved. If a bodyshop submits an inaccurate repair estimate for approval

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As vehicles become smarter and their systems more complex, the process of assessing damage and conducting the repair is becoming ever more intricate, and the need for right first time assessments is also rising

and then has to reassess the vehicle, insurers will need to use additional resources to re-inspect and re-authorise the estimate and invariably additional parts need ordering. What's more, any further delay in the process between the first and second estimates pushes out repair cycle times, which is likely to create a highly dissatisfied end consumer.

Very often in today's world, suppliers only stock the specific parts needed for a repair. If a bodyshop orders the parts using an estimate which turns out to be incorrect, assessors will have to return to the vehicle and conduct a supplementary estimate. The time it takes to reorder the correct parts will inevitably delay the repair cycle. This also means that any replacement cars are not being utilised properly, which can restrict the amount of work that bodyshops take in, making the need for accurate first time assessments all the more valuable.

The shrinking repair window

Many bodyshops are now facing mounting pressure when it comes to accurately identifying the extent of the vehicle's damage and selecting safe repairs within the manufacturer repair times. It is therefore now extremely challenging for bodyshops to optimise their entire repair cycle time.

The influx of damaged vehicles, coupled with the growing demand for faster repairs, has left bodyshops with a smaller time window to both assess and conduct the works needed. As a result, repairers are increasingly unable to spend adequate time at the vehicle evaluating the damage, with many now operating with a higher risk of submitting inaccurate damage assessments. There are various consequences which can arise when inaccurate evaluations are submitted by the repairers;



not only do they often result in greater costs or time delays, but a fragmented repair journey can also amount to a rise in dissatisfied customers.

Continuous advancements in technology are now also offering the claims industry huge opportunities to streamline manual damage assessment processes and improve efficiency. Artificial intelligence (AI) is now a huge talking point across the sector, with many applying the technology to improve their decision-making, supported with accurate damage capture.

However, like many industries attempting to leverage the likes of AI and machine learning, the technology is developing faster than the claims industry's ability to adapt to it, and many bodyshops and insurers are struggling to keep up. But with the industry so firmly focused on using these innovations to optimise key-to-key times, it is now important for bodyshops to strike a balance between the human and the virtual, to ensure they are able to keep up with demand, whilst progressively integrating technology into their assessment processes, to get them right first time.

Achieving accurate assessments

Despite these challenges, bodyshops can take action to achieve right first time assessments. With the need for a quick turnaround giving assessors less time at the vehicle's side, the chances of submitting incorrect evaluations are significantly higher. Yet, by simply giving assessors adequate time with a vehicle and using clearly defined inspection processes, they can ensure the damage is captured successfully.

Taking the correct images of the damage which support the chosen repair methodology is also essential and reduces friction. New technologies like AI are set to play a huge role in supporting bodyshops, suppliers



It is now important for bodyshops to strike a balance between the human and the virtual

and insurers with decision making. Image recognition, available in the very near future, will also enable companies to harness its potential to build intelligent solutions for the claims industry.

Although technology calls for less human intervention in damage assessment, for now an expert's involvement remains crucial. More training on how to walk around the vehicle and accurately assess the damage is therefore required and with changes in vehicle build technology moving at pace, it is key that technicians have regular refresher courses. At Audatex, our training embodies these changes and how our system deals with them, to teach users how to utilise our tools to correctly capture damage.

The future of repairs

With the need for seamless damage assessments growing every day, the future of repairs will undoubtedly become more reliant on technological solutions which enable bodyshops to streamline their assessment process and produce time-effective estimates. Bodyshops will have to work closely with solution providers to help with this innovation and further support them in making decisions about vehicle damage and selecting the correct means of repair.

Our parent company Solera, and Audatex in the UK are working hard to develop accurate image recognition powered by AI, that, coupled with machine learning, will help to guide humans through the process and allow them to build repair profiles which can be revisited. Leveraging this machine driven technology, our product teams are dedicated and committed to creating solutions which lay the foundations for the evolution of decision support and damage capture technology, to help bodyshops optimise their assessment and repair process to improve profitability.



BODYSHOPPROFILE

ONLY THE BEST WILL DO

There is a saying that if you want something done properly, it is better to do it yourself. That's certainly the approach taken by Stuart Werren, who, after a career working in bodyshops, decided to put all his experience to use and go it alone.

Having begun his working life on the shopfloor, Stuart moved from MET to panel to paint, worked his way through estimating and inspection before progressing to workshop control and management.

However, despite the personal development, he was growing increasingly frustrated with the lack of imagination around him. He said, 'Unfortunately, a lot of the bodyshop owners are fairly old school. They've not moved with the times so every time I tried to put something new forward I was met with resistance. So I decided to do it myself.'

Fast forward to the present day and the result is a 20,000sqft bodyshop that, says Stuart, has the best of everything. 'I don't want to be a leading bodyshop,' he proclaimed. 'I want to be the leading bodyshop.'

It's a bold ambition, but a tour around Werren's workshop and an insight into the attention to detail that has gone into its design suggests that he is very serious. Efficiency of process has been the driver behind every decision, and no expense has been spared in attaining it. The parts department is just one area where that level of perfectionism is evident.

Located on its own level with 190 operational bays that can be adjusted between 1.5m and 2.5m as required, the parts department is serviced by a lift that receives incoming parts and then distributes them to technicians on the shopfloor as and when required. Stuart expects this lift to see a lot of action, which is why he favoured a 15-second motor over a 45-second one.

'It's only a 30-second difference,' he explained, 'but

how many times a day will that lift go up and down? Over time, it will add up. We're just trying to make sure everything runs smoothly.'

The parts department is also temperature-controlled to preserve consumables, while a filtration system will keep it clear of dust. But that's just the parts department. The four-bay spraybooth has been compartmentalised and fitted with rails so four different jobs can be ongoing at once, with each moving through the stages as though on a production line.

Meanwhile, the aluminium and steel bays both have their own fixed storage cupboards to save technicians time searching for tooling, while each technician also has their own tablets providing instant access to job progress, repair methods, parts and scheduling. Once quality control has been added to the device, the workshop will be a completely paperless environment.

Volume

Stuart said, 'The goal is to produce high quality work in volume, so everything here has to be top spec. You have to take it to the next level if you're going to repair cars in the future, because the old ways won't work. One of the biggest failings I see in the industry is people not keeping up with the technology. That's why I've got an aluminium bay. It's just future-proofing.'

That is also why he will look at electric vehicle capabilities in the near future and is already talking to Tesla about training, and, in a separate building, is fitting out a mechanical centre that will provide room for ADAS calibrations.



'It might cost £30,000, but how many cars will have ADAS and how many repairers won't be able to repair them? If I put the facilities in now I can become an ADAS hotspot for other bodyshops as well as insurers.'

The mechanical centre, which will be operational in January and employ seven full-time technicians, will handle larger jobs and vans, with capacity for 18 operational bays and a valeting area. Overall, the end goal is to employ up to 30 members of staff, with master technicians in each area guiding apprentices to ensure there is always a conveyor belt of talent.

He said, 'Putting the foundation team in place is very difficult, with master technicians in every role. I want people with a passion for the job. If they haven't got all the necessary qualifications then I'll train them to the right standard, but they have to want to do the job, they have to love it.'

Passion

Passion is certainly something Stuart is not short of. He was only handed the keys for the site on 1 March, at which time the building was a ramshackle former recycling centre. Walls had fallen down, gas pipes removed, and there was no electricity or water. Converting it into a prestige bodyshop was not easy.

Apart from in excess of £800,000, it required a new mezzanine floor, new pits dug out for the spraybooth, roof repairs, wall repairs and a new sewer system. The offices were gutted and replastered, the paint shop was remodelled to create more natural light, while future employees were considered with the installation of a

20,000
sqft

35
operational bays

70
repairs per week

18
mechanical bays

dedicated canteen and lockers. In total, more than 2,000 litres of white paint were used.

His hard work is already paying off though. Business increased by 30% in the first month, 20% in month two, and Stuart says that Werren's Bodyshop is expected to be turning a profit just six months after launch. That's been driven largely by insurance work, although the focus going forward is to increase retail and fleet customers, while adding a list of prestige manufacturer approvals.

Stuart said, 'We want to create a dealership feel but without charging dealership prices. I see retail becoming a large part of the business, more significant than insurers. I don't see much future in insurers – changes in technology means claims are going to go down so you can't rely on them to provide work.'

Replacing that work provision won't be easy, but Stuart is not shy of hard work. He said, 'I've been working 100-hour weeks since March to make this happen, but it's starting to take shape. Hopefully by the end of the year it will be a Monday to Friday job.'

Those who know Stuart aren't convinced. The drive that compelled him to set up alone is not likely to be satisfied with a single site, and he admits that within 18 months he'd like to have replicated this template somewhere else. Luton, Milton Keynes and Northampton are all on his radar, and then beyond. He says he has no upper limit on the number of bodyshops he'd like to manage.

'If it works here, there's no reason it shouldn't work anywhere else.'



BUSINESSDEVELOPMENTEXPANSION

THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE EXPANDING

The opportunity to expand is both an exciting and daunting prospect. But what considerations need to be made before a business takes the plunge into the pool of new territory? What are the risks and what are the financial implications? Georgia Pethick has asked a panel of industry experts who have thrived at doing exactly that

The first step

When discussing how a business should draw up an expansion plan, Robert Snook, director of Business Success Global, stressed the need to establish a clear understanding of the reasons for expansion – what is the vision of the future company, how will it work and what is the intention behind it?

Robert said, 'When you have clarity on the why, vision and intent, you can start to plan backwards from the end goal to give yourself a clear, time-scaled roadmap of what you need to do and by which point. Only then should you carry out financial and cash-flow modelling, as you will then understand exactly what investments will be required and when.'

Phil Ewbank, Fix Auto Rochdale owner who invested more than £1m in buying and developing his Fix & Go Express Repair facility in 2016, said, 'For me, the primary considerations for any business wishing to expand is to build a solid business case, have sound financial forecasts, do extensive market research and ensure a resource for quality staff. Timing also should be a careful consideration.'

Advantages

Andy Pennell, group operations manager of Balgores Motor Group, highlighted the value of networking and collaboration as a key advantage of any successful expansion. He commented, 'If you don't network and

look beyond your site, you have nothing to benchmark your business on – you're stuck in a bubble. Expansion gives you the opportunity to grow and learn from others.'

'We formed a love square between ourselves at Balgores, Rye Street Accident Repair, East Bilney Coachworks and Apollo Motor Group. We did this to create a forum of communication within which we can work as a team.'

'When looking for a new site, we don't venture into each other's territory. If an employee from another group in the love square interviews for our site, we make sure that they know about the interview and they're ok with it. It's about having consideration and working together.'

When discussing a second advantage, Robert compared acquiring a second site to developing a single bodyshop. He said, 'If your current site is the optimum size for your chosen business model in your area, you are often better off replicating that successful model in a second site than increasing a single site to an unsustainable size. This grows the geographic footprint while also making it clearer to measure site performance and see areas for improvement. It also creates healthy competition if the culture is right.'

Risks

Developing a company isn't easy; if it was, everyone would do it. Complications will crop up and you need to be prepared to deal with them efficiently.

Paul Smith, who this year developed his second repair centre and first Fix & Go express repair facility, is no stranger to confronting the various obstacles that arise from business expansion. He emphasised that above all, you must make sure that the success of the new development is not at the expense of your current site.

He said, 'The main risks associated with the decision to further develop the business was the fear of taking my eye off the ball with regards to my main operation. Obviously, you want the very best for your customers and your staff, so it would be easy to fall into the trap of letting your heart rule your head and letting the finances spiral out of control.'

Robert added, 'You will have many 'one off' costs that will suck cash and so you will have to ensure you can continue to safely trade when suppliers' bills also increase significantly. In any significant growth, you will have to sacrifice margin to grow.'

Staff

When a bodyshop expands, so does its staff. One difficulty for bodyshop managers is keeping the company culture prevalent across new developments, especially in the case of acquiring an existing bodyshop.

When taking over an existing site, Andy suggests appointing management from the current team. 'By

“

Often significant growth causes a period of staff churn, because a large business often needs different staff skills and profiles than a small business

promoting an existing member of staff to manage the new bodyshop, we ensure that the site will maintain the 'Balgores way'. It is not enough to put a sign above the door. Allowing an internal member of staff to run the business will mean that you continue to be the business that your customers trust'.

Robert added, 'Often significant growth causes a period of staff churn, because a large business often needs different staff skills and profiles than a small business. Ensure you can replace the staff with what you need not just what you used to have.'

Tips and takeaways

Evidently, there are a host of benefits and complications that come with growth. On a final note, Paul says it's essential to do your research thoroughly: 'You must always go into a project with your eyes open and be prepared for the unexpected; it's imperative to have additional funds or those unforeseen costs.'

Phil added, 'It's critical to ensure your team is on board and feels informed and part of the new expansion. Success hinges on a great team as well as a solid business case.'

And, as Andy highlighted, 'The more we work together, the more knowledgeable we become and in turn, the more successful our bodyshops will be.'

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ESBM5 (03/17)

CLAIMSMANAGEMENT

FOLLOW THAT DRIVER

Claims management has been a battleground for years, but technology and practices within other industries are changing the game.

The claims process will increasingly become the domain of the driver; it won't be long until it is the driver who decides where and when they want their car repaired, and everyone else involved will be judged on how well they facilitate that.

That's a view shared by insurers, work providers and bodyshops alike, so, if that is not the direction your business is moving, the chances are your customer today will find someone else tomorrow.

The issue driving this shift in customer behaviour and expectation is digital technology, and the simplicity that it has brought to their lives in other industries. Whether it is buying a book, paying the bills or getting the news, the digitalisation of the world has at a stroke put the customer in control. It's not enough now to be better than all your peers at the old way of doing things; entire industries have marched like lemmings off the cliff competing against each other to be the best at something no one wants anymore. Instead, the challenge is to follow the lead set by the pioneers in customer service, and build a claims process based on their examples.

As Vicki Heslop, head of customer claims, personal lines at Covea, said, 'As a sector we now need to benchmark ourselves against Amazon or ASOS, not just against other insurers.'

Communication

Probably the first consideration is communication, and how best to reach the customer. David Punter of Amber Heights Consulting pointed out that emails and phone calls were often unnecessary and considered old-fashioned by consumers brought up on Whatsapp and Snapchat. He argues that those companies still forcing customers down that route are shooting themselves in the foot.

'Claims management is going through an evolution, but



“

Success looks the same for both the insurer and the customer – getting the customer mobile again as quickly as possible

in essence it really is just catching up with the rest of the commercial world,' David said. 'That is not to say that all claims should be digital, as indeed the empathetic face of the insurer is important in times of need, but for transactional information, it is digital all the way.'

Of course, customers range dramatically in age and habit, and what suits one doesn't suit another. One of the most significant challenges – and it's a change in attitude as much as anything else – is engaging with customers in a way and at a time convenient to them. Vicki explained that Covea takes advice from its 1,500-strong customer panel, and policy is often guided by where that panel tells them the motorist is heading (figuratively speaking).

She said, 'Success looks the same for both the insurer and the customer – getting the customer mobile again as quickly as possible. The key to this is speed of settlement, reducing the effort the customer has to make and keeping an eye on costs. What's changing rapidly is the need to have a range of communications channels through which to transact their claim. They don't want to be forced down a particular channel and we are beginning to utilise emerging technology to enable this.'

Essentially then, the attitude change previously mentioned is a shift from handling the claim to handling the customer – as David so neatly summed it up.

Repair

But as helpful as it might be to communicate effectively with the driver at first notification of loss (FNOL) and then throughout the claim, the end result will still be delays and dissatisfaction if the initial estimate is wrong. Speed and accuracy is fundamental to a streamlined repair process, and here too major advances have been made.

GT Motive Estimate is active across Europe and has built



close ties with bodyshops. Based on the feedback from these relationships, as well as its dedicated consultancy team, it's developed a solution focused on relieving pressure within bodyshops.

Richard Taylor, UK business director, said, 'Based on the feedback of users, we build our proposition and design new functionalities based on what our customer actually needs, not what we believe they need. Costs are a key driver for bodyshops and they will continue to rise due to advances in car composition and functionality. But that's where GT Motive can support the market. Our system is cloud-based, therefore everything can be done in real-time without delays due to information being sent via mail or exportation of data. Speeding up the estimating process so vehicle repairs can be authorised within minutes reduces key to key times and thus costs.'

He added that ease of use and accuracy also increases the rate of 'right first time' estimates, which reduces the potential for costly delays in the process.

Artificial Intelligence

But in terms of estimates, perhaps the most influential technology is artificial intelligence (AI). One of its first exponents was Solus, the nationwide network of accident repair centres owned and operated by Aviva. As early as April it began exploring how AI can be used to leverage efficiency and customer service. Working with Thatcham Research and Emergent Network Intelligence, it adopted image recognition software and analytics data to identify when cars are write offs or repairable. The next step is automatically producing accurate repair methods and ordering the necessary parts.

Audatex too, has been making strides in this territory with the recent launch of AudaFNOL, which enables customers to photograph the damage and then, using either a 2D damage capture portal or 3D damage capture app, obtain a 'gamified' representation of the damage to the vehicle.



Costs are a key driver for bodyshops and they will continue to rise due to advances in car composition and functionality

Using predictive analysis based on millions of past assessments, Audatex will then determine whether the vehicle is repairable or not. If it is repairable, the company's Repair Allocation Manager (RAM) will decide on the type of repair required – traditional, mobile, fast-track or advanced (electric/ADAS/aluminium) – and then, using Google Maps to identify the customer's exact location, compile a list of manufacturer-approved repairers nearby, as well as distance and estimated travel times. Streamlining the process further, the bodyshop will be able to view the images beforehand so it can schedule repairs effectively.

AudaFNOL is already in use, with Covea integrating the technology into its back-office systems to further its own strategy of putting the customer front and centre.

Vicki said, 'AI is already starting to play a role within our claims department and this will continue to increase, but we see it as being there to complement what we already do, not to replace people in the contact centre. There will always be customers whose preference is to talk to someone in person, either over the phone or by some form of video technology. This means our department managers are now challenged with how they can use recruitment to find the tech-savvy, multi-tasking, customer advisors of the future.'

Competition

But, as creative and innovative as traditional players in the claims game are, it's a foregone conclusion that disruptors from outside will impinge on their territory. Amazon, Google and Tesla are already muscling in, and other players are sure to follow as technology encourages ever greater industry crossover.

David concluded, 'The value of an insurance policy is in the handling of a claim, and this is where they excel. Insurers need to look at the plethora of technology out there and adapt it to fit our claims world. Nothing stands still, so why should we?'

CYBERSECURITY

A PROBLEM SHARED...

Cybercrime is one of the most talked about topics in the business world today. However, it's also a subject matter only applicable to large corporations who are deliberately 'targeted' – right? Wrong. As you are about to read it can happen to anyone and the SME sector and, more specifically, the accident repair sector is not immune. Here we talk to one organisation willing to share its experience of life on the receiving end, so it can help others.

In the past 12 months, 875,000 small and medium-sized businesses have been targeted by cyber criminals, costing a fifth of affected organisations over £10,000 in damages. These cyber criminals are becoming more sophisticated and attacks increasingly damaging.

Cybercrime is 'everyone's business nightmare', and one company we talked to should know having recently suffered such fate. 'Our story is one I believe the collision repair community as a whole could benefit from,' explained the bodyshop owner.

'The worst thing we could do is to keep this to ourselves. By sharing our experience we hope to prevent other businesses being exposed to risks they may have never even considered.'

This case relates to criminals gaining access to its accounts system and, ultimately, costing the business in the region of £75,000 in less than a week.

Illegitimate

To put things in their most basic context, the business was hacked into crediting illegitimate bank accounts within its well-known accounting package. Seamlessly the criminals had accessed its business accounts a few days before month end and changed the bank account numbers and/or sort codes, without affecting the account names, to some of its regular creditors. Come the end of the month when accounts were settled, rather than settling debts with legitimate supply partner

Expert comment:

Quiss commercial services manager, Matt Rhodes said, 'It's no longer enough to claim your business can resist potential cyber threats.'

'Clients are adopting stricter vetting processes and actively seeking evidence of government-endorsed approval to show security standards are up to scratch.'

accounts, the business was actually making payment into the criminal's accounts.

'Our first thought was how did that happen?' the owner said, 'We didn't understand how this type of thing could happen without notifications popping up informing us of changes to regular creditor account details. This is happening right under the noses of customers and large corporate system suppliers.'

Thankfully, and due to the tightly governed nature of this business, it was a supply partner who inadvertently raised the alarm when it realised its payment hadn't been settled in the normal fashion. And this was the catalyst for investigations which unravelled the true extent of the crime.

'Yes, we lost a lot of money from the episode and, although not crippling, it could certainly have hurt a business of our scale,' explained a director. 'But more than that, and this is really the important part that we want to share with our peers, we learnt an awful lot from it too – and that could prove priceless for others in the future. We weren't doing anything wrong, we just learnt some very harsh, yet valuable lessons.'

Security

Firstly, the business on the receiving end is one that is renowned for being extremely well governed – there was no major flaws in its cyber security and all measures were 'in place' that a business of this scale would





be expected to have. In fact, many would argue their corporate responsibility and safeguarding protocols far exceed many businesses of its scale and beyond.

No other platforms were accessed and no data was stolen, just the changes to the creditors accounts. But as the true nature of that crime unravelled it became evident to its team that: a) its a far more common issue than it ever anticipated but no one shares learnings; b) you need to ensure you know exactly who and what has access to your systems and when; and c) when you need help after being caught it's quite hard to come by.

The director explained, 'What we also learnt is that, seemingly, nobody really wants to help when you're caught in this situation. The bank, our insurer and the accounts system provider, all 'wiggled' when we approached them for help about the case, while the police cyber security team said it wasn't a big enough crime for them to get involved in and they had bigger cases to focus on.'

The spokesperson continued, 'For example, we found that cybercrime is not covered by a typical commercial insurance policy – these still focus more on physical thefts and taking payments to a bank. Instead we should have held a specific cybercrime policy. Standard commercial policies have simply not kept pace, yet most businesses rely on the advice of their friendly broker to renew at the best premium each year. We also learned

some suppliers set up remote access on install to run 24/7 in the background without getting your permission. These are just two areas that all businesses should be looking at.'

Move on

As you would expect, it would be easy to get drawn into a lengthy finger pointing exercise when such an experience unfolds, but in discussing the issue with others who had been victims of such criminal activity the advice was 'lick your wounds, and move on.'

The director said, 'Some of the businesses we spoke to had spent many months and great sums of money trying to recover their losses but to no avail. So we took their advice and moved on.'

The business in question has now reviewed its entire cyber security policies (see panel) and installed further complex software to prevent future attacks. The director said, 'This type of crime has accelerated so much in recent years that for us we are now going to a whole new level of security which will add to our overhead, but hopefully ensure we will be impenetrable next time.'

'You would never think a company of our size and standing would need that level of protection but it's clear from what we have learned that if anyone thinks they are immune from this type of crime, they should think again – this is very real.'

Recommended process review

- Every member of staff should be periodically logged out of every system and reset
- All log-ins and passwords should be changed and made different across all platforms
- All staff to lock screens when away from their desktops during the day
- All staff to close down all programmes and systems fully at end of the day, no minimising
- Enhance diligence with system access levels amongst all new and existing staff
- Implement robust clear desk and internet security policies signed for by all staff
- Install Livedrive for permanent back up process on all desktops and laptops
- External viewing applications only allowed for one off access, not 24/7 access
- Antivirus regularly manually updated on each machine, it's not as automated as you think

CIRCLE LEASING SETTING STANDARDS



2017 has been a good year for the bodyshop industry, with average profits up for the fourth year in a row (ABP Industry Year Book 2017/2018). The UK motor industry, on the whole, however has been considerably more turbulent. Factors such as BREXIT and VED have reduced manufacturer incentives leading to a rise in average lease pricing. With this in mind we worked extra hard to maintain the standards which you have come to expect from us:

FLEET MANAGEMENT: Circle Leasing have also been working hard to improve our software solutions. MyFleet Vehicle Hire has experience a large update which has improved not only the look and feel of the system but widened it's capabilities immensely.

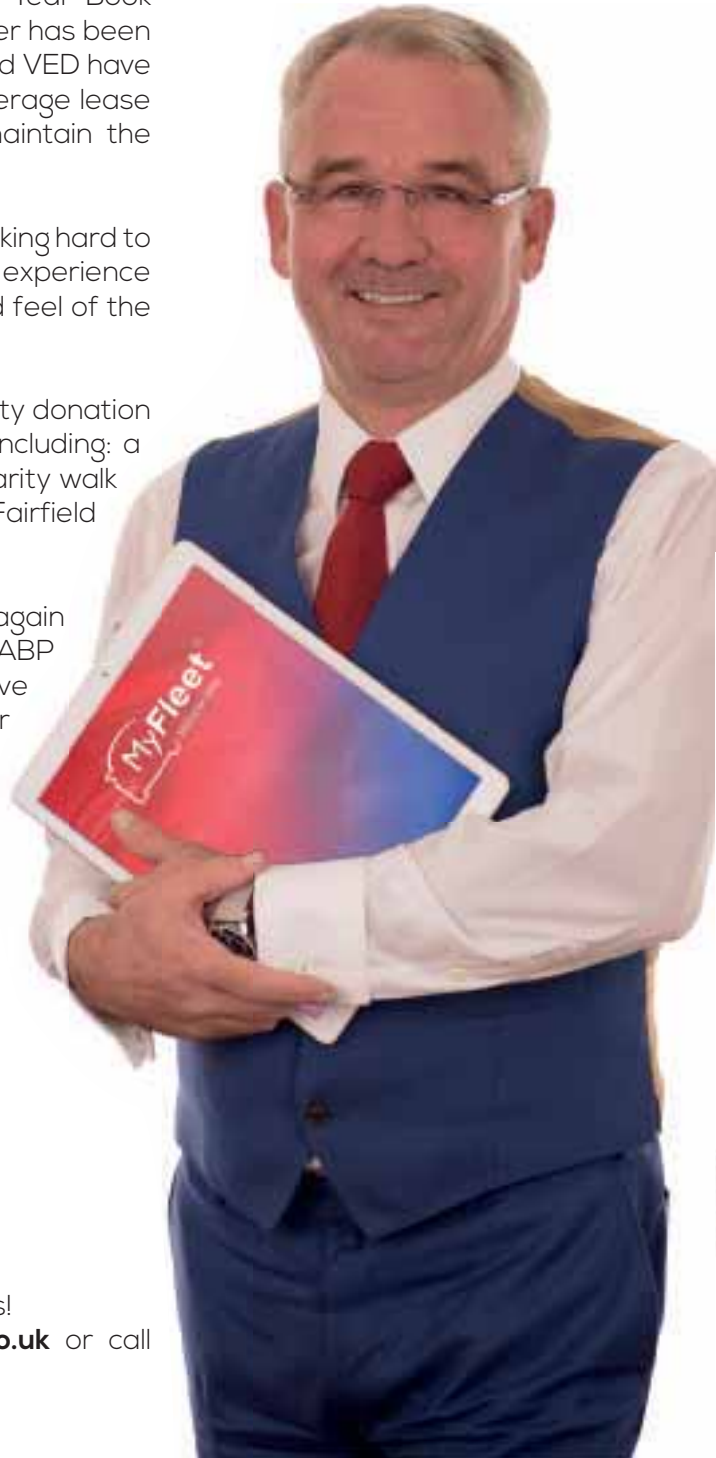
FUND RAISING: This year we smashed our £10,000 charity donation target by undertaking a number of gruelling activities including: a directors car wash challenge, a Tough Mudder and a charity walk where we navigated the undulating 11.5 miles of the Fairfield Horseshoe.

CUSTOMER SERVICE: Circle Leasing have once again been voted Courtesy Car Provider of the Year at the ABP Repairers Choice Awards. In order to continually improve we are running a survey where you can suggest ways for us to improve.

Wishing you all the very best for Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Aidan Minogue,
Managing Director,
Circle Leasing

P.S. We are still able to deliver vehicles before Christmas!
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AUDATEX AUDAFNOL

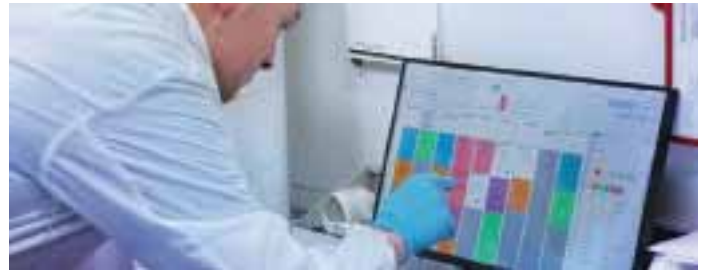
Audatex has launched AudaFNOL, its all-encompassing, next generation First Notification of Loss platform.

At FNOL, customers can instantly photograph damage to the vehicle through their smartphone, the images are then automatically attached to the Audatex damage assessment, insurer claim system, or viewed through the Audatex image viewer.

Using Audatex's software, the policyholder or the claims handler can then mark up the area and severity of the vehicle's damage with either a 2D Damage Capture portal or a downloadable 3D Damage Capture app.

Audatex's Repair vs Total Loss feature then determines whether the vehicle is repairable or a total loss. This is calculated using predictive analytics, based on millions of vehicle damage assessments, enabling accurate triage at FNOL. If the vehicle is repairable, Audatex's Repair Allocation Manager (RAM) can be used to allocate the repair.

Each AudaFNOL module can be used in isolation or with other aspects of the Audatex platform.



AKZONOBEL CARBEAT

AkzoNobel Vehicle Refinishes has introduced Carbeat, an industry first digital solution, offering simpler workflows and easier access to information.

Carbeat provides significant benefits by giving a real-time overview of the repair process. This information is then made available to managers, team leaders, technicians and third parties, which in turn creates improved transparency and communication.

The cloud-based application is deployed on a large touch screen monitor providing a comprehensive overview of all the work in production. This enhances the quality and granularity of captured cycle time data, which enables deeper insight into ways to improve efficiency and eliminate waste.

Carbeat has been launched across the US and is expected to launch across Europe in early 2018.

LASER TOOLS PULLER TOOL

New from Laser Tools is the Puller Tool set which is ideal for reducing small dents and dings.

It is supplied with 24 assorted glue pads, including circular and split elliptical pads suitable for a variety of different dent shapes and sizes. Eight different profile glue pads are supplied, three of each.

Recommended for use with the Power-TEC Gluematic hot-melt glue gun and glue sticks, the glue pads are designed to grip the glue and pull in different ways. A split pad initially pulls strongly across the dent. Then the pad deforms as the metal moves out and the pad is pulling more from the centre.

Laser Tools has also introduced a versatile ratchet screwdriver, supplied with 20 screwdriver bits plus nine quarter inch drive sockets.



GYS SPOT WELDER

The GYS Evolution Pti Spot welder with full automatic mode has been approved by Tesla.

The approval is for the forthcoming high volume Tesla Model 3 currently in the early stages of production. Unlike the existing Model S and Model X, the new Tesla Model 3 has a high steel and boron content.

This approval follows the GYS Neopulse Pulse MIG/MAG welder winning approval for the Model S and Model X earlier this year.

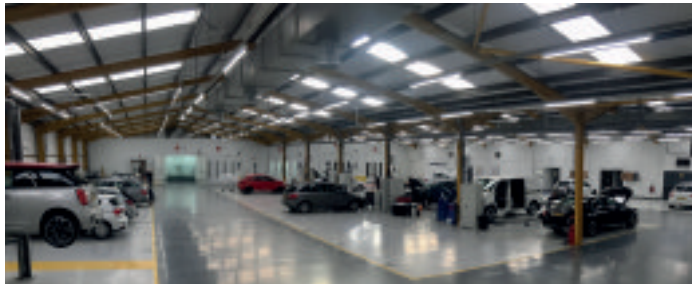


SNAP-ON SOFTWARE

The new upgrade to Snap-on's diagnostic platform software saves time in the workshop and puts new information for thousands of vehicles and systems into the hands of technicians.

As well as 2016 model year updates for many manufacturers, software version 17.4 brings enhancements and innovations designed to increase productivity.

Version 17.4 adds almost 120,000 new systems, over 3,000 new vehicles, more than 11,000 new codes, and increases the number of functional tests by 2,600 – bringing further power and knowledge to the workshop.



AKZONOBEL L&I EATON PARTNERSHIP

AkzoNobel and L&I Eaton ARC Ltd's partnership continues and has seen the business grow from a single accident repair centre to nine sites in just seven years.

Its ninth site, which relocated to larger premises in April 2017 in Edinburgh, includes state-of-the-art facilities offering multi-material repair and using the latest technology. AkzoNobel provides the advice, business support, Sikkens products and Colorvation digital approach.

The new Edinburgh repair centre boasts around 560sqm of office and customer area, along with 3,500sqm of work space equipped with four USI Italia spraybooths. This, it claims, comfortably lends itself to flexible deployment of different work streams and offers scope for introduction of new processes. A triage system will also allow customers to benefit from fast turnaround times of UV technology, where appropriate.

ECP WINDOW

Euro Car Parts now includes fitting instructions in product boxes for its window regulator replacements.

The decision to include instructions follows a high returns rate of mechanically sound window regulators. Spotting the trend, Euro Car Parts made the commitment to reduce returns after discussions with workshops revealed that fitting window regulators was a frustrating task for technicians.

Euro Car Parts has also expanded its portfolio of industrial heaters to include the established AmbiRad range of radiant gas heaters.

PRO-ALIGN/TEXA ADAS

Pro-Align and TEXA have joined forces to help workshops with resetting advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS).

Pro-Align has teamed up with TEXA to offer the company's electronic diagnosis and ADAS calibration service solutions. Additionally, the companies are hosting a series of free technical workshops at Pro-Align's Northamptonshire headquarters to help technicians better understand the ADAS reset and calibration process.

Among the tools that Pro-Align will now be offering are TEXA's Diagnostic and full board option packages.



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REMIT GOLD STANDARD

Remit Group has joined an elite group of nine other training providers to become accredited by People 1st as a Gold Standard Apprenticeship Provider.

The accolade is granted to training providers who provide 'outstanding service' to employers looking to achieve excellence in apprenticeships by the performance and talent management experts.

Remit Group employs 330 employees and delivers apprenticeships to more than 5,500 young people each year across a growing number of market sectors.

In supporting the accreditation, Remit was supported by major Hospitality brands including Casual Dining Group and Starbucks.

MASTER ABRASIVES SUPERFINISH

Master Abrasives has been appointed to represent Superfinish Innovation AG, a division of Thielenhaus Technologies GmbH, as its agent in the UK and Ireland.

The superfinishing devices, working with tapes or stones, are offered for high-precision applications requiring optimum geometry and surface quality.

The superfinishing process is used in automotive, aerospace and many other markets for improved surface quality of components. Benefits of applying the superfinishing process in manufacturing include reduced workpiece wear, increased percentage contact area, improved energy efficiency and savings in workpiece material and weight.

ESAB REGULATORS

ESAB has invested heavily in a factory in Poland to manufacture its popular G Series pressure and flow regulators for customers in Europe.

The state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Opole, Poland has been equipped with brand new tooling, utilising the latest processes. Furthermore, the regulators are 100% inspected and tested prior to dispatch, so customers are assured of the highest possible quality and safety.

G Series regulators have been available in Europe for approximately three years, sourced from ESAB's factories in the USA, Mexico and China.



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HELLA TECH WORLD

Hella has introduced its online portal, Hella Tech World to provide technicians with the latest range extensions, technical product information and Hella Online Training.

Tech World also links to the company's online catalogues enabling users to browse all that Hella, Behr Hella Service and Hella Gutmann Solutions has to offer.

In addition, briefing notes are available, which give detailed information on product features and specifications, as well as links to supporting apps. Technicians can also access a range of practical technical training modules for lighting, electric and electronics and thermal management.

Hella has also introduced its Adlight app offering a 3D, real-time visualisation to help identify what auxiliary headlamps would be the perfect match for a particular vehicle.



RUPES POLISHER

Rupes has introduced a new type of polisher called Triple Action, which will be part of the BigFoot range.

Triple action tools feature a special epicyclic gear reducer which allows the torque value to be significantly increased while, at the same time, the velocity is reduced. With the use of this solution the impact of a variable in performance (the load applied by the user) is substantially minimised and, consequently, a greater uniformity of performance is achieved. This provides a considerable improvement in the surface finish as well as a drastic reduction in the vibration levels.

The new polishers are suitable to polish and finish a variety of painted surfaces.

STANDOX CALENDAR

The 2018 Standox car calendar – Comics & Cars – is now available.

The calendar features 1970s and 1980s automotive classics – with typical comic strip treatments. Photographer Ramon Wink, who shot the 12 iconic cars featured in the 2018 Standox calendar, and his colleague Thomas Roth, who was in charge of the special post-production treatments, have combined two elements of global culture: comics and cars.

Standex wall calendars have been created by renowned photographers for over 30 years.



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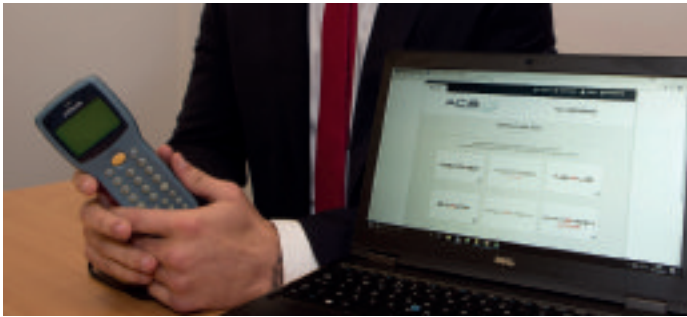
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TECALLIANCE CARUSO

TecAlliance GmbH, alongside telematics service providers such as Bosch, Continental and ZF, and car manufacturers including BMW, is one of the first companies to make its data available on Caruso.

Caruso, the open, neutral and secure data marketplace for the automotive aftermarket, is now live and allows data users to connect data from different providers to optimise their business models or develop new ones.

As a first step, TecAlliance is now offering its repair and maintenance information (RMI) via Caruso. In the future, it will also be possible to acquire individual data points via the Caruso marketplace using TecAlliance vehicle IDs, making the information easy to access, even for smaller businesses.



ACIS WEB PORTAL

ACIS has launched the latest version of its online web portal designed to help bodyshop customers get an easier management overview of their business performance.

The new version of the ACIS website provides bodyshop managers with the ability to access Ascribe, the stock ordering and replenishment tool, and other subscription online offerings, including training records, equipment maintenance, health and safety compliance and wider management information, through one portal.

Users have access to the services they subscribe to through one user code, with the option to add other services displayed on the user-friendly dashboard.

HORTONS BOOKS THE FAMILY SILVER

bodyshop publisher, Chris Mann has published a major history of the iconic Maserati marque, *Maserati, the Family Silver* by acclaimed automotive historian Nigel Trow.

The two-volume, 872 page book won the 2016 Guild of Motoring Writers Mercedes/Montagu of Beaulieu Trophy. Two versions of the book are available, the Tifosi edition and a Collectors' edition, limited to 101 copies. A museum-quality Archive edition is due to be launched in early spring 2018 which, limited to 26 copies worldwide, will be supplied in a bespoke leather 'tool case' along with an original painting and signed signed by Grand Prix greats Sir Stirling Moss and the late John Surtees, as well as the noted Maserati collector and rock legend Nick Mason.

Full details may be found at www.maseratifamilysilver.com.

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BODYLINE POLISH

A new range of polish compounds from Bodyline are now available across the country via Brown Brothers Distribution.

The polishes provide an effective, fast and easy to use polishing process to remove scratches and sanding marks whilst leaving a premium high gloss finish.

The new Bodyline Ultimate Cut Compound offers extreme cutting capabilities and is ideal for removing coarse sanding scratches to produce a high gloss finish. Bodyline Ultimate Finish Compound is ideal for use on dark coloured vehicles or when an extreme gloss is required. The Bodyline Compound Foam Pad and Finishing Foam Pad help produce a superb gloss finish and high end results. These new pads join the recently launched purple Microfibre Cloth, exclusive to Bodyline.



AUTOGLASS ART

Autoglass has unveiled a series of new technologies designed to support technicians and further improve its vehicle glass repair and replacement service for drivers, fleets and insurers.

The technologies include Advanced Repair Technology (ART), a recently launched Vehicle Handover Video Appraisal service, and a new Facebook chatbot for people who prefer to use social media to engage with customer service.

In response to growing demand for digital services, Autoglass has also launched a new 'On My Way' real time tracking tool which texts customers on the day of their appointment with a link that allows them to see the location of their technician.

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The TY30VS is the next evolution in diamond cut alloy wheel technology, designed for the sole purpose of diamond cutting alloy wheels.

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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

www.hella-gutmann.co.uk



STANNERS CATALOGUE

The new 36 page Stanners Equipment catalogue includes product information and details of Stanners Specialised Services.

From plastic repair systems to mobile infra-red and from parking sensor cutters to aluminium dent pullers, the catalogue also features a number of carefully sourced new equipment ranges such as the Mercedes approved Mig brazer/Mag and aluminium welding machines from Fronius, EWM, Migatronik and Elektron. Also new is the Jaguar Land Rover approved TKR XT2 riveter.

Other newly introduced equipment are the Stanners range of Quick Pull benches – the 2000, 3000 and 4000 ideal for all bodyshops.



CLARKE HEATERS

Clarke's new electric fan heaters are the ideal heating solution for small to medium sized premises such as workshops, garages and more.

Stainless steel heating elements are housed inside a tough steel cabinet with a durable enamelled finish, and feature insulated handles for safe handling. They also feature an adjustable heat output with thermostatic control to achieve a desired room temperature without fail.

Models in this range are available with outputs of 230V or 400V, the high end models in this range can deliver a heat output of up to 20kW with the best-selling DEVIL 6003 delivering a maximum heat output of 3.5kW.



CROMAX VIDEO

Cromax has added a new video to its Straight from the Heart image campaign, whose titles encapsulates the idea behind the online Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) initiative.

It centres on video interviews of refinishers from the region who use Cromax. The newest video in the campaign focuses on a refinisher's experience with digital colour retrieval from Cromax.

The Cromax Straight from the Heart campaign, designed to support and to accentuate the brand's ethos of delivering productivity gains across the bodyshop, features candid, personal and unscripted video testimonials from refinishers at all stages of their careers.

BLUEGRASSCOMS VISION

Bluegrasscoms and Audatex have partnered to enhance parts provision opportunities within the collision repair market.

Bluegrasscoms Vision, an OE parts procurement platform, will now receive a feed directly from Audatex to enhance its parts interception service whilst also ensuring compliance with the impending GDPR requirements.

OEMs and bodyshops with VISION agreements, and who instruct Audatex which repair parts orders to pass to Bluegrass, will benefit from improved speed and accuracy of information. The move will allow Bluegrasscoms to provide a more effective, timely service to bodyshops whilst supporting its manufacturer programmes.

VISIONTRACK TELEMATICS

VisionTrack has launched a new video-based telematics camera, designed to significantly reduce the usual costs associated with this technology.

Following a string of successes related to its award winning Internet of Things (IoT) platform, the business will be the first in the UK to launch the VT2.3G which is designed especially for the insurance sector with 3G, full HD recording and insurance grade GPS and G-sensor.

VisionTrack's offering includes the option for white-labelling, an online portal and app where footage can be viewed in real-time, provide instant FNOL alerts and predict driver behaviour.

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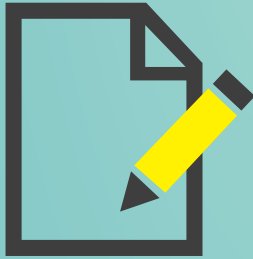


Challenging perspectives

'Innovation within tradition'

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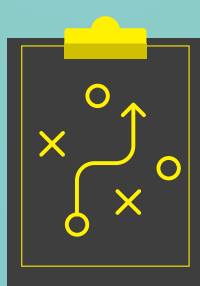




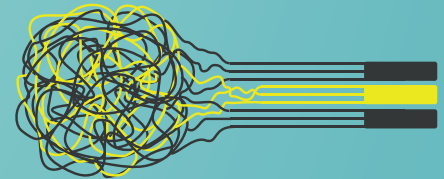
More than a third of UK SMEs still rely on pen and paper to manage crucial aspects of their business



1/4 of digital marketers don't track marketing spend



A survey has revealed that only 45% of businesses have a structured plan in place for GDPR compliance, with more than half (58%) not being fully aware of the consequences if noncompliant.



Nearly two thirds of SME's are looking to big data to benefit their business

'Innovation is taking two things that already exist and putting them together in a new way.' -Tom Freston



Drivers are receiving 12 million penalties annually, amounting to one every 2.5 seconds (RAC Foundation research)



It is predicted that by 2019, four fifths of global internet traffic will be online video



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EDITORIAL

Editor
Mark Hadaway mark@bodyshopmag.com
Deputy Editor
Alan Feldberg alan@bodyshopmag.com
Digital Communications Editor
Georgia Pethick georgia@bodyshopmag.com

ADVERTISING

Sales Director
Nicola Keady nicola@bodyshopmag.com

PRODUCTION & DESIGN

Head of Production – Events and Publications
Louise Cooke louise@bodyshopmag.com
Designer
Alice Young alice@bodyshopmag.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Administrator & Subscriptions
Sally Lang sally@bodyshopmag.com

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Events & Marketing Executive
Natalie Wylde natalie@bodyshopmag.com
Development Director
Graham Threlfall graham@bodyshopmag.com
Business Development Manager
Poppy Allard poppy@bodyshopmag.com

SPECIAL PROJECTS

IAEA Administration Manager
Sally Hurst sallyh@bodyshopmag.com
The Assessor editor (IAEA)
Ruth Draper editor@plenham.co.uk

ADMIN & FINANCE

CEO
Jason Moseley jason@bodyshopmag.com
Event Administration Manager
Emily Miles emily@bodyshopmag.com
Associate Director Administration & Finance
Jane Bartholomew janeb@bodyshopmag.com
Co-founder & Chairman
Chris Mann chris@bodyshopmag.com
Co-founder & Director
David Young david@bodyshopmag.com

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bodyshop is published monthly by:
Plenham Ltd, The Firs, High Street, Whitchurch,
Buckinghamshire, HP22 4JU
t: 01296 642800 | f: 01296 640044 | e: info@bodyshopmag.com
www.bodyshopmag.com

ISSN 1465-9514 | Printed in Great Britain by Pensord Press

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Electric vehicle uptake is growing exponentially – but are the skills keeping pace?

Retention:

Getting quality staff is one thing – keeping them is another. What can you do to retain your key assets?

Apprentices:

Millennials – are they really so different? We try to debunk the myths.



SPOTTED

Mirka's **Julie Starkey** waxing lyrical about the joys of parenthood.

Graham O'Neil of ACIS making the most of 'bring your dog to work' day.

Conversely, **Stuart Werren** of Werren's Bodyshop had the dog's bed in his office, but not the dog!

Karl Woolley of Saint Gobain contemplating the MacDonald's Olympics.

Simon Edwards of Body Perfect mulling over a huge banquet.

Ken Hughes rocking Milton Keynes in a check suit.

Neil Pulsford of GYS seriously going to 'town' on the biscuit offering.

Tim Kelly of MotorClaimGuru Ltd throwing the cat among the pigeons.

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