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“Thanks So Much”

by Penny Stacey

O n page 26 of this issue, you’ll find something we’ve never before included in AGRR magazine—real-life transcripts of calls between customers and auto glass shops, along with calls involving glass shops, customers and insurers. Readers provided these calls (devoid of identifying information) to AGRR magazine and I had the “pleasure” of transcribing them. The purpose of reprinting them is to share some of the possible steering tactics that you might encounter when working with third-party administrators.

I recognize one man’s “educational conversation” is another man’s steer, but I caught something else as I listened to the calls. The auto glass shops involved all had trained their CSRs—and in two cases, likely their technician/CSRs—to provide excellent customer service.

I heard phrases like “thanks so much” and “I really appreciate it” repeatedly. Some might say this is over-the-top or that this takes too much time turns into hours) on the phone calls. Please e-mail me at pstacey@glass.com. Thanks so much for reading.

If you’ve ever met me, you know I’m a pretty friendly person (unless someone is rude to me over the phone), so I feel pretty confident I haven’t caused much less frustrated when the person with whom I’m speaking is polite, appreciative and engaged in the conversation.

Each issue, when I make the calls for our “Price Points” department, I’m always a bit surprised by some of the responses I get. Many answer the phone “Hello?” and I have to ask if I’ve actually called an auto glass shop or have the wrong number; many tell me they are busy with a replacement (and in those cases I know it is tough—when you’re a one-man show answering phones and doing the work); and others might repeat the vehicle back to me like I’ve bothered them immensely.

If you’ve ever met me, you know I’m a pretty friendly person (unless someone is rude to me over the phone), so I feel pretty confident I haven’t caused this response.

But when I am an actual consumer, chances are, if price, quality, etc., are pretty similar between two companies, I’m going to choose the one that was nice to me over the phone (or in person, depending on the case).

As always, I’m sure if you’re reading this magazine, you care about your business and treat your customers (and potential customers) with respect and courtesy. So, I’d like to hear your tips for training CSRs or for handling phone calls. Please e-mail me at pstacey@glass.com. Thanks so much for reading.

PS. If you’re at the upcoming Spring Auto Glass Show™, please be sure to stop by booth #28 and say hello.

Penny Stacey is the editor of AGRR magazine.
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Indepe ndents Fight Back

by David Zoldowski

I’ve often remarked in my columns that there is a lot to be said about strength in numbers. This can be even more critical when it comes down to supporting or defeating legislation initiatives at the state level. Lately, this has been more evident than usual. Since the beginning of 2010, the auto glass industry has seen a flurry of legislative activity across the country. The mere fact that legislation is now addressing a range of issues within the AGRR industry, and in so many states, is indicative that all is not right in the industry. Whether a bill under consideration is deemed to be pro-independent or pro-insurer, independents must align in mass to ensure that the final bill must not tip the scale any further in favor of the insurance industry.

In Arizona, recent bills made the news as independents fought for their voices to be heard. The Arizona Glass Association (AGA) worked with legislators to try and make positive changes to bills that could have been potentially damaging implications for consumer choice and auto glass shops in Arizona and eventually across the country. As of the writing of this article, one bill went down to defeat, while the other had just been signed. Unfortunately, the bill that was just signed into law is bad legislation and anti-consumer. Introduced under the premise that it was anti-fraud, the bill was in actuality an attempt to allow insurers to tighten their grip on marketing practices pertaining to windshield repair. The value of associations like the AGA and the Independent Glass Association (IGA) in situations like Arizona is priceless. These associations can provide structure for a grass-roots effort and possess tools to both inform membership and the public about why they should get involved and more importantly, why they should care.

Get Involved

In our daily lives filled with paying our bills and running our businesses, it’s often too easy to sit back and think that someone else will make the difference for you. As business owners we owe it to our employees, communities, and families to care enough to stand up for our industry. I urge all independents to get involved in their local or state associations, write letters to their representatives and talk to everyone about the unfair business practices that are taking place currently.

As the legislative debates in Arizona appear to be over for now, independents need to regroup and prepare for the next showdown. In a recent story, glassBYTES.com™/AGRR magazine published comments by AGA president, Rex Altree. In his comments, Altree urged others to get involved and ask for assistance when needed. “Our head was down and we were so focused on our world that we didn’t seek help from the IGA during that period, or maybe the auto body shops … People who’ve been through it before are the people with the knowledge,” he said. “We were trying to reinvent the wheel, where it’s already been done in these other states, and we can glean a lot of knowledge and insight from these other associations.”

With new legislation on the horizon in various states many independents are hard at work trying to create changes. The IGA continues to add state chapters to the association that are serving as powerful outlets to both introduce legislation, defeat legislation and band together. By gathering independents together in your local area it provides an opportunity to work toward a common goal using the same means, to include letter writing, education or networking. If you want to get involved with the creation of your state’s chapter, contact the IGA and we will provide you any assistance that you might need.

Legislation and having the law on our side is our biggest tool, but there is certain data and information that will help you on your quest to legally change our industry. Anytime you experience an incident of steering, report it using the IGA Steering Report Form (you can find this report by going to www.iga.org and clicking on “Report Steering”). You can also file a complaint with your state insurance commissioner using the tools on the IGA website (go to www.iga.org and find the complaint link at the bottom of the page). Finally, get in touch with us at the IGA. We have contacts across the country and can get you in touch with the proper authorities.

David Zoldowski is the president of Auto One in Brighton, Mich., and president of the Independent Glass Association (IGA). Mr. Zoldowski’s opinions are solely his own and not necessarily those of this magazine.
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I nignt be maY many channels are made available through your television viewing provider! Even more amazing is how few shows are available that provide a reasonable level of entertainment or eduction. I must say, however, that CBS really hit a home run this season with the airing of “Undercover Boss,” which, by most all critics’ assessments, has been a real success. In fact, the New York Daily News referred to “Undercover Boss” as, “simple and brilliant” and “an hour of feel-good television for under-appreciated workers.”

Wake-Up Call

For those of you who have not seen the show, the idea behind it is for top executives of large companies to go undercover, in a disguised manner, and take jobs within their own companies and interface with their own actual workforces. These top executives typically learn three things during this experience:

- the difficulty of various jobs that are far below their own positions;
- the deficiencies of their corporate systems, policies and procedures that employees count on for support; and
- probably most important, they get to know their people, who are their front-line producers of products and services.

Within the first season, nine companies were filmed, ranging from waste management companies to 7-Eleven to 1-800-Flowers, and not one top executive failed to return to his/her office, following the one-week stint of undercover work, learning how little he/she really knew about his/her employees and the real problems they face every day trying to make their boss happy.

The best part is that every executive was humbled by the experience and took action to improve his/her organization. The response from employees was overwhelming (and so, too, have been the national television ratings).

This show should be a wake-up call for all companies, big or small, to realize there is an enormous separation between the top and bottom in the organizations and, if more than one level of employee ranking exists within the company, then the risk of this separation is present. The outcome of this separation is that the top of the organization doesn’t really know what goes on at the bottom of the organization—and this can be a costly condition. While the buck stops at the top of any company concerning the responsibility of this problem, it is the neglected employees, who are never really asked how things are going, or who are shot for telling the truth (not literally, of course), that will finally quit producing, resulting in a failure of the company.

This happens because top management is too isolated and insulated in its organization. Executives live in too small of a world by not creating means of interfacing directly with their lowest-ranking employees on a regular basis. “Executives live in too small of a world by not creating means of interfacing directly with their lowest-ranking employees on a regular basis.”

The Remedy

The first step of remedy is for the top of the organization to meet regularly with the bottom of the organization. The second step is for top management to participate in this exercise in a manner in which members truly learn the good, the bad and the ugly. Such participation requires not just doing the job, but asking good questions of employees and then listening carefully. You must remember that employees who share information, ideas and concerns want to make a better company. The third step is to take action on everything you learn and make sure that everyone in the organization knows about it.

The final step of remedy is to never quit doing this. These four steps resolve the issues of isolation and insulation, while causing everyone else between the top and bottom of the organization to work on the same continuum of truth.

Carl Tompkins is the Western states area manager for SIKA Corp. in Madison Heights, Mich. He is based in Spokane, Wash. Mr. Tompkins’ opinions are solely his own and not necessarily those of this magazine.

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Glass Emporium Owner Found Guilty of Insurance Fraud Charges

A jury found Glass Emporium owner Mehrdad Hakimian guilty on all counts in the charges filed against him related to insurance fraud and the harboring of illegal aliens, according to the U.S. Attorney’s Office lead attorney on the case, Stephen Corrigan. The trial was completed in March, and Hakimian is scheduled to be sentenced on June 4. The charges filed against him, as the result of an investigation by the FBI, include conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, harboring illegal aliens, obstruction of justice, conspiracy to commit visa fraud, and visa fraud.

Hakimian issued the following statement regarding the trial to AGRR magazine/glassBYTES.com™. “Glass Emporium staff and management are disappointed in the outcome of this trial, but everyone associated with the company respects the jury’s decision,” he says.

In the faxed statement Hakimian also says the company has changed its operating procedures since the FBI investigation began.

“Since the investigation began at the end of 2006, Glass Emporium has implemented strict auditing procedures and investigation to correct the issues underlying the charges and are confident that these problems are resolved and will not occur,” he says. “We have reimbursed insurance companies involved for any errors and we continue to have good working relationships with them.”

In the details of the fraud charges, Hakimian was accused of directing the company’s employees to bill insurance companies “for the cost of more expensive windshields than those installed ... knowing that less expensive windshields had been installed.” Likewise, the court charged him with directing employees to also separately charge insurance companies for moldings, clips and installation materials, “even when those costs were included in the cost of the windshields.”

With regard to the obstruction of justice charges, Hakimian is alleged to have “corruptly alter[ed], destroy[ed], mutilate[de], and conceal[ed] documents and records, namely, glass invoices, glass work orders, and electronically stored invoice records, with the intent to impair their integrity and availability for use in an official proceeding,” according to documents filed in the case.

With respect to the illegal immigration charges, Hakimian is said to have encouraged certain employees whom he knew were illegal aliens to work from home in an effort to avoid being discovered by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE), according to the indictment issued against him.

Bobby Guinto and Aldy Antonio, two fellow employees whom Hakimian is said to have directed in these efforts, pleaded guilty previously, and Glass Emporium vice president Emma DeGuzman was scheduled to be on trial at the same time as Hakimian, but pleaded guilty just before it was to begin to the charges related to harboring illegal aliens, at which point the fraud charges against her were dismissed.

Glass Emporium owns both Glass Pro and Glass Masters and has locations throughout the United States. The company is not affiliated with Glasspro in Charleston, S.C.

Court Doubles Damages in Saint-Gobain Autover/Xinyi Suit

The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio issued a recent ruling doubling the damages Xinyi Glass North America will be required to pay Saint-Gobain Autover in a patent infringement suit filed by the latter company; the final damages total is nearly $22 million. (The exact amount of the damages totaled $21,888,030, compared with an original ruling of $10,944,015.) In addition, Xinyi has been ordered to pay attorney’s fees of nearly $2 million, according to court documents.

In addition, court costs also were assessed—totaling $384,882.99—also to be paid by Xinyi, according to court documents.

Though a jury had made a damage assessment in November of around $11 million, Saint-Gobain Autover had motioned for “enhanced damages, attorney’s fees and pre-judgment interest.” Though the first two of these were granted, Saint-Gobain Autover was not awarded pre-judgment interest, however.

Saint-Gobain filed the suit in 2006, alleging that Xinyi infringed on two of its patents, one titled “Spacer for Windshield Bracket” (known in court documents as the ‘669 patent) and one titled “Method of Centering Windshield Glazings” (referred to as the ‘395 patent). Both patents involve windshields equipped with an extruded profiled spacer,” according to a November statement from Saint-Gobain Autover. (continued on page 12)
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Mainstreet Computers Expands Both Physical Location and Staff

Industry software supplier Mainstreet Computers in Belleville, Mich., recently has undergone some growth, and, though it previously shared its building with several tenants, is in the process of expanding into the entire facility.

“We’re expanding and using the whole building now,” company sales manager Mark Haeck told AGRR magazine/glassBYTES.com™ in a recent interview. “We’re bracing ourselves for growth.”

Haeck attributes some of this growth to the company’s entry into web services in the last few years.

“About three to four years ago we added our web services division and it’s been going really well,” he says. “There’s a whole new generation out there with people going to the web instead of the yellow pages … It’s a great opportunity for us.”

“Our programs are getting better all the time, and the tools available are more flexible,” adds Haeck.

The company also recently hired a new representative, Kevin Winningham, to handle its marketing efforts and is in the process of expanding its sales staff as well.

Mainstreet expanded its headquarters in April.

Safelite to Open New Call Center in Phoenix

Safelite announced recently that it will open a new call center in Chandler, Ariz., outside Phoenix, on June 1. The company says the call center initially will employ around 195, with numbers estimated to grow to around 1,000. The new facility is 86,000 square feet and will be staffed 365 days a year.

“This new facility helps support our business continuity plan by expanding our contact center operations to a second city outside of Columbus, Ohio,” says Safelite president and chief executive officer Tom Feeney. “We chose Phoenix for several reasons, including its strong business community and highly educated workforce; access to a growing Hispanic and Latino-speaking employee base; the later time zone; and the climate.”

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California Cancels Plans to Enact Auto Glass Regulations

THE CALIFORNIA AIR Resources Board (CARB) has announced that it will not enact the previously planned California auto glass regulations based on concerns from stakeholders that they might impact electronic device performance, according to a statement from CARB. The regulations were set to be finalized in March (see related story in November/December 2009 AGRR, page 24).

“After listening to this input and accounting for the legal deadline to finalize the rule … we are announcing that the AB 32 ‘cool cars’ rulemaking will cease,” reads the statement. “Instead, the Board will pursue a performance-based approach as part of its vehicle climate change program to reduce CO2 from air conditioning and provide cooler car interiors …”

A mixed response came from across the industry following the decision to cancel plans to enact such regulations. Many glass manufacturers had supported the development of the regulations, which called for reflective glass in vehicles with the model year of 2012 or later, noting they might have helped the promotion of value-added glass, while some repair industry representatives had expressed concerns previously about the regulations.

In light of the announcement, Rob Vandal, director of advanced product development for Guardian Automotive, says many manufacturers had already put a great deal of work into getting ready for the enactment of the regulations.

“Normally after Board approval, which occurred last June, the regulations end up being adopted after the appropriate edits and comments periods have passed,” says Vandal. “In this case, this late cancellation is particularly difficult for the supply base as the proverbial horse had already left the barn. In order to be prepared for 2012 model year the suppliers and OEMs had already made investments and prototypes. These investments are now in question, along with any jobs they created.”

SuperGlass Windshield Repair president David Casey had been in contact...
with CARB as a representative of the National Windshield Repair Association about how the regulations might impact windshield repair in the state; he previously advised AGRR magazine/www.glassBYTEs.com™ that he had fears about the requirements and what would happen to repair if manufacturers chose to place the reflective coating on Surface No. 2 of the glass.

“Even though there were a number of reasons that the ‘cool glass’ bill was terminated by CARB, I was very gratified that the director was open to hearing about the repair issue with the coated glass,” says Casey.
Glass Doctor University Becomes AGRSS-Registered Training Program

The Automotive Glass Replacement Safety Standards (AGRSS) Council has determined that the Glass Doctor training program qualifies for registration as an AGRSS-Registered training program. In addition, Glass Doctor has decided to open its training center, Glass Doctor University, to the entire industry. Previously it was used only to train Glass Doctor franchisees.

The course lasts four days. The first half a day is spent on adhesive training, while the remainder of the course is spent on advanced training techniques and discussions of industry standards and various available tools. The course is taught by industry expert Frank Levesque.

“It’s very detailed,” says vice president of franchise relations and training Dan Mock. “It’s more for an advanced technician or a business owner.”

“They’re not going to try to sell people franchises while they’re there,” he says.

AGRSS Changes Registration Fee Structure; Businesses Can Now Pay Monthly

The Board of the Directors for the Auto Glass Replacement Safety Standards Council Inc. recently voted to change the structure of its registration fee program, allowing AGRSS-registered companies now to pay monthly if they prefer to do so. The new fee will be $39 a month per registered company, plus an additional $8.50 per location each month. AGRSS currently is setting up a system whereby a business can simply provide a credit card number for automatic payment each month.

“We realize in these tough times, it’s sometimes difficult for companies to pay the entire registration fee at once,” says AGRSS Council president Debra Levy. “We are glad to be able to make this option available.”

However, if a business prefers to continue to pay the full amount of its registration fee annually, this is also possible, and, as an added bonus, companies who do pay in full will receive a free conference registration for one person from its headquarters location, and an additional free registration for one person from each of its locations.

AGRSS Begins Interviews for Business Development Director Position

The Auto Glass Replacement Safety Standards (AGRSS) Council Inc. has begun interviewing for the position of business development director, whose goal will be to expand the AGRSS brand with the ultimate goal of making AGRSS compliance a requirement for all installations.

The business development director also will be responsible for increasing the AGRSS-registered-company pool and working with insurance companies to use AGRSS-registered companies.

AGRSS Council to Lead ARGULA Development

The Auto Glass Replacement Safety Standards (AGRSS) Council Inc. has taken over the administration and development of the Auto Replacement Glass Uniform Labeling of Adhesive (ARGULA) draft standard. The National Glass Association (NGA) previously served as secretariat for the developing standard. The ARGULA Committee will continue to function as a separate committee of the AGRSS Council.
Connecticut Insurance Department Fines GEICO Companies

THE CONNECTICUT INSURANCE Department has fined four GEICO subsidiaries a total of $177,500 for several items found during a recent market conduct examination. Among the citations noted in the recent report, two specific subsidiaries, GEICO Casualty and GEICO Indemnity, were cited for failure to comply with the state's law requiring that optional coverage for safety glass repair or replacement be offered at all deductible levels. “They’ve found instances where GEICO did not offer glass repair or replacement coverage at all deductible levels,” says Dawn McDaniel, a spokesperson for the Connecticut Insurance Department.

The Connecticut insurance statute regarding insurance deductibles for auto glass coverage cited in the report reads as follows:

**Comprehensive automobile coverage to include optional coverage for repair or replacement of damaged safety glass without deductible or minimum amount.**

Each automobile insurance policy providing comprehensive coverage, whether designated as such or included in a policy providing broader coverage, shall provide at the option of the insured complete coverage for repair or replacement of all damaged safety glass without regard to any deductible or minimum amount.

To resolve this, in addition to the associated fines, the Connecticut Insurance Department is requiring that the companies begin complying with the statute, and “re-file these options with the Department.”

According to information from the state, GEICO has said it will comply with the state's orders and will submit a compliance report to the commissioner within 90 days.

The fines break down as follows among the four GEICO subsidiaries included in the report: GEICO Casualty Company, Maryland ($49,000); GEICO General Insurance Company, Maryland ($31,500); GEICO Indemnity Company, Maryland ($64,500); and Government Employees Insurance Company, Maryland ($32,500).

“Connecticut statutes are in place to protect consumers, and violations of these laws are unacceptable,” says Connecticut insurance commissioner Thomas R. Sullivan.

Florida Body Shop’s Slander Suit Against State Farm Dismissed

A U.S. District Court in Florida has dismissed a slander suit brought by a Florida auto body shop against State Farm in a summary judgment. The ruling was issued in late March by Judge Steven D. Merryday in Tampa, Fla.

Gunder's Auto Center, based in Lakeland, Fla., brought the suit against State Farm last March, and alleged that State Farm tortiously interfered with at least three customers and made “slanderous and/or tortious statements to those identified prospective customers.” Gunder’s claimed these false statements included State Farm advising that the shop was overcharging its customers; that it doesn’t repair its customers’ vehicles in a timely and efficient way; and that Gunder’s repair equipment does not pass State Farm’s inspection and is lacking in quality.

State Farm argued in the case that “even if State Farm agents uttered false statements about the plaintiff, the statements are privileged.” Florida law defines privileged statements as “a communication made in good faith on any subject matter to a person having a common interest or duty, even though it contains matter which would otherwise be actionable, and though the duty is not a legal one but only a moral or social obligation.”

Based on this idea, the company argued that “because it was acting as an insurer and was communicating with a party seeking benefits under the insurance contract about an issue in which they have a common interest—the prompt and full payment of the repairs,” any statements made to insureds were “privileged.”

The judge confirmed this argument, but explained in his opinion that, even privileged statements, if made with “express malice” (defined as “ill will, hostility, [or] evil intention to defame and injure”), can be considered slander.

“Although State Farm’s statements (if false) might be defamatory, the plaintiff offers no evidence (other than the alleged falsity of the statements) from which a juror could infer malice,” wrote the judge in his March 29 opinion. “The statements ‘do not inherently demonstrate express malice.’”

He went on to write, “State Farm neither attacked the plaintiff’s moral character nor accused the plaintiff’s insurers or its proprietors of violent crime; each allegedly slanderous statement concerns only the matter of common interest between State Farm and the insured—the quality and value of the plaintiff’s work.”

Gunder’s was represented by Alan Brent Geohagan of Geohagan Law, who advised AGRR magazine/glassBYTEs.com™ in April that he planned to appeal the ruling. However, at press time an appeal had not been filed.

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May/June 2010 | AGRR 17
GETTING STARTED:
For vehicle and glass preparation please refer to AGRSS/ANSI 002-2002 as well as your adhesive manufacturer’s recommendations. Inspect the windshield for defects and any contamination that may compromise the bonding of the adhesive. Also look for any distortion, scratches or defects on the glass or underside moulding.

If the vehicle is equipped with an electrochromic or telematic mirror, disconnect the negative battery cable. Unplug the wiring harness located on the back side of the mirror assembly and unscrew the T20 torx set screw holding the mirror assembly. Remove the nut covers on the wipers and the 15-mm nuts. Using a suitable puller, remove the wipers and set them aside, marking the drivers and passenger side for correct reinstallation. Remove the two push-style pins that secure them to the fender (these are located at the end of the cowl). Use a #2 Phillips screwdriver to turn the two plastic screws located at the top of the cowl 90 degrees to the left, being careful not to strip them. Remove the six push-style pins that secure the cowl (located along the strut tower brace) and place the cowl in a safe location.

REMOVING THE WINDSHIELD:
For the sides and top of the windshield, a cold knife or power tool can be used as well as wire. For the bottom, a power tool or wire can be used, but the hood does not allow for the use of a cold knife along the bottom. Keep in mind that there is not one correct method of removal; the technician should use the tool with which he feels most comfortable and the one that achieves a safe removal (both for the vehicle and the technician).

PREPARING FOR THE NEW WINDSHIELD:
Trim the existing urethane bead, leaving it 1 to 2 millimeters in height. Use your adhesive manufacturer’s pinchweld primer to prime all scratches, if any exist, and allow to dry, according to your adhesive manufacturer’s recommendations. Please note that only the full-cut method is permitted by the AGRSS/ANSI 002-2002 Standard.

FINISHING TOUCHES:
Install the cowl, wipers and mirror in reverse order from removal and torque the wiper nuts to 13-foot pounds. Check for any leaks and be sure to inform the vehicle owner of the safe drive-away time, according to the adhesive manufacturer. Also be sure to record all lot numbers from the adhesive and primers as well as the DOT number from the windshield.

Jamie Browning was the winner of the 2009 Pilkington Classic Auto Glass Technician Olympics. He has more than 17 years’ experience in the industry. Mr. Browning’s opinions are solely his own and not necessarily those of this magazine.
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If you're looking for a new adhesive, faster drive-away times or the latest tools to help you work on the latest vehicles, you've come to the right place.

In the following pages you'll find AGRR's first-ever new product guide, containing the latest items designed for your business.

**TOOLS**

**Reverse It**

The new reverse blend blade from UltraWiz® is ideal for times when a technician does not want the blade to cut right up to the glass, or for situations when exposed glass with an underside moulding or encapsulation is involved.

The 5200 series is available in sizes of ¾, 1 and 1 ½ inches and, according to its manufacturer, offers the control a technician needs to cut away from the glass and moulding.

**You Needn't Beware of This HammerHead**

The HammerHead, a new tool from Crystal Glass/The Extractor, was designed to offer an economical way to reach the lower corners of windshields that sometimes cannot be accessed by a cold knife. The HammerHead uses standard Extractor blades and comes with a 6 ¾-inch cut-out blade. The 21-inch overall dimension of the tool should fit most standard toolboxes, according to the company.

The company also has introduced the Swivel Shaft, a 7-inch extended shaft made to provide longer reach in tight cut-out areas. The shaft swivels 90 degrees left and right, allowing the technician to swivel his battery or handle out of the way of obstacles when cutting out glass.

**ADHESIVE SYSTEMS**

**Dow Reduces Safe Drive-Away Times of Two BETASEAL™ Adhesives**

Dow Automotive Systems has reduced the safe drive-away times of its BETASEAL™ U-400HV and BETASEAL™ U-418HV conventional-cure, glass bonding adhesives by 25 to 50 percent or more, depending upon temperature and humidity conditions.

“These drive-away time improvements will make life easier, safer, and more profitable for glass shops,” says Dale Malcolm, technical manager, aftermarket, for Dow Automotive Systems. “They’re the result of process enhancements in our new, state-of-the-art manufacturing facility, as well as many years of computer modelling, destructive testing, weatherization/durability testing, and laboratory testing that enabled incremental optimization of the adhesive chemistry. The new drive-away times were ultimately validated in March by a series of FMVSS 212 crash tests performed by MGA Research Corp.”

Between 70 degrees Fahrenheit to 80 degrees Fahrenheit and 50 to 70 percent relative humidity, the new drive-away time for BETASEAL U-400HV is three hours, or 25 percent faster than the previous time of four hours. For the same conditions, the new drive-away time for BETASEAL U-418HV is four hours, or 50 percent faster than the previous time of eight hours.

In addition, the company has cut down the drying time of its enhanced BETAPRIME™ 5201 bare metal primer by half—from 30 minutes to 15 minutes.

“BETAPRIME 5201 Bare Metal Primer enables glass shops to provide a necessary service in very little time with basic tools,” says Philip Jentoft, commercial manager, aftermarket, Dow Automotive Systems.

**www.ultrawiztools.com**

**www.extractortools.com**

**www.dowautomotive.com**
Precision Replacement Parts Offers Beam-Style Frameless Wiper Blades

Precision Replacement Parts in Snohomish, Wash., now offers its beam-style frameless wiper blades, designed to withstand all weather conditions. According to the company, the frameless design of the blades makes it so they don’t collect snow and ice. The blades are made from a high-quality, natural rubber and apply smooth, even pressure for quiet, streak-free performance, according to the company.

These also feature an integrated spoiler, reducing lift-off and vibration, and a universal adapter that fits 95 percent of the vehicles on the road today. The blades are available in sizes ranging from 12 to 28 inches.

Provide VIN Etching to Customers

The patented INSTAetch professional glass etch system is a digital, handheld VIN etch device specifically designed for mobile glass technicians. INSTAetch kits allow any installer to produce VIN security marks for the car’s owner or glass company logos and/or phone numbers for brand recognition, all while in the field.

The wireless system provides a permanent etch using a proprietary process that takes less than ten minutes, according to the company.

DBC Offers Online Quoting and Smart-Phone Capability

Digital Business Controls (DBC) in Salt Lake City, Utah, offers a number of software solutions for auto glass businesses. Among these is a solution for real-time online quoting, including a tool for alerting customer service representatives (CSRs) instantly and providing detailed web success analysis.

In addition, DBC’s real-time smartphone applications give technicians a direct tie-in with the company’s software system, allowing them to enter/update information, including notes, payment information and ticket status, as well as to report their status from “on-site” to “completed.” At the same time, CSRs are able to monitor these updates from the company’s headquarters and relay necessary information to customers.

Zeledyne™, in conjunction with Ford, recently introduced a heated power slider back window (Part No. DB 11708 YPY). The window originally was developed for the Ford F-150 pickups and was introduced on 2010 model-year vehicles. Truck owners can flip a switch and defrost their rear windows the way most car drivers do.

The part also is available to replacement businesses, along with the motor and cable assembly, provided for a fast installation, according to the company.

The Annihilator from Glass Pro Systems allows a technician to perform a high-quality repair quickly, according to its manufacturer. Glass Pro Systems officials say the dry-vacuum system is extremely fast to use and works on vertical glass as well as cracks and normal damage.
GlasWeld Releases “Eco” Windshield Repair System

GlasWeld has launched its newest offering in windshield repair equipment, the ecoVac™ injector. The ecoVac injector was built based on the performance of the company’s patented ProVac™ technology and then refined even further to support the company’s environmental and efficiency initiatives, according to GlasWeld.

“GlasWeld is Dedicated to Preservation™ and the ecoVac offers our

Spring Auto Glass Show™ Preview

A number of brand-new products were scheduled to be launched at the Spring Auto Glass Show™ this May in Fort Myers, Fla. Read on for an overview of these.

Booth #12: Mainstreet Features Check Processing Module

The team from Mainstreet Computers will be featuring the latest addition to its Glas-Avenue 8.0 software, its new electronic check-processing module, designed to help glass shops compete more effectively in today’s tough economic market.

By using the company’s electronic check processing module, businesses can eliminate the need for daily trips to the bank and save on the per-item deposit fees. Likewise, insufficient funds risks are reduced, due to quick notification cycles, and deposits are credited for same day availability, allowing a company to lower its overall operational costs.

This feature is available with both the traditional desktop software and the web-based version of Glas-Avenue 8.0.

Booth #15: Get Mouldings Quickly

The newest moulding program from Pilkington North America allows retailers to place orders for mouldings through its quick delivery program: the Pilkington Express Expedited Moulding Program. The company says that using this program, mouldings will be delivered to your door in less than five business days.

Place orders for the mouldings that you use most or need quickly through the new quick delivery program called, the Pilkington Express Expedited. Minimum orders are not required.

Booth #11: eDirectGlass Releases Integrated Technician Route Planner

eDirectGlass, a wholly owned subsidiary of AMJ Logistics, Inc., has introduced a solution for technician route planning in all its TSM point-of-sale editions. The new route planning add-on, called Technician Route Sync or TRS for short, allows eDirectGlass customers to easily pre-plan a route and obtain precise travel logistics for any technician’s work day.

TRS gives eDirectGlass customers integrated “door-to-door” route planning that can easily be dispatched to compatible, over-the-counter, portable GPS devices by companies such as Garmin and TomTom, providing them with real-time and historic guidance on their routes throughout the day. Additionally, TRS routes are integrated with the eDirectGlass Mobile Edition.

Booth #13: CRL Introduces One-Hour Urethane

C.R. Laurence Co. Inc. (CRL) is introducing its POWR Bond one-hour auto glass urethane windshield adhesive, which is cold-applied and priced economically, according to the company.

“Our new POWR Bond one-hour urethane windshield adhesive is a high-viscosity, non-conductive, super-fast-curing adhesive that meets or exceeds U.S. Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards,” says product manager Gary Byrum.

According to the company, the urethane doesn’t have to be heated prior to gunning and can be tack-free in only ten minutes, allowing a one-hour safe drive-away time at temperatures as low as zero degrees Fahrenheit.
Four Events—One Venue

The Independent Glass Association (IGA), the National Glass Association (NGA) and the National Windshield Repair Association (NWRA) all are co-locating their auto glass events during the Spring Auto Glass Show™. The conferences will be held May 21-22 at the Sanibel Harbour Marriott Resort & Spa in Fort Myers, Fla.

The NGA will hold its auto glass certification committee meeting on May 21. Following are the overviews of the IGA, NWRA and Spring Auto Glass Show schedules.

NWRA 2010 Schedule at a Glance

| Thursday, May 20, 2010 | Registration Open  |
| 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. |  |
| 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. | NWRA Board of Directors Meeting  |
| 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. | NWRA Informational Session about ROLAGS  |
| 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Tour of LYNX Services*  |
| 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. | Conference Dinner Cruise* (additional fee applies)  |

| Friday, May 21, 2010 |  |
| 7:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. | Registration Open  |
| 9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. | Opening and Welcome  |
| 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | Legislative and Standards Update  |
| 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. | Auto Insurance Company Panel Discussion  |
| 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Ten Surefire Web Strategies  |
| 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. | Lunch on Own  |
| 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. | Anti-Steering & Grass Roots Initiatives  |
| 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. | Internet Marketing: Websites that Produce Results  |
| 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | Roundtables  |
| 3:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. | Spring Auto Glass Show™  |
| 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. | Cocktail Party on Show Floor  |

| Saturday, May 22, 2010 | Registration Open  |
| 7:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. | Windshield Repair Marketing Tips  |
| 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. | NWRA/IGA Breakfast  |
| 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. | Windshield Repair Technical Tips  |
| 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. | Spring Auto Glass Show™  |
| 10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. | NWRA Certification Training  |
| 2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. | NWRA Certification Examination  |

IGA 2010 Schedule at a Glance

| Thursday, May 20, 2010 | Registration Open  |
| 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. |  |
| 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Tour of LYNX Services*  |
| 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. | Optional, Cocktail Party/Dinner Cruise*  |

| Friday, May 21, 2010 |  |
| 7:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. | Registration Open  |
| 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | Legislative and Standards Update  |
| 10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. | “Freedom of Choice:” The Auto Body Perspective  |
| 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Ten Great Marketing Ideas  |
| 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. | Lunch on Own  |
| 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. | Anti-Steering & Grass Roots Initiatives  |
| 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. | Internet Marketing: Websites That Produce Results  |
| 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | Town Hall Meeting  |
| 3:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. | Spring Auto Glass Show™  |
| 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. | Cocktail Party on Show Floor  |

| Saturday, May 22, 2010 | Registration Open  |
| 7:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. | Continental Breakfast  |
| 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. | How to Maximize Your Legislative and Legal Efforts Locally  |
| 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | Spring Auto Glass Show™  |
| 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Lessons Learned from AGRSS  |
| 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. | IGA Certification Training  |
| 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | IGA Certification Exam  |

* Pre-registration required. Schedule is tentative and subject to change.

Delta Launches 3 Series Windshield Repair System

Delta Kits has a new windshield repair system, the 3 Series. Company officials say the new EZK-321 was designed to deliver maximum productivity for discerning technicians.

customers an economical way to support this initiative and to help reduce glass waste by keeping windshields out of our landfills and saving energy,” says GlasWeld general manager Dennis Garbutt.

The new ecoVac injector has fewer moving parts than its predecessor, improving ease of use and longevity of life. The injector comes with a lifetime warranty and is available in black anodized aluminum with all operating surface areas finished in stainless steel or a completely stainless steel version.

www.glasweld.com/ecovac

Delta Kits has a new windshield repair system, the 3 Series. Company officials say the new EZK-321 was designed to deliver maximum productivity for discerning technicians.

www.deltakits.com

www.agrrmag.com May/June 2010 AGRR 23
Installing rain and light sensors correctly is critical in order for them to work properly. Air bubbles or contaminants, such as dust between the adhesive and the glass, can cause them to malfunction and must be avoided. Windshield manufacturers utilize special heating devices and vacuum systems for their application processes. It can be difficult for a technician in the field to apply sensors without these tools, but here are some tips and guidelines.

Pre-Inspection and Functionality Test
Before getting started on a windshield with rain sensors, you first need to make sure that the rain and light sensors are working. Here are a few tips for doing so:
• Prior to the removal of all windshields with sensors, functionality needs to be proofed by spraying water onto the glass; and
• For combined rain and light sensors, the light sensor functionality needs to be proofed by darkening the light sensor section on the outside of the windshield.

A sensor that does not operate correctly on the original glass will not work on the newly installed windshield either. Sensors not operating correctly need to be calibrated by the local OEM dealership before the broken windshield is replaced.

Application
Once you’ve completed the above pre-inspection tips and have replaced the glass, it’s time to re-install the rain sensor. There are several important steps involved in this:
• First, use a 50/50 mix of isopropyl alcohol and water to clean glass...
surface. Most companies supply a small capsule of primer with a new sensor. Apply the primer to the glass just before applying sensor.

- Try to always get new sensors with the adhesive pad pre-applied. If you have to apply your own pad to a sensor, there is a chance that it may incorporate air bubbles and/or contamination that may cause it to malfunction.

- It is best to apply the sensor to the windshield if the surface of the adhesive is heated (after the lining is removed). It should be noted that the pad carries a slight electrostatic charge, which will attract dust. Because of this, using hot air from a heating gun is not recommended. The best method is to use radiant heat, like the heat generated by a lamp.

- Once the surface of the adhesive is heated, apply the sensor using a rolling motion while applying pressure. The goal is to push out all air bubbles.

Sensor Hints and Tips

Once you have re-applied the sensors, you will, of course, want to test them to make sure they work.

In order to assure correct testing of the sensor functionality, make sure that all vehicle’s doors are closed and the motor is running, because in many cases (such as in that of the Mercedes-Benz), sensors will only operate when all doors are closed. The vehicles were made this way to make sure that vehicle occupants are not splashed with water by the windshield wipers when entering the vehicle.

Also, be sure not to turn the ignition on or listen to the vehicle’s radio while a vehicle with a rain sensor is without its windshield. This can cause the electronic device to come out of adjustment and will need to be recalibrated. This happens because when the radio or ignition are turned on without the windshield in place, the sensor unit receives the wrong information.

Other Factors

There are many other factors to consider when working with windshields with rain and light sensors, such as glass thickness, tints, coatings and a variety of PVB interlayers on the market today.

A windshield with a rain and/or light sensor is developed to operate within that specific windshield’s parameters. The electronic device attached to the optical unit processes the incoming data and reports the information to the electronic controller, which activates the wipers and/or headlights in turn.

If you replace the originally installed windshield with a new one (with a different tint, coating, interlayer or thickness), the electronic device may need to be changed as well. For example, a Mercedes Benz C-Class windshield in solar extra-blue tint (FW02473) has a different electronic device attached than the green/grey tinted (FW02271) glass for the same C-Class vehicle.

Other Types of Sensors

It should be noted that all of these instructions apply to the most common types of sensors found in the field. These all utilize a foam acrylic adhesive. There are other sensors that utilize different adhesives and involve other application guidelines.

These include:

- Lexus and Toyota sensors: Have their own unique adhesive. Do not try to use any aftermarket alternative if it is not the same as the OE adhesive. It will not work properly.

- Condensation sensors: Need to be applied to the glass specifically in relation to the rain/light sensor.

- Today’s new generation of sensors: Use a “gel” instead of an adhesive pad. It is important that this gel is used for the sensor to work properly.

Joseph Gold is the president of Gold Glass Group in Bohemia, N.Y. Mr. Gold’s opinions are solely his own and not necessarily those of this magazine.
THOUGH third-party administrators and independent glass shops likely will forever disagree on whether unethical steering exists in the auto glass business, many in the industry have been recording their calls with customers, insurance agencies and third-party administrators, and AGRR magazine was provided access to some of these (devoid of company, personal or insurance information) for this issue. In the following pages, you’ll get a glance at what your customers may be hearing from third-party administrators. (Editor’s note: All personal information has been removed from the following transcriptions of actual calls.)

An Inside Look at Some Possible Steering Tactics

The “Tactic” – Wait and Switch

Many auto glass shops have reported cases in which their customers receive a call from a third-party administrator after they’ve either started the process, or, at minimum, booked the work, suggesting the customer take the work to one of its own shops. In the following transcription of an actual shop’s phone interaction with a customer, you’ll see a real-life example of this.

CSR: [Auto Glass Shop], this is XX, how can I help you?
Customer: My name is XX and I’m getting a windshield. Should I talk to one of the guys that took my whole order and wrote it up?
CSR: No, it’s okay, he’s actually not even here, but how can I help?
Customer: Okay, that auto glass place, whoever normally does windows for [my insurer] …
CSR: Okay …
Customer: Are you aware of them?
CSR: [XX], I’m assuming?
Customer: Uh-huh. They called me and said “are you ready to schedule your appointment?” And I went, “I already had it done.” They wanted to know if I paid my deductible or if you charged me more than my deductible, and I said “no,” and they said, “okay, well in order to send me a payment, we have to know how much the windshield cost.”

CSR: Okay, well what, actually what I’d like to do is, if it’s alright with you, we actually have a huge problem with [that company]. They’re a third-party administrator for [your insurer], but they also obviously offer their own auto glass service.
Customer: I know that.
CSR: We’ve had a problem with them, after you report the claim, calling and actually stealing jobs from us that way. What they’ll do is, and we have your insurance information here, I’ve already pulled it up. When did they call you, just now?
Customer: Yeah, like about 2 minutes ago.
CSR: Hang on one second and let me find out the best way to go about this. Hang on one sec for me.
Customer: Okay, I have another question, though. Pull my records and see what kind of claim number you have because they gave me a reference number and I’m just curious to see if you’ve got the same thing.

CSR: Sure.
Customer: I’m just curious if they’re talking about when I called one time and said I might like to get it fixed.
CSR: Absolutely, hang on just one second for me, because I did just find it, because I looked it up while we were on the phone. I wasn’t sure that I had that. It looks like the referral number—let me make sure it’s this one; the referral number they gave me was XXXX.
Customer: Oh, well maybe this is from when I called in the very first time, because this is XXXX [different number].
CSR: Yeah, that could be.
Customer: But they’ve already got your approval, right?
CSR: We do, so we have everything that we need.
Customer: So I’m not going to even call them back then.
CSR: No, there’s no need to.
The “Tactic” – Delay, Delay

Many industry auto glass shop owners feel delaying the time it takes for the customer to have his/her coverage verified for a windshield replacement or repair interferes with their ability to do business, by making the customer they're trying to help wait for the service—and giving him/her extra time to decide to go elsewhere. Following are two examples of calls in which the third-party administrator was unable to verify coverage after a lengthy process on the phone.

Call No. One

TPA CSR: Thank you for calling XX, this is XX, how can I help you?
Customer: Hi XX, this is XX over at XX. I have a customer with a cracked windshield who'd like to have it replaced and I'd like to make the claim.
TPA CSR: If the insured is with you, please put them on the line.
Customer: Hello,
TPA CSR: Hello, my name is XX, and I'm going to assist you with your glass claim today.
Customer: Uh-huh.
TPA CSR: May I have your name, please?
Customer: XX.
TPA CSR: Have you previously reported the claim?
Customer: No.
TPA CSR: For the claim, I have to put in a date, if you can give me an estimated date, that will work.
Customer: Uh, XX.
TPA CSR: [repeats date back]
Customer: Yes.
TPA CSR: May I have your zipcode please?
Customer: [provides zipcode]
TPA CSR: I'm having trouble retrieving your information. Can I have your home phone number, please?
Customer: [provides phone number]
TPA CSR: [The TPA CSR then obtains the policyholder's alternative number, address, city and state.]
TPA CSR: Would you happen to have your agent name and phone number?
Customer: Um, it's XXX. The phone number's XXX.
TPA CSR: Thank you, so I have [address, city and state], and your agent is XXX at XXX?
Customer: Uh-huh.
TPA CSR: And may I have the year, make and model of your vehicle?
Customer: It's an old '95 Dodge Ram.
TPA CSR: Is that a pickup?
Customer: Uh-huh.
TPA CSR: Is that a 2-door standard?
Customer: 4-door.
TPA CSR: Is that a 4-door pickup?
Customer: Uh-huh.
TPA CSR: What started the damage?
Customer: Uh, I have no idea. There was a crack in the bottom and it just took off all the way across.
TPA CSR: Is it just in your windshield?
Customer: Uh-huh.
TPA CSR: What's the size of the crack? Is it larger than a dollar bill?
Customer: Oh yeah. It's all the way across the window.
TPA CSR: At the moment, I'm looking to confirm coverage on the vehicle. I will continue to work on it and we'll call you back when it has been confirmed.
Customer: Why can't you confirm it?
TPA CSR: It happens quite often. We're actually a third-party who processes claims on behalf of your insurance company, and sometimes it's just a matter of two systems communicating with each other, since we're not in the insurance company system.
Customer: Uh-huh.
TPA CSR: So usually that's the case and we're not able to verify it right away.
Customer: Okay.
TPA CSR: We have an offline verification department and they'll look into it …
Customer: So is that within an hour or days or … ?
TPA CSR: Sometimes. Usually it's within a couple hours, sometimes it may take a day or two.
Customer: Hmph.
TPA CSR: I'm sorry.
Customer: I had my truck sitting at this place with an appointment to put a window put in, so I'm sure they don't want to wait days.
TPA CSR: Right, definitely, I can understand that. The shops are pretty familiar with when this happens. It happens quite often.
Customer: Okay.
TPA CSR: So, I'm not sure how they—each shop probably has their own way of handling it, but it happens often.
Customer: So who do you call when it's verified?
TPA CSR: We'll notify you and the shop.
Customer: Okay.
TPA CSR: And may I have an e-mail address where I can send a confirmation of the claim?
Customer: Uh, you know, I don't know my e-mail address at home.
TPA CSR: Okay, that's okay. Well, that's all the information I need from you. I do need to speak with [the shop CSR] for just a moment.

continued on page 28
THIS CALL MAY BE RECORDED... continued from page 27

Customer: Okay.
TPA CSR: Do you have any other questions for me, sir?
Customer: No, that's it.
TPA CSR: Okay, well, thank you for calling.
Customer: Thanks.
TPA CSR: You're welcome.
Shop CSR: Hello. May I have the phone number for the shop you're at?
TPA CSR: [provides number]
TPA CSR: Okay. Can I have the spelling of your last name, please?
Shop CSR: [provides spelling]
TPA CSR: And I have the shop e-mail address of XIX?
Shop CSR: Correct.
TPA CSR: Okay, and I will go ahead and send over confirmation of the claim. I wasn't able to verify coverage right away, but we're going to do our offline verification process, and then we'll notify you if coverage is confirmed.
Shop CSR: Okay.
TPA CSR: Any other questions?
Shop CSR: So there's no referral or anything yet?
TPA CSR: No, not at the moment.
Shop CSR: Okay, thanks.
TPA CSR: Okay, well, thank you for calling, and you have a good day.
TPA CSR: Goodbye.

Call No. Two
TPA CSR: Thank you for calling the [insurer name]. This is XX. How may I help you?
Shop CSR: Hi XX, this is XX over at XX. I have a customer that has a cracked windshield and would like to have it replaced. [The TPA CSR requests and verifies the Shop CSR's name and phone number.]
TPA CSR: Go ahead and bring the policyholder on the phone, please.
Customer: Hello.
TPA CSR: Hi, this is XX with the [insurer name]. I'm sorry about your glass damage and I'm going to help you report the claim, alright?
Customer: Great.
TPA CSR: Before I proceed, I need to let you know that our calls are recorded for quality purposes and we are financially affiliated with XX. Is glass the only thing damaged on the vehicle?
Customer: Yes.
TPA CSR: Have the repairs been done?
Customer: No, I'm at the place right now.
TPA CSR: And do you have a claim number yet?
Customer: Uh, no, I don't have a claim number, no.
[At this point, the CSR requests the customer's name, phone number, alternate phone number, e-mail address, policy number and zip code.]
TPA CSR: When did this happen?
Customer: Around XX.
TPA CSR: Around [repeats date]?
Customer: Yes.
TPA CSR: And what state was this in?
Customer: XX.
TPA CSR: And what time was that on XX?
Customer: Driving into work on XX.
TPA CSR: Do you know how it happened?
Customer: It was just expressway driving, probably a rock hit the windshield.
TPA CSR: Is there any damage besides the windshield?
Customer: No, just the windshield.
TPA CSR: Is it smaller than a dollar bill or larger? The crack?
Customer: Yes, it goes all the way across.
TPA CSR: Can I have the address of your policy?
Customer: Yes, it is XX.
TPA CSR: [confirms address] And the last six digits of your VIN number?
Customer: [provides last six digits of VIN]
TPA CSR: [confirms VIN]
Customer: Yes.
TPA CSR: And the year, make and model of the vehicle?
TPA CSR: It's a 1995 Nissan Altima?
Customer: Correct.
TPA CSR: Is that a two-door or four-door?
Customer: Two-door.
TPA CSR: Alright. Ma'am, at this time we are unable to verify coverage with the deductible information, but we will go ahead and verify that manually, and the process is typically completed quickly, but may depend on how much research is required to locate the coverage. In the meantime I can assist you with scheduling an appointment, and once the coverage and deductible are confirmed, [we] will notify you, and please be aware that if the repairs are done before coverage is verified, you may be responsible for the cost of repairs.
Customer: Okay, but I already talked to my agent and he said it's a $100 deductible.
TPA CSR: Okay, but we do have to verify coverage again. That shop again is XX, and, if you want to go ahead and bring XX back on the line, I'll finish up the claim with him.
Customer: Okay, thanks.
TPA CSR: Thank you.
Shop CSR: Hello?
TPA CSR: Alright, XX, I've got a windshield replacement on a 1995 Nissan Altima for XXX.
Shop CSR: Okay.
TPA CSR: Her coverage hasn't been verified yet, so we will contact you once we verify it.

MAY BE RECORDED...
TPAs Speak Out on Coverage Verification Issues

Why do delays in coverage verification, such as the ones detailed in these calls, occur? AGRR magazine asked a number of TPAs that verify insureds’ coverage everyday to comment on what could possibly cause such delays.

HSG vice president of operations and administration Adriann Dalton says sometimes this might happen if the policyholder has made a recent update to his/her policy, but that this is rare.

“Typically, when there are coverage issues, they are to do with updates that have been made to the insured’s policy, but which have not yet been updated in the system,” she says. “For instance, if the policyholder bought a new vehicle, changed their address or changed their phone number, we would not be able to confirm coverage until we [have] receive[d] additional authorization from the insurance company.”

LYNX Services vice president of strategic initiatives Chris Umble says LYNX sees coverage verification issues rarely as well. He estimated that less than half of one percent of callers experience this.

“I don’t have the statistics in front of me, but this is not an issue that we hear about a lot,” he says. “There are times when a client has a system issue that goes away for short periods of time, but that’s the rare exception.”

He adds that if there is difficulty in verifying coverage due to a system failure, LYNX has processes in place to still expedite the claim.

“In every instance, in the interest of customer service, there’s a manual process which would be utilized, so typically the client’s policyholder doesn’t experience [a delay],” he says. Dalton says HSG works to handle these issues quickly as well.

“We utilize a dedicated Verification Team which works any issues [in] real-time until they obtain coverage,” she says.

Officials from Safelite Solutions declined to comment on this issue.

www.agrrmag.com
A Focus(ed) Group
Repair-Only Businesses
Focus on Success
by Penny Stacey

Though the auto glass repair and replacement industries are in many ways linked, sometimes, businesses that focus on windshield repair alone face an entirely different set of challenges than their replacement counterparts. Many have found a way not only to overcome these challenges—but also to make them strengths. Read on for some tips.

1. Windshield Repair Awareness

Though windshield repair has now been around for nearly 30 years, that's a relatively short lifespan compared to other processes and ideas. And with that youth comes a lack of awareness by consumers about both its existence and how it works.

"I find that the majority of the public doesn't know the difference between repair and the actual replacement of windshields," says Mark Huckle, owner of GlassLogic Windshield Repair in Irving, Texas. "They think that repair is replacement."

In order to combat this, Huckle says when he receives a call from a potential customer, he's always careful to pre-qualify the job.

"I always ask specific questions to pre-qualify and make sure that the break is repairable before I head out to the jobsite," he says. "That's really important for a repair technician."

The way insurers handle repair also can be a source of misunderstanding.

"What's confusing to [customers] a lot is that they still don't realize that almost all insurance companies will waive their deductibles [for repair]," says Mike Cass, owner of Eco-Smart in Peoria, Ill. "After all these years, that's still a predominant issue out there."

However, the recent television and radio program focusing on windshield repair by Safelite AutoGlass has helped with awareness, some say.

"I have had two instances where a customer said [he] saw the commercial on television talking about windshield repair and how it was paid for by insurance, and [he] could not remember the name of the company, so [he] looked me up online," says Huckle.

Cass thinks the ad campaign has been a positive for the industry at large.

"I'm always in the Yellow Pages," he says. "... I mostly just concentrate in the main one, but online, I think, is now the way a lot of people, especially the younger generations, are shopping. They'd rather do a search than look through the phone book."

Cass agrees.

"The Internet wasn't even a blink in someone's eye when I got started," says Cass. "But now everyone uses computers ... There's been an explosion in Internet usage."

Robert Cawood of Rock Star Mobile Windshield Repair in San Antonio says approximately half of all his new business comes from his website.

Huckle, however, goes a step beyond his own website.

"I make sure that I am consistently signing on to lists and other directories that will link to my website," he says. "Usually if you find an online directory they will have a free spot in which you can put your information."

Wurst also has a billboard on the main road that goes into his town, along with a regular ad in the local "Pennysaver."
Though Wurst has tried television, he said it wasn’t his most successful effort.

“I did TV ads last December, and the bills came in before the money did,” he says. “It was a very expensive way of advertising.”

Cass has found that marketing via your vehicle also is a good method.

“Make sure you have a very, very recognizable vehicle,” he says. “Use brighter colors, just something to attract the eye. Leave that vehicle parked in a very busy area, such as a major parking area next to a main road.”

Referrals—both from other shops and from other customers—also can result in new business. Cawood sends all of his customers hand-written thank-you cards, and has found that this usually results in word-of-mouth advertising.

“In just a couple of years, I’ve gotten a lot of repeat business and people will refer me to their neighbors,” he says.

Forming an alliance with a replacement shop also can be a benefit.

“When I encounter a windshield that I cannot repair, I am very honest with people and I do my best to refer to replacement shops,” says Wurst.

“Now they have started sending some [repair work] back, even though I give them a lot more money than they give me,” he chuckles.

continued on page 32

Windshield Repair Industry Looks to Promote “Green”

While windshield-repair only businesses face many challenges, there’s also a silver lining—in a world where all things “green” are good, they are providing an environmentally friendly service. And for many this has been a boon.

Windshield repair business owner Mike Cass placed green at the forefront even as he named his business, which is called “Eco-Smart.” And, for every windshield the Peoria, Ill.-based company repairs, it gives away a tree to plant—in support of the fact that a windshield was saved from going to a landfill.

“Most people don’t realize that windshields are not recycled and are just thrown into landfills,” says Cass. “That’s going to be a big draw for repair in general as more people realize that.”

But even though customers often are glad to hear of this, many are unaware, says Mark Huckle, owner of GlassLogic Windshield Repair in Irving, Texas.

“I tell my customers often … that they’re really helping the environment when they choose repair over replacement, and, a lot say, ‘You know, I never thought of that,’” Huckle says.

Some say environmental concern often can be a regional issue, though. For example, Bob Cawood, owner of Rock Star Windshield Repair in Schertz, Texas, serves a variety of areas—and has found this to be true in his home state.

“Being green and environmentally cautious pushes a lot more buttons in Austin, Texas, than it does in San Antonio,” says Cawood.

Likewise, he finds that though green can be a factor, another kind of green plays a larger role—especially in today’s economy.

“I think [my customers’] primary concern is saving money and preventing having to replace their windshields,” he says. “I will bring up the fact that windshields don’t degrade in the landfills and that it’s a good thing to repair, but I have never had anyone said to me that that’s their main reason.”

Though awareness may not always be strong, just this last year, an association has formed to promote the idea of glass repair and conservation throughout the industry at large—and to consumers as well. The Global Glass Conservation Alliance was formed last November by several members of the National Windshield Repair Association (NWRA) who are aiming to reduce the energy impact of glass upon the earth.

“We do everything we can to assist our members with promoting glass conservation to their customers, and hope that, in the end, as a group we can cut down the impact the industry has on the environment,” says GGCA director of operations Wendy Jozwiak.

Though windshield repair is a part of this, the association also works with the flat glass industry as well to promote the re-use and restoration of glass.
A Focus(ed) Group  

continued from page 31

When Steering Impacts Repair-Only Businesses

Though windshield repair-only businesses face a range of issues unique to their industry, they also share a concern with many independent replacement businesses—that of steering (or what some call “deceptive referrals”) by third-party administrators (see related story on page 26).

“Just last week I lost a job to Safelite,” says Jeff Wurst, owner of Crack Master in Redding, Calif. “The customer was in my shop, ready to do a repair and Safelite talked them out of using me.”

Mike Cass, owner and founder of Eco-Smart in Peoria, Ill., has also had some steering issues, so he tries to prep his customers prior to calling their insurance companies.

“When insurance comes up, I’m not going to push [a potential customer] not to call his agent, but I do warn them that their agent’s going to tell them ‘even though you may have contacted xx, you may want to contact this company and this company,’” he says. “I can’t say that I’ve been 100 percent successful with that, but all you can do is keep trying.”

4. Working with Networks

Working with third-party administrators and glass claims networks has its advantages, many say, but it also can create some headaches for a repair-only business. First, there’s billing.

“I can’t survive on what they offer [to pay for repairs], because what I offer is a far greater service than what they’re paying for,” says Wurst. “I’m stuck telling the customers, ‘your insurer says it will pay 100 percent, and that’s not really true.’ That’s part of that bad information.”

To combat this, Wurst has his customers pay him directly and then they submit these to the insurer directly for re-imbursement.

“That’s the only way I’ve been able to survive the last five years,” he says. As for getting leads from networks, it can vary.

“I’ll have a month where I’m getting maybe three, four or five LYNX calls a week, and then I’ll go a month or so when I don’t hear from them at all,” says Cawood.

And, even if you don’t get referrals from the networks, Cass says he’s found it helpful to be listed on them so that he can help a customer off the street more easily.

“If you don’t get on their lists, you’ll lose business—not referral business but people walking through your doors,” he says. “You’re going to have to call that network anyway [even if you’re not on it].”

Penny Stacey is the editor of AGRR magazine.

Though many windshield repair-only business owners say they’ve never thought about expanding into replacement, these types of businesses face a different set of challenges than other auto glass businesses.
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The Dollar Bill Isn’t What It Used to Be!

by Richard Campfield

In today’s economy, the above phrase is even truer than before, and we believe it and accept it. How many times have you heard “it’s not worth the paper it was printed on”? And yet, here we are today with the insurance industry and others using “the size of a dollar bill” as an adjusting criteria that has been of no value to the consumer for more than 20 years.

Back in the 1970s and 1980s the following statement was published in a few windshield repair training manuals: “Cracks over 6 inches are not repairable because the stress is greater than the resin can withstand.”

This statement was not correct; in fact it is just the opposite. In all my research and involvement in the industry during the last 24 years, I have never found one document of evidence showing a scientific difference between a crack longer than 6 inches—whether repaired or not.

I believe length is not the determining factor for repair-ability; contamination is. There is a correlation between length and contamination, but 6 inches is not even in the ballpark. About 80 percent of cracks shorter than 18 inches are not contaminated, but approximately 80 percent of cracks longer than 18 inches are contaminated. Likewise, the length of the crack and the length of time the crack has existed are related. Almost all cracks shorter than 14 inches (which is 72 percent of the repairable crack market) are not contaminated, which is why I think that is a good length for the Repair of Laminated Glass Standard (ROLAGS) to address. (Recently, the ROLAGS Committee voted to adjust its scope, to address cracks of 6 inches or less, and to begin development of a second standard for cracks 6 inches or longer. Prior to that, it had covered repair of cracks up to 14 inches.)

Consumer Feedback

Getting back to the length of a dollar bill again, I can honestly say that I have never heard of one consumer or crack repair technician complaining about a repaired crack because it was longer than a dollar bill (or 6 inches). To this day, I know of no evidence of a difference because the crack is longer than 6 inches, repaired or un-repaired.

There is documentation, however, that 90 percent of all cracks are longer than 6 inches. Additionally, 90 percent of repaired cracks are edge cracks and most windshield replacements are caused from a crack that started at the edge. Also, 95 percent of edge cracks are longer than 6 inches. Ten percent of the repairable crack market consists of floater cracks, but we will cover the floater crack in another issue. This is about the edge crack.

Edge Cracks

So, why are such a large percentage of windshield cracks edge cracks? This happens because during the manufacturing bending and annealing process, a thermal effect causes the edge of the glass to be weakened, known as residual stress. The residual stress is an area about two inches wide (20 percent of the exposed surface area of the average windshield) around the perimeter and is 1,000 psi or less on an OE and usually higher on replacement glass. This is why this area fractures twice as easily as the rest of the windshield. This defect became exposed after the first gas crunch in the 1970s when manufacturers reduced the thickness of the windshield glass to reduce weight; this is when windshield claims began to comprise 30 percent of all comprehensive insurance claims in the United States.

Induced Stress

In addition, there is another stressor called induced stress. Induced stress occurs when the windshield is installed in the vehicle, intensifying and expanding the residual stress and adding its own stress. Then, when a fracture occurs in this already weakened perimeter area of the windshield, it cracks almost immediately to relieve this induced stress (located on the first 4 to 6 inches), and stops when the lamination stress pulls the crack back together. The inward positive lamination stress becomes greater than the negative installation stress and stops the crack. This occurs when the crack is at approximately 8 to 12 inches—the length of approximately 52 percent of the crack repair market. Installation/induced stress is also why 95 percent of edge cracks are longer than six inches.

The SAE Technical Papers 1999-01-3160, titled “Windshield Investigation – Manufacturing Installation Stresses,” describes the aforementioned stresses as follows:

“Two primary sources of stress on a windshield are manufacturing stress (referred to as residual stresses), and installation stresses (referred to as induced stresses).”

We have discussed the reasons why a crack is likely to occur and why it will quickly and easily go beyond the “dollar bill” size. What about repair-ability as far as technician skill is concerned? Well, if you ask a technician properly trained in crack repair if he would...
rather repair a 12-inch crack or one that is shorter than 6 inches (or dollar bill size), the response likely will be “12 inches, because it is easier.”

Stress Relief

Why? Because the stress in that crack has been relieved. It is not only easier to repair but, once repaired, it is more adhesive-friendly because adhesives react positively when they are not under stress. An edge crack smaller than 6 inches is still under negative outward installation stress at the point, which is why 95 percent of cracks are longer than 6 inches; the lamination stress and induced stress are still fighting for control at the edge, making it more temperamental to repair. On the other hand, cracks longer than 6 inches have no stress at the point and less stress in the edge area. It accepts the structural adhesive resins more easily, and, when the correct resin properties are used, the cured resin is under less stress and is being helped by the positive inward lamination stress. A properly repaired long-edge crack is structurally superior to a properly repaired chip repair, because chip resins are adhesives and crack resins are structural adhesives.

In summary, it is the windshield itself that enables a fracture to crack and to extend to more than 6 inches in length. Fixing a cracker longer than the size of a dollar bill is easier than fixing one that is smaller, and you are basically using the same methods, tools and resins to perform both types of repairs, but, still, cracks longer than 6 inches are easier to repair. So when you hear insurers, customers, etc., refer to “a crack longer than a dollar bill,” just tell them, “a dollar bill ain’t what it used to be!”

Richard Campfield is the founder and president of Ultra Bond Inc. in Grand Junction, Colo. Mr. Campfield’s opinions are solely his own and not necessarily those of this magazine.
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TPAs Push for Windshield Repair with Green Efforts

Two third-party glass claims administrators have been working to promote windshield repair in recent months. Net-cost Claim Services, which handles glass claims for Nationwide, recently joined with an organization called American Forests to create a program called “Repair & Replant™.” The company will donate one tree to the American Forests “Releaf” program for every windshield that is repaired through its participating clients.

In addition, HSG recently worked with Esurance to donate 5,500 trees in Madison, Wis.

NWRA Joins ANSI

The National Windshield Repair Association (NWRA) has joined the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) as an organizational member and has submitted its application to become an ANSI-Accredited Standards Developer in order to take over secretariat duties of its Repair of Laminated Automotive Glass Standard (ROLAGS).

Delta Kits Inc. Sets New Sales Record

Officials from Delta Kits Inc. say the company broke its 26-year sales record in early 2010 with an 11-percent increase over the same period for 2009. Specific numbers were not provided.

“Our success is accredited to the perseverance of our team and the quality of our products,” says Korey Gobin, account executive at Delta Kits.

Glasspro Systems has moved its headquarters to New Port, N.C. The company previously was located in Rockville, Ill. (www.glassprosystems.com) …

BRIEFLY …

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**Auto Windscreens Appoints Singleton CFO**

United Kingdom-based Auto Windscreens has appointed Kieron Singleton to the position of chief financial officer (CFO). As CFO, Singleton will head up the company’s finance functions. He will report directly to Auto Windscreens’ managing director, Peter Fox. Singleton joined Auto Windscreens as interim commercial manager in June 2009.

**Glass Doctor Creates New Positions; Adds Second VP**

Glass Doctor has made several management changes. Dan Mock has been appointed to the new position of vice president of franchise relations and training. The company has hired Mark Liston to become vice president of operations, and Todd Overpeck has been promoted to the new position of e-commerce and public relations manager.

In Mock’s new role, he will work to grow Glass Doctor University, which trains new and existing Glass Doctor franchise owners, their glass service technicians and personnel, and other glass industry professionals. (The company recently announced it would open Glass Doctor University to the entire industry. See related story on page 16.) Mock also will support franchise owners by conducting regional meetings and training sessions, as well as developing new customer service initiatives.

Mock has more than 35 years of experience in the glass industry, including the last eight years with Glass Doctor, where he has served as vice president of operations as well as franchise consultant. Mock also serves on the boards of the Auto Glass Replacement Safety Standards (AGRSS) Council and the National Windshield Repair Association (NWRA).

Liston joins the Glass Doctor management team from Clockwork Home Services, where he was vice president of sales and marketing. With more than 30 years of franchising management experience, Liston also worked for Valpak, where he was director of new franchise development.

Overpeck has more than 18 years of experience in public relations, marketing and strategic planning, including the last three years with Glass Doctor as communications specialist. In the position of e-commerce and public relations manager, Overpeck will coordinate online marketing, website management and social media initiatives, as well as support individual franchise marketing plans.

**Pilkington Parent Company Names Former DuPont Exec President**

The Board of the NSG Group, which owns Pilkington North America, has appointed former DuPont executive Craig Naylor as its new president and chief executive officer (CEO). He succeeds Katsuji Fujimoto, who will now serve as chairperson of NSG Group; Fujimoto takes the place of Yozo Izuhara, who is scheduled to retire on June 29. Naylor became “CEO designate” on May 1 and at press time was scheduled to take on the role of president and CEO on June 29.

Naylor completed a 36-year international career with DuPont in 2006, as group vice president for DuPont Electronic and Communication Technologies, and was a non-executive director of Delphi Corp. from 2005 to 2009.

The proposed changes were subject to shareholder agreement and, at press time, were scheduled to be finalized after the company’s shareholder meeting on June 29, according to a statement from the company. The changes and appointments were to take effect immediately following such approval on that date.

**ABRA Names Rouse President and CFO**

ABRA Auto Body & Glass has appointed Duane Rouse to the position of president and chief financial officer. He previously served as executive vice president and chief financial officer. Rouse joined ABRA in 1996 as vice president of finance, chief financial officer and treasurer. In 1998 he was promoted to executive vice president, chief financial officer, secretary and treasurer. Rouse is a certified public accountant with a degree in accounting from the University of Wisconsin at LaCrosse. He was employed by Price Waterhouse and held senior management positions in several companies prior to joining ABRA.

**CodeBlue™ Hires New Chief Operating Officer**

CodeBlue has hired Gary Bonneau as its new chief operating officer. In this role, Bonneau will oversee the company’s new office located in Springfield, Ohio.

Bonneau comes to CodeBlue from Ameriprise Auto and Home Insurance, where he has spent the past five years, most recently serving as director of claims operations.
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Adrenaline Junky
Nick Muratalla, OC Glasscraft

If you talk to Nick Muratalla about his hobbies, you’d be amazed that he has time to sleep—or work, for that matter, as owner of OC Glasscraft in Tustin, Calif. But Muratalla spends his mornings before work at the beach surfing, and his afternoons playing both fast-pitch softball and biking, and, on the weekends, he participates in not only fast-pitch tournaments, but also in extreme downhill mountain-biking.

“I’m an adrenaline junky, and, if it’s fun, I’ll do it,” he says.

“Plus I do auto glass too,” he jokes. Muratalla, a lifelong athlete, grew up surfing on a regular basis and playing baseball as well. As an adult, he began playing slow-pitch softball and was picked up by a national team. But after a few years of that, he realized the level of competition he desired was missing.

One day, while installing a windshield for a customer on a mobile job, Muratalla caught sight of a fast-pitch trophy and asked the customer about it.

“I went and watched two games, and I asked the coach if I could try out for the team,” he says. “I made the team and I’ve been booked ever since.”

In Southern California where Muratalla lives, the fast-pitch season lasts most of the year, though the national tournament is held each year in August—when all of the U.S. states are warm enough for the sport. Muratalla’s team is quite competitive and has placed in the top five of the 72 teams across the country. He plays the role of catcher.

In addition to various tournaments throughout the league, the team practices twice a week and plays every Wednesday night during the season.

Though Muratalla describes fast-pitch softball as his passion, several years ago he discovered another pastime—mountain-biking, but not just any mountain-biking.

“The real thrill is to get on a downhill bike and go as fast you can,” he says. Though he loves the thrill of the downhill ride, he says it’s also great exercise.

“It really works the lungs, the torso, the arms—you’re using a lot of muscles,” he says.

But it can also be dangerous, he warns. "I definitely don’t take it lightly," says Muratalla. "One of the major factors is to ride with a buddy. If you go off a trail, you’re going to need someone to radio or call for help.

He also wears protective gear—not just a helmet but also elbow guards, shin guards and a kidney guard—in case of a fall.

Muratalla mainly downhill bikes on weekends, but, during the week, he still tries to fit a ride in when he can.

“Generally in the wintertime I try to get out there every weekend, and then I ride around town during the week to keep my legs loose,” he says.

Muratalla manages to fit his other major pastime—surfing—before most people’s days even begin.

“I can go surf before the sun comes up—that doesn’t take much [time],” he says. “The surfing part is easy because it’s nearby, and you don’t need anything but the ocean.”

Muratalla, 44, has 23 years’ experience in the industry. He has three children, Brittany Marie, Dakota Raye and Logan.

Self-proclaimed adrenaline junky Nick Muratalla has been in the auto glass industry for 23 years. In his spare time, he mountain-bikes (downhill specifically), plays fast-pitch softball and surfs. Last November, he participated in the Pilkington Classic Auto Glass Technician Olympics in Las Vegas.
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