

3 keys to performing safe collision repairs

How your collision repair facility can consistently and efficiently perform safe, quality repairs.



There's no doubt you understand the challenges collision repairers face today—tight schedules, staff retention, demanding customers, and the pressure to maintain high standards for safety and quality.

On the one hand, you're working to improve your operational efficiency and, on the other, making sure every repair meets industry standards – both are easier said than done. These challenges can be overwhelming, especially when you're juggling multiple repair jobs, trying to keep up with customer expectations, and supporting your team. Soon, the days start to feel longer but you never feel like you're getting caught up. There's got to be a better way...

Good news! Here are a few tips to help you navigate these challenges and deliver safe, high-quality repairs consistently and efficiently.



Consistency

If you pause to consider anyone at the top of their field, you'll likely realize that one of the primary reasons they excel is their consistency. Whether they're in the collision repair business or a different profession, like an athlete or a musician, they perform and deliver consistent results. So how do you instill a level of consistency within your collision repair facility?

A good place to start is the process. **Having a standardized repair process in your shop that follows the same methods and procedures every time creates consistency.** It also helps reduce the risk of errors and oversights that may compromise the repair. Plus, by implementing a standardized process, you're also promoting consistency across your staff. Your technicians know exactly what steps to take and what standards they are expected to meet to deliver a high-quality repair.

Next, clear, consistent communication that includes everyone involved in the repair process, including the customer. Listen to your customer's account of the collision and review the vehicle together while documenting the damage. You should also set expectations for your customer during this step – let them know what you're doing, how long you'll have the vehicle, and what you may need from them in the process. And, of course, be sure to ask the customer if they have any questions.

In addition to establishing good communication practices, it's also important to maintain consistency in your documentation and record-keeping. **Solid written and photo documentation will help prevent supplements and help ensure you are paid the proper amount for your work.** Make sure to document every step of the process, including any interaction with the customer. While estimating and repair planning solutions will cover the basics, when it comes to documenting procedures, you want to make sure you're also taking quality pictures of the repair process. Luckily, most newer smartphones will do the job!

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Efficiency

You would be hard-pressed to find a successful business that is also inefficient. Now efficient doesn't necessarily mean 'fast' as much as it means 'streamlined.' This includes time management, of course, but it's also about leveraging your resources appropriately.

There are several ways to encourage greater efficiency within your staff, but one that may get overlooked is providing ongoing **training for technicians**. This ensures they are up to speed with the latest repair techniques and technologies, allowing them to work more efficiently. Knowledgeable employees are efficient employees who know their stuff. Given how quickly things change within the industry these days, ongoing training and education for your team is invaluable. What's more, investing in training shows your employees you value their professional development and are committed to helping them succeed. This promotes higher levels of job satisfaction and employee engagement, which boost productivity, efficiency, and morale.

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The logical extension of training your team is getting collision repair certifications for your facility. A great way to help ensure your facility and technicians have up-to-date tools and training is to **invest in OEM Certifications**. Certification provides the knowledge and skills that empower your team to approach each repair with confidence, minimizing mistakes, supporting high-quality work, and maximizing workflow. Are you using the right welding method? Consulting the repair procedures? Regularly maintaining your equipment? The recommendations published by OEMs are designed to ensure consumer safety, repair quality, and vehicle longevity. These are steps you should take regardless of whether your shop is certified, but why not get recognition for your hard work? OEMs already recommend certified shops through shop locator tools. Many are also starting to recommend certified shops in subscription-based apps, meaning even more business for you if you're certified.

One final tip for improving shop efficiency is to invest in parts management solutions. You've likely dealt with time-consuming parts research, inaccurate orders, and out-of-stock parts, all causing delays in completing repairs. Using parts ordering solutions can streamline these processes, allowing you to quickly access parts information, including diagrams and order tracking. You should also consider taking advantage of promotional pricing through existing parts programs offered by leading parts procurement platforms. These platforms provide incentives and discounts on parts, so leveraging these programs, in addition to supporting a streamlined procurement process, can also have a positive impact on your bottom line.



Quality

This is likely a given, but consumer safety is the top priority. This starts with high-quality, proper repairs that help ensure vehicle safety and contribute to overall safety on the road. Prioritizing consistent and safe repairs helps build a positive reputation for your repair facility, while also decreasing the likelihood of vehicles returning with quality issues.

One way to help ensure quality is to **always use up-to-date OEM repair procedures.** Manufacturers design vehicles with specific materials, parts, and repair methods to guarantee the highest safety standards for drivers and passengers. Following these repair procedures helps maintain the structural integrity of the vehicle. We know this can be especially challenging, considering OEMs are constantly adding and updating procedures. However, using comprehensive **repair planning software** with up-to-date repair procedures will make your job a lot easier and go a long way toward promoting quality.

Consistently delivering safe, quality repairs, can **help you maintain (or build) a strong, trusted presence in the industry**. Customers value safety and are more likely to come back to a repair shop that delivers quality repairs and work that meets – or better – exceeds expectations. Satisfied customers will also recommend the shop to others, further enhancing your reputation and attracting new business. For any business, but especially collision repair facilities, reputation is absolutely critical. You want your business to be known for quality and safety, because if you're not, you're facing an uphill battle to repair your image.



Consistency



Efficiency



Quality

Establishing a strong foundation

By focusing on these three keys– consistency, efficiency, and quality – collision repair facilities can perform safe repairs that meet industry standards. Consistency, as demonstrated by standardized repair processes and clear communication, lays the foundation for quality repairs, and reduces the risk of errors. Efficiency, driven by ongoing training, certification, and streamlined parts management, helps your team work smarter and faster, improving workflow and customer satisfaction. Finally, prioritizing quality through the use of up-to-date OEM repair procedures and comprehensive repair planning software ensures that every repair meets the highest safety standards, enhancing your reputation and driving business growth. Together, consistency, efficiency, and quality help collision repair facilities navigate ongoing industry challenges to drive success and growth for your business and your team.

Questions?

We're happy to help!
Click [here](#) to connect with an expert or to learn more about OEC Collision Shop Solutions.

