

3M™ RepairStack™ Performance Solutions Helps Arizona MSO Optimize Operations



by Autobody News Staff

James Huard's impact on the automotive repair industry spans more than four decades. After getting his start at 15, he performed different roles within shops across the country, culminating in his ownership of *Painters Collision Centers* in Arizona. Each chapter of his career contributed to his understanding of the industry, laying the groundwork for Painters, which grew into three mega-volume body shops and a calibration-specific facility, to become a leader in its region before being acquired in early 2024.

At the core of Painters Collision Centers' reputation was a commitment to quality and close attention to detail under Huard's leadership. Painters' facilities operated under a strict regimen to ensure every vehicle underwent thorough scrutiny before leaving, complemented by a robust documentation system, where each step of the repair process was recorded and archived.

Central to Painters' success was staying abreast of the latest advancements in software technology. In mid-2021, Huard engaged in discussions with **Joel Skaar**, a 3M representative specializing in collision repair, about 3M™ RepairStack™ Performance Solutions, an innovative hardware and software system designed to revolutionize inventory management, streamline blueprinting and billing processes, and provide real-time business performance analysis. Recognizing the potential of 3M™ Repairstack™ to optimize operations and drive growth, Huard embraced the partnership with 3M.

"I wanted to provide my technicians and painters with the best products available, and I believe 3M delivers just that," Huard affirmed. By implementing 3M™ Repairstack™, Painters could equip their team with superior products while minimizing waste and maximizing efficiency. The promise of cost savings and operational enhancements made 3M™ Repairstack™ an attractive proposition.

However, Huard sought



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reassurance from 3M, having encountered numerous vendors and their promises over the years. "I'm really big into promises kept. I've been in this industry so long, everybody makes me a promise that they can't fulfill." From the beginning of the process, Skaar sought a deep understanding of how Painters operated, which gave Huard confidence in the partnership.

By the end of 2021, all three Painters locations were equipped and operational with 3M™ Repairstack™. In their approach, they designated their parts managers as the gatekeepers, centralizing control over inventory. They meticulously managed every item. This level of detail allowed them to precisely allocate resources, down to a single piece of sandpaper. The software they implemented facilitated this granular level of tracking and accountability. With this system in place, they were able to operate with unprecedented precision and efficiency, enabling them to focus on the task at hand of repairing more vehicles.

"The biggest promise kept was that they would save me money, and they did," Huard acknowledged. By leveraging the 3M™ Repairstack™ Performance Solutions advanced inventory management capabilities and superior products, Painters achieved about a 1.5% increase in the top line sale on average, significant for any business over

time. Furthermore, 3M's unwavering support and commitment to customer satisfaction and use of the tool further solidified the partnership.

In addition to the tangible benefits, Painters also derived value from creating a gamified approach to reporting facilitated by 3M™ Repairstack™. By integrating analytics and sales numbers into a competitive framework, Painters fostered a culture of continuous improvement and accountability among its employees. The weekly analytics/reporting email, shared among the three shop GMs, served as a motivational tool, driving sales to higher levels. If a shop wrote \$100,000 worth of repairs, but only sold \$200 of 3M product, it was clear this was an area of opportunity to discuss with the GM. The "winning" GM would receive a prize or bonus.

Huard's visionary leadership and strategic partnership with 3M helped propel Painters Collision Centers to unparalleled heights of success. By prioritizing quality, efficiency and employee satisfaction, Painters set a new standard of excellence in the automotive repair industry. As Huard aptly puts it, "I recommend [3M™ Repairstack™] to shop owners. I recommend it to corporate collision. I recommend it to everybody. If you want to be efficient, you want to have control of your products and you want happy technicians, it's the way to go."

Painters Collision Centers

Queen Creek, AZ
480-987-7968

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair
Facility Employees: 100+
In Business Since: 2021-2024
Number of Locations: Three



A weekly analytics/reporting email generated by the Performance Analytics Dashboard, shared among the three shop GMs, serves as a motivational tool, driving sales to higher levels.



Parts managers are able to meticulously manage every item, down to individual units, allowing them to precisely allocate resources, even down to a single piece of sandpaper.

3M Automotive Aftermarket Division

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