

M. Toguchi Body Shop Praises Axalta for 'All Around Support' Since 2000



by Autobody News Staff

M. Toguchi Body Shop started as a one-person operation in 1958, in a 500-square-foot lean-to garage on the side of Masano Toguchi's parents' home in Puunene, Maui, HI. The business' first big move came in 1965, when it relocated to a 4,000-square-foot military Quonset hut leftover from World War II, one of 40 such huts that comprised the Kahului industrial park.

A few years later, in 1968, Masano "Masa" Toguchi decided to enter the collision repair market after a new Volkswagen dealership opened on Maui.

Coupled with the release of the movie "Herbie: The Love Bug," the Volkswagen Beetle had become the new "it" car on Maui. Masa had found his niche, as not many collision repair technicians were excited to repair this odd little car. He and his team became the go-to repair shop for the "bug."

After the County of Maui decided to demolish the old Quonset huts in the 1980s, M. Toguchi Body Shop settled in its current location in the Wailuku Industrial Park in 1984. The collision center now has 17 employees and consists of two adjacent buildings totaling 10,000 square feet.

Masa's son, Daniel, took over the company in 1993. Daniel now runs the company with his son, Brent, and his wife, Alexandria.

"We are proud to be a third-generation legacy repair shop," Daniel said.

When Autobody News asked Daniel what sets his business apart from others in the industry, he said, "my people."

"I got a really good crew," he said. "We all say we're 'the best of the scrubs.'"

In 2000, Daniel started using Axalta refinishing products. Shortly after in 2002, he joined the Axalta Business Council, also known as the Axalta 20 Group.

"It has been a long journey," he said. "They have helped us a lot."

Daniel said the Axalta Business Council meets quarterly to encourage "best practices" to improve business.



M. Toguchi Body Shop was founded in 1958 as a 500-square-foot lean-to garage, and now comprises two buildings totaling 10,000 square feet.

"They would cover how to move production vehicles through your facility more efficiently, shop management and marketing and more, while using the group composite financials to monitor your progress," he explained. "We would turn in our financial data, and they would put it in as composite spreadsheet so that you could measure your business among your peers."

Daniel added the body shop tours that accompanied the meetings were an "excellent opportunity" to see how other group members were using Axalta products in their operations.

"You see how other members operate their business, knowing full well that what works for them in their part of the country might not work for you," Daniel said. "But if you see some operation you like, you can tweak it to fit your business."

Daniel said he discovered the Pro Stat-Gun on one such Axalta Business Council shop tour. The Pro Stat-Gun is used to minimize the dust particles getting on paint surfaces due to static electricity, especially on plastic bumper covers.

"It helps a lot, but we also use good spray booths and high-quality Axalta paint, so it's everything combined, along with good paint preparation from our painters," he added.

Daniel and his team at M. Toguchi Body Shop recently started spraying Axalta's Cromax XP Basecoat.

"Cromax XP Basecoat is

Axalta's hybrid solvent line that mimics their water-based product called Cromax EZ," he explained. "It provides fast coverage and better color matching for today's vehicle colors."

Cromax XP has excellent color capability to match modern high chroma color palettes. Color matches are available in a wide choice of solid, metallic, pearl and special effect colors for spot, panel and overall repairs. Other features include outstanding coverage and blending.

Apart from the high-performing products, Daniel said his collision center also has "all around support" from his Axalta representatives.

"We have our local Axalta paint supplier at H&S Paint, and our Hawaii Axalta Business Account Manager Troy Emrick," he said.

Daniel added that whenever he needs help with training, he can reach out to one of his Axalta contacts and a paint technician will fly out of California promptly. "We have Mr. Bellisario Garcia coming in shortly to help our paint team," he said.

Autobody News asked Daniel about his typical customer profile, and he said his niche is the "everyday man's car."

"If you look at the vehicle demographics on Maui, it's primarily Asian vehicles," Daniel said. "Which works out because Axalta has done a great job with color matching on Asian brands."

M. Toguchi Body Shop

Wailuku, HI

808-244-5339

mtoguchibodyshop.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 17

In Business Since: 1958

Number of Locations: One

Production Space:

10,000 square feet



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M. Toguchi Body Shop has sprayed Axalta paint products for more than two decades.

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