



Diamond Collision Center Shines with Audatex Estimating™

Diamond Collision Center

With a focus on repairing deer-inflicted damage to SUVs, cars and trucks, Diamond Collision Center, located in Webster, Wisconsin, stays a cut above the competition by leveraging the most advanced equipment available. Following a deadly Category 3 tornado in 2001, the shop's use of Audatex estimatics technology enabled it to rise to the challenge of supporting the community, returning hundreds of storm-damaged vehicles to the road in record time.

Industry

Collision Repair

Products

Audatex Estimating, Audatex Real Steel Recycled OE Parts Locator™ and Audatex Shoplink®



Diamond Collision Center

Challenge

As many as 2.4 million deer collisions occurred between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2009, according to data from State Farm Insurance¹. In most areas of the U.S., these statistics may seem unimaginable, but in Webster, Wisconsin, where the deer population thrives, the numbers reflect nothing more than everyday life. Deer are part of the culture in this somewhat rural “north woods” section of the state: Enough of these wild mammals exist to wreak havoc on vehicles across the region.

Judy Sperry, who co-owns Diamond Collision Center with her husband Mike, estimates that most drivers in Webster accidentally strike a deer approximately once every 3 years. Helping customers get their vehicles looking like new again after these nerve-racking incidents is the focal point of Diamond Collision's well-run business.

When Judy and Mike Sperry bought the auto body repair shop in 1999, they faced many hurdles. One was dealing with the frustrations of hand-

written estimates. As vice president and business manager, Judy Sperry felt the brunt of this outdated system, which frequently led to miscalculations of repair materials and labor time, lack of insight into add-on requirements, and loss of productivity and revenue.

Although the company was burdened initially with many bills due to the need to modernize, she felt that they couldn't afford not to embrace automation to expedite and standardize their collision repair estimating processes.

“If you're going to operate a modern shop, you must have cutting-edge technology,” Sperry says. “We invested immediately in big changes, all geared toward improving quality, service and profits, including the purchase of a Spraybake downdraft spray booth, a Pro Spot® resistance welder, a Chassis Liner™ frame rack and a Kaeser™ compressor. We knew that adding a first-class, Internet-based estimating system to the list would bring everything together.”

“They sold me almost instantly on their overlap calculations and their streamlined labor reports.”

Judy Sperry, Co-owner, Diamond Collision Center

Audatex Solution

To scout out available estimating system options, Sperry started by attending the International Auto Body Congress & Exposition (NACE), held annually in Las Vegas. There, she looked at two primary Audatex competitors, but felt their sales staffs didn't take her buying intentions seriously. At the then-ADP booth on the show floor, however, she found a skilled team of sales executives dedicated to helping her find a good solutions fit for her shop.

While it now has been nearly a decade since Diamond Collision chose Audatex, Sperry recollects her selection of the system as if it were yesterday.

“They sold me almost instantly on their overlap calculations and their streamlined labor reports, along with capabilities for documenting our work in the system and showing exactly what each labor operation required,” she says. “With these resources available to us, we knew that we would be better positioned to get paid for the full breadth of work performed.”

Sperry also recognized that Audatex positioned its offerings ahead of the technology curve. At that time, digital photography was poised to change the collision repair industry dramatically, offering a huge advantage over Polaroid® photos. Audatex innovations in this area gave her the potential to attach digital photos to electronic estimates, which not only yielded efficiency improvements, but also ultimately supported her efforts to secure direct repair contracts with major automobile insurance providers.

Results

Sperry came home from the NACE show with the Audatex Shoplink system essentially in tow. The shop installed it without a hitch. When any questions or issues arose, Sperry said Audatex offered great support by telephone. To ensure that the staff got the most out of the system's capabilities, she sent the entire group to offsite training.

That training was tested almost immediately. They had barely set up the system when disaster struck the Webster, Wisconsin region. On June 18, 2001, a Category 3 tornado occurred roughly 15 miles away from the center of town, tragically killing two people and injuring 16 others. Webster also suffered more than \$10 million in damages. Vehicles smashed by flying objects and fallen trees represented a large part of those damages, and Diamond Collision was called upon to quickly get them back to prime condition.

"It was a challenge that demanded peak performance from our staff," recalls Sperry. "Audatex allowed us to present a professional image at a time when our town was immersed in chaos. If we had still been doing manual estimating, that chaos would have been magnified."

Diamond Collision experienced a record month after that tornado hit. During that initial period with Shoplink, she recalls that capturing the many

operations lost in the hand-written sheet was her most critical goal. This allowed her to find a way to ensure profitability for her small but growing business.

Today, Sperry's use of the Audatex Estimatics platform is more about improving productivity and customer service. The Audatex Estimating email feature is one of her favorites. It offers the ability for Diamond estimators to attach photos to electronic estimates, and then email them together with invoices scanned in from another device. This ensures that all pertinent data is presented to adjusters in a single location.

Sperry and her team are also venturing into the world of 3D Intelligent Graphics, taking advantage of an exclusive Audatex Estimating feature that represents a significant step forward for "smart" estimatics, helping shops make sure that the correct parts are ordered.

The driving force behind Diamond's estimating success continues to be the Audatex Collision Estimating Database, which serves as the backbone of Audatex Estimating Software. An immense collection of intelligence that encompasses some 4 million parts, it delivers the most current pricing on original equipment, after-market and even



salvage parts (via the Audatex Real Steel Recycled OE Parts Locator), along with labor and refinish information. For Diamond, this valuable data ensures fast, accurate and complete estimates, resulting in fewer supplements and quicker cycle times.

Being in a small town like Webster, where word-of-mouth advertising is even more widespread than deer collisions, Sperry recognizes the importance of keeping her customers happy. She is pleased with how far Diamond Collision has progressed since she and her husband purchased the shop. "We have built a clean and modern shop, investing in top-notch equipment and excellent technology such as Audatex," she says. "These decisions have allowed us to live up to the Diamond name while keeping our business a cut above the competition."

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