



Collision Repair Center Best Practices

Getting the Most from the Estimate

The estimate or damage assessment is the most critical part of the collision repair process. A shop's revenue starts with a thorough, well-written damage assessment. The damage assessment must be complete and include all required operations in order to speed the process and reduce cycle time. Losses can occur if the estimate is poorly written.

To become more profitable, shops must rethink how they do business - starting with the damage assessment. Does your staff have the proper amount of time and training needed to properly write an assessment? Are their damage assessments profitable? Your efforts in ensuring this will positively affect your bottom line.

Include All Materials

Be sure to identify frequently missed items on the estimate – items that are used on most repairs, but are rarely charged for. These items include glue, screws, bumper clips, fasteners, bonding adhesive, buffing after painting, etc.

What if each vehicle estimate was missing \$30 worth of frequently missed items? That may not sound like a big number, but when you multiply that by the total number of estimates done in a year, that number suddenly becomes much higher. And so does the hit in your profits. Remember, you can charge for it as long as you can justify it.

Learn the Art of Up Selling

Is your shop making the effort to give your customers an assessment on other damages that exist on their vehicle? If not, you could be missing a great sales opportunity through up selling. This is

usually missed when the estimator or customer doesn't have enough time or estimators aren't aware they should be doing so. Make them aware! Perhaps the estimator is just lazy.

Items such as a complete detail, paintless dent removal, clear 3M bras, stripes, accessories, and alarms can be sold by most collision repair centers. Keep in mind that up selling works best when you schedule your assessments. In most cases, that means a minimum of 30-40 minutes for each assessment, with 15 minutes in between customers. This would mean estimates should be scheduled approximately one every hour. Scheduling back-to-back estimates could mean more mistakes and missed damage. Not to mention no time for up selling. The estimate plays an important part in the sales process.

Your Customers are Your Best Salespeople

Don't forget to "resell" the repaired vehicle back to the customer. A satisfied customer can be an excellent salesperson for your shop. The estimator can begin the process of training the customer as a spokesperson. Consider that repeat and referral business typically accounts for 60-90% of revenues.



Please contact your FinishMaster Account Manager for more value added suggestions and tools to help boost your profits. Our business is making your business better.