

TIPS

Sales & Marketing: While advertising is necessary, it requires engaging the public through some external media. According to Masters, "Marketing is the TOTAL of activities involved in the transfer of goods or services from the producer to the buyer." As we say in Tennessee, "Charity starts at home!" So be sure not to overlook the tools right under your nose. Have you asked your employees lately how they view or would promote your business?

Profitability & Management: Tracking the right numbers is vital. Knowing your history is only valuable if you are constantly measuring your progress, so you can correct inconsistencies as you go. For example, pour all liquids on the scales in order to monitor where paint and materials are really going.

Production & Cycle Time: The old adage, "A picture is worth a thousand words", could be changed in collision shops to: "A picture is worth a thousand dollars". Point being, you are required to document repairs with photos. Digital Cameras are getting less expensive every day. Put them in every department, so that production is not stopped or delayed while waiting for the estimator.

Safety & Thinking Green: In an earlier issue, we suggested forming a safety committee. Once the committee is formed, schedule a meeting each month and document the results. Give an award or gift to the person who 1.) helps promote safe practices in your shop; 2.) creates the least waste materials; or 3.) recycles the most. This will not only promote green, but put green in your pocket!

Estimation: Estimators often begin looking for damage before they determine all the necessary information. An estimate that I reviewed recently was shorted over an hour. Also, part prices were entered manually, because an item was not listed in the options. It would have taken only 5 minutes to review all the options before starting on the sheet.

Technical: The new I-CAR SP08 class gives the OEM recommended procedures for sectioning the frame on most of today's full frame vehicles. Make sure your estimators and technicians check out this class. Also make sure they are aware of the technical link on the I-CAR website: www.i-car.com

"Whether you think that you can, or that you can't, you are usually right."

**Henry Ford
(1863-1947)**

Top Ten Numbers to Track

10. UP-SELL (*Increase sales on jobs that are already there.*)
9. PROPER SOFTWARE & TOOLS ARE ESSENTIAL (*PC, flashlight, chamois, camera, measuring devices, etc.*)
8. INFORMATION ON THE PROCESS (*Avoid customer frustration and explain what goes on.*)
7. A SUITABLE ENVIRONMENT (*The sales process requires appropriate space and fixtures.*)
6. A GOOD RECEPTION (*Everyone who greets potential customers needs to be prepared and presentable.*)
5. A CLEAN PLACE (*Research says that 60% of your work is brought to you by the female population.*)
4. PROFESSIONALISM (*We train other staff, but seem to think sales will just happen.*)
3. EMPATHY (*Although we deal with it everyday, the customer's experience is anything but routine.*)
2. INTEGRITY (*If we start down a shady road we may find the tunnel it becomes has a train in it.*)
1. ASK FOR THE SALE (*Research indicates the average person says "no" 5 times before they say "yes".*)

TONY'S **10**
TOP

DATE	CLASS & LOCATION	*Tony's classes!
Oct. 6-10	Masters Body Shop Management Essentials—Galesburg, IL	
Oct. 14*	I-CAR SPS07 Steel Unitized Structures—Memphis, TN	
Oct. 16*	I-CAR SPS02 Structural Aluminum Repair—Memphis, TN	
Oct. 22*	I-CAR STA01 Cosmetic Straightening Aluminum—Kingsport, TN	
Oct. 23*	I-CAR CPS01 Corrosion Protection—Kingsport, TN	
Oct. 25*	ICAR FOM01 Automotive Foams—Kingsport, TN	
Oct. 25*	I-CAR SPS02 Structural Aluminum Repair—Kingsport, TN	
Oct. 28*	I-CAR ALT01 Electric & Electric Hybrids—Memphis, TN	
Oct. 30*	I-CAR SPS08 Steel Full Frame Technologies & Repair—Memphis, TN	
Nov. 6	I-CAR REF01 Ref. Equip. & VOC Regs.—Jacksonsonville, FL	
Nov. 18*	I-CAR DAM05 Alum. Panels & Struc. Damage Analysis—Memphis, TN	
Nov. 11-13	Dupont Refinisher Certification—Marietta, GA	
Nov. 20*	I-CAR STA01 Cosmetic Straightening Aluminum—Memphis, TN	
Dec. 2-3	Dupont Color Solutions—Marietta, GA	
Dec. 9*	I-CAR REF02 Surface Preparation & Masking—Memphis, TN	
Dec. 11*	I-CAR REF04 Detailing—Memphis, TN	

**Upcoming
certification
classes**

Contact Tony Nethery at 731-424-7008 for more info. on classes & upcoming events—including the Tennessee Collision Repair Association monthly meeting on November 11th.

Please note that all Tony's Memphis classes are held at the Fletcher Creek store.



We are very pleased to welcome **EM Collision** Briston, TN into the **COLORMATCH** Family!

Bob was driving to work when a truck ran a stop sign, hit his car broadside, and knocked him out cold. Passers by pulled him from the wreck and revived him. Bob began a terrific struggle and had to be tranquilized by the paramedics. Later, after Bob calmed down, they asked him why he struggled so much. Bob said, "I remembered the impact. Then... nothing. When I suddenly woke up, I was on a concrete slab in front of a huge, flashing sign. It shook me up. It took me awhile to realize that someone was standing in front of the 'S' on the 'Shell' sign."

HA!

COLORMATCH *gold*



Make history— don't live in the past!

Is your business operating like a Model T
in today's fast paced world?

It's all about CHANGE— Keep up the pace or you'll lag behind!

I was recently asked by a co-worker why body shop owners and technicians are so reluctant to make changes – especially in the area of business. When you consider all the technical changes the industry has overcome, you would think that we had *CHANGE* down to a science! We have made the transition from lacquer to urethanes, full frames to uni-bodies, rear wheel drive to front wheel drive, and hand written estimates to computer generated sheets. The collision industry is facing tremendous technical changes in the days to come—alternate systems and hybrids are being further developed as we speak.

In previous decades, many senior technicians decided that it was just not worth the effort to adjust, and so they made career changes. In view of the technological changes looming on today's horizon, this may be a decision shared by technicians of this decade as well. We have similar struggles ahead of us to keep pace in today's expanding business environment. Whether decisions are technical—or related to business—the choice is either to quit, lag behind, or to move ahead.

Many of the technicians who entered the auto body profession in the seventies are now owners of repair facilities. These courageous owners have endured an onslaught of change on the technical side of the business. But will they be ready for business changes to come in the arena of administration, marketing, sales, and finance? This leads me back to my real question: Why are we so scared of the changes we face on the business side of the industry? Maybe we love the challenge of the technical side, because we are confident of our ability, our tools, and our equipment. Most of us can say that our tools don't let us down, unless we abuse them – and we know when we are abusing them! On the other hand, we are not as confident of our skills as business people. Probably, most business tools would not let us down either, if we knew what they were and had the confidence to fully utilize them.

Will we as an industry be too complacent, ignorant, arrogant, and/or insecure to seek the help from those who have the knowledge and training we require to be the resilient industry that we have always been? What about you? Are you using business tools that are obsolete and ignoring business resources available to you? Perhaps it's time to climb out of the Model T and get into the Lamborghini...



According to Albert Einstein, the definition of insanity is "doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results."

TODAY'S BUSINESS TOOLS

- Having an adequate, reliable computer with appropriate software, memory, upgrades, & peripherals.
- Get the training or hire an expert to use your computer & software system to its best advantage.
- Receiving financial advise and mentoring from your accountant, banker or other professional.
- Using programs or taking classes developed by industry professionals that are focused on your administrative or financial business needs.
- Taking the advice of any business development opportunities of your jobber, vendor, or other business associates.
- Taking classes at your local community college.
- Learning what's going on by networking in your community and within industry organizations.

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