



## Crown Collision Gives Customers the Royal Treatment with Audatex 3D Intelligent Graphics

### *Crown Automotive/Crown Collision Repair*

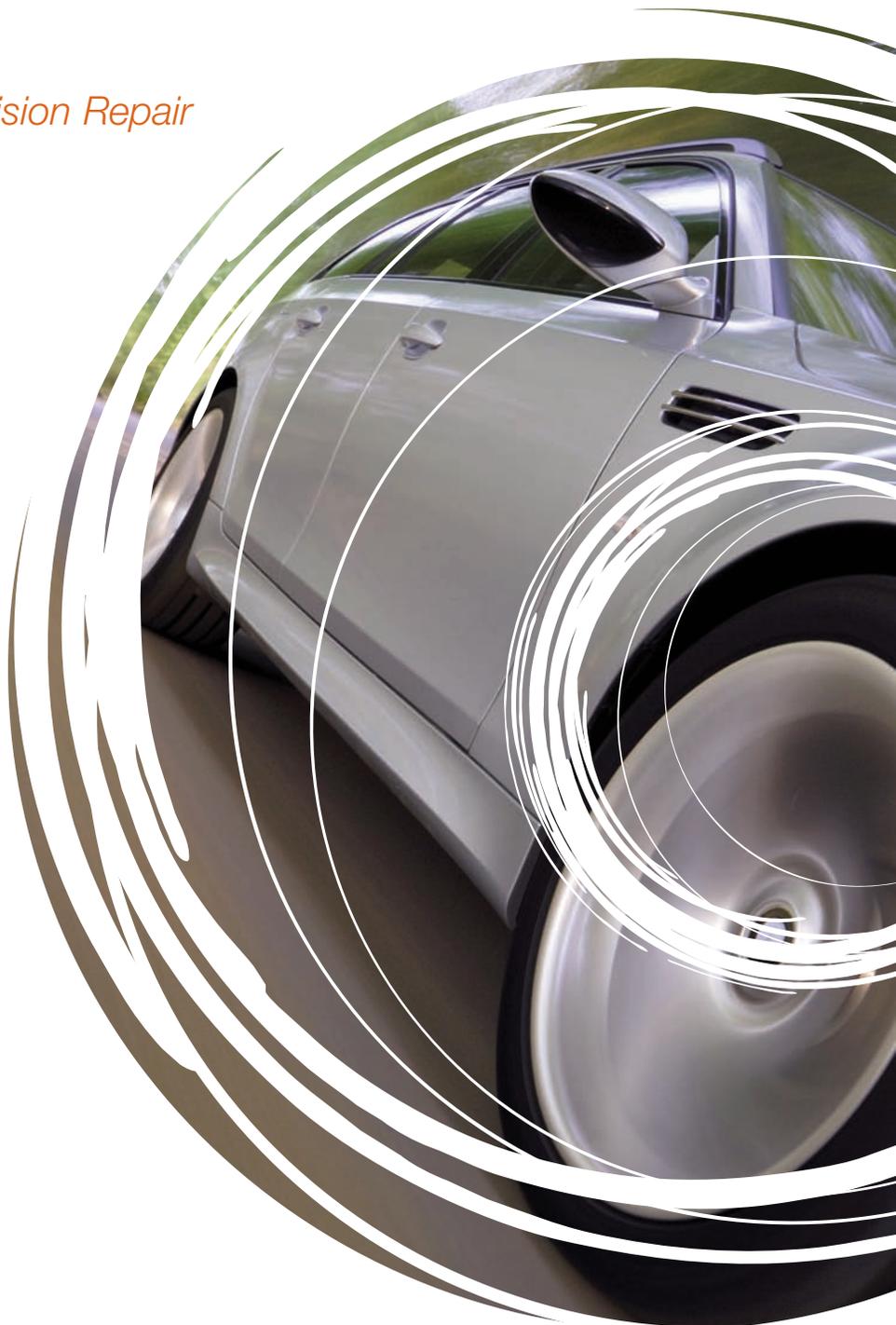
Crown Automotive Group has built a substantial presence throughout Florida's Tampa Bay Area, where it sells and services 14 leading automotive brands at nine dealership locations. For the past 40 years, the family-owned company has also been a trusted name in collision repair. Through its adoption of Audatex Estimating™ software with 3D Intelligent Graphics, Crown Collision is achieving dramatic improvements in both estimating processes and repair times. The powerful graphics give estimators an entirely new perspective on the task at hand to ensure that the right parts are ordered up front, thereby greatly reducing the chances for estimating error.

### *Industry*

Collision Repair

### *Products*

Audatex Estimating



# Crown Automotive/Crown Collision Repair

## Challenge

While capable of repairing any make of vehicle, Crown Collision specializes in luxury cars such as Porsche, Jaguar, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, and even the legendary Maybach. So strong is its hold on the region's luxury market that Crown stands out as one of two Mercedes-certified repair centers in the greater Tampa Bay Area—a distinction that brings great pride to the shop.

Backed by a team of 32 highly trained employees, Crown is uniquely positioned to work on these high-end vehicles as well as all other makes and models. Its ASE- and I-CAR-certified technicians have taken steps to gain a competitive edge in understanding the advanced electronics of today's cars, as well as the best-practice use of the industry's top-rated tools and equipment.

With a sizable 40,000-square-foot facility, Crown Collision is also fully prepared in every aspect of its operations to give customers—and their prized vehicles—the royal treatment. The shop has 56 repair stalls, with 30 specifically dedicated to body repair, two reserved for uni-body straightening and measuring, and a dedicated stall for working on aluminum. In addition, its mechanical repair department maintains two stalls for the repair and replacement of any mechanical-related items that can occur due to a collision. Lastly, the paint department consists of 20 stalls: Four of these are downdraft heated paint booths, and seven serve as downdraft heated prep stations—all designed to ensure a factory-quality finish.

With all of these investments, it's clear that Crown seeks to maintain the highest standards of excellence. Still, the shop's management team is constantly looking for ways to meet and exceed the high expectations of its luxury customer base. By taking advantage of new advances in collision repair technology, Crown Collision is able to do just that.

“We saw an Audatex 3D demo at an Auto Body Association meeting and we knew almost instantly that it could make a difference in our shop, in terms of both time savings and improvements in estimating accuracy,”

Steve Lukas, Senior Estimator, Crown Collision

## Audatex Solution

With eight direct repair program (DRP) partnerships, Crown makes use of a variety of estimating software programs. To the untrained eye, this software may all seem the same on the surface. Yet when Mike Elliott, collision center manager for Crown Automotive, along with Steve Lukas, one of his senior estimators, first came across Audatex Estimating with 3D Intelligent Graphics, they immediately recognized that it was an Estimating platform worthy of a second look.

“We saw an Audatex 3D demo at an Auto Body Association meeting and we knew almost instantly that it could make a difference in our shop, in terms of both time savings and improvements in estimating accuracy,” says Lukas, who has been in the collision repair business for more than 17 years.

The demo showed the software's color-coded parts, designed not just for easy differentiation between items such as brackets and braces, but also to ensure that all damaged pieces have been selected for any

given estimate. In addition, Lukas was impressed with the unlimited zoom and 360-degree rotation capabilities, which allow estimators to rotate parts as if they were holding them in their own hands. The bottom line for Crown was that Audatex 3D appeared to provide an entirely new perspective in terms of visualizing the repair process.

As a long-time user of Audatex Shoplink®, Lukas was already familiar with industry-leading Audatex features that eliminate time-consuming data entry and data sharing steps. He also knew about the powerful Audatex Collision Estimating database, which offers the most current pricing on more than 4 million original equipment, after-market and salvage parts, along with labor and refinish information. Adding 3D Intelligent Graphics into the mix made the decision easy, and upon returning to the shop after the meeting, they placed their order for the marketing-leading, advanced software.

## Results

Lukas can describe—in clear-cut terms—the impact that Audatex 3D graphics can make on a typical repair job. In a June 2010 article in the collision repair trade publication, *Fender Bender Magazine*, he explains how the graphics took the guesswork out of a repair performed on a 2004 Buick LaSabre, which required inner structure work behind the front fender and bumper.

“There are a lot of pieces that make up the inner reinforcement,” he said in the article. “When you look at two-dimensional images for estimating, it can be hard to tell which pieces are inner, outer and middle parts on some of those panels. The 3D images lay it out clearly.”

Lukas went on to describe how the 3D images allowed him to visualize the six inner pieces that had to be repaired on the Buick. Without those

images, Lukas relayed that the initial estimate on the LaSabre could very likely have resulted in the shop ordering at least one wrong part, which potentially could have translated into a week of extra repair time, not to mention a disappointed customer.

For Crown and other shops, the true value of Audatex 3D Intelligent Graphics is that it allows estimators to ensure that the right parts are ordered up front, because all the pieces that are needed—even the well-hidden ones—are in plain view, which significantly reduces the chances for estimating error. Fewer estimating errors mean that jobs are completed faster, which creates a positive impact on the entire automotive repair ecosystem, from the shop, to the insurer, to the consumer.



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