

Flurry of announcements as Assured Performance launches 'OEM Certification 2.0'

By [John Huetter](#) on August 24, 2017

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Its network built out to 2,800 shops nationally, [Assured Performance announced last month](#) the launch of “OEM Certification 2.0,” a suite of tools and initiatives intended to attract customers to and encourage repair quality at those shops.

“Now that we have achieved nearly complete coverage of the entire country, our mission is to help transform our Certified network into process-driven Collision Care Providers that deliver the highest repair quality and customer satisfaction,” Assured Performance CEO Scott Biggs said in a statement in July. “Our mission is to ensure that all consumers receive an exceptional repair experience delivered by exceptional businesses.”

The company has since then rolled out a slew of announcements, and more are planned through Assured Performance’s conference Oct. 4-7 in Phoenix. Biggs said that the first step was to build out the network of shops, all of which have various combinations of Ford, Nissan, Hyundai and FCA certifications. Now that this is done, the company can refine the program, he said.

“These are all elements of us putting a complete package together,” Biggs said Thursday. “... Now we’re refining who’s participating and asking more of them.”

[On Wednesday, the company announced an agreement with Vehicle Collision Experts](#), run by VeriFacts co-founder and forensic engineer Mark Olson, to offer optional services like shop inspections. VECO had already done certification work for Assured Performance in certain markets, but Biggs said the new services would be available to shops anywhere VECO was willing to travel.

“VECO Experts provides monthly on-site and remote shop assessments, as well as repair inspections to ensure manufacture’s process and materials are followed,” Assured Performance wrote Wednesday. “VECO also conducts in-shop technical training lessons for shop personnel, distributes monthly quality and equipment reports, and provides regular technical support.”

Such VECO audits are optional but not required. Shops who request them will receive preferential pricing and access under VECO’s deal with Assured Performance, according to Biggs.

The absence of actual repair output checks has been a criticism of Assured Performance's program, though Biggs has argued that building up a network of trained and equipped shops — [which weeds out a lot of inadequate performers anyway](#) — had to come first.

Asked about the optional audits Wednesday, Biggs argued that the responsibility and [liability](#) for quality control should lay with the shops, not the Assured Performance program.

"It's not our place to be overstepping our position," Biggs said.

Assured Performance didn't want the liability for guaranteeing a shop's repairs, he said. "We never intercede," he said. "We don't want to make any warrants."

"It's enough for us to have gone this far," he said.

An OEM certified shop faced a higher liability for errors in their work, [collision repair attorney Erica Eversman suggested Wednesday on "Repair University Live."](#) An OEM itself might also carry an increased risk for mistakes made by network shops, she said.

Assured Performance requires shops to have access to OEM repair procedures and prove compliance. [In January 2016, it announced system for technicians to document and photograph each line item of an estimate.](#) In July, the company announced its new "ShopOps" suite included "a Quality Assurance system based upon the estimate repair lines with the ability to document OEM Repair procedure use (OE-QC)," an upgrade to the existing model.

"It's simpler to use, and it has the workplace component," Biggs said. Technicians using the older system didn't have the smart app they do now, he said.

QC^{2.0}

OVERVIEW

ASSIGN

IN PROCESS

REVIEW

HISTORY

SETUP

Select a technician and click Save to assign line items. Check the box under "Ignore Line" and click Save to omit line items.

Estimate ID: 1598bac9 RO Number: 16847BP VIN: JTDBR32E142039005 2004 Toyota Corolla

Body Assign Body Category to: Lines Assigned: 34/34
 Lines Completed: 1/34

Assigned	Line Completed	Line Item	Operation	Tech Assigned	Ignore Line
		Grille assy w/o gold	Remove/Replace	Select Technician	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	LKQ RT Headlamp assy CE & LE +30%	Remove/Replace	Test Mechanic	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	LKQ LT Headlamp assy CE & LE +30%	Remove/Replace	Test Mechanic	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	Aim headlamps	Remove/Replace	Test Mechanic	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	Upper tie bar	Repair	Test Mechanic	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	RT Side panel	Remove/Replace	Test Jr Body	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	O/H bumper assy	Overhaul	Test Jr Body	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	RT Support bracket	Remove/Replace	Test Jr Body	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	Hood US built	Repair	Test Jr Body	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	Front seal US built	Remove/Install	Test Jr Body	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	Insulator US built	Remove/Install	Test Jr Body	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	A/M CAPA Bumper cover CE & LE	Remove/Replace	Test Jr Body	<input type="checkbox"/>
✓	✓	RT Hinge	Remove/Replace	Test Jr Body	<input type="checkbox"/>

As the technician is also considered responsible for the repair in the eyes of the court, a point collision repair attorney [Erica Eversman](#) made Wednesday on "Repair University Live," such documentation benefits them as well as the shop. (Or potentially buries them if procedures weren't followed, creating another indirect incentive for Assured Performance shops to do the work right.)

ShopOps' capabilities go far beyond repair procedure documentation. It also features "data self-management and key performance indicator benchmarking tools, an electronic operations manual and process management system with pre-written process, procedures, checklists and forms, as well as a cutting-edge HR Management system, a state-of-the-art customer relationship management system, and a comprehensive business improvement program," according to Assured Performance.

BUSINESS PROFILE

PROGRAM APPLICATION

BEST PRACTICES ASSESSMENT

CERTIFICATION ASSESSMENT

CERTIFICATION SCORE & EVALUATION

ANALYTICS

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PRO FORMA CALCULATOR

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT REPORT

Key Performance Indicators

OE Comparison

FCA (Chrysler)
 Hyundai
 Ford
 Nissan
 GM
 Other

Date Range

Past 12 Months
 Year to Date
 Custom Range
 From Date:
 To Date:

Business Type

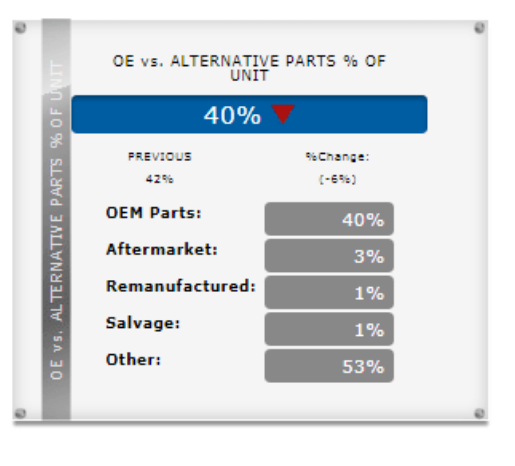
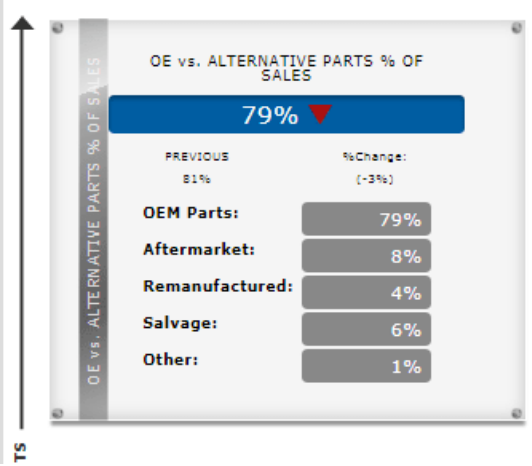
Dealers
 Independents
 All

Group Data to View/Compare

Collision Industry Average ▾

Submit

TABLE VIEW | GAUGE VIEW



Besides quality control, the other major question about OEM certification programs involves whether customers even know of their existence. Insurers have an edge in recommending direct repair program shops — a customer must contact the insurer to file a claim, creating the opportunity for referrals. It’s less likely a consumer taken the time to research collision repairers, as nobody *plans* to get into a crash.

According to Assured Performance, the company is attempting to improve on its existing shop locators with “intelligent shop locators and smart apps with the ability to create the assignment with a set appointment connecting consumers with the certified repair provider of choice.”


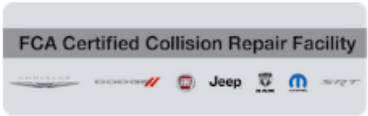


The best source of referrals will likely be the OEMs themselves — a consumer knows Ford, Hyundai, Nissan and FCA; they don’t know Assured Performance.

“In July alone, over 4 million consumers have been contacted by the Automakers,” Assured wrote. “Equally as impressive, Insurers made over 37 thousand hits to the specially designed insurer-facing Certified shop locator: www.AdvancedRepairCapable.com.”

- CERTIFIED SIGNS
- MICRO WEBSITES
- PRESS RELEASES
- CERTIFICATION LOGOS**
- ON DEMAND MARKETING (ODM)
- DIGITAL MARKETING

Once your business is officially Certified or Recognized by each Auto Manufacturer, you are granted permission to download and use the specifically designed logos. This is a critical and powerful benefit of your Certification. Use the appropriate Certification logos and badges in all of your marketing, websites, advertising, estimate holder, business cards, brochures, interior signage and more to maximize the credibility and impact of the manufacturer's Certification of your Collision Care business.

NOTE: Please DO NOT use any altered versions and follow the style guide and rules closely. Misuse of the logos or use of the wrong or unapproved logos could result in cancellation of your Certification or worse.

	<p>Assured Performance Certified Logo and Style Guide</p> <p>Download</p>
	<p>FCA Certified Logo and Style Guide</p> <p>Download</p>
	<p>Ford National Body Shop Network Recognized Logos and Style Guide</p> <p>Download</p>
	<p>Nissan Certified Logos and Style Guide</p>

Intriguingly, Assured Performance's news release indicates that consumer communications "will eventually include telematics." This will become a powerful tool for OEMs and certified shops, as it likely refers to the concept of the vehicle detecting the collision and immediately referring customers to the automaker's certified network. General Motors already has said this feature is available for the Cadillac CT6 and its certified repair network.

Until then, and even afterwards for markets with multiple certified shops, the impetus falls on the shop to market themselves. Assured Performance stated it would offer repairers "OEM branded signage supported by multi-media display systems, special shop locator landing pages (micro-sites), custom web-site development and social media listing and promotion, press release distribution to local media and community, consumer direct mail print materials, and a series of consumer direct marketing and even a customer relationship management system (CRM)."

On Aug. 14, it announced "eLOBBY," which Biggs in a statement called "like the old waiting room video on steroids."

Developed by Assured Performance and Advantego Technologies, the system runs multimedia on digital picture frames, televisions and counter displays and delivers "shop-specific commercial messaging, official Certification signage, and Automaker-branded consumer education videos directly to consumers," according to Assured Performance.

Multiply the number of customers the average shop sees in a year by Assured Performance's 2,800 shops, and that's what Biggs estimated was 10-15 million customer impressions a year about how great certified shops are.

On Aug. 3, [Assured Performance](#) also announced it and Advantego would through “eLISTINGS” automatically transmit the certified shops’ information “to over 70 different directories and search engines, ensuring consistent information and better search engine rankings.” It wrote that eLOBBY also would clean up erroneous business contact information and monitor current listings for accuracy, show which certifications each shop had and track customer reviews.

Asked if the directories and search engines included such high-profile consumer tools as Google, Yelp and Angie’s List, Biggs said, “It’s everything”