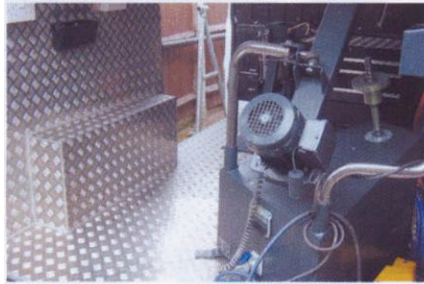




Andy Patterson, founder of Automotive Repairs, bought Bradley Smart 3 years ago and says that the strategy has worked really well, allowing his business to

develop cooperatively side by side in two business streams.

Andy began his business in 1996 as an independent PDR technician. That has grown to become Automotive Repairs, with a mobile fleet of 13 dent, 22 paint, 4 trim and upholstery, 17 wheel technicians. In Andy's view the mobile technician can't be a jack of all trades, they need to specialise in order to maintain speed of repair.



He also feels that there is more market potential catering to dealers and fleets, therefore it's necessary to have a team that can be deployed quickly and professionally to cover the required geographic area. In 2011 Automotive Repair will expand its operational base with 2 new regional centres, one in Bristol and one in Birmingham. The company already operates from centres in Kent and Liverpool.

Andy sees a trend for regional and national customers to require more from their smart repair partner. 'They want to know the job's done to a high standard of course, but they also want the security of knowing they are dealing with a company that has the correct liability insurance, adheres to health and safety legislation, all that 'back office' stuff'.

An additional area for growth predicts Andy is that of SMART repair insurance; he sees enormous potential for insurers to sell policies indemnifying against 'SMART' repair type damage alongside the traditional comprehensive policy sale. To service that type of customer,

Automotive Repair can offer GPS-tracked repair callouts and centralised call directing etc.

Where they don't have geographic coverage the company will work with local independent operators, in particular those who are Bradley Smart customers. 'We have been able to develop the Bradley Smart product range using our AR technicians as field testers. No other UK supplier can do that and this is a huge advantage for us'. Bradley Smart will be launching some brand new product ranges (leather repair for one) through 2011.

Wheely Challenging

Wheel repair and refurb is a large part of the business, says Andy. 'All our vans are kitted out for high volumes of repairs. Colour matching has been challenging of late because there are so many variants – each vehicle manufacturer develops their own colour palette and it's challenging keeping pack with it.

We have a specialist colour matcher at Bradley Smart who develops our VM ranges. For instance we've a range of 70 premixed colours for use on Audis. You could argue that 10 different colours would be enough but we are encountering customers with changing expectations – they really do look closely at the colour match and won't accept the 'close as possible' match any more.

Other challenges include matching the diamond-cut finish out in the field. We've developed a special tool that allows us to meet this need. Matte finishes are also becoming popular and we will meet that requirement too'. **RS 27A**



This was 20

FIX ME QUICK
Commercial Repairs and their Quick Turn Around page 14

BODY REPAIR
THE NEWS from bodymagazine.co.uk From page 14

Issue No 11 January 2011 Price £4.99 Please don't forget to subscribe! 1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years 5 years