

Third-Generation Tennessee Body Shop Benefits from AkzoNobel's Sikkens Business Services

AkzoNobel

by Autobody News Staff

Much has changed in the years since **Walt** and **Ruth Stinnett** established *Stinnett's Auto Body Services* in Maryville, TN, in 1965. While the family-owned business has built its reputation on top-notch workmanship and generations of satisfied customers, early repair techniques have given way to factory-approved procedures, technician training and investments in facilities, equipment and technology.

From the original 3,500-square-foot shop with a handful of bays, the third-generation facility now spans 25,000 square feet, including a new 12,500-square-foot addition that houses a state-of-the-art body shop, paint shop and paint booth. The company also boasts multiple OEM collision repair certifications, with ADAS calibrations performed on site.

The shop is now owned by **Zach Stinnett**, the founders' grandson, who took the reins when his father, **Lee**, retired in 2016. Though he grew up in the shop, running the business wasn't on Stinnett's radar. He majored instead in pre-med at East Tennessee State University while working part time at the shop. He ultimately found his calling and earned a degree in business administration.

Determined, however, to broaden his knowledge and elevate the company to a higher level, he attended his first AkzoNobel Sikkens meeting with his dad. It was a revelation.

"I didn't have much industry knowledge and I needed to learn the ropes," said Stinnett. "The meeting was eye-opening. I formed relationships on that trip that I still have today."

Stinnett is now a member of the Sikkens Acoat Selected Services Team and the North American Performance Groups (NAPG). Participation in the NAPG meetings is exclusive to Acoat members. The 20 Group-style meetings facilitate sharing best practices and strategies, as well as networking.

"The networking relationships are the biggest value," said Stinnett. "It's a bunch of shops talking shop. Everyone has similar issues and solutions you might not have



Founded in 1965 and known for its dedication to superior-quality repairs and top-notch customer service, Stinnett's Auto Body Services holds numerous OEM collision repair certifications.

thought of. Every time I've attended a meeting, I've learned something new or made a change that benefits the business. We also use products like Carbeat that we were introduced to at the meetings."

Carbeat technology combines software, hardware and services to improve production efficiency. It features a touch-screen monitor, providing real-time workflow from the cloud and a production analysis dashboard. As a car goes through the production pipeline, the touchscreen displays a vehicle's progression from one department to the next. Employees can track an individual car's status and the shop's workflow. It also helps identify trouble spots.

"For a volume shop, it helps with real-time production," said Stinnett. "We get reports on the average time each department keeps each car, so we can nail down where it takes too long and try to improve. It's a huge benefit. It's also a real perk, because Carbeat is exclusive to AkzoNobel Sikkens customers."

Given the complexity of today's high-tech-equipped vehicles, Stinnett is also a stickler for adhering to OEM guidelines and standards. And he's proud of the company's reputation as a certified collision repair facility for more than a dozen automakers, including Honda, Acura, Subaru and Mopar brands.

"We are committed to ensuring the quality and safety of every repair and that repairs meet factory standards," said Stinnett.

Along with skilled, factory-trained ADAS technicians, Stinnett recently established a separate company devoted to conducting

calibrations in-house. He's also invested in tools and equipment that meet OEM requirements.

But Stinnett doesn't rely solely on scan tools and other diagnostic equipment from one source. He's cobbled together multiple resources. "I didn't buy just one of the ADAS packages," he said. "I've pieced it together by each individual OEM instead of investing in a one-size-fits-all package."

"The company has been open about a year," he added. "It's still a learning process. My goal is to open a storefront off site to attract collision work."

He's also pursuing other avenues to grow the business and anticipates the new building's oversized paint booth will draw new customers. "There are a lot of tour companies and wedding venues in the area, so we're going after the Sprint and Transit van market." With Rivian slated to service a local Amazon distribution center, he's also seeking Rivian certification.

An active community leader, Stinnett has drawn upon his AkzoNobel NAPG experiences to network locally, helping to establish the Tennessee Collision Repair Association and serve on its board. "I've gained so much from those NAPG conferences. It's one of the reasons for our success," he said.

"I enjoy the business. I enjoy entrepreneurship. We're fortunate we've been established for many years. And we're fortunate to have a great team and repeat customers whose families' cars were repaired by my grandfather and my dad," Stinnett said. "Not only are we a third-generation business, we're working with third- and fourth-generation customers."

Stinnett's Auto Body Services

Maryville, TN
865-982-7050
stinnettcollision.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair
Facility Employees: 16
In Business Since: 1965
Number of Locations: One
Production Space: 25,000 square feet



Attention to detail is a hallmark of the company's commitment to meeting or exceeding OEM guidelines.



State-of-the-art equipment and expert color matching ensure vehicles are restored to pre-collision condition.

AkzoNobel Coatings

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