

Move to Industrial Finishes Makes Shop Owner Smile Ear-to-Ear



by **Autobody News Staff**

Everyone in this industry has to anticipate change or they won't survive. In this case, **James Kim**, owner of *Kim's Auto Body* in Santa Clara, CA, entered into an agreement with Industrial Finishes and Systems to spray AkzoNobel Sikkens waterborne paint and tap into the company's world-class customer support.

With his shop growing exponentially every year, Kim is doing everything he can to adapt and continue to provide a top-notch finished product. The pandemic wasn't easy for Kim and his crew, but now they're back on track. A Tesla certification they landed in 2021 has helped the bottom line.

"Teslas are very popular here in Silicon Valley and we've been getting our fair share of them since we got the certification," Kim said. "They are now a big part of our workload. To please these Tesla customers, we have to do a great job on each one, and a big part of that is the paint."

To produce a top-notch product each and every time, Kim signed up with Industrial Finishes & Systems in 2019, for a lot of different reasons.

"We knew one of their reps, **Ray Alergia**, so when he joined Industrial Finishes, we followed him there," Kim said. "We knew that he was a great rep, and he helped us during our early years, so we knew it would be an awesome fit for us, and we were right."

Kim, 41, had no plans to take over the family's shop, but when his late father, **Keene**, got cancer, he decided to step in and begin running the business in 2006. It was a trial by fire scenario, but by working hard and asking a lot of questions of his vendors and insurance adjusters, he has enabled Kim's Auto Body to post better numbers every year, with a two-year interruption caused by the pandemic.

Taking over a 26-year-old shop was a real game changer for Kim, he said.

"I was considering entering the Peace Corps and seeing the world, but life had other plans for me. I had to figure things out on my own just to survive, so I im-



Kim's Auto Body is right in the middle of Silicon Valley so it repairs many high-end luxury brands, including Tesla.

mersed myself in the business and got up to speed as fast as I could," he said. "I started asking my crew a lot of questions and read everything I could find. Back then, we were fixing three to four cars weekly and I was scrambling to get them done. My father had a lot of longtime clients, so it made it a little easier. But admittedly, it was a scary time."

From day one, Kim's plan was to obtain the finest equipment and tools available in the collision repair industry and train his crew on how to use them efficiently, Kim said.

"I'm not afraid to invest in the best equipment and products out there on the market, because I know it will pay off over time," he said. "When I was first introduced to AkzoNobel, I could see right away that it's a great product. Their clear coats are very high-level and the base coats are the best we've encountered."

Kim appreciates the hands-on customer service he receives from Industrial Finishes for a wide range of reasons.

"They're extremely process-oriented with their system and we really like that," he said. "They take a very personable and friendly approach and continually show that they're not just about the numbers. They make us feel like they want us to succeed, so it's less of a sales relationship and more like a partnership."

One major benefit of working with Industrial Finishes is the fact Kim has access to the com-

pany's top managers, something he never encountered with the previous paint companies he worked with.

"When I met with their business development team, led by Director of Marketing **Mike Duncan**, I was honestly blown away. They offered us a wide range of resources, and we are still in the process of taking advantage of them all," Kim said. "They have a strong team that can help us in every area, from marketing to business strategies and financials. It's like having an in-house consultant as part of our crew. They also have an outstanding technical team with a ton of very knowledgeable people, so if we ever have a question, they always have the right answer."

Another benefit of working with Industrial Finishes is the color-matching precision Kim's paint crew is enjoying.

"It's a camera-based system and it is excellent," he said. "We haven't had any color-matching issues since we started using it and we don't anticipate any in the future."

In 1968, Industrial Finishes opened an automotive paint store in Portland, OR, and another branch in Roseburg, OR, in the early 1970s. In 1990, the Bend, OR, store was opened, followed by the acquisition of two more Oregon stores in Gresham and Medford. Today, the company owns 33 locations in Oregon, Utah, California, Idaho and Nevada.

Kim's Auto Body

Location: Santa Clara, CA
(408) 294-7633
www.kabsc.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair
Facility Employees: Eight
In Business Since: 2016
Number of Locations: One
Production Space: 12,000 square feet



Kim's Auto Body loves the over-the-top hands-on customer service it receives from Industrial Finishes.



Owner **James Kim** appreciates Industrial Finishes on many levels, including the fact he has access to all of the company's management team for advice.

Industrial Finishes & Systems

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