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**“Who Pays for What?” survey finds increased use of materials invoicing systems; latest survey open through April**

Although the majority of shops are still using a simple calculation of dollars-per-refinish-hour to bill for refinish materials on estimates, the first "Who Pays for What?" survey of 2018 found that the percentage of shops using materials invoicing systems to calculate these charges has increased

The latest of the four 2018 “Who Pays for What?” surveys, which focuses on not-included body labor operations, is open now through the end of April at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XHZ67SD](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XHZ67SD" \t "_blank). The surveys are conducted by Collision Advice and *CRASH Network.*

The survey conducted in January found that 23 percent of shops are using some kind of invoicing system to calculate their materials charges; that is up from the previous two years when about 19 percent of shops said they were using an invoicing system.

Mike Anderson of Collision Advice said invoicing systems are becoming more necessary as OEM paint processes become more complex.

“I think this is going to become increasingly important as we start to see more 3-stage and 4-stage finishes, as well as more limited-use toners that shops may not stock because they are only infrequently used or have limited shelf-life,” Anderson said. “This is why it’s important to research the paint code during estimating to find out if it’s 3-stage or 4-stage, or if it requires a limited-use toner.”

The survey, to which more than 900 shops responded, also showed that among those shops using invoicing systems, well over 50 percent of them are being paid based on those invoices “always” or “most of the time” by seven of the eight major insurers in the survey. Farmers and Nationwide all exceeded 60 percent, and more than 65 percent of shops reported that USAA pays “always” or “most of the time” based on materials invoices.

In addition to asking about invoicing systems and refinish labor rates, the January survey asked shops about their billing practices – and insurers’ payment practices – regarding more than two dozen not-included refinish labor operations.

The current survey focuses on body labor procedures and includes some all-new questions to offer the industry even more helpful information; shops can take the survey before the end of April by clicking below:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XHZ67SD](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XHZ67SD" \t "_blank)

Survey participants receive a report with complete survey findings at no charge, broken down by region, insurer and DRP vs. non-DRP. The report also includes analysis and resources to help shops better understand and use the information presented.

Anderson said the survey, which will take about 15-30 minutes, should be completed by the shop owner, manager or estimator who is most familiar with the shop's billing practices and the payment practices of the largest national insurers. Each shop's individual responses are held in the strictest confidence; only aggregated data is released.

The results of previous surveys are also available online (<https://www.crashnetwork.com/collisionadvice>).

Collision Advice ([www.CollisionAdvice.com](http://collisionadvice.com/)) is an independent training and consulting firm featuring some of the most respected and experienced experts in the collision repair industry. *CRASH Network* ([www.CrashNetwork.com](http://www.CrashNetwork.com)) is a subscription newsletter offering news and information not available from other industry sources.

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