

## In this blog:

- \* **Optimum Business Size to cope with paperwork**
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**Another busy week, part of which was spent helping to distribute copies of the January magazine to the companies featured in it. Packed with great stories, it will help you understand better the industry you are part of. Staying abreast of new products, today's trends and news of other bodyshops is easy when you read BODY Magazine.**

On the grapevine this week we've heard yet again of the difficulties of keeping track of all the different requirements from different work providers. It's a sensible risk management strategy to have a varied basket of work sources but it is really difficult to keep a handle on all the variables that brings. It's understandable that work providers want special terms and conditions that will help them offer commercially attractive deals to fleet managers and car owners but it is a headache to keep all the paperwork in order.

Balancing the amount of time all this admin takes with the value of the repairs coming from each particular strand of work is really challenging for bodyshop managers. Some decide it's not worth it and their solution is to downsize; for others the answer is to expand. Sharing the admin across a couple of sites can make it commercially viable.

It would be nice to see work providers and insurers acknowledge the part that the single site bodyshops play within the national picture. There will always be insurance-paid for repairs going into single site bodyshops - whether driven by capacity or price issues is irrelevant. The more realistic insurance folk know and understand this - so perhaps it's time for them to start thinking about relieving the single site shop of the need to slot into the 'paper mountain' systems. Couldn't they install an 'override' button?

Ok, rant over.

Thanks to longstanding friend of BODY Mag, Tyrone Kirk from Spies Hecker, we know that Andrew Walsh, AW Group based in Sleaford, Lincs is going to open his 'new' bodyshop next week. The company is moving into newly built and designed premises - not far from their 'old' site. The new shop is said to be amazingly well thought out with a design that's 'of the moment' and exactly what's required for today's body repair business. It is sleek and lean, kitted out with the all the equipment that makes it 'really work'. An interesting feature is the amount of space for storage and parking - a sign of the current trend to economic write-offs.

Times are changing throughout the industry especially at the moment with the new [panel] ATA format. R.P.M. Welding is leading the way by achieving 'IMI Awards Ltd' centre status. RPM are also working with the IMI to develop the Welding Criteria for ATA ready for the IMI to launch to the industry from 2 April 2012. R.P.M. often tell us they are very proud that their welding inspectors hold CSWIP 3.1 level 2 qualifications. This means they have the knowledge, skills and welding/material experience. With over 15 years of experience specializing in British Standards welding certification, R.P.M. Welding has assisted over 1200 Body shops with their certification and have issued in excess of 5800 certificates to panel technicians. Over 412 bodyshops have been assisted to achieve and maintain their PAS 125.

## Work Provider/Insurer Stories of the Week

\* Stockport's Aim Group, one of the North of England's largest providers of motor and family legal cover, has launched a powerful online portal set to transform the support it is able to offer the UK's intermediary market. Built in-house from scratch and released through recently created specialist division Aim Core Protect, the free to use bespoke system will allow brokers of all sizes to broaden and enhance their offers to consumers, improving efficiency and service levels and increasing revenue streams effortlessly.

Tasked with making existing and potential customers aware of the benefits of the new broker platform, AIM's sales team, lead by manager Ian

Meachin, is already picking up on a buzz of anticipation as meetings are scheduled with prospective users.

Ian comments: 'Our initial conversations with brokers have been very positive. We are promising a lot but we are confident that our new portal delivers on those promises. It will beat any other system on the market and if the early feedback we are getting is representative of how the market in general will react, I have no doubt that this launch will mark something of a sea change in AIM's history.'

Building the system ourselves means we have control over its future direction and scalability so that we can guarantee the best possible results for brokers and their clients. We'll continue to listen to our customers, to innovate and add policies and providers according to demand because we are committed to maintaining the best levels of service and a user-directed development approach'.



Ian Meachin (AIM Group)

## Reported this Week

\* AA insurance premium price index shows 15% rise for the average comprehensive policy over 2011, with young drivers again seeing the largest increases.

\* Saga is recruiting for 500 new staff in Hastings to join the first 300 working in their newly opened office there.

\* The FSA has fined Churchill and Direct Line for tampering with customer complaint files. The fine is £2.17mn.

# Weekly Review

Monday 23rd January 2012

The 2012 Weekly Review is sponsored by Mirka Abrasives.



\* The ABI is looking into the legal issues of ownership of telematics data.

\* WNS (Holdings) Ltd announced their worldwide results for their 3rd quarter 2012, which ended 31/12/2011. Snippets from their statement include:

'revenue less repair payments reduced sequentially during the third quarter as a result of the depreciation in the British pound versus the US dollar and the impact of seasonal volume reductions'

'In the past quarter, the uncertain and volatile macroeconomic outlook has resulted in near-term behavior changes for some WNS clients and prospects. While some clients are viewing this environment as an opportunity to engage and accelerate cost reduction initiatives, other clients have experienced business challenges and strategic changes which are impacting volumes with WNS. Most of our client's calendar 2012 budgets are expected to be finalized in the next month, which should provide additional clarity with respect to strategic plans and business volumes for fiscal 2013'.

'Revenue less repair payments for the fiscal third quarter 2012 increased 4.9 percent to \$97.2 million, compared to \$92.7 million in the prior fiscal year period'.

'Adjusted gross profit excluding share based compensation expense, as a percentage of revenue less repair payments, was 36.3 percent in the fiscal third quarter 2012, compared to 34.3 percent in the prior fiscal year period'.

'From a balance sheet perspective, WNS ended the fiscal third quarter with \$23.3 million in cash and an additional \$11.4 million in bank deposits and marketable securities'.

You can read the entire document on their website [www.wns.com](http://www.wns.com)

## Suppliers in the News this Week

\* The board of directors of PPG Industries declared a regular quarterly dividend of 57 cents per share, payable March 12 to shareholders.

\* The AA Fuel Price report shows oil price is at \$111 per barrel; UK unleaded average is 133.5ppl and diesel is now 141.9ppl.

## Some Like it HOT

With 8,500 kilometers of the world's toughest terrain behind them, Petronas Team DeRooy Iveco, together with Technical Sponsor R-M Automotive Refinish Paints are celebrating an outright win in the Truck class in the 2012 Dakar Rally with first and second places going to Petronas Team De Rooy Iveco. Third place went to Team Astana, which came in 1 hour 47 minutes after the winning time.

Dakar, acknowledged throughout the world of motor racing as probably the most demanding rally in the world, with competitors competing in four classes: Motor Cycles, Quads, Cars and Trucks race from Plata on the Atlantic coast of Argentina, through the Andes Mountains in Chile, and up to Lima in Peru, over the most difficult and demanding terrain in world.

The Petronas Team De Rooy Iveco maintained an astonishing lead virtually throughout all fourteen stages and with Team Gerard de Rooy in the lead from stage 4 on.



The Petronas Team De Rooy Iveco

## Others Like it COLD

Henkel-sponsored freestyle snowmobiler Levi LaVallee just shattered his standing world record for distance jumping on a snowmobile by soaring 412 feet, 6 inches over San Diego harbour. LaVallee, who relies upon Loctite brand adhesives and sealants to keep his sled in top form, blasted toward the takeoff ramp at 100 mph, launched through the air across the gap between the North and South parks of Embarcadero Marina Park, and touched down forcefully but safely on the exit ramp.

'I'm as excited as I think a person can be', said 29-year-old LaVallee in an interview immediately following the jump. 'I just landed an over 400-foot jump. I'm not sure how the sled's

doing, but I'm okay'. The sled was fine. A video of LaVallee's distance-record-breaking jump can be found at: [http://www.redbullusa.com/cs/Satellite/en\\_US/Video/red-bull-new-year-no-limits-021243143084453](http://www.redbullusa.com/cs/Satellite/en_US/Video/red-bull-new-year-no-limits-021243143084453)  
Levi LaVallee



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