



INCREASING PARTS ORDERING EFFICIENCY

HOW PARTSTRADER® STREAMLINES THE PARTS ORDERING PROCESS

As more and more shops look to move away from phone, email and fax in their parts ordering processes, repairers are turning to electronic parts procurement methods to improve the accuracy and efficiency of their parts orders and deliveries. Richard Wheeler, owner of Auto Body Express in Louisiana, is one of those repairers. Wheeler's shop began using PartsTrader roughly 15 months ago as part of the State Farm Select Service rollout, but shortly thereafter, he began using the system for all of his repairs.

"Once I started using it, it saved me time rather than having to be on the phone or faxing orders in and then being on the phone to make sure they went through," he says.

Before using PartsTrader, Wheeler stated he was ordering parts the "old-school" way. He would make a purchase order, fax it, wait for the fax confirmation and spend the last hour of his day, on the phone, checking in with vendors.

But as the high-volume shop got busier and Wheeler's time became more heavily occupied with managing the business, he says he had less and less time available to spend on the phone ordering parts or sending faxes. That's where PartsTrader came in.

The PartsTrader system allows repair shop parts managers to request quotes from participating suppliers by providing the job's parts list. Repairers receive back comprehensive quotes that provide each responding supplier's best combination of price, availability, delivery time as well as the supplier's reputation ratings. These factors allow shops to weigh several criteria in selecting the right part for the job.

Suppliers, in turn, have the ability to increase their sales opportunity in two distinct ways. For existing customers, they are able to quote on any part on the parts list

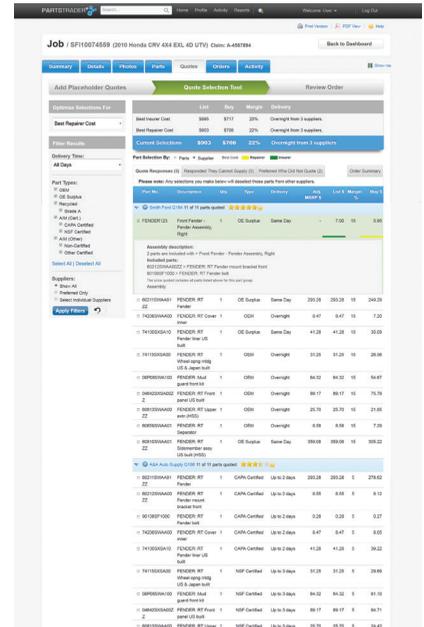
submitted for quoting. As a result, suppliers are now seeing and quoting on more parts than they were through previous methods. As for new business, the PartsTrader program makes it easy for suppliers to reach new customers in their immediate service area, as well creates cost-effective opportunities for geographic growth.

The process is very straightforward. The repairer simply exports the estimate to PartsTrader and submits the parts list for quoting. He then reviews the responses and determines for each part which supplier has put forth the best quote. Once the repairer has decided which mix of suppliers and quotes represent the best decision for the shop and its customer, he puts the orders through. Vendors confirm the orders via PartsTrader and the repairer knows the parts are on the way. Wheeler says that using the system has not affected parts profitability and he is also getting more accurate parts orders.

"It's an easier program for me to see real-time pricing, price-match availability, and availability in general on the part, whether I can get it the next day. That way I can let my production manager and estimators know as far as what they're looking at when it comes to getting the parts in, and getting them out to the techs in the shop," he says. "It has helped me out tremendously with saving time. I probably save about two hours or two-and-a-half hours per day."

From a supplier perspective, Fernando Carrillo, manager at Automotive Alliance in Pompano Beach, Fla., says PartsTrader has saved him hours of time and streamlined the quoting process.

"It made it a lot easier to quote orders for customers. All the information is right in front of you. There's no back and forth on the phone," he says. "Today alone we've



probably had 200 quotes, which would have all been phone calls before. It just makes it a lot easier."

Carrillo says that utilizing PartsTrader has also allowed the business to grow and move more product than ever before.

"We've gotten a lot more customers out of using PartsTrader because it's given us access to the whole Southeastern United States," he says. "And now other body shops are using it for other insurance companies."

Even though switching to an electronic parts procurement system was a big change for the shop, Wheeler says that the PartsTrader team was very responsive during the switch and has continued to be since.

"My PartsTrader representative calls me about once a week to see how things are going," he says. "If I have an issue, I can get them on the phone right away and get things resolved."

Carrillo has had a similar experience with his representative and says the PartsTrader team has been open to feedback.

Customer feedback has been integral in helping the PartsTrader product group focus on new features that provide the most value to the market. The company continues to enhance the product on a regular basis, having recently announcing expanded reporting capabilities and integrations with leading technology providers such as OE Connection/CollisionLink, Hotlines and DMI.