

Ward's Dealer Business

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Call in the wizards

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You're a big dealer with a lot of inventory. A hailstorm rips through town and damages 5,000 of your vehicles. What do you do? Ricart Automotive in Columbus, OH called in St. Louis-based Dent Wizard.

For approximately three weeks Dent Wizard technicians have been repairing the damaged cars at Ricart using a process called Paintless Dent Removal (PDR). Dent Wizard developed the process years ago, and although the company doesn't hold a patent, the process is considered proprietary, says vice president of marketing, Brady Abel.

The dings and dents are removed by using calibration tools and measurements from the inside out, eliminating any need for painting. It's a careful process. Each Dent Wizard technician spends eight weeks in training. The program is so tough many would-be technicians fail to make it all the way through, according to Abel.

"Dent Wizard is a great story," says dealer Rhett Ricart, co-owner of Ricart Automotive. "Not many dealers know about them yet - but there are a lot of companies trying to copy what they do."

Dent Wizard recently launched a series of dealership programs designed to turn those dings and dents into profit generators for both the F&I and service departments.

The Ding Shield protection plan is both an F&I and customer retention tool. F&I managers can sell the Ding Shield plan to new buyers. Technically, it's not called insurance, but customers can pay for the service up front and when their vehicle gets a ding, they can bring it into the service department or any Dent Wizard location and get the damage repaired.

Dent Wizard also offers a PDR For Profit program for dealers. As customers bring cars in for service, the service advisor can offer to have the dings or dents fixed for the customer.

Dent Wizard will either send a technician to the dealership the same day, or will keep a technician at the dealership, depending on the amount of work the dealership generates.

What's attractive for dealers is that Dent Wizard handles the advertising, training and repair work. The only thing dealers do is sell the advantages to the customer.