

Gabe's Collision Uses USI Spray Booths in All 3 Locations



by Autobody News Staff

When **Jeff Mucciarelli**—the owner of Gabe's Collision, with three locations near Buffalo, NY—purchases any piece of equipment, he wants to see it in person before he becomes an adopter. That's exactly how Mucciarelli, a second-generation shop owner, discovered his first USI paint booth. After that, he became a believer.

"Almost 11 years ago, I went to the NACE Show in Vegas and all of the paint booth companies were there," Mucciarelli explained. "It was right before we were about to open our second *Gabe's Collision* and I wanted to do things differently with this new location. There was a lot of talk about waterborne at that time and I wanted to see the best of the best. I felt that the only way I could do that is to fly to a place where they had them all lined up and I could go through all of them. I remember there must have been 12 there to look at, so it took some time."

The USI booth stood out from the rest of the pack, he said, and from then on, it was a no-brainer. "When I saw that USI booth, with all of those motors and propellers and saw how it was built, I got excited," Mucciarelli said. "Right away, I could see that these booths were really head and shoulders above the rest."

Walking through that USI booth also gave Mucciarelli more ideas about how to improve his business. "There were a lot of new things that I wanted to do put into practice at the second *Gabe's Collision Center* that I was afraid to do then in our existing location because I didn't want to ruin the business," he said. "We were doing great, but I had all these ideas about parts and equipment and how I would set up the shop to make it flow better. So I put to use all these crazy thoughts I had in my head in our second location and it worked. Getting that first USI paint booth was a big part of that evolution."

Mucciarelli is a second-generation shop owner who was born into the business, he explained. "While most kids were out playing after school, my mother used to



From left, Owner **Jeff Mucciarelli**, Head Painter **Nate Weyand-Painter** and Painter's Assistant **Anthony Galante** comparing notes in front of one of their USI paint booths.

drop me off at the shop just to keep my father company. It was a one-man shop and he did it all. I actually started playing around with cars when I was probably around 10–12 years old. When the time came, I went off to college, but I always worked with him whenever I could because I loved it."

Working with his father has been great, and even though he's 82, **Gabe Mucciarelli** still comes into work regularly. "I love the man, and he has always been very supportive, but he was always very skeptical and dead against some of my changes, but he eventually let me do them anyway. And they worked, because we used to be a corner garage and now we have three locations that fix 500-plus cars every month. Not many fathers would have allowed their sons to take such a risk, but he did."

Now, all of Mucciarelli's three locations have full-scale downdraft drive-through USI booths with two finishing decks and two sanding decks in each facility. "The finishing decks are full baking downdraft, so essentially, we can paint three cars at once in each location," he said. "The USI booths allow us to paint two additional cars every day, which really helps us with our insurance partners, too."

By using the USI booths, Gabe's Collision is saving time and money. "Yes, we've probably cut a half a day off our cycle time with these booths. It means a lot when you're trying to hit a four-day cycle time. If you're at a 4.2 and it drops you to a 3.7 then it puts you in a great place with certain insurance carriers. If we can stay under that 4.0 number, that's our goal."

In addition to his USI booths, Mucciarelli also values the company's support and training. "It was very easy to learn, and each time we got a new booth from USI, our guys picked it up fast," he said. "They were painting cars the day right after the training. Also, if we ever have a question or need feedback, their tech support is wonderful. We pick up the phone and it's done. And if we need service, their people are incredible. The support is definitely exceptional."

If he had to open those three shops again, would he put USI equipment in each one? "Guaranteed. If the industry warrants a fourth *Gabe's Collision*, then I'll open a fourth Gabe's Collision, and you can bet that USI will be right there with us. Dad is no longer skeptical because he has seen these booths in action and believes in them—just like me!"

Gabe's Collision and Claims Center
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(716) 632-4900
www.gabescollision.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 84

In Business Since: 1964

DRP Programs: 4

Number of Locations: Three

Combined Production Space:
76,000 square feet (combined)



Dad and son have built a great business at *Gabe's Collision* and USI paint booths are a part of it. From left, **Gabe** and **Jeff Mucciarelli**.



Since 1964, *Gabe's Collision* has provided quality work and exemplary customer service to its second and third-generation clients.

USI of North America

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