
Investing in the future – making the most of classic car restorations

The classic car market has enjoyed phenomenal success over the past decade. A new world-record was set in August 2017 when a 1950s Aston Martin DBR1 sold at auction for 22,550,000USD^[1]. And with approximately 30,000 American classic cars shipped into Europe in 2018^[2], this buoyant market needs an expert in the field. This is where Standox comes in.

Standox, the paint brand manufactured in Wuppertal, Germany, has a long-standing reputation of offering professional advice to bodyshops specialising in classic car restorations, and in times of economic uncertainty, people look to invest their money in something tangible. Over the past decade, investments in cars have outperformed coins, diamonds and vintage wine by some considerable margin.^[3] This trend presents an opportunity for bodyshops to perfect their classic car restoration skills and grow this particular segment of the market.

The Standox Brand Manager for Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA), Olaf Adamek, explains, "Classic car restoration requires a high level of both technological know-how and skilled labour, but it can be a lucrative market for bodyshops. The customer base is strong, close-knit and resilient to shifts in the economy. They are often knowledgeable about classic car restoration in general but they look to bodyshops for professional advice on the paint process. They need to feel that their prized possession is in safe hands."

It's important to pay attention to detail when determining the best path for the restoration of a classic car. Sometimes what starts out as a small rust repair turns into a full restoration project with a complete refinishing job, so having access to professional support and the right type of products is key.

Corrosion: The main foe of the vintage car

The biggest difference between repairing paint on a classic car and carrying that out on a modern car is corrosion protection. Until the 1980s, vehicle bodies were mostly built from sheet metal, which is badly affected by moisture and humidity.

Harald Klöckner, Standox Training and Technical Service Leader for EMEA, says, "It goes without saying that getting a comprehensive cost for the entire restoration project is vital. Once that has been made and agreed with the owner, the refinisher's number one priority should be to protect the historical vehicle effectively against corrosion. It's crucial to avoid contact between the putty and the bare metal and to counter the risk of corrosion when preparing the substrate. A thin insulation layer should always be applied between the bare metal and the putty. If not, the putty acts like a dry sponge that absorbs water and passes it on to the metal."

Standox recommends a three stage build-up consisting of an acid primer and a VOC filler. After the appropriate pre-treatment the bare metal should be insulated with a Standox acid primer, for example Etching Adhesion Primer U3100 and a VOC filler, such as VOC Xtra Filler U7560, in accordance with the specifications of the respective Standox repair system. The VOC Filler isolates sanding marks and pores and helps to even out the surface, making it the ideal foundation for the topcoat.

An eye for perfect colour-matching

As with the paint repair of new cars, digitalisation of the colour management process has made the colour matching process for classic cars infinitely easier and more accurate. Refinishers can use the Standox digital colour management tools such as the Genius iQ spectrophotometer and the Standwin iQ software to achieve the perfect match and to reproduce the original shade and effect of a vintage colour.

When classic cars have very little original paint left due to heavy damage, when the car has been repainted and the original colour is long lost under layers of different paint, or if the colour code is simply not known, Standox supports the bodyshop through the entire colour-matching process and draws on its long-standing classic car restoration experience to identify the right colour.

Klöckner explains, "With the advanced technology of the Genius iQ spectrophotometer and the Standwin iQ software, bodyshops have access to more than 200,000 constantly updated colour formulas that provide a precise colour match every time and can be transmitted digitally to the wireless mixing scale."

Technical resources and support

Klöckner adds, "In addition to the practical support that we offer to our customers, we also have a series of helpful, technical resources readily available online to help professional refinishers fine tune their skills."

Standopedia is the online guide from Standox where refinishers can find technical information as well as valuable expertise on specialist topics related to the refinish process, such as the repair of special colours or the application of new products. In addition, Standox offers a

series of technical information journals, the *Standothek* guides, with helpful information for refinishers looking to update their skills on the restoration of classic cars.

Adamek concludes, "Owners of classic cars tend to be very passionate about their vehicles and if a classic car repair is done well, the vehicle owner is likely to bring his other vehicles in for paint repairs as well. Bodyshops who offer a highly personalised and committed service will gain customer loyalty, a strong reputation in the market and grow their business as a result."

For information from Standopedia, please visit the *Service & Training* menu on the Standox homepage or at www.stadox.com/standopedia. The classic car area in Standox's Standothek can be found under *Prestige and Classic Cars* and can be downloaded at www.stadox.com/standothek.

About Standox

Stadox, a global refinish coating brand from Axalta, is the best choice for professional refinishers. Customers can rely on Standox to achieve the best quality results, every time, accurately and quickly. As a brand manufactured in Wuppertal, Germany, Standox ensures our customers are ready for future digitalisation by improving workflow and work processes with digital tools. Standox further supports customers not only with relevant market insights but also work provision thanks to extensive approvals from car manufacturers as well as fleet, lease and insurance companies, which reflect the brand's position as a leading partner to the automotive industry. Standox – the art of refinishing.

[1] <https://www.luxurylifestylemag.co.uk/drive-sail-and-fly/why-the-classic-car-market-is-melting-down/>

[2] <https://www.hagerty.com/articles-videos/articles/2019/06/10/europeans-buying-american-classic-cars>

[3] <https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/motors/have-we-just-seen-the-peak-of-the-classic-car-market-1.3580762>

http://www.axaltacoatingsystems.com/content/standox_corporate/en_GB/about-us/news/investing-in-the-future---making-the-most-of-classic-car-restora.print.html