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What is the Q-Manager™ ?

The Q-Manager™ a self directed implementation program specifically designed for the collision repair industry to improve the performance of a collision repair facility through the installation and use of a quality assurance system

What is a Quality Assurance System ?

This is the hardest concept to explain because it is not just what the vehicle looks like when it leaves your facility. A Quality Assurance System such as the Q-Manager™ is the framework of reaching total quality management. This includes all processes of the operation which causes you to lose money or have Customer complaints or problems when they break down.

The system covers all aspects of your operation and are based on the latest series of international quality standards, ISO9000:2000.

I have heard about Quality Management Systems, is this the same ?

In other Countries, they also may be referred to as a Quality Management System, but since we already have so many management systems on the market, we didn't want to be confused with them or be mistaken for a shop management system software product.

Who is ISO ?

ISO, International Organization for Standardization, has been developing quality standards for over 50 years. They have developed a series of standards which when followed produce measurable and dramatic results in the Customer Satisfaction, Operating Efficiency (lowering costs), and Profitability. www.iso.org

So what is an ISO Standard ?

They have different standards for different industries and standards for different areas of the industry. The latest series of ISO standards, which the Q-Manager™ uses, replaces older standards developed in 1987 and updated in 1994. These original standards were primarily directed to manufacturing and very difficult and expensive to implement in a smaller business, especially a service related business.

A Quality Standard is simply a statement or identification of a policy, process, or procedure that improves the business or reduces (to eliminate) errors that affect Customer's Satisfaction or final product repair quality. These standards and requirements are very global in nature as they relate to ISO requirements.

Because the ISO Quality Standards are meant to be used in all Industries, it is very expensive and labor intensive to create and implement an ISO Compliant Quality Assurance System that is Collision Repair Facility specific. . Without Q-Manager™, It would require an ISO Consultant to interpret the ISO Standard's application to your business and for them to create the quality processes and documentation to be ISO compliant. This could certainly be a good situation for the consultants and an expensive one for the business.

So how do I become certified to ISO ?

This too is often misunderstood and requires explaining. You could at your own expense and time develop your own Quality Assurance System to meet ISO Standards. This would be a very long and probably costly investment. Shops worldwide that did this in the past have spent \$30,000 – \$80,000 to accomplish this and over one year of time.

You could then also contract an international registrar to conduct your initial audit and then subsequent yearly audits. You could then state you are certified to the ISO Standards you are compliant to.

So what are my other options ?

QASI has developed the Q-Manager™ which meets the requirements on an ISO Quality Management System. This takes all the guesswork out of understanding the standards and makes it clear to what needs to be done step by step.

So how does the Q-Manager™ do this for me ?

We have taken the ISO9001:2000 Standard and applied it directly to the collision repair industry. We have in essence compiled what expensive consultants have done in the past. We have written it in easy to follow instructions rather than "ISO Speak" which may become confusing and unclear.

The most important element of the program is that is designed to be completely self implemented rather than requiring expensive consulting assistance.

What about certification using the Q-Manager™ ?

QASI has designed a three level approach to demonstrating compliance and certification. This provides a basis for current facilities to be recognized for their compliance level as implementation takes place. This also provides flexibility regarding the intent of the Customer to utilize The Q-Manager™ within their business or network.

Level 1: Designed to provide an initial introduction and compliance to a measurable process improvement quality assurance system. The compliance audit of this level can be performed by three methods:

Level 2: Designed to indicate full compliance to The Q-Manager™ Standards based on ISO 9001:2000 Quality System Standards.

Level 3: Designed as a Full Certification or Accreditation to the ISO 9001:2000 Standard and to standards within The Q-Manager™. The only difference between Level 2 and Level 3 Audits is meeting the ISO Audit rules for required time on-site. The same standard of compliance to The Q-Manager™ is required in both levels.

The ISO Audit Rules for required time on-site will increase the audit costs.

What and Why are there three methods of Audit in Level 1 compliance ?

Audits for Level 1 compliance may be part of a Paint Manufacturer's Value Added Program, an insurer network, or any other network provider. They may have designed an audit be conducted internally, by QASI or a 3rd party, or by a Registrar.

In these cases there is flexibility to meet the needs of the market demands while still improving the business.

What is a Registrar ?

A registrar is an auditing organization which has highly trained auditors to specific domestic and international standards. To become a registrar requires a very strict compliance to uphold the standards they are auditing. The registrars have to also meet requirements set forth by governing bodies that also audit them on a regular basis. This is similar to the standards CPAs that conduct accounting audits are required to uphold and be accountable for.

What is an audit ?

The value of becoming certified is to be able to prove you are doing what your quality assurance system says you are on a consistent basis. This is done through internal auditing (your own audit), and by an independent 3rd party audit. This can be done on both a pre-audit assessment by QASI, or the Registrar.

How do I find a Registrar ?

QASI has also spent a great amount of time doing this for you as well. We explored a number of options for the collision repair industry and found most were either not interested in our Industry or their costs were so high we were not interested.

We also felt that the audit had to be completely independent and not related to QASI in any way. This we felt would be a major conflict of interest. We have reached an agreement with Entela, a leading international Registrar for the automotive Industry to be our sole recommendation for Registrar auditing of the Q-Manager™.

Why Entela and why just one ?

You can elect to have any ISO 9001:2000 accredited auditing body or Registrar audit your system or even the Q-Manager™. Since the Q-Manager™ is based on ISO9000:2000 Standards that is always an option. What we found however is that because the Q-Manager™ is industry specific and comprehensive, another auditing organization would require more on-sight time to first learn collision repair industry processes, before they were able to perform an accurate audit, this would drive up the costs of audits. We selected Entela due to their international automotive experience and their willingness to train their auditors on our industry's processes. Like QASI, Entela is committed to provide high quality and low cost services.

Do you offer any help if we need it ?

Certainly. QASI offers complete implementation support if you desire. We also are developing a qualified Value Adding Resellers (VAR) Network to assist you as well.

Do you recommend assistance in certain areas ?

There are two areas in which we encourage our involvement:

- The initial rollout training
- A Pre-Audit Assessment and Review

The initial rollout training provides the needed “jump start” to senior management, the implementation schedule, the identification and training of the Company's Quality Representative, and the introduction to the entire staff.

The Pre-Audit is advised after you have completed the Q-Manager™ implementation schedule to ensure that compliance has been met before the 3rd Party final certification audit takes place.

How long does this all take ?

That is difficult to provide an exact answer. Based on what time and resources you have or want to dedicate to the implementation, the time frame will differ. It can be accomplished within 90 days or can be set to implement over a greater time frame. The most comfortable time frame may be 9 – 12 months.

Do we have to become certified ?

Absolutely not. The most important part of the Q-Manager™ is it will improve your business by providing a system to manage the business. This is what ISO Quality Standards are designed to accomplish. You can choose to use Quality Certification as a distinction of excellence for customers and referral sources. Or when the market demands quality certification of collision repair facilities, you will have already installed the best quality assurance system and only have to pass a quality certification audit.

Why use Q-Manager™ and the ISO Standards and Certification if there is no pressure from customers or insurers for certification or a quality assurance system?

QASI recognizes the new ISO 9001:2000 Quality System Standards as management's best practice principles we have been providing our clients for years. The consistent use of best practices; being customer focused; instilling leadership and commitment; getting employee participation and encouraging development; providing performance measurements; promoting continuous performance improvement all are sound business principles any business will benefit from.

As collision repair industry consultants, the biggest customer challenges we repeatedly face are: shop management does not have a consistent method for self-assessing their own processes and shop management is unable to maintain a consistent use of best practices.

Q-Manager™ is first and foremost a management tool to make sure that quality assured shop process are consistently used and re-evaluated. It is carefully designed to educate management and staff. It is also carefully designed to help management stay organized and focused on customers and quality. And most importantly, Q-Manager™ gives management the tools to execute a defined plan for quality analysis and improvement for every shop area. This will improve the operations of the business which will translate to profitability.

So what does this all cost me ?

The Q-Manager™ only costs \$1295.00. Thousands of man hours were involved in the development of the Q-Manager™ by experienced collision repair professionals. It is ready-made to “plug in” to your business.

QASI will offer all Q-Manager™ customers within 30 days of purchase of the product a special offer to perform the initial rollout training and pre-audit for you. The total cost of these will vary based on travel expenses, but generally figure approximately \$1500.00 for each event plus travel.

The initial certification audit costs if you elect to pursue will vary due to the level of compliance being audited and the number of employees. We believe that the first Level 2 Compliance Audit and initial Certification will generally cost approximately \$1500 - \$2500.00 plus travel.

Are there any costs later ?

Yearly follow-up Audits are required to maintain certification. These surveillance audits cost much less. In many cases up to 50% of the initial certification audits.

I have multiple locations, how does this work with the Q-Manager™ ?

All Q-Manager™ kits are licensed directly to each facility, registered through QASI, and shipped by QASI regardless of packaging options. This license agreement specifies that all Q-Manager™ documents can be duplicated or edited for use within the registered facility only and can not be distributed, sold, or shared outside the licensed facility.

A Q-Manager™ licensing purchase is required for each facility and must be licensed through completion of a license agreement.

Is there a price break for purchasing multiple Q-Manager™ kits for our multiple shop locations ?

We do have a discount program for multiple locations of the same organization. You may contact QASI at (317) 297-7274 for additional information.

How does this differ from The BOSs™ at www.TheBOSs-Online.com ?

Unlike our product, The BOSs™, and other industry knowledge base products, The Q-Manager™ provides a clear direction and path to improving the Customer's operations and profitability. It provides the accountability, reporting, and implementation plan for achieving results.

The BOSs™ provides a wealth of documents which can supplement your Quality Assurance System and provide additional information for other areas of your business. It also can store documents for web access by your staff as well.

What about electronic formats ?

Once you begin to work with the Q-Manager™ you will quickly see the reason for the paper format we supply. We realized early that many of the items which we have included would lose their effectiveness placed on a CD or only on the web. You also would not see the layout of the product and see the clear path to its completion any other way.

We also know that electronic formats will become important in the future to some. We have already begin the development of a web based tracking system for multiple locations and expect its completion in 2002. We also have documents in The BOSs™ in electronic format for editing and storage.

Why should I do this ?

Historically, everyone we have interviewed told us that becoming compliant to ISO standards was one of the best business decisions they have ever made. It was hard work, but has paid off.

If you are doing this because of marketing ... it is the wrong reason ... once you improve your business, it will however be marketable. This product is designed to improve your operations and your bottom line. This will put you in a competitive position.

What do I do first ?

Of course you can purchase the Q-Manager™ through our website at www.QASIDirect.com or we can take your order directly. We will then forward you a licensing agreement for your signature and to license each Q-Manager™ to your facility.

When you receive the Q-Manager™ package, go through the entire product and familiarize yourself with the contents. Read the QA Assistant and especially the Introduction Section which is your guide to implementation.

We will follow up in 30 days to hear your progress and answer questions.

How can the QASI and the Q-Manager™ benefit our organization with multiple locations

Often one of an enterprise's greatest challenges is providing operating consistency within their entire organization. This carries a much higher risk than single shop owners. For this reason QASI believes that using The Q-Manager™ as the basis of your quality assurance system will greatly reduce the time and money it would take otherwise to develop your own system.

QASI also is available to provide enterprise wide training support or implementation training which can be handed off to your existing training and quality control departments. This will also reduce the costs associated in design and development of such services to your enterprise.