

# Automotive News

## New center lets Manheim do more reconditioning in-house

[Arlena Sawyers](#)

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Manheim Auto Auction, the nation's largest vehicle auction site, has a new reconditioning center that is more than four times the size of the shop it replaced.

The \$38 million, 200,000-square-foot center opened this spring in Manheim, Pa. At the center, employees do mechanical repairs and vehicle paint and body work.

The center's workers can perform repairs and other services that previously were done by outside vendors - or not at all - because the auction site lacked adequate space, says Keith Williams, the auction's general manager.

The in-house work will cut vehicle turnaround time for sellers and give buyers a wider choice of reconditioned vehicles, adds Bryan Allison, the auction's assistant general manager.

The auction site is owned by Manheim, the biggest U.S. auto auction company. Manheim estimates that every \$1 spent on reconditioning returns \$2 when a vehicle is sold.

"This facility affords us the ability to have all of the appropriate repair mechanisms in place at the right time," Williams told *Automotive News*. "We've tripled our volume."

Manheim Auto Auction has 33 auction lanes. About 7,500 dealers take part in its traditional and online auctions each week.

Last year, the auction sold 300,000 vehicles for its customers. About half of the vehicles were reconditioned.



Keith Williams: "We've tripled our volume."

The new center has the capacity to detail 700 vehicles a day, up from 270. It can handle 300 vehicles a day in its paint and body shop, up from 75. Its mechanical shop can handle 150 vehicles per day, up from 60.

The center has 200 employees, more than double the number at the old facility, Williams says.

The new center also has equipment for engine analysis and repair of wheels and leather upholstery, Williams adds.

New hand-held computer technology enables the center to track vehicles throughout reconditioning, Williams says. Because Manheim's online auctions list some vehicles for sale the day they arrive at an

auction site, he adds, the company must know where vehicles are at all times.

"It's important for us to make sure that we expedite these vehicles," Williams says. "It's a very exact tracking

process."

The new reconditioning center uses waterborne paints in its paint shop to reduce air pollution.

The center's wastewater treatment plant produces as much as 42,000 gallons of reusable water a day. Williams says that capacity cuts the center's water demand by as much as 60 percent.

You may e-mail Arlena Sawyers at [asawyers@crain.com](mailto:asawyers@crain.com)



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Manheim's reconditioning center, four times larger than the one it replaced, will reduce the use of subcontractors.