FIELD GUIDE

The Collision Operations Playbook

Six areas a collision center has to run well, and how to run each one on purpose.

A collision center is a flow shop wearing a body shop's clothes. Cars come in, work happens in a sequence, and money is made or lost in the gaps between the steps. This playbook walks the six areas that decide whether a shop runs clean or runs hot: cycle time, supplements, lead conversion, customer communication, performance measurement, and multi-shop consistency. Each section is built to be worked, not admired. **Read the one that hurts most first.**

1. Cycle Time and Flow

Cars don't sit still because your techs are slow. They sit because the work in front of the tech isn't ready. Attack the waiting, not the people. Most of a repair order's calendar life is spent parked between operations, waiting on a part, an authorization, a decision, or a stall you never saw coming.

The fix starts with visibility. You can't shorten a delay you can't see. Every vehicle needs a known state and a target date, and every stall-out needs to raise its hand before it costs you a day.

- **Blueprint up front.** Do a full teardown and 100% disassembly diagnosis before the car enters production. Find the hidden damage, write the complete repair plan, and order every part while the car is still in blueprint, not halfway through the job.
- **Parts staged before teardown into body.** A repair shouldn't start until its parts are received, checked against the estimate, and mirror-matched. Missing or wrong parts discovered on the bench is the most expensive kind of surprise.
- **Morning production meeting.** Ten minutes, standing up, in front of the board. What's due, what's stuck, what moves today. Everyone leaves knowing the plan.
- **Dispatch by skill and load.** Send the right job to the right tech based on who's good at it and who has room, not whoever walks by the rack first.

WHERE OPVANTIS FITS

Production Boards flag stall-outs and target-date risk before they turn into blown promise dates, **Meeting Mode** runs your morning huddle off live data, and **Dispatch** routes each job by skill and current load. It runs alongside CCC ONE and your DMS, so the board reflects the estimate and the schedule you already keep.

2. Supplements and Leakage Recovery

The carrier's obligation isn't to pay the cheapest number. It's **indemnification for a safe and proper repair**. When you fix the car the way the OEM says it has to be fixed, the operations and materials that requires are owed. Short-pays happen because documentation is thin, not because the work wasn't necessary.

So win the argument with paper. Every disputed line gets the same three-part backup: the OEM procedure that requires it, a photo that proves the condition, and the estimate line that prices it. That package is hard to deny and faster to approve. Vague requests get haggled. Documented ones get paid.

Then audit what comes back. When the carrier returns a revised estimate, read it line by line against what you submitted. Reductions and quiet deletions hide in the reconciliation, and the ones you don't catch become leakage you eat. Compare every line, flag every difference, and push back on the ones that don't hold up.

Track the leakage you can't recover so you can see where it comes from. Break it out by carrier, by estimator, and by repair type. Patterns show up fast once the numbers sit next to each other, and patterns are what you negotiate from.

WHERE OPVANTIS FITS

JustifIQ captures in-process labor and material documentation as the work happens, so the justification exists before you need it. **SuppLogIQ** handles supplement submission, runs the line-by-line difference audit on the returned estimate, and gives you a negotiation workbench to work the deltas. The **Reporting Suite** breaks leakage out by carrier, estimator, repair type, and date. All of it references the estimate in CCC ONE rather than replacing it.

3. Lead Conversion and Scheduling

The job a lead does is get on your schedule. Most shops lose leads not to a competitor's better pitch but to their own slow response and dropped follow-up. Speed and consistency win here more than polish.

- **Speed-to-lead.** The first shop to respond usually gets the car. Minutes matter, and after-hours leads that wait until morning are often already gone.
- **Single owner per lead.** One person is responsible from first touch to booked. Shared responsibility is no responsibility, and that's how leads slip through.
- **A real multi-touch cadence.** One call and a shrug isn't follow-up. Work text, email, and phone across several touches over several days before you let a lead go cold.
- **Easy photo estimates.** Let people send photos and get a real answer without driving in. Friction at this step costs you the ones who were only half-committed.
- **Book within real capacity.** Schedule to the work you can actually take in, not to an empty calendar. Overbooking blows cycle time; underbooking wastes the building.

WHERE OPVANTIS FITS

Lead Funnel Manager assigns a single owner and runs the multi-touch cadence so nothing goes quiet. **AI Photo Estimates** turn a customer's pictures into a fast, credible answer, **Cora** covers leads 24/7, **Switchboard** gives your front office branch word tracks and builds a live workfile as the call happens, and **Capacity-Aware Scheduling** books to the load your shop can actually carry.

4. Customer Communication and CSI

Satisfaction is built at drop-off, before a single panel comes off. Set expectations clearly up front, and most of the anxious calls never happen. Tell people what to expect, then beat your own timeline with proactive updates.

Proactive beats reactive every time. A customer who hears from you first feels taken care of. A customer who has to chase you feels forgotten, even if the repair is flawless. The update they didn't have to ask for is worth more than the one they pried loose.

Talk like a person. Skip the shop jargon; a customer doesn't know what a sublet or a blend panel is, and doesn't want a lesson. Plain language, honest timelines, and the same cadence for every customer, not just the ones who complain the loudest or know your name. Consistency is the reputation.

Always leave a door to a human. Automated updates are fine until someone has a real question, and then they need a name and a number, fast. Photos help too. A few progress shots turn a black box into a repair the customer can see, and seeing it builds trust.

WHERE OPVANTIS FITS

The **Communications Hub** handles two-way text, email, and portal messaging tied to the job, the **Customer Portal** gives every customer 24/7 access to status, photos, and promise date, and **Post-Repair Surveys** measure CSI and flag unfavorable results while there's still time to fix the relationship.

5. Performance and KPIs

Monthly numbers tell you what already went wrong. Weekly numbers let you steer. Run your shop off a short list of measures everyone can see, and look at them often enough to act.

- **Cycle time and touch time.** How long the repair takes on the calendar, and how much of that was actual work. The gap between them is your opportunity.
- **WIP and on-hand days.** How much is in the building and how long it's been there. Aging WIP is trapped cash.
- **Sales versus capacity.** What you took in against what you can actually produce, so you catch the imbalance early.
- **Gross percent and gross per RO.** The margin on the work and the dollars each job brings, watched together.
- **Supplement and leakage recovery.** What you're owed, what you captured, and what leaked.
- **Tech proficiency, billed versus clock.** Hours produced against hours on the floor, per tech.
- **CSI and reviews.** The customer's verdict, tracked as closely as the financial numbers.

THE RULE THAT MAKES IT WORK

Everyone sees the same live number. When the estimator, the tech, the manager, and the owner all read from one source, the arguments stop and the work starts.

WHERE OPVANTIS FITS

ProfitARC shows live RO gross profit and paces it against your monthly target, the **Reporting Suite** carries the operational KPIs, and per-person **My Work** views put each person's numbers in front of them. Because it sits on top of CCC ONE and your DMS, the numbers come from the systems you already run on.

6. Multi-Shop Standardization

Growth breaks the shops that never wrote down how they run. If the operating model lives in one manager's head, you can't copy it, and every new location reinvents the work. Standardize the model, then let the local details flex.

Standardize the things that define quality and let you compare stores:

- The production stages a car moves through and what "done" means at each one.
- The QC gates and who signs off before a car advances.
- The customer communication cadence.
- The documentation standard for supplements and repairs.
- The metric definitions, so cycle time means the same thing in every building.

Let scripts, staffing, and vendors flex locally. A shop in one market has different labor, different suppliers, and different customers than a shop in another, and forcing those to match helps no one. The operating model is fixed; the local execution adapts. Then measure adherence, because a standard nobody follows is just a document. Watch where a store drifts and coach it back.

WHERE OPVANTIS FITS

Configurable workflows and QC gates set the stages and sign-offs, with **process-compliance measurement** showing where each store follows the model and where it drifts. The **Reporting Suite** rolls the same KPIs up by store, region, and company on shared definitions, the **Learning Hub** delivers role-based training so a new hire in any location learns the same standard, and role-based views give each person what their job needs. It layers on top of the CCC ONE and DMS setup each store already uses.