

Introduction to the P-Pages 101

By Larry Montanez III, CDA and Jeff Lange, PE

There are many different computerized estimating software systems out on the market that assist insurance companies and body shops in listing replacement parts, repaired parts, removed and installed parts, additional items, etc. Then, these systems assist in calculating all the numbers and producing a printable estimate of all charges for collision damaged vehicles. Although the bottom line prices between the database providers appear to vary from \$300 to \$1,000, in reality they only differ, on average, about \$25 to \$100. So what is the *real* difference between these systems? That would be the Procedural Pages, better known as the P-Pages.

The P-Pages explain the included and not-included items for each vehicle part and procedure. For the procedures not listed, there is a section that defines additional procedures or labor items that are not included. Worst case scenario, you could call the software maker and ask for clarification or a letter of definition on procedures of labor times. This article will deal with some of the available ways to understand the explanations and definitions in the P-Pages. Although there are many different estimating systems available to the industry for estimatics, the insurance

companies in the United States really only use three providers. The Big Three, as I will refer to them, are CCC Pathways, Audatex and Mitchell Ultramate.

Many shops choose one system to use. In a perfect world, a body shop would have all three systems and write each estimate based on the insurance companies' systems so that negotiations would go smoothly. But as we all know, we do not live in a perfect world, and the monthly cost of all three systems would not be cost-effective to own in most cases. Some shops agree to purchase one system over another based solely on their Direct Repair Program (DRP) requirements; others base it on preference. Regardless of the system you have chosen, you will need to learn the system you purchased and know the P-Pages inside and out. But the most important thing you will need to know is the P-Pages of the other two or three systems that you *do not* own. Now, you might ask yourself why you would need to know the other systems' P-Pages. The answer is simple – it is to save time and make sure you are getting reimbursed for the procedures you are performing. Through my years of consulting, I have noticed that body

shop estimators waste an inordinate amount of time negotiating – or should I say arguing? – over listed procedures on an insurance company estimate, when in reality the procedures are already included in the database time of that system.

“Hey Larry, wait a minute!” I hear you say. “I do not own the system, so I do not have the access to get the P-Pages for that system.” Well, I have good news: This information is totally free, and here's where you get it:

CCC Pathways/Motor P-Pages:

<http://www.motor.com/documents/PDFs/GTE.pdf>

Mitchell Ultramate:

<https://www.mitchell.com/mcms/content/pub/Brochures/cegEnglish-1940.pdf>

Audatex (SHOPLINK):

<https://www.training.audatex.us/otc4viewdoc.asp?ID=802>

But, *please* do not use the links above. Why? Because they are from another website I want you to visit first: <http://degweb.org>. This is the official web site of the Database Enhancement Gateway, better known as the DEG.

The DEG is an initiative that was developed to help improve the quality and accuracy of collision repair





estimates through proactive feedback from everyone in the collision repair industry and other “end users” to the Information Providers (IPs) that supply the databases for the various estimating products. The DEG is created, equally funded and maintained by the Automotive Service Association (ASA), the Alliance of Automotive Service Providers (AASP) and the Society of Collision Repair Specialists (SCRS).

The links for the P-Pages can be found at this website, but there is even more there for you to experience, such as the DEG Database and the “Submit a Database Inquiry” option. The “Submit a Database Inquiry” section is an area where you can fill out a form and the DEG will ask the particular database provider about your inquiry. Your inquiry can be about missing labor time, a labor time increase, a missing procedure or just about anything else. The DEG Database is the area where all submitted inquiries are listed and answered. If you look at the DEG Database, you will see that most of the inquiries have been answered and adjusted to reflect the initial inquiry. This is a useful and very important website for your business, and you really need to support it.

Let’s look at the Big Three by P-Page numbers. Mitchell is 53 pages, Motor/CCC Pathways is 38 pages and Audatex Shoplinc is 100 Pages. That would be a total of 191 pages. Let me give you a comparison to some other industries. On average, a pharmacist’s desktop reference book is 800 pages, a law desktop reference book is 1,300 pages and a physician’s desktop reference book is 3,300 pages. You are just as much as a professional in your field as a pharmacist, doctor or lawyer, but you only need to know 191 pages to properly negotiate for an agreed price.

There are two database systems that will also assist you. One is the OEM websites that will provide their repair manuals in a PDF format. The OEM repair manuals will give you access to their repair procedures and position statements. These repair manuals are available for free or pay-per-view, but there is an easier way to access this information. Alldata Collision Connect will provide you web-based access to the OEM information and Technical Service Bulletins (TSBs) for a monthly fee. But the really cool thing is that all the information is much easier to access, and there is also a separate tab for “Collision Reference” that will give you access to all the OEM position statements. OEM position statements give you a printable document on refurbished wheels, used parts, used air bags, sectioning and full body sectioning (better known as “clipping”). These statements and procedures can be a useful negotiating and educational tool.

Hopefully, this article has brought to your attention the importance of knowing the P-Pages and how they can

help you be more efficient and increase your profits to restore the vehicle to pre-loss condition. I will be offering an intensive 90-minute seminar on “P-Page Logic” on March 19 and 20 at the 33rd Annual NORTHEAST™ Trade Show at the Meadowlands Exposition Center in Secaucus, N.J. Please pre-register online for this **FREE** course at www.aaspnjnortheast.com/seminarsevents. Space for the seminar is limited, so register early to ensure a seat at this industry-changing event.

Feel free to contact us anytime if you have any questions.



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