

## How to make the most of attending NACE

By: Geralynn R Kottschade

The time of year is here again: the leaves are changing, we are creating our holiday list, and we are packing our bags with full anticipation of heading to Las Vegas for the greatest show for the collision industry -- NACE. After attending many NACE events over the years you tend to develop a routine for trying to see everything and everyone you need to, in a too short period of time. Yet when you board that plane for your ride home you still feel as if you just spent 10 days on the show floor and you did not accomplish anything you wanted to. I have some hints for success in getting in all you can while in Las Vegas at NACE and I would love to share them with you.

One of the first things I do is find the wish list my technicians keep during the year. During our October meeting we go over equipment that is in need of repair and what would be cool to have. Then I go online to [www.NACEexpo.com](http://www.NACEexpo.com) to locate vendors and view the map of the show floor. I get on the phone and schedule the meetings I need to make with our preferred vendors, as this saves them time and yourself down time. Another trick I've learned is to keep a schedule of events that I *must* attend, the events I need to find time for, and the ones I really want to and will give every effort to get there.

Remember, this is Automotive Service and Repair Week so as you walk the tradeshow floor you will have the chance to meet with your friends in the mechanical repair industry. Take a look at their vendors and you will be surprised at the tools and connections you can use in your day-to-day operations in the collision repair shop.

The best part of NACE is networking - meeting and making new friends and becoming reacquainted with older friends. These are the people who you can relate to the most -- they go through virtually the same type of day you do. These are not like the friends you have at home; they are special. You can learn so much from them and can develop business relationships that will improve your job skill set. Take advantage of your lunch time to get off your feet and to visit and talk about all the exciting things that are going on.

Education at NACE is incredible so please don't ignore the opportunity you have to expand your training; there is something for everyone in every aspect of collision repair. You can attend classes early in the morning to later in the day -- the schedule is designed to fit anyone's busy schedule.

Now I've gotten myself excited about hitting the road again. I need my annual boost to prepare me for the busy winter months ahead. See you in Las Vegas!