COMPRESSED AIR IN AUTOMOTIVE PAINT AND BODY SHOPS

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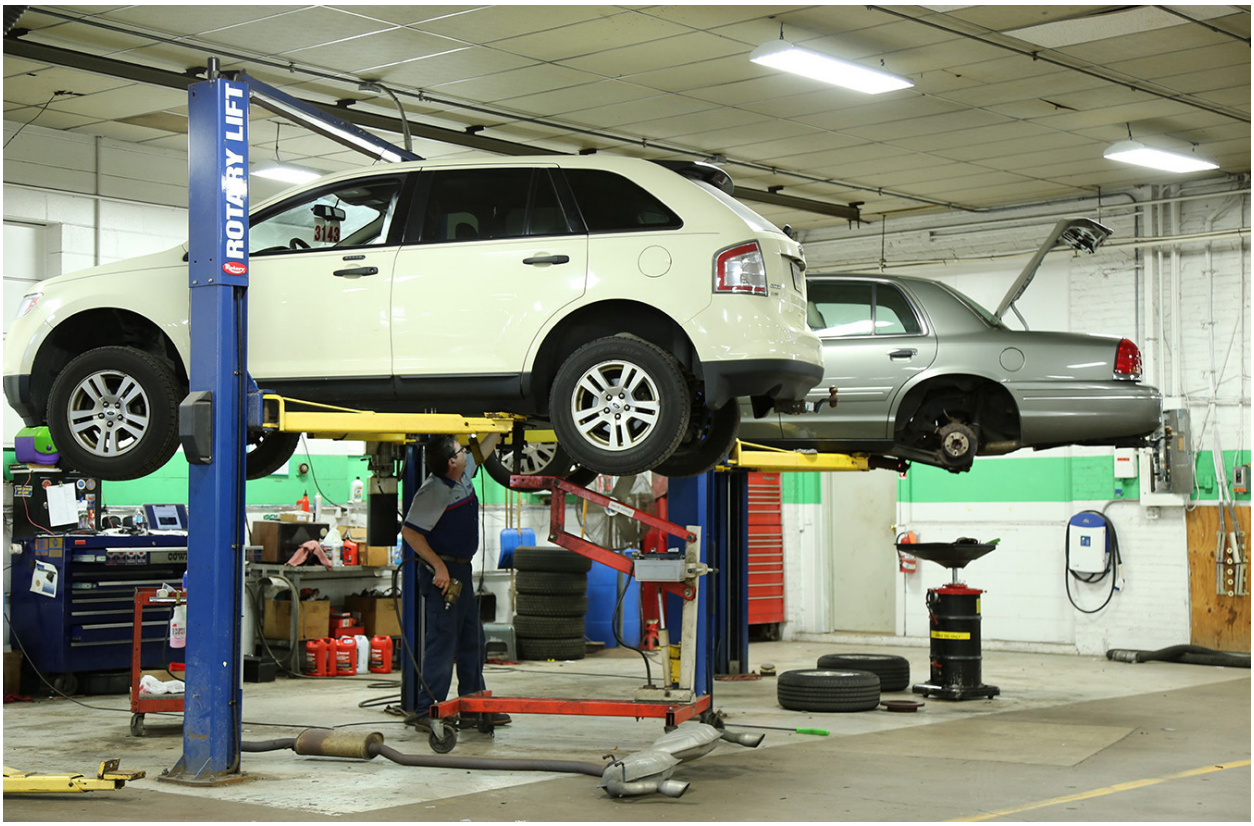

Just as cars and trucks are part of most of our daily lives, compressed air is vital in the day-to-day operations of the automotive aftermarket industry. Whether it's a small body shop using compressed air to paint or an auto shop operating air tools for repair, air compressors play an important role. When considering what kind of air compressor for your shop, it's important to consider your choices carefully. Below are some key questions and considerations before making your investment.

Rotary Screw or Piston?

Traditionally auto and body shop owners have elected piston compressors because of their lower upfront cost. However, as compressor technology evolves, many shop owners are discovering what larger facilities and industrial manufacturers have known for years: the many benefits to using rotary screw technology. Rotary screw compressors are more energy efficient, quieter and provide a reliable supply of clean, dry compressed air.

In addition, rotary screw compressors are designed for 24/7, continuous duty operation and offer superior diagnostic tools. The Sullair ShopTek® is microprocessor controlled, so all essential parameters – such as temperature and maintenance indicators – of the compressor are conveniently displayed on the controller. Typically, piston controllers only offer temperature gauges.

Where Do You Want to Store the Compressor?
Standard shop piston compressors operate loudly, thus requiring them to be placed in a separate compressor room. In addition, the pounding of the piston compressors results in a noisy operation – typically about 85 dBA or more – and vibrations which can reverberate through entire shops. This is not only disruptive to shop workers but also customers.

On the contrary, rotary screw compressors have a small footprint, operate very quietly and have no vibration. ShopTek compressors, for instance, have a sound enclosure allowing them to operate as low as 66 dBA. This is equivalent to a copy machine or moderate humming noise. This allows for a normal conversation to be had while near the compressor. In addition, it means the compressor can be placed right on the shop floor and you no longer need a separate compressor room.

What Size Compressor Do I Need?
What size compressor you need depends on the number of bays within the shop and the number of tools you would be using at the same time. You then need to ensure your compressor can supply enough air to handle that work load. For example, if your shop has 10 bays, it's usually safe to assume you'll have five shop workers requiring compressed air at any given time, so you would size for the requirements of the five tools. The tools display how many cfm are required for each – typically it's around 10 cfm but varies by manufacturer.

If you expect your business to grow in the coming years, take that into account as you're choosing your compressor, too.

Recommended Products:

- Sullair ShopTek Rotary Screw Compressors 5-100 hp