

# URG/PINNACLE TRAINING CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE RECORDS WERE AGAIN SMASHED!



Over 600 automotive recycling industry leaders took it to the next level at the 2011 URG & Pinnacle Training Conference that was held in Denver

By Richard Filley

What recession? What lingering downturn? There was no evidence of a weak economy at this year's 16th annual URG & Pinnacle Training Conference held April 14-17, 2011 at the Inverness Hotel & Conference Center in Denver, Colorado. Quite the contrary, as attendance records for the auto recycling industry's premier event were smashed with over 600 automotive recycling industry leaders and decision makers present from across North

America, Europe and Australia to learn from each other and the experts. They gathered to better understand the cutting edge developments in their rapidly changing industry, meet with vendors to see what's new in the market, and renew old acquaintances and make new friends.

"Thanks to everyone who came to Denver for the URG & Pinnacle Training Conference this year", says Michelle Alexander, URG executive director. "Our conference attendance was up this year by over 20%. We offered 54 training sessions to attendees, many to standing room only crowds." In her welcoming remarks, Michelle told the audience that "it has never been a better time to be a recycler. URG is here to serve you with an array of programs and offerings that are designed to help stay competitive and prosper, even in times like these. The

benefits of automobile recycling, both environmental and economic, connect well with most Americans. All of us need to tell our great stories and get the word out to the public, insurers, and repair and collision facilities."

Helping URG do just that was a film crew from Collision Hub, the premiere networking site for the collision repair industry. Shown live on the URG website ([www.u-r-g.com](http://www.u-r-g.com)) and the Collision Hub website ([www.collisionhub.com](http://www.collisionhub.com)) Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn pages, selected conference sessions are now available to a global network of viewers like

never before. "URG represents the best of the auto recycling industry", says Kristen Felder, CEO of Collision Hub. "The collision industry doesn't often get to see the auto recycling industry's point of view, and we want to help change that. Our coverage will expose URG and some of their top members to a much larger audience."

"Business is there for the taking. Independent recyclers need to be efficient and draw upon their strengths in order to get their fair share," said keynote speaker Peter Riddle, President and CEO of Actual Systems of America, the UK and Australia, creators of Pinnacle Pro and Pinnacle Classic, the world's most advanced salvage yard management systems. For many attendees, the chance to meet Actual Systems expert staff and experienced Pinnacle users is a highlight

of the training conference.

"Sixteen months ago we bypassed Pinnacle Classic and went straight into Pinnacle Pro," says Mike Faurie, General Manager of Harold's Used Cars & Parts (Briggs, TX). A first time attendee, he says "I am really impressed with this conference and how many top recyclers are here. I'm strengthening some of my existing partnerships and also making new connections. A third generation recycler, he is typical of many younger attendees – tuned into technology, marketing, positioning, supply chain, and global considerations that are all changing the auto recycling industry and the salvage yards across America that make up this dynamic industry.

Change seemed to be on everyone's mind at this year's URG Conference, from casual discussions during session breaks to the presentations in nearly every educational session. Attendees learned that the auto salvage industry is changing quickly for reasons partly due to a shifting environment (such as a slowly recovering economy, the rising awareness of the benefits of 'going green,' and a stricter regulatory environment) and other reasons internal to the industry (a relatively diminishing supply of salvage vehicles due to foreign buyers, a 'changing of the guard' among many yard owners and staff, and the aggressive implementation of technology).

Conference chairwoman Michelle Alexander offered thanks to everyone who attended, spoke, exhibited or otherwise helped make this year's URG training conference so successful. "I especially want to thank my board of directors. They make it all possible." It's not too early to start making your plans for next April – in Denver!