RESTORATION INTEL • MANAGED REPAIR INTELLIGENCE

Experience First-Look Card • The Ranking That Reorders Your Week & The Quality Floor

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CORE AXIOM • CONTRACTOR CONNECTION STATE OF THE MANAGED REPAIR MARKET (OCT 21, 2026)

The trade's oldest answer — "do good work" — just lost. 33% of contractors named customer experience as the single biggest factor in industry success. That is more than twice the share that chose quality of workmanship, and nearly three times the share that chose carrier relationship management.

1. The Contractor Success Ranking: Why Workmanship Stopped Being the Contest

CRAWFORD & COMPANY SURVEY DATA

Success Factor	Contractor Share	Program Reality & Operational Impact
Customer Experience	**33% (#1 Rank)**	**The deciding differentiator.** Separates the firms that keep getting fed from those that quietly fall off the rotation. What happens around the repair is what carriers track.
Quality of Workmanship	**< 16.5% (< 1/2 of #1)**	**The table-stakes floor, not the contest.** Every roster contractor is already vetted and credentialed. Workmanship floor is fixed before assignment #1 is dispatched.
Carrier Relationship Mgmt	**~ 11% (Distant 3rd)**	**Working the carrier desk doesn't save you.** The relationship that pays is not with the program — it is the one the homeowner feels while the program watches.

A. The Vetted Quality Floor

The finding is not that workmanship stopped mattering — it is that workmanship stopped being the contest. Inside managed repair, vetting sets an identical baseline for all shops. Superior craftsmanship cannot compensate for a sloppy customer process.

B. The Carrier Relationship Illusion

A contractor can work the carrier side of the table for years and still lose the rotation to a competitor whose policyholders report a better experience on the exact same quality of work. Carrier loyalty follows homeowner survey metrics.

2. The Evaluation Gap: Daily Experience vs. End-of-Job Workmanship

WHY EXPERIENCE OUTPOLLS WORKMANSHIP 2 TO 1

Evaluation Dimension	Quality of Workmanship	Customer Experience
Evaluation Frequency	**Judged once**, at the very conclusion of the project.	**Judged every day** of the job across every single touchpoint.
Evaluator Competency	Evaluated by a homeowner who *usually cannot technically evaluate it*.	Evaluated directly by the living policyholder experiencing disruption.
Carrier Impact	Assumed to be compliant based on credentialed roster entry.	**Directly recorded on carrier surveys** when the file closes.
Roster Consequence	Poor workmanship triggers a warranty claim; rare if vetted.	Poor experience triggers rotation removal; quiet and permanent.

The Core Operating Axiom: "The credential gets you onto the roster; the experience keeps the assignments coming." The job is the homeowner's experience of the job.

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3. What "Experience" Actually Consists Of — 5 Unglamorous, Schedulable Behaviors

SYSTEMS OVER PERSONALITY

On a managed repair job, customer experience is not charm or charisma. It is a list of unglamorous, schedulable behaviors that can be trained, audited, and improved exactly like production:

Schedulable Behavior	The Controlled System Standard	The Failure That Kills the Rotation
1. First-Call Clock	A first-call clock **measured in hours** immediately after assignment intake. Immediate contact established.	Letting the assignment sit in inbox; homeowner calls carrier asking if anyone was assigned.
2. Single Named Contact	A **single named point of contact** on every file with direct phone/email. One person owns communication.	Subjecting the policyholder to an internal phone tree or bouncing them between subs and PMs.
3. Proactive Update Rhythm	A **scheduled update rhythm** the homeowner can set their watch by; updates arrive *before* they ask.	Silence during pauses; forcing the homeowner to initiate contact to ask "what is happening next."
4. Pre-Start Explainer	**Scope, schedule, and dust control** explained in detail *before* work starts with written protocols.	Surprising the homeowner with dust, noise, or crew hours and apologizing for it after the fact.
5. Final Walkthrough & Warranty	A final formal walkthrough that physically **shows the work and explicitly names the warranty** protection.	Packing up tools and leaving; mailing an invoice without a formal demonstration of completion.

The Economic Pressure: Cost Meeting Expectation

Lance Malcolm, president of Network Solutions at Contractor Connection: contractors navigate rising material and labor costs "*alongside higher expectations for speed, transparency and service.*" When prices cannot come down (rates fixed by program rules), **the experience around the price is the only variable left in the contractor's control.**

4. The Program Trade: What Both Sides Are Buying

74% STEADY STREAM BENEFIT

What Contractors Buy (The Payment):

- **74% named a steady stream of work** as top benefit.
- Built-in credibility and trust with property owners.
- Stronger client relationships and competitive edge.
- *The trade:* Assignment volume is payment; experience metrics are the price of staying in the flow.

What Carriers Buy (The Ledger):

- **Contractor accountability** & strict cost control.
- **Reduced leakage** across claims files.
- **Faster claim cycle times** from assignment to close.
- **Higher policyholder satisfaction** on post-loss surveys.

5. What the Policyholder Thinks They Are Buying — The Missing Repair

PERCEPTION REALITY

Asked what managed repair delivers, contractors named: (1) **Peace of mind** from working with vetted professionals, (2) **Help finding a contractor**, and (3) **Warranty protection**. Notice what is missing: *the repair*. The homeowner assumes competence; what they experience, remember, and report back to the carrier is the process wrapped around it.