3M™ Finesse-it™ Robotic Paint Repair System earns prestigious SURCAR award

The breakthrough system, developed by robotics experts in the 3M Abrasive Systems Division, is revolutionizing the detection and repair of paint imperfections on the automotive assembly line

ST. PAUL, Minn., Oct. 28, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- 3M, a pioneer in the automotive industry's paint repair process more than 100 years ago, is again setting the standard for the future of automated paint repair. The team behind the 3M™ Finesse-it™ Robotic Paint Repair System has been awarded one of the industry's most prestigious honors for its groundbreaking innovation.

At 2021 SURCAR Detroit Conference -- the world's leading automotive body finishing congress -- the presentation made jointly by 3M and Ford Motor Co., featuring the 3M™ Finesse-it™ Robotic Paint Repair System was selected for The Award for Technique, besting 23 other presentations. Accepting the award was the two-person team that made the presentation: Scott Barnett, Director – Application Engineering, Robotics and Automation, 3M; and Marc Tornero, AI Vision and Robotics Lead Engineer (Global Paint), Ford Motor Company.

"For decades, paint imperfections on vehicles coming off the assembly line have been detected and repaired manually, a labor-intensive process that produces inconsistent results," said Carl Doeksen, Director, Robotics and Automation, 3M. "Our new 3M™ Finesse-it™ Robotic Paint Repair System, developed in collaboration with our integrator partners, automates the process, delivering repairs consistently, efficiently and of the highest quality. The SURCAR Award is a fantastic recognition of the value and impact of this robotic system, and the trailblazing work of our 3M Abrasive Systems Division."

The winning presentation detailed the years-long development of the 3M™ Finesse-it™ Robotic Paint Repair System, a project undertaken in an effort to achieve a better method for perfecting car finishes. After years of research and testing, and drawing on 3M's decades-long expertise in robotics, the system was commercialized earlier in 2021. It is centered on proprietary software that fixes defects, identified by a qualified vision system, by providing robots the right repair process to enable them to sand and polish the vehicles using 3M abrasive products.

It is the latest innovation from the 3M Abrasives System Division, which has developed numerous robotic abrasive processes -- across several industries – that use automation to help increase productivity, consistency and cost savings, benefits made even more critical by a shrinking workforce.

The SURCAR award was the second earned by the 3M™ Finesse-it™ Robotic Paint Repair System team, which was presented with the 2020 3M Circle of Technical Excellence and Innovation (CTEI) corporate level award. The CTEI award honors exceptional individuals and teams for their outstanding contributions to 3M and for setting the standard for 3M technical excellence and innovation worldwide.

For more information about the 3M™ Finesse-it™ Robotic Paint Repair System and how it can help improve productivity and consistency of your paint repair process, download the brochure or visit 3m.com/robotics.

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