

SS Customs Relies on Avery Dennison® Graphics Solutions Automotive Films to Delight Clientele

It's said that if Silicon Valley were a country, it would be one of the richest in the world. So it's no surprise that the region is home to a wide variety of high-end cars and trucks, often owned by people pushing the tech industry into the future. And when those owners are interested in preserving or customizing their vehicle's finish, many turn to SS Customs in Redwood City, California.

SS Customs owner Shareef Khan is second generation in the graphics business. His father and mother, immigrants from the Fiji Islands, own a sign-making shop (Sam's Signs, which still operates in San Leonardo, California). Shareef started working there as a teenager and witnessed the evolution of the graphics industry over the last couple of decades.





An automotive films pioneer

A car lover himself, Shareef started SS Customs in 2005. The following year, he appeared at SEMA with what he believes to be one of the show's first wrapped cars. Reflecting on the early days of the automotive film trend, Shareef says:

“Our cars would win shows and events, and that told me that people were paying attention. Many who saw our cars first thought our designs were airbrushed, and were surprised to learn they were digitally printed on films. Once solid color films came out, everything kind of grew. I can't believe how big it is now.”

Around 2009, Shareef also learned how to apply paint protection film (PPF). Today, SS Customs focuses mainly on PPF and color change film — splitting those applications about evenly — while also offering ceramic coating, powder coating of wheels, and window films. He notes that while many other custom shops prefer to focus on

different types of work (paint, fabrication, etc.) with wrapping as a secondary offering, his is one of the few shops that focuses on vehicle films.

Relying on Avery Dennison Graphics Solutions automotive films

Shareef and his team rely on Avery Dennison automotive films for a lot of their work. He refers to it as their number one brand for color change. SS Customs was also one of the first in the country to use Avery Dennison PPF products. Today the shop uses products such as Supreme Defense™ PPF and neo™ noir films. They use MPI 1105 with overlaminates for customers' graphic vehicle wrapping needs.

Avery Dennison Supreme Defense high-performance paint protection films provide exceptional scratch resistance, self-healing properties, and truly supreme gloss and matte finishes. The neo™ noir product is

an innovative hybrid gloss black paint protection film. It provides an OEM paint-like finish, while protecting the vehicle from harmful environmental hazards.

Shareef talks about what sets the Supreme Defense line apart from the competition:

“Supreme Defense PPF has less initial tack, so you don't have glue lines, glue failure, or anything else that you often see with these films. This is especially true on black cars.”

In addition, Shareef advises, “And with any car in general, you're going to get more of a clean cut. It does take a little longer to dry, and you need to wait a little longer to tuck edges. So you have to give yourself a little bit more time for the post-work. But the overall finish and install quality is superior to anything else.”

Considering the demands of their clientele, fit and finish are critical. Shareef and his team are used to working on cars made by Lamborghini, Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, Tesla, and other high-end makes and rare models.

“There are products that could allow us to move faster,” says Shareef. “But at the end of the day, our customers want the best quality they can get. The results we get from PPF really mean a lot to our business. We've moved everything to Avery Dennison, with the occasional trickle of other brands.”



Process is key to consistent results

For SS Customs, process is key to consistent, excellent results. Cars are first carefully hand-washed and treated with a clay bar to ensure surfaces are decontaminated and as smooth as possible. The post-application process includes inspecting the car under lights to ensure there are no air bubbles or other blemishes in the work.

Shareef considers the application of the Avery Dennison Supreme Defense PPF products to be slightly more technical than a dry install film, but he appreciates its overall ease of use. "It's a bit more forgiving, with the lower initial tack," he says. "That helps a lot of the newer installers understand the film a little bit better."

Shareef and his team also rely on Avery Dennison's training and service offerings.

"They've always had our backs when it comes to teaching us about the film, educating us about the process, and more," he says.

"The customer service you get from any brand you carry is a direct mirror of what I'm able to give to my clients," Shareef continues. "So the fact that Avery Dennison is on top of everything helps us be on top of everything for our clients. It's a win-win on all sides."

Just a humble little wrap shop

Like the automotive films trend itself, SS Customs has come a long way since its beginnings in the early 2000s. And despite his remarkable story and ability to get his hands on some of the world's most desirable cars, Shareef is down to earth and grateful for his success. "We're one of the oldest and highest-rated shops in northern California, and have a lot of cool

things happening here. But I still think of us as the 'humble little wrap shop on the West Coast.'"

Visit SS Customs and view some of their amazing automotive film work at sscamerica.com.

Learn more about Avery Dennison Graphics Solutions, including the Supreme Defense PPF and noir paint protection films at graphics.averydennison.com/ppf.