CTIA Certification

NO. 7 ISSUE | WINTER 2025

REVERSE IN REVIEW



TRANSLATING SUPPLY CHAIN EXCELLENCE INTO CONSUMER TRUST

The CTIA Reverse Logistics and Service Quality (RLSQ) Program has dedicated the last five years to defining standards and procedures to increase transparency within the supply chain for secondary device lifecycle management. Leveraging this foundational work, the program has sharpened its strategic focus on enhancing consumer trust in the pre-owned device market. While our mission remains grounded in certification processes for technicians, retailers and services facilities, this year, we have evolved the universal standardized grading scales criteria and definitions for mobile devices to address consumer demand for more device condition transparency.

With the publication of the CTIA Wireless Device Grading Scales Criteria and Definitions, Version 5.1, the marketplaces selling secondary used mobile devices direct to consumers have an opportunity to further standardize device conditions. Industry grading scales include universal descriptions adding clarity to help eliminate consumer confusion which serves as a benchmark for consistent, standards-based quality of device grading across multiple sales channels.

The RLSQ Program Working Groups are leading the way for greater industry transparency, redefining supply chain excellence and ultimately supporting greater consumer trust.

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2025 BY THE NUMBERS

Supporting WISE Technician Certification

7 WISE Authorized Training Administrators, including new partners in Europe, Canada, and South Africa

12 Educational institutions teach WISE Certification courses

1,500+ Technicians certified this year, 24,000 certified to date

Growth of the WISE Authorized Service Center (ASC) Program

14 New WISE ASCs joined in 2025 – a record year!

33 Certified WISE ASCs

40+ Facility candidates on deck for 2026

3 Languages offered for WISE Certification in English, Spanish and French

Global Interest grows across the US, Canada, Poland, Dubai

THE FIX JOINS WISE

With over 275 store locations globally, THE FIX has officially joined the WISE community.

Founded in 2013, THE FIX began as a single repair shop in New Jersey and grew into a global network of retailers. They are known for providing fast, high-quality, and trusted service to customers across the US and Germany.

We are all beyond excited to be part of the WISE program and the certifications it offers to our team. This is an important step in solidifying our place in the industry and ensuring that we consistently provide the best service to our customers. The WISE program and the certifications will provide our technicians with valuable education and a badge of honor proving THE FIX techs have the skills to be your trusted neighborhood repair center.

– MICHAEL DUARTE, CEO

Allstate Protection Locks in Quality
Adding Trust to Their Repair Service Network

Allstate Protection Plans (APP) has formalized its commitment to industry standards by leveraging WISE Certification as a critical vetting mechanism for the Allstate Protection Program, a device service protection plan sold online and at retailers nationwide. This strategic decision establishes WISE as an essential industry benchmark for greater customer experience utilizing certified skilled technicians.

By adopting industry standards, APP is ensuring customer excellence, including fewer reworks, and more consistent, quality repairs for their customers.

With more than 1,300 local repair stores in its service provider network, APP has required WISE Certified repair technicians for all new applicants since 2023. Today, approximately 80% of authorized retail locations now meet the industry standard. For bulk repairs performed in larger depot facilities, APP only utilizes WISE Authorized Service Centers for their mobile device repairs and trade-in processing.

Looking ahead, APP plans to continue building internal audit capabilities to ensure all partners are in current standing with their WISE Certification, encouraging broader partner adoption, in turn supporting more repair opportunities through its network of WISE Certified providers.

welcome NEW MEMBERS

The following companies joined the RLSQ Program in second half of 2025

2ndlifephones

Archangel Education and Technology

B2B MOBILE

BUYSPRY

ecoATM

PREMIER

RepairDesk

stratix

triage partners

WIRELESS REPLAY

RETAIL SPOTLIGHT

A2 PHONE REPAIR:

Serving a University Community

Located in the heart of Ann Arbor, A2 Phone Repair has been serving their local community for over a decade, specializing in fast, reliable repairs for phones, tablets, and laptops. For University of Michigan students, staying connected is essential; coursework, research, and campus life all rely on their devices. “We understand that losing data or facing downtime isn’t just inconvenient; it can impact their academic success. That’s why we carry a wide range of parts in stock, allowing us to complete most repairs quickly and efficiently, helping students stay on track,” said owner, Alex Alakarhi.



Their commitment extends to faculty and staff as well, ensuring that everyone in the Ann Arbor community has access to the reliable device support they need. From cracked screens and battery replacements to data recovery, their experienced team approaches every repair with urgency and care. At A2 Phone Repair, it’s not just about fixing devices; but keeping Ann Arbor connected and helping students and professionals stay productive every day.

A2 Phone Repair prioritizes adherence to industry standards with two WISE Certified retail locations. With demand continuing to grow, the team is in the process of opening a third store in the area, further expanding their reach serving customers access to fast, dependable repairs.

More about A2 Phone Repair here.

WISETALKS

THE EVOLUTION OF MOBILE REPAIR

on ReTech Roundtable

From the "Wild West" to Wireless Industry Service Excellence (WISE), the mobile repair industry has evolved through collaboration. Together, we’ve come a long way. It was great fun as guests of the ReTech Roundtable podcast to highlight our history, have a listen here.

episodedrop

FROM CELL PHONE BIRTHPLACE TO GLOBAL STANDARDS:

RLSQ Fall Meeting Highlights from Chicago









Chicago was the perfect autumn backdrop for the RLSQ Fall Meeting, hosted at the Motorola downtown offices at the Merchandise Mart. As the birthplace of the very first cellular phone call, the city set the stage for a week centered on community connection, program adoption, and advancement of device repair standards. With blue skies over Lake Michigan and more than 85 members in attendance, we enjoyed a packed agenda with presentations from members.

Members led forward-looking sessions on technician training, grading scale standardization, and global expansion plans. Working Groups shared achievements, including the micro-credential modules presented by the Technician Training Working Group, the upcoming release of the industry’s first direct-to-consumer grading scales, and streamlined audit procedures for the WISE Authorized Service Centers. Additionally, CCS Insights, and Alchemy presented the use of different trade-in models and consumer attitudes toward trade-in.









Congratulations to Craig Feely of Samsung who was voted by his peers as this year’s Working Group Presentation Champion. As we close out the year, we invite all organizations to lean further into the program — whether through technician certification, retail certification, facility audits, or championing the adoption of grading scales within your networks.

See everyone in San Jose at eBay HQ for the RLSQ Spring Meeting!





UNTAPPED POTENTIAL:
Unlocking The Next Wave of Device Trade-In

Alchemy, a circular solutions provider for the tech industry, joined the CTIA RLSQ Fall meeting in Chicago to present new findings from its recent large-scale research into consumer trade-in behaviors. Partnering with independent research provider CCS Insights, Alchemy conducted more than 40 interviews with senior industry decision-makers and surveyed 4,000+ consumers across the UK and US, to understand what truly drives — and hinders — consumers when trading in devices. All with the aim of opening new revenue streams for OEMs, retailers and carriers through data-led circular solutions designed to meet consumer needs.

According to their research, around 1 billion devices reach end-of-life globally each year, yet only about 20% are traded in. Increasing trade-in participation through stronger, more compelling propositions represents a multi-billion-dollar opportunity for the consumer electronics industry.

The research commissioned by Alchemy shows shifting consumer perceptions: trade-in is no longer just an affordability mechanism, but a powerful lever to accelerate upgrade cycles.

71%
would replace their smartphone earlier if given a strong trade-in offer

68%
would upgrade to a higher-end device with a compelling trade-in offer

The research also draws lessons from adjacent industries to identify best-in-class practices with clear relevance for consumer electronics. Insights from sectors as varied as automotive and home electronics demonstrate how these industries have successfully shortened upgrade cycles and elevated the customer experience through effective trade-in models.

To learn more about how consumer trade-in can drive revenue and earlier upgrades, and how data can turn returns into commercial opportunity, contact Stephen Wise and explore the findings firsthand.





WISE ASC Program Secures Worldwide Auditor Footprint

The WISE Authorized Service Center (ASC) program is expanding its network of approved auditors to meet the increasing global demand from facilities seeking WISE Authorization. The program's network of approved auditors now comprises four independent firms: IBEC, Glacier Consulting, Solar eWaste Solutions, and Greeneye Partners. Click here to book your WISE ASC audit today!

Longevity vs. Loyalty:
WHAT TRULY DRIVES THE SMARTPHONE UPGRADE CYCLE?

Jeff Lively, AVP, Service Delivery at Assurant shared a snapshot of the retail device repair market.

3+ yrs
U.S. consumers keep smartphones longer than 3 years

36 mos
Device financing programs are trending longer

79%
Consumers say OEM parts are important

<50%
Buyers purchase a protection plan

27%
Consumers without a protection plan choose the manufacturer for repairs

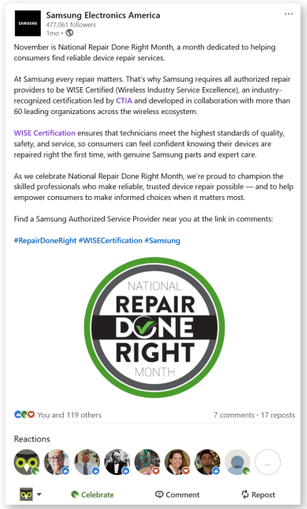
21%
Consumers without a protection plan choose specialized repair shops

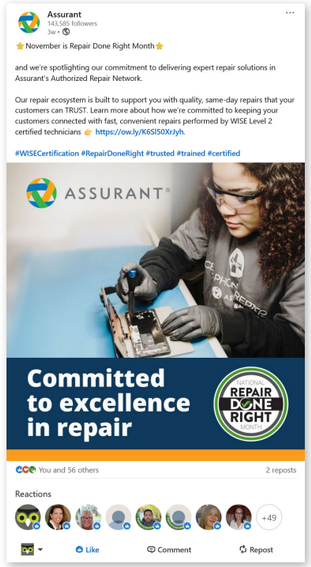
NATIONAL REPAIR DONE RIGHT MONTH

November marked our 4th year celebrating trained and skilled technicians serving consumers in thousands of trusted retail locations nationwide. This promotional campaign annually highlights the importance of reliable repair servic networks for all product categories and encourages consumers to seek out local, trusted repair technicians.

INDUSTRY

Thank you to Samsung and Assurant for celebrating trusted repair with us.





CERTIFICATED TECHNICIANS

We are adding content across Instagram, X and YouTube, celebrating retailers and technicians.



EDUCATORS

We celebrated student technicians coming through secondary and post-secondary schools.



AUTOMATED GRADING: ROBOTICS IN REVERSE LOGISTICS

The recent CTIA RLSQ Roundtable Webinar, "*Revolutionizing Mobile Device Repair Grading with Robotics and Automation*," brought together Phoenix Innovations, CDR Eco-Movement, and FutureDial to discuss how automation is advancing high-volume device grading. The session highlighted emerging robotics solutions designed to improve grading speed, accuracy, and operational efficiency.

Presenters also shared real-world applications and trends shaping the future of device repair and recovery, offering a clear view of how automated tools are becoming an increasingly important part of modernizing reverse logistics workflows.

Missed the recording? For a copy, reach out to Marin Galvin.

PHOENIX INNOVATIONS

FUTUREDIAL

HAVE A GREAT IDEA FOR AN

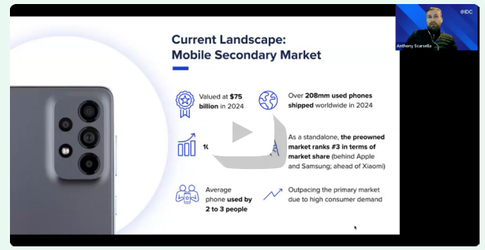
RLSQ Roundtable Webinar in 2026?

REACH OUT TO MARIN GALVIN

Replay More Expert Insights Here!

Trends Shaping the Mobile Secondary Market: A Discussion Between B-Stock's Sean Cleland and IDC's Anthony Scarsella

Two industry veterans, Sean Cleland of B-Stock and Anthony Scarsella of IDC, deliver a deep-dive analysis into the forces reshaping the mobile secondary market. This session moves beyond surface-level trends to provide actionable intelligence on market dynamics critical for every player in the wireless ecosystem. The conversation dissects current supply chain realities, covering essential topics such as global supply dynamics, trade-in program performance, and evolving device pricing trends. While also addressing the technological and regulatory changes that disrupted the market this year.





The Digital Workplace: A Key Opportunity for Your Organization's Green Strategy

Part of ReLondon's Circular Economy Week, this webinar explores how circular thinking can turn everyday IT procurement — laptops, phones, tablets — into a powerful driver of organizational sustainability. Together with moderator Nicole Scott, Closing the Loop's Joost de Kluijver, Hugo Warner, and Ray Knight from Atos discuss how collaboration, leadership, and simple but impactful circular solutions can align IT devices with a company's green strategy and business goals.

celebrating success

A CERTIFICATION MILESTONE FOR ENCORE REPAIR

The Encore Repair facility in Galvin, IL proudly achieved WISE Certification, reflecting their ongoing commitment to quality device repair, safety best practices, and supply chain excellence. This year's milestone is especially noteworthy, as only 33 facilities worldwide have earned this designation, placing Encore Repair among the top facilities recognized for meeting the highest industry standards. The WISE Certification team had the honor of attending the celebration ceremony, marking this significant accomplishment alongside the Encore Repair leadership team.





HAVE A STORY SHOWCASING YOUR TEAM'S

"COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE"?

SHARE YOUR PHOTOS AND VIDEOS WITH US! PLEASE REACH OUT TO PROGRAMS@WISECERTIFICATION.COM.

viva la France

The Repair Academy Becomes a WISE Authorized Training Administrator

We officially welcomed The Repair Academy as the newest Authorized Training Administrator, and the program's first training location in Europe.

THE REPAIR ACADEMY

The Repair Academy joins the WISE community, bringing both technical expertise and a unique market position. It is the only facility in the region recognized by the French government for its board repair capabilities, making it a valuable addition to our network. The Repair Academy will begin WISE Level 1 and Level 2 training in early 2026.

For more about The Repair Academy, click here.

BUILDING TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE

As we accelerate our efforts in the upcoming year, we will be scaling this proven model of community-focused tech education and amplifying the impact of the WISE Certification credentials to reach even more aspiring technicians nationwide. The future of the repair workforce starts with industry credentials.

IDEAL FOR SCHOOLS WHO ARE:

- **Running an in-house repair program**
- **Starting a repair program**
- **Utilizing staff to repair devices**
- **Equipping teachers to teach a repair program**
- **Preparing students for the workforce of tomorrow**











Dallas-Fort Worth Amps Up Course Offerings in 2026
The WISE Program is thrilled to announce a significant collaboration effort across the Dallas-Fort Worth area with multiple secondary and post-secondary schools and training centers. More to follow on this developing story at our RLSQ Spring Meeting in San Jose.

Techtonic Launches Repair Ready!
WISE Certification is proud to partner with Jonathan's Landing Foundation (JLF) to support the development of a specialized job training program focused on mobile device repair. This past year, JLF's social enterprise organization, Techtonic, launched Repair Ready, the first interactive WISE Certification prep course delivered through an online management system. Read more about it here.

Jonathan's LANDING

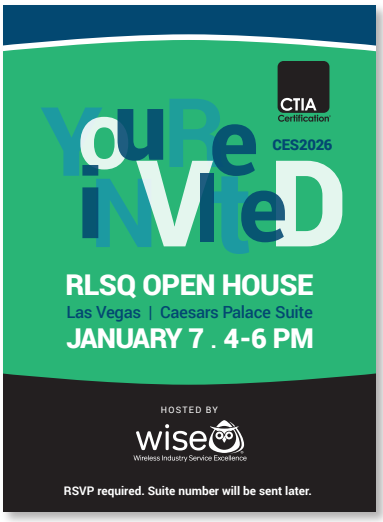
techtonic
POWERED BY JONATHAN'S LANDING FOUNDATION

MARK YOUR 2026 CALENDARS



CES 2026, Jan 6-7

CTIA Certification, Rohde & Schwarz and TÜV SÜD will host a VIP Happy Hour on Jan 6th, and CTIA Certification will host an RLSQ Open House on Jan 7th at Caesars Palace.



RLSQ SPRING 2026

Opening Reception on April 1st followed by a full day of programming on April 2nd, hosted by eBay in San Jose.



Notable Events on the Radar

JAN 11-12 *New York*
NRF and NRF-Rev

FEB 4 *London*
CCS Insights Circular Markets

MAR 2-5 *Barcelona*
Mobile World Congress

APR 28-29 *Orlando*
Annual Warranty & Service Contract Innovation

JUL 7-8 *Miami*
Mobile Disrupt

AUG 4-5 *Las Vegas*
ITAD

CTIA Certification

CTIA Certification's Reverse Logistics and Service Quality Program is committed to supporting the reverse supply chain through industry collaboration on best practice, guidance, and certification pathways to ensure the mobility ecosystem is always generation ready.

CTIACertification.org