



STAFF PHOTOS BY NICOLE PETITHORY

Above left, Gary Reagan, 24, owner of R.A.D. Customz, shows off the interior of a Bentley with mink heated floor mats. Above right, the inside of Ty Law's 2004 Hummer. Below, the exterior of Law's car in front of the R.A.D. Customz store.

# A R.A.D. DEAL

Norwood auto customs shop caters to Pats, local charity



By Nicole Petithory  
NORWOOD COMMUNITY EDITOR

**F**or the ultimate in luxury and innovation, New England Patriots' long snapper Lonie Paxton knows where to take his trucks when it's time for something

new. "These guys are very accommodating," said Paxton. "They're young and up-to-date — and if you come in thinking of something new, no matter what it is they find a way to get it

done for you."

R.A.D. Customz, owned by Norwood resident Gary Reagan, is a local business that does a little of everything. From installing special doors for a handicapped customer to adding personal, opulent touches to celebrity rides, the small company has a large list of the everyday and the extravagant clientele.

A little more than three years ago, Reagan was working at another customs shop in Canton when he decided to go into business for himself. Several clients followed him to his R.A.D. Customz,

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tomz, including former Patriots' cornerback Ty Law, who at the time was still in New England.

"Ty's a great guy," said Reagan. "He started bringing in a lot of the players like Otis Smith and Lonnie Paxton. It was a huge thing for a business just starting out to have these guys come in. They have these really expensive Hummers and Escalades and stuff ... then they put another \$25-50 grand into them."

Reagan then became partners with a southern California auto customizer, Chris Papadopoulos. Papadopoulos brought with him a few clients more suited to the Billboard than the scoreboard—some of his loyal clients include pop stars Justin Timberlake and Christina Aguilera, who continue to be patrons of R.A.D. Customz.

Part of what keeps R.A.D. Customz so ... well, *rad*, is keeping up with technology and never saying "no" to a client.

"We'll do just about anything to a car if it'll make a customer happy," said Papadopoulos. "They come in with an idea, and we'll expand on it, make it better and then make it happen. If they can think it up we can do it."

R.A.D. Customz was one of the first businesses in the U.S. to offer what they refer to as "Car-puters": a touch-screen PC elegantly mounted to the dashboard, complete with wireless internet.

"We did our first one two years ago," said Papadopoulos.

Despite such fanciful tales of vehicle modification, R.A.D. Customz is not all glamour and extravagance (you can, however, have them customize a car seat for your child, complete with Gucci fabric, if you so choose).

R.A.D. Customz has done modifications for handicapped clients as well.

"This man came to us because he couldn't fit his wheelchair into any newer cars," said Reagan. "So for him, we refit the doors of a 2004 Escalade so they would open backwards, known as suicide doors. Apparently, the next closest place that could do that sort of thing was in Michigan, so he was really

happy when we told him we could make it happen for him."

When the R.A.D. Customz folks aren't up to their elbows in gleaming rims and mink heated floor mats (a special order from the former owner of Yankee Candle Company, who had the mats installed in his Bentley), they're busy raising money and awareness for a special needs school in Hopkinton.

Riding to Raise Money began with Reagan's friend Dan Duest, whose daughter has Downes Syndrome.

The friends rode souped up street bikes together as a hobby, and decided that was an outlet to begin raising money for Duest's daughter's school.

"It's a great cause and we feel pretty strongly about it," said Reagan.

Reagan and Duest began making DVDs showcasing the newest in tricks and styles for street bikes. Proceeds from the sale of each year's DVD went to Riding to Raise Money, which goes to the school.

Last year, Riding to Raise Money brought in thousands of dollars for the school from a charity stunt and car show, where they also sold the DVDs.

There are plans in the works for another such show, hopefully slated for a Norwood venue, at the turn of the year.

If you're a Patriot, a Red Sox player, someone who wants a new car stereo, or you're a charity-minded person, R.A.D. Customz has a lot to offer.

"For all the sports players, it's really a bragging right," said Papadopoulos.

But having a business in town that can modify your car to your liking is certainly a bonus, especially for those with special needs greater than fancy extras.

"We tell people we're a one-stop shop," said Reagan with a smile.

For more information on R.A.D. Customz, check out their Web site at [www.radcustomz.com](http://www.radcustomz.com). For more information on their charity, check out [www.ridingtoraisemoney.com](http://www.ridingtoraisemoney.com)

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**Top**, the R.A.D. Customz lot with Ty Law's Hummer and a Bentley. **Above**, Gary Reagan talks about some of the modifications his business has done.

# RAD CUSTOMZ