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THE JOURNAL
OF DECORATIVE
CONCRETE

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Cold Climates pg. 51

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Vol. 12 No. 3 April 2012

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the 2012 Concrete Decor Show





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publisher's LETTER

Dear Readers,

As I previewed this edition in our production department at *Concrete Decor* headquarters, I noticed a theme that seems to run through the issue — the vivid colors contractors are showcasing in their work. Is this an emerging trend? Or is it just a coincidence that this edition of *Concrete Decor* has stumbled into this month?

Trend or coincidence, one thing is certain — the attention and interest shown toward concrete is growing.

Some of you heard the announcement at this year's *Concrete Decor* Show that Concrete Decor magazine recently teamed up with the American Institute of Building Design (AIBD) to launch a new design competition, the ARDA Concrete Decor Design Competition. The AIBD has been hosting residential design competitions for the past 60 years. Their interest in expanding their focus into the area of decorative concrete is a huge boon for our industry.

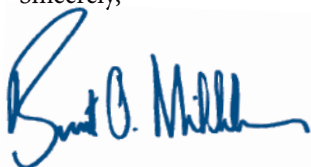
Given our efforts to distinguish decorative concrete among the many building trades today, this partnership comes at an excellent time. In fact, to help foster a successful launch of this annual competition, *Concrete Decor* magazine has decided to withdraw from hosting its own industry competitions in an effort to encourage your participation with the AIBD awards program.

If you're asking yourself why you should enter, I have a number of reasons I hope you will agree to support. First, this opportunity offers your company a new way to promote itself nationally among designers and general contractors. Second, we've helped AIBD develop seven different design categories that your company can participate in to increase your chances of winning. Third, the awards will be presented as part of a special ceremony at the national AIBD conference that will take place this August in Wilmington, N.C. In addition to the coverage that *Concrete Decor* will give to the winners of this competition, it is customary for numerous other architectural and design/build magazines to be covering the AIBD awards as well.

Judges for the ARDA Concrete Decor Design Competition have all been recruited from the decorative concrete industry so that your projects can be judged accurately and fairly. Entries should be projects that were completed within the past four years, and the submissions need to include good "before" and "after" photos. This is your opportunity to shine and *Concrete Decor* is there to support you.

To enter, please visit www.ResidentialDesignAwards.com/Register.pdf. All entries must be submitted by May 31, 2012.

Sincerely,



Bent Mikkelsen
Publisher



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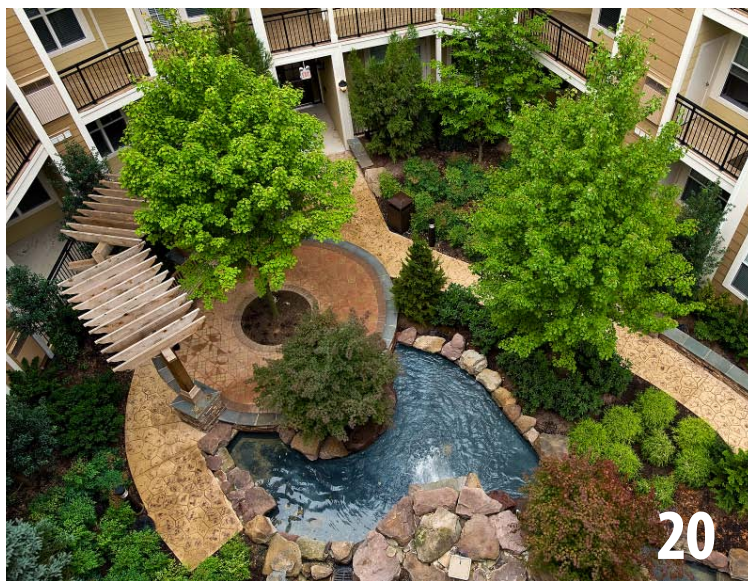


versatile building products

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A colorful montage featuring the winners of the American Society of Concrete Contractors' annual decorative contest.

On the cover: Melanie Royals applies NewLook NanoSet Color to Werkmaster's polished entry at the Demonstration Pavilion, part of the 2012 Concrete Decor Show. See the contest winner on page 13.
Photo by Steven Ochs

Most of the photos of the 2012 Concrete Decor Show in this issue were taken by students at Southern Arkansas University. SAU professor of art and decorative concrete craftsman Steven Ochs (far left) brought this team to San Antonio. *Concrete Decor* thanks them for their efforts.



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by Kelly O'Brien



Photo courtesy of Belarde Co. Inc.

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Doug Carlton operates Carlton Concrete Inc. in Visalia, Calif. He can be reached at carltondoug@comcast.net. See Doug's column, "Carlton's Corner," on page 64.



Jason Geiser owns Deco-Crete Supply and Cornerstone Concrete Designs, both based in Orrville, Ohio. He can be contacted at jason@deco-cretesupply.com. See Jason's article on page 51.



Jeffrey Girard is founder and president of The Concrete Countertop Institute and a pioneer of engineered concrete countertops. He can be reached at info@concretecountertopinstitute.com. See Jeffrey's column on page 48.



Jeff Kudrick, product manager for J&M Lifestyles LLC, based in Randolph, N.J., is an award-winning creator of concrete kitchen and bath fixtures, fireplace surrounds, furniture and architectural details. For more about his processes, custom-designed product molds and engineered concrete mixes, contact info@infinicrete.com. See Jeff's article on page 30.



Rick Lobdell is a classically trained artist and concrete artisan based in Nashville, Tenn. He owns Concrete Mystique Engraving and Gallery Mystique. He can be reached at rick@concretemystique.com. See Rick's article on page 66.



Chris Sullivan is vice president of sales and marketing with ChemSystems Inc. Contact him at trowelanderror@protrade.pub.com. See Chris' column, "Trowel & Error," on page 74.



Jacob Webb, MBA, is a small-business strategy consultant and co-founder and vice president of NewLook International Inc. where he is primarily responsible for business development, sales and marketing. Reach him at jacob@getnewlook.com. See Jacob's column, "Fundamentals of Business," on page 37.

Talk back! Weigh in online at ConcreteDecor.net

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INDUSTRY NEWS

R.A.T. announces winners of first design competition

R.A.T. International, a trade group catering to rock carvers, artists and theme builders, has named the winners of the first annual R.A.T. International Design Competition.



Photos courtesy of R.A.T. International

Best Overall Concept: Troy Lemon,
Cornerstone Decorative Concrete, Fennville, Mich.

Concrete Decor, AIBD team up for awards program

Concrete Decor magazine and the American Institute of Building Design have teamed up to develop a new awards program, the ARDA Concrete Decor Design Competition.

The design competition has been developed to recognize and encourage excellence in designing and building with architectural and decorative concrete and related materials. Categories include concrete home design, community and retail renovations, outdoor living, kitchen design and fabrication, interior floor design and artistry, and more.

Judging will be based on aesthetic value and use of color, superior design and craftsmanship, innovative use of materials and methods, green building, and overall creativity.

An entry form and official rules are available online. Entries must be received by May 31, 2012.

www.residentialdesignawards.com



Best 3D Sculpture:
Kym and Stan
Festa, I Dig Ponds,
Englewood, Fla.

Best Use of Color:
Raul Mihai Petrut,
Huedin, Romania



Best Use of Water in a Design: Brandon Little,
Innovative Industrial Services Inc., Bartow, Fla.

ratinternational.ning.com

Presentation proposals sought for 2013 Concrete Decor Show

Professional Trade Publications Inc. is seeking presentation proposals for the 2013 Concrete Decor Show, to be held March 11-15, 2013, in Charlotte, N.C.

Presentations are sought for both basic and advanced courses, including educational seminars, hands-on workshops and panel discussions.

Courses may cover, but are not limited to, topics under our established categories: Construction Services, Concrete Coatings, Countertops and Precast Concrete, Fresh Concrete, Grinding and Polishing, Overlays and Toppings, Staining and Coloring, Stamping and Texturing, and Walls and Hardscapes. Green building courses are also encouraged, with particular enthusiasm shown for those that fit into any of the above mentioned departments.

Experts from various fields in the decorative concrete industry, including contractors, distributors, manufacturers, business owners, researchers and government officials, are encouraged to submit proposals. Courses must be nonproprietary. Companies donating materials for workshops will receive recognition within the course and in any printed material regarding that course.

Professional Trade Publications Inc. is the publisher of *Concrete Decor* and producer of the Concrete Decor Show.

☎ (877) 935-8906

🌐 go.concretedecorshow.com/call_for_presentations.cfm

Decorative concrete tools and materials win awards at World of Concrete

World of Concrete has announced the winners of its 2012 Most Innovative Products awards program.

This year's winners were grouped into nine categories, including one for Decorative Concrete Materials and Equipment. In that category, Kut-Right Manufacturing Co.'s Conquer Twin, which can operate tool sets in both rotary mode and planetary mode, won the Industry Choice award. Prosoco Inc.'s Consolideck PolishGuard, a water-based, VOC-compliant, glossy, protective coat for polished concrete, won Experts' Choice, and Clemons Concrete Coatings' Super Cast, a sprayable surface retarder for creating a variable etch, won Editors' Choice.

🌐 www.votemip.com

Photo courtesy of Versatile Building Products



Versatile names winners of 2011 photo contest

Decorative concrete coating manufacturer Versatile Building Products has announced the winners of its 2011 Photo of the Year contest.

Legendary Concepts of Wichita, Kan. won first place. They installed Versatile's Roll On Rock System using 4195 Direct to Concrete Epoxy in Beige with a Saddletan flake and Clear Polyurea 5073 as the

final topcoat. At the main entrance of the 17,000-square-foot floor, they created a compass star using Versatile's Lava Flow and Diamond Floor products.

Concrete Graphix of Los Angeles won second place, and Garage Floors Unlimited of Twin Cities, Fla., took home third.

🌐 www.garagecoatings.com

New products honored at Val-Test show

This year's New Products awards at the annual Val-Test Distributor Show and Meeting were split into two categories: one for sundries and one for hardware, plumbing and electrical.

This year's Sundries winner is Preval for their vFan Airbrush, which converts to an air gun and achieves 3-inch fan and 1/16-inch hairline spray patterns for detail. Preval's innovative, ecofriendly aerosol compressor unit contains 7 ounces of VOC-exempt propellant that powers more than 150 feet of linear paint coverage and up to 40 square feet of paint coverage per unit.

The winner for the Hardware, Plumbing, and Electrical Division went to ShopVac for Toolmate, a full-size toolbox with a detachable 2 1/2-gallon, 2 1/2-horsepower wet/dry vac.

🌐 www.preval.com

🌐 www.shopvac.com

New Wisconsin distributor for NewLook

NewLook International has announced an exclusive distribution partnership with Farrell Equipment & Supply Co. Inc. in Wisconsin.

According to the partnership arrangement, Farrell Equipment will be the only authorized distributor of NewLook's specialty product line in the state of Wisconsin. A minimum amount of NewLook's comprehensive system of specialty products will be stocked in all Farrell Equipment & Supply locations, with the rest available on a drop-ship basis.

🌐 www.getnewlook.com

🌐 www.farrellequipment.com

ASCC, DCC elect officers and directors

The ASCC has elected officers and directors for the organization at large as well as for its Decorative Concrete Council.

The Decorative Concrete Council elected Chris Klemaske of T.B. Penick & Sons Inc. in San Diego, Calif., as council director. Paul Schneider of Cincinnati, Ohio, was re-elected secretary/treasurer. Nick Adams of Cleveland, Ohio, John Belarde of Woodinville, Wash., Clark Branum of Marysville, Wash. and Tim Fischer of Louisville, Colo., were elected as new members. Ray Brooks of Sioux Falls, S.D., Clyde Cobb of West Columbia, S.C., Marshall Hoskins of Columbia, S.C.,

Dionne Hutchings Ojeda of Dallas, Texas, Gregory Hyde Hryniewicz of Annapolis, Md., Byron Klemaske II of San Diego, Calif., Jim Mullins of Naperville, Ill., Joe Nasvik of Addison, Ill., Kevin Percy of Walpole, Mass., Rob Sousa of East Providence, R.I., and Wes Vollmer of San Antonio, Texas, were re-elected as directors of the DCC Advisory Council.

As for the ASCC at large, Mike Poppoff of Poppoff Inc. in Moxie, Wash., has been elected first vice president for 2012-2013. Scott Anderson of Houston, Texas, Chris Plue of San Mateo, Calif., and Thomas Zinchiak, Woodbine, Md., were re-elected vice presidents. Keith Wayne of Kannapolis, N.C., was elected secretary/treasurer. Jack Cooney of Ft. Myers, Fla., and Aaron Long of Rocky Mount, Va., were elected as new directors. Robert Dalrymple of Valley View, Ohio, Peter Emmons of Hanover, Md., Shawn McMahon of Irving, Texas, and John Ylinen, Tempe, Ariz., were re-elected as directors.

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🌐 www.asconline.org

ACI developing manual for cast-in-place

A working group of the American Concrete Institute's (ACI) Committee 131 on Building Information Modeling (BIM) is actively developing an Information Delivery Manual (IDM) for cast-in-place concrete. The IDM will capture in written form the interaction that occurs in the design and construction of concrete structures

by identifying the parties involved in information exchange, what information is exchanged and when, based on a typical construction project timeline.

The committee is aiming to complete the IDM by the end of 2012.

🌐 www.concrete.org

SDC seeking presentations

The concrete industry's Strategic Development Council, a council of the ACI Foundation, is currently seeking presentations for future sessions.

SDC is currently seeking Technology Showcase presentations for its upcoming fall session, to be held in Quebec City, Quebec, Sept. 6-7, 2012. For more information and to submit your technology for consideration, please visit the SDC website and click "Introduce your Technology."

🌐 www.concreteSDC.org

Strategic Development Council announces new chair, board members

The concrete industry's Strategic Development Council, a council of the ACI Foundation, has announced its new chair and board members.

The new SDC Chair is Mike Schneider, senior vice president and chief people officer at Baker Concrete Construction Inc. Schneider was selected as an ACI Fellow in 2006, received the Roger M. Corbetta award in 2011, served on the ACI board of direction from 2008 to 2010, and is currently a member of several ACI committees. In 2005, Concrete Construction magazine called him one of the 10 most influential people in the concrete industry.

The four new board members, who have begun three-year terms, are Kevin Cail, Brian Green, Charles Hanskat and Claudio Manissero.

🌐 www.concreteSDC.org

ASTM committee names chairman

ASTM International Committee C01 on Cement has named Paul D. Tennis, Ph.D. as its new chairman. Tennis is manager of cement and concrete technology at the Portland Cement Association. Committee C01 includes more than 500 members who oversee 56 ASTM International standards for hydraulic cements, including

portland, natural, pozzolanic, masonry and slag cements.

🌐 www.astm.org

Publisher of *Concrete Decor* hires marketing and communications director

Professional Trade Publications Inc. has hired Mary Browning as its marketing and communications director.

Her primary duties revolve around the Concrete Decor Show, where she will be in charge of promotions, exhibitor and media relationships, and developing sponsorship opportunities.

Browning will also provide general marketing support for *Concrete Decor* magazine.

🌐 www.concretedecorshow.com



AmeriPolish hires vice presidents

Mark DiLorenzo has joined AmeriPolish Inc. as vice president of marketing. DiLorenzo will oversee worldwide marketing of the AmeriPolish brands.

Joelle Lattimer, PE, a specialist in the design and use of concrete floors, is joining AmeriPolish Inc. as vice president of global account development. Lattimer has consulted on floor system design for some of North America's biggest retailers.

🌐 www.ameripolish.com



Scofield grows Chromix-It team

L. M. Scofield Co. has hired David Reid and Stan Nabers to further develop Scofield's rapidly growing Chromix-It Liquid Color Dispenser program.

Reid will hold the position of director of engineering services, and he will be responsible for building, installing and maintaining Scofield's Chromix-It Liquid Color Dispensers throughout the United States. He will be managing, scheduling and training Chromix-It technicians, assist with maintenance, troubleshooting and developing strategies for the liquid

event calendar

Session No. 31

Strategic Development Council
April 25-26, Scottsdale, Ariz.

🌐 www.concreteSDC.org

Second Annual Campinar

R.A.T. International
May 28 – June 2, Pawnee City, Neb.

🌐 www.ratinternational.org



A concrete polisher works on Xtreme Polishing's entry at the demonstration pavilion.

AmeriPolish wins Demo Pavilion contest at 2012 Concrete Decor Show



AmeriPolish went all out with their entry, which features a dragon stencil from Floormap Stencil Designs. Jason Campbell of AmeriPolish and Chris Swanson of Colour did the polishing and coloring.

At the 2012 Concrete Decor Show, three companies went head-to-head to compete for the bragging rights of being the winner in this year's Demonstration Pavilion. The contest was designed to show off the polishing products of the

three competitors: Werkmaster, AmeriPolish and Xtreme Polishing.

Attendees voted AmeriPolish this year's winner. Besides polishing the slab, the company added a colorful dragon design to give it extra appeal.

machines, and participate in installation and startup of the equipment in the field.

Stan Nabers will hold the position of engineering services supervisor. He will be the primary point of contact for Scofield's Chromix-It 101 and 304 customers. Nabers will be responsible for building, installation, startup and training on these machines.

www.scofield.com

A new president at Versatile

Versatile Building Products has promoted Matthew Newman, formerly a vice president at the company, to the position of president. In his new role, Newman will be responsible for leading Versatile's North American manufacturing operations. He will manage operations at the company's plant in Anaheim, Calif., which serves the entire United States.

[\(714\) 829-2600](tel:(714)829-2600)

www.garagecoatings.com



Quest names new service manager

Quest Building Products has promoted Nicholas Shilling to the position of service manager. Nicholas will be responsible for managing Quest Building Product's service department and its growing fleet of rental equipment used by contractors throughout the Southwest.

www.questbuilding.com

Polycoat expands its sales force

Polycoat Products, a division of American Polymers Corp., has hired Adriaan van der Capellen as sales and technical support manager for their waterproof division and Steven McGrane as technical sales manager in industrial applications for the foam division.

The company has also hired 18 independent sales reps tasked with expanding sales throughout the US, Canada and Mexico.

www.polycoatusa.com

Dur-A-Flex names quality manager

Dur-A-Flex has named B.J. Gocłowski quality and continuous improvement manager.

In his new role, Gocłowski will oversee Dur-A-Flex's Quality, Total Productive Maintenance and Dur-A-Flex University efforts, among other tasks.

www.dur-a-flex.com



Halco announces new president, operations manager

Halco Lighting Technologies has announced that Kim Cook is the new president of Halco Lighting Technologies. She will also retain her current title as chief operating officer, which she has held since 2005.

Halco has also promoted Lisa Johnson to operations manager. She had served as Halco's information technology manager since 2007.

www.halcolighting.com



AMERICAN SOCIETY
OF CONCRETE CONTRACTORS
DECORATIVE CONCRETE COUNCIL PRESENTS

The 2012 Award Winners

The Ruppel Hardscape project (above and right), created by Tom Ralston Concrete for a home in Saratoga, Calif., won the WOW! Award, 1st Place for Best Cast-In-Place Specialty Finish and 2nd Place for Best Vertical Surface. For full details about the project, see the January 2012 issue of *Concrete Decor*.

Photos courtesy of American Society of Concrete Contractors

THE DECORATIVE CONCRETE COUNCIL, a specialty council of the American Society of Concrete Contractors, has announced the winners of its fourth annual Awards competition for decorative concrete projects.

Tom Ralston Concrete, of Santa Cruz, Calif., won the WOW! Award, given to the best overall project, for the Ruppel Hardscape, built in the backyard of a home in the Saratoga Hills of Northern California. The Ruppel backyard also garnered 1st Place for Best Cast-In-Place Specialty Finish and 2nd Place for Best Vertical Surface. The hillside project included layout and design for a patio, upper patio walls, a staircase, retaining walls, wall caps, a pool deck and a fire pit.

T.B. Penick & Sons, a San Diego company, won an honorable mention in the WOW! Category for the Harbor Drive Pedestrian Bridge in central San Diego.

The entries were judged by: Clark Branum, UltraFlor program manager for Diamatic USA; Howard Jancy, architectural consultant with Jancy and Associates; Bob Harris, founder and president of the Decorative Concrete Institute; and Rebecca Wasieleski, editor of *Concrete Contractor* magazine.

The Decorative Concrete Council membership includes contractors, manufacturers and suppliers of decorative concrete products. 🚗

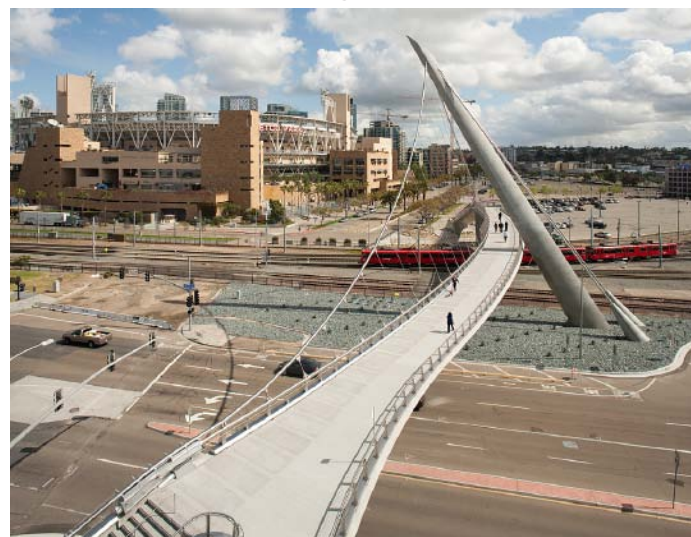


**WOW! Award
Ruppel Hardscape**

Tom Ralston Concrete, Santa Cruz, Calif.

WOW! Award Honorable Mention Harbor Drive Pedestrian Bridge

T.B. Penick & Sons, San Diego, Calif.



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Columbia Parc

Contractor: Sundek/
Concrete Coatings Inc.,
Mandeville, La.



Cast-In-Place, Stamped, Under 5,000 Square Feet

"Hidden Oasis"

Greystone Masonry Inc., Stafford, Va.

Cast-In-Place, Stamped, Over 5,000 Square Feet

Robinson Nature Center

Hyde Concrete, Annapolis, Md.

Concrete Artistry, Under 5,000 Square Feet

Vine Patio

Concrete Mystique Engraving, Nashville, Tenn.

Concrete Artistry, Over 5,000 Square Feet

NE 36th Street Bridge

Belarde Co. Inc., Woodinville, Wash.

Multiple Applications, Over 5,000 Square Feet

Boathouse

Creative Construction By Design, A Corp., Danville, Ill.



"Hidden Oasis"

Greystone Masonry Inc.,
Stafford, Va.



Vine Patio

Concrete Mystique Engraving, Nashville, Tenn.



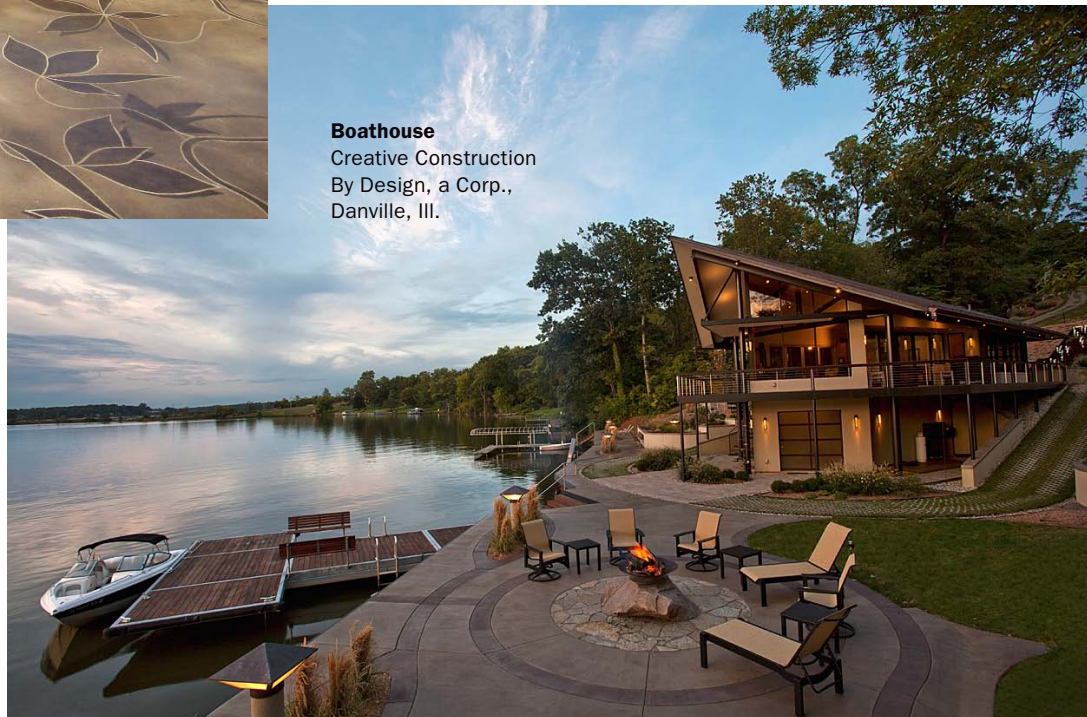
Robinson Nature Center

Hyde Concrete, Annapolis, Md.



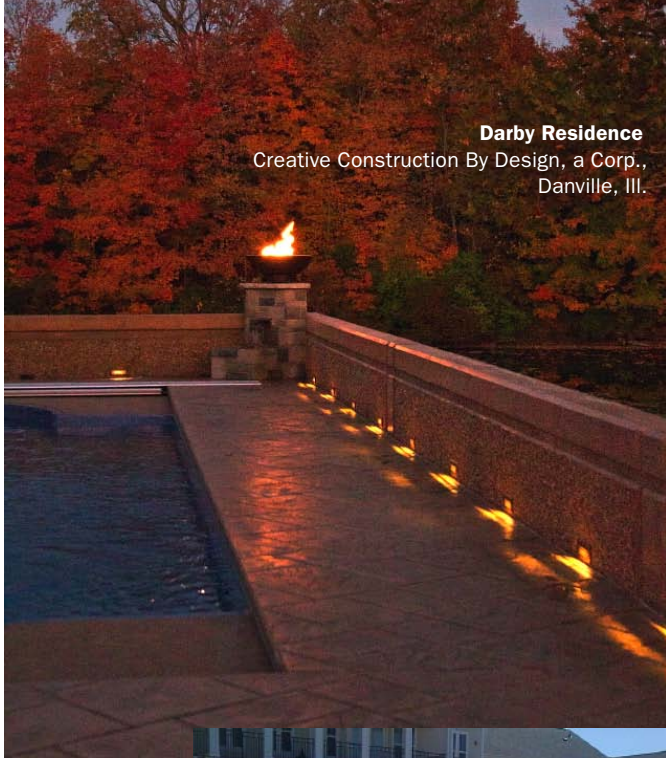
NE 36th Street Bridge

Belarde Co. Inc.,
Woodinville, Wash.



Boathouse

Creative Construction
By Design, a Corp.,
Danville, Ill.



Darby Residence
Creative Construction By Design, a Corp.,
Danville, Ill.

Multiple Applications, Under 5,000 Square Feet

Darby Residence

Creative Construction By Design, a Corp., Danville, Ill.

Graphics, Under 5,000 Square Feet

Columbia Parc

Sundek/Concrete Coatings Inc., Mandeville, La.

Epoxy, Under 5,000 Square Feet

"It's A Duesey"

Deco Illusions LLC, Roanoke, Ind.

Polished, Under 5,000 Square Feet

St. Phillip High School

Burgess Concrete Construction Inc., Moline, Mich.

Cast-In-Place, Special Finishes, Under 5,000 Square Feet

Johnson Residence

New England Hardscapes Inc., Acton, Mass.

Cast-In-Place, Special Finishes, Over 5,000 Square Feet

Ruppel Hardscape

Tom Ralston Concrete, Santa Cruz, Calif.



Columbia Parc
Sundek/Concrete Coatings,
Inc., Mandeville, La.



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Moline, Mich.

Johnson Residence
New England
Hardscapes Inc.,
Acton, Mass.



Ruppel Hardscape
Tom Ralston Concrete, Santa Cruz, Calif.

Countertops

Two Rivers Steakhouse

Hyde Concrete LLC, Annapolis, Md.

Vertical Application, Under 5,000 Square Feet

Darby Residence

Creative Construction By Design, a Corp.,
Danville, Ill.

Vertical Application, Over 5,000 Square Feet

Galen Center

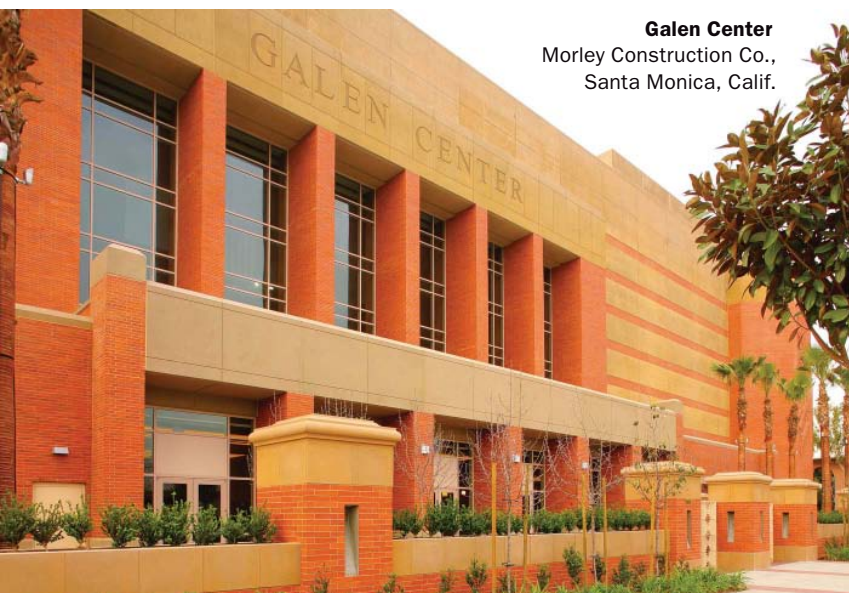
Morley Construction Co.,
Santa Monica, Calif.



Two Rivers Steakhouse
Hyde Concrete, Annapolis, Md.



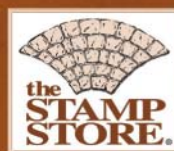
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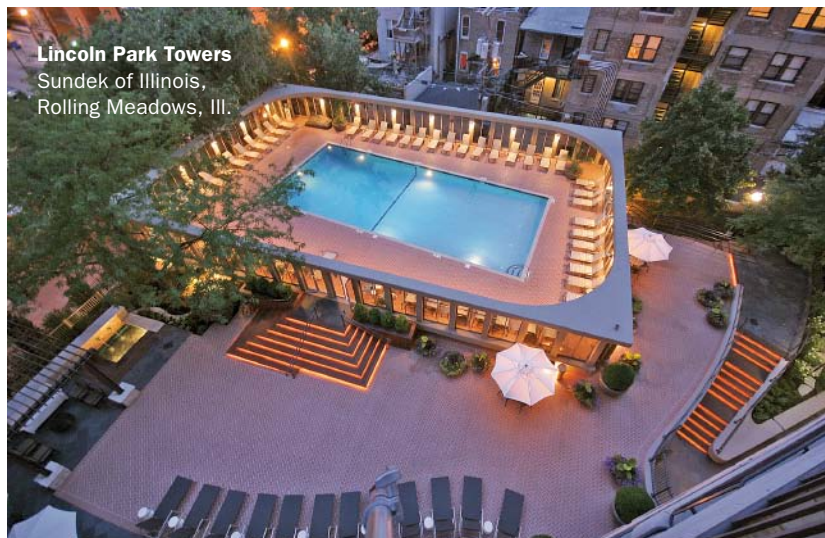
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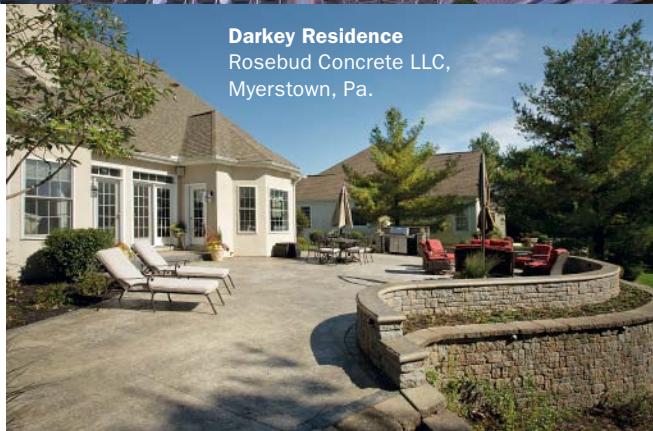
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Cast-In-Place Special Finishes,

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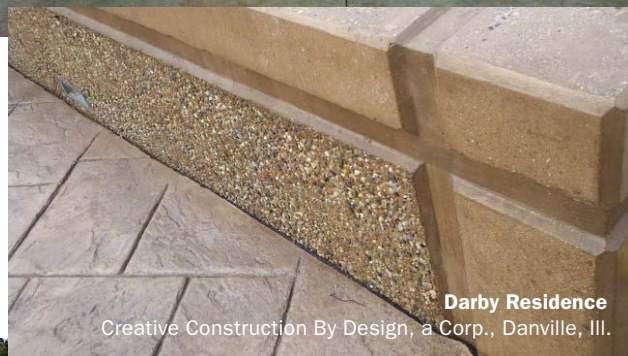
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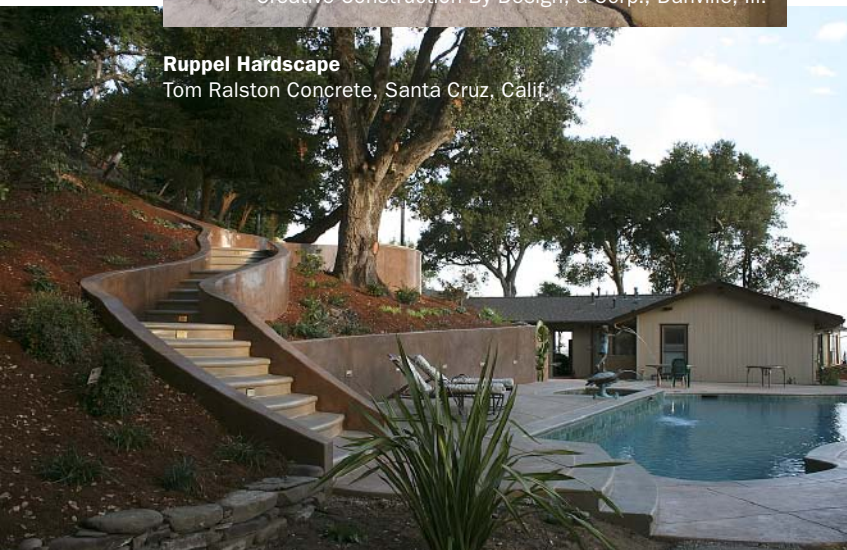
Two Rivers Steakhouse
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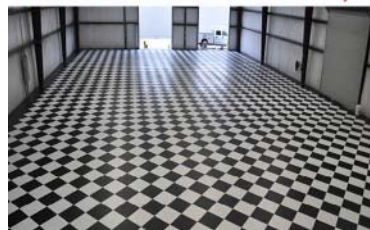


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Photos courtesy of Hyde Concrete



Greg Hyde Hryniewicz, Hyde Concrete Annapolis, Md.

by Kelly O'Brien

GREG Hyde Hryniewicz, owner of Hyde Concrete in Annapolis, Md., does not have your average resume. After growing up in Puerto Rico, Hryniewicz moved to the mainland for university. He received an undergraduate degree in systems engineering from the U.S. Naval Academy, served for six years as an officer in the Navy, earned an MBA from the University of Michigan, and slogged through several years as a high-powered management consultant for Fortune 100 companies.

Desperate to get away from the corporate rat race, Hryniewicz started a concrete coatings company, and in the seven intervening years, he's turned it into a decorative concrete firm that's garnered awards from the American Society of Concrete Contractors in five different categories (and a 2010 GreenSite Project of the Year award to boot). Hryniewicz, now 41, has been a busy man.

As circuitous as Hryniewicz's career path may seem, each zig and zag has contributed something substantial to the way Hyde Concrete operates. For example, when he was growing up in Puerto Rico, everything was made of concrete, he says. "I had never seen stick framing until I came to the States. I thought, 'Haven't you guys heard of the three little pigs?'" So concrete's value as both a structural and decorative material was known to Hryniewicz from a very young age, which made working

in decorative concrete a natural fit.

At the Naval Academy, Hryniewicz's degree in systems engineering gave him a technical skill set that complemented his passion for building things—a passion instilled in him by his father, also an engineer and an occasional architect. During Hryniewicz's time as a naval officer, he says, he learned the leadership skills that he uses every day to manage his three crews. And while his career in the corporate sphere was short-lived, Hryniewicz says the business skills he honed in his MBA program have definitely influenced the way he runs his business. "My corporate background has really helped me to set up, from an early stage, what I believe to be a very professional company," he says.

Although when he started the company, he was looking more for a corporate outlet than an artistic one, it didn't take long for Hryniewicz to get absorbed in the possibilities of decorative work. The company was initially focused on garage floor coatings, but Hryniewicz was soon introduced to acid staining, which was more or less his gateway finish. Now, Hyde Concrete offers a full spectrum of services.

Staining, Hryniewicz says, traditionally accounts for 25 to 30 percent of their annual business, but that percentage tends to fluctuate pretty significantly year by



year. “Everything seems to go in phases,” he says. The company will have a glut of staining jobs, but then it’ll be three big stamp jobs in a row, then pervious, then a polished overlay. These days it’s precasting. “Right now,” Hryniewicz says, “I’m getting my butt kicked by countertops.”

Having such a diversity of services to offer has been a definite blessing for the company. While some of the local concrete shops can compete with them in one or two areas, says Hryniewicz, none can compete with Hyde Concrete across the board.

But mastering this many different techniques can also be a curse. Hryniewicz spends a lot of time and money to keep himself and his crew of 10 up to speed on every service they offer.

Regardless of what technique they’re using, Hyde Concrete’s approach remains the same and reflects not only Hryniewicz’s eye for decorative work, but also his technical precision as an engineer. For every product they install, Hryniewicz has done his own material testing and analysis to work out his own mix designs and color ratios. As a perk for volunteering as a technical adviser with the Naval Academy’s concrete canoe team for the past three years, Hryniewicz has even had the opportunity to quantitatively test his mix designs in the Academy’s materials labs. All of the things the books tell you about concrete, says Hryniewicz, he’s been able to prove firsthand.

Of course, being a successful decorative concrete contractor requires more than a

good eye and in-depth technical knowledge. It also requires experience, which Hryniewicz — and most of his people — were admittedly short on at the beginning.

Fortunately, from Hryniewicz’s first hire, Jose Cantarero, to operations manager John Haines, everyone on the Hyde Concrete team is a quick study. “We’ve made all the mistakes,” Hryniewicz says, but they’ve taken every one of them to heart. “I don’t think a mistake characterizes you as a person — I think what you do after a mistake characterizes who you are.”

Recently, that very conviction won Hyde Concrete a job — and a couple of awards. After running into what Hryniewicz calls “a trifecta of issues” on the floor of a Tilted Kilt Pub & Eatery in White Marsh, Md.,



they reached the point where entire sections of the floor were failing, and they knew they had to replace the entire floor.

In the midst of this, before they'd done the replacement, Hryniewicz got a call from Tony Toskov, the owner of Two Rivers Steak & Fish House, in Pasadena, Md., who was interested in a very similar finish for that restaurant. During their initial meeting, Toskov told Hryniewicz that the owner of the Tilted Kilt location had recommended him. Hryniewicz was a little taken aback, he says, and asked Toskov why it didn't bother him that sections of the Tilted Kilt floor were peeling up. "He says, 'I spoke with the owner, and he said you're a stand-up guy, and you're going to make it right,'" says Hryniewicz.

Not only did Hyde's stained self-leveling overlay at the Tilted Kilt win a 2011 Decorative Concrete Award from the ASCC's Decorative Concrete Council, but they also took home this year's ASCC DCC award for Best Countertop for their cast-in-place, acid-stained bar top at Two Rivers, plus a Second Place for Multiple Applications, Over 5,000 Square Feet (for Two Rivers' top, its acid-stained overlay floors in public areas, and a broadcast-quartz floor in the kitchen).

While the company has certainly made the most of the speed bumps they've hit, Hryniewicz has taken great pains to put systems in place that keep those mistakes to a minimum. "I don't get angry when we make mistakes," Hryniewicz says, "but I get furious

when we repeat mistakes." So from stain samples to mix designs, Hyde Concrete has established standards that they are careful to maintain from one job to the next.

Hryniewicz's journey to decorative concrete artisan may not have been the most straightforward, but he has no regrets. Not only does he get to use his skills as a businessman, engineer and lifelong concrete enthusiast, but he also has job satisfaction. "That's one thing I never had as a consultant," he says. "You worked your tail off, and at the end of the day you hand over a document and get paid all this stupid money, but it was completely unsatisfying. Now I can walk away from a project, and people are like, 'WOW.'" 📱

🌐 www.hydeconcrete.com



Photos courtesy of Southern Arkansas University Photo Team

Decorative concrete makeover at SAY Sí earns a resounding 'Yes!'

The makeover was conducted as part of workshops at the 2012 Concrete Decor Show in San Antonio, Texas

by Emily Dixon

TRANSFORMING more than 5,500 square feet of flooring surfaces, creating a vertical sculpture and constructing a waterfall is no small task, especially when the majority of the work is done over just two days. However, that's exactly what happened at SAY Sí, a teen art center in San Antonio, Texas.

The work was completed as part of the hands-on workshops at the 2012 Concrete Decor Show, held Feb. 20-24 in San Antonio. Rather than working on a temporary slab, students in these workshops got hands-on experience while creating long-lasting projects for the community.

Greeting guests to SAY Sí is an elaborate front garden, complete with hardscaping largely crafted by the students in Jason Geiser's "High-End Stamped Concrete and Custom Features" workshop. Attendees joined a crew from Geiser's Ohio-based company Deco-Crete Supply to stamp more than 600 square feet of concrete, add colored borders and bands with color hardener, and stain individual stones within the stamped pattern. To improve the surface's high-end look, grout was applied between the stones before sealing.

The real highlight of the project is the approximately 100 fiber optic lights that surround a glow-in-the-dark SAY Sí logo. They were installed by Geiser's team.

Adjacent to the lighting feature is a large waterfall constructed by StoneMakers Corp. Using their new LedgeFalls waterfall panel system, the New Hampshire company utilized poured concrete to construct the pool area and lower rocks, and they employed GFRC panels to create the upper-level rocks.

Just above Geiser's stamped project is SAY Sí's front entrance,



which was made over as part of a preshow project (described in the February/March 2012 issue of *Concrete Decor*). A concrete bench constructed at a workshop led by West Virginia artisan Justin Burd was placed there as a final element.

At the back of the building, Nathan Giffin of Illinois-based Vertical Artisans was tasked with beautifying a space that will eventually be turned into a garden area. Playing off that theme, he created a faux wooden door textured with a skin from a tree native to southern Texas. On either side of the door are sculpted rocks, and a wood-like header completes the frame around the door.

"We took one of the most undesirable areas of the facility and turned it into something very desirable," Giffin says.

Inside the building, SAY Sí's Visual Arts Studio is where high school students study drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics and art history. There, Adrian Henry, of California-based Diacon Decorative Polished Concrete, led a "Fundamentals of Polishing" workshop. Henry says the 1,400-square-foot space was in pretty rough shape at first, which allowed students to learn how to solve real-world problems.

After an initial grind and treating some particularly poor areas of the floor, the crew brought it up to 400 grit. Next, Rachel Knigge-Bruce of Floormap Stencil Designs helped apply a stencil to create four bands of dyed color, and the floor was brought up to a 3,000-grit finish. Henry also noted that the floor was treated with a sealer that is UV-stable because it is exposed to a large amount of natural light.

The colored bands in the Visual Arts Studio don't end there.



They appear to flow into colored bands that Bruce and Tennessee artisan Ryan Samford, of Epo-Floors LLC, created as a side project in the facility's vestibule area, on the other side of a doorway from the studio. The bands and main floor surface in the foyer were epoxy rather than a polish and dye job.

Directly off the foyer is SAY Sí's WAM (Working Artists and Mentors) room, where high school students mentor and teach middle-school students in visual and media arts. In that space, George Lacker of Florida-based GLC3 Concrete conducted a workshop that explored applying and polishing a 1/2-inch overlay.

"We had people from our class running and bringing other people over," Lacker says. "People were amazed with what we could do with a half-inch overlay."

The Black Box Theatre serves as a 2,000-square-foot performance space for the facility. There, Troy Lemon, president of Michigan outfit Cornerstone Decorative Concrete, applied various metallic epoxies and polyaspartics on three quarters of the floor.

Finally, Trevor Foster of Miracote and Bill Young of Utah-based Concept Art and Design made over a portion of SAY Sí's art gallery with the use of polyaspartics. Because the space is used to display artwork created by SAY Sí students, it was necessary to keep the floor subtle to not detract from the work on the walls. With that in mind, earth tones were used in a simple design of circles and soft lines.

After just two long days, the renovations were complete. This accomplishment would not have been possible without the support of trainers and students — as well as the manufacturers who donated products. 📱



Photos courtesy of Southern Arkansas University photo team



Concrete dinosaur makes big impression at Concrete Decor Show

The SAY Si makeover wasn't the only thing the 2012 Concrete Decor Show gave to San Antonio. It also left its host city a dinosaur.

Acrocanthosaurus, a biped, roamed the state of Texas 200 million years ago. The species has returned as a concrete statue crafted at the show.

Artisans Thom Hunt and Mark Whitten led the effort to construct, sculpt and color the ginormous dinosaur. The life-size replica spans 30 feet from nose to tail and is 13 1/2 feet tall.

The basic skeletal structure and scratch coat were done in advance of the Concrete Decor Show, but the detailed sculpture work and coloring was accomplished at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center under the watchful eye of show attendees. Students at the workshop "Dinosaurs Go Decorative: Theming in Large Scale" got to participate in its creation, as did some key volunteers.

What do you do with a nearly 10,000-pound concrete dinosaur once it's finished? In this particular case, it was craned onto a truck and driven across San Antonio to its new home at the Witte Museum.

"People had never seen anything of that size going down the road before," Hunt says. "There were helicopters from the news stations overhead."

Understandably, it's the kids visiting the Witte Museum that are the most excited about the dinosaur.

"They all want their picture taken with it," Hunt says.



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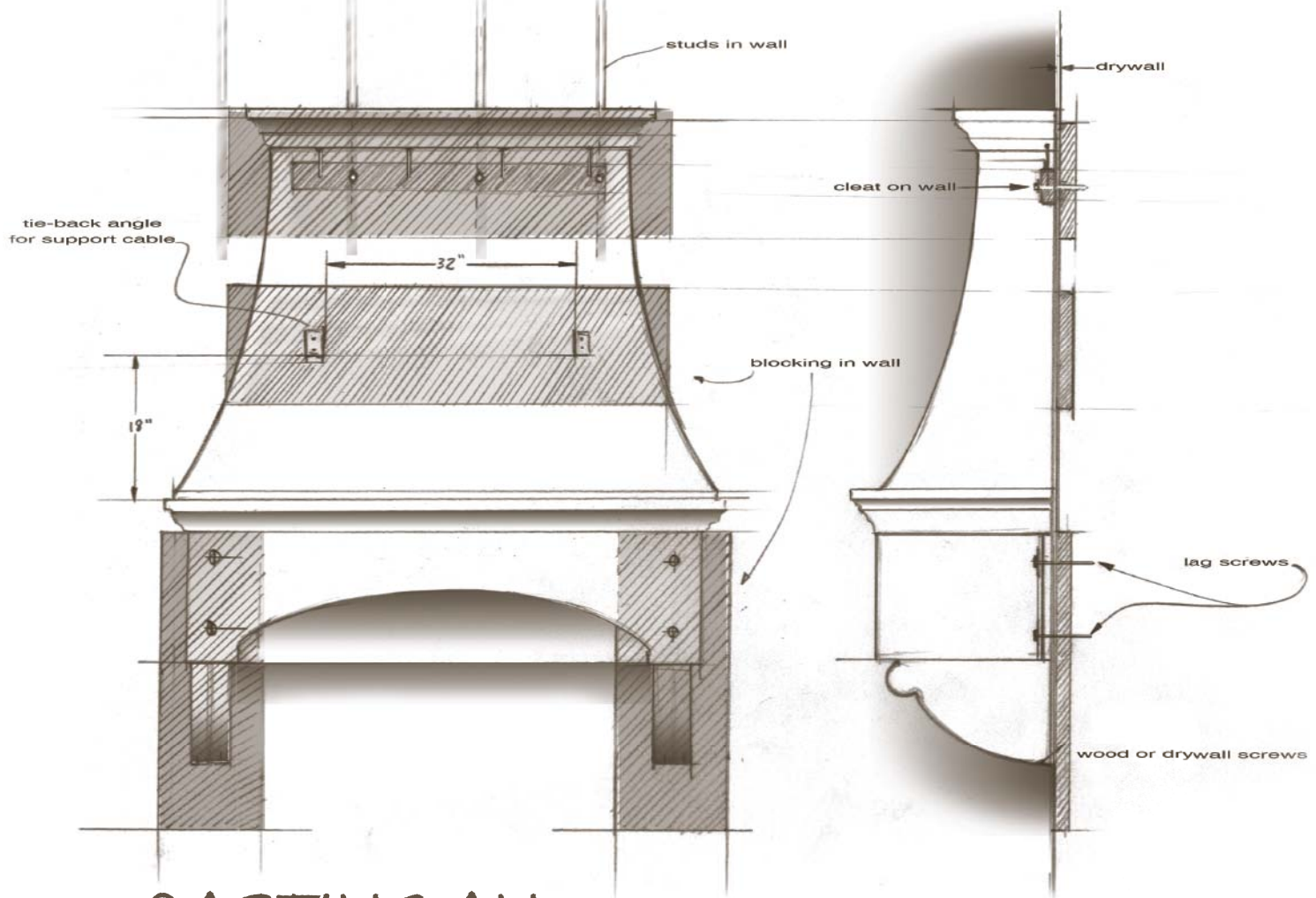
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CASTING AN OVEN HOOD

PART TWO OF A THREE-PART
SERIES ON DESIGNING,
CASTING AND INSTALLING
CONCRETE OVEN HOODS

Illustrations by Rob Bynum

by Jeff Kudrick

BEFORE we get into casting a hood let's review a couple of very important preliminary steps we need to take beforehand.

In order to build our molds we have to know what type of blower unit we need to accommodate, which gives us a parameter to follow for size.

Second, we need to know the space the entire Hood has to fit in. This includes the cabinets, stove, widths, heights and so on. This can be considered the external structure of the hood.

how
TO

Featured Artisan:

Jeff Kudrick
Randolph, N.J.

www.infinicrete.com

The next logical component will be the internal supporting wall structure that is not actually part of the hood. We need to have the contractor install blocking to allow for weights and provide the installer/builder with the specified components before the wall is closed, tile is installed, or other structures are installed. The diagram at left (above the title of the article) shows how to specify for blocking in the wall for the design we are using.

Another optional support mechanism is a wall bracket used for supporting floating vanities. This can provide the structure necessary to carry not only the Header but also the Breast. You will just specify the locations differently, and the cables are unnecessary at this point.

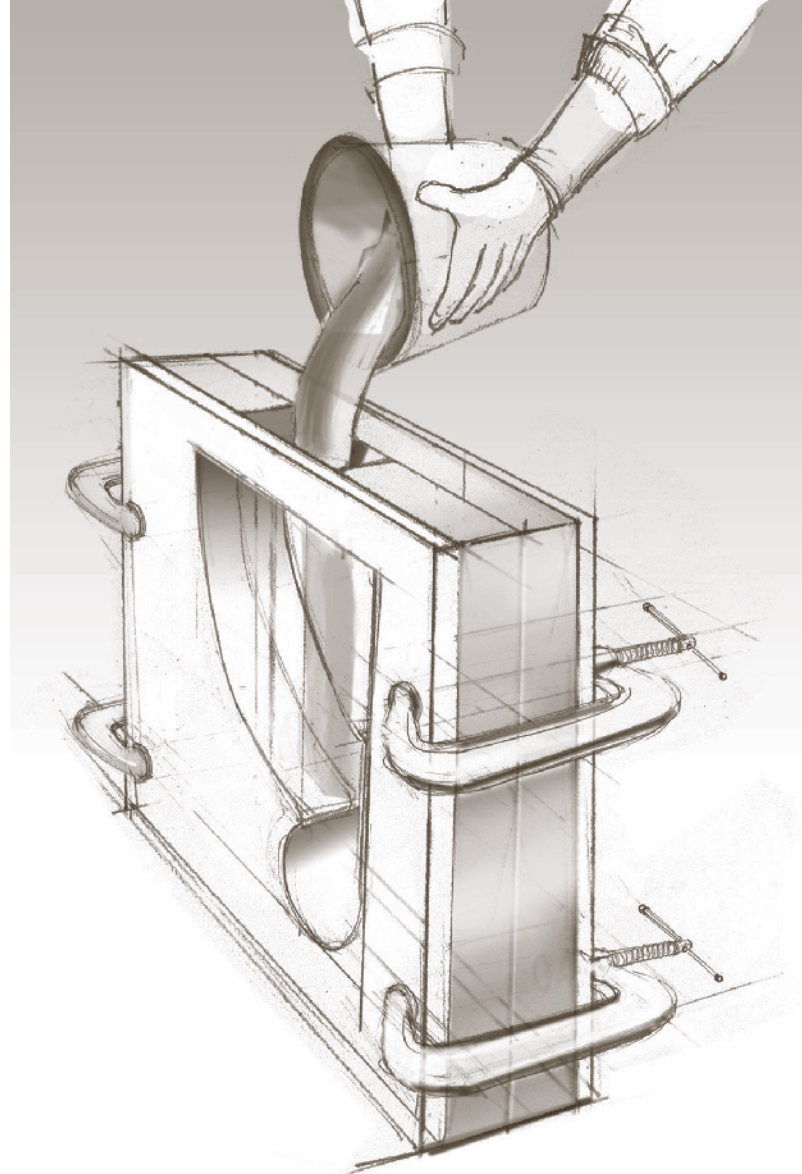
The blocking diagram should show an entire area that is the minimum required coverage, and the blocking should be specified as a "2x thick" material that is screwed into the supporting studs. The weight of the entire structure needs to be supported by the blocking materials. The blocking for the header will accept 3/8-inch lag bolts, the bracket will need drywall screws for support and stabilization, and the front of the header will be supported by cables that tie back into the upper blocking within the Breast.

These drawings need to be submitted with the designs and the expectation of who is responsible for the blocking should be outlined as well.

A FEW DETAILS ABOUT THE CASTING

The finish of the hood needs to coincide with the complexity of this application. The expectation of the final outcome, and how you will accommodate errors in the finish, holes, sags, and other blemishes especially considering the mold is assembled as you spray, make it difficult to make a perfect cr me finish. It is recommended that you use a textured finish, such as the J&M Lifestyles signature limestone finish used in this article. Secondary and tertiary process levels such as staining, glazing, acid staining, distressing and microtopping techniques after casting gives the fabricator a tremendous level of security and salvage ability in the case of errors or the occasional blemish.

Many of the components of this hood are rather simple and the level of understanding and difficulty is quite low, so we will go over each piece by level of complexity starting with the easiest first. We will be explaining the application of the cast using a bagged GFRc product from SureCrete Design Products to avoid the need to explain mix designs. We will be utilizing a material that is very well suited for adaptation and has superior attributes when exposed to fire and heat. Traditional acrylic-modified GFRc cements are not as stable with high heat as a nonacrylic modified cement, and they are not suitable for the supportive structures and compressive strengths needed here.



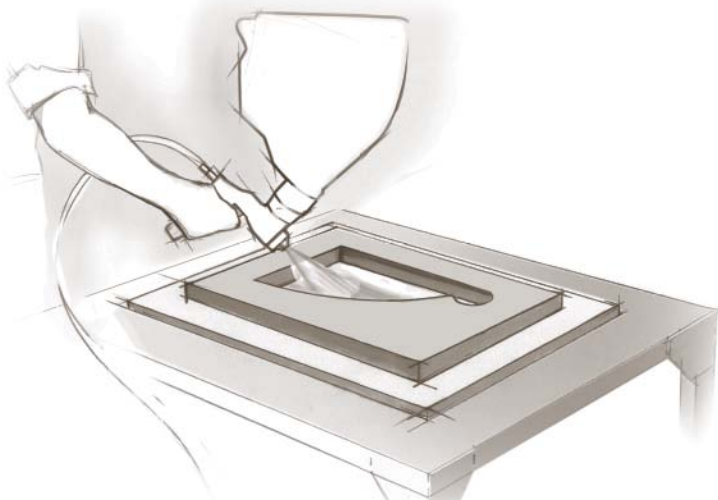
1. CASTING BRACKETS:

The brackets are simple molds, two halves in fact, that comprise a fully finished 4-inch thick component. This mold can be cast in one piece if the two halves are put together and the back of the mold is exposed so you can pour in the Surecrete Xtreme casting mix. This method will add weight to the overall finished product but be quicker to cast.

The other consideration is the finish. This overall hood design will require the strength of a high-fiber mix and the complex shapes can't be cast using "B" molds. So, in order to create pieces consistent with the finishes of the other components, for example the Header and Breast, we need to spray the face mix into the molds first, put the two halves together, brush the seams, then pour in the casting mix.

There is an architectural detail on the centerline of the brackets so as to limit the obtrusiveness of the seam. This can be molded in, hand cut, or ground in after the cast.

If cast separately the two halves will be put together using a urethane adhesive such as PL Premium before finishing. Be sure not to allow the adhesive to expand out onto the face disturbing the finish on the surface of brackets. Urethane adhesives are helpful when bonding cementitious products in that they expand and adhere well to surfaces that have moisture present.



SPRAYING THE SURFACE LAYER



HAND-LAYING THE GFRC

2. MOLDINGS

The moldings are separate transitional components of the hood design. They add depth, support the design context (in this case, a traditional design that has a more embellished visual aesthetic), make each individual part more manageable and smaller, and allow adjustment in the overall height.

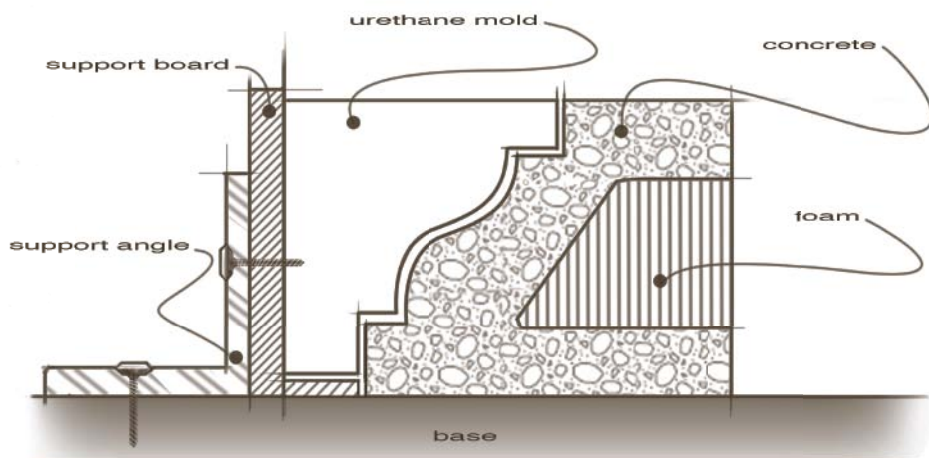
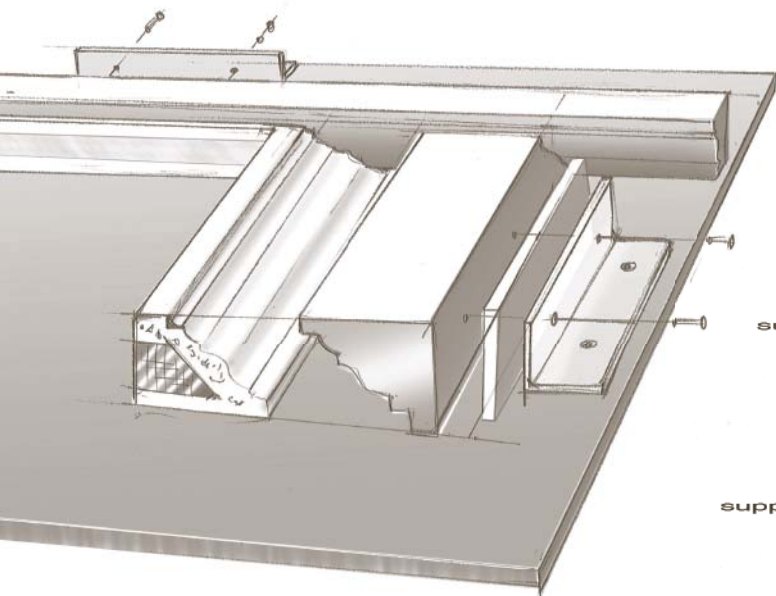
The molds used here are urethane mantle molds available through Infinicrete, the company I do product development for. These cast components can be made with fabricator-made urethane molds or shaped PVC molds. You can even substitute wood as a single-use material. This design allows for diversity in mold application.

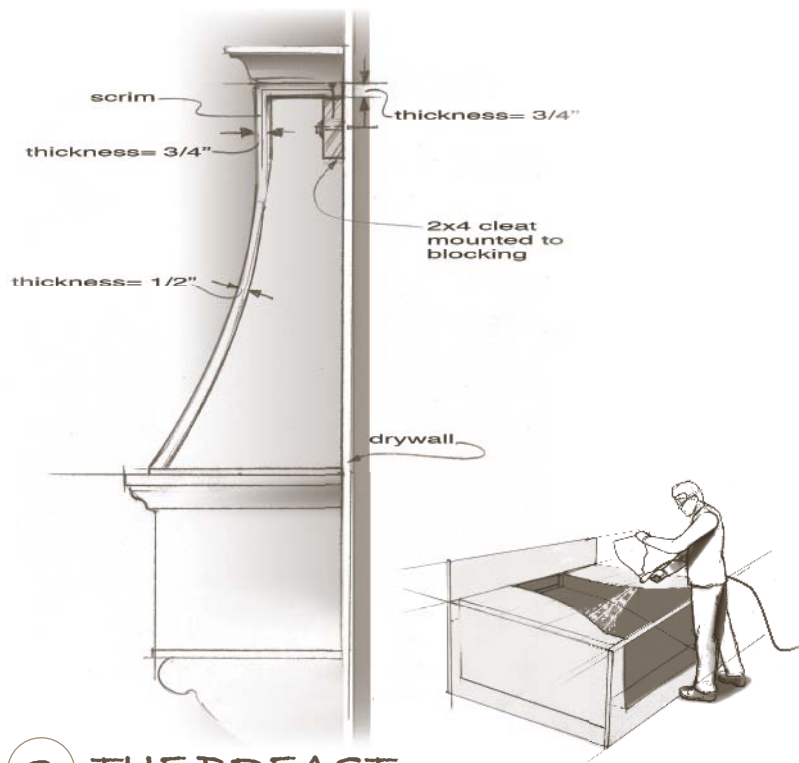
The sizes of all components are adjustable and the only component that justifies the size of the actual hood is the Header Face panel. This is the only mold face that is not adjustable. The value of making a hood this way is that subsequent mold costs are very small, even with varying sizes.

The main mold is an 8-foot length of molding that is held upright on the base mold face (typically melamine or architectural concrete-faced plywood) with a steel or aluminum angle. The two side molds are also held in place with angles, and the end of each side mold is coped to fit snug against the face mold without the need for silicone.

These three pieces will accommodate any size molding in a monolithic U-shaped part up to 8 feet wide and 40 inches deep. Diagrams on this page show how the inside of the molding has stops to finish to and how foam is used to support the GFRC material to reduce the overall weight.

The molding holds little weight, especially the one on top of the hood. The important areas to consider are the ends that meet the wall on the transitional molding between the Header and Breast, since this is where the Breast will be shimmed so the weight is transferred only to the bolted area of the Header and not the forward cabled section.





3. THE BREAST

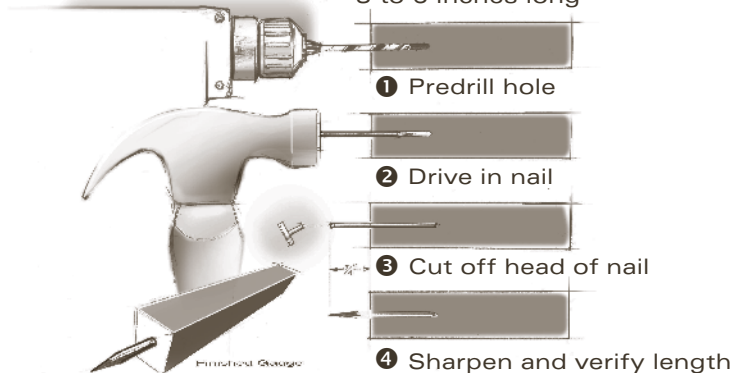
After you have built the mold for the Breast, the casting is simple. The Breast will be fastened and supported in at least two places. The top return flange will carry the weight and be screwed into external blocking that will be lagged into the studs in the wall. Alkali-resistant fiberglass scrim is recommended to tie in the top area.

The thickness of the Breast overall should be all GFRC. It should be 1/2-inch thick and up to 3/4-inch thick near the top of the breast. All termination points to the wall should have flanges for dimensional stability and support. These flanges can also provide more surface area on which you can use acrylic mastic to adhere the breast to the substrate, usually sheetrock. The base of the Breast where it meets the intermediate molding is where the shimming will carry the weight of the breast at the wall. Scrim on the two sides of the breast will allow for greater attachment strength to the wall. These areas will be cast thicker, 3/4-inch to 1 inch thick, and No. 8 drywall screws will attach the top of the Breast to external blocking.

The face mix will provide a consistent finish. You will use gauges to maintain consistent and correct thicknesses throughout. The diagram below shows how to make a gauge. It is also acceptable to use scrim throughout the breast component.

HOW TO MAKE A SIMPLE GAUGE

Start with a 3/4-inch square block, 3 to 6 inches long



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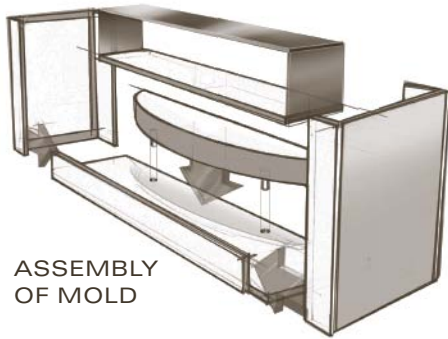
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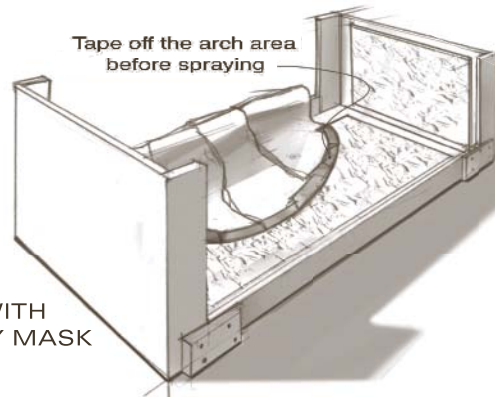
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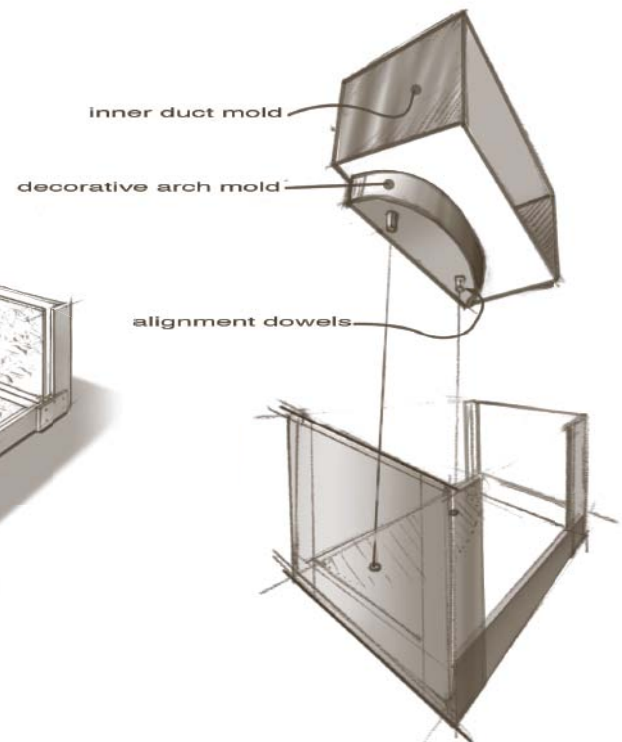
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ASSEMBLY OF MOLD



SPRAYED
HEADER WITH
ASSEMBLY MASK



MOLD WITH DOWEL REGISTERS

4. THE HEADER

The Header is a complex component. The spaces required to support and house the blower and filtration unit — combined with structural needs — create small and involved areas that are challenging to accommodate in a monolithic part. This will require a mold that is easily disassembled to spray a face coat that will allow for a monolithic finish in the final part.

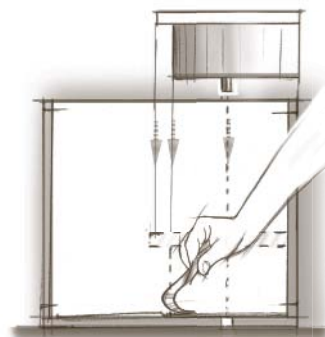
Once sprayed, the different mold faces need to be fabricated in such a way that the assembly is rapid and simple so the face mix can be brushed at the seams.

Another advantage of using the SureCrete Xtreme series of products is that there are no acrylic or hardeners in the mix. It is nearly impossible to “lose” the mix, a problem caused by the heat and time constraints of acrylic-modified cements that can result in crazing in the face mix and separation between the layers.

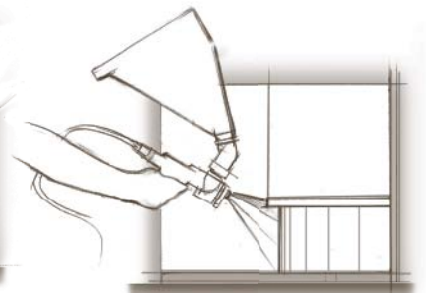
The individual panels, when removed, need registers to align the faces so you do not damage the sprayed face mix during assembly.

You also must consider the areas that will be sprayed with face mix and, if not masked, would keep the mold from closing tightly.

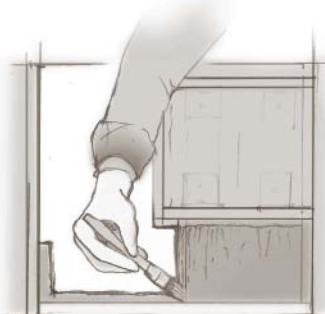
In the diagrams on this page, we show stages of the process and pictures of a mold with dowel registers.



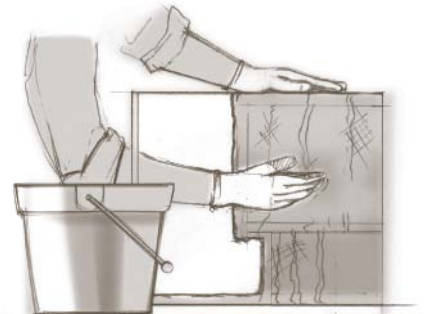
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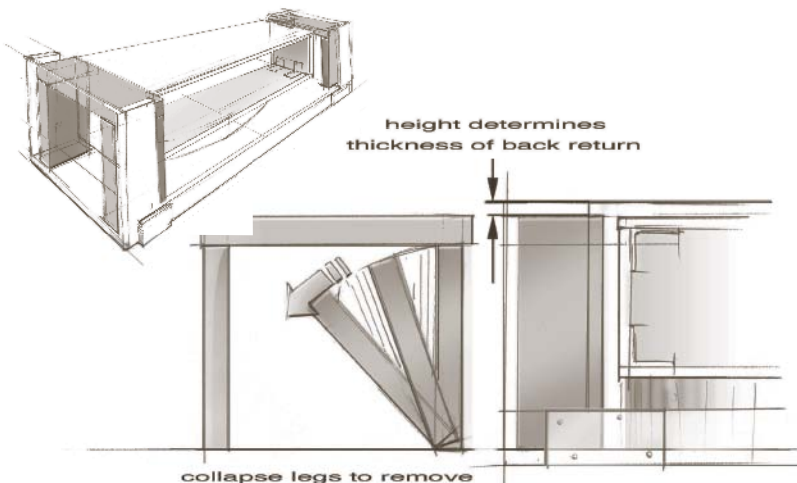
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MOLD FACES



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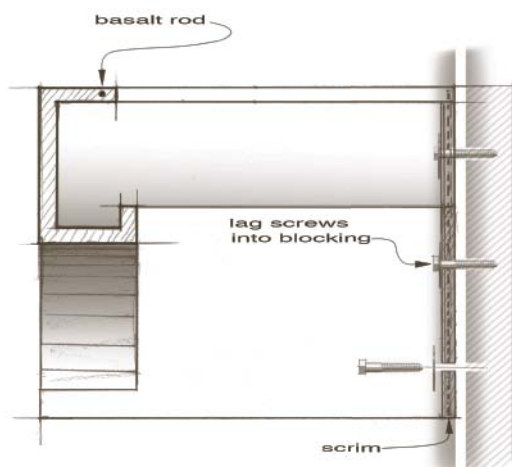


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MONOLITHIC BACK SUPPORT

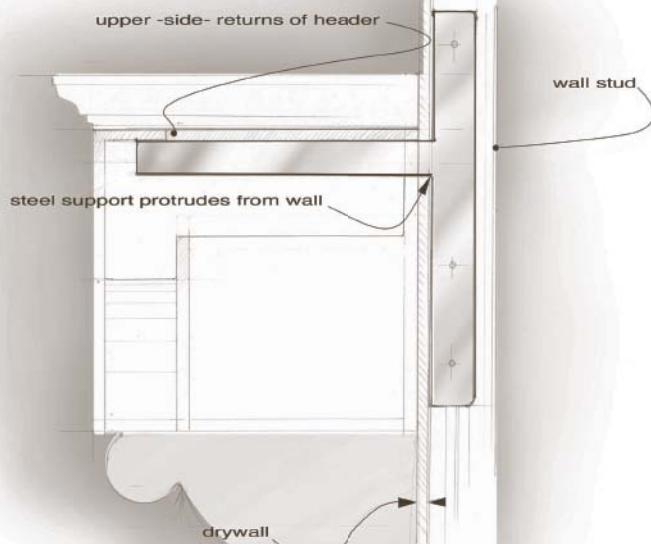
a.r. fiberglass scrim

basalt reinforcement rod

SETTING SCRIM IN BACK SUPPORT PANEL




CAST PIECE READY FOR INSTALL



ALTERNATE HEADER SUPPORT METHOD

The finishing of the header is crucial. The distribution of reinforcement and scrutiny of the application of GFRC, assuring the greatest level of workmanship, is what makes this design functional.

An alternate support method that will more directly carry the weight of the header is shown in the diagram in the lower left corner of this page. 

In the next issue of Concrete Decor, Jeff Kudrick will describe the installation procedures for your new concrete hood. In the previous issue, he discussed designing the hood.

Jeff Kudrick, product manager for J&M Lifestyles LLC, based in Randolph, N.J., is an award-winning creator of concrete kitchen and bath fixtures, fireplace surrounds, furniture and architectural details. For more about his systems, processes, custom-designed product molds or engineered concrete mixes, contact info@infinicrete.com.

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FUNDAMENTALS OF BUSINESS

Your Profit Margin: How to Know if You're Really Making Money

RECENTLY conducted an email survey, and out of the 100 decorative concrete professionals who responded, nearly 50 percent could not tell me what their margins were without verifying first. This intrigued me. Essentially, five out of 10 contractors and distributors did not know with certainty the most important financial metric they have to determine the value produced for their business. And that means they could be losing money.



by Jacob Webb

Value to your business (as opposed to value to your customers) is often called “profit margin,” which is the difference between price charged for a product and the cost of getting that service to the customer.

The value to your business is best determined on a per-unit basis. However, many contractors don't exactly make widgets for their customers. So if your primary business is something like concrete staining, polishing or stamping, I recommend you calculate your margins on a per-square-foot or per-project basis.

You should know the price you charged. Just look at your customer bid or income statement. Calculating all the costs of delivering your product (“fully absorbed costs”) is a more complicated process, especially cost per unit. But it's worth the effort — it ensures that you will be better equipped to navigate your competitive landscape.

Calculating cost per unit requires a combination of three types of costs: direct costs, indirect costs and overhead. Let's break them down:

Direct costs can be completely attributed to producing an actual unit of your product — the installation service and the decorative finish. For example, direct

costs include the amount you paid (expense) for your concrete stamps or stains. Did you use a brush to install the stain? Better add that cost in, as well.

Indirect costs or “variable overhead” are the costs of marketing and delivering your product to your customers. Examples include costs that cannot be directly allocated to a specific product, such as labor expenses, legal fees, print ads, expenses for equipment maintenance, or utilities. Generally, service-based businesses tend to have substantial indirect costs compared to their direct costs. They fluctuate somewhat with the level of your business activity. But remember, these costs are incurred even if business is slow.

Overhead is the fixed expenses of your business that are not included in direct or indirect costs. Rent, executive salaries and insurance are usually categorized as overhead.

Your total cost per square foot can be

figured with a simple calculation:

$$\begin{aligned} & (\text{Total Direct Costs} + \\ & \text{Total Indirect Costs} + \text{Total Overhead}) \\ & \div \text{Total Square Feet Installed} \\ & = \text{Total Cost Per Square Foot} \end{aligned}$$

The cost allocation among these three categories may be somewhat arbitrary as long as the costs are fully absorbed, meaning that ALL costs in the production of a single unit (or square foot) are accounted for. You may have the receipt for your last tank of gas, but have you figured out exactly how many gallons of that gas were consumed (an indirect cost) to install one square foot of concrete stain? You may know your monthly payment for your power trowel, but do you know how much of that expense should be allocated to a single square foot of finished concrete?

This process may sound tedious or unnecessary, but successful contractors will take enough time to measure their costs so

CONGRATULATIONS



The dinosaur project at the 2012 Concrete Decor Show was a tremendous success!

See this outdoor exhibit at the Witte Museum of San Antonio.



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they can better understand how to finance and grow their business.

Here's a simple example. Let's say your direct costs (e.g. stamps, stains, hardener, etc.) for a given month were \$1,000 and your indirect costs (e.g. part-time labor, depreciation expenses on your truck, advertising campaign expenses, etc.) were also \$1,000. If your overhead (e.g. executive salaries, rent, utilities expenses, etc.) for the same month was \$2,000, your total costs (i.e. Direct + Indirect + Overhead) were \$1,000 + \$1,000 + \$2,000 = \$4,000.

Now, let's say you installed 4,000 square feet of decorative concrete in that month. Your cost per square foot was $\$4,000 / 4,000$ square feet = \$1 per square foot.

So far so good. If you charged your customers an average of \$2 per square foot in that month then your gross revenue was \$8,000 (4,000 square feet x \$2 per square foot).

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY for the up and coming Decorative Concrete Contractor

If you are planning on starting a decorative concrete company, the timing for purchasing equipment, tools and training could never be better. After being in the Industry for 25 years I am retiring. I will be offering consulting and training services for those inquiring. We will be liquidating all tools, stamps and equipment from each of our divisions.

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Therefore, your pretax net profit is \$4,000 (\$8,000 gross revenue - \$4,000 total costs) and your net profit margin is 50 percent ($\$4,000$ net profit / $\$8,000$ gross revenue). Congratulations!

Four Profit Margin Tips

- Calculate margins on a per-unit or per-square-foot basis.
- Hire a competent accountant if you struggle with calculating your margins.
- Establish procedures that will help you better measure your margins.
- If your profit margins are less than 20 percent, it's maybe time to rethink the viability of your business.

When consulting for small businesses, I offer a *general* rule of thumb for margins that can vary widely depending on the industry. Generally speaking, net profit is usually around 20 percent. Costs of goods sold (COGS), which is your direct and indirect costs combined, tend to be an average 50 percent of gross revenues. And overhead tends to be an average 30 percent of gross revenues.

The results of my survey are consistent with this *general* rule of thumb. More than 70 percent of respondents (who could actually recall their margins) indicated their net profit margin is more than 20 percent. This was good news, because if your margins are less than 20 percent you really need to ask yourself if it's worth getting out of bed in the morning for your business.

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There is virtually no substitute for knowing your costs per unit. Knowing this is what separates the business-savvy from the rest of the competition. Managing your business without this information is like going 10 rounds with Mike Tyson with your hands tied behind your back.

Let's say your profit margins are 40 percent, which would probably be considered relatively high margins for the decorative concrete industry. A high-margin business has more room to sustain pressure from customers to discount the price. That is, when you find yourself engaging in a price war, your business will have room to maneuver. And if your fully absorbed costs are less than those of your competitors, then you can discount your price, still make a profit and win the job over your competition.

But what if your margins are only 10 percent? This represents a risk if you were to find yourself trying to bid against another contractor with healthier margins. Again, this is reflected in the results of my survey. Approximately 30 percent of respondents indicated their margins are less than 20 percent. And 30 percent said they have to discount their price due to competition or pressure from customers. Where margins are smaller, it will be exponentially more difficult for you to manage, finance and earn from your business.

If you struggle with the exercise of calculating your margins, you're not alone. For most business owners, it's about as exciting as a colonoscopy. Just make sure you have access to a competent accountant who can help you navigate your income statement. Take time early on to establish procedures to measure this information while your business is relatively small. Then it will become easier to finance the growth of your business. This effort will pay big dividends down the road. 🚧

Jacob Webb, MBA, is a small-business strategy consultant and co-founder and vice president of NewLook International Inc. where he is primarily responsible for business development, sales and marketing. Reach him at jacob@getnewlook.com.

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PRODUCT NEWS

A new crack repair system

Adhesive Technology Corp.'s new Crack Kit has everything you need to perform crack injection and concrete repair.

The new, patented T-Port system reduces leaks, provides better penetration of resin into the crack and eliminates underfilling. The T-Ports contain tubes that expand to hold resin, which is then injected into the crack.

Miracle Bond is included as the capping material — it can also be used for numerous repairs in concrete and other various substrates.

A bonus tube of Crackbond CSR fast-setting urethane, used to repair cracks or spalls in concrete, is also included. Its ultra-low viscosity allows deep penetration into cracks, producing a high-strength repair.

www.atc.ws

NewLook introduces concrete dissolver

NewLook International Inc. has unveiled an advanced liquid formula that dissolves and physically breaks down concrete. Mean Klean will safely clean, dissolve and remove concrete, cured cement, mortar, grout and stucco. It can also be used to clean tools.

Mean Klean has been formulated to break down concrete by attacking portland cement and other unique chemical properties, reducing the concrete to a mush that's easy to remove.

Mean Klean's formula is 100 percent biodegradable, ecofriendly, noncorrosive, nonfuming and nonflammable. The dissolver is composed of a non-VOC, nonacid formula. It comes ready to use and can be applied with a standard pump sprayer or brushes.

www.getnewlook.com

Bon expands product line

Bon's line of contractor-grade hand tools has been expanded to include more than 600 new items.

New products of interest span the trades and include: Bon's Mixing & Pouring Barrel Transporter and Micro Topping Squeegees for concrete restoration work; Bon's Nylon

Face Dead Blow Hammers and Paver Joint Wire Brush for hardscape contractors; and Bon's Saw Cut Groover, available as a hand tool or walking tool for concrete finishing.

The complete catalog of products can be viewed online.

www.bontool.com

Vacuum ideal for fine dust

Metabo Corp. has introduced the ASR 35, a heavy-duty vacuum that features automatic electromagnetic vibration filter cleaning.

The ASR 35 wet/dry vac is suited for the collection of fine concrete dust created when grinding or cutting. It works equally well in the shop collecting large volumes of debris or nonflammable liquids.

The ASR 35 generates an airflow rate of 130 cubic feet per minute and has a 9-gallon capacity that allows for longer intervals between unit cleanings. The vacuum is available in a HEPA version for toxic dust applications.

www.metabousa.com

A wireless time clock

ExakTime has introduced JobClock Horner, a rugged wireless time clock that automatically sends electronic time records back to the office every hour. JobClock Horner requires workers to punch in and out with Keytabs that track work down to the minute, in real time.

www.exaktime.com

Milwaukee's new cordless options

Milwaukee Tool has introduced the M18 Fuel 1/2-inch Drill/Driver (2603-20/22) and M18 Fuel 1/2-inch Hammer Drill/Driver (2604-20/22). Using Milwaukee's Powerstate brushless motor, the M18 line offers up to 725 inch-pounds of torque.

www.milwaukeetool.com



Wall Slotter cuts channels in concrete

CS Unitec's EMF 150 wall slotter cuts parallel channels in concrete and masonry up to 1 3/4 inches wide by 1 3/4 inches deep using two parallel 6-inch diamond blades. They can be easily adjusted for desired cutting depth and width. The EMF 150's powerful 20-amp motor has a no-load speed of 7,500 rpm.

www.csunitec.com

HEPA vacuum from CS Unitec

CS Unitec's CS 1225 H wet/dry HEPA vacuum captures 99.999 percent of particles up to 0.1 microns, exceeding EPA filtration standards. The vacuum weighs less than 25 pounds and includes a hose adapter to easily connect portable power tools.

www.csunitec.com

Boot stands up to rebar wire ties

Billy Boots has expanded distribution of the Cruiser boot. Molded from lightweight EVA resin, the Cruiser has no seams to leak and no buckles to fail. At just 2.1 pounds per pair, Cruisers are virtual featherweights but still tough enough to stand up to challenges like rebar wire ties.

www.billybootsusa.com

A two-speed hydraulic breaker

The Doosan DXB260H hydraulic breaker features two-speed control of breaker frequency for improved efficiency in demanding demolition and rock-breaking applications.

Delivering up to 600 blows per minute, the 5,400-pound DXB260H is designed for use with excavators in the 27- to 37-metric-ton weight range, specifically the Doosan DX300LC and DX350LC.

www.doosanequipment.com



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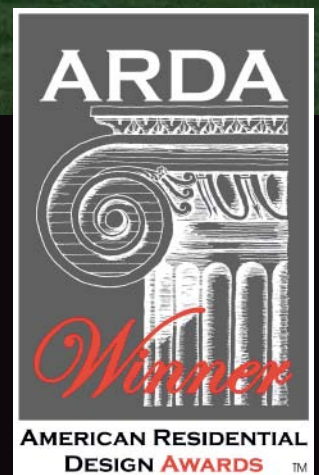
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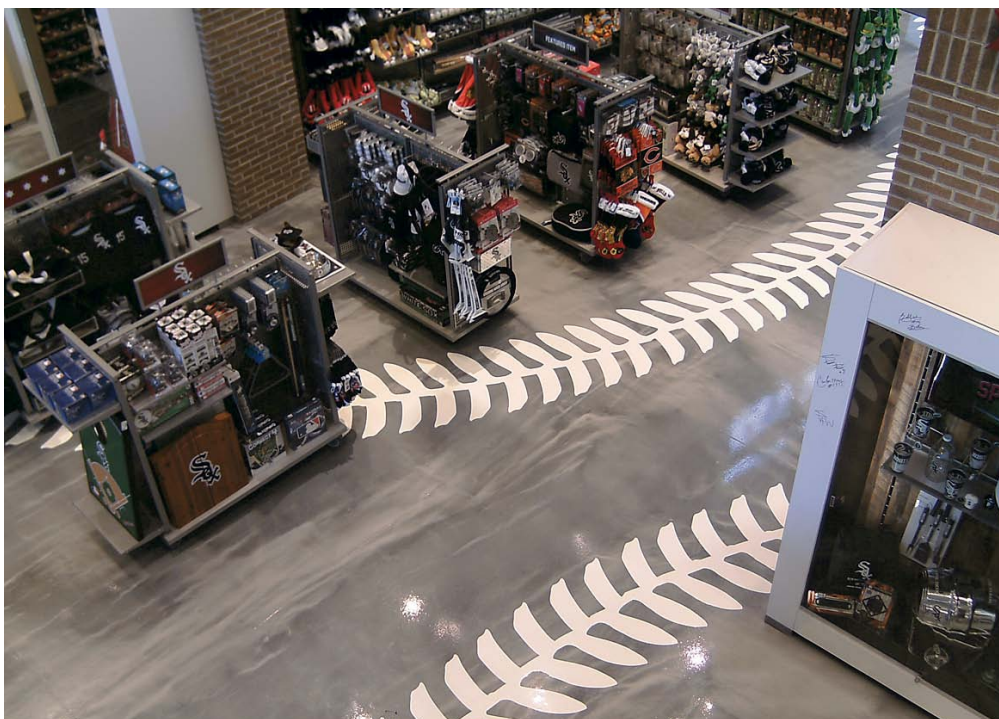
Chicago Sports Depot Chicago, Ill.

by *Natasha Chilingirian*

A CHICAGO sports lover's paradise opened in January of this year: the Chicago Sports Depot, a two-story, 12,000-square-foot retail facility located adjacent to U.S. Cellular Field (home of the Chicago White Sox baseball team) that offers fans an extensive collection of White Sox, Bulls, Bears, Blackhawks and Cubs merchandise, autographed memorabilia and custom printed jerseys.

But it's perhaps the décor, not the shopping selection, that makes the Chicago Sports Depot, developed and run by hospitality management company Delaware North, a true destination. Large murals depict current and former star players, memorable championship game scenes, front-page newspaper article clippings and White Sox logos. Sporting events play on 75 video monitors, and a staircase equipped with 15,000 LED lights displays sports team-related video clips on its steps.

Enhancing the store's interior design



further are its epoxy-coated concrete floors, which were installed in White Sox team colors by a crew from decorative concrete floor design and installation company CCI Flooring Inc. The floors feature a baseball stitching design, which installers brought to life by applying white epoxy material onto vinyl stenciling. The stitching design flows outside of the interior space and continues on the building's exterior brickwork, adding drama.

Retail design and branding firm RGLA Solutions Inc. was responsible for the flooring's look as well as the overall store design, including the exterior concept and environmental branding. RGLA Solutions director of brand marketing Ivelisse Ruiz says the stenciled stitching not only reflects the store's overriding theme, but also directs customers through the retail space.

Project at a Glance

Client: Delaware North Cos., Buffalo, N.Y.

Decorative Concrete Contractor: CCI Flooring Inc., Chicago and Crest Hill, Ill.

Project Designer/Interior Architect: RGLA Solutions Inc., Schiller Park, Ill.

General Contractor: James McHugh Construction Co., Chicago

Project Specs: 12,206 square feet of epoxy-coated concrete flooring (a 5,362-square-foot upper level and a 6,844-square-foot lower level)

Timeline: 16 days (eight days for each level)

Materials Suppliers: BDC Decorative Concrete Supply, Crest Hill, Ill.; Dur-A-Flex, East Hartford, Conn.

Materials Used: Shimmer pigment in Titanium and Kool Koncepts Specialty Stencils from BDC Decorative Concrete Supply; Dur-A-Glaze MVP moisture mitigation primer, Dur-A-Glaze #4 Water Clear epoxy, Dur-A-Gard epoxy in Bright White and Armor Top urethane from Dur-A-Flex



“The baseball stitching on the flooring is an integral part of the design that literally grounds the space with a ballpark feel,” Ruiz says. “It was also used to lead customers through the different team shops as well as define categories of merchandise, reinforce aisles and move customers through the space using a dramatic, graphic approach.” The design team developed the store’s custom floor plans with input from CCI Flooring.

Ruiz says the floor’s marbled look, which installers achieved by mixing BDC Decorative Concrete Supply’s Shimmer pigment into epoxy material, adds texture and depth to the surface. According to CCI Flooring president Bob Bauer, Shimmer is a pigment powder that performs similarly to most metallic pigments on the market but blends better and allows for more natural color enhancement.

The artisan’s contribution

Bauer says he first learned of the project when the general contractor, Chicago-based James McHugh Construction, asked him to offer a quote for the job. Once he reviewed the contractor’s original plans for the flooring materials and application methods, Bauer decided some changes had to be made.

“The product they wanted to use produced a look that was similar to ours, but the thickness on our product was greater,” Bauer says. “The cost of our product was also lower, so we gave them more floor at a lower cost. They also wanted to leave the vinyl stencil on the floor and coat epoxy material on top of it, but I was against that.”



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Project managers agreed with Bauer's choice — Dur-A-Flex's Dur-A-Glaze #4 Water Clear epoxy mixed with Shimmer pigment in Titanium — which promised a glistening, marbled coating in shades of silver and white. For the baseball stitching, installers would apply Dur-A-Flex's Dur-A-Gard solid-color epoxy coating in Bright White through vinyl stencils, also supplied by BDC Decorative Concrete Supply.

Workers completed the floor coating installation in two eight-day phases in October 2011, beginning with the store's upper level and ending with its lower level. (Construction of the entire Chicago Sports Depot structure took place over a seven-month period from April to November.) CCI Flooring job supervisor Mike Bauer (Bob's younger brother) explains that the crew began the job by prepping

the existing concrete surface on each level using shotblasting, grinding and vacuuming tools and smoothing out cracks with a joint filler.

They originally planned on applying Dur-A-Glaze #4 WB Primer as the primer coat, but after discovering the slab's moisture levels were too high for it, they switched to Dur-A-Flex's Dur-A-Glaze MVP moisture mitigation primer.

Then they began installing their decorative coat, the pigmented #4 Water Clear epoxy. To get the marbled look, workers ran 18-inch rollers across the surfaces in zigzags instead of in straight lines.

Once the base and stenciled epoxy materials were in place, installers finished each floor's level with a coat of Dur-A-Flex's Armor Top urethane.

Bob Bauer notes that selecting products from a single supplier was an important part of the project's success.

"In today's market, it's important that you find a single-source supplier for all products, including, in this case, the moisture mitigation primer," he says. "This will allow you the confidence that the installed products are a solid system. When you mix and match products, there is always the potential risk for incompatibility, which will lead to job failure."

Mike says coordinating his crew's tasks with those of other workers, such as exterior wall painters, was the most difficult part of the installation.

"The biggest challenge was coordinating what we were doing with what was going on outside of the building," he says. "The stitching design travels out of a window and up the wall on the outside, and lining that up was a challenge. But it was also the coolest part — it looks like an actual baseball."

The chosen epoxy materials are intended for high-traffic surfaces, which gives the client peace of mind that the Chicago Sports Depot floors will hold up against excessive abuse. "Given the anticipated high traffic volume during baseball season, the epoxy



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was chosen for its durability and the fact that it's easy to clean," Ruiz says.

Mike says the Chicago Sports Depot project stood out to him for its unique design, adding that the project has helped CCI Flooring earn recognition and paved the way for future sports-related floor coating projects.

"The pigment itself is unique, and the stenciling adds character to the floor," he says. "It's definitely a custom floor for the Chicago White Sox, and it will last because we prepared it that way."

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CONCRETE coatings

PRODUCT NEWS

Dur-A-Flex introduce Armor-Stat

Dur-A-Flex recently debuted its Armor-Stat ESD floor system.

The three-step, epoxy-urethane ESD system offers superior abrasion and chemical resistance. Additionally, its UV resistance ensures consistent color throughout the life of the floor. Armor-Stat is available in five colors.

www.dur-a-flex.com

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High-volume pump for polyureas

U.S. Saws has introduced a high-volume electric dual-component gear pump for the installation of polyureas.

Two 5-gallon polyethylene tanks hold the components to be mixed and applied. The pump offers a 1-to-1 component mixing ratio, though a 2-to-1 ratio is available as an option. The materials move through an aluminum dispensing manifold mounted on the dispensing wand, which has a variable speed control knob to manage the flow of mixed components.

Production rates with this pump can range from 4,000 to 7,000 lineal feet per day.

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DSM launches new product family with urethane cement system

URelle-Crete — the first of a new product family from DSM — is a three-component urethane cement system designed to stand up to excessive physical impact, thermal shock and chemical exposure. Ideal for pharmaceutical and food and beverage facilities and other places where durability is of major importance, URelle-Crete protects concrete against mechanical abuse and heavy traffic, and can also withstand extreme conditions such as the thermal shock associated with hot water discharge. It is therefore highly suitable for exposure to wet processing and high-temperature (steam) cleaning.

URelle-Crete meets current USDA and FDA standards and provides excellent chemical resistance against a wide range of cleaning and processing chemicals. It is available in multiple colors and supplied in several grades with varying textures and thicknesses.

www.dsm.com

New UV curing equipment from Jelight

Jelight has introduced new portable UV curing equipment for decorative concrete applications.

The JFC-426L unit is 26 inches wide and weighs just 135 pounds. The power supply provides 230 watts per cubic inch of nominal output, which is ideal for most waterborne UV coating applications.

The JFC-434E is a larger model at 34 inches wide and weighs 225 pounds. This three-phase model is ideal for curing large areas such as aircraft hangers and commercial floors. With an available 350 watts per cubic inch nominal output, this unit will cure pigmented 100-percent solids coatings with ease.

www.jelight.com

Quest becomes sole distributor of Kretus concrete coatings

Quest Building Products is now the sole distributor of the new and growing line of Kretus concrete coatings.

The lineup includes: Kretus Water Based Epoxy, a fast-drying primer; Kretus Easy Patch, a two-part fast-curing epoxy-based patching material; Kretus Base Coat Pro, an ultrafast-drying, economical epoxy that is great for sand, quartz and paint chip broadcast systems; Kretus Epoxy Fast Set, a fast epoxy that also leaves a high-gloss topcoat; and Kretus Top Shelf Epoxy, a 100-percent solids epoxy that offers a 20- to 30-minute working time and leaves a brilliant finish.

Other products include Kretus Metallics, a powder that can be mixed into clear epoxy for a vibrant marbled effect; Kretus Lava Flow, which combines two or more colors in an organic self-leveling technique; Kretus Polyaspartic 72 and 85 (with 72 percent and 82 percent solids, respectively), which leave an ultradurable UV- and chemical-resistant finish; Kretus Acrylic Sealer, a tintable solvent-based sealer; and finally, Kretus Base Coat Cement, which is designed for acrylic lath decking systems and is inexpensive, durable and crack-resistant when properly mixed with a polymer or acrylic additive.

www.questbuilding.com

Dow Coating Materials offers low-VOC coating

Dow Coatings Materials, a global business unit of The Dow Chemical Co., has developed Paraloid B-66 Thermoplastic Acrylic Resin in Dimethyl Carbonate (DMC).

Part of Dow's Paraloid B-66 Acrylic Resin family, the new product forms clear solutions, which air-dry extremely fast to form hard, colorless films that offer excellent block resistance and color retention with ultra-low VOC rates. Paraloid B-66 DMC also exhibits moderate evaporation rates and should give similar solvent compatibility as Paraloid B-66 Resins in xylene and toluene.

www.dow.com

Bayer develops new sealer technology

Bayer MaterialScience LLC has developed new two-component polyurethane waterborne technology for sealers in the decorative concrete market.

The new sealer technology offers a number of advantages over currently available concrete sealer products, including better ease of use, improved durability, low odor, increased service life and very low amounts of volatile organic compounds (less than 15 grams per liter).

The technology is primarily applied to indoor surfaces but is also appropriate for outdoor applications.

www.bayermaterialscience.com

Pflaumer introduces new amine-functional resin

Pflaumer Brothers Inc. has made available a new amine-functional resin for polyurea polyaspartic coatings used on concrete, metal, plastic composites, wood and other substrates.

The polyaspartic amine, designated Teraspartic 230, is characterized by low viscosity, high reactivity and fast gelation. It is ideal for specialty applications such as patching compounds, sealants, gel coats, caulks, pore fillers and putty. The product can also be used in combination with other polyaspartic amines or together with other amine functional resins or hydroxy-functional acrylic resins.

www.pflaumer.com

Dur-A-Flex earns national certification

One of Dur-A-Flex's floor systems has been certified by the National Floor Safety Institute for slip resistance.

The NFSI provided Dur-A-Flex with the means to have their Dur-A-Quartz with Armor Top epoxy flooring system independently evaluated for slip resistance. Once the system passed the agency's rigorous evaluations, it was placed on the NFSI's Certified Products list.

In order for Dur-A-Flex's Dur-A-Quartz with Armor Top to achieve the NFSI's certification status, the flooring system had to pass a laboratory phase and a field test. The epoxy system exceeded the minimum accepted scores, earning a "high traction" determination from the NFSI.

www.dur-a-flex.com

Ardex launches Android app

Ardex Americas has developed a free Android Product Calculator Application, which features a user-friendly calculator that installers, distributors, architects and engineers can use to calculate the amount of Ardex product required to cover a job area.

The Ardex Android App also gives detailed product descriptions, directs users to local sales professionals and features an overview of Ardex Americas. The app is available for download via Google Play.

A version for iPhones was previously released, and is available in iTunes.

www.ardexamericas.com

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Creating a Self-Consolidating Countertop Mix

SELF-CONSOLIDATING concrete is a highly technical mix. It is not an easy mix to create, since it requires an understanding of how all the ingredients work together. What's more, specialized testing is required to characterize and optimize the mix.



by Jeffrey Girard

Self-consolidating concrete starts with ordinary concrete ingredients, but the mixing process and proportions are different. In a 2003 paper for the Japan Concrete Institute (JCI), Hajime Okamura and Masahiro Ouchi outlined a rational

mix design methodology and suggested test methods for producing SCC. Here's a brief summary of their starting mix design proportions:

- Coarse aggregate content is fixed at 50 percent of the total solid volume.
- Fine aggregate content is fixed at 40 percent of the mortar volume.
- Water-to-powder ratio (by volume) is assumed to be 0.9 to 1.0 depending upon the properties of the powder (which can be cement, pozzolan or powdered stone).
- The final water-to-powder ratio and superplasticizer dosage are determined so as to ensure self-compactibility.

The basic makeup of SCC varies around

the world and there are many different models for creating an SCC mix design besides the JCI model. In general:

- The largest aggregate sizes in SCC range from 3/4 inch to 1 inch in diameter.
- Powder can consist of portland cement, a blend of portland cement and a pozzolan, or portland cement and powdered limestone (or another stone).
- The pozzolan can be fly ash, metakaolin, silica fume or slag, and the makeup of the powder could include some combination of the aforementioned materials.

What is important to realize is that these guidelines are a starting point. Variations or changes in ingredients, such as changes in aggregate gradation or cement fineness,

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will have a profound influence on the mix and whether it achieves the required characteristics. Designing an SCC mix is a repetitive process that starts with these basic proportions but alters them again and again based on how each newly created mix behaves. Individual mix designs based on local ingredients will most likely differ from the JCI guidelines. When SCC first came out, there were different styles or approaches in Europe, Japan and America.

Two essential admixtures

Two very important admixtures to understand when working with SCC are an advanced, powerful superplasticizer and a segregation-controlling viscosity modifier (VMA), which is sometimes used in combination with ultrafine powders to control viscosity.

Conventional superplasticizers (melamine, naphthalene and lignosulfonate types) function mainly through electrostatic repulsion. In a very simplistic way, they act a lot like dryer sheets, but instead of eliminating static cling (so your socks

don't stick together), the superplasticizers cause the cement particles to repel each other. The superplasticizer gives the cement particles an overall negative charge. Since like charges repel each other, the more negatively charged the cement particles are, the greater they repel each other and the more powerfully the superplasticizer performs.

The superplasticizer used to make SCC is a polycarboxylic ether, which is an advanced third-generation superplasticizer. Polycarboxylate superplasticizers use electrosteric repulsion, which is a combination of electrostatic and steric repulsion. Steric repulsion is generated by polymeric "fingers" that are attracted to the cement particles and provide extra particle separation and mobility. It's this combination that makes polycarboxylate-based superplasticizers so powerful and effective. These new superplasticizers are not only more powerful than other types of superplasticizers, their effects last longer too.

The other admixture commonly used in SCC alongside polycarboxylate

superplasticizers is a viscosity modifier. Viscosity-modifying admixtures (VMA) thicken the cement paste, increasing its viscosity. Essentially, the VMA makes the runny cement paste thick enough that the aggregates remain suspended and don't settle out.

Not all SCC mixes use or need a viscosity modifier. But using one can add an extra degree of segregation control to respond to unforeseen aggregate moisture, changes in the fine aggregate content or other factors that affect the concrete's viscosity.

The importance of testing

Central to the development of an SCC mix design for each project is testing. An SCC mixture should be designed and tested in the lab and in a production setting to verify its performance prior to use on a job. Unlike conventional concrete, where one basic test is needed for assessing workability (slump), SCC requires several specialized tests. The tests are used to gauge the mix's flowability and its viscosity. Some tests also assess the ability of the mix to pass between

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congested rebar.

These tests include:

- A modified form of the SCC slump test (ASTM C1611) and a J-ring test of the passing ability of SCC (ASTM C1621).
- Viscosity is assessed several ways, including the visual stability index (VSI), taken at the end of the C1611 test. The column technique (ASTM C1610) assesses static segregation.
- Other tests include the L-box, the U-box and the V-funnel. These three tests are not formally standardized but are useful laboratory tools for developing and refining a specific SCC mix.

When concrete countertop manufacturers make their own

in-house concrete using this information, the concrete they make may not be strictly defined as SCC, but the overall characteristics of greater flowability and segregation resistance may prove adequate for their needs.

For construction applications where congested rebar or the need to reduce labor costs make SCC the concrete of choice, it's vital that special care be exercised by all parties in design and implementation, since the project needs justify and demand the properties that SCC provides. 🛠️

Jeffrey Girard is founder and president of The Concrete Countertop Institute and a pioneer of engineered concrete countertops. He can be reached at info@concretecountertopinstitute.com.



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PRODUCT NEWS

Admixture mixes from Trinic

Trinic LLC has added System 1 admixtures to its product line.

Designed specifically to simplify the production of high-performance wet-cast and GFRC architectural concrete, System 1 admixtures are a combination of six separate ingredients, each dosed in the proper ratios, eliminating the need to mix and match different admixtures. System 1 Admixtures contain antifoaming agents and antishrink agents. Dispersing and wetting agents in the mixtures help improve color dispersion, intensity and stability. System 1 admixtures also eliminate the need for liquid polymer when fabricating GFRC concrete, and they reduce shipping and storage costs.

📞 (800) 475-1975

🌐 www.trinic.us

Gnomeinator 2000 is unveiled

Tommy T. Cook and FRP Equipment have teamed up to develop The Gnomeinator 2000 (G2). Designed with smaller shops in mind, the G2 FRC pump allows the user to spray up to five gallons of 3/4-inch GFRC premix, or similar mix designs, onto vertical surfaces or 3-D forms, achieving higher strengths and faster application times.

🌐 www.gnomeadicarts.com

New countertop corbel from Federal Brace

The Eleuthera Metal Countertop Corbel from Federal Brace mixes the best of both worlds — the elegant lines of a corbel and the strength of a metal countertop support bracket. With its naturally flowing lines and the beautiful finish, the Eleuthera brings the traditional corbel design to the countertop support hardware world. 🛠️

🌐 www.federalbrace.com

Beyond the Kit: Outdoor Kitchens in Cold Climates

by Jason Geiser

OUTDOOR kitchens are a popular request no matter where you live, but typically when you read a book or see a television show featuring outdoor kitchens, the contractor is doing them in a warm climate. Warmer climates allow the use of these all year round. But that doesn't mean that folks up north won't want one in their backyard too. Here in Ohio, we continue to get more and more calls from homeowners regarding these.

Unfortunately, some of the calls we get are from disgruntled homeowners who have purchased outdoor-kitchen kits intended for a warm climate only to have them fall apart after a winter here. They now need repairs done or want it trashed altogether.

Why kits don't work in cold climates

A outdoor-kitchen kit typically includes a preordered, premade frame, usually stucco, HardieBacker fiber-cement board or stone veneer, plus prefab tile or granite



Jason Geiser created this outdoor kitchen six years ago at a home in Spencer, Ohio.

Photos courtesy of Deco-Crete Supply

countertops and other materials. The kit ships in pieces to be completed by the homeowner or contractor on-site.

Many times the homeowner — or even a contractor — is enticed to purchase a kit online due to the cost factor, as these are usually about half the cost of a custom-built kitchen.

Proper communication with the homeowner regarding expectations and possible future issues will usually persuade them to at least educate themselves a little better on these. However, even after given a proper explanation of the problems, I still have had one homeowner say: "Well, if one goes bad, I will just buy another one." (That was my cue to pick up my stuff and leave.)

The problems with an online kit begin with the fact that it comes in pieces for shipment. It has to be bolted or screwed together. Any time you fasten something together, you create a weakened spot where you can get moisture intrusion and movement, which can lead to cracking or the start of a delaminating surface.

Then, once the kitchen is constructed, it needs to be bolted to concrete. In Ohio we have control joints every 8 to 10 feet. If the kitchen happens to go over the top of one of these control joints, bad things can happen due to movement between the slabs during freeze/thaw cycles.

Lastly, most of them that I have seen or been called out to look at use HardieBacker board as sheeting to stick the finished product to. What a lot of people do not realize is that when water gets into the HardieBacker board it freezes and expands, and the material flakes off in layers taking whatever is on it with it.

Your outdoor kitchen should have a footing that isolates it from the rest of the slab, and you should use actual cement board, which is often confused with HardieBacker board.

Different footers for different climates

A proper outdoor kitchen constructed for a cold-weather climate definitely begins with a foundation that is below the frost



Water and freezing weather caused deterioration of this HardieBacker fiber-cement board.

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line. We pour a footer
after I finalize a
design for the kitchen.

I have seen many
books with outdoor
kitchen plans that
show a picture or
a diagram of how
the job can be done
in a warm-weather
climate. Those plans
would not work
here because the
foundation and footer
shown are not deep
enough to withstand
the effects of cold
weather. Different areas have different codes
on what that depth should be. In my area it
is 3 feet from the surface to the bottom of
the footer.

Why we use cement block

Next, I hire a block mason to lay cement
blocks per our design. Even though we
could lay the block ourselves, it doesn't
always make sense financially, because we



Concrete blocks make a good structural foundation for outdoor kitchens. Their
surfaces bond well with almost any type of overlayment.

can make more money doing another job
than we can fooling around with cement
blocks. I have tried to form and pour the
kitchen walls instead of using cement
blocks. However, this took three times as
much labor as what my mason can do it for.

Another benefit to cement block is
that you get a great surface to pour your
concrete countertop on. And it is extremely
porous, allowing a great bond with whatever

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PRODUCT NEWS

you decide to face the block with. Stucco, artificial stone, vertical carving and so on should never be an issue. These things will not deteriorate and are not going to move.

After the block work is completed we pour the concrete around the area, using some form of expansion joint anywhere the concrete touches the block.

Outdoor tops and appliances

Exterior countertops are different from the ones you do inside. I recommend you give them some slope to get water off. Obviously, anytime water sits on anything for too long it can lead to problems — discoloration, sealer issues, puddles, etc. — and the customer may not be too happy to come out to grill a hamburger after a rain only to find that their grill is flooded.

Also, I would strongly advise you to do your homework on the sealer you use. Not all interior countertop sealers will work on outside applications. Make sure you talk to the manufacturer or supplier of any product to find out if it will work.

One last tip that could save you some headaches no matter what climate you are from is make sure you have the appliances on hand before you start. I prefer to actually personally measure each appliance being installed to ensure a proper fit.

When I first started doing outdoor kitchens, a couple gave me the dimensions of a grill that was different from the one they actually ordered. There is nothing worse than completing a beautiful countertop only to find out when installing the grill that the opening is too small. Luckily, we could cut and grind the opening to fit the grill. However, it was still not fun and cost us a lot of time. That was the last time I made that mistake. 🛠️

Jason Geiser owns Deco-Crete Supply and Cornerstone Concrete Designs, both based in Orrville, Ohio. He can be contacted at jason@deco-cretesupply.com.

Attachments for power cutters

Husqvarna Construction Products has introduced two new attachments for the K3000 line of electric power cutters: the K3000 Dust Reducer and the WT 15 water tank.

The K3000 Dust Reducer easily attaches to the K 3000 Vac power cutter to minimize dust while sawing. It works exceptionally well on flat surfaces. When the Dust Reducer is detached, the unique blade guard features a hose attachment for a convenient way to cut wet.

The WT 15 water tank holds enough water to cut continuously for 20 minutes before refilling. It comes fully equipped, and every attachment fits on the unit for easy transporting and storage. The WT 15 water tank can be used with Husqvarna power cutters and drills.

🌐 www.husqvarnacp.com

Stego launches three new accessories

Stego Industries LLC has unveiled its three newest installation accessories: the Stego Crete Claw, the StegoTack Tape, and the Stego Term Bar.

The Stego Crete Claw is a multilayered tape/detail strip that will mechanically lock Stego Wrap Vapor Barrier to concrete. Thanks to the strip's patent-pending design, wet concrete bonds with its textured surface. It forms a seal between the perimeter of Stego Wrap and the concrete slab and adheres Stego Wrap to concrete in settling or expansive soil environments.

StegoTack Tape is a double-sided adhesive strip used to bond and seal Stego Wrap Vapor Barrier to concrete, masonry, wood, metal and other surfaces. StegoTack is a flexible and moldable material.

Stego Term Bar is a semiflexible plastic termination bar used for mechanically

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New walk-behind trowels

The Allen VP436 and VP446 are the newest additions to Allen Concrete Equipment's line of walk-behind power trowels. They feature height-adjustable handles with either traditional twist-action blade pitch control or lever-action positive pitch control. The VP Series also feature cast-iron spiders, pressure plates and lift levers along with lifting bars.

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Wagner Meters launches RHSpec app

Wagner Meters has developed an application for Android, iPhone and iPad users. Based on the ASTM F2170 testing method, the RHSpec app will give flooring installers, general contractors and spec providers immediate access to the latest relative humidity thresholds for flooring adhesives, coatings, finished floor products or remediation products.

The easy-to-navigate RHSpec app lets you search by product type, manufacturer or product name. 📱

🌐 www.rhspec.com



grinding & polishing :

PROJECT PROFILE

The Comedy Carpet Blackpool, U.K.

by Chris Mayo

I would bet that when you think about concrete, humor is not the first word that comes to mind. Then again, you aren't Gordon Young. Young, a visual artist who specializes in public art in the U.K., has created some amazing works of art with concrete. His most impressive to date is the Comedy Carpet at Blackpool.

The Comedy Carpet is a 2,200-square-meter courtyard made up of 320 individual slabs of concrete made to look like show bills, variety posters and newsprint, all paying homage to British comedians as well as foreign comics who played Blackpool. The lettering and characters were created out of red and black granite and blue concrete, all cut out and embedded in a perfectly white concrete base.

A seaside town on the Northwest coast of England, Blackpool has long been a popular destination for British and foreign vacationers. During its heyday in the early to mid-1900s, Blackpool teemed with workers when factories would shut down for maintenance and upgrades. It was during this time that comedy came to the fore, as stand-up was a popular form of entertainment for Blackpool vacationers.

Young was commissioned through a collaboration between the Blackpool Council and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment's Sea Change Project to create something outside the entrance to the iconic Blackpool Tower that would represent the past, present and future of Blackpool. "I wanted to go back to the roots of the area," he says. "Light entertainment and comedy were the heartbeat of Blackpool during its halcyon days."

Young had done other projects involving lettering embedded in concrete, some of them quite large, he says, "so the idea of creating wood type on a grand scale wasn't completely mad."



Photo courtesy of Angela Catlin

Graphic designer Andy Altmann of Why Not Associates, London, presents the Comedy Carpet he helped create.

Once Young had an idea of what he wanted to do, he had to figure out how he was going to do it. He met with someone he calls "an old guy, a chemist in Bristol," who is an expert in pigments. He had meetings with other chemists, too, to start figuring out how to create the concrete he wanted, and he talked to people familiar with different types of granite and sand.

"We wanted to do something that was of a ridiculously high quality," recalls Young. "It wasn't long before I realized that even though the end product would be a piece of art, the creating of it was really a matter of chemistry and craft. Everything was relevant — the sands we used, the density of the granite, the malleability and viscosity of the concrete, and of course, the ratios of water to solids."

Teamwork

Young interviewed a few concrete contractors and soon realized that the scope of the job was simply too unusual,

and therefore risky, for most conventional contractors. He decided to put his own team together.

Having done projects with embedded figures in concrete in the past, Young had some contacts from which to build a team.

Project at a Glance

Contractor: Gordon Young, U.K., in collaboration with Why Not Associates, London

Client: City of Blackpool, U.K.

Project Description: Create a 2,200-square-meter concrete courtyard that looks like a sea of show bills and newsprint.

Materials and Tools Used: Specially engineered self-placing concrete and high-compression grout, Werkmaster Colossos grinder, Monlevi M1 Standard No. 4323 bridge polisher, Super Selva Abrasives and Diamonds pads, Frankfurt pads

Challenges: Finding materials that would both work for creating the "newsprint" and stand the test of time, setting up a factory to create concrete panels, engineering mix ratios that would flow into the smallest areas of the lettering without vibration, transporting and setting panels.

He started with Why Not Associates, a graphic design company based in London. Then he added Andy Sawyer, an engineer with a reputation for taking on unusual projects, and Russ Coleman, a stonemason and sculptor. With his core team in place, he recruited experts in international stone and sand, chemists, and machinists.

Young searched the globe for his materials. The red and black granite and the white sand came from India.

One pesky detail — they needed to find a suitable setting in which to cut the

granite and concrete letters and characters, then pour the concrete slabs. Young found a factory that fit the bill. However, it was hours away from Blackpool, creating yet another logistical factor.

Trial and error

Sawyer became the factory manager, responsible for setting up the flow of work — cutting the letters and characters, gluing them in the forms, mixing and pouring the concrete, removing the slabs from the forms, polishing them, and

ultimately preparing them for shipment.

“Something like this comes along and it’s challenging and interesting. It proved to be just that, quite a process,” says Sawyer.

“The slabs were two meters by four meters, poured in three separate stages. Each pour was done upside-down. We bought a high-pressure water jet machine from Sweden to cut the granite and the cobalt blue concrete for the letters and characters. It had to have specially designed software to meet with production demands. Once the letters were cut, we glued them on layouts in the bottom

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Photo courtesy of The Comedy Carpet

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grinding & polishing :

of steel molds and poured the first layer of concrete around them.”

Coming up with a mix that would work for the surface of the Carpet proved to be a huge challenge.

“We needed ‘high-spec’ self-placing concrete, and it was absolutely essential that it would flow into every nook and cranny without any vibrating. Because the letters were glued in place, vibration could have loosened them and skewed the layout,” recalls Sawyer. “It took an incredible amount of trial and error. If we achieved a mix that flowed well, cracking was a problem. If we designed one that didn’t crack, we might have voids around some of the letters. It was all very challenging. But we finally worked it out. The mix we ultimately used performed very much like a high-flow grout.”

The facing pour was only the first step. Next came a backing of high-compression grout and finally a layer of a standard casting mix from a local ready-mix company. Sawyer was worried

about delaminating, but they wanted to eliminate any possibility of staining from any metal they used to reinforce and tie the layers together. They ended up using stainless steel.

A Monlevi bridge polisher was used to polish the individual slabs at the factory. “Each slab weighed about four tons,” says Sawyer. “When we started the operation, we thought we might achieve 10 slabs per week. The best we ever did was seven.”

Final spit and polish

After the panels were delivered and placed, they had to be polished again. And once again, the Comedy Carpet presented unique challenges.

“Lippage and the combination of granite and concrete was the problem for most contractors,” explains Brian Wilson, president of polishing equipment manufacturer Werkmaster. “The Comedy Carpet was constructed of concrete panels that were fitted together, much like a simple puzzle. At the edges, where each panel met another, there was a lip, or slight unevenness. With a typical polishing or

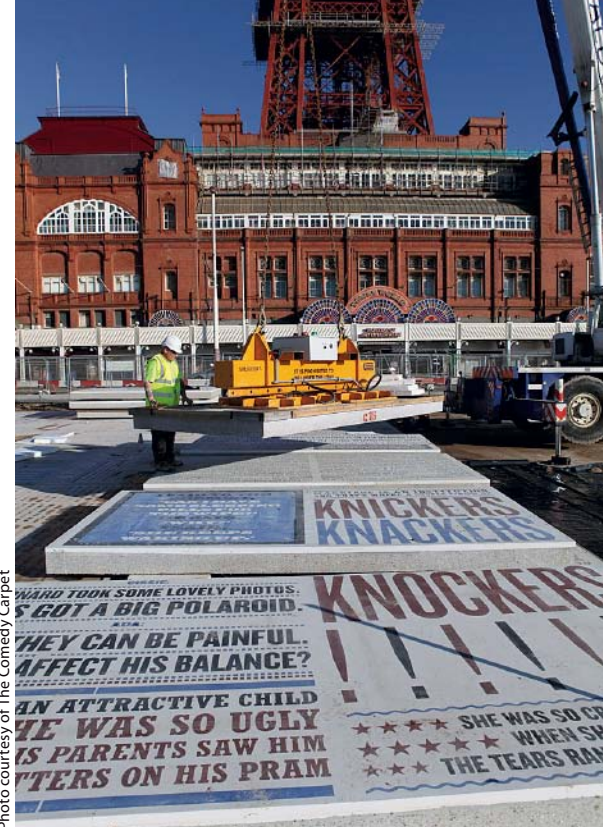


Photo courtesy of The Comedy Carpet

grinding machine, an uneven surface promotes a lot of tooling marks. The contrast in density between granite and concrete created additional difficulties for a standard grinding machine.”

Happily, Werkmaster had designed its Colossos grinder specifically to polish black

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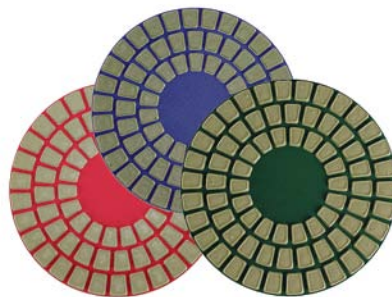
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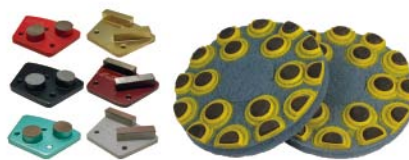
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PRODUCT SHOWCASE

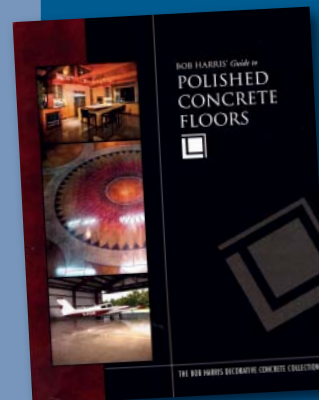
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stop to read it and they laugh.

"I knew we hit the mark when I went out to watch people reading the carpet — they shuffle sideways as they read, laugh to themselves or share a laugh with a stranger," says Andy Altmann, graphic designer and one of the founders of Why Not Associates.

"It is exactly what we were going for."

For Young, his moment of "yesss" came when a concrete ready-mix driver saw a slab with Monty Python quotes and had to stop working because he was laughing too hard to continue. "We put together a collaboration and then we came up with a massive piece of art," says Young. "Funny how that works, right?"

In case you're wondering, the dry British humor had no discernable effect on the cure rate of the concrete. 🚚

🌐 www.gordonyoung.net



Photo courtesy of Angela Catlin






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PRODUCT NEWS

Hand-held grinder from CS Unitec

CS Unitec's new EBS 180 H 7-inch hand-held concrete grinder removes epoxy, paint and other coatings. It also prepares new concrete surfaces before the application of new paints or coatings. This grinder is solidly built with a 20-amp, 2,500-watt motor to enable a high load capacity running 7-inch diameter diamond wheels at 9,500 rpm.

The EBS 180 H comes with a built-in vacuum port for dust-free operation when connected to an industrial vacuum. It also has an integrated shock-absorbing system and ergonomically designed side handles.

www.csunitec.com

NewLook's NanoSet densifies and colors

NewLook International Inc. has unveiled NanoSet Color, the latest installment in NewLook's NanoSet Polishing System of densifiers, sealers, cleaners and colorants. The water-based stain formula is based on a blend of densifying silicates, which create a translucent UV-stable finish, suitable for both interior and exterior polishing projects.

NanoSet Color hardens, dustproofs and colors concrete. It may be used as a component of the NanoSet Polishing System or independently to add color to existing concrete.

NanoSet Color is packaged as a concentrate that can be diluted with water and sprayed or brushed onto existing concrete during the polishing process. It can be used either after NanoSet Densifier or on its own.

www.getnewlook.com

A dust collector for smaller grinders

The Dust Muzzle Ultra Leatherneck is a new universal dust collector for 7- to 8-inch grinders. The completely collapsible shroud can handle any thickness wheel, from 7-inch diamond cup wheels to thinner silica carbide wheels.

The exhaust port rotates 180 degrees, and an inner steel ring and rubber guard keep the shroud away from the wheels.

www.dustmuzzle.com

Diamond wheels from Boride

Boride Engineered Abrasives has developed and designed a diamond wheel that uses Blue Star Diamond Technology to grind and polish edges on concrete floors.

The Easy Edge is available in 4-, 5- and 7-inch wheels in grit sizes of 30, 50, 100, 270 and 400. It has a quick-mounting system and can be run on most hand-held grinders as well as stand-up edgers with 5/8-11 thread. Easy Edge eliminates the need to use metal-bond cup wheels.

www.bsddiamond.com

Aztec Sidewinder redesigned

Aztec Products has redesigned the Aztec Sidewinder, an ultrahigh-speed stripping and scrubbing machine. A new transport wheel attachment for the Sidewinder makes the 400-pound-plus machine even easier to unload and maneuver around the job site.

www.aztecproducts.com



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PROJECT PROFILE

Pool Deck at U.S. Naval Base Manama, Bahrain

by Stacey Enesey Klemenc

It was not unusual for Sundek to get a call requesting its decorative concrete services for a pool at a military installation. After all, the company, which has been installing its acrylic spray texture overlay on pool decks across the country since 1970, had

done work specified by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on bases from Hawaii to Texas. Its finished surfaces are well known for their slip-resistant and cooler-than-concrete qualities.

What was different about this project was its overseas location. It was about 8,000 miles from Sundek's headquarters in Arlington, Texas ... far away in Bahrain, a small island in the Persian Gulf war zone off the coast of Saudi Arabia.

Specifically, the pool was in the country's capital city of Manama, on a base that housed the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and Navy's Fifth Fleet headquarters. Home away from home to as many as 4,500 military and civilian personnel, some with family in tow, the installation is a critical mission support center for naval forces in the Persian Gulf, Red Sea, Arabian Sea and along the coast off

East Africa as far south as Kenya.

Acknowledging that the project was a logistical challenge — beginning with an eight-hour time difference between Texas and Bahrain — Sundek personnel also saw it as an opportunity to show their patriotism and support for the men and women fighting for our country. A three-man crew was selected for the Middle East assignment: Tony Hernandez, director of production; Byron Miller, commercial account executive; and Frank Hernandez, senior crew leader. Kooheji Contractors, the on-site general contractor in charge of maintaining the base, provided the labor force.

Time, language challenges

As for challenges, it turns out the time difference was just the tip of the iceberg. Shipping materials and equipment from Dallas to Florida to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to Bahrain took an unanticipated 30 to 40 days. The Texas crew arrived in Bahrain four days ahead of their shipment, putting a bit of a squeeze on the two-week schedule the Navy had allotted for the 5,000-square-foot job, says Tony Hernandez.



Photos courtesy of Sundek



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Project at a Glance

Client: U.S. Navy

General Contractor: Kooheji Contractors, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain

Decorative Concrete Contractor: Sundek, Arlington, Texas

Sundek Project Manager: Tony Hernandez

Project Specs: Install 5,000 square feet of a decorative acrylic overlay on a concrete pool deck, then stencil dolphins and an octopus in the children's area.

Materials Used: Sundek Classic Texture in Bone White with a perimeter color of Terra Cotta

Challenges: The logistics involved with shipping materials and equipment nearly 8,000 miles away, working with international laborers who could not speak English, dealing with cultural and religious differences, and enduring working conditions with 120-degree heat and 100 percent humidity

"It was a complete remodel," Miller says. "The base contractor had removed all of the tile prior to us arriving and floated in a new concrete substrate. Our job was to apply the concrete decorative texture."

The atmosphere on the island was a little tense during the job's time frame in September 2009, Miller acknowledges, as families of the military were sent home right before the installation crew arrived. Everywhere he looked, he saw only military personnel in uniform.

The biggest obstacle to overcome was probably the language barrier. "Basically there was only one guy (in the provided construction crew) who partially spoke English" out of about 40 people from several different countries, Hernandez says. Trying to communicate with the translator was hard enough, but then he would try to relay the message as he understood it to the others, who didn't quite understand him.

"On many occasions, he wasn't delivering the proper message, so the message literally got lost in translation," says Miller.

Local customs and 120-degree heat

Besides the language differences, lifestyles and customs added a few more stumbling blocks to the mix. As fate would have it, the project fell during the holy month of Ramadan, when Muslims refrain from drinking or eating from dawn to sunset each day.

To accommodate the lack of food and fluids in the 120-degree heat, the Muslim crew members would take an hour break every two to three hours. "They'd come in at 6 a.m. and by 8:30 they'd be on their first break," which included locating what little shade could be found for a short nap, Hernandez says. "Come noon, they'd take their second break and at 3 they'd take another."

Since the crew worked together as a team, the non-Islamic members also took extended breaks even though they could eat and drink. "When originally estimating the number of man hours needed to complete the project, we used our Western-style workday as a template, only to find out that not all cultures have two 15-minute breaks and a 30-minute lunch," Hernandez says.



Preferring simple tools

Another interesting challenge involved the crew's lack of knowledge concerning modern-day equipment. "We had shipped brand-new concrete saws and other tools but they wouldn't take advantage of them. We'd show them how to use the equipment and then five minutes later they were back to their homemade tools," Hernandez says.



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They even struggled using simple tools such as putty knives that would help them achieve a straight, clean edge. "As soon as I'd turn around, they'd have them in their back pocket," he says. "Soon, the 20 shipped putty knives were nowhere to be found," as they had stashed them away like coveted souvenirs.

Their tool of choice, which they used for everything from chipping out expansion joints to profiling the concrete surface, was a crude chisel made out of metal or PVC pipe with a 2-inch nail at the end.

"Sometimes it's hard for us coming from

a Western civilization with ready access to power tools to realize that in other countries it can be cheaper to hire five manual laborers than to purchase one powered hand grinder. The job still gets done. It just takes a little longer," Miller says.

"There was no sense of urgency," he continues. "As most American contractors practice a per-piece or volume pricing, it seems in the Middle East the job will be done when it's done."

However, Miller says he also found the workers to be very meticulous. "Their attention to detail — making sure every

aspect of the job was perfect, no matter how long it took — built pride in their workmanship," he says. In 120-degree heat, they'd be on the job fully dressed in jumpsuits with their chipping tools working long hours for what many Americans would consider low pay. "Not discounting American ethics, I think there's something to learn from these people."

Using modern and not-so-modern equipment, the Americans and their international crew overcame what Miller and Hernandez label "the clash of the cultures." They successfully installed a textured deck coating on schedule for the enjoyment of military personnel, civilian employees and their families in Bahrain. "It took a lot of hands-and-knees effort but we got it done," Hernandez says.

"It wasn't the biggest or most decorative job we've ever done," Miller says. "But it's something we'll always remember."

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PRODUCT NEWS

Rapid Set introduces LevelFlor underlayment

CTS Cement Manufacturing Corp. and its brand Rapid Set have announced the launch of LevelFlor — an advanced hydraulic cement-based self-leveling underlayment that can be used both indoors and outdoors. LevelFlor levels rapidly, maintains workability for 30 minutes, and produces a smooth, strong surface with high bond strength. It is designed for fast-track application, so it can accept foot traffic in approximately four hours and be coated in a mere six hours at 70 degrees F.

LevelFlor can be poured or pumped onto a prepared and primed substrate at a minimum thickness of 1/8 inch and maximum thickness of 1 inch.

 www.ctscement.com

Portable mixing station with removable liner

With CS Unitec's Hippo PMH 70F-RL portable mixing station, multiple batches of construction compounds can be mixed easier and faster using the new removable liner and rimless bucket system. Consecutive batches can now be mixed without downtime for cleaning the bucket.

The PMH 70F-RL allows one person to mix, transport and accurately place up to 20 gallons of material at the same time. Equipped with heavy-duty casters, the PMH 70F-RL moves freely on level floors, or it can be equipped with air-filled tires.

The Hippo is ideal for mixing cement screeds, grout, mortar, texture coatings, sealants, adhesives and other self-leveling compounds and construction materials. It is supplied with two mixing paddles designed with a special helix ribbon and side bars that lift and shear quickly and efficiently.

 www.csunitec.com




CTS announces Rapid Set TRU Epoxy Primer

CTS Cement Manufacturing Corp. has launched Rapid Set TRU Epoxy Primer (TXP). The primer ensures strong adhesion between the substrate and topping while sealing porous concrete to prevent pinholes and bubbles. TRU Epoxy Primer can be used on moist surfaces.

 www.ctscement.com

Polycoat Products announces urethane mortar system

American Polymers Corp., which does business as Polycoat Products, has announced PC-Crete U, a three-part, heavy duty, 100-percent solids, aromatic, cementitious urethane mortar system typically applied at between 1/8-inch and 3/8-inch dry film thickness. It has a textured matte finish and can be used to form containment beams, form integral cove bases for seamless wall-to-floor protection, or slope floors in horizontal applications. It is extremely receptive to decorative aggregate broadcast and acts as an aggressive barrier against chemicals, abrasive wear and heavy impact.

PC-Crete U is well-suited for tough, harsh environments that require application below 40 F. It offers a quick return to service in just four to six hours after application. 

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New Ways to Sell Stained Concrete in Changing Times

It happened again just last month.

You would think a decorative contractor who has plowed through two recessions and whatever you want to call this nasty correction would know his local market. Not necessarily.

The call came from an existing customer, a retired engineer to boot, attempting to establish a construction budget for a new addition that will include stained concrete throughout. Our crew



by Doug Carlton

installed his pool decking last year, so it makes sense this client would consider us for the interior decorative work as well.

The vast majority of return customers usually flow straight into the project's objective, colors, design, etc., but this conversation was anything but typical. Each time I asked about designs or expectations the customer brought up price and budget. Please understand that for me, front-end work is nothing more than a fact-finding mission attempting to establish how far the customer has stumbled along by themselves.

Finally my customer said the words no contractor wants to hear, especially in 2012. He said, "Maybe your company is too

expensive for my decorative project?"

Now I must be honest — in 20-plus years of running a decorative concrete business I have seen the "expensive" card played maybe a handful of times at best. I didn't see my customer's price sensitivity side because I was focused on figuring out the best products, method and timing to complete a lifetime-lasting quality stained floor.

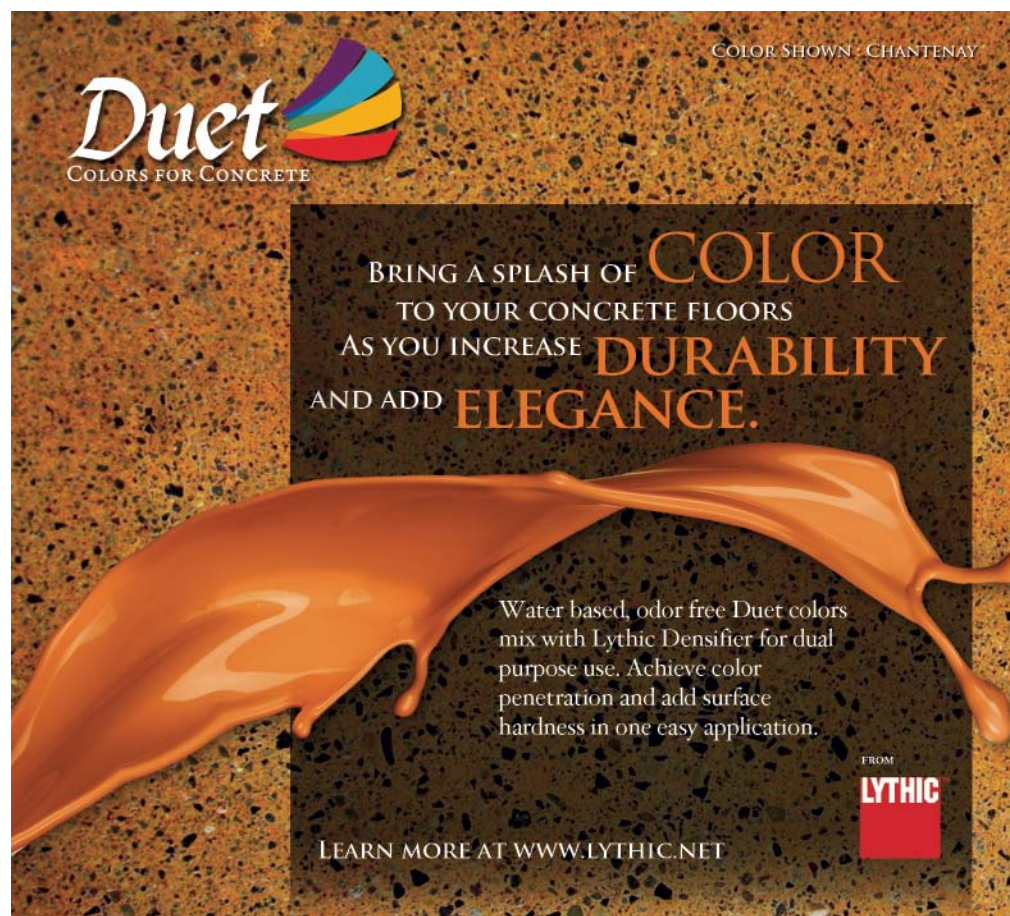
My point: Never before has price been such a large factor in decorative concrete. If your plans are to prosper in 2012, my advice is to be understanding and frugal.

Realize customers for everything from retail floor projects to back-patio stain jobs are all looking for the best price first and quality, bells and whistles second. My haste may not only cost my company a job, but a customer too, not a good start for 2012.

Customers must leave each meeting believing that we as contractors understand today's monetary challenges and appreciate each job. I obviously failed to do both.

On several occasions I've written about how today's business climate is so different from the heydays of not so long ago. How we as decorative contractors sell stained concrete must adapt too. Sometimes this is as easy as using new words better suited for today's times. Should we discuss stain's affordability benefit over its vibrancy? Should we speak of stain's longevity instead of its color variations?

Some of you have been at this a long time and already realize few decorative finishes have the versatility of stained concrete. Today's concrete stain products are as user-friendly as any in the history of the staining business. Why not capitalize on such benefits by streamlining your company's staining options to match today's economic climate? Why not promote your company as being aware of the times and willing to adapt? Offer, if you will, affordable staining options with the same workmanship. Most local competitors still sell decorative



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concrete staining the same way they did in 2006. This no longer works. Our customers care less about flashy pictures of multiple colors and more about, well, affordability and longevity. Why not give your local stain market what it wants?

Today's customers are more than willing to participate in many cost-saving options. Now don't get me wrong here, because the last thing I'm recommending is letting your customer help you do something you have worked thousands of hours to master. My point is, allow your customer to participate in less artistic aspects of the project.

For example, we all know floor prep can make or break the profit end of a decorative concrete stain project. Explain this to your customer by allowing them to understand you're discounting only if they're willing to participate in prep and floor protection. My company often does this not only on homeowner projects but commercial projects as well. No company is too large to want to save money, and many project managers are willing to participate in floor protection or maybe even floor preparation. Let's fact it, your crew makes profit by

staining floor, not prepping it!

Few decorative artists will argue that cut patterns, borders and multiple colors not only increase complexity but job costs too. Don't be afraid to bring creativity into the presentation early by proving a willingness to put effort into cost-saving ideas too.

Also, some decision makers fail to realize that bigger areas sometimes allow for lower pricing per square foot. Don't be afraid to bring that up. Job coordination can save 10 to 15 percent on projects by combining one "move-in" over multiple phases or project visits. All things add up to savings, especially when you become the contractor known for budget consciousness, savings and quality.

This era is so different than the days of yesterday, but adaptation is the linchpin for the 2012 staining industry. Now go make good things happen wherever you call home. 🛠️

Doug Carlton operates Carlton Concrete Inc. in Visalia, Calif. He can be reached at carltondoug@comcast.net.



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staining & coloring CONCRETE :

PROJECT PROFILE

Vine Patio Mt. Juliet, Tenn.

by Rick Lobdell

As an artist working with decorative concrete, I find myself working on unique outdoor designs more often than interior ones. Because of this I tend to use acid stains more than any other type of

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stain. I am always worried about longevity with my work, and I feel that acid stain will outlast any other current product on the market. When working with acid stain I enjoy the challenge of layering colors when you have one shot at it and a limited color palette. Although I am very limited in color choices, I feel I am able to achieve more

color variations than clients expect.

As with any of my clients, when I sat down with Leo White of Mt. Juliet, Tenn., about designing his back patio, I wanted to find a design that intrigued him. When I first entered Mr. White's house I noticed that his décor incorporated numerous images of different types of leaves or vines. He had multiple paintings that were just close-ups of leaves. I was immediately drawn to one image of an ivy-like leaf pattern that I thought would make a unique design.

After pointing out the image and idea I turned to see a very surprised stare. White knew right away that I was the artist he was looking for.

Next we had to discuss the layout of the concrete. I rarely get to be a part of the actual concrete layout. Many times I deal with an existing space. I brought in Joe Drake (a Mt. Juliet resident who pours all my

Project at a Glance

Client: Leo White, Mt. Juliet, Tenn.

Decorative Concrete Contractor: Rick Lobdell, Concrete Mystique Engraving, Nashville, Tenn.

Project Specs: A private residence's back patio, comprised of 800 square feet of concrete and two sitting walls that were added to an existing 150-square-foot patio.

Material used: H&C Dual Component Texture overlay; Kingdom Products Black, Rustic Tan and Deep Walnut acid stain and Regal Gloss acrylic sealer

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concrete and does all my overlays) to help facilitate my design ideas.

Joe poured an 800-square-foot slab to expand the old 150-square-foot back patio, and he finished the new slab with an antique rub. I like this surface because it has a nice texture without being a broom finish. (We left the old slab alone — no overlay, no antique rub.)

When he does an antique rub, Joe creates a surface that has a sandpaper-like finish. He goes back over the surface with a special trowel and rubs it to make it look weathered. He waits until just the right moment and rubs the surface to rough it up.

Within the next week Joe came back out to the space and built two sitting walls out of cinder block. Concerned about changing weather conditions, we waited until the concrete was cured before Joe overlaid the surfaces of the walls with H&C's Dual Component Texture. This way, the overlay would not get abused by weather during the curing period. I came in the next day to start my design.

When I do designs of this caliber I have to make sure every little detail is planned out perfectly when it comes to color. Do I stain first or do I design first? On this particular project I designed first and stained second.

Adding overlay to the sitting walls created another level of difficulty for this project. We had to match colors and textures between an existing slab, a new pour, and an overlay on a vertical. It is hard enough between two pours. Overlays tend to be more white than regular concrete, or a different grey. They tend to either take acid stain too well or barely stain at all.

Layout and engraving

Laying out the design was entertaining. One important point I learned in art school is to think about a composition as a whole and not just start on one side and work your way across the space. The easiest way to accomplish this was to draw out the vines first. That way I could see the composition as a whole. I could see how the vines create the flow through the space and where each leaf needed to fall to finalize the space. This includes taking the vines up the walls, seeing where they should start and stop, how many directions the vine should travel in certain areas to fill those spaces, and so on.

Next we took construction paper and made a couple variations of individual leaf sizes that matched the leaves in the painting on White's wall. Then we took those variations and laid them out one leaf at a time. We paid close attention to how each leaf would fill and affect a space.

We knew in what vine areas we wanted to have more or less congestion. Next was a matter of amplifying the congestion. This is not a fast process. We drew out a couple of leaf areas, stepped back to observe, and then repeated the process. When I paint a composition

on a canvas I have to step back often to make sure I can see everything as a whole. It is a lot harder to do this with 900 square feet of concrete but it can be done.

Knowing that nature grows in a random sequence of design opened



this layout to any direction we felt like taking. The client himself had seen another project of ours, at the Nashville Dinner Theatre, and had told us, "If I were the pope, I would have been stupid to tell Michelangelo exactly how it should look. I'll take the same approach with you. You work with it as you see best."

After feeling like we answered every layout question possible, we engraved our design with a small angle grinder. The wider blade and the small hand tool allow us to cut and shape or curve quickly and easily.

The staining process

Then the staining began. I decided that the vines would be the darkest value, leaves the middle value, and the negative spaces very light. We used Kingdom Products Black acid stain for all three types of space, diluting it more as we worked from the darkest to the lightest areas. All the vines and leaves were hand-stained with brushes. Once that was done we lightly sprayed Rustic Tan and a diluted Black acid stain, randomly, on the entire area to add a little warmth to the cold brown-black coloring. Although the Rustic Tan is barely noticeable to the naked eye, we felt it was extremely important in bringing extra depth through color to the space.

After achieving depth through limited acid stain colors it was time to add the most important details. Remembering that acid stain is so permanent, this last color was extremely stressful. We decided we needed shadows throughout the entire design. After hours of drawing shadows over and over to achieve the consistent appearance of a moment in time we stained all the shadows with a full-strength Deep Walnut acid stain from Kingdom Products. Although this color is very close in value and tone to the Black acid stain, it was just warm enough to create a separation between the vines, leaves and ground.

We had engraved all the lines for the vines and leaves. The shadows, however, had no engraving. We hand-brushed every shadow carefully. Staying inside the lines we drew was a lot harder than hand-brushing between two engraved lines. The shadows had softer lines than all the engraved lines we had already cut. Through both their color and the softer lines, the shadows helped separate the vines from the ground color, and the vines quickly began to appear as if they were floating on a two-dimensional space.

Masking can make a stain bleed, especially on a sandpaper-like finish. I trust my ability with a brush over masking. I wanted a soft edge. I had to be careful to not add an excessive amount of stain so it would not puddle and start to bleed. We had to just take our time and slowly paint each shadow. Slow for me is an hour. For almost anyone else it would be an entire day.

Finally we sealed everything with two coats of Kingdom Products' Regal Gloss.

Not only is a custom design like this a great collaborative process, I can also feel confident that it will last a very long time. Using acid stain for longevity might focus my color choices down to very few, but in the long run I created a long-lasting, one-of-a-kind design. Jobs like this do not have a quick turnaround time like dye-and-seal projects or stamping concrete, but to me it's worth spending the extra days working on a project to achieve a moment in design, and I believe this becomes a clear asset when collaborating with my team and my clients. 🛠️

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staining & coloring CONCRETE :

L. M. Scofield Co.'s 2011 Decorative Concrete Award Winners

DECORATIVE concrete product manufacturer L. M. Scofield Co. has announced the winners of its Fourth Annual Decorative Concrete Awards contest. This contest was open to any contractor, architect or designer who uses or specifies Scofield Systems.

Scofield received a record number of entries this year. A group of 42 entries was narrowed down to nine finalists by a panel of five judges, including *Concrete Decor* editor John Strieder. Then the nine were given to a Grand Prize judge, who this year was Ned Cramer, editor-in-chief of *Architect* magazine.

The Grand Prize award, an engraved cut-crystal trophy, was awarded to Homestead Paving Co. of Homestead, Fla. Their winning entry — a 20,000-square-foot colored and textured art plaza at The Museum of Discovery & Science in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. — was recognized for its aesthetics, creativity and craftsmanship.

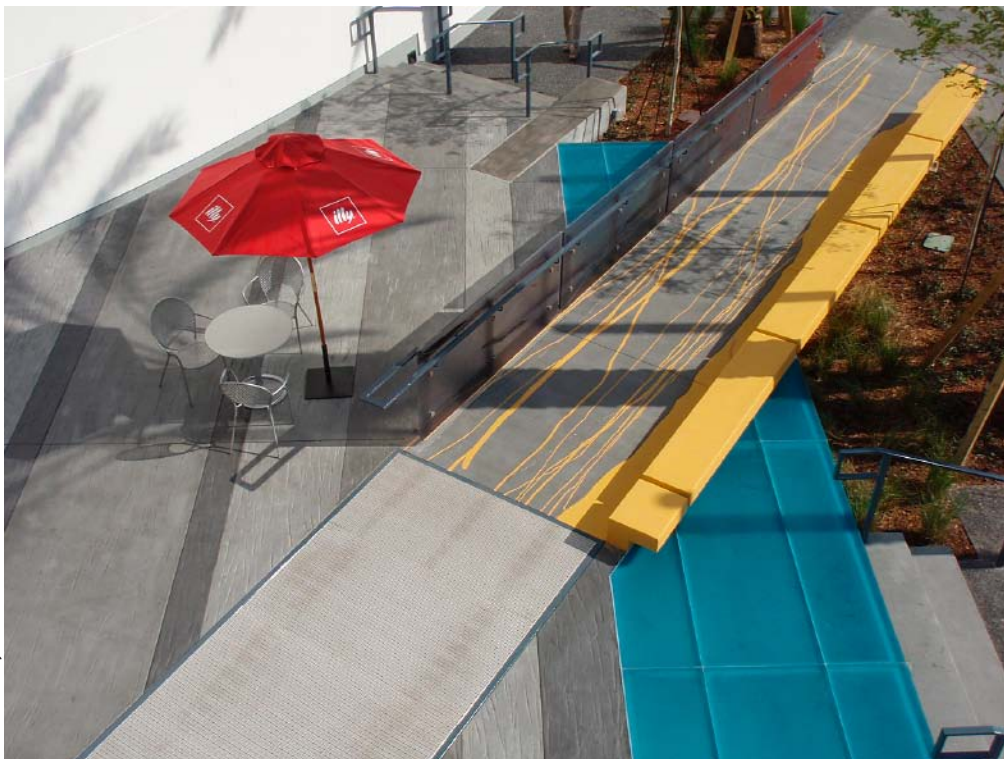
The remaining finalists, who all will receive a black glass commemorative plaque engraved with their names, were:

Alternative Floors, St. Augustine, Fla.; Diamond Polishing Systems, Puyallup, Wash.; Greystone Masonry, Stafford, Va.; Paulo Romero, San Jose, Calif., (for two projects); Polished Concrete of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pa.; Rescue Concrete, Rancho Cordova, Calif.; and Specialty Surfaces, Sparta, N.J.

In addition to the juried contest, Scofield this year opened up a separate vote to the public so they could select the three projects they felt best exemplified Scofield's "Colors of America" theme.

The three winners of this "people's choice" award were: Surfacing Solutions Inc., Temecula, Calif.; Maverick Specialty Contracting, Seattle, Wash.; and Capitol Decorative Concrete, Easley, S.C.

www.scofield.com/DIST/decorative-concrete-awards.html



Photos courtesy of L. M. Scofield Co.

Grand Prize Winner: Museum of Discovery & Science

Homestead Paving, Homestead, Fla.

L. M. Scofield materials used: Chromix Admixtures for Color-Conditioned Concrete in Charcoal, French Gray and Caution Yellow; Scofield Texturetop Stamp Grade in Caution Yellow.



Prakash Labyrinth

Paulo Romero, San Jose, Calif.

L. M. Scofield materials used: Lithochrome Tintura Stain in Old Hickory, Spring Green, Autumn Honey and Yellow; Cementone Clear Sealer.

Epic Theatre

Alternative Floors, St. Augustine, Fla.

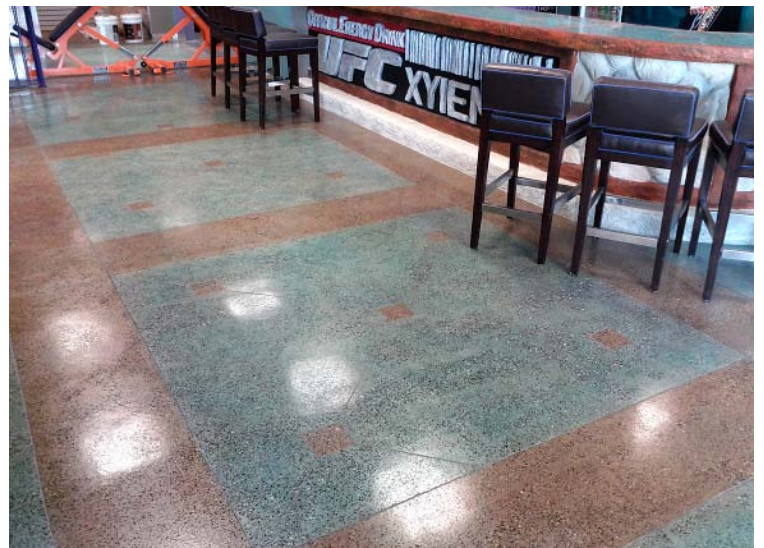
L. M. Scofield materials used: Scofield Formula One Lithium Densifier MP; Scofield Formula One Liquid Dye Concentrate in multiple colors.



Valley Supply

Diamond Polishing Systems, Puyallup, Wash.

L. M. Scofield materials used: Scofield Formula One Lithium Densifier MP; Scofield Formula One Liquid Dye Concentrate in multiple colors; Scofield Formula One Guard-W.



Giants Fitness Center

Polished Concrete of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pa.

L. M. Scofield materials used: Scofield Formula One Lithium Densifier MP; Scofield Formula One Liquid Dye Concentrate in multiple colors; Scofield Formula One Guard-S.



"Hidden Oasis"

Greystone Masonry, Stafford, Va.

L. M. Scofield materials used: Lithochrome Color Hardener in Steadman Buff, Lithochrome Chemstain Classic in Antique Amber, Padre Brown and Faded Terracotta.

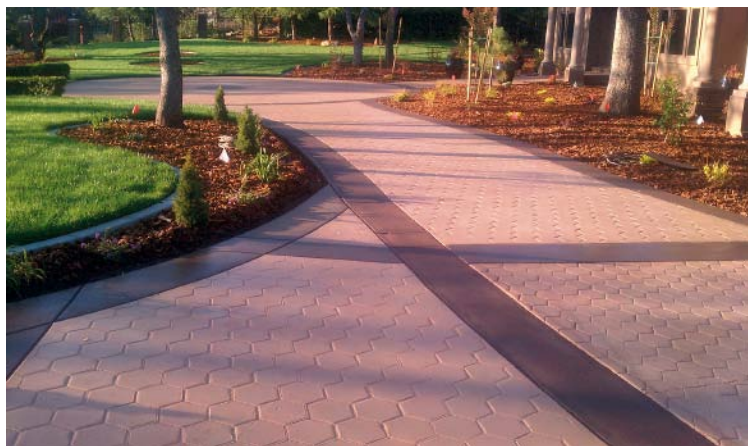



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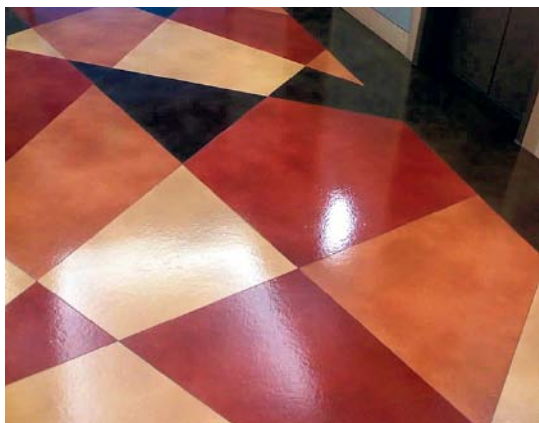
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Highland Hills

Rescue Concrete Inc., Rancho Cordova, Calif.

L. M. Scofield materials used: Scofield Revive Color Refresher in Sombrero Buff and Westwood Brown.



Franklin Steakhouse

Specialty Surfaces, Sparta, N.J.

L. M. Scofield materials used: Scofield Formula One Lithium Densifier MP; Scofield Formula One Liquid Dye Concentrate in Leather; Scofield Formula One Guard-S.

Burr and Pilger Elevator Lobby

Paulo Romero, San Jose, Calif.

L. M. Scofield materials used: Lithochrome Tintura Stain in Spanish Tile, Old Hickory and Autumn Honey; Cementone Clear Sealer.

PRODUCT NEWS

New Chapin acetone-only sprayers

Chapin International has developed a line of sprayers that can stand up to high concentrations of acetone. They are ideal for decorative concrete professionals working with dyes carried by acetone.

The line consists of three models. Model 21127, a top-of-the-line, 3-gallon poly unit, comes with Chapin's new Dripless Trigger Grip Ergonomic shut-off, allowing the user to accurately spray a mist pattern without any unwanted drips after the trigger is released. This unit comes



equipped with a ceramic nozzle designed for stain application.

Model 26127 is a 2-gallon poly unit designed for smaller jobs. It features the same ceramic nozzle found on model 21127. A 48-ounce hand sprayer, Model 10027, is designed for working in small areas or when spraying multiple colors at the same time.

www.chapinmfg.com



NewLook unveils SmartColor

NewLook International Inc. has unveiled SmartColor, an acrylic water-based concrete color stain with nanotechnology. It's used to restore, decorate and revitalize concrete and

masonry floors.

The nanotechnology used enables the stain to penetrate and adhere to very dense surfaces. It is also water-submersible and alkali-, weather- and UV-resistant. SmartColor stains require a topcoat and are compatible with solvent-based, water-based, and single- and two-component products, including but not limited to acrylics, epoxies and urethane sealers.

SmartColor is packaged in a concentrated form that may be diluted with clean water to achieve either a semiopaque finish with high-hiding capabilities or a semitransparent finish depending on the dilution ratio. Its VOC content is very low and it contains no toxic or hazardous air pollutants.

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TROWEL & ERROR

Maintaining and Resealing Stamped Concrete

If you install stamped concrete, you should be maintaining stamped concrete. You already have all the equipment you need, and unless you have a lot of failures with your work, you probably have the experience



by Chris Sullivan

and training you need as well. Offering an annual maintenance program on your work, or any stamped concrete work for that matter, is a good source of revenue that does not require much in the way of equipment or mental gymnastics. If you install stamped concrete, collect a check, and hope the homeowner loses your business card

after you leave, you are missing the boat.

As we all know, stamped concrete is a premium product, and being so, it typically attracts more attention from the owner. For those who have a stamped concrete patio, pool deck or driveway, each spring usually involves some type of an assessment of the overall look of their concrete. They paid a premium for their stamped concrete, so it usually goes without saying they want it to look good.

If their stamped concrete does not meet their expectations, the default conclusion always seems to be, "It must be time to reseat." In my years of troubleshooting, I have found a lack of understanding, predominately at the homeowner level, of the expected working life of sealers and of how best to maintain their stamped

concrete. I have also found a lack of qualified installers marketing and selling maintenance programs for stamped concrete. With a large segment of those owning stamped concrete looking for maintenance professionals, the demand is high, and with few professionals offering these services, the supply is low. You don't need to be an economist to see that maintaining stamped concrete could be a nice source of revenue for the stamped concrete installer.

Some of the common industry misconceptions start when it comes to sealers on stamped concrete and how to best maintain them. For starters, it's more than just resealing. Maintenance can include cleaning, patching and recoloring as well as resealing.

I have found that as a whole, installers, designers, and homeowners have become better educated in recent years in regard to sealer performance. The Internet, along with a better-educated professional installer, has a lot to do with that.

Still, when it comes to maintenance and

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resealing of stamped concrete, life span and final appearance need to be discussed with any prospective client. No matter the brand or chemistry, sealers used on stamped concrete all have a life span. They are not bulletproof and in fact are often nothing more than thin layers of plastic.

Just like the initial sealer has a life span, so does the reseal, and no matter what you do, the stamped concrete will not look like it did when it was first sealed. Just like with your truck, home and body, wear and tear and time have their effect.

There is no hard and fast time to reseal. Don't make the assumption that all stamped concrete needs to be resealed automatically after 2.5 years. Resealing too often only adds more sealer where it is not needed and can itself create a delaminating failure. Sealer life span will vary based on sealer type, environmental conditions and traffic. I have seen some sealers last six months, while others last five-plus years. The average is about two and a half years for your typical acrylic sealer used on most residential exterior stamped concrete.

I try to find out what sealer was originally used to get an idea of the expected life span, but I rely on a visual inspection to make the final determination if a reseal is needed. You can also do a crosshatch adhesion test (ASTM D3359) to determine if the sealer is still well-adhered or is coming to the end of its working life. Most sealers will start to look slightly gray or off-white as they come to the end of their working life, with the concrete color matte or natural in appearance.

Cleaning tips

When it comes to the actual process of maintaining stamped concrete, there are a few steps to follow. The first involves good old-fashioned cleaning. Before you start, put away the power washer. There is no need to blast the surface with 2,000-psi water jets. A standard residential garden hose with household soap and a medium-bristle brush will work just fine. A walk-behind scrubber with a medium pad also works on light- to medium-textured surfaces. Follow the soap-and-water scrub with a clean-water rinse and let the patio dry — completely. If there are stains such as oil, leaf litter, sap, pet waste, or white cloudy moisture trap, to name a few of the common ones, additional cleaning or even stripping the sealer may be needed. I have found that solvents like xylene work



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well. Rust removers, chemical strippers, cleaners with oxidation properties, and organic spot treatments also work well.

If you do plan on treating a spot, test before you do the whole surface to assure the cleaner works but does not create a bigger problem in the process. Once the scrubbing is complete, any old worn-out sealer is removed and the slab is clean and dry, you can then make a determination if the surface really needs to be resealed.

Resealing

If resealing is necessary, I recommend resealing with the same sealer that was


originally used. I know this is not always feasible, but at least make an attempt to find out what sealer was originally applied. At a minimum, always try to stay within the same resin family and use compatible materials — water-based on water-based and solvent on solvent. If you don't know what sealer was originally used, always do a test. If the sealers are incompatible, you will know pretty quickly something is wrong. It's much better to have incompatibility occur on a 10-inch area than on 1,000 square feet.

I am also a big fan of lower solids on reseals. If you don't know the sealer that was originally used, I recommend 20 percent or less solids when resealing. The lower solids allows for easier application, better breathability and better adhesion.

Always strive for coating at a minimum

of 400 square feet per gallon when resealing.

Speaking of adhesion, solvent-based sealers exhibit much better adhesion when you are resealing. This is yet another reason I like solvent-based technology when sealing exterior stamped concrete. If you are using water-based acrylic sealers, a light sanding or scrubbing with a black pad goes a long way in helping the adhesion of the reseat.

If you currently offer a maintenance program for your stamped concrete work, you already know the benefits. If you currently don't offer a maintenance program, what are you waiting for? 

Chris Sullivan is vice president of sales and marketing with ChemSystems Inc. He has led seminars and product demonstrations throughout North America. Contact him at trowelanderror@protradeup.com.



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PRODUCT NEWS

Engrave-A-Crete's latest makes straight cuts, arcs and circle

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The Mongoose X is ergonomically designed, and its removable handle is designed to eliminate muscle strain. Without the handle, the Mongoose X becomes a low-profile engraver for confined spaces.

Features include a lateral pointing system and optional laser pointer designed for complete accuracy, a spring-loaded cutting head for total operator control, a 79-millimeter-wide diamond blade specifically tuned to match the motor, a vacuum port positioned for optimum dust uptake, and conical bearing pivots to eliminate head shake. It utilizes a 10-amp motor that turns out up to 10,000 rpm.

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PROJECT PROFILE

NE 36th Street Bridge Redmond, Wash.

by Kelly O'Brien

SPANNING 480 feet across Interstate 520 in Redmond, Wash., the NE 36th Street Bridge is not your average overpass. The bridge actually comprises two separate spans, joined in the center, that boast not only carefully considered landscape design, but also expansive installations — both vertical and horizontal — of award-winning decorative concrete.

The NE 36th Street Bridge earned Belarde Co. Inc. a 2012 Decorative Concrete Award from the American Society for Concrete Contractors' Decorative Concrete Council in the category of Artistry, Over 5,000 Square Feet, and it's not difficult to see why. Entering or exiting the bridge, drivers navigate around a custom-colored, stamped concrete roundabout that directs the flow of traffic. Alongside the roadways, pebble-studded concrete paths wend through lush landscaping, hemmed in by the project's high point: a curving, sloping wall, replete with meticulously seeded aggregate striations that mimic the sedimentary look of a river bank.

"The concrete elements of this are so



Photos courtesy of Belarde Co. Inc.

Project at a Glance

Client: City of Redmond, Wash.

Decorative Concrete Contractor: Belarde Co. Inc., Seattle

Engineering Design Firm: BergerABAM, Federal Way, Wash.

Landscape Architect: J. A. Brennan Associates, PLLC, Seattle

General Contractor: Tri-State Construction Inc., Bellevue, Wash.

Length of Project: Four months, September-December 2010

Project Specs: Designed to mimic the feel of a meandering Pacific Northwest river, the 480-foot bridge spans Interstate 520 and connects two Microsoft campuses across the freeway from one another. The bridge space incorporates curvilinear walkways with bands finished with hand-seeded aggregate, a wall meant to mimic the look of a sedimentary river bank, and a stamped and colored concrete roundabout at one end.

Products Used: Lithocrete System, Lithocrete Sedimentary Wall System, Bomanite Imprint System

ASCC Decorative Concrete Council 2012 Award Won: Concrete Artistry, Over 5,000 Square Feet

unique," says John Belarde, president of Belarde Co. Their success in pulling it off, he says, was partly thanks to their skills as a company and partly thanks to the clarity and specificity of the design concept.

Designing the bridge experience

Tanja Wilcox, senior associate at Seattle architecture firm J.A. Brennan Associates and aesthetic designer for the project, had her work cut out for her when developing a design concept for the bridge. Although the client was the city of Redmond, a lot of the money for the project was put up by a local tech company you may have heard of — Microsoft Corp. — because their main corporate campus sits on both sides of the 520. The overall objective, says Wilcox, was to transform the overpass into an enjoyable environment for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. But the bridge also

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had to celebrate Redmond as a city, while giving a nod to its patron and beneficiary, Microsoft.

After much deliberation, Wilcox and her team conceived a design that evokes the Sammamish River, which winds through the heart of Redmond, just north of the bridge site. By incorporating native plants and materials as well as subtle river motifs, the design not only expresses Redmond's beautiful natural surroundings, but also echoes the look of a portion of one of the adjacent Microsoft campuses that was also inspired by Northwest ecosystems.

The Great Wall of Redmond

While Wilcox was doing material research, she ran across Lithocrete and its Sedimentary Wall system, billed by the manufacturer as displaying “natural formations representing the stratified characteristics of the Earth’s geological layers.” Looking at pictures of Sedimentary Wall installations, says Wilcox, “I realized that the walls could undulate ... which would help to mask the bridge’s considerable slope from one end to the other.” Wilcox’s design called for the riverbank-inspired walls to offer seating areas as well as define meandering paths reminiscent of the river’s flow.

The key to getting the walls right, says Belarde, was the composition of the



aggregate layers, or lenses, to use the geological term. Lithocrete’s wall system was designed for use in sunnier climes, with aggregates from those regions, and it took some significant adjustments to make it work with the Pacific Northwest aggregates that Wilcox had specified. Belarde and his crew did sample pours for the designer and owner, but their first attempts weren’t perfect.

“The original design had about 10 to

12 different materials,” including a variety of rocks as well as shells and pinecones, says Belarde. The sample wall was a little more rugged than the designer had envisioned and not exactly what the city was after, either. To ensure the finished walls maintained their Pacific Northwest character but with a tidier, more controlled finish, Wilcox limited the aggregates to half a dozen sizes, shapes and colors of native stone. She and Belarde worked side by side for the first few pours to develop a process of hand-seeding the aggregate into each lens until, Belarde says, “it turned out exactly like they wanted it to.”

Bringing it together

The other two decorative concrete elements — the walkways and the roundabout — help extend the river theme across every square foot of the bridge. The walkways may not include quite the same variety of patterns and textures as the wall, but the contrast between the simple acid-washed concrete and the waves of Lithocrete with hand-seeded pebble aggregate contributes to the bridge’s atmosphere.

The roundabout, which serves to usher traffic smoothly on and off one end of the bridge, was colored, stamped and sealed with Bomanite products and designed, like the rest of the project, to complement the surrounding landscape.





Belarde says he was particularly pleased with Wilcox's specifications for the roundabout. "Often, designers don't specify a system. They say, 'We want this stamp, this mix design, and some color.'" In these situations, the installation can end up a mishmash of different products that don't necessarily play well together, and the resulting surface will fail within a few years. But Wilcox took the

time to understand the products she was specifying, says Belarde, and he was able to install a beautiful roundabout that should hold up for as long as the bridge itself.

Once Belarde's work on the bridge was done, the final piece was the actual landscaping. "You can look at your stuff, when the project's half done, and feel you're doing a great job," say Belarde, "but when the rest of the landscaping goes in, you then understand why a landscape architect is so vital on a project."

Still, while the native plants helped tie the concrete elements together, Wilcox says the decorative concrete was no less critical than the flora. "With decorative concrete we were able to integrate both the flatwork and the seating walls into the design," she says. "Both had a flowing design that would remind you of the concept of the flowing river." Belarde's work, she says, allowed them to express their design concept not just in the landscapes but in the hardscapes as well.

Belarde Co.'s work on the NE 36th Street bridge project spanned September through December 2010 — four of Seattle's rainiest months of the year. "It was a long time to be out on a project," he says. But thanks to some solid collaboration, an abundance of artistry, and a lot of exceptional craftsmanship, they made it through just fine. Somehow, says Belarde, four months "doesn't feel that long when people keep telling you how beautiful your work is." 🛠️

belardeco.com

An Award-Winning Bridge: One Judge's Opinion

Howard Jancy, architectural consultant with Chicago-based Jancy & Associates, was one of the four judges for the 2012 ASCC Decorative Concrete Council Awards who selected the NE 36th Street Bridge project in the category of Concrete Artistry, Over 5,000 Square Feet. The criteria for a winning project, Jancy says, are that it meets the demands of the owner, demonstrates exceptional creativity, and shows that the contractor is "pushing the limits on concrete, not just placing it."

In the eyes of Jancy and his fellow judges, Belarde's work met all three criteria. "There was incredible concrete craftsmanship and artistry displayed," Jancy says. "And you really needed equal doses of both to be successful with that installation."

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PRODUCT NEWS

Lumi Lumi products glow in the dark

Tom Ralston Concrete's Lumi Lumi products will soon be available to the public.

Lumi Lumi is a series of handcrafted glowing concrete products. Ten minutes of either direct or indirect sunlight will provide 10 hours of glow. They are used in gardens as ornamental art, on pathways as guides, and on steps for safety. They can also be embedded in pool decks, patios, concrete countertops and any other concrete surface.

Two of the offerings in the series are the Lumi Lumi Balls and the Lumi Lumi Step Louvers. The balls come in sizes of 4, 6 and 12 inches and can be hung by cable, chain, or stainless-steel stems. The Lumi Step Louvers consists of concrete encased by stainless steel or bronze and can be retrofitted onto any step-riser face, making it easier to climb steps in dark areas.

www.lumilumiballs.com

Engrave-A-Crete offers solar lighting

Solar Lightpod Systems, Engrave-A-Crete's latest offering, are solar-powered and completely wireless. The Lightpods can be installed into existing concrete, pavers, decks, asphalt and nearly any other surface, vertical or horizontal.

Available in 2-inch and 2 1/2-inch models, five colors and various modes, Solar Lightpods are attached using a specialty core drill and custom bits.

Lightpods recharge in as little as three hours of direct sunlight or in up to eight hours in the shade or on a rainy day. A single charge gives 12 to 20 hours of operating time.

www.engraveacrete.com

Walttools adds to line of vertical tools

Walttools has made several additions to its collection of vertical concrete tools: three new texture roller sleeves, the Tru Pac X admixture kit for decorative vertical concrete, and an Old Castle Block vertical concrete stamp set.

Gnarly Stone, Light Wood and Striated Slate are the latest texture roller sleeves, and each is designed to turn out textures fast on medium-sized to large areas. They will fit any standard 9-inch roller handle and can be used in conjunction with Walttools' complete line of Tru Tex textured mats and trowels.

The new Tru Pac X admixture kit is a high-performance vertical concrete system that allows the user great versatility when used with thin applications of less than 1/2 inch. The useable application thickness can range from less than 1/4 inch to 5 inches on a properly prepared surface.

Lastly, Walttools has introduced its third Tru Text V Stamp pattern, Old Castle Block.

This stamp recreates old-world granite blocks in an attractive, detailed pattern and can be used in varying orientations to further differentiate the surface with up to 3/4-inch of relief.

[\(815\) 941-4215](tel:(815)941-4215)

www.walttools.com

Sollos announces deck mount canopies

Sollos Landscape Lighting has introduced Deck Mount Canopies, which are ideal for surface-mounting low voltage landscape lighting fixtures on trees, decks, eaves, fences and walls.

These versatile mounting canopies are available in Textured Black and Textured Bronze finishes that match Sollos fixtures and blend nicely with a variety of landscapes and surfaces.

www.solloslighting.com

Halco announces new ballasts

Halco Lighting Technologies' new line of electronic HID ballasts provide superior light quality and versatility. Halco eHID ballasts paired with ceramic discharge metal halide lamps provide high efficacy and long life. They are available in wattages of 20, 35/39 and 70 watts.

www.halcolighting.com

Waterproof LED lights for landscaping

Sollos Landscape Lighting has introduced the ProLED Waterproof PAR36 series, ideal for landscape and outdoor accent lighting applications.

The new ProLED PAR36 Series offers recent LED developments in a durable lamp enclosure that protects against dust and debris as well as the effects of temporary water immersion.

ProLED PAR36 lamps offer an average of 40,000 hours of life and high efficacy. The low wattage draw allows for up to four times as many ProLED Waterproof PAR36 lamps as traditional light sources on a single transformer, lowering overall project costs.

www.solloslighting.com

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KNOXVILLE, TN – On the bottom left section of a relatively unknown website, there are 4 tabs that could mean less stress and added profits for concrete contractors nationwide.

You've Got a Friend in Tennessee may sound more like a tourist claim than a business idea, but for one supplier, the tag line fits just right. The supplier, Braxton-Bragg, has been a friend to stone fabrication shops since 1995. Now, they have teamed up with Diamond Products to change the way concrete contractors get their supplies and tooling.

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