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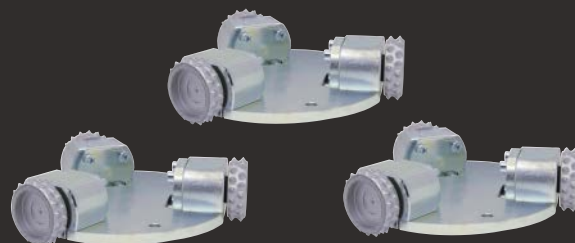
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From the Publisher's Desk

Dear Readers,

In Denver at this year's fall conference of the American Concrete Institute, ACI held its first annual Excellence in Concrete Construction Awards. For all intents and purposes, the event marked a new era for ACI, an organization whose role in the concrete industry has been vital to the industry's ongoing success. Coupled with the launch of ACI's full-color logo two years ago, these changes cite an exciting new vision that this worldwide organization now embraces.

These changes are no doubt a result of ongoing advances in concrete technology as well as decorative concrete's strengthening stance as a competitive force in the construction market. If you have ever considered whether your quality workmanship does anything more than deliver a good pay check, think again. You are integral to the industry's progress. The time and resources you invest in training, education and certifications, along with your daily commitment to doing the job right, are what contributes to all of our success.

Entering 2016, *Concrete Decor* is expanding its editorial coverage. Aside from reaching further into the industry to uncover best practices and innovations in decorative concrete, *Concrete Decor* is now making strides to better describe decorative and architectural concrete and the similarities the two have.

2016 is already shaping up to be an exciting year as *Concrete Decor* launches its new RoadShow, a traveling extension of the magazine that aims to promote the industry with demos and training events by iconic industry artisans at supply stores throughout the country. Also in this new year from Sept. 25-29, the Concrete Decor Show will travel to sunny southern California where the magazine got its start 16 years ago. Based on phone conversations I've been having lately, this year's event will likely be our biggest show ever as it is attracting numerous industry veterans to San Diego, all of whom have made incredible contributions to the industry because of an undying passion to share their knowledge.

Lastly, I want to say that while *Concrete Decor* only publishes eight issues each year, it is quality workmanship that we aim to showcase in every issue. That being said, I want to encourage you to share your challenges and successes with us. As iron sharpens iron, we strive to keep our editorial relevant and focused on your success.

On behalf of everyone at *Concrete Decor* we wish you a very successful year ahead.

Sincerely,



Bent Mikkelsen
Publisher



On the cover: The Fashion Show shopping mall, a fixture on the Las Vegas Strip since 1981, has recently undergone a facelift and 22,000-square-foot addition.
Photo courtesy of T.B. Penick & Sons Inc.



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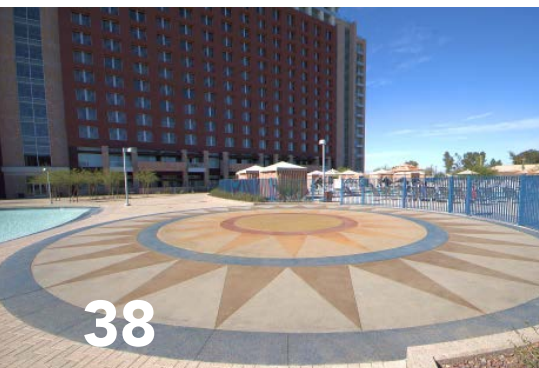
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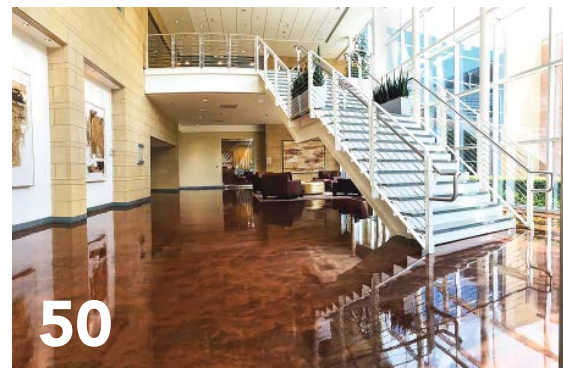
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Doug Carlton is working on his third decade in the decorative concrete industry. He is the owner of Carlton Construction, located at the base of the Big Horn Mountains in northeastern Wyoming. Doug can be reached at carltondoug@sbcglobal.net. See Doug's column, "Carlton's Corner," on page 82.



Mark Donaldson is president of IDEAS media LLC, a company that specializes in lead generation for concrete professionals. Services include websites, online marketing, SEO and social media. Reach Mark at mark@getideas.com. See Mark's article on page 30.



Gaye Goodman is an artist who fell in love with acid staining 20 years ago. She and her company, based in the high desert of New Mexico, work on decorative projects across the Southwest. Contact her or see training materials on staining at gayegoodman.com. See Gaye's article on page 84.



Karen Keyes wears many hats at Denver-based Colorado Hardscapes Inc., including business development, marketing, sales, estimating and project management, with an emphasis on specialty rock construction. She can be reached at karen@coloradohardscapes.com. See Karen's column, "Concrete in Colorado," on page 28.



Jon Kopp owns and operates Quality Epoxy LLC in Gilbert, Arizona. The company exclusively uses Arizona Polymer Flooring epoxies and urethane and Cohills Building Specialties Inc.'s metallic powders. You can follow Jon at [Facebook.com/qualityepoxy](https://www.facebook.com/qualityepoxy) or visit his website at www.qualityepoxy.com. See Jon's article on page 54.



Jason Spangler has 17 years experience in sales and sales management and has successfully launched a variety of products to the market, including the original Rapid RH concrete moisture tests. He currently works with Wagner Meters as the Rapid RH product sales manager. See Jason's article on page 66.



Chris Sullivan is vice president of sales and marketing with ChemSystems Inc. He has led seminars and product demonstrations throughout North America. Chris was inducted into the Decorative Concrete Hall of Fame at the 2015 Concrete Decor Show. Reach him at questions@concretedecor.net. See Chris' column, "Concrete Questions," on page 80.

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ACI honors contributions and service

The American Concrete Institute presented six awards and delivered the next presentation of the Katharine and Bryant Mather Commemorative Lecture Series during its annual convention in November in Denver.

The Arthur J. Boase Award, presented by the ACI Foundation Concrete Research Council for outstanding activities and achievements in the field of reinforced concrete, was presented to Andrew W. Taylor, FACI, associate at KPFF Consulting Engineers in Seattle, for his research and committee work to advance seismic performance of reinforced concrete structures and develop design guides through applying the results of structural concrete research.

The Robert E. Philleo Award, also presented by the ACI Foundation Concrete Research Council, recognized Ramon L. Carrasquillo, FACI, founder and president of Carrasquillo Associates in Austin, Texas, for his contributions through education, research and consulting to the advancement of concrete technology.

The Jean-Claude Roumain Innovation in Concrete Award was presented to Fred R. Goodwin, FACI, fellow scientist in the product development group of BASF Construction Chemicals in Beachwood, Ohio, for more than 30 years of leadership in the construction chemicals industry, and for championing improvement in the concrete and concrete repair industry.

The Concrete Sustainability Award went to Julie K. Buffenbarger, FACI, construction specialist for Lafarge Holcim, for her leadership in concrete sustainability, her guidance as chair of ACI Committee 130, Sustainability, and her tireless efforts as co-chair of many ACI sustainability forums.

The Distinguished Achievement Award was bestowed to Castle Rock Construction Company of Centennial, Colorado, for its leadership in advancing the concrete industry through innovation, information sharing and concrete promotion.

The ACI Young Professional Essay Contest Award recognized Shane M. Maxemow, structural engineer at Robert Silman in Washington, D.C., for his essay, "Listen, Learn, and Pass it On."

 www.concrete.org

TRANSITIONS

Alice Marks is celebrating 50 years with Wooster Brush Co. She began work at the paint applicator manufacturer after graduating from Smithville High School in 1965. Marks, who currently works in the brush finishing department boxing brushes, is the 15th person in the company's 164-year history to have reached this milestone.



Lackmond Products Inc., a supplier of diamond tools, carbide tools and equipment, appointed **Bob Mertz** and **Westin Moe** as regional sales managers. Mertz has more than 25 years in sales and sales management and will be overseeing the company's sales and business development in the Southeast and parts of the Midwest. Moe joined the company in 2010 and most recently was director of customer service.

Michelman has appointed **Karen Smith Bogart**, president of Santa Barbara, California-based Smith Bogart Consulting, to its board. Bogart was previously senior vice president at Eastman Kodak Co. and is currently a director at Mohawk Industries, a NYSE-listed floor covering firm, and Monolithic Power Systems, a NASDAQ-listed semi-conductor company.



Laticrete has hired **Jesler Savi Freitas** as regional manager for South America. He will maintain existing customer relationships and identify new opportunities to increase sales of Laticrete products and solutions across South America. Savi Freitas has more than 20 years of industry experience and lives in Brazil.

American Engineering Testing Inc. has hired a senior chemist, **Cyler Hayes**, to broaden its chemical analysis and petrographic capabilities. Hayes has more than 25 years of chemical experience and has worked on ASTM subcommittees C09.22, C09.43, C09.44 and C09.62.



Erik Maandi was named Laticrete's vice president of research and development in North America. Before joining Laticrete, he held several positions at Henkel Corp., most recently serving as the company's director of innovation and technology. Maandi has 11 patents and is enrolled in the innovation and entrepreneurship program at Stanford University.



Atlas Copco has named **Jamie Roush** as its new vice president/business line manager, Construction Service Division, to continue the growth of Atlas Copco's consumables, parts and service business. He brings more than 17 years of industry experience and has held several positions with Atlas Copco over the last seven years, including customer service manager, e-commerce manager and, most recently, aftermarket business development manager for national rental accounts.

Andy Schultze has joined VersaFlex as a marketing associate. Schultze comes to VersaFlex as a recent graduate of the University of South Dakota where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in strategic communication and a minor in business administration. Most recently, he worked as a marketing coordinator for Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Sioux City, Iowa.

Proline Decorative Concrete launches concrete coatings division

Proline Decorative Concrete Systems, a leader in the manufacturing and distribution of decorative concrete products and stamping tools, recently launched a new division, Proline Coatings. It will provide stamped overlays, micro toppings, patching mixes and other resurfacing products to repair, restore, protect and beautify existing surfaces. Other products include sealers, epoxies, polyaspartic, moisture mitigation products, penetrating dyes and colorants.

"This is something we have been working on for awhile," said Tyler Irwin, Proline's national sales manager. "It makes perfect sense adding decorative and industrial coatings to our extensive product line."

Bart Sadleir, former vice president of operations at Concrete Solutions Inc., has joined Proline's team and will oversee manufacturing, product development and training/education of the Proline Coatings division. Sadleir, who brings 18 years of technical and sales experience in all aspects of decorative and industrial concrete coatings, is very familiar with Proline's products as his company distributed its stamps and tools for 17 years. He will work directly with Proline's distributors to educate them and their customers on these products.

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60 companies honored with CPG concrete awards

In November, the Excellence in Concrete Awards were presented by the Concrete Promotional Group, a nonprofit trade association representing the concrete industry in greater Kansas City, to recognize outstanding work in concrete construction. The 2015 awards honored 60 companies in 19 different categories.

The Judges Award went to MacArthur Elementary School in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. More than 7,550 cubic yards of concrete were used in this unique school which includes concrete piers, footing, traditional formed walls, insulated concrete forms, concrete floors, lightweight concrete suspended floors, a decorative shotcrete retaining wall and sidewalks full of animal paw prints and leaf prints.

🌐 www.concretepromotion.com/pdf/EIC2015_2-21.pdf

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Super-Krete celebrates 30 years

Super-Krete, a manufacturer of concrete repair, restoration, waterproofing and decorative concrete overlay products, is celebrating 30 years of success in sales, training and domestic and international distribution of Super-Krete products.

John Holwitz founded Super-Krete in 1985 and the brand has since become known as Super-Krete. Super-Krete is the federally registered trademark owner of Super-Crete, Super-Krete, Bond-Kote, Stamp-Kote, Super-Stamp, Pene-Krete and the Super-Krete Products logo. Holwitz developed the world's first ready-mix cementitious concrete overlay material now known as Bond-Kote.

Holwitz's daughter, Tracey Lackovich, purchased the company from her father in 1999 and incorporated as Super-Krete International Inc. Since then, Lackovich has served as president and CEO.

Since the development of Bond-Kote, multiple complete systems have been formulated and engineered to create long-lasting decorative concrete surfaces suited for industrial, commercial, retail and

municipal environments. The complete Super-Krete product line consists of concrete waterproofing and crack treatments, cementitious overlays, water-based paints and stains, and protective sealers. The film industry has adopted Super-Krete products for use in many of its film construction projects. Super-Krete products enable plasterers and masons ultimate control over creating the most exotic film sets including pirate ships, spaceships, statues, pyramids, mountains, complete tropical islands and even a yellow brick road.

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SWR Institute is a nonprofit corporation founded in 1976 as an organization strictly for commercial contractors but has since evolved to include manufacturers and design professionals.

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Cleveland Vibrator named exclusive U.S. distributor of Uras vibrators

Uras Techno, one of the world's largest manufacturers of electric vibratory motors, has appointed Cleveland Vibrator Co. as its exclusive distributor of rotary electric vibrators in the U.S.

The full line of Uras KEE and SEE rotary electric vibrators is now marketed under the Cleveland Vibrator private label RE and RES line in the U.S. These high-performance, continuous-duty vibrators are used on powering vibratory equipment such as feeders, conveyors, screeners and tables and also used as flow aids on bins and hoppers. These products are used in the concrete, aggregate, foundry, food, agriculture, mining, recycling and powder bulk industries.

The Uras rotary electric vibrator sets itself apart from competitive units with features such as an anti-vibration lead cable, fully adjustable force outputs up to 100 percent, fully enclosed construction, and stronger motor shaft with less deflection and continuous duty rating for long service life. Cleveland Vibrator added more value to the units with Grade 5 mounting fasteners, higher IP ratings and upgraded paint specs.

☎ (800) 221-3298

🌐 www.clevelandvibrator.com

EVENT CALENDAR

ASTM Committee Week

Jan. 24-29, San Antonio, Texas

🌐 www.astm.org

World of Concrete

Feb. 1-5, Las Vegas

🌐 www.worldofconcrete.com

Tilt-Up Concrete Association Winter Jubilee and Winter Board Meeting

Feb. 3, Las Vegas, Nevada

🌐 www.tilt-up.org

National Concrete Masonry Association ICON-Xchange 2016

Feb. 24-25, Orlando, Florida

🌐 www.ncma.org/

Laticrete sales manager raises nearly \$14K for cancer institute

Peter McKeon, a regional sales manager for Laticrete, a global manufacturer and leader of premium installation and finishing systems, recently raised \$13,717 when he rode in the Pan Mass Challenge this past summer. It was the sixth time that McKeon has participated in the event.

This year he rode in honor of his close friend Chris Erickson and his brother-in-law Frank Reddington, both of whom lost

battles with cancer, as well as those who fight against cancer every day.

The 192-mile bike ride across the state of Massachusetts raises money for the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. All of the funds McKeon raised went directly to Dana-Farber's mission to provide compassionate care to children and adults with cancer while advancing the understanding, diagnosis, treatment, cure and prevention of cancer.

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Canadian CSDA president to receive Lifetime Achievement Award

Ted Johnston, a Concrete Sawing and Drilling Association past president from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, has been selected to receive the association's prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award.

Johnston will receive the award at the association's 44th Annual Convention & Tech Fair, March 8-12, 2016, at the JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa in Palm Desert, California.

The first Canadian contractor member elected to serve as CSDA president, Johnston becomes the eighth member of the industry to receive the Lifetime Achievement Award since its inception in 2005.

Johnston began his career in the industry in 1978, working alongside his brother, Steve, at Johnston Bros. He went on to work for Rodron Drilling before founding his own company, Di-Tech International, in 1984. He stepped down as company president in 2015.

The company joined CSDA in 1985 and remains a member today. Johnston was elected to serve on the board in 1998 and as president five years later. During Johnston's two-year tenure as president, the CSDA Safety Manual was released — a 230-page document developed to assist concrete cutting contractors establish company-specific safety programs. Also around this

time, CSDA completed a new training facility with its partners at St. Petersburg College in Clearwater, Florida, which remains the venue for the association's Operator Certification program.

☎ (727) 577-5004

🌐 www.csda.org

Graco acquires Machine Technologies

Graco Inc., a leading manufacturer of fluid handling equipment, has acquired Machine Technologies LLC, a Texas-based manufacturer of mortar pumps and continuous mixers. Its products will become part of Graco's Applied Fluid Technologies Division's portfolio.

Machine Technologies' pumps and mixers are used for concrete restoration projects, self-leveling underlayments, fireproofing and grouting applications as well as Exterior Insulation and Finish System installations. Financial terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

Minneapolis-based Graco supplies technology and expertise worldwide for the management of fluids and coatings in both industrial and commercial applications. It designs, manufactures and markets systems and equipment to move, measure, control, dispense, and spray fluid and powder materials.

🌐 www.graco.com

🌐 www.machine-technologies.com

Concrete Show South East Asia attracts record numbers

The third edition of UBM's annual Concrete Show South East Asia was successfully held at Jakarta International Expo in Jakarta, Indonesia, from Oct. 28-30. The trade show attracted a record number of exhibitors and visitors, with 200 exhibiting companies from 28 countries and 6,223 visitors.

Indonesia and other countries in the Southeast Asia region have huge demand for advanced concrete technologies and products. Indonesia's construction market is the biggest within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, accounting for 60 percent to 70 percent of the total market in the region. The construction sector is the largest contributor to Indonesia's national income, at about 10 percent.

In addition to the exhibition, the show featured an extensive program of conferences, seminars and workshops covering every aspect of the concrete industry. These were organized by UBM in collaboration with the Indonesian Association of Precast and Pre-Stressed Concrete Companies, the Indonesian Association of Precast and Pre-Stressed Engineers, and the Indonesian Society of Civil and Structural Engineers.

The next edition of Concrete Show South East Asia will be held Sept. 14-16, 2016, at Jakarta International Expo, in a larger hall to accommodate more exhibitors.

☎ 62-21-2930-5959

🌐 www.ubm.com

Pecora Corp. announces new material estimating app

Pecora Corp., an American manufacturer of architectural weatherproofing products, has launched its new Sealants and Coatings Calculator App. This popular estimating tool has been on Pecora's website and is now available to download for free on the App Store or Google Play. Users can also find links to download the app on Pecora's website.

The app provides users with a fast, simple way to estimate the amount of sealant or coating needed for their next project. This information can be saved in the My Projects section of the app which allows users to not only save calculations but also review past information. Users can send job data via email, text message or other available options on the mobile device.

☎ (215) 799-7530

🌐 www.pecora.com



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W.R. Meadows offers AIA-accredited course on air barriers

"Detailing Air Barriers" is the latest installment of courses offered by W.R. Meadows via the AEC Daily website. This program is registered with the American Institute of Architects for continuing professional education and is approved as Health, Safety and Welfare-related training.

Although most architects understand why air barriers are an integral part of a high-performance building enclosure, they may not be clear on the installation details. This newly rolled out, one-hour course focuses on specific techniques for installing the different types of air barrier materials. It covers tricky details, including rough openings, roof-to-walls, and joints between different building materials.

Air barriers are hot topics these days due to current codes and standards. W.R. Meadows has always played a role in educating the architectural community by offering courses that teach aspects of different elements including the building envelope, waterproofing and concrete restoration. The company also offers lunch-and-learn presentations. Get in touch to schedule one.

www.aecdaily.com

www.wrmeadows.com

Concrete Surfaces announces winners

Concrete Surfaces magazine announced the winners of its fifth annual Polished Concrete Awards competition.

There are several winners in nine categories, including one Readers' Choice. See the full list of winners in the magazine's January 2016 issue.

www.concreteconstruction.net/concrete-surfaces

ACI taps winners of inaugural excellence awards

The American Concrete Institute honored the winners of its inaugural Excellence in Concrete Construction Awards during the 2015 ACI Concrete Convention & Exposition in November in Denver, Colorado.

The highest honor, "The Excellence Award," was presented to the MuCEM: Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations in Marseille, France. As an icon of urban rejuvenation on the banks of the city's 2,600-year-old harbor, the three-story MuCEM building houses the first French National museum outside of Paris. It was visited by 3.4 million people during its first 15 months.

At the end of a historic pier where immigrants from all Mediterranean countries once landed, the structure blends with the surrounding mineral and stone landscape, presenting a veiled, cubic appearance linked to the city with ultra-thin footbridges. Efficient, wide exhibition halls are surrounded by a sheltered climbing promenade facing the sea up to the scenic terrace.

To be eligible to participate in the Excellence Awards, projects needed to be winners at a local ACI chapter level and submitted by that chapter or chosen

by one of ACI's international partners. The winning projects were selected from among several possible categories, with a first- and second-place winner available in each. The entry period is now open through Feb. 15, 2016, for the 2016 Excellence in Concrete Construction Awards. The ACI Chapter Awards Guide has been created as a planning tool to help chapters get started.

www.aciexcellence.org

www.concrete.org



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New Green Seal edition covers most of today's architectural coatings

A revised version of the GS-11 Standard Green Seal now covers most types of architectural coatings on the market today.

This new edition of GS-11, a compilation of the previous edition of GS-11 and the GS-47 Standard for Stains and Finishes, includes floor coatings, concrete and masonry sealers and fire-resistive coatings, in addition to the paints, primers, anti-corrosive coatings and reflective coatings previously covered. Clear and transparent coatings are also included in the 24 product categories now eligible for certification.

The new Green Seal standard offers greater flexibility for the assessment of VOCs and aligns with VOC limits set by the current California Air Resources Board. The standard also addresses stains and finishes for wood and metal, previously covered by the GS-47 Standard, and updates for clarity on certain criteria for chemical ingredients.

GS-11 ensures that certified paints, coatings, stains and sealers deliver satisfactory performance. Green Seal, the nation's first independent nonprofit certifier of sustainable products and services, tests each product for performance parameters applicable to its intended use.

☎ (202) 872-6400

🌐 www.greenseal.org/gs11

Cemstone receives two awards of excellence from NRMCA

Cemstone, an upper Midwest leader in high-performance concrete, has received two 2015 awards from the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association.

For the fifth consecutive year, the company has been honored with an Excellence in Quality Award that recognizes its commitment to quality initiatives.

Also, Cemstone's Columbus, Minnesota, facility was chosen as winner of NRMCA's Category B1 award in its Commitment to Environmental Excellence Awards competition. The Category B competition is for facilities with an annual production between 25,001 and 50,000 cubic yards.

The award honors companies that have not only met but surpassed governmental compliance measures and demonstrated a commitment to environmental excellence through plant and staff investment.

☎ (800) 642-3887

🌐 www.cemstone.com

🌐 www.nrmca.org

ACI, ICRI publish new evaluation and repair guide for concrete buildings

The American Concrete Institute recently released "Guide to the Code for Evaluation, Repair, and Rehabilitation of Concrete Buildings" for concrete industry professionals.

Published jointly by ACI and International Concrete Repair Institute as a printed and digital book, the guide provides assistance and examples to professionals engaged in the repair of concrete buildings. The guide has been developed to serve as a companion to ACI 562-13 "Code Requirements for Evaluation, Repair, and Rehabilitation of Concrete Buildings."

The guide's primary purpose is to help licensed design professionals gain more knowledge, skill and judgment to interpret and properly use ACI 562. Although specifically developed for licensed design professionals, it will also serve to provide insight into the use and benefits of ACI 562 for contractors, material manufacturers, building owners and building officials.

The new guide is separated into two main components: "Chapter Guides" and "Project Examples." These two components work together to provide additional information pertaining to how to interpret the performance requirements in ACI 562 and how the requirements may be applied to a broad range of projects.

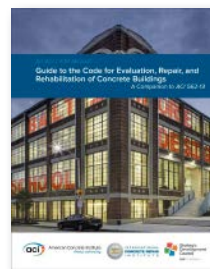
🌐 www.concrete.org

🌐 www.icri.org

Proposed ASTM test method will measure concrete texture

A proposed new ASTM International standard will help minimize confusion in quantifying the texture value of a concrete surface. The standard — WK49335, Test Method for Concrete Micro Surface Texture — will be used to determine the smoothness/roughness of concrete surfaces as measured by a contact stylus instrument called a profilometer. The standard will describe how to use the profilometer and reliable data indexes, allowing users to quickly and precisely inspect the surfaces of a wide range of cement-based building materials, such as concrete flooring.

The technology described in the proposed standard will be used to



provide an accurate assessment in surface irregularities and serviceability of concrete. The test described will be particularly relevant to people in the decorative concrete industry, which is currently not guided by a standard that addresses concrete finishes.

ASTM Subcommittee E06.21 on Serviceability is developing the new standard. People who would like to help develop the standard are encouraged to become ASTM members by signing up at www.astm.org/join.

The ASTM Committee E06 on Performance of Buildings' next meeting is April 10-13, 2016, in San Antonio, Texas.

🌐 www.astm.org/sn-construction

CSDA chooses high-flying keynote speaker for convention

The Concrete Sawing and Drilling Association has chosen a speaker who has seen the whole world from a different perspective to provide attendees with an exhilarating keynote presentation during the association's 44th annual CSDA Convention & Tech Fair, March 8-12, 2016, at the JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa in Palm Desert, California.

Dick Rutan made history in December 1986 after completing a nine-day, three-minute and 44-second nonstop and non-refueled flight around the world, setting records that remain unchallenged today. He was awarded the Presidential Citizen's Medal of Honor by President Ronald Reagan four days after the epic landing, and has since been inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame.

Before his record-setting flight, Rutan flew 325 missions during the Vietnam War, 105 of them as a member of the Super Sabre Forward Air Control, a high-risk operation commonly known as the "MISTYs." Before retiring from the Air Force in 1978, Lt. Col. Rutan was awarded the Silver Star, five Distinguished Flying Crosses, 16 Air Medals and a Purple Heart.

The CSDA annual convention is attended by owners, managers and operators from concrete cutting, polishing and imaging companies as well as industry representatives from manufacturers and distributors. Founded in 1972, CSDA has 500 member companies worldwide.

Registration deadline is Feb. 19, 2016.

☎ (727) 577-5004

🌐 www.csdasawing.com/convention

🌐 www.nrmmarketresearch.com

ACI mourns the passing of member Thomas Grisinger

A celebration of life for Thomas John Grisinger, 60, took place at College Park Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, Oct. 7. Grisinger was a member of the American Concrete Institute 310 Committee and served on the ACI board for 27 years. He was a good friend to many people and an outstanding concrete materials professional.

Grisinger passed away Sept. 30 from complications associated with cancer. An Omaha, Nebraska, native, he graduated from the University of Nebraska with an engineering degree and was employed by Lehigh Hanson Cement for 31 years as technical services manager for the North Region with offices in Carmel, Indiana. For the past 27 years he lived in Fishers, Indiana.

Previous positions were at Concrete Industries/Nebco Inc., Lincoln, Nebraska, as concrete testing lab manager, and Burns and McDonnell, Kansas City, Missouri, as a civil and environmental engineer.

Survivors include his wife, two daughters and four grandchildren.


CSDA-ST-115 a hit at specifier trade show

The spotlight shone brightly on the Concrete Sawing and Drilling Association during this year's Construct trade show in St. Louis, Missouri. The association marked its debut appearance there by educating architects, engineers and other industry specifiers on its game-changing industry Standard CSDA-ST-115 "Measuring Concrete Micro Surface Texture" and promoting its skilled membership.

"Certification continues to be a big deal for specifiers within the new construction market and for those working on renovation projects. Many have grown tired of jobs needing extra work and incurring additional costs because there are no benchmarks in place," says Christopher Bennett, chair of CSDA's Polishing Committee. "They want certified contractors to complete work to a quantifiable level. This is why CSDA-ST-115 has had such an impact. Unlike other standards before it, which can be rather subjective in terms of finish points, this one provides specifiers with results that are truly measurable."

CSDA also sponsored and participated in panel discussions at the show's "Praxis: Take Back Design Intent." During this event, Bennett joined Kirby Davis of Laticrete, Bill DuBois of Gensler, CSDA Executive Director

Patrick O'Brien and Chris Wolf of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association to talk about how specifiers can regain control of concrete system design. Discussion was based on quantifying measurements and creating accountability through craftsmanship.


 (727) 577-5004

 www.csda.org

H.D. Hudson celebrates 110th year

2015 marks the 110th anniversary of H.D. Hudson Manufacturing Co., whose enduring legacy has been of a family-owned company with an established worldwide reputation for quality and service.

At the turn of the century, American farmers found themselves in need of new types of equipment to feed and house livestock. Hudson responded by providing sprayers, dusters and water systems in its 1917 catalog. As time passed, the demand for sprayers among the nation's homeowners increased. New and innovative uses for sprayers emerged in areas that Hudson is still a leader in today including cleaning and curing concrete.

 (800) 977-7293

 www.hdhudson.com

Chromaflo launches content information sharing program

Chromaflo Technologies, a leading independent global supplier of pigment and chemical dispersions for the thermoset and coatings industries, has launched its new content information sharing program.

In addition to its quarterly newsletter, Chromaflo Technologies now has an information-sharing blog on its website designed to be a resource for customers, the press and the business community. Posted articles contain practical information and recommendations relevant to the pigment dispersion market that are meant to be shared.

The new blog is housed under the "Industry Leadership-Resource" section. Links are also posted to social media. Selected topics fall into one of the pigment dispersion categories of architectural colorants, industrial colorants, thermoset colorants and corporate news. Chromaflo also has produced the first in a series of upcoming technology-based videos that will be available on YouTube.

 (440) 997-5137

 www.chromaflo.com

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NAWIC installs new national president

The National Association of Women in Construction installed Riki F. Lovejoy, CBT, CIT, as its 61st national president during its annual meeting and convention in September in Nashville, Tennessee. Lovejoy, owner of RFL Consulting Solutions Inc., has been a member of the greater Orlando, Florida, chapter since 1987.



Lovejoy's goal for the upcoming year is to encourage NAWIC members to step out of their comfort zone and take on leadership roles in both their professional and social lives. She has spoken to multiple groups about what it takes to become a leader in just about every capacity. She has developed a tag line, "Saying Yes is a Growth Experience," as she has realized what saying yes has meant for her personally and professionally.

NAWIC, an international association serving approximately 130 chapters across the U.S., also installed officers and directors. The NAWIC board is composed of a national director from the association's eight regions. Each director serves a two-year term and is elected by her peers. The association has expanded to include international affiliates in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

☎ (817) 877-5551

🌐 www.nawic.org

Horn awarded H.B. Fuller representation in the West and Southwest

Horn, one of North America's premier distributors of specialty chemicals and raw materials, recently partnered with H.B. Fuller Polymers. The company will represent Fuller as its exclusive sales distributor throughout the Western and Southwestern U.S. territories, offering a line of specialty polymers. These technologies will cater to a variety of applications including adhesives, construction products, textiles, paints and specialty coatings.

H.B. Fuller also manufactures and markets world-class specialty polymers. The collaboration between Horn and H.B. Fuller creates opportunities to broaden market reach.

☎ (800) 442-4676

🌐 www.ethorn.com

🌐 www.hbfuller.com

Water Mitigation Concepts now distributes Koster wares

Koster American Corp. has entered into an exclusive distributorship with Water Mitigation Concepts LLC. In January 2015, Water Mitigation Concepts began distributing Koster products in San Diego and Imperial counties in California. It has since expanded into the Los Angeles market and is the only authorized distributor of Koster products in Los Angeles and San Diego. Water Mitigation Concepts opened a new warehouse in Southern California in October.

Koster specializes in moisture control, waterproofing and floor coating systems. Its principal product line, Koster Vap I systems, is an epoxy coating line that effectively controls vapor transmission in concrete floor slabs.

☎ (619) 784-3108 (San Diego)

☎ (714) 923-1027 (Los Angeles)

Predict relative humidity in concrete quickly and accurately

Wagner Meters has shared a new tool developed especially for contractors, flooring installers and others in the concrete industry that enables them to predict the relative humidity (RH) of a concrete floor slab at service conditions — even before those service conditions are met.

The widely used and highly accurate science-based method for measuring moisture in concrete (standardized as ASTM F2170) mandates taking RH measurements at service conditions. But project timelines are often such that contractors would like to be able to estimate RH before reaching service conditions.

The Service Temperature Correction Table is a predictive tool developed by CTLGroup, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Portland Cement Association. It's now being made available free for contractors and others to use, courtesy of a special arrangement between Wagner Meters and CTLGroup.

This table is simple to use, once the RH and temperature readings of the concrete slab are obtained using a Rapid RH kit or other similar RH testing materials. Learn more by watching the video, <http://www.wagnermeters.com/rhtemp>, then download the table to begin using the tool.

🌐 www.wagnermeters.com

Concrete Protector expands to new Las Vegas distribution center

Since 2001, The Concrete Protector, based in Ohio, has developed products and equipment to transform existing concrete into works of art. Concrete Protector trains contractors how to make concrete look like wood, marble, slate, tile, brick, granite and more at its monthly free training classes. After a highly successful 2014 year, followed by GraniFlex being named 2015 "Most Innovated Product" at World of Concrete, The Concrete Protector is expanding to a new distribution center in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The new 5,000-square-foot state-of-the-art distribution center will house the full line of Concrete Protector products as well as host monthly training classes for its systems and products. The company offers free training on the application and use of its products.

☎ (567) 297-3100

🌐 www.theconcreteprotector.com

CIM program seeks donations for 11th annual WOC auction

The Concrete Industry Management (CIM) program — a business-intensive program that awards students with a four-year bachelor's degree — is seeking donations for its 11th annual auction to be held at World of Concrete 2016. The auction is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 3, at the Las Vegas Convention Center. The silent auction will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the live auction begins at 1 p.m.

The proceeds from the 2016 auction will benefit the CIM National Steering Committee, help fund scholarships and support the current CIM programs at Middle Tennessee State University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Texas State University and the California State University-Chico, as well as the Executive MBA program.

Once again, CIM auction organizers are hoping for a record event in 2016. According to CIM Marketing Committee Chairman Brian Gallagher, the 2015 CIM auction set a record with more than \$800,000 in gross revenue.

Those interested in making a donation should contact CIM Auction Committee Chairman Michael Philipps.

☎ (713) 722-2969

🌐 www.concretedegree.com

Study finds green construction is major U.S. economic driver

The green building sector of the U.S. construction industry is slated to contribute 2.3 million jobs in 2015, growing to 3.3 million by 2018. This sector is outpacing overall construction growth in the U.S. and will account for more than 2.3 million American jobs this year, according to a new U.S. Green Building Council study from Booz Allen Hamilton.

The 2015 Green Building Economic Impact Study, released by USGBC and prepared by Booz Allen, finds the green building industry contributes more than \$134.3 billion in labor income to working Americans. The study also found that green construction's growth rate is rapidly outpacing that of conventional construction and will continue to rise.

By 2018, the study finds, green construction will account for more than 3.3 million U.S. jobs — more than one-third of the entire U.S. construction sector — and generate \$190.3 billion in labor earnings. The industry's direct contribution to U.S. Gross Domestic Product is also expected to reach \$303.5 billion from 2015-2018.

The new USGBC analysis also explores

the multifaceted economic contribution of green construction to the U.S. economy and individual U.S. states, quantifying the economic impact of green building and LEED.

In addition to national jobs, GDP and labor earnings from green building, the study projects significant growth in green building's contribution to individual state's tax contributions and environmental asset indicators at both the national and state levels.

Total state earnings related to LEED building construction projects are estimated to total \$8.4 billion by 2018.

go.usgbc.org/2015-economic-impact-report.html

ACI selects winners of pervious concrete student competition

The American Concrete Institute honored the winners of its 2015 ACI Pervious Concrete Student Competition at the Concrete Convention and Exposition in Denver, Colorado. The first, second and third place in the Cylinder Performance and Cementitious Efficiency categories each received cash awards of \$750, \$500 and \$250, respectively.

Teams were challenged to apply sustainability concepts and to use their knowledge of concrete mixture design by

producing pervious concrete that balanced permeability and splitting tensile strength. Teams were additionally challenged to develop a mixture design that demonstrated cementitious efficiency, that is, maintaining the overall performance of the mixture with the lowest amount of cementitious material.

The first-place Cylinder Performance winner was Ryerson University in Toronto, Ontario. The first-place Cementitious Efficiency winner was the University of Puerto Rico.

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Honoring Veterans

ASCC Decorative Concrete Council volunteers at monument in Colorado

by Stacey Enesey Klemenc

HUNDREDS of people showed up Nov. 7 to witness the dedication of the Veterans Monument at Ken-Caryl Ranch in Ken Caryl, Colorado, which was officially presented to the community just in time for Veterans Day 2015.

Last spring, members of the American Society of Concrete Contractors Decorative Concrete Council joined forces with veterans and their supporters to lay the foundation for the project. But due to an unusual amount of rain, the DCC portion of the community project got off to a slow start.

“Denver had the wettest spring it’s had in 100 years,” says Chris Sullivan, vice president of sales and marketing for ChemSystems Inc. in Littleton and the ASCC member who served as project manager for the concrete portion of the project. “I think it rained 26 out of 30 days in May. We had to rent a tent to cover the entire project so we could get the concrete done.”



Photos courtesy of Chris Sullivan

The project entailed about 2,000 square feet of flatwork featuring two different finishes. One was colored and stamped with 2-foot-wide bands running north to south and east to west and textured to a sandstone finish. The remaining area was integrally colored and finished showing a light sand exposure.

Sullivan estimates about 25 different organizations pitched in to make the veterans’ memorial a reality. All totaled, they donated more than \$52,000 in labor and materials.

ASCC members that donated tools, materials and service for the cause are Aggregate Industries, Cemex, ChemSystems Inc., CNA, Colorado Hardscapes, ConcreteNetwork.com, Diamatic USA, H&C Decorative Concrete Products, Lakebrink’s Custom Concrete, McMahon Contracting LP, Putzmeister America, Sika Greenstreak, Somero, ToddRose Decorative Concrete and Wagman Metals.

Other companies that also contributed were Clemons Concrete Coatings, Concrete Equipment and Supply, McClure Concrete, Peterson Group, Pritchard Concrete, Southwest Concrete Pumping, Sticks and Stones Supply and Western Hardscapes.

Although work on the memorial began in May, it didn’t wrap up until November. “Through the summer the brick, stonework and detail work were completed,” Sullivan says, and the community was very

supportive through it all. “We had about 300+ people show up for the dedication,” including state Rep. Jon Keyser.

The DCC is a professional organization dedicated to focusing on the issues, trends and work of the decorative concrete industry. Made up of contractors, manufactures and other concrete professionals, it is focused on its mission of “Advancing Decorative Concrete Contractors Through Education and Networking.”

To that end, the council selects a couple of community projects to tackle each year. The most recent one, headed up by Todd Scharich, a decorative concrete specialist for the ASCC, involves sprucing up a playground at a school in South Carolina. At press time, this fall project was behind schedule due to, once again, an unseasonable amount of rain.

A frustrated Scharich writes in mid-November: “Since Oct. 31 Tamassee, South Carolina, has had zero days without rain including a total accumulation of over 10 inches. This comes on the heels of the South Carolina floods in early October that brought 12-24 inches of rain throughout the state. Let’s just say Noah has the kids all lined up and he’s about ready to sail.” He adds that the project has been shelved until late February or early March. 🚢



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App monitors weather to lessen risk of plastic cracks

Due to its inherent qualities, concrete is bound to crack sooner or later. But thanks to a free Web-based application accessible via any Web browser, it just got easier to alleviate the “sooner” problem.

The Plastic Crack Risk Calculator will help you determine the best time to place concrete to lessen the chance of cracking from plastic concrete shrinkage, which can occur within the first few hours of placement. The app uses your project’s ZIP code to pull weather data such as air temperature, humidity and wind speed from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association and compare it to an evaporation rate chart. It then generates a graph of the next seven days, showing when your site is at low risk, moderate risk and high risk for plastic shrinkage.

The app was developed by college students and Mark Grinter, a former superintendent and current professor at Southern Illinois University. Besides providing the seven-day snapshot of the conditions that affect how fast water will evaporate, the app allows you to set up an account to receive emails alerting you when “high risk” weather conditions are approaching.

<https://plasticcracks.siu.edu>

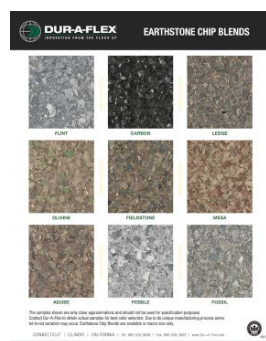
Vinyl chip blends designed for health care use

Dur-A-Flex Inc., a leading manufacturer of commercial, industrial and institutional seamless, resinous floor systems, has released a new line of decorative vinyl chips to be used with any of its seamless flooring systems.

Earthstone blends offer a color palette made up of neutral-colored vinyl chips designed to achieve a stone-like appearance. These new color options are being introduced with a focus on the health care market to provide architects and facility managers with options when looking for a durable, seamless floor system for areas such as hospital corridors and patient rooms.

Dur-A-Flex’s Earthstone chips are available in nine standard blends. These new colors are available for order immediately and samples can be ordered by visiting Dur-A-Flex’s website.

www.dur-a-flex.com



M2 Mesh Mask available in four new colors

RZ Industries has introduced the high-flow M2 Mesh Air Filtration Mask in four new colors: safety yellow, safety orange, navy blue and red.

This patent-pending piece of technical headwear captures dust, allergens and other hazardous airborne elements in all conditions with an active carbon HEPA filter, allowing riders, drivers, workers and citizens to breathe safe and easy.

The innovative personal air cleaner’s durable, abrasion-resistant nylon mesh construction provides max airflow when the heat is on. A form-fitting, streamlined shape ensures that it easily fits underneath helmets. Wide elastic side straps offer 3 inches of adjustability for a secure, comfortable fit. A tension-adjustable, riveted nosepiece helps keep the mask firmly in place. Exhaust valves on the left and right effectively expel moisture, keeping the M2’s interior dry, goggles fog-free and glasses clear.

The M2’s F3 HEPA filter captures particulates and fumes with a three-ply construction by sandwiching activated charcoal between filter material. The high-tech filter is secured by a twist seal that locks it in place. It lasts up to eight hours in prolonged dust exposure. Replacement filters come in convenient three-packs.

RZ Industries’ Mesh Mask is also available in black or gray in three sizes: small (up to 125 pounds), regular (125 to 225 pounds) and XL (more than 225 pounds). Every RZ Industries product is backed by a 30-day performance guarantee.

[\(888\) 777-9422](tel:(888)777-9422)

www.rzmask.com

Flowcrete Americas brings new screed technology to U.S.

Flowcrete Americas has launched a new range of leveling floor compounds, patching screeds and repair mortars, bringing the parent company’s Isocrete screed technology to the U.S., Canadian and Latin American markets.

Isocrete, a range of fast-cure, cement-based floor-leveling compounds, can be used for sloping, patching and leveling the concrete substrate prior to installing floor finishes. The systems are easily installed, can be applied to green concrete and offer fast-cure properties to reduce downtime. In new-build scenarios, they minimize any halt to construction, allowing follow-on trades swift and efficient access to the site.

Once cured, Isocrete underlayments offer excellent compressive strength, moisture resistance and non-shrinkage properties. They can be covered with ceramic tiles, carpet, laminate, vinyl or polymer floor finishes.

Systems available in the range include Isocrete 1500, a rapid-drying, premixed, self-leveling, cement-based compound installed at greater than 3/16 inch and best suited to general-purpose use and traffic conditions. It offers protection against external moisture ingress, condensation and spillages.

Designed to tackle more arduous, heavy load-bearing environments is Flowscreed Industrial Top, a rapid-drying, premixed, self-leveling, cement-based compound installed at greater than 3/16 inch. It contains durable quartz aggregates for added strength under high-traffic conditions.

Completing the range is Isocrete 4000, a trowel-applied, protein-free, cement-based mortar installed between 1/4 inch and 4 inches thick. It has been designed to repair, slope or level structurally sound, interior and exterior concrete surfaces that are pitted, worn, scaled or spalled.

[\(936\) 539-6700](tel:(936)539-6700)

www.flowcreteamericas.com



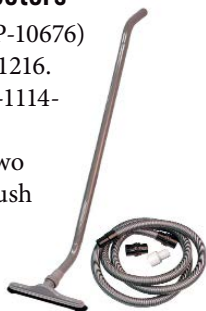
Optional accessories available for dust collectors

Blastrac now has an optional accessory kit (CP-10676) for dust collector models BDC-112EU and BDC-1216. This wand package is included with model BDC-1114-PKG, which also includes a HEPA filter.

The accessory kit includes one 13-foot hose, two adapter hose cuffs and one 14-inch bare floor brush with a 54-inch wand. Blastrac dust collectors are specifically designed for the rigors of commercial/contractor use, with powerful motors for increased air flow, heavy-duty filters and components protected from dust and debris.

☎ (800) 256-3440

🌐 www.blastrac.com



Mixer attachment makes skid-steer loaders portable

New from Western Material & Design LLC is the FasTrac Concrete Mixer, which converts any skid-steer loader into a portable concrete mixer. Portability and versatility make the FasTrac ideal for a broad array of applications where speed is important and space may be limited. The model 750 has a 3/4-cubic yard



capacity, while the model 500 has a 1/2-cubic yard capacity.

Wherever fast-setting concrete is used, the FasTrac is a good option because the mixing can be done right at the pour site. Airports, military facilities and departments of transportation use it to reduce downtime during repairs. Concrete contractors find it is easier and less expensive than scheduling a full-sized mixer for smaller jobs. Landscaping and decorative concrete contractors like the added capacity compared to portable mortar mixers.

For rental outlets it's a viable alternative to small batch plants and premixed cartloads. FasTrac is also used to transport concrete to places that ready mix trucks can't reach.

A patent-pending design and numerous features make the mixer a versatile workhorse. Contractors can pour on the left or right side and the discharge chute extends up to six feet, providing more latitude when positioning the mixer. The pour gate seals to prevent water and material from escaping, and makes the unit ideal for self-leveling applications that involve a more fluid mix. Weighing 750 pounds, less than competitive mixers, it's easier to stay under the skid-steer loader's lifting capacity when the mixer is full.

FasTrac is powered by a hydraulic motor connected to standard quick disconnects for skid-steer loaders. The low-maintenance design features a solid-steel, all-welded auger and a rubber trough base to provide the flexibility necessary to handle aggregates of varying sizes while enabling tighter tolerances. The main trough is designed to prevent dry mix from gathering in corners, and the mixing auger can operate in either direction.

☎ (816) 380-4747

🌐 www.wmdus.com



600SERIES Coatings Remover

Removing sealers from concrete doesn't have to be difficult or hazardous. Franmar's BLUE BEAR® line of powerful coatings removers is the safe, effective and eco-friendly solution delivered at an affordable price per square foot. With three times the coverage rate of traditional petroleum removers the 600 series removes multiple layers of topical sealers, acrylics, enamels, urethanes, latex, some epoxies and other single-component coatings. Made with soybeans, the 600 series is a safe, low-odor, non-caustic, green coatings remover.

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- Special Spray Formulation
- Removes Multiple Coatings

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www.franmar.com





Rattle Stick tool now has more bite

The Rattle Stick — a vibrating tool that attaches to walking tools such as bull floats, joint cutters and edgers — can also be more firmly affixed to aluminum screeds with the company's new "Snake Bite" screed bracket. Other improvements include variable speed control, allowing operators to dial in just the right amount of vibration depending on slump consistency or tool size.

The tool, which emits a mild vibration to cut down on finishing time, is used to place concrete and help achieve a better finish without having to add excessive water to a mix or surface water to seal it up. Less water means less shrinkage and stronger concrete. The company will debut another new attachment at World of Concrete 2016 in Las Vegas.

☎ (916) 645-5334

🌐 www.rattlestick.net

14-inch Compact Saw features collapsible handlebar

EDCO condensed its proven "Rental Tough" saw features into a new 3-by-1.5-foot footprint in its 14-inch Compact Saw, Model KL-14. These existing features include a heavy-duty box frame construction, laser-fabricated thick-steel material, precision-machined arbor assembly and easy-use hand-wheel depth control.

With its specifically designed collapsible handlebar, the KL-14 easily fits under shelving for storage. Other features include a misting system for wet cutting, heavy-steel blade guard for added safety, easy access belts and bearings for fast maintenance and EDCO's popular Quick Response Code Decal for anytime video training and information via mobile devices.

The KL-14 has a 14-inch blade capacity and is ideal for short-run cutting applications like creating contraction joints, asphalt patch repair and trenching.

☎ (800) 638-3326

🌐 www.edcoinc.com



Green rotating laser more accurate than red beam

The new Hilti Green rotating laser PR 3-HVSG provides up to four times better visibility and a finer, more accurate line compared to a conventional red beam, ensuring better range of vision over longer distances.

Built with Hilti quality, the PR 3-HVSG is equipped with shock-absorbing casing designed to endure tough conditions. Specifically engineered with the customer's environment in mind, each laser features four shock-absorbing handles and an advanced internal damping system that helps safeguard from drops at standard working tripod height (3 ft./1m) to free fall (4 ft./1.5m).

With an accuracy of +/- 1/16 inch at 33 feet and an operating range (with laser receiver) of up to 100 feet and a diameter of 7 to 492 feet, this rotating laser is great for applications such as transferring reference heights, leveling suspended ceilings, positioning drywall tracks and installing pipes and cables trays.

Each tool, which comes standard with a 12V battery pack and charger, provides 16 hours of continuous working time and needs only 30 minutes to fully charge. Convenient accessories for the PR 3-HVSG include a wall-mount bracket, green laser receiver, target plate, remote control and crank tripod. When mounted in the wall bracket or on the tripod, the PR 3-HVSG allows many jobs to be handled by one person using the remote control as a laser receiver.

☎ (800) 879-8000

🌐 www.us.hilti.com

ChemSystems adds next generation of penetrating sealer

ChemSystems Inc. offers a solvent-based penetrating and waterproofing sealer that will permanently seal, darken and enhance the surface of decorative concrete and concrete pavers.

An excellent alternative to traditional film-forming acrylic sealers, Penetrating Color Enhancer SB can be applied directly over existing solvent-based acrylic film-forming sealers and cure and seals. It penetrates deep into the surface forming a long-lasting level of protection, even cutting through existing thin solvent-based acrylic film-forming sealers. In the process, it seals the underlying substrate while at the same time reinvigorates the existing sealer film.

Once treated, the surface repels water, oil and other common sources of contamination to prevent staining.

Benefits include increased service life by protecting surfaces against oil, gasoline and hydrocarbon-based fluids. It will not peel, flake, yellow or discolor over time and when used for resealing projects provides a "wet look" without forming a film and looking "plastic." It is also an excellent alternative for use in resealing existing sealed decorative concrete.

☎ (800) 545-9827

🌐 www.chemsystemsinc.net



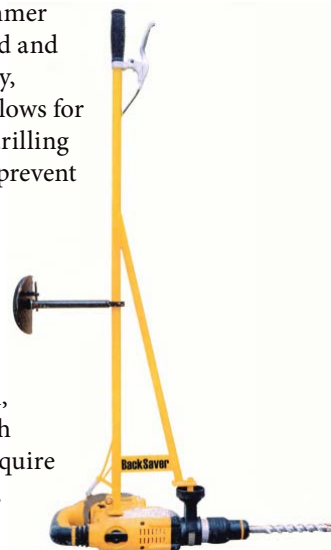
Backsaver hammer drill increases productivity

Backsaver, the patented concrete hammer drill attachment, allows workers to stand and drill into concrete. It requires less energy, permits application of more pressure, allows for easier, faster and more consistent level drilling which increases productivity and helps prevent back injuries.

The newest Backsaver, Version 1.5, is now powder-coated safety yellow and is revised to work with more Dewalt hammer drill models including SDS Max Rotary Hammers D25761K-2-inch, D25762K-2-inch, D25763K-2-inch, D25701K-1 7/8-inch, D25721K-1 7/8-inch and D25723K-1 7/8-inch, all of which require adapters; as well as D25601K-1 3/4-inch, D25602K-1 3/4-inch, D25603K-1 3/4-inch, D25501K-1 9/16-inch; and Spline Rotary Hammers D25651K-1 3/4-inch and D25553K-1 9/16-inch.

☎ (618) 797-6078

🌐 www.hammerdrillattachment.com



Inflatable shim lifts up to 300 pounds

The AirShim Inflatable Pry Bar and Leveling Tool, which spans gaps from 3/32 inch to 2 1/2 inches, is a contractor-grade inflatable bag from Calculated Industries that can support up to 300 pounds. It allows a single installer to position and hold items in place, saving jobsite time and reducing labor costs in installations.

Inflatable shims got their start in the automotive world where they have been used by tow truck drivers to unlock car doors. These early models are smaller, lighter and typically can only lift up to 200 pounds.

Calculated Industries designed this shim to be a more useful tool for builders and installers who need a stronger, more powerful inflatable shim to lift, level and hold doors, windows and other awkward, heavy objects. It is made of tougher material that won't fold under pressure, and its rounded corner and internal stiffener get it into tight 3/32-inch gaps. The wide 2 1/2-inch gap-spanning capacity means greater lifting or pushing range.

The AirShim has been compression tested with a load of 300 pounds. SGS — the world's leading inspection, verification, testing and certification company — tested the tool and certified that it held for 60 minutes with no damage, cracking or notable leakage.

Easy one-handed operation using a simple squeeze pump and precise bleeder valve lets you raise and lower to perfect alignments. And unlike wooden shims, wedges and metal pry bars, the AirShim poses no risk of damage due to its durable, no-scuff cover. It can be used to install heavy or bulky items, including countertops, mantels, beams, furniture and cabinets. It is backed with a one-year warranty.

☎ (800) 854-8075

🌐 www.calculated.com

Engrave-A-Crete Introduces Color Enhancing Concrete Floor Wax

ENGRAVE-A-CRETE is proud to add Color Enhancing Concrete Floor Wax (CEC Floor Wax) to its prestigious line of decorative concrete products. CEC Floor Wax is an environmentally friendly material using natural waxes derived from renewable resources.

While CEC Floor Wax can be used on any interior concrete surface, it is particularly useful for floors that may have water ingress from below the slab.

CEC Floor Wax has unique characteristics:

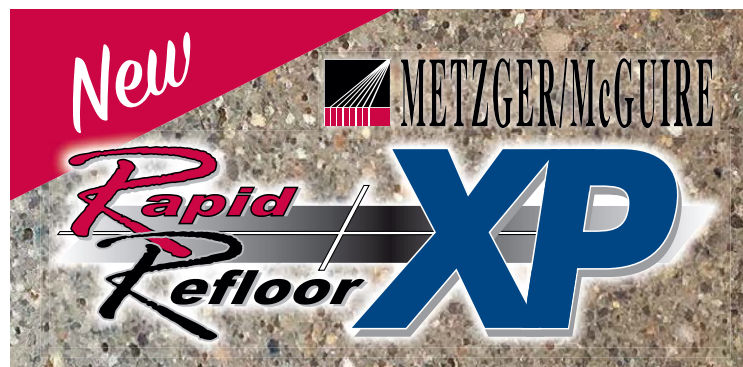
- No harsh, chemical odor
- Non-combustible and safe to use in any interior environment
- Makes colors pop
- Breathable
- Natural antimicrobial properties
- Simple application
- Easy maintenance – buff out scuffs easily by hand

CEC Floor Wax is ideal for use on:

- Floors with moisture issues – ideal for basements
- Acid stained or integral colored concrete
- Micro toppings
- Plain gray concrete
- Smooth masonry surfaces

☎ (800) 884-2114

🌐 www.engageacrete.com



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Surface prep system designed for rental industry

EDCO's Magna-Trap Systems are opening a new era in concrete grinding surface preparation equipment and tooling specifically designed for the rental industry. Offering both rental and retail opportunities, the new system solves virtually every concrete grinder surface preparation application.

An investment in EDCO's Magna-Trap System brings same surface preparation tooling across the company's floor and turbo grinder product lines and a 90 percent improvement in tooling changeover times compared to existing tooling systems. Users can enjoy increased application solutions through new tooling selections, consistency and simplicity in approaching surface preparation tasks and rentals along with decreased risk of lost rental revenues due to tooling burn out. The return on investment with this machine can be up to six times more than existing tooling systems and grinding machines.

The combined capabilities of the four-core Magna-Trap tools — Dyma-Dots, Dyma-Segs, Dyma-PCD with Backing Segment and Strip-Serts — are designed to solve most surface preparation applications. These options are available in the new Magna-Trap rental packages.

☎ (800) 638-3326

🌐 www.edcoinc.com

Polymer coating improves adhesion, resists hot-tire pickup

Pliotec Gar130, a new epoxy-modified acrylic copolymer from Omnova Solutions, is made for 1K garage floor and concrete coatings. Highly resistant to hot-tire pickup and chemicals, including solvents, it has been designed for use in low-VOC waterborne coatings, both colored and clear. Additionally, it improves cure-time for faster use following application and is highly UV resistant, making it an excellent choice for exterior concrete applications.

Pliotec Gar130 polymer also successfully balances garage floor performance with the limitations epoxy-modified acrylics can face in exterior applications due to the potential impact of UV rays. As a result, formulations with Pliotec Gar130 demonstrate ideal characteristics for interior and exterior environments.

☎ (888) 253-5454

🌐 www.omnova.com

Parts bags are designed for small tools

A solution to the clutter dilemma, the PB4-Parts Bags from Veto Pro Pac is a professional grade set of four parts bags designed to help tradesmen organize and store small tools and assorted items.

The color-coded parts bags are made out of 600 denier nylon and feature reinforced see-through side panels. In addition, the PB4s have a metal swivel hook that attaches to any Veto Pro Pac tool bags' outside D-rings, or they can be stored inside the tool bags.

☎ (877) 847-1443

🌐 www.vetopropac.com



Pavestone launches mobile app for hardscape market

Pavestone, a leading manufacturer of segmental concrete products for the commercial, residential, contractor, industrial and retail consumer markets, launched an interactive mobile app at Hardscape North America, a trade show held in October in Kentucky.

A comprehensive resource for completing hardscape projects from start to finish, the app was created by Pavestone as a commitment to its customers as residential and commercial landscape demand trends upward. The app is also customized to provide some regional content.

According to market researcher Freedonia Group, the five-year landscape project demand is forecast to grow 5.3 percent per year from \$5.3 billion in 2014 to \$8.2 billion in 2019. Of the four landscape project categories considered in the forecast, concrete pavers and segmental wall units project for the greatest annual growth at 7.3 percent.

In addition to nationwide access to Pavestone, product information for CST (Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland), Willamette Graystone (Washington and Oregon) and Flagstone (Florida) is available to mobile app users geo-located or self-identified in those areas. Pavestone, CST, Willamette Graystone and Flagstone are members of The Quikrete Cos. segmental concrete products division.

Built for use on iPhones, iPads, Android phones and Android tablets, the free Pavestone mobile app provides a robust menu of interactive options highlighted by a "Project Planner," which considers every detail including design elements and product specifications for transforming commercial or residential outdoor spaces.

🌐 www.pavestone.com

Dust extraction bit cleaner, quicker than conventional bit

Reducing dust on the jobsite is no longer nice to have, it's required. Bosch Speed Clean Bits are built around an internal dust channel that's milled to Bosch specifications to deliver reduced dust in a lightweight concrete bit featuring 25 percent greater speed. The dust extraction bit system saves time, saves money and produces less dust than traditional drilling methods.

Bosch Speed Clean Bits are part of a comprehensive system that reduces dust while quickly producing precise, clean holes — reducing drilling time by up to 50 percent. Because the bit does not allow dust into the environment, there are benefits to both workers and people near the construction site. The bits work in conjunction with an attached vacuum system.

Bosch Speed Clean Bits offer a range of sizes to fit both SDS-plus and SDS-max hammers. Primary users include concrete contractors, adhesive and mechanical anchor installers, civil construction workers and mechanical, electrical and plumbing professionals. The system also reduces silica dust, a known contributor to respiratory illnesses. Bosch Speed Clean Bits are available beginning January 2016.

☎ (877) 267-2499

🌐 www.boschtools.com

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How to Get the Job Without Being the Low Bid

by Karen Keyes

WE'VE all had the phone call with a client where he lets you down gently, saying thanks, but some other contractor came in with a lower number. Sometimes it's best to just write off those lost jobs, but how do you get the jobs you really want without having to be the lowest price?

The most obvious answer is reputation. If you have a great reputation for being the best decorative concrete contractor in your area, you may be able to overcome some of the price battles. If clients see the value represented in your reputation, they may be willing to pay a little extra to have you on the job. But how do you get there and stay there?

While at the American Society of Concrete Contractors conference this fall, I helped facilitate a roundtable discussion on "beating the unit price battle." Through the discussions with various concrete contractors, a common theme came up in realizing proposals shouldn't always be only about dollars. It involves so much more. The thought and thoroughness that goes into each bid results in the estimated price to get the job done correctly the first time. Each project is unique and needs to be treated as such. The same holds true for the low-bid battle. It is dangerous for owners or general contractors to base their selection solely on the lowest dollar.

Looking through our most successful projects, seven main reasons surfaced as to why the client chose us based on value instead of solely the price: professionalism, response time, quality, attention to details, thoroughness, follow-through and loyalty.

Professionalism

I know all of us in the concrete business are rough and gruff construction folks . . . but we're not living in the world of handwritten proposals out of the bed of a dusty pickup truck any more. Through technology, competition, education and business evolution, expectations have increased for subcontractors. The emphasis on professionalism from the first meeting to the final walk through determines a



The follow-through and communication of your crews will help establish loyalty.

Photo courtesy of Colorado Hardscapes Inc.

business' success. Look professional, have clean, professional business cards, letterhead and formal proposals (with all the legal jargon to protect you and your company). It's not only nice, it's expected.

In addition to having a professional appearance and presentation, insist on samples and mockups. By providing clients with samples and mockups, you not only set yourself apart as an industry leader, but you provide assurance to the client, the designer and your crews of what to expect in the finished product.

Response time

How quickly you return phone calls pre-bid, during bid, post-bid, during construction and post-construction help support your professionalism and reputation. If you can't get to something as quickly as you or the clients would like, at least provide a courtesy call or email letting them know the status. Communication helps build and maintain professional relationships.

Quality

If you can look at your finished work next to someone else's and there is a noticeable difference, you're doing something right. You should be able to pick out one or two things your crew does better than the competition. For example, I recently walked a job that we lost to a lower bidder, and walking through it I noticed wavy saw cuts, saw cuts that didn't line up with each other and birdbaths in the slab from poor attention to grading. Now, this may be acceptable per the plans and specifications, but it's not acceptable to the standards our company holds internally. Being able to identify how your crews produce more value will help in the negotiation process on the next job. Also point to past projects your clients can visit to prove your consistency in quality.

Attention to details

During the bid process, point out details included in your proposal. When owners or general contractors shop your quote, they

can ask your competitors if they included such details (e.g., sealer, caulking, final cleaning, control joint shop drawings, LEED submittals, supply of power, concrete washout pans). Of course you risk the competition blindly agreeing to include those details, but even if you lose the job, you have raised the bar of expectations in your market (and probably just lowered their margin).

Attention to details in the field is equally important. When saw cuts line up with every corner and wall perfectly, landscape architects notice. They may not draw every joint on the plan, but when they see the attention to detail and how a crew can make their vision on paper become a spectacular reality, who do you think they will recommend to install their next design?

Thoroughness

Similar to “attention to details” is thoroughness — meaning you catch everything in your scope. Read the specs and plans. Double and triple check your scope and have someone else double check your proposal before it goes out. By creating a thorough proposal and scope, you make the owners’ or contractors’ lives easier. If they can clearly see you included everything, they know they can trust you and know your crew will be attentive in the field as well.

Colored take-offs, which are detailed drawings that highlight a project’s included scope with unit measurements, are one of the tools we use to help clearly identify our scope (we use www.oncenter.com/products/

ost). With the computer-generated plans we provide with every bid, general contractors can quickly glance at them and see what we have and haven’t included. On a weekly basis, general contractors call to thank me for the colored take-offs. It helps them eliminate overlap or gaps in their bids.

Follow-through


The previous tips are all helpful, but without the follow-through you can still fall flat. If you don’t hear back from clients after you send a proposal, follow up to make sure they received it and to see if they have any questions. The last thing you want is all your hard work to get lost in cyberspace or buried on someone’s desk. Be certain they received it and looked at it. Perhaps even point out a particular item to make sure they noticed an inclusion or exclusion. Then, if you get the job, ensure that your crew is set up for success so they can deliver what you promised. With good follow-through, you will enhance your reputation and build trust with the client.

After your crew completes the work, walk the final project with clients to ensure their and your satisfaction. If something doesn’t live up to your expectations or doesn’t meet the plans or specifications, fix it or tear it out and do it again. We have a client for life because he remembers a driveway we placed and rejected 20 years ago and redid on our own dime. Although the redo may hurt a particular job’s bottom line, it will impress clients and build long-term trust and loyalty knowing you stand behind your work.

Loyalty

This one may seem backwards, because in the long-run aren’t we trying to gain our clients’ loyalty? Yes . . . but loyalty is a two-way street. To gain their loyalty, you need to be a loyal contractor first. When you say you’ll be on the job or at a meeting, be there. Stick to the schedule you agreed on and do everything you promised. And take it a step further.

When the job is done, thank them for the project, take photos of it and market it, giving them equal or more credit for the outstanding project (unless, of course, it is a job that isn’t allowed to be marketed). By helping them succeed, they will want to help you succeed. Give them a successful project and the loyalty and trust will start to grow and thrive.

By providing consistent professional and loyal services, your company’s reputation for quality will help you win more projects without losing money. The fun part of our industry also stems from the creative side. If you offer something unique or are able to try some crazy idea the client wants, you can also build your reputation with them, but the same rules as above apply to innovation. By being innovative, accountable and professional, decorative concrete is an exciting and thriving business. 

Karen Keyes wears many hats at Denver-based Colorado Hardscapes Inc., including business development, marketing, sales, estimating and project management, with an emphasis on specialty rock construction. She can be reached at karen@coloradohardscapes.com.



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Developing Relationships

Strengthen your friendships with architects and designers

by Mark Donaldson

BEING a successful concrete professional requires more than skill with trowels, colors and coatings. You also need to network. Networking requires investments in both time and infrastructure, but you will almost definitely see an increase in your business if you are thoughtful about your approach.

Strengthening relationships with your local builders and architects is one of the best ways to get good contracts. When builders need help with the concrete portion of their projects, they will immediately think of the person they have a connection with. Forging relationships with your local builders is absolutely critical to the success of your business and it can be done in a variety of ways.

Work your showroom

A showroom is a wonderful place to show potential clients the capabilities of your company. It can also be a place to hold events that will allow you to network with local builders, architects and designers. Organize monthly lunch-and-learns, business after-hours get-togethers, holiday parties or hands-on training events and invite architects and builders. You will be able to connect with the local architects and builders on your home turf, and get to know them better.

Go where they are

Another important way to network is to go to events that architects and builders are likely to attend. If there is a local professional organization or charity that many local builders work with, then you

should consider joining as well. These organizations are a wonderful way to build professional relationships and they may lead to more business in the future.

Provide contact info

One simple but important thing to remember is that local architects and builders need to have your contact information. They may meet a lot of different people at events and will not be able to recommend your decorative concrete if they can't or don't know how to easily reach you. Have professional business cards made and always carry some with you. Whenever you meet new builders, give them your business card. Leave several of your business cards at the offices of the builders and architects you meet, so they can recommend you at any

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time or pass them on to colleagues who may be looking for your services.

Develop high-quality, eye-catching brochures that state your business philosophy and capabilities. Feature your best project photos. You can hand out these brochures or direct mail them to the offices of all of the local builders and architects in your area. This is an excellent way to ensure that your abilities are familiar to these local companies. If you choose direct mail, be sure to follow up with a phone call to ensure they received your mailing while also opening the door for a conversation.

Photos and case studies

As you develop your concrete business it is important for you to take photos of your work and keep them on file.

Develop case studies of your work based on quality and problem solving. PDFs of case studies can be shared easily, so architects and builders can see exactly what you are capable of and have done. You could post these studies on your website or print and send them to every architect and builder in your area. Also, send them to your local newspaper or local lifestyle magazines.

Architects draw plans and make finish specifications for buildings, and it is extremely important to them that the contractors they specify or hire can read the drawings and execute them properly. These architects must feel confident that you can and will perform the work properly. Giving them examples of your past projects will ensure architects you have done a project of similar scope and complexity and will be capable of handling their project.

Invite and communicate

Providing examples of your past work is not the only way to assure architects that you will do a great job. Consider inviting architects to your job sites. Allow them to observe the work of you and your crew. Architects generally love to learn and see new processes take place. If you show them how things are done, they will be much more likely to use you for one of their upcoming projects.

As you move toward maintaining a relationship that you have cultivated, regularly communicate with your contact. And don't be shy to introduce yourself to a partner or the person in the office next door. Dealing with only one person at a

large firm could backfire if your contact leaves or moves to another firm.

To keep in touch, let your contacts know how your projects are progressing. They will appreciate being kept in the loop and will be more likely to work with you in the future.

Communication is critical if you are going to be successful at maintaining relationships with architects and builders, and it is critical for your business to build these relationships. Start by reaching out to the architects and builders in your community in a way that feels comfortable

to you. If you have a showroom, take advantage of it by hosting events. If not, consider investing in one, and develop outreach materials to communicate with other professionals. Be honest and friendly, and let them know you're the right person for the job. 🚚

Mark Donaldson is president of Ideas Media LLC, a company that specializes in lead generation for concrete professionals. Services include websites, online marketing, SEO and social media. Reach Mark at mark@getideas.com.

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Photo by Vanessa Salvia

Crowning the Top Brawler at the 2015 Concrete Decor Show

by Vanessa Salvia

FOR the second consecutive year, the Concrete Decor Show held a Brawl in the Fall competition where seven preselected teams of decorative concrete professionals vied for a chance to win their part of \$10,000 in cash and prizes, with the first-place team netting booty worth \$5,000.

The competition was held on the floor of the sixth annual Concrete Decor Show in Indianapolis, Indiana. Show attendees received a ballot and were encouraged to observe and evaluate the work in progress, then cast their ballots for their favorite projects. The winning projects were determined by attendee votes and five judges — Chris Sullivan of ChemSystems Inc., Rachel Knigge of Rachel K Graphics and FloorMap Stencils, Mike Murray of Concrete Cares, Mike Archambault of Moderne Methode and Jim Peterson of Concrete Network.

“This year the level of competition was even better than the year before and that’s hard to believe,” says Jeff Hershberger, sales and operations manager with Deco-Crete Supply, the event’s sponsor. “The work was very creative. We were all very impressed” at the variety of products used, from epoxy and vertical coatings to GFRC and overlays, he continues. “Pretty much every facet of decorative concrete was represented and a lot of them even in the same project.”

FIRST PLACE WINNER:

Keefe Duhon

Concrete Revolution LLC, New Iberia, Louisiana

www.concreterevolutionllc.com

One of the standards the judges evaluate in this competition is the use of different materials and techniques, and Keefe Duhon certainly achieved that goal. “The detail he had in his entry was just amazing and he utilized a lot of different things,” says Hershberger. “That’s what helped him win — how detailed everything was and how many different things he had going on.”

A Louisiana native, Duhon brought a touch of the bayou with him for his swamp-like scene, which featured an epoxy floor colored to look like water and accented with concrete trees and partially submerged logs. “People don’t see the swamp like where I’m from,” Duhon says. “They just see it on TV so I wanted to bring that to life.”

He used a stuffed raccoon, replicas of colorful fish and a concrete-molded alligator lurking in the water to create realism. The “water” was peppered with foot-friendly faux rocks. Strands of grass made from a T-shirt coated with Flash Patch, a SureCrete crack treatment product, and an Ameripolish green dye were so flexible they “will wave in the wind.” A behind-the-scenes boom box played Cajun

music, which added that extra touch of ambience. All of these combined to clearly make Duhon the crowd favorite.

"People liked that they could walk on the rocks and take pictures of all the different elements," says Hershberger. And the fog machine took the exhibit to a whole other level.

Duhon says he stayed "very humble," during the competition. "It was awesome to hear the positive comments but my main focus was staying on what I was doing and have people wanting to come back to see more," he says. "It wasn't about winning or a losing. It was about the experience. The others were all awesome at what they do."

Now that he's had a taste of winning, Duhon plans to bring his best game to the 2016 Concrete Decor Show in San Diego. He says his plans call for more interactivity, which he believes helped propel him to the win. He's already contemplating his next move. "If people think the swamp was cool, what I have in mind is going to be even more of a hit!"

This was Duhon's first time participating in the Brawl, although he has been on



Photo by Southern Arkansas University Photo Team

other competitive teams, including World of Concrete 2015, where he worked on "Blue Moon" by Troy Lemon (who was also a contender in this year's Brawl). Duhon thanks his sponsors, SureCrete and

Kingdom Products — who are also sponsors of the Concrete Decor Show — RicoRock, Polytek Development Corp. and CTS Cement/Rapid Set.

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SECOND PLACE WINNER:

Nathan Giffin

Vertical Artisans, Hickory Hills, Illinois

www.verticalartisans.com

Nathan Giffin, a judge in the inaugural Brawl, was part of the competition this year. He created a seating wall and fire pit for his entry, using products from Hardscape Systems, Flex-C-Ment, MortarSprayer.com and Walttools. For almost two decades Giffin has specialized in sculpting vertical decorative concrete with his Chicago-area company.

Hershberger liked Giffin's entry because it was a real-world design. "It was something that you could actually do in your backyard," says Hershberger. "Nathan didn't want people to say, 'Oh man, how did he do that?' He wanted people to say, 'Oh, I could do that.' And he's also obviously incredibly talented at what he does."

Giffin says he wanted his entry to come across as achievable for many of the show's attendees while also using a system that allows for creative freedom within the competition's three-day time frame. "I



Photo by Vanessa Salvia

chose to create something that I felt would resonate with contractors as opposed to fabricating something abstract," Giffin says. "It really gives the guys an opportunity to create something that would compete in the regular arena of business. It resonates with homeowners and contractors who see that

they've got something they can work with."

He was certainly successful in that regard. Giffin says he heard "tremendous compliments" and had manufacturers approach him about buying the fire pit ensemble right off the show floor.

THIRD-PLACE WINNERS:

Ellie Ellis

Elite Artistry, Happy Valley, Oregon

www.eliteartistrybyellie.com

Eva Gallant

Y-Knot-Creations LLC, Hurst, Texas

www.y-knot-creations.com

Ellie Ellis entered last year's Brawl as a lark and won first place for replicating a plaster medieval scene she had previously made for a fireplace at her home. Her teammate this year, Eva Gallant, was her behind-the-scenes helper then, so they both knew what they were in for.

This year, Ellis created detailed molds for an 8-by-8-foot ocean scene featuring a mermaid, a ship, a full moon and numerous sea creatures. Both this year and last, her detailed molds and the care with which they were placed in the overall scene gained the team lots of points and appreciation from judges and onlookers.

"It was incredible artwork," says Hershberger, and quite a show in progress. Each day, the duo donned costumes for the competition — one day Gallant was a pirate and Ellis wore a crown of sea stars and shells. On the last day of the competition



Photo by Vanessa Salvia

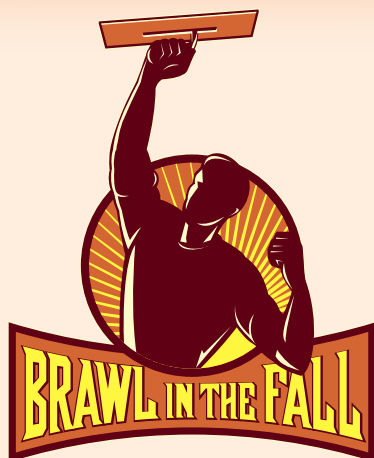
they wore shirts printed with an octopus design that matched up when they stood next to each other.

Both Gallant and Ellis are experienced decorative faux finishers and decorative artisans who are members of the International Decorative Artisan League. Gallant has been recognized and certified by IDAL as a Certified Stencil Artisan.

Ellis is a Certified Master Stenciler. The team thanks their sponsors — Deco-Crete Supply, Flex-C-Ment, KirtBag Carving Mix, Polytek Development Corp., Modern Masters, Brick in the Yard Mold Supply, and private sponsors David Kriel and Ted Grant. Ellis is planning to return to next year's *Concrete Decor* show as an instructor. 📷



Photo by Southern Arkansas University Photo Team



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ARTISAN IN CONCRETE

Progressive Hardscapes

Mike Riggs, Phoenix, Arizona

by Vanessa Salvia

MIKE Riggs is a guy who can say that he really did grow up in the concrete business. His first job was for Progressive Concrete Works, a concrete company his father started in 1954 in Phoenix, Arizona. Riggs, now 54, went through a concrete apprenticeship program and became a concrete finisher. He progressed into estimating and management and in 1995 became head of the company.

He kept that business going 15 years, doing work throughout the state of Arizona. In 2010, he closed Progressive Concrete Works and started Progressive Hardscapes with Vince Van Heukelem, owner of Colorado Hardscapes. Progressive is the Arizona division of Colorado Hardscapes, and the two companies share a passion for decorative concrete and install many of the same finishes. By collaborating, they knew they could learn from each other and grow successfully as partners. With similar business models and pursuit for innovative decorative concrete finishes, the Colorado Hardscapes and Progressive Hardscapes partnership was a natural fit.

"The transition went smoothly and we kept all the same people that I had working for me and rolled everything over into the new company," Riggs says. "We were very similar companies, except that Colorado Hardscapes was a larger organization than we were. It was a good move and I enjoy working as the general manager for the Arizona division."

Riggs has always appreciated and enjoyed the challenges involved with doing concrete work at a high level. "A lot of what I do to keep myself engaged is keeping informed and getting involved in new products," he says. "That and continuously learning. There's always something to be learned in this industry and if you think you know it all you're in trouble!"

Venturing beyond the basics

Back in the early 1970s, Riggs' father became a licensee for Bomanite, installing the first imprinted concrete in Arizona, which allowed Progressive Concrete Works to rapidly expand their repertoire. "By the time I got involved we were doing both architectural concrete and standard foundations, floor slabs, residential and commercial . . . we were doing

everything," Riggs says. "The business slowly started carving a niche for itself in the architectural concrete sector."

In the 1980s, Riggs began offering acid staining and countertops. "We're always looking for new things," he says. "Today we are doing a lot more contemporary finishes with exposed aggregate and sand finishes that we call Actacrete. We are also doing a lot of architectural concrete walls."

Progressive Hardscapes is a Lithocrete and Lithomosaic licensee as well. "Lithocrete and Lithomosaics are a lot of fun," he says. "You talk about artistry . . . it's really cool to be able to have an opportunity to work directly with the artist on some of these types of projects and figure out how to bring their vision to life and actually achieve it."

Seeing the potential of pervious

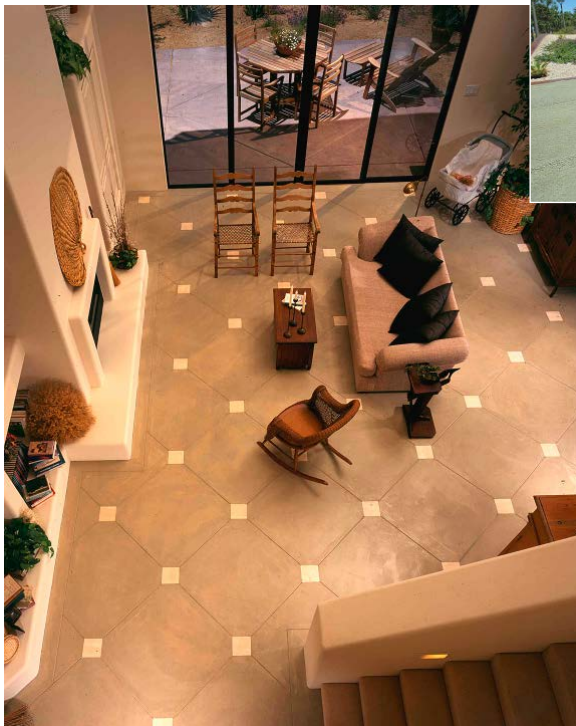
Nine years ago Riggs entered the pervious concrete market at a time when there was hardly any pervious being offered in Arizona. He chases down that market, and actively goes out and gives box lunch presentations to architects to inform them about what pervious is and what it can do.

In a niche market, he says, "You've got to get out and promote your products. You've got to educate architects and let them know what's available." He estimates there is about 550,000 square feet of pervious installed throughout the state, "And we've done the majority of the work."

Riggs has made a career out of entering and developing niche markets, and the pervious market is no exception. "It takes a little different mentality," Riggs says. "The placement procedures and related things are a lot different than standard concrete, so we've developed a crew of guys that pay particular attention to the details. This comes from working with architectural concrete. I am very fortunate that we have such a good group of people working for us. It's a team effort and the men in the field do a great job!"

Progressive's projects have set the bar high for pervious concrete in Arizona. In order to separate themselves from other pervious concrete contractors whose work may not meet their standards, Progressive branded its pervious concrete as DrainScape. "This name has come to be known as the premier pervious concrete," Riggs says. "When owners and architects





specify DrainScape they can be confident that they will have a quality installation installed by a highly skilled crew.”

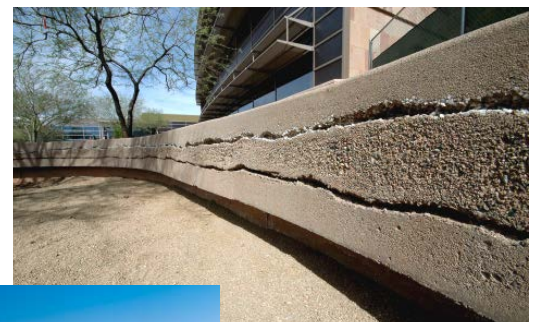
In addition, Riggs offers Lithocrete Sedimentary Walls, board-formed walls and other work that might involve standard finishes but are difficult for some other reason. Those are also the jobs he likes best. “When things start getting a little more complex, those are the types of projects we really excel in,” he says. “The thing I really enjoy the most is the creative architectural projects where you have to think outside the box. It’s fun, it’s challenging, it’s just different.” He also has a penchant for anything pervious.

Riggs says the pervious work is “hit or miss” and the jobs are scattered, but the technique has great potential for alleviating some environmental concerns, so he’s hoping it continues to grow in popularity. He’s done jobs as large as 140,000 square feet and 110,000 square feet on park-and-ride stations. Currently, his crew is working on a 5,000-square-foot job at a hospital.

Pervious concrete allows groundwater to recharge, which has been a big benefit in these recent years of extreme drought in the West. “Pervious slows the rain water down and allows it to filtrate into the soil a little bit better,” Riggs says. He points to research

conducted in collaboration with Arizona State University on a plot of pervious he poured. The study focused on the “heat island effect,” or how much heat a surface reflects into the surroundings and how quickly the surface cools.

During the day, the temperatures of the pervious plot were the same as regular concrete but at night it cooled off much faster, Riggs says. “The thermal mass in the regular concrete retains a lot more of that heat and that’s how pervious helps because it cools off a lot more at night. It’s a neat product and it allows developers to get more environmental benefit out of their



projects and control pollution runoff. It also allows developers to increase the size of their buildings because they've been able to increase the size of their parking lots by reducing the size of retention basins. So the land can be used more effectively."

Bringing ideas to life

One Lithomosaic project Riggs enjoyed working on involved a Tucson streetcar station where he helped an artist named Mary Lucking install full-color Lithomosaic cactuses and flowers along the stop's entire platform. "It wasn't big but it was fun," he says.

Progressive Hardscapes is the licensed

installer of the Sedimentary Wall system in Arizona. Sedimentary Walls, a product of the Lithocrete family, provide aesthetic interest and structural integrity. They are often used as seating walls or barriers where a natural look is warranted.

The walls are created by pouring layers of integrally colored concrete, often all in one color, with different types of seeded aggregate or glass placed to achieve the look of sediment building up over time. Riggs often pours the walls and then pressure washes them to create different levels of aggregate exposure.

Progressive Hardscapes has 15 to 20

employees at any given time, and one of the biggest things Riggs enjoys about the work is having the opportunity to work with other creative people to bring projects to life. "We get to take their ideas for what they want to do and turn it in something that's constructible," he says. "This has been my life and I really enjoy it too. What makes it fun is that you're learning every day."

www.drainscape.com

www.progressivehardscapes.com

See more photos from this feature
online at ConcreteDecor.net

Re-fashioning the Fashion Show Mall

Las Vegas, Nevada

by K. Schipper

In a city where each new project shines brighter than the last, an old favorite is taking on a new sparkle.

Fashion Show, a fixture on Las Vegas Boulevard ("the Strip") since 1981, has just wrapped up a facelift that includes a 22,000-square-foot addition which provides space for five new restaurants on the mall's front plaza, as well as upgrades to its landscaping and ingress-egress.

A large component of the new look: concrete provided by T.B. Penick & Sons Inc. of San Diego. With more than 1.9 million square feet of retail space devoted to more than 250 stores and no desire to close things down while the remodel was underway, the job was anything but easy.

Fortunately, Andrew C. Weber, Penick's senior project manager for the project, says jobs such as this really play to the company's strengths. Penick has three different divisions: a general contracts division, a structural concrete division and the architectural division, the latter recognized as one of the largest decorative concrete contractors in the country and the division responsible for this particular job.

"We get to do the fun stuff," he says.

Project at a Glance

Client: VCC LLC, Dallas, for General Growth Properties (GGP), Chicago. GGP owns the Fashion Show mall in Las Vegas.

Decorative concrete contractor: T.B. Penick & Sons Inc., San Diego

www.tbpenickconcrete.com

Crew: Andrew C. Weber, senior project manager; Rich Robertson, general superintendent; Rigo Macias, on-site superintendent. For most of the project, Penick employed a crew of 25.

Scope of project: Approximately 18,000 contact square feet of walls and benches; 50,000 square feet of architectural concrete; and application of 21,000 contact square feet of Penickrete.

Challenge: Completing a fast-paced job on a busy corner of the Las Vegas "Strip" while the mall remained open.

Products used: Penickrete at the walls, quarried stone finish on the flatwork



Photos courtesy of T.B. Penick & Sons Inc.

Setting the stage

In this case, Penick began by working with Callison, an international architecture firm based in Seattle, Washington, providing samples and different ideas for the project. Weber says they were then able to bid successfully with VCC LLC, the Dallas-based general contractor. "And they selected us to do the work," he says.

VCC Senior Vice President Derek Alley says Penick was selected after a bid process, although price was not the only criteria for the choice. "We scour the marketplace for subcontractors and vendors who can understand the project scope, who show the right logistics plan and give us the confidence they can get it done," says Alley. "We looked at multiple contractors, but they stood out."

He admits that in a glamorous setting, concrete often isn't the focal point, but it is critical to the project's success. "A lot of patrons don't necessarily look down, but the concrete is extremely important," Alley notes. "This is the front door to the mall and the hardscape is a major part of the project's scope. It really sets the stage."

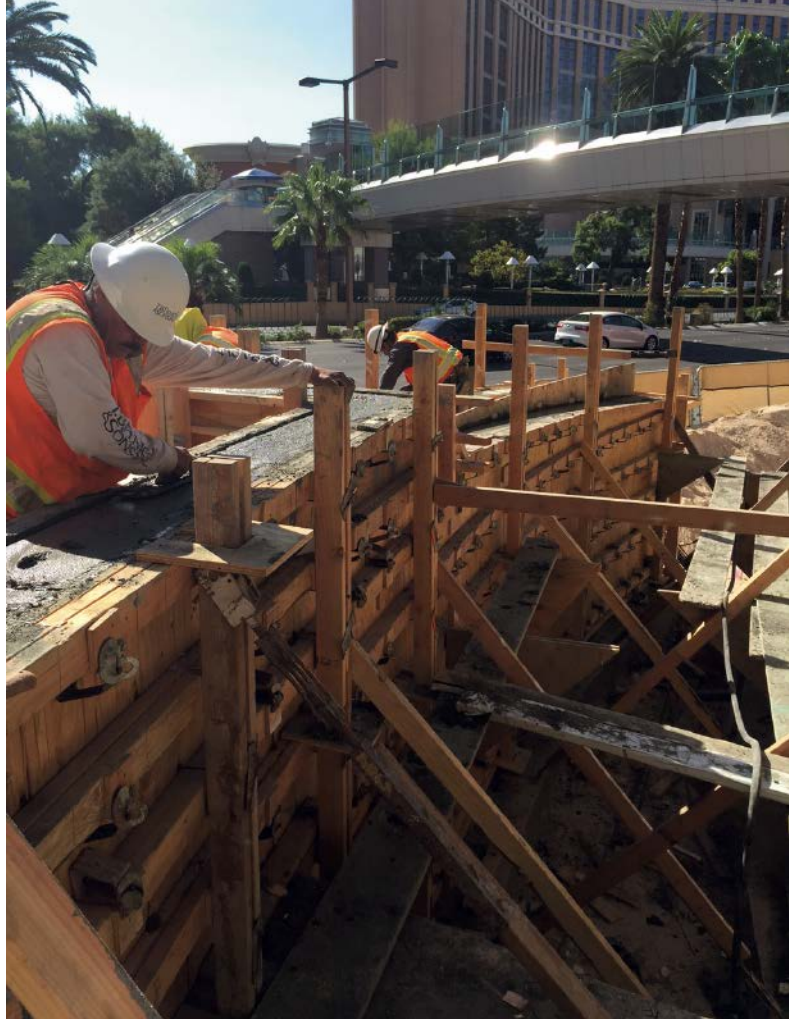
Work begins

Actual work on the project began early this year, and Weber says Penick's part included several different components, such as about 18,000 contact square feet of walls and benches, and another 50,000 square feet of architectural concrete.

"The walls consist of a lot of radius work," says Weber. "They meander through the property and have a battered edge, which is a tilted-back piece on the concrete. The very top is tilted. It's very difficult to do this and required us to insert a foam piece under them to get the desired effect. It was very challenging."

The benches, which also feature radius shapes with battered edges, were a mix of poured-in-place and precast concrete. "A lot of them have arm rests that weren't precast," he says. "However, the seats were poured in place. There were a lot of components on those, as well."

Not even the flat concrete work on the job was easy. The existing concrete had been removed to the structural deck, causing varying elevations which required a lightweight cementitious infill to be



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PROJECT PROFILE

installed first. “This system leveled the architectural concrete substrate and allowed the forms to be installed directly on the substrate,” says Weber.

The project also utilized four different colors of concrete, and Rigo Macias, Penick’s on-site superintendent, says that was further complicated by the site’s working conditions. Although foot traffic was curtailed during construction, it didn’t stop completely and vehicle traffic on the Strip went on as usual, so access to the site by heavy equipment was limited. Staging occurred in the mall’s underground parking structure.

“A lot of the work was arranging deliveries and moving everything from the street into the plaza,” says Macias. “Everything was poured through boom pumps, and on pour days we moved the pump one or two times a day. We would pour a strip on the north side and one in the center, then do another piece somewhere else. We hop-scotched the different colors so we could let one strip harden enough to pour the strip next to it.”

Weber says that presented a challenge in quality, as well. “We were also bouncing around in order to achieve VCC’s deadlines, and when you’re starting at one point and then jumping to another and then back to the place you were previously, we had to increase our manpower,” he says.

Until the final weeks of the job, Penick had an average of 25 workers onsite. While



the hectic pace of the job drove some of that, the company also had to contend with abnormal working hours. “We’d start work around 2 a.m.,” Weber says. “One, there was far less traffic then. But, we did a lot of the work during the summertime and in Las Vegas it’s very hot. When you’re pouring concrete, 100-degree weather makes it very difficult.”

Macias says the last four or five months of the job consistently involved 10-hour shifts.

On to Plan B

Although the company had the work planned out, about three weeks into the project it had to rethink what it was doing due to several different challenges, from the elevations and radii involved to the finish. Part of the job involved applying about 21,000 contact square feet of a proprietary product called Penickrete, which is troweled on to create a quarried-stone finish.

“We had planned to pour the walls and benches and then strip the forms and finish them, but we weren’t able to because of all the components involved,” Weber says. “Eventually we ended up keeping the forms up and installing the Penickrete on the walls.”

Work — except for some punch list items — wrapped up in mid-November, and both Weber and Macias say they’re pleased with the job, as is VCC’s Alley, who praised Penick’s performance. “Their ability to coordinate, their ability to work under a fast-paced schedule and allocate the proper resources to get the job done the right way proved to be a great asset to this project,” he concludes. 🚧

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Contractor Works his Magic While Facility Conducts Business as Usual

Claremont Hotel & Spa, Berkeley, Calif.

by K. Schipper

JULIO Hallack isn't really a magician. Still, what else can you call a contractor who pulls off the nearly impossible: completing a 25,000-square-foot pool deck restoration for the ritzy Claremont Hotel Club & Spa while the facility remained open?

Further complicating the process was a concrete pour whose cure time alone would have made it difficult for Concrete by Hallack to complete the work on time. However, rather than relying on spells or incantations, Hallack was able to successfully complete the project thanks to good advanced planning with the owner's consultants and contractor, his continued presence at the jobsite and the use of several products from Miracote Products' line.

The consultant who was handling the resort restoration was given the name of Hallack's Turlock, California-based crew by a swimming pool company that knew his work. Hallack's business, with almost a quarter century of experience, has a reputation for delivering exceptional results on both residential and commercial



Photos courtesy of Concrete by Hallack

Project at a Glance

Client: Claremont Hotel Club & Spa, Berkeley, California

Decorative concrete contractor: Concrete by Hallack, Julio Hallack, CEO and president, Turlock, California

www.concretebyhallack.com

Crew: Julio Hallack; Joshua Martinez, job superintendent; Alfonso Cortez, construction foreman; Juan Calderon; Victor Carrera; Emilio Moreno and Juan Cortez.

Scope of project: Restoration of 25,000 square feet of pool deck, some of which was damaged in a 1989 earthquake. Repair cracks and drains, level concrete, and color and seal the deck.

Challenge: Stage the jobsite so that adults and children could continue to use the facilities while the work was being done.

Products used: MiraPatch RM 1, MiraGard HD 100, MiraGard Colorbond XL, Miracote MPC and MiraPrime Aqua-Blok XL to help speed finish time on a 5,000-square-foot pour of new cement.

concrete restorations. "I was interested in the job because of the challenge and opportunity it presented to me, and the type of client," he says. "I also knew there were not many other contractors who were willing to deal with the challenges."

Reputation wins out

Hallack's reputation served him well. Not only did his company get the job despite not being the low bidder, but his input was accepted when it came time to choose both a coating company to supply the job and determine how to stage it. "The managing contractor was familiar with another coating company that I am also familiar with, but allowed me to make recommendations," he says. "After walking the project and learning from the client what they were looking for, I contacted Trevor Foster with Miracote to exchange ideas."

Foster, the western sales manager for

Miracote, a division of Crossfield Products Corp., says once he saw the job and talked with Hallack, his job was to make product recommendations based on Miracote's experience with similar West Coast projects, as well as provide case studies to the contractor. "Our job is to make sure there's a good partnership between us as the manufacturer, the contractor and the end user," says Foster. "We want them to feel comfortable they have support from all sides, both for the installation and for warranty reasons. We back each other up."

Both men acknowledge that Miracote is more expensive than the managing contractor's recommendation but, says Hallack, "Miracote is one of the oldest coating companies, and my company has been working with them going back to the '90s. We've installed other coatings, but feel more comfortable with Miracote."



Scope of the project

One big challenge was getting the right shade of white for portions of the job, which included overnight shipping samples from Miracote's Rancho Dominguez, California, manufacturing facility to the Bay Area. "People will often see a swatch that's 1-by-1 inch, but we like to send samples that are at least 2-by-2 feet so the owner can get a good feel of what it looks like against their cut wall or their coping stones or against a painted surface," Foster says. "And, any commercial job like this is difficult because you have multilayers of decision-making."

The scope of the project was also astounding. Leading the way was removing 23,500 square feet of existing coating. Much of the area needed to be repaired

or the concrete leveled. Additionally, the 25-yard lap pool had to undergo a hydraulic injection to compensate for an 8- to 10-inch settlement after the 1989 earthquake. All the concrete around it had to be removed and poured anew.

The structural repair work on the lap pool, which required it to be shut down, perhaps best indicates the other major

challenge Hallack faced. Not only is the Claremont one of the oldest hotels on the West Coast, but the spa also has many members who use its facilities. For that reason, management decided it wouldn't close the spa while work was being done.

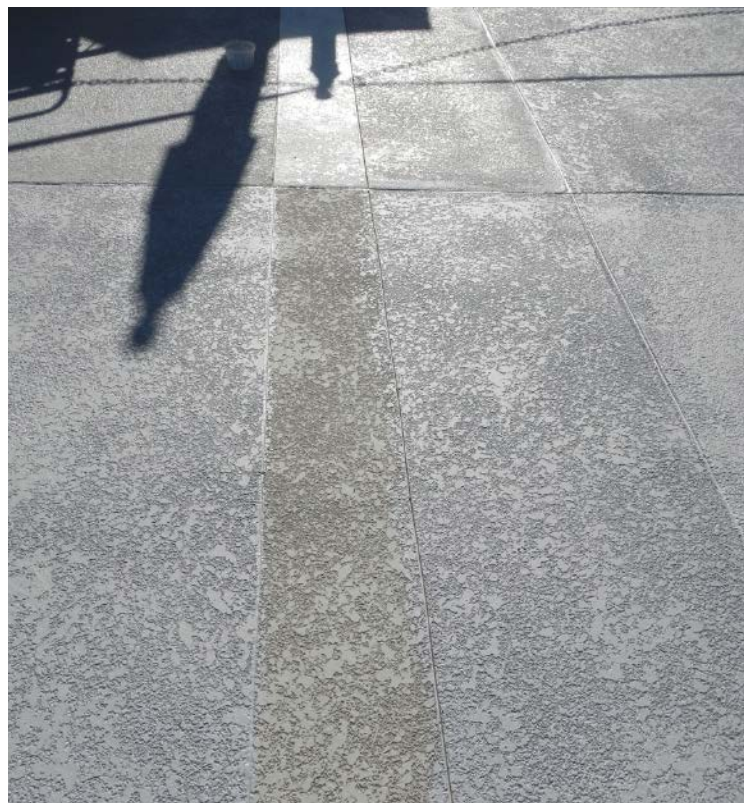
"The construction management company and hotel management presented a plan to us to do the restoration in nine stages," says

PROJECT PROFILE



Hallack. “I knew I had to make changes to their recommendations to still comply with allowing the members to use the facilities. I presented a request to do it in six stages, and that was accepted and worked well.”

Even so, the company was allowed to work only from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. And, Hallack had to close the section being worked on, installing barricades and asking members not to walk in the construction area. One of the consultants on the project expressed concern about minimum application temperatures when the work was being done in February and March. Hallack agreed that temperature might be a concern when sealers are applied, but the



polymers perform even when temperatures are in the 50s.

Much of the work was completed using Miracote MPC, a dual-component polymer-modified cementitious overlay. Other products included MiraPatch RM 1, MiraGard HD 100 and MiraGard Colorbond XL (a custom bone white) to color and seal the deck.

Challenges continue

Perhaps the greatest challenge, though, might have been the new concrete pour around the lap pool, which originally had a 28-day cure window. Foster says that Hallack knew exactly which Miracote products he wanted to use for other parts of the project, but for that area of the deck he turned to Foster for a recommendation. He, in turn, suggested a fairly new product: MiraPrime Aqua-Blok XL.

“We worked with the concrete contractor and specified a certain mix which was a low-water-to-cement ratio that supports a quicker cure,” says Foster. “Then, Julio applied the Aqua-Blok, which allowed him to coat the new concrete much quicker than industry standards.”

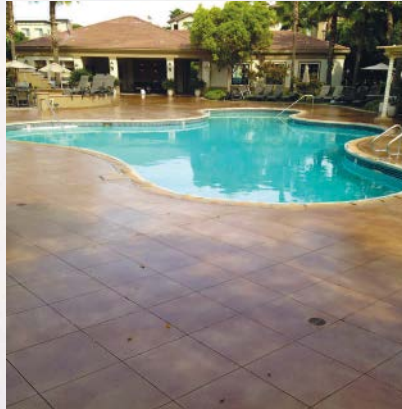
The combination took the time down to where the concrete was cured enough to coat in seven days. In the end, Hallack says the most difficult part of the job was dealing with members who were tired and frustrated by the ongoing noise, dust and construction. To counter that, Hallack hired one new employee, bringing his onsite team to six, including the boss. “I told the members construction restoration is noisy and dusty,” he says. “We worked with lots of efficiency and planning. I met with my staff every day and planned the work. Everybody knew what they had to do.”

And, while it probably isn't a job that every company can take on, Hallack says in the end, he's particularly proud and appreciative of his staff, and grateful to the management construction company and hotel management and staff for making it work. 🚚



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Photo courtesy of Rhino Linings Corp.

Concrete Solutions Metal Fusion system by Rhino Linings graces this lobby of the Sabre building in Southlake, Texas.

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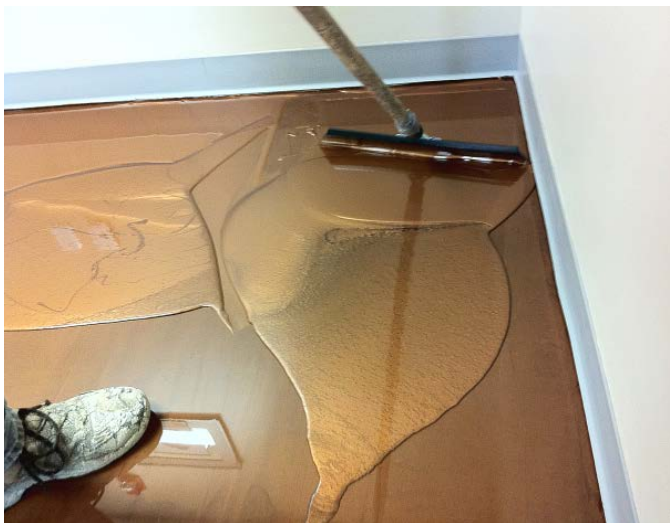


Photo courtesy of Euclid Chemical

by Debby Canto Davis

FROM commercial kitchens, fire stations, spas and salons to basements, garages, veterinarian clinics and airport hangars, epoxy materials are being applied to concrete floor surfaces. The reasons why are simple: Epoxies are easy to use, durable and profitable. And, new products are more environmentally friendly.

"Epoxies are time-tested, affordable, reliable floor coating solutions," says David Brown, business development manager for Seal-Krete. When used on concrete surfaces, epoxies can turn the ordinary and marred into extraordinary and flawless, and with the added benefit of giving an appearance of depth to a space.

"By adding multiple colors to the floor at the same time, the results can be one of a kind," notes Michael Jensen, president of Atlanta Concrete Artist.

"On concrete surfaces, epoxies provide a smooth base and hide imperfections," says Ernie Archuleta, technical services manager for Rhino Linings Corp.'s Concrete Solutions product line.

Durability

Bryan Mercado, general manager of A Seamless Floor Co., specializes in decorative concrete overlays and designer epoxy floors. "About 80 percent of our jobs are tearing up existing interior flooring and laying down new surfaces," he says. "After laying down concrete, I can color, stain or seal the surface with various epoxy systems and create detailed, professional work."

Epoxy customers use the material in several ways. According to Brown, his company's customers often use epoxy materials as a build coat to repair damaged floors and as a floor leveler. "Epoxy

also has excellent adhesion properties along with great impact resistance, so it makes for a durable long-lasting floor coating,” he adds.

Archuleta says his company’s epoxies are excellent primers for urethane topcoats and are often used in their Quartz Flooring System, which is growing in popularity. Rhino Linings Corp. recommends a urethane topcoat for additional ultraviolet (UV) stability and chemical resistance.

Paul Koury, president of Westcoat Specialty Coating Systems, says customers use his company’s clear epoxies such as EC-32 High Build Epoxy Clear Topcoat to protect interior concrete floors and Westcoat’s Texture-Crete interior system.

What about water-based versus solvent-based epoxies? It depends on the job, says Jensen. “We prefer water-based epoxies for interior residential applications because of the low odor and solvent-based epoxies for commercial applications because of their added abrasion resistance.”

Archuleta says water-based epoxies do not hide surface blemishes as well as Rhino Linings’ regular epoxies do, but its water-based products are a quick and inexpensive way to change the color and look of existing concrete.

In fact, he says the company’s WB Epoxy Clear and WB Epoxy Color products perform even better with WB Urethane, its water-based topcoat. “The topcoat adds additional chemical and abrasion resistance, but the products work very well on their own also.”

Westcoat’s EC-11 Water-Based Epoxy had been designed to be a pigmented primer and topcoat for fast turnaround when a low-odor epoxy is needed. However, the clear version has become the standard topcoat/sealer for many of the company’s systems, including its Fast Stain Grind & Seal, says Koury.

Increte recently reformulated its products to provide more resistance to ambering, and to reduce the chance of fish eyes (voids also referred to as bug holes) and amine blush (a whitish waxy residue). Rich Cofoid says his company is continuously researching and developing the newest technology to ensure state-of-the-art decorative products.

“The market demands outdoor areas be as pretty as indoors have been,” says Cofoid, who is Euclid Chemical’s project manager for its Increte brand of decorative concrete products.



Photo courtesy of A Seamless Floor Co.

This floor has been stained with Cohills’ Earth Stain in Reavis Brown and sealed with a 60 percent solids water-based epoxy and top-coated with a solvent-based, gloss polyurethane.

Profitability

Versatile Building Products is well known in the market for its Roll on Rock garage floor epoxy system, according to Matthew Newman, company president. The products make garage floors easy to clean and maintain, enhance lighting, and are stain-proof, chemical-resistant and UV-tolerant.

Also popular for Versatile are 4195 Epoxy Primer, which dries quickly and is resistant to moisture, and 5073 Polyurea Top Coat, which also dries fast, is easy to apply and has a long pot life.

Concrete Solutions by Rhino Linings’

most popular epoxy coating systems are its Metal Fusion, Color Flake and Quartz systems. “Our Epoxy 200 is an excellent primer,” Archuleta adds. “It is a slow-drying, penetrating epoxy that repels moisture coming through a slab.”

Brown notes that his company’s 100 percent solids epoxy — Epoxy-Shell 1000 — is its most popular coating because of its versatility. It’s used for solid color, quartz, flake and metallic floors.

Westcoat’s Koury says his company offers more than 15 resinous flooring system-based solutions, with EC-11 being the most



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popular for sealing interior concrete and EC-32 at the top of the list for its versatility and superior clarity.

“We offer our customers a comprehensive line of supportive tools, such as detailed instructions in our system specifications, architectural drawings, training videos and the highest level of customer service,” Koury says.

Euclid Chemical also offers training sessions in decorative concrete conducted by Cofoid. “We’ve found that bringing the how-tos to the customers and giving them hands-on training is

invaluable,” he says. “It’s an extra service we believe benefits everyone from property owners to contractors to the concrete industry itself.”

Environmentally safe

Less than a year ago, Versatile developed Eco Concrete Profiler, a safe and environmentally friendly concrete profiler and cleaner that’s noncorrosive and 100 percent biodegradable.

“Our advanced formula incorporates a proprietary blend of surfactants, organic minerals for the most effective concrete etching solution available,” says Newman. “It does not contain phosphoric, hydrochloric or muriatic acid, yet works better — and it’s safer.”

Seal-Krete recently developed two water-based epoxies in response to the federal regulatory focus on low volatile organic compounds (VOCs). “We’ve stepped up to offer our customers a true replacement to 100 percent solids epoxy,” Brown says. “Epoxy-Shell WB 250 and WB 50 are water-based epoxies built on the technology that made the 100 percent solids epoxies so reliable and less prone to failure.”

These lower-priced products offer quicker dry times, water clean-up and increased breathability, which reduces blistering and peeling.

Overall, Archuleta says epoxies are easy to clean, sanitary and monolithic, which is required in restaurants and hospitals.



Photo courtesy of RL Surfacing

Problem solved

David Brown, business development manager for Seal-Krete, says his company’s favorite projects are those that solve problems. “Being a dog owner, keeping my pet safe is important. I understand the issues veterinary clinics face when looking for a flooring solution to protect their patients,” Brown says. “So when we were tasked with providing flooring solutions that offer easy maintenance, long-term reliability and antimicrobial protection, we jumped at the opportunity.”

This Orlando, Florida, clinic now sports a low-odor flooring system that consists of Seal-Krete’s Epoxy-Shell WB 250 as a primer, followed by a full coverage chip broadcast into its Epoxy-Shell 1000, then top coated with the company’s Poly-Shell 1000.



Photo courtesy of Atlanta Concrete Artist

Feeling the heat

Imagine getting a phone call from Shaquille O’Neal asking you to create a concrete floor in his house. Oh, and the floor is to depict a hole going down into a pit of fire. No problem, right? “You don’t say no to Shaq,” says Michael Jensen, president of Atlanta Concrete Artist. For guidance, O’Neal gave Jensen photos he had of famous street art, which were two-dimensional drawings on sidewalks that appear three-dimensional using a process called anamorphic drawing.

“These works of art only appear ‘correct’ when viewed from one very specific angle,” Jensen says. “Our challenge was to create this image so it would appear believable from all angles.”

Jensen teamed up with Atlanta decorative artist Kass Wilson, who specializes in faux visual effects. Together, they made O’Neal’s vision come to life with the use of Elite Crete’s Reflector Enhancer, Thin Finish overlay, various stains and dyes.

“We knew we had accomplished our goal when we heard Shaq say, ‘This is so believable I can almost feel the heat when I stand on the edge,’” Jensen says.

Words to the wise

Two vital components of any successful concrete and epoxy floor job are meticulous slab preparation and carefully following material directions. Cofoid calls these “epoxy fundamentals” in his training sessions.

Too much moisture or vapor and epoxy coatings may not bond to the floor, so Cofoid suggests always performing a recognized moisture test before starting any job. Then, mitigate any excess moisture by improving drainage in the area, using a densifier and then retesting, using a moisture barrier engineered for epoxy floors, or using a moisture-tolerant epoxy.

The pH level of a floor also affects job success. Cofoid says epoxies are “fairly tolerant” of pH levels, but some urethanes and polyaspartics are not. He suggests performing a standard pH pencil test on the flooring surface using any inexpensive kit found online.

Simply wet a small area of the floor with distilled water, then draw a line in the area with the kit’s pencil or marker. Wait 15 to 30 seconds to see what color the line turns. Match that color to the kit’s color-coded pH scale key to determine the floor’s pH level, on a scale of 0 (white) to 14 (blue), with 0-7 being acid and 7-14 being alkaline.

Cofoid says most cured concrete will fall between eight and 10, but freshly poured concrete can be in the 13 range. “I believe most coatings require less than 10 on the scale,” to bond properly, he says. To be on the safe side, installers should consult with the manufacturer for product specifics.

Next, profile the slab mechanically. Jensen’s rule of thumb is:

When in doubt, grind. “We grind every floor that we are planning on applying epoxy to,” he says. “This ensures that the concrete surface has been opened.”

Lastly, repair any cracks in the surface and clean it well.

According to Cofoid, a successful finished surface also requires strict adherence to the product manufacturer’s directions on first mixing — before combining — part A and part B separately, mixing the combination the appropriate amount of time, and doing all this within the correct pot life timeframe and specified work area temperature. Deviations from the requirements could not only result in a poor quality finished surface, but could result in personal injuries, Cofoid says.

Solvent-based epoxies, for example, have a low flash point and strong fumes. Keep these materials away from pilot lights and gas heaters and properly ventilate the work space, he adds.

“We believe quality work the first time, every time, will spread awareness of the benefits of concrete and epoxy flooring when compared to the conventional alternatives, such as carpet, tile and wood,” says Mercado. “So whatever it takes to safely create the best product possible, we will do.”

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Photo courtesy of Westcoat Specialty Coating Systems



Hard act to follow

According to Paul Koury, president of Westcoat Specialty Coating Systems, one of the company’s recent projects was the green rooms of the Ascend Amphitheater in Nashville, Tennessee. The project featured 4,000 square feet of Westcoat’s Liquid Dazzle system in Taupe and was finished with an application of its EC-96 Satin Polyurethane Topcoat for extra protection and low-gloss finish. The installation was done by Specialty Coatings Inc.

“Liquid Dazzle is the perfect system for a modern and sophisticated look while being durable in a busy backstage environment,” Koury says. “The performers and visitors of the amphitheater will be enjoying the floor for many years.”



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METALLIC MANIPULATIONS

**With the right knack they can
range from elegant to exotic**



by Jon Kopp

COLORFUL mica pigments designed to be dispersed in a variety of binders are part of what makes metallic epoxy floors so alluring. The right combination of binders and finish coats create a unique three-dimensional appearance on seamless floors that can offer an unmatched blend of beauty and durability. Depending on the application techniques used, the finished floors' look can range from elegant to exotic.

Metallic epoxy floors can be installed anywhere a truly unique finished floor is desired, from retail establishments, nightclubs and automobile showrooms to residential interiors, backyards and garage floors. When I talk to my customers, it's critical that I understand what they want or what they need their metallic floor to accomplish. Most don't really know what goes into a metallic floor. All they know is that they like the pictures they see.





Two sides to metallics

Metallic floors always involve a 100 percent solid epoxy or a very high-solid polyaspartic. There are two considerations that I like to explain to my customers: their cosmetics and their durability.

Cosmetically, metallic floors are beautiful with the color disbursements, three-dimensional looks and effects that transpire from install to dry. When the floor system is applied and the installer's work completed, there will still be movement in the product caused by the natural flow of the concrete and the pull of gravity.

On the technical side, metallic floors are among the most durable, impact-resistant flooring systems. Their only drawback, in my opinion, is that their typical high-gloss finish makes them more prone to scratches. However, you can reduce that risk by applying a polyurethane topcoat with a satin finish. I also tell both my residential and commercial customers to maintain the floor with wax. This way any scratches will be in

the wax and not in the actual floor. So when the floor is rewaxed, the scratches are gone.

As for being slippery, metallic floors are no slicker than solid pigmented floors, chip floors or bare concrete. If slipperiness is a major concern, I apply aluminum oxide in the 100 percent solid epoxy, not the polyurethane clear coat.

Choosing colors and solvents

One thing that makes metallic floors so different from other systems is that the epoxy or polyaspartic is clear, so when you add the colored metallic powder, that's all you'll see. Since metallic systems are so translucent, when using multiple colors you should always use the darkest color in your prime coat for proper hide.

When choosing colors, I break it down to three categories.

- Earthtones – browns, beiges and copper
- Exotics – purples, reds, yellows, oranges, greens and blues
- Contemporary – an assortment of grays

As an aside, white is the hardest color to do because metallic floors are very translucent.

I don't recommend mixing colors

together from these three categories. I do recommend keeping the mix to no more than three colors, with my preference being two, otherwise the floor tends to look really

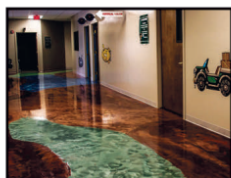
busy. When it comes to residential interiors, I recommend only one color with no solvent effects. Inside a home, the solvent effects can look too busy and eventually there



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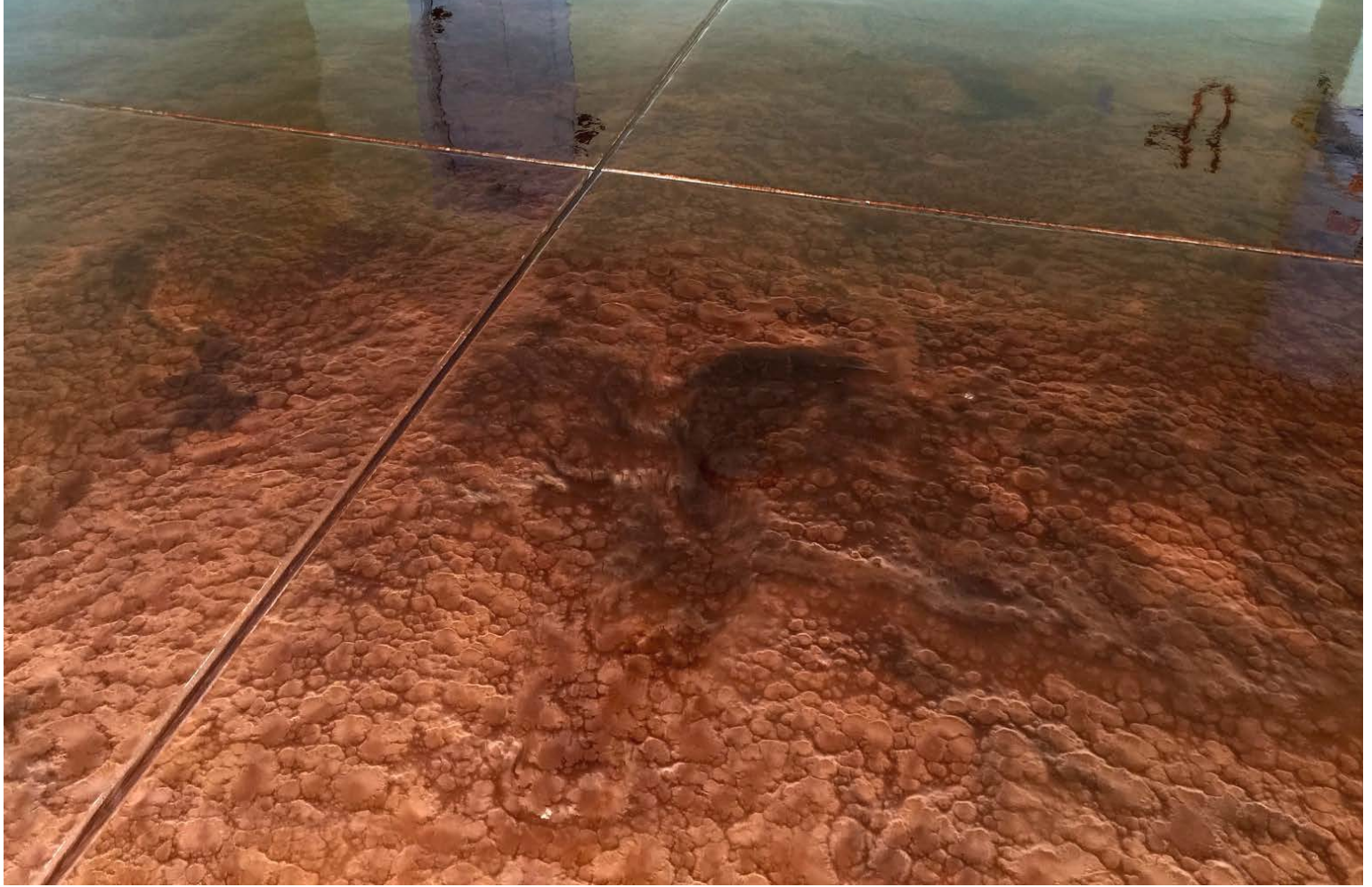
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might be too much movement going on.

Solvents can help give a metallic floor a swirling “movement” and also create craters that provide a three-dimensional look. Just remember not to apply your solvent or any effect right after you installed the metallic system. You should wait until the floor gets to the tacky stage, because that way your effects will not flood back. A guiding point is to touch the floor with your finger and, if it leaves a print, you’re good to go.

When installing metallic floors, don’t be afraid to experiment with new things. I cannot stress this enough. Different types of solvents produce different effects.

If the solvent evaporates slower than the epoxy cures, you’ll have “soft pockets” in your floor, areas where the solvent is trapped underneath the epoxy. To get the best results, follow the manufacturers’ mixing instructions and don’t over-apply solvent.

If you do not add a solvent, the floor will look like an acid stain with the colored powder flowing naturally throughout the floor depending on gravity and the levelness of the concrete.

When installing a metallic system, there are a lot of different techniques you can use to manipulate the surface, such as rolling

out your product or squeegeeing it. You can also use different props such as a leaf blower or an air compressor to move it around.

Imperfections make the floor

Because no two metallic floors will ever be alike, never make a sample board for a client. You're only going to hurt yourself and disappoint your customers.

The biggest thing to understand about these incredible floors is they are only as good as the artistic ability of the installer. You don't just open up a can and out they come. It takes practice and perseverance to hone your technique.

If customers want a perfect floor, this is not the system for them. They would be better off with a chip system, a stamped pattern or a polished concrete floor.

As a licensed contractor I have had my share of getting beat up by both consumers and the Registrar of Contractors because of their lack of knowledge and misunderstanding about what constitutes a metallic floor. Each floor will vary in looks inch by inch. Even if you don't use a solvent for certain effects, the floor will still have a natural flowing look due to the highs and lows in the surface and the pull of gravity. Think of how a waterfall works.

For commercial jobs, I always ask my customers if they would like to include a vinyl decal of their logo, company name or something that matches their design concept in their floor for a nice finishing touch. But be careful: While decals can look nice they can also take away from the beauty of the floor if they are not designed right. Decals always go on before your clear polyurethane topcoat.

In closing, there are many things you can do to a metallic floor



and many ways to do them. My advice is to experiment and discover that secret recipe that works for you and keep it under wraps. Like an accomplished chef, you may share your general recipe but never reveal that one ingredient that makes your mix a stand-out among others. 🍴

Jon Kopp, who has been coating floors for more than 16 years, owns and operates Quality Epoxy LLC in Gilbert, Arizona. The company exclusively uses Arizona Polymer Flooring epoxies and urethane and Cohills Building Specialties Inc.'s metallic powders. You can follow Kopp on social media under Facebook.com/qualityepoxy or visit his website at www.qualityepoxy.com.

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Photo courtesy of Pablo Aviles

Bomanite, a company with franchises worldwide, has offices in Mexico where stamped concrete has remained the mainstay since 1995. Below, Brad Bowman, one of Bomanite's founders, poses in a roller he invented that never really caught on and demonstrates a tool that makes "ornamented concrete," a term he coined.

Culture of Invention

Bomanite and the dawn of decorative concrete

by Joe Maty

WHAT is it with the San Francisco Bay area as a hotbed of technological and artistic invention and innovation? Is it the climate, the awe-inspiring Golden Gate coastal setting or the pioneer spirit that lives on in this land of dreams and promise?

From trailblazers of electronic gadgetry such as Steve Wozniak and Steve Jobs to musical legends Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead, a whole host of seismic developments of the man-made variety can be credited to the San Fran environs.

The culture of invention and innovation extends to design, architecture and, yes, concrete. It was the Bay area where the brave new world of color and decorative treatment of concrete first made its appearance on the design and construction stage.

The setting: The San Jose/Palo Alto area, home of the renowned Stanford University and the phenomenon that would later be known as Silicon Valley, and Carmel, the picturesque coastal enclave to the south.

The time frame: The Vietnam War-era 1960s.

The players: A young business-school graduate from the Midwest, a Carmel construction craftsman and designer, a Stanford professor, a local businessman and the Peace Corps.

That's concrete?

"I was training for the Peace Corps at Stanford, getting ready for assignment in Peru," says Dan Sieben, the business-school grad from Illinois. As part of the training program, Peace Corps recruits were assigned to perform business-consulting work with a local company. This was intended to serve as valuable experience for the Peace Corps' workers mission in South America — consulting for local businesses there.

For Sieben, the consulting gig was with an aluminum foundry in San Jose, owned by John Johnson. At the end of his stint, Sieben and Johnson went out for cocktails. Johnson showed him photos of



Photo courtesy of The Bomanite Co.



Photo courtesy of The Bomanite Co.



Photo by Parker Kimball, courtesy of Dan Sieben

Early basketweave brick pattern tool.

“ornamented concrete” made by a client, Brad Bowman, with aluminum stamping tools made by Johnson’s foundry. There were three patterns: brick, tile and cobblestone. The term “ornamented” was Bowman’s label.

“And I said, ‘That’s concrete?’” Sieben recalls. Johnson said yes, but the client didn’t know what to do with what he had created. Sieben was fascinated, as he

was experienced with concrete, installing foundations and the like back in Illinois. He went on to work in Peru with the Peace Corps for two years, during which he had time to think about his future. “My dream had always been to get involved with a small company,” he says.

The McDonald’s model

Intrigued with the potential of Bowman’s creations, Sieben devised three different business plans built around their use. The idea he liked best was inspired by the then-novel McDonald’s expansion plan Sieben had learned about at Northwestern — franchising. He sent his plan to Frank Shallenberger, the Stanford professor who had led the corps training program. A successful businessman, Shallenberger liked the concept and invited Sieben to visit when he completed his Peace Corps stint.

“And that’s what I did,” he recalls. In a borrowed car from his dad, he drove to California, making stops in Dallas and Phoenix to talk to architects. Armed with only three photos of Bowman’s work, “I walked into these architects’ offices and I got tremendous response.”

In California, Sieben stayed with Shallenberger and developed a case

study for the professor’s small-business class. Schallenberger, enthused about Sieben’s idea, suggested they visit Bowman in Carmel, where Bowman had done a few “ornamented concrete” installations, mostly for well-heeled residents. One job, a “basket-weave” pattern in the pavement at the corner of 6th and Delores, is still there today.



This photo of Betty A. Sandholdt sitting on her patio in Monterey, California, was part of an early brochure promoting “Processed Colored Brick-Tile.”

Long story short: They agreed to form a company called Bomanite Corp. to commercialize Bowman’s creations. “He came to the table with a process, tools and a patent. Schallenberger brought capital, and I brought my time and business expertise,” Sieben says. It was April 1970.

Another key player — John Wilcox — soon joined the new company. He eventually teamed up with Sieben to help run the growing young enterprise.



John Wilcox and Dan Sieben pose for a cover story for *Concrete Products* magazine.

Designs on Southern California

It was in Southern California, not the Bay area or Carmel, where Bomanite first made its mark on a wide commercial scale. Francis Sullivan and John Dryden, contractors in the Los Angeles and San Diego areas, were installing this ornamented concrete, Bowman told his new partners. They met with them and came up with the blueprint for Bomanite’s franchise agreements.

In these deals, Dryden and Sullivan got a break. There would be no franchise fee in exchange for training any franchisees that would subsequently sign on. “They took a chance and it paid off very well for them,” Sieben says.

The first formal franchise agreement followed soon after with Bay Area Concretes in Livermore, California. The company remains a Bomanite franchise.

Mike Dryden, John Dryden’s son, remembers how Bomanite’s stamp patterns were used to add design flavor to model homes in new housing developments in greater Los Angeles. The patterns were cobblestone, Spanish tile, brick and fish-scale, he recalls.

John Dryden also introduced a new twist — applying a petroleum-based wax that enhanced the look of grout (joint) lines without the labor-intensive grouting process. This gave the stamped concrete a cost advantage over actual tile or masonry surfaces. Soon, the stamped-concrete/wax installation process was being used to “pretty up” display-home sites all over Southern California, Mike Dryden says.



One of Bomanite’s earliest projects included a demonstration project at the Bay Window restaurant in Menlo Park, California.



The Getty Museum.

Photos courtesy of Dan Sieben

A landmark development for John T. Dryden Inc. and Bomanite came in 1973, when the Getty Museum in Malibu wanted the look of ancient stone as part of its design theme. Bowman and Dryden delivered a “random stone” pattern for the concrete installation, complete with a weathered, aged look reminiscent of Pompeii and grass growing among the cracks in the “ruins.”

He eventually assumed leadership of his father’s company in the late 1970s and took the decorative-concrete revolution to Texas when the era’s high interest rates hammered real estate in California.

In Houston, the novelty of decorative concrete went over big, boosted by the oil boom that was underway. “We had tremendous response to our advertising in Texas, where no one had ever seen it before,” Dryden says. He eventually exited the trade, however, as competition flooded the market, eroding decorative-concrete quality and prices. He now heads Earth Toxics Inc., an environmental sampling and analysis company.

Harder and smarter

Southern California also was the setting for a legal drama that, Sieben says, played a key part early on in the company’s future direction. Bomanite brought a patent suit against a San Diego company that had allegedly copied Bomanite’s tools and process. However, Bomanite lost the suit and wound up paying a penalty to the defendant. But, realizing it would not be alone in this new decorative-concrete arena, Bomanite knew it had to work harder and smarter, Sieben says.

“That forced us to just do a better job than anyone else,” he says.

Bomanite raised more capital and developed an aggressive marketing operation. The primary target was landscape architects, who would theoretically specify concrete features in their designs. The initial marketing foray consisted of a four-page brochure with a cover letter and business-reply post card. “Normally if you get a 1 or 2 percent response, you’re happy. This got more than 26 percent response,” from all over the country and overseas, Sieben says.

He then embarked on a two-week sales trip that wound up being a



two-month journey. In each town, he’d visit all the landscape architects who had returned Bomanite’s post card and ask them to name the best contractors who could do an exposed-aggregate driveway. Typically, the designer would name one or two contractors, Sieben says, and that’s who he went after as a franchise target, with unanticipated success.

“We sold it by having them see work done by Sullivan and Dryden. I’d tell prospects to come to California and visit an installation in progress and meet guys doing it. This was a very important part of the process of showing what this thing was, and how they can make money with it. It offered a way to get them away from straight concrete flatwork — something unique to sell their company in a more dramatic way.”



Dan Sieben, Mike Bernath, Brad Bowman and John Wilcox pose for posterity in the late '80s.

Personal relationships were part of the plan

A good marketing strategy was only part of the overall picture. Just as crucial to Bomanite’s long-term franchising game plan was the networking — the sharing of expertise and innovations among the highly diverse and widely dispersed franchisees.

“From that came a tremendous amount of innovation,” Dan Sieben says. “Our agreement with franchisees stipulated that if they come up with something new, they’ve got to share with Bomanite Corp., and we have to share it with the group.” The pace of innovation was fast and furious. The network “created a mechanism for them to share with one another.”

Integral to this networking was the annual meeting of the Bomanite International Society comprising franchisees. “We decided it was important to get together, to drink beer together,” Sieben says. “It was a way to talk about problems and issues in a nice place for three days. We’d start with cocktails on the first evening,” followed by morning meetings and playtime in the afternoon.

“You can ask any Bomanite franchisee, and they will say one of the big things was being in touch with others in the same business, independent contractors sharing ideas and talking.”

These personal relationships also helped to keep the peace about territorial encroachment, Sieben says. “Some issues did arise, but because they knew each other so well from our meetings, these issues would be resolved.”

And, importantly, something to deliver a better return, a higher margin.

Sieben remained with Bomanite as president and CEO until 1989, when he sold his interest in the company.

Expanding the palette

Byron Klemaske, a colleague of Mike Dryden's with John T. Dryden Inc. and later in Texas, remembers Palm Springs as a burgeoning market for this new phenomenon of decorative concrete in the 1970s. Fish-scale patterns — also called “European” — proved to be big sellers, as were the tile look and “running-bond cobblestone.” Color was added with shake-on materials.

Photo courtesy of Pablo Aviles



Bomanite: South of the Border

Pablo Aviles, who heads Bomanite's Mexico franchise, testifies to the value of the exchange that takes place between corporation and franchise. “Support from Bomanite has been crucial. It keeps us on the cutting edge and informed,” says Aviles, CEO of Concretos y Pigmentos S.A. de C.V., Mexico City.

Aviles says Bomanite — with a boost from NAFTA — has helped his company import the decorative-concrete revolution to Mexico, where coastal resorts on both the Caribbean and Pacific are particularly high-demand markets. Stamping remains the mainstay of the trade's design portfolio there, with exposed aggregate beginning to catch on, he says.

“We really had to open and ‘create’ the market,” Aviles says. “There was nothing before.”

“Bomanite taught us how to do it. They were big with support in crisis times and have always innovated, which has given us a lead over our competition.” Expansion initiatives by two other companies in the trade failed, he says. “We have endured because of Bomanite support.”

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Klemaske, now with T.B. Penick & Sons Inc. in San Diego, says imprinting with textures added a groundbreaking dimension to decorative concrete, conveying a more authentic impression of natural stone. An early landmark installation was at Epcot Center in Florida in the early 1980s. Klemaske credits Jon Nasvik, a pioneering decorative-concrete innovator from Minnesota, with developing the plastic tools that could produce such textures.

Diversification continued as Bomanite evolved in the years that followed, with the introductions of microtop finishes, reactive acid stains, toppings for existing concrete, stenciling and water-based color stains. Grasscrete — Bomanite's pervious concrete system — made its debut in the 1990s. Described as a “green alternative to



Photo courtesy of The Bomanite Co.

standard concrete surfaces,” the system can be used for emergency access lanes, delivery access routes, overflow parking areas and for intermittent drainage channels that help prevent erosion.

A huge fishbowl

David DeAngelis, a former Bomanite franchisee who also did a stint as Bomanite's technical director, says the unique relationship of the company and its franchisees was at the heart of the culture of innovation that drove expansion for more than two decades.

“I like to say Bomanite Corp. was the center of a huge fishbowl, with all the fish (franchisees) swimming around. Information flowed from the contractors to the corporation, and my job as technical director was to get it back out to the contractors.” As Bomanite tech director, DeAngelis oversaw workshops where new tooling, materials and techniques were shared with franchisee contractors.

He cites advances in concrete mix design as an example of the flow of intelligence from the field, derived from the real-world laboratory of first-hand experience and experimentation. “Aggregates, ratio of sand and cement, additives, a lot of this was brought into the corporation from contractors.

“What made it all successful was really the licensee network,” DeAngelis says. “And the Bomanite International Society, the organization of contractors that assisted Bomanite Corp. in making the right moves. The advisory board of the society brought problems and concerns — and opportunities — to the corporation.”

Starting the revolution

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enterprise of the '70s remains a major player in the decorative-concrete industry.

"The founders created a great company that continues to operate today with licensed contractors throughout the U.S. and Canada, some of which have been with Bomanite for more than 35 years. The network of qualified, creative licensees is what sets us apart, makes us unique and provides innovation," says Russ Ingersoll, president of Bomanite.

Bomanite "really began the industry," Sieben says. "Before that, you'd see some coloring and exposed aggregate with flatwork as the only architectural things being done with concrete. And maybe a little bit of scoring. Those were the only tools the landscape architect had in his quiver.

"What Bomanite brought was a new design tool for landscape architects. It allowed architects to work with shape, color, design and texture."

Early on, there was skepticism about turning concrete into "cheap cobblestone or cheap tile," but as time went along, designers and concrete contractors realized they really had a creative design tool. And techniques developed in one place were shared with others around the world. It was not just about the lowest bidder getting the job, it was concrete and a contractor with a new design tool.

But without the right hands using this tool, "ornamented concrete" would not succeed, Sieben says. Bomanite or any other tool or color supplier could provide the means, but the craftsman had to make it work, formulating the right mix, the right pour duration, and other application details and techniques.

"It required training and contractor skill, combined." 

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Circle Reader Service Number 29

How to Measure RH in Concrete

Avoid wasted time and money with testing

by Jason Spangler

How valuable is 48 hours to you and your business? Can you put a price on it?

And does the price go up if you run into a moisture-related problem with a concrete slab in the later phases of a project?

These questions aren't merely "academic," of course, because moisture issues in a slab can lead to delays, callbacks and even flooring failures. However, relative humidity (RH) testing not only yields readings of the highest accuracy, but also does so in such a way that you may be able to effectively gain 48 hours' worth of decision-making time as an inherent byproduct of the process.

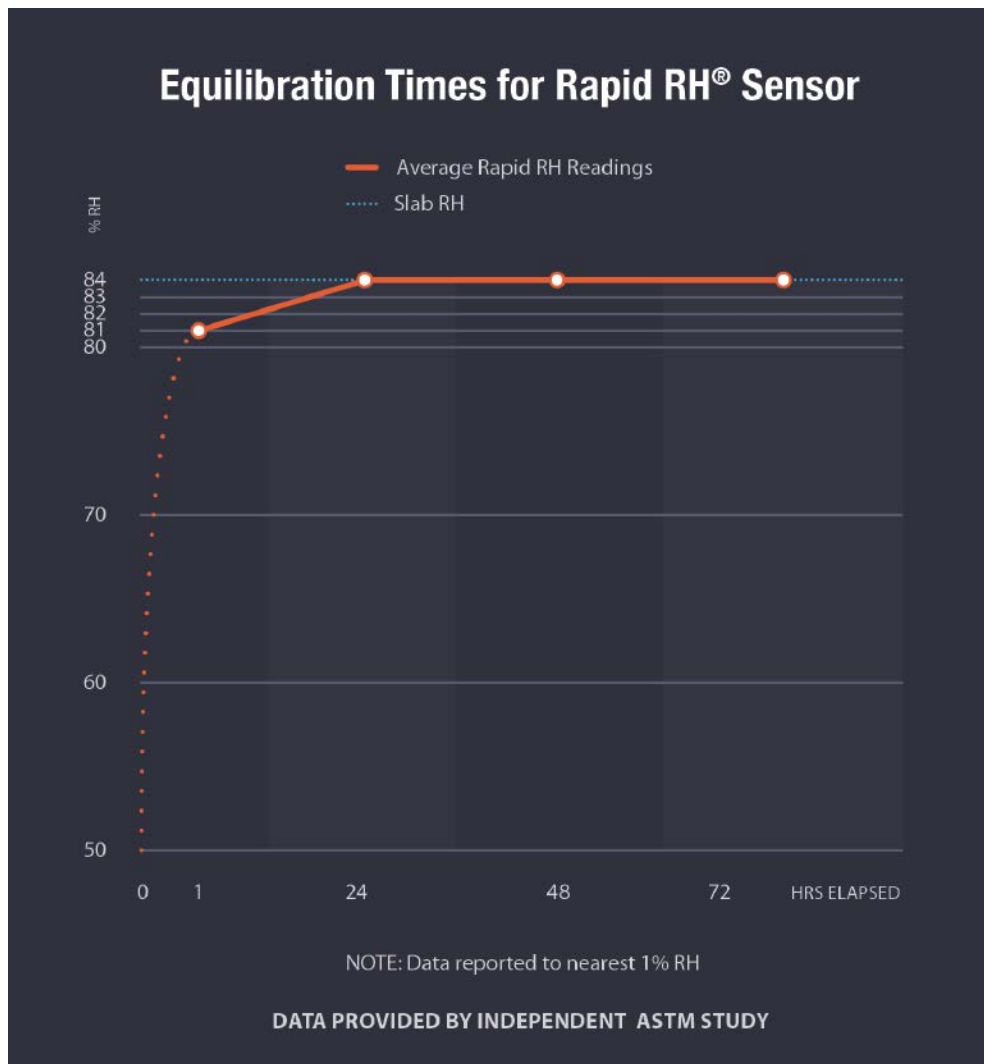
When time is of the essence

Suppose you need an RH reading of 85 percent to proceed with applying finished product to a slab — but at 24 hours you're getting a reading of 92 percent.

Currently, the ASTM F2170 Standard requires you to measure the RH and record it at 72 hours. But it certainly would be helpful if you didn't have to wait the full 72 hours to confidently know what your RH measurement was going to be, wouldn't it?

What if you knew, for example, that your 24-hour reading was a highly reliable indicator of what your 72-hour reading was going to be? This would give you 48 hours to come up with a reasonable solution to proceed if the RH percent reading were higher than your maximum moisture thresholds, or 48 hours to get the project labor and material in place if it were below, all prior to obtaining the final readings at 72 hours.

Well, one of the key findings of a soon-to-be released Precision and Bias (P&B) study that was conducted by an independent laboratory under the direction of an ASTM task group reveals that this is exactly the case with in situ RH testing. When using some manufacturers' RH sensors, you don't have to wait until the 72 hours have elapsed. You can take your RH measurement at 24 hours — a full 48 hours ahead of your final reading — and be reasonably certain that this is essentially the same number you will see at 72 hours.



The ASTM study demonstrates that RH probes basically equilibrate within 24 hours.

ASTM's P&B study

In the study, the laboratory tested six manufacturers' RH products, taking temperature and RH readings at periods of 1, 2 and 4 hours and at 24, 48 and 72 hours.

The 24-hour readings for the tested RH sensors were essentially identical with the 72-hour readings. There was some slight variation, but it fell well within the acceptable range as laid out by the standard.

In other words, the test showed conclusively that when properly conducted tests were done in the field using some manufacturers' RH sensors, users can

confidently and soundly predict what the RH measurement at 72 hours will be, based on the 24-hour measurement.

Of course, you still need to take measurements at 72 hours to fulfill the standard's requirements. But there is no longer a doubt about how long you must wait to get the necessary data to move forward on your project. Twenty-four hours gets you the information you need to make critical, timely business decisions.

Putting it to work in the field

So, how does this work in practice?

First, you would ideally have specific guidelines about RH testing and its requirements included as part of the project's scope of work. This ensures that measurements are taken in a timely manner, that flooring issues are given the attention they need and that possible mitigation steps (should a problem arise) are at least already on the table.

Then, when your slab is ready, you drill your holes and place the appropriate number of sensors for the square footage in accordance with the ASTM F2170 Standard. Now, when you take your 24-hour readings, you're in a position to evaluate how to move forward — even though you're going to come back at the 72-hour mark to check and record your readings to comply with the standard. According to the study, you're 48 hours ahead of the curve.

If your 24-hour readings are within the acceptable range for your finished flooring product, you know that you are going to be looking at essentially the same reading at the 72-hour mark. You have time to ensure that everything is in order and ready to go.

On the other hand, if there is a problem, you can immediately begin the process of

addressing mitigation.

In terms of our opening scenario where we needed an RH reading of 85 percent but were looking instead at 92 percent, this means you can be well underway in terms of putting the pieces of the mitigation puzzle in place by the time you take your readings at 72 hours. You are able to put that 48 hours to good use precisely because you already know you have a moisture-related issue and you know how severe it is.

In general, depending on the readings you're getting and the requirements of your finished flooring product, you'll need time to look into different alternatives, discuss options with project principals, order mitigation product and so forth. That "extra" 48 hours is mission-critical in terms of opening the necessary lines of communication and ensuring maximum efficiency in the ongoing project workflow.

Moisture issues and the RH imperative

Indeed, with decorative concrete projects, where it's especially important for the flooring to truly "look right" in terms of the end user's expectations — and where it can be particularly challenging to deal with

moisture-related complications — having and using such accurate knowledge of a slab's moisture profile in a timely manner is critical. This again speaks to the desirability of including RH testing specifications in the project's scope of work.

When it comes to evaluating a slab's moisture profile before applying a finishing product, 24 hours is a short span of time in which to gather such critical data. But that's what RH testing can provide. Of course, check with the RH sensors' manufacturer for specific usage guidelines.

So whether it's a matter of wrapping things up smoothly and "according to plan," or tackling some form of mitigation in light of a setback, in situ RH testing can yield exceedingly valuable information almost immediately, avoiding costly delays and potentially enhancing project profitability. 📱

Jason Spangler has 17 years' experience in sales and sales management and has successfully launched a variety of products to the market, including the original Rapid RH concrete moisture tests. He currently works with Wagner Meters as its Rapid RH product sales manager.

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FROM ROUGH



TO READY

Before tackling this polishing job at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas, the contractor, DimaShield, prepared a 250-square-foot sample area.

Photos courtesy of David Stephenson, Polished Concrete Consultants

Get the most out of your diamonds



Photo courtesy of SASE Co.

On new construction where you don't want to expose any aggregate, you could start with hybrid tools like those pictured here instead of metal.

by Gail Elber

DIAMOND tools, and how they're used, can make the difference between a profitable polishing job and a not-so-profitable job. So how should contractors select tools that are long lasting and deliver what they want? Read on.

Hard or soft bond?

A set of diamonds starts with metal tools for the initial cut, followed by hybrid tools of various materials that prepare the surface for final polishing with resin tools.

With metal tools, you'll choose a bond, or matrix material, that's soft or hard, depending on the kind of concrete you're working on: a hard metal bond for soft concrete, so the matrix material will wear away and keep exposing diamond grit, and a soft metal bond for hard concrete, so the matrix material won't glaze over and will wear away.

Concrete hardness varies depending on the aggregate available in your area and on how much the slab was troweled. A good way to determine the hardness of concrete is to conduct a Mohs hardness test using a set of specially made scratch pencils. (Use this link to read our article from the May/June 2013 issue about how to do this: <http://bit.ly/1ORpvhH>)



Resin-bond tools are typically used in the final polishing phase.



Metal tools are normally used for the initial cut in the polishing sequence.

Andy Schaaf, concrete marketing coordinator with Jon-Don, favors the Scanmaskin series of metal tooling, which goes from 14-16 grit to 120, because the matrix material comes in a range from quadruple soft to quadruple hard, which enables good matching to the hardness of the concrete. To follow that up, Jon-Don also carries a puck-style ceramic hybrid diamond called CrossMaxx, which is private-labeled for the company, and a series of resin pads called Pro-Maxx.

Some polishers are moving away from

using metal tooling to cut into the surface, and are instead polishing with resin tools or diamond-impregnated pads and calling it a topical polish or burnish. Although there are specific markets for this type of polishing, which is usually budget-driven, concrete polishing consultant Bob Harris prefers the traditional grinding, honing and polishing approach.

“Full slab refinement (via grinding and honing) gives the best results,” says Harris, senior director of decorative concrete services for Structural Services Inc. This is especially

true when the surface has mottling or surface imperfections from the finishing process, he adds. But he understands there are times when topical or cream polishing is necessary.

What grit to start with?

How deep you want to go determines the size of grit you’ll start with, since the size of the biggest chunks of diamond determines how deep the initial scratch pattern will be. “For an exposed aggregate finish you would generally start with a 16-20 grit diamond, for a sand aggregate finish a 40-80, and

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Successive passes with steps 1 through 5 of the Sektor tooling show the finish obtained at each step.

for a cream polish, where you stay right up on the very top, start with a 150-grit metal bond,” says David Stephenson, president of Polished Concrete Consultants.

When you start the transition stage, with hybrid tools, “Drop back a grit to remove the scratch pattern from the previous grit sequence,” Harris says.

On new construction, where light or no aggregate exposure is desired, Marcus Turek, North American sales manager at SASE Co. says you might start with hybrid instead of metal tools.

The polishing process

After the grinding and transition stages, polishing can be done with conventional resin tools or with pads. John Heidmann, a regional sales specialist with Concrete Polishing Solutions, says his company’s most popular tools for polishing are in the Sektor system, which is numbered steps 1 through 5 instead of by grit and is designed to work with any active planetary grinder (i.e., one where the satellite heads are driven).

Compared with other resin tools, he says, the Sektor tools allow faster coverage on a floor because the grinder is run at top speed (roughly 900 rpm at the satellite heads) with the operator walking about 60 feet per minute — comparable to walking behind a lawn mower, Heidmann says.

Step 5 is comparable to a 3,000-grit polish and can be used on conventional concrete, polishable overlays and cementitious terrazzo. Sektor pads are attached to the machine by a hog’s hair pad, which adds flexibility and helps remove swirl marks from lower-grit polishing tools as you go. They have a waffle-like surface that contacts the floor. Sektor tools are designed to be used after initial grinding with a 30-40 and 60-80 grit metal bond with densification, then a transitional tool such as in CPS’s Mach Series.

Troubleshooting

If polishing isn’t going well, Harris recommends changing the procedure systematically. “If the diamond tooling was not cutting efficiently, I drop down to the next grit sequence as a starting point and consider adding weight to the grinder,” he says.

If this doesn’t help, he suggests switching to a softer bond. “If they’re using the softest bond they have, we’ll mist a little bit of water and cut wet, or reverse the

direction of the motor, which can prevent the diamonds from glazing over, since it changes to the other edge of the diamond. In extreme cases, I consider using single-segment diamonds to increase the down pressure to the individual diamond heads,” says Harris.

Schaaf says, “If you turn on the grinder and nothing’s happening, or the tooling is burning through too quickly, that’s the bond. If it’s not aggressive enough, that’s the segment.” Tools with fewer segments apply more pressure to the floor.

Other variables, Schaaf says, are the rpm of the machine and walking speed of the operator. He says initial grinding should start at 500 rpm and increase as grits become finer, with final polishing at 1,400 rpm. Likewise, the operator should walk more slowly when grinding and more quickly when polishing.

Excessive dust, Schaaf says, is a sign that you’ve made too big a jump to a finer grit.

To get a consistent finish between the center of the floor and the edges, Stephenson recommends doing the initial stock-removal grinding of the slab with metal tools before the walls are installed. It’s hard for a person to match the appearance of grinding with metal tools with a hand grinder, even if the same grit is used. But once you get to the polishing stage with resin tools, Stephenson says, it’s easy to match the work of the big grinder with a hand grinder using a pad with the same grit.

You can often use fewer resin passes with the hand grinder than you do with the big grinder, says Harris, as long as there has been clean refinement with all of the metal cuts on the edges.

Grinding the floor before the other building trades start work improves its resistance to chipping, Stephenson says. This is because exposed aggregate transfers the force of a blow over a wider area than surface paste does.

Harris says that although many trainers advocate making just a 4-inch overlap between passes to save time, he recommends a minimum of at least a third of the machine overlap to avoid creating stripes on the floor. On excessively hard concrete, that should be upped to a 50 percent overlap.

A bargain may not be a bargain

If you’re tempted to seek out the cheapest tools, remember this: You don’t always get what you pay for, but you definitely don’t

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There are many different types of diamond tools, including backing plates that play a supportive role in the polishing process.

get what you don't pay for. Stephenson says there's no standard for how much diamond has to be in tools. "One manufacturer may put 2 tablespoons of 80-grit diamonds into their metallic matrix to make their segment, whereas a very cheap manufacturer puts half a teaspoon of 80-grit diamonds into their metallic matrix, and they both call it an 80-grit diamond," he says.

You can't tell how much diamond is in a segment by looking. "You need to evaluate it just like you would a car or any other consumable

item: by the quality of the company that's selling it to you and then by field trial and error," Stephenson says.

"There are more and more Asian manufacturers that really have no quality control, and they sell really inexpensive tooling. I see a lot of smaller contractors end up choosing a foreign manufacturer that doesn't have any quality control because they're \$10 cheaper a set, but they may have 60 percent of the diamond. They feel like they're doing good, but that action results in poor quality projects. The floors don't get cut as flat or profiled as well."

Stephenson says the problem is more acute with inexpensive resin bond tools. "They'll cut down the diamond content and configure the resin to melt faster," he says. "The diamond might wear away faster, but the floor's got a great-looking shine because it's got melted resin on the surface. It looks great at the end of construction, but it wears away very quickly and you get walk paths."

In addition to the amount of diamond in the matrix, the quality of diamond used affects performance. Turek of SASE Co. says synthetic diamonds are graded for quality, and the lower grades tend to round off instead of shattering to expose new cutting surfaces.


Segment shape

In metal-bond tooling, the shape of the segment doesn't really matter, Stephenson says, but it has more of an effect with resin-bond tools. "In a resin diamond, the standard post style brings up a really high shine because they have so many pounds per square inch of pressure on the individual point," he says.

"But if the floor's not really clean when they start, if they get anything trapped under there, like dye residue or dirt, they start to scratch really bad. A puck style (without) those high pressure points can bring up a good shine. Maybe not as good as the post style, but it's harder to get those to start scratching the floor. So the industry as a whole has moved toward the puck style."

Be picky

When you find a brand of tools you like, don't get too attached. Stephenson says that when he was a contractor, he tested different brands of tools every six months to see which performed best. He said manufacturers are always making slight modifications to their bond materials, for example, and a small change can produce a big change in performance.

"At the end of the day, it's a very small part of your project," says Stephenson. "All of your diamond tooling added together is probably 3 percent to 4 percent of the overall cost for your project. Is it worth going to a cheaper product but end up spending more in labor and customer frustration? It's much more important to have good quality, customer service and a consistent product." 

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LIGHT SPEED



UV-cure coatings are back in the mix for specific applications

Photo courtesy of Niagara Machine

by Amy Johnson

CONCRETE artisans and contractors are always searching for the ideal coating, but end-users and equipment manufacturers are behind the latest push for one specific coating formulation — UV-cure.

Clear coatings that cure in seconds by exposure to high-intensity ultraviolet light have many uses, from DVDs to dentistry. The coatings reach full cure in just seconds, so it's easy to see why they would be attractive for concrete, and of interest developed a few years ago. But for most applications, the advantages of fast cure and premium stain and abrasion resistance failed to outweigh the cost of the material and equipment, and the learning curve to use it. Interest leveled off and many formulators exited the market.

But that wasn't the end. Some customers can't wait even eight hours to get back on a floor and others require coatings with high stain and abrasion resistance with little VOCs and off-gassing. For them, UV-cure coatings look like a real problem-solver.



Photo courtesy of HID Ultraviolet

So, prompted by big end-users and nudged along by UV equipment manufacturers, some formulators are introducing new coatings aimed at very specific applications. Here are their stories.

Not just supersize — industrial size

Food acids and forklifts are a deadly combination for any floor, but a way of life in most large food processing plants. Plus, at factory scale, shutting down for even a day to wait for a floor to cure costs thousands of dollars. UV-cure coatings are just about their only option.

A new coating, DiamoPro Systems UV-HS, which is distributed by Niagara Machine, allows contractors to produce a protected floor that can be put into full service as soon as they leave the site. As a one-component aliphatic urethane, the coating is low in VOCs, odorless once cured and has an unlimited pot life. It is also formulated to reduce the marring resulting from forklifts and other machinery.

DiamoPro Systems coating specialist Scott Thome recommends applying the company's surface conditioner to a prepared concrete floor during the surface preparation step. This allows the coating, which is applied at 1-2 mils, to develop a thin, uniform, pinhole-free protective surface. The conditioner also hardens the concrete over time, prolonging the system's service life.

The next step is to apply the coating. Thome recommends using two-person crews on sections of about 2,000 to 3,000 square feet. This allows the crew to apply the coating and cure it before it penetrates too deeply. One person runs the UV-cure

equipment (also called a light and similar in size and shape to a lawn mower) and the other manages the cord. Two coats are recommended. A two-person crew with a large light can efficiently coat and cure about 1,500 square feet in an hour. And this is final cure, not initial cure.

Even a fast-curing polyaspartic may not reach full cure (i.e., be ready for forklift traffic) for up to 48 hours.

The DiamoPro Systems coating seems to be racking up an impressive record. Take, for example, the largest peanut butter plant in the U.S. Each day the equivalent of 11 train cars of peanuts enter on forklifts through a single door. That's a lot of forklift tire spinning. The UV-cure coating on the floor by that door still looks new after a year and a half of that punishing treatment.

Food processing plants are not the only beneficiaries. Several restaurant chains are

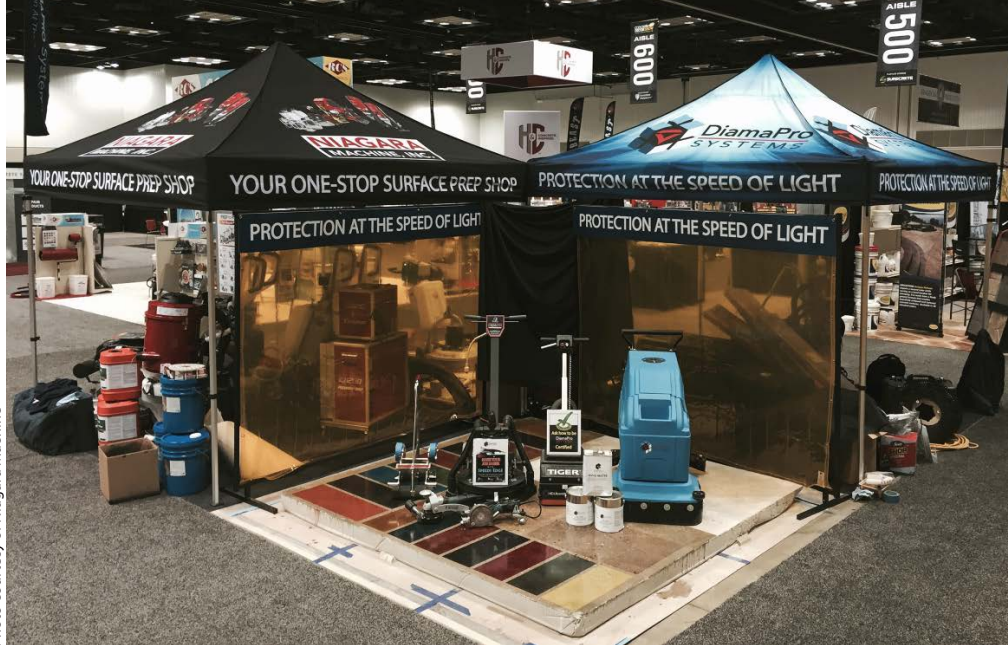
seeing the advantages of a coating that can give their floors immediate protection from food, traffic, even snow-melt chemicals.

Concrete contractor Nicole Poteet, president of Preferred Dallas LLC in Grand Prairie, Texas, likes the DiamoPro Systems coating. After using it in the product distribution center of a large candy manufacturer, she said it seemed more durable and scratch resistant than other UV-cure coatings she's tried.

Big boxes mean big floors

Koster American Corp. is in the floor protection business. One of its large customers, a big box retailer, found that stripping and rewaxing floors every night for eight or 10 weeks and then starting over again was costing about \$300,000 per year, per store. They wanted an easy maintenance system that could be installed

Photo courtesy of Niagara Machine

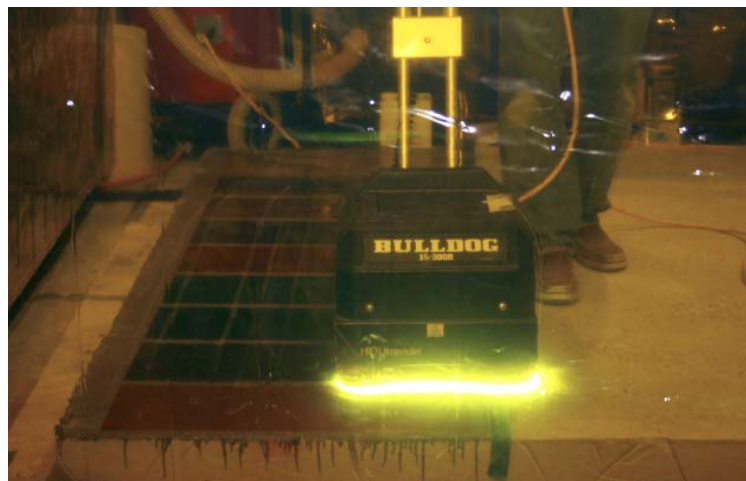


At the 2015 Concrete Decor Show in Indianapolis, Niagara Machine displays its DiamoPro Systems UV-HS products, as well as curing equipment available to purchase or rent.

Photos by Stacey Klemenc



Coating specialist Scott Thome demonstrates the ease of rolling on DiamoPro UV-HS at the 2015 Concrete Decor Show.



Curing was done with a walk-behind Bulldog HID machine.

without interfering with shoppers. Koster owns its own R&D lab and manufacturing, so it developed the Koster UV-Cure Polyurethane Floor Coating to add to its line of floor coating and repair products. The product has zero VOCs, is odor-free and is made in the U.S.

The Koster system forms a film, so no primer is used. The company recommends rolling out three coats of 3 mils each and allowing each coat to dry for a half hour before curing it and applying the next coat. Koster President Raymond Hicks says its testing confirms the coating should last three to five years. If recoating is required in high-traffic areas, it can be accomplished

in most cases by screening and buffing first and then applying a single coat.

Koster customers are property owners, not contractors, but the company trains and approves preferred applicators, who are expected to have access to the UV-cure equipment.

What about countertops?

A lot of early interest in UV-cure coatings came from countertop fabricators because of the potential to resist common food stains and their quick turn-around time. Difficulty in achieving the desired appearance slowed this demand, and several suppliers moved away from the technology. One who stayed

and continued improving it is Surface 519. Its original UV-cure product was a 100 percent solids product called Stonecure. According to owner Troy Thompson this coating delivers “unbelievable stain protection and is very durable.” But, he says, “There is a post-cure sanding process required to achieve a matte or satin finish.”

Sanding can hone the surface down to where it looks very natural, soft and smooth or polish it up to a high gloss that looks like granite or even glass. The end result is impressive, but most contractors are accustomed to being finished when the sealer is applied, so it feels like an extra step to polish afterwards. However, even with the

Fast and prosperous

by Stacey Enesey Klemenc

A great deal of Scott Harrison’s work involves large facilities, so he understands the importance of being able to do a lot in a limited amount of time. In many of his jobs, the manager of BN’A Construction in Frasier’s Bottom, West Virginia, must figure out a way to apply a new floor coating while a plant is largely still up and running.

He credits Matt Walker, a sales technician with Niagara Machine, for bringing DiamoPro UV-HS, an ultraviolet-cured coating designed specifically for concrete floors, to his attention. For quick turn-around jobs, he says, “It’s almost impossible to use anything except something like this.”

The Niagara coating cures instantaneously when exposed to the proper amount and strength of ultraviolet light generated by a portable machine. As soon as it’s dry, it will accommodate foot and forklift traffic.

One of Harrison’s larger jobs involving DiamoPro was at the Charleston Area Medical Center in late 2014, early 2015. The center, which comprises four hospitals, is home to the largest heart program and the highest-level trauma care in West Virginia. Its laundry facility handles all linen, gowns, medical clothing and bedding for all four hospitals, as well as 50 clinics throughout Charleston.

The laundry’s floor was chipping and peeling, Harrison says, and “They couldn’t keep it clean. They had stopped using their floor scrubbers because the paint kept coming off.”

B’NA Construction was hired to remove the epoxy coating on the 30,000-square-foot laundry area floor and the warehouse loading area, add line striping for safety and apply a new floor coating. The maintenance work had to be done without incurring any downtime and, to complicate matters further, the surface prep had to be dustless to comply with health care sanitation requirements.

“That laundry runs 16 hours a day, 365 days a year,” says Scott Thome, a DiamoPro coating specialist who helped with the job. “They told me if they had to close this laundry and ship everything out it would cost \$40,000 a day.”



Although it looks highly polished, the floor in this laundry facility was taken up to a 100-grit finish and coated with a UV-cured coating.

Harrison says the UV-cured coating allowed his company to complete a portion of the floor during the eight-hour stint the laundry was idle each day. “We worked from control joint to control joint,” he says, “and made it look like polished concrete without all the pain.” The shiny floor was only taken up to a 100-grit finish.

In addition to the floors, Harrison says his company also applied the coating vertically to walls in some areas of the hospital with great results. “As soon as the light goes over it, it’s ready,” he says. And it’s easy to clean. The coating forms an antimicrobial finish that’s impervious to the chemicals in cleaning agents.

Having the right equipment is imperative to a successful install, Harrison adds. “Everything is clear so if you have any marks on the concrete, you’ll see them through the coating.”

He concedes that he has purchased a significant amount of money’s worth of equipment from Niagara Machine, including walk-behind propane grinders, HEPA vacuums, walk-behind UV lights and handheld UV lights, but the investment has been worth it. “We make money off of it,” he says.

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polishing step, Thompson says an artisan can seal a countertop, cure it and polish it in one day and then install it the next day. And since the UV-cure coating reaches final cure immediately, there is no need to ask customers to “baby it” for a few days.

Besides being stain-resistant, the coating can withstand hot dishes and pots up to 450 degrees. However, using a knife to cut directly on the counter will dull and damage the finish over time.

To eliminate the post-cure sanding step, Surface 519 recently introduced a new water-based urethane-acrylic resin coating called RockTop UV WB500. This product is available in matte or gloss finishes. The two can be mixed for more of a satin look. Because it is waterborne, it has to dry for anywhere from one to four hours before curing. This still allows a contractor to apply and cure two coats in a day and install the countertop the next day.

Like other UV-cure coating suppliers, Surface 519 trains and certifies applicators. While UV curing is not difficult, Thompson says, “There is a learning curve. The whole process is different — you don’t just apply it and walk away.”

Old solution solves new problem

DIC Imaging Products USA LLC, a long-standing supplier of UV-cure coatings for optical media like Blu-ray Discs, is entering the concrete UV-cure coating market from yet a different direction.

Recently, a manufacturer of UV curing equipment helped the company recognize its technology was well suited for site-applied UV-cure coatings for concrete surfaces, as well as ceramic, terrazzo, vinyl composite tile and wood. DIC’s 100 percent solids floor coating line is called OneCure. Three different systems deliver different looks on concrete: high gloss or satin, wet and darker, or dry and natural. All can be applied on floors ground to 100 to 200 grit. Again, some training is required.

The product is available from the OneCure facility in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. “If you are someone who pays attention to detail and wants to do a good job, you’ll have a lot of success with our system,” says Kevin Orcutt, vice president of sales and marketing.

A word about equipment

One of the biggest hurdles to entering the UV-cure coating market is access to curing

equipment. Poteet, the contractor from Texas, points out it is a big investment for a contractor who’s not sure there will be a customer base. She recommends renting the equipment at least in the beginning and to be sure to include that cost in the bid. Niagara Machine rents equipment supplied by HID Ultraviolet to contractors. Koster works with light supplier Jelight Co. Inc. In addition to its materials, Surface 519 leases and sells handheld lights from HID on its website.

Intense UV light is hazardous to eyes and skin, so proper equipment, protective clothing and, above all, training, are required to keep workers and bystanders safe.

Material costs plus equipment costs can make UV-cure coatings expensive. But for those end-users who need a strong, durable finish with excellent chemical resistance and don’t have the luxury of time, a UV-cure coating may be the best option. 🚚

🌐 www.diamaprosystems.com

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To Reseal or Not to Reseal?

That is the Question

by Chris Sullivan

RESEALING exterior decorative concrete is probably the most misunderstood and least-studied process in our industry. It has the potential to be a repeat revenue stream or a headache that never really goes away. I must admit, in the past 15 years I've become more guarded on the recommendations I hand out in regard to resealing. I used to be quick with advice for any job, no matter how far gone the sealer. "Just clean it and reseal every year or two" is still the standard advice I hear regarding resealing.

I believe this "one size fits all" strategy for resealing is a significant reason for many of the sealer issues the industry faces today. I also believe that manufacturers and installers alike need to focus more attention on the process of resealing, as well as the strategies and recommendations they provide to clients. Today I am much more cautious when it comes to resealing instructions, usually recommending that the surface be stripped of all existing sealer. That advice never goes over well, as there are not many jobs as miserable as stripping sealer from stamped concrete. I get that, but experience has taught me that if you are not 100 percent certain of what is on the surface, or the job is not in good condition, stripping is the best way to go.

I'm not sure where or when I heard it first, but the saying, "no matter what was done before you, the last one to touch a job, owns it," has long been one of my standard lines. This could not be truer than when it comes to resealing.

What should you look for when it comes to the go/no-go decision of taking on a reseal job? Most important, and the one you should never ignore, is your internal voice. Always listen to that "little voice" inside your head or the "gut" feeling that says run if it doesn't feel right.

Understanding acrylics

Since 95 percent of exterior decorative concrete work is sealed with acrylic products (cure and seal or sealer), we will focus on those sealer systems. When you look at the chemistry of resealing, you must understand two key processes: cohesion and adhesion. Adhesion is the bonding force a material has to another substance, such as sealer to concrete. Cohesion is the bonding force between the same substances, such as one sealer molecule to another sealer molecule.

When a sealer is applied, we need good cohesion of the sealer molecules to each other to form the sealer film, while we also need good adhesion of the sealer film to the concrete. When resealing, both adhesion and cohesion may take place depending on the sealer type. This is where solvent-based acrylics literally and figuratively outshine water-based sealers.

Solvent-based sealers applied directly over existing solvent sealers can melt or reliquify the original sealer coat. This allows the two to become one, giving a solvent-based reseal the benefit of both cohesion and adhesion. Water-based sealers don't have the solvent strength to melt or reliquify the initial coat, so they only exhibit adhesion when resealing.



Photo courtesy of Chris Sullivan

This pool deck with moisture issues was resealed over existing contamination. Within weeks, the new layer of sealer failed.

A lack of cohesion or adhesion is the primary culprit for reseal failures. This often occurs if the existing sealer film is dirty, contaminated, already in failure or is just too thick. Keep in mind that acrylics are designed to be a thin film (1 to 3 mils) and year-after-year resealing increases the thickness and stresses the sealer, eventually leading to premature failure.

Factors to consider

Here are a few key factors to help you determine whether you should reseal exterior decorative concrete:

- **Too often the job doesn't need to be resealed.** In many cases plenty of sealer still remains and the issue is more about the owner's desire to have that clean, shiny, new look back. Adding coat after coat of sealer, year after year, only to bring back gloss is a recipe for disaster. Look into sealer rejuvenators which restore shine without increasing sealer thickness.
- **Slow down.** Unless it has been 10 years since the last sealer was

applied, or the surface has been stripped or never been sealed, chances are there is more sealer there than you can see. Most reseals are applied just like the first application. This usually doesn't provide enough time for one coat to adhere to the first. With solvent-based acrylics it takes 60 to 90 seconds for the new reseat coat to wet out the existing sealer. This involves slowing down, working small areas, rolling the reseat into the existing sealer and lots of patience.

- **Resealing can't fix a bad job.** Resealing will not fix issues with the concrete, such as color failure or efflorescence. Too often I get called on jobs where a reseat is failing, and now the installer and owner are dealing with two issues — the original problem and a failing reseat. Understanding and identifying issues before resealing are critical. If in doubt, walk away or strip the sealer to address the root of the problem.
- **Resealing will not fix flaking and/or chipping sealer.** It took me years to finally learn that once the sealer starts delaminating from the concrete, resealing is only a Band-Aid. You may improve the look for a little while, but the original sealer issue still exists and it will come back, typically worse than ever.
- **Manage your client's expectations.** Too often homeowners are under the misconception that their stamped concrete patio, which is subject to wind, rain, dirt and sun, should still look shiny and new two years after it was initially sealed. The response usually involves resealing to restore gloss, when rejuvenating or cleaning is all that's needed.
- **Think tires!** Do you replace tires on your vehicle every year, no matter their condition? I doubt it. Most people replace tires when

the tread is worn. That can vary based on the tires, how much and on what they are driven. Same goes for sealers. Reseal when the sealer is gone, not based on the calendar.

- **Look at other options.** Products like sealer rejuvenators, stains and penetrating sealers are becoming popular because they bring life back to dull and worn sealers. Penetrating sealers can add waterproofing and stain-resistant properties to existing sealers. They are not a magic fix, but they do offer an alternative to just throwing more sealer on the surface.

I want to be clear that I'm not advocating every job be stripped or that you should avoid resealing. I think the industry as a whole should pay more attention to the process of resealing, better understand the products, and better educate and manage clients on what to expect long term from exterior sealed decorative concrete. When you consider how much stamped concrete is out in the market, the percentage of sealer-related complaints and failures is actually pretty low. We just hear about the problem jobs.

I suggest you pick and choose reseat jobs with a very tight set of parameters. You'll probably walk away from more than you agree to take. Expand your toolbox of products, and don't enter into any job before seeing it. Treat each case independently, look at the symptoms, diagnose the problem and follow through with a well thought-out solution. 🛠️

Chris Sullivan is vice president of sales and marketing with ChemSystems Inc. He has led seminars and product demonstrations throughout North America. Reach him at questions@concretedecor.net.

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Hybrid Sealer Promises a Change for the Better

by Doug Carlton

It's no secret that most people think sealers are the Achilles' heel of decorative concrete. You can do nearly everything perfectly while installing your concrete masterpiece only to have something like a sealer decimate all your good efforts. That's the bad news. Lucky for us, there's some good news, too. It's well beyond time to rethink how exterior decorative concrete is sealed and then move forward with the peace of mind knowing our industry is on the verge of a major breakthrough.

Let's agree that the majority of exterior decorative work, if sealed, is sealed with a solvent-based acrylic that leaves a glossy film on the surface. This process usually leaves the concrete looking shiny and glossy, and then over the course of weeks or months the coating acquires a more satin sheen. The vibrant shine will nearly always last long enough for checks to clear but, typically, soon after that adverse issues often arise. The situation is frequently diagnosed as a sealer applied too thickly to allow moisture to pass beyond the concrete surface, thereby creating a white or cloudy appearance just beneath the sealer. At this point the sealer is in the early stage of failure. The prognosis is often stripping, which is no easy feat, and then reapplying the same old sealer that didn't work right in the first place.

In my opinion, you never stood that good of a chance for long-term success regardless of how the sealer was applied. But things are changing for the better!

Try it, you'll like it

I've personally been searching for sealer solutions since the first time I installed stamped concrete many years ago. Recently, I've become optimistic that the problem could be solved. What if a sealer could be formulated using a low-build, low-sheen product that allows concrete to "breathe" beyond the sealer membrane and let moisture escape? What if the same sealer is thin enough that it's not only breathable but it also won't white out or peel? The good news is that there is a hybrid sealer



Photo courtesy of Doug Carlton

in production that's VOC compliant and readily available in every state across the United States.

Most of you know I wouldn't be wasting good space touting a sealer without testing it. I first tried it by resealing a small patio at my home. The sealer dried in moments and left a subtle, but not glossy, sheen. It's worth noting the hybrid sealer has less chemical odor compared to typical film-type sealers I've used in the past.

After feeling sealer confident, I next applied two coats over 1,000 square feet of newly stamped concrete that had cured for 30 days. To say the sealer is user friendly is an understatement. The sealer comes from the can ready to brush, roll or spray with no dilution needed. We cut edges with a brush just prior to spraying the field, noticing firsthand how easily the material applied to the clean concrete and admiring the low-build consistency of the product.

The hybrid sealer sprays nicely but thinner than what most of us are used to. The first pass, or coat, will be evident but not glossy like most traditional film-type sealers. The first coat dried in minutes, allowing me

to retrace my steps by applying a second coat evenly over the stamped concrete surface. I noticed my sprayer's Viton-protected seals couldn't hold the product from slightly dripping but it left no visible drip marks on the sealed surface. Both sealer coats combined factored into around 200 square feet per gallon usage. I paid slightly less than \$40 per gallon for the sealer, which I bought in 5-gallon containers.

My customers loved the end result of two coats of this sealer. Personally, I noticed the surface was less glossy and more slip-resistant than what was produced with sealers I've used in the past.

Thin is in

Bob Chatterton with Trinic has used reason and common sense to develop this sealer, called Stamp Shield. I'm told Stamp Shield originated by necessity as well as encouragement from a decorative concrete contractor at his wit's end over sealer failure. Some of you can surely relate. The folks at Trinic believe the key is formulating a breathable sealer that achieves long-term success by utilizing a low-build, low-sheen

sealer applied in thin layers.

Trinic's Stamp Shield description claims the sealer will not white out or peel, will waterproof in 10 minutes and is compatible with most solvent reseals. The solvent catalyst is acetone, which means it is VOC compliant across the U.S. — even in California where xylene regulations have taken the bite out of many sealers and coatings.

Feel free to let me know your take on this or any other sealer type you feel will enhance our decorative concrete industry. Even with great advancements, we still have room for improvement and such improvement will make our industry stronger for all. 📧

Doug Carlton is working on his third decade in the decorative concrete industry. He is the owner of Carlton Construction, located at the base of the Big Horn Mountains in northeastern Wyoming. Doug can be reached at carltondoug@sbcglobal.net.

Editor's note: The opinion expressed in this article is that of the author. The mention of a specific product does not imply endorsement by Professional Trade Publications or Concrete Decor magazine.

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The Elements of Style for Contractors: Having Fun with Faux Textures

by Gaye Goodman

I GOT into acid staining as an extension of my former life as a painter on canvas. In fact my earliest works were not on canvas, but on hardboard panels mounted on stretcher bars and coated with plaster of Paris.



Photos courtesy of Gaye Goodman

While the plaster was wet, I could incise it or swoosh it around on the surface. Once it had hardened, I would sand the whole surface with a finish sander, so the actual profile was seldom more than 1/8 inch thick. I thickened my acrylic paints with marble paste and used a stiff brush or palette knife for more texture. When the layers were dry, I could make a thin glaze of dark or iridescent paint and wash it over the whole piece. Another sanding would expose bits of bright color emerging from the glaze.

I always loved antique weathered doors and these paintings were an attempt to replicate and hasten the weathering process. To my chagrin they ended up looking unlike doors, but more like satellite views of other planets. So I went with the flow and made a series called “Postcards from Space.” Most of them were small — about 15-by-19 inches like this one — and sold well to collectors of small works.

A texture was born

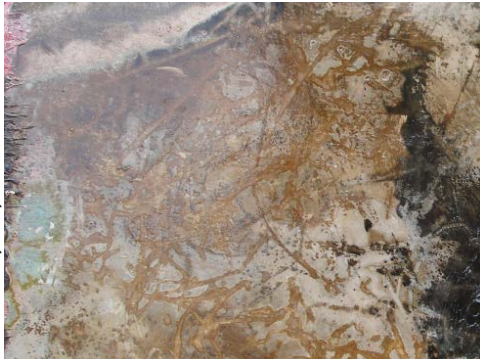
When I landed my first staining job in 1994 of an old restaurant floor, I wondered, “How can I get the look of texture on this floor without creating cleaning problems?” The L. M. Scofield instructions said, “Rags can be placed on the wet stain for a marbled look.” After a trip to the thrift store for old sheets, and some false starts, our first simulated marble texture was born. We discovered that dry fabric left no mark, so every rag had to be soaked in water, wrung out and kept nearby in advance of staining (*see results below*).

As my company grew, I usually hired my neighbors — struggling artists and musicians who also thought that it was fun

to get cool effects with humble materials. We never counted the cost of our labor, although it would take us three or four times as long to stain a floor this way. However, after spending half a week on wall masking, cleaning and patching, it never struck me as excessive to take a few more hours to actually apply the stain.

We soon found that for straw, ground corncobs or plastic to leave a mark it must go down damp before our sprayed stain had soaked into the slab and be left undisturbed for the full four-hour cure time. On a very absorbent slab, my three-person crew would rush from one small section of floor to another, like hyperactive characters in a Charlie Chaplin movie.





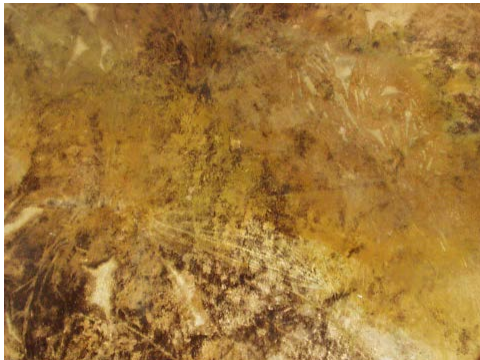
A sample board with damp rags placed on water-based stains.



Miracle-Gro crystals thrown into acid stain.



Thick plastic and ground corncobs.



Thin plastic on double-diluted Dark Walnut stain.



Acid etching of stain through cut felt fabric.



Alfalfa soaked in brown acid stain, drained and scattered across a lighter color.

Simulating textures

Above are some thumbnail images of our favorite simulated textures.

I love the remarkable effects possible with stamping and grinding, but the heavy equipment and lifting are beyond my strength. Many artists have a penchant for the accidental line and natural feel of scattered materials, since patterns found in nature are our main inspiration. Therefore, I still get my best materials from feed stores and thrift shops.

I have not yet ventured into floor

polishing, but am very impressed with the potential it offers to inlay a variety of natural and man-made objects. It is remarkable that soft inlays such as shells can be polished and flattened right alongside metal and glass. Carlos Perez, of Custom Concrete Designs in Florida, is doing some great work with inlays in polished floors (*below and at right*). I consider inlays to be simulated texture, since the floor is still left flat and easy to clean.



Admiring outcomes

I am envious of countertop artisans who have the opportunity to use translucent concrete and fiber optics, such as Jeff Kudrick of JM Lifestyles. The company won three awards in the American Institute of Building Design's residential design competition in 2013 in the decorative concrete category, one for this countertop in a basement which netted a second place (*below*). He won first place in Residential New or Renovation for this handsome shower lined with primarily flat, simulated walnut paneling, a real tour de force of visual texturing (*at right*).

Whether you decide to play with actual textures or illusory ones, the flow of small details within the larger composition of your



Photos courtesy of JM Lifestyles LLC

slab will add the equivalent of what painters call "expressive brushwork." The goal is to get a second and third look from your viewers.

I think it's an awful shame to saw cut an integrally colored slab of concrete into tiny squares and laboriously grout them all, just so the owner can say, "See, it looks just like tile!" What is the point of imitating a cheap and commonplace product when they might have had a floor which looks like huge slabs of expressive and varied stone?

A few years ago we used all our skills to stain the home of a woman in Santa Fe who collects silk Persian carpets. I adore Persian carpets and would be thrilled to own just one. As she handed me the check she said, "I'm going to put most of my carpets into storage, so I can enjoy the wonderful patterns you made on my floors." Wow, the rewards don't get any better than that! 🗑️

Gaye Goodman is an artist who fell in love with acid staining 20 years ago. She and her company, based in the high desert of New Mexico, work on decorative projects across the Southwest. Contact her or see training materials on staining at www.gayegoodman.com.



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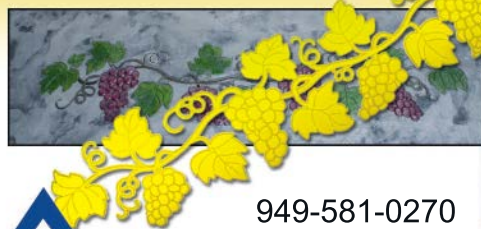
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Circle Reader Service Number 02

Slip-resistant Surface a Win for Vegas

by Vanessa Salvia

AQUAFLEX, a proven resilient coating, is in demand among luxury hotels in Las Vegas, including Mandalay Bay, which has used it twice, and the Four Seasons, an iconic, art deco-inspired hotel on the Las Vegas Strip. The 14,000-square-foot job shown here was installed early in 2015 for the Four Seasons, but the coating looks great even on jobs from years past.

"We put the Moorea Beach Club areas down for Mandalay Bay in 2009 and those areas still look good after seven pool seasons," says Jim Brendel of Pebble Stone Coatings Inc., a locally owned Las Vegas company.

Pebble Stone Coatings is getting more of these jobs through its Play Surface Coatings division, as hotels discover the coating goes on easy, is resistant to pool chemicals and looks great longer than other surfaces. AquaFlex utilizes different colors of urethane pebbles that can be combined in endless color patterns and shapes, including logos. The Four Seasons chose to use cream, gray, black and tan. Plus, it's a slip-resistant material so it reduces the hotel's liability for falls on wet surfaces.

Las Vegas hotels typically close down their pools for seasonal maintenance and improvements during the winter months, which means Pebble Stone Coatings is busy installing AquaFlex during mid-winter. The coating is in increased demand, Brendel says, because other, more rigid materials tend to get hairline cracks when the concrete shifts underneath. And when dirt gets in these



Photos courtesy of Pebble Stone Coatings

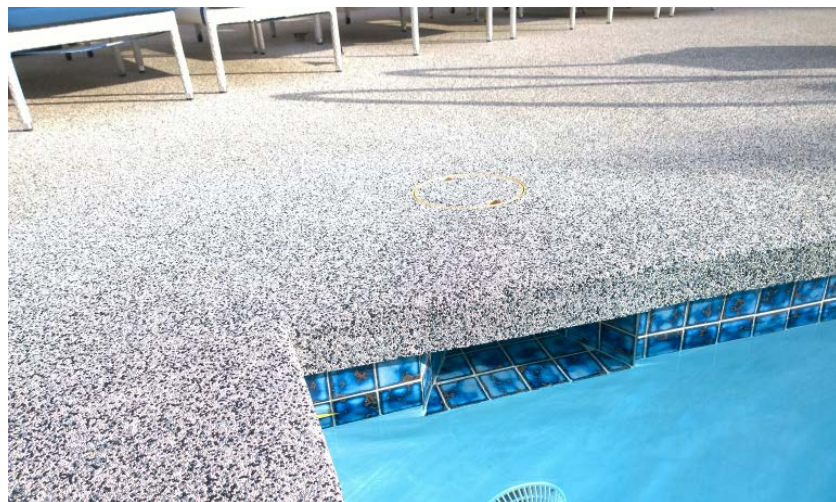
cracks they can turn an otherwise beautiful pool area into one that looks aged. "That's a major concern for Las Vegas hotels," he says.

AquaFlex tends to flex a bit with the concrete to avoid those cracking issues, and hotels like the look. "AquaFlex is a soft material with a high-end look and long

usable life which, combined with its slip resistance and ability to be cleaned, result in a lower cost of ownership than other materials the hotels have been using," he says.

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