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Vol. 16 No. 8 November/December 2016



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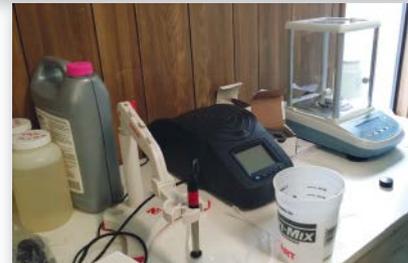
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From the Publisher's Desk

Dear Readers,

Concrete Decor will soon embark on its 17th year of service to the architectural and decorative concrete market. As we prepare for another exciting year of coverage, I must share some recent experiences that heighten my level of appreciation for the industry we represent.

Right before this year's show, I started my first concrete polishing project at our church in Alavadore, Oregon. The job began with removing mastic from a carpet that was applied to the concrete floor 40+ years ago. I later discovered that was the easy part.

Leaving the floors usable for church activities, I then headed south to prepare for the seventh annual Concrete Decor Show's workshops in San Diego, which involved an enormous amount of prep. You can read about our accomplishments for our chosen nonprofit organization in this issue.

As with prior shows, working with industry experts is always a learning experience. I love it because it deepens my understanding of the processes associated with everything from surface preparation, weather-related issues and proper use of tools and equipment to safety challenges, following manufacturers' directions and site cleanup. All this reminded me again that sidestepping any of these procedures only leads to less than favorable results.

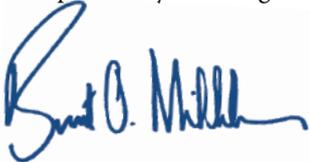
When the show ended and I started the two-day drive home, my thoughts turned to the church project. I was tired and didn't want to think about work of any kind but I knew the project wouldn't get done on its own. So, on my way, I grabbed a few Prosocon supplies and some abrasives at Runyon in Sacramento.

Long story short, with help from my wife and a friend, it took several more evenings and a couple of Saturdays to finish up. While the congregation is ecstatic with the transformed concrete, I must admit this polishing project kicked my butt. It was challenging to take my "head knowledge" and convert it to practical applications. Nothing about the project was easy, but the results were worth the effort and — oddly enough — I want to do it again!

The moral of this story is: I get it. And I want you to know your hard work in the field each day is both honored and respected here at *Concrete Decor*.

As we wrap up 2016, I invite you to join us at the World of Concrete in January where we're sponsoring a new outdoor event called Decorative Concrete LIVE! And stay tuned for an important announcement about the 2017 Concrete Decor Show this fall in Florida. We've got some great plans in the works.

Hope to see you in Vegas,



Bent Mikkelsen
Publisher



On the cover: When the seventh annual Concrete Decor Show ended its San Diego visit, it left behind a spruced up facility at UC San Diego Health, thanks to the hard work of dedicated workshop instructors, show attendees and Concrete Decor staff. See related story beginning on p. 14.

Photo by Steven Ochs

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Publisher: Bent O. Mikkelsen
bent@protradepubinc.com
(877) 935-8906 x201

Editor: Stacey Enesey Klemenc
stacey@protradepubinc.com
(757) 427-6355

Assistant Editor: Jacqueline Valle
jacqueline@protradepubinc.com
(877) 935-8906 x204

Creative Director: Bill Simpson
bill@protradepubinc.com
(877) 935-8906 x203

Web Design: Steven Wolff

Writers: Lindsay Chelf
Greg Iannone
Rick Lobdell
K. Schipper
Chris Sullivan

Business Manager: Sheri Mikkelsen

Circulation: Meg Kilduff

Central & Western Sales: Morgana Dundon
morgana@protradepubinc.com
(877) 935-8906 x208

Northeast Sales: Bill Kaprelian
billkap@protradepubinc.com
(262) 729-2629

Subscriber Services: (877) 935-8906 x200
circulation@protradepub.com
Fax: (541) 228-9972

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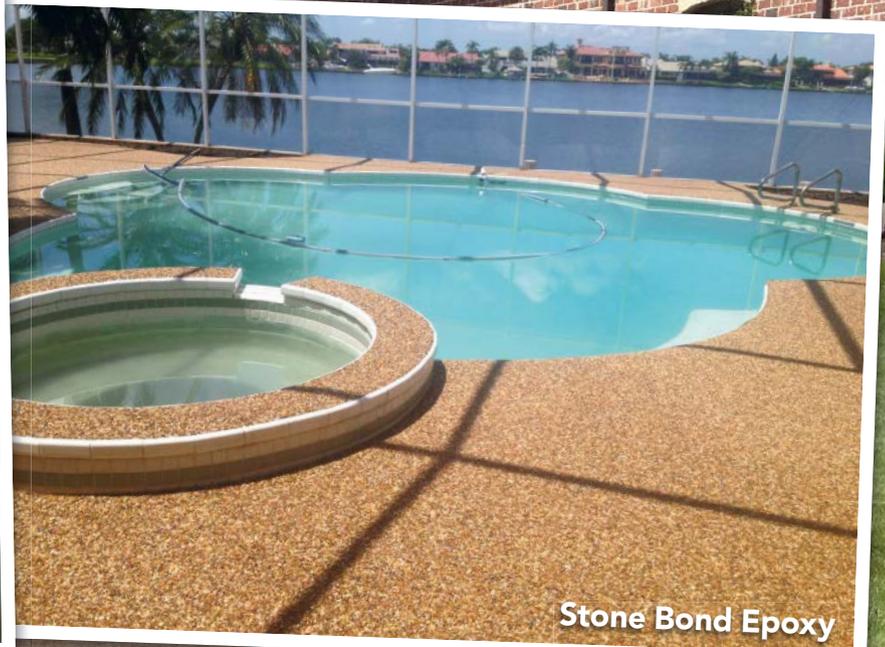
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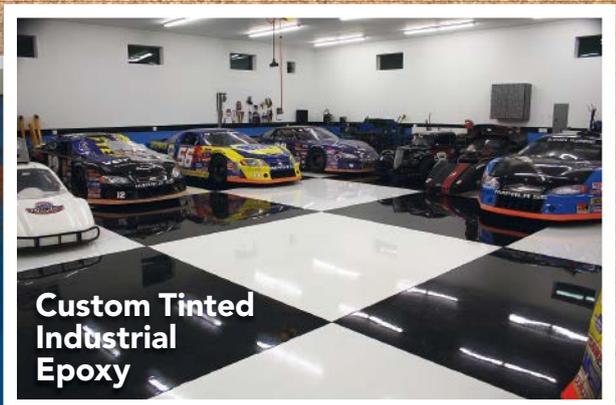
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Lindsay Chelf is the marketing coordinator at Constructive Communication Inc. With almost a decade of experience in writing and editing for publication, her specialty is the use of graphic design, video and social media in marketing for the architecture, engineering and construction industry. Chelf can be reached at (614) 541-9868 or at lchelf@constructivecommunication.com. See Lindsay's article on page 22.



Greg Iannone is sales manager for Innotech Decorative Concrete Products headquartered in Twinsburg, Ohio. He has worked in the concrete construction industry for more than 30 years and has provided training seminars throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico, as well as Mexico and Japan. He can be reached at (877) 829-7880 or Greg@Innotechdcp.com. See Greg's article on page 24.



Rick Lobdell, a classically trained artist with a master's in fine arts in painting from the Savannah College of Art and Design, has also studied math and drafting. In this series, the owner of Concrete Mystique Engraving in Tennessee will explain how he lays out his well-known designs. He can be reached at rick@concretemystique.com. See his column, "Design Theory," on page 46.



Chris Sullivan is vice president of sales and marketing with ChemSystems Inc. and a member of the Concrete Decor Hall of Fame. He has led seminars and product demonstrations throughout North America. Reach him at questions@concretedecor.net. See his column, "Concrete Questions," on page 44.

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New software improves submittals process

BSD and Kahua have integrated BSD's automated construction specification-writing software, BSD SpecLink-E, with Kahua's project management and collaboration platform.

This integration streamlines and enhances the specifications to the submittals process and improves the coordination between the architect and the contractor on construction projects. It's the first collaborative effort in a strategic partnership targeted to help the real estate and construction industry optimize complex intercompany business processes.

Because BSD SpecLink-E employs a sophisticated relational database rather than word-processing files, the architect's submittal requirements are assembled automatically into a Kahua import file that includes the full text of each, organized into work categories.

Within the Kahua project management software, the submittals data from SpecLink-E can be expanded to track dates and material selections. Submittals also can be routed via workflow for review and approval.

(888) 273-7638
www.bsdssoftlink.com

IFPE 2017 to explore robotics

The International Fluid Power Exposition 2017 will host the fluid power industry's prestigious Energy Efficient Hydraulics and Pneumatics Conference in addition to offering hands-on "college course" education on the effective use of hydraulics in mobile equipment.

The EEHPC focuses on concepts and techniques to keep fluid power (hydraulics and pneumatics) systems operating at peak efficiency to reap significant energy savings. The conference traditionally includes a "future of fluid power" program, which at IFPE 2017 will explore robotics challenges and opportunities.

IFPE and the co-located CONEXPO-CON/AGG exhibitions will be held March 7-11, 2017, at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Nevada, targeting the fluid power/power transmission/motion control and construction and construction materials industries.

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CIM seeks donations for 2017 auction

The Concrete Industry Management program, a business-intensive program that awards students with a four-year bachelor's degree in concrete industry management, is seeking donations for its 2017 CIM auction to be held at the World of Concrete.

The auction is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 18, 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.

Proceeds from the auction will benefit the CIM National Steering Committee 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, the Executive MBA program, as well as help fund scholarships.
www.csuchico.edu

Three Prosoco cleaners earn EPA Safer Choice label

Three products from Prosoco's Consolideck concrete flooring line have met the Environmental Protection Agency's safer product standards. DailyKlean, DailyKlean Ultra 15 and DailyKlean Ultra 30, phosphate-free cleaners for concrete floors, have now officially earned the EPA's Safer Choice label.

The EPA Safer Choice label means that every ingredient in the product has been reviewed by EPA scientists, is safer for people and the planet, meets EPA safer product standards and is effective.

DailyKlean, DailyKlean Ultra 15 and DailyKlean Ultra 30 all offer more positive environmental and human health characteristics than conventional cleaners for polished concrete floors. The products contain no phosphates, hazardous solvents, environmentally harmful surfactants, fragrances or dyes.

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EVENT CALENDAR

Colorado Concrete Expo
Dec. 14, Brighton, Colo.
www.coloradoconcreteexpo.com

World of Concrete
Jan. 16-20, 2017, Las Vegas, Nev.
www.worldofconcrete.com

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Blastrac Global acquires Cyclone Technology

In October, Blastrac Global acquired Nilfisk Cyclone Technology from the Nilfisk Group. The acquired entity is a wholly owned subsidiary of Blastrac Global and is now called Cyclone Technology LLC.

Cyclone Technology is a manufacturer of high-pressure and low-pressure surface preparation/cleaning equipment, using proprietary and patented technology. The company will operate as a separate entity within the Blastrac Global Group, but the group plans to use its sales and distribution centers around the world to assist in sales and service activities to enhance the experience of Cyclone customers.

Bill Bamford will continue to serve as Cyclone's vice president/general manager. All employees of the Cyclone Team remain with the company.

☎ (800) 256-3400

🌐 www.blastrac.com

Spancrete partners with Shanghai builder

Spancrete, one of the world leaders in precast/prestressed concrete building solutions, has partnered with a builder in Shanghai to produce modern precast buildings in Shanghai. The company, Shanghai Construction Group, is building multilevel, multifamily homes with the new Spancrete precast system.

The precast system includes a Spancrete GT-120 Slipformer System, which produces Hollowcore slabs. Through this partnership, Shanghai Construction Group now produces its own precast concrete building components with the guidance and resources of Spancrete's 70 years of expertise.

Spancrete has been a long-time provider of precast solutions to the China market, with nine machines currently producing, but this is its first Shanghai precast facility.

☎ (414) 290-9000

🌐 www.spancrete.com

Firm releases results from 2017 marketing survey

Constructive Communication Inc., a specialist in public relations and marketing communications for professional service firms and members of a variety of technical industries, recently released the results of its 2017 Marketing Trends Survey.

Participants in the online survey include professionals in the architecture, engineering, construction and other technical industries from across the United States. According to Kimberly Kayler, president of CCI, the purpose of the survey was to identify challenges in the technical industries the firm serves — to include chemical, architecture, engineering, construction and electronics — and how the marketing sector is responding.

Businesses are realizing a need for more mobile-friendly websites, as half or more of web traffic is coming from mobile devices, according to SimilarWeb's State of Mobile Web US 2015 report. Likewise, approximately 55 percent of all emails are now read on mobile devices, according to Litmus software's "Email Analytics."

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ASCC honors safety award winners

Concrete contractors with exemplary safety records for 2015 were recognized by the Safety & Risk Management Council of the American Society of Concrete Contractors at the association's annual conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in September.

W. Burr Bennett Awards for Safety Excellence were given to specialty contractor Structural Preservation Systems, Columbia, Maryland, and general contractor Sundt Construction Inc., Tempe, Arizona. These awards are presented in partnership with CNA, Chicago, to contractors that place the highest priority on safety. Additional awards based on the incident rate for 2015 were presented to general and specialty contractors in four categories.

General contractors receiving the Outstanding Safety Achievement Award for the lowest incident rate were Walbridge, Detroit, Michigan (over 500,000 work hours); Briegan Concrete Contractors, Clayton, North Carolina (120,000-500,000 work hours), and Gregory Construction Services, Columbus, Mississippi (less than 120,000 work hours).

Specialty contractors receiving the Outstanding Safety Achievement Award were Structural Preservation Systems, Columbia, Maryland (over 200,000 work hours); Lloyd Concrete Services, Forest, Virginia (70,000-200,000 work hours); and Poppoff Inc., Moxee, Washington (less than 70,000 work hours).

 (866) 788-2722

 www.ascconline.org

Chromaflo Technologies changes hands

American Securities LLC has partnered with management at Arsenal Capital Partners and Nordic Capital Fund and signed a definitive agreement to acquire Chromaflo Technologies Corp., a leading producer of proprietary, high-performance colorants and chemical dispersions.

The transaction is expected to close in November 2016 and is subject to customary closing conditions and regulatory approvals. Financial terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

 (440) 997-5137

 www.chromaflo.com

TRANSITIONS

Lackmond Products Inc., a leading supplier of diamond tools, carbide tools and equipment, has named **Scott McCoy** as territory manager overseeing the company's sales strategies and business development on the West Coast. He brings more than 16 years of experience in sales and marketing in the construction and industrial industry. Prior to joining Lackmond, McCoy was the sales and marketing manager for Tajima Tool Corp., a leading Japanese hand tool manufacturer out of Torrance, California.



Also joining Lackmond Products is **Kevin Sullivan**, who was named regional sales manager overseeing the company's sales and business development in Ontario, Canada. He brings more than 25 years of experience in sales and distribution within the construction and industrial markets. Prior to joining Lackmond Products Canada, Sullivan ran his own sales agency, Nivek Marketing, for nearly 24 years.



Paul Scheidmantel has been promoted to sales director of Arizona Polymer Flooring, overseeing the company's business development and expansion strategies, as well as a team of nationwide sales representatives. He has nearly 20 years of experience in industrial coatings, concrete restoration, moisture vapor mitigation, decorative concrete, floor leveling and waterproofing.

Bruce Blair was recently appointed president and CEO of Consumers Concrete Corp., one of Michigan's largest suppliers of ready-mixed concrete. With more than 30 years of experience in the concrete construction industry, Blair is the first nonfamily member to take the helm of this West Michigan company. While former CEO Tom Thomas and former president Steve Thomas have retired from the company's day-to-day operations, they continue as owners and as chairman and vice chairman of the company's board of directors.



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High-Rolling Homebuilder Bets on Deck System in Vegas Project

Residential construction heavyweight Lennar is putting serious chips down on its Las Vegas fortunes, with new-home developments springing up across the Nevada desert faster than a tourist can max out at a casino.

Rainstorms hit Vegas about as often as visitors go home richer, but waterproofing still matters in the design and construction of decks for all these new homes.

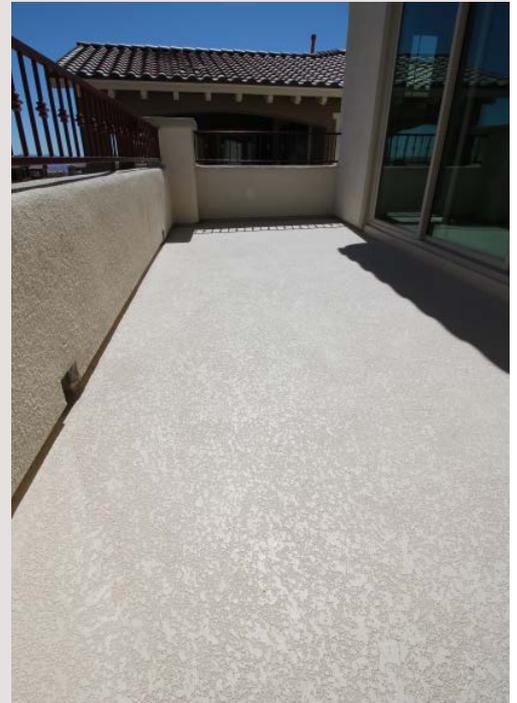
Cooper Roofing & Solar, a major Lennar subcontractor, was brought on board to install a waterproofing system from Westcoat Specialty Coating Systems on more than 500 decks this year. The general contractor is betting on Westcoat's ALX waterproofing system, which integrates acrylic resin/cement blends with a reinforced, galvanized metal lath. A visual benefit is the absence

of seams, Westcoat says.

The ALX system is installed with three separate applications of a polymer-modified cementitious coating, followed by a sealer coat using Westcoat's SC-10 Acrylic topcoat or a clear sealer. Standard or custom finishes are offered with the system.

The company says the system delivers durability in high-traffic areas with the look of decorative concrete. Recommended uses include balconies, corridors, walkways, stairs and landings. The system is also commonly specified for hotels, condos, apartments and office buildings, and can be used to rehab existing deck systems. The standard system consists of sheet membrane, lath, basecoat, slurry coat, texture coat and standard topcoat. Also offered is an ALX Pro version, which incorporates an additional

layer of fiberlath-reinforced membrane to prevent cracking on larger spans of unreinforced substrate. 🛠️



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Registration: This webinar is available by invitation only and online seating is limited. Please contact Wagner Meters today to reserve your seat for this groundbreaking presentation.



Bamboo level is accurate and durable

OX Tools has addressed both accuracy and durability, the most important hallmarks of a mason level, with its new Bamboo Masons Level which also is built with extruded aluminum bindings for protection and strength.

Bamboo has a tensile strength comparable to steel and when combined with lamination, the level provides exceptional durability. Bamboo is not affected by heat or cold like aluminum or plastic levels which tend to expand or contract with the cold, which affects the accuracy of the level.

This 48-inch level features two plumb vials and a level vial. The vials are constructed from solid block acrylic for increased accuracy.

For added protection OX has included shock-absorbing rubber end caps that can be easily replaced. For easy transport the level showcases two smooth and ergonomic handholds.

(888) 850-6710
www.us.oxtools.com

Low-riding burnisher can be used for spray cleaning

The new LowRider Spray Mist burnisher from Aztec is made to be used on polished concrete floors and vinyl composite tile. The LowRider Spray Mist system can be used for spray cleaning with a cleaner/maintainer chemical or for concrete restoration with a concrete restorer solution.

The system includes a tray for a one-gallon chemical jug, a brass spray nozzle, PVC tubing and a 12-volt pump with 40 psi. The adjustable spray nozzle position allows for a variable width spray radius, reaching up to a 95-degree angle in front of the burnisher.

The LowRider burnisher, named for its low-profile 3.75-inch deck height, is available in 21-inch, 24-inch and 27-inch pad widths with additional available upgrades including dust control, auto emissions shut down, a Blue Sky certified engine, a centrifugal clutch and a kill switch lanyard.

The Spray Mist System and the Dust Control upgrade were developed as part of Aztec's commitment to green cleaning and to comply with the GS-42 requirements. The burnisher is powered by the EPA-certified Kawasaki 603 cubic centimeter engine with an 18-horsepower block.

(800) 331-1423
www.aztecproducts.com

Triple hammer delivers ultimate torque

The Triple Hammer Impact Driver from Hitachi Power Tools, the newest addition to the company's 18-volt brushless lithium-ion cordless line, is truly in a class of its own. This revolutionary professional impact tool incorporates a third anvil for ultimate torque, less vibration and faster tightening speed. It is powered by Hitachi's new compact 3.0 Ah battery that delivers the same capacity as an 18-volt 3.0 Ah lithium-ion battery, but in about half the footprint and weight.



The triple hammer also features a brushless motor, which plays a large part in decreasing the weight while increasing runtime per charge, as well as improving the overall life of the tool. To add a degree of protection against dust and water exposure, the tool also has IP56 certification. It is also produced with an optimal design to efficiently cool the motor and hammer case, thus increasing durability.

(800) 829-4752
www.hitachipowertools.com

Rotary hammer unleashes big power at low weight

The rotary hammer is the workhorse of any construction site, providing the power and torque to drill and chisel in materials that range from concrete to steel. But the real differentiator among these power tools is putting all that performance in a package that delivers great power at low weight — and that's the story of the Bosch GBH18V-26 1-inch SDS-plus EC Brushless Rotary Hammer.



This Bosch rotary hammer delivers 1.9 feet-pounds of torque in a tool that weighs only 7.7 pounds. The ergonomic L-shape design offers great horizontal power transmission. Combined with a Bosch 6.0 Ah lithium-ion battery, this is a power tool that will drill longer and hit harder than bigger tools with more weight.

It features proprietary KickBack Control, an integrated acceleration sensor that virtually stops the drill's rotation during bit bind-up situations. It's designed to reduce potential arm and wrist injuries. In addition, the tool includes industry-leading Bosch vibration control for added user safety and ease of use.

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Rebar safety caps can be reused

Durajoint Concrete Accessories Corp. recently added the Preco Safety Rebar Cap to its product offerings. This new OSHA-compliant rebar safety cap features a unique, patented design that enables reuse. Rebar safety caps protect workers and pedestrians from vertically protruding rebar at job sites.



Unlike other rebar caps on the market, the patented Preco Safety Rebar Cap provides extended reuse because it doesn't have breakable fins. In addition to fitting #3 to #8 rebar, the Preco Rebar Safety Cap has a tilt-free neck design, which enables ease of installation, secure placement and enhanced job site safety.

Contractors can get a free sample by visiting the company's website and requesting one.

(888) 833-8308
www.durajoint.com

Propane grinder gets new engine

Superabrasive, the manufacturer of the Lavina floor machines, showcased its most popular models at the Concrete Decor Show in San Diego, including the recently upgraded 30-inch propane machine L30G-X.

The L30G-X grinder is now outfitted with a more powerful Kawasaki engine (FX600) and it is one of the best-selling propane grinders on the market today. It features a chain-driven forced planetary drive with three large 13.5-inch heads and a low-profile base for reaching under cabinets and shelving.

It can be easily converted to a 25-inch propane machine by switching the heads with smaller 9-inch heads and removing the low-profile skirt. Superabrasive is working on more propane machine models that are expected to launch at World of Concrete 2017.

(800) 987-8403

www.superabrasive.com



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Circle Reader Service Number 02

App conjures up virtual slabs

Solomon Colors launched its augmented reality app for decorative concrete at the Concrete Decor Show 2016 in San Diego. Bringing decorative concrete sampling into the 21st century, StampApp lets contractors create instant, virtual stamped slabs anywhere at any time on their tablet or smartphone using state-of-the-art augmented reality technology.

With this new sales tool, contractors can go beyond the color card and example photo. StampApp uses augmented reality technology to create a super-realistic virtual slab of concrete with your choice of color, texture and release. The app simulates up to a 10-by-10-foot slab anywhere you can lay the paper image target. Use this as a sales tool to help clients make their decision and choose decorative concrete.

StampApp is free on the Apple Appstore for iPad and Google Play Store for Android tablets and phones. Within the next few months, support for iPhones will be included. The stamp selection will also continue to grow, eventually including the 20 most popular textures and patterns.

www.stampapp.net
www.brickformstampapp.com
 (800) 624-0261



New polyaspartic topcoat offers many perks

Westcoat Specialty Coating Systems recently released its new improved topcoat formula with EC-101 polyaspartic topcoat. Replacing EC-100, EC-101 is a 100 percent solids polyaspartic topcoat that is proving to be a favorite among applicators and customers alike.

The EC-101 gives applicators a longer working time while also drying faster. It allows for customers to utilize the space in a much shorter time, usually within 12 hours, and customers love the look of the smooth, clean surface and how resistant it is to scratching.

EC-101 requires fewer coats with its high-build and creates fewer bubbles due to its short drying time. It levels out smoothly and is extremely durable. With little VOCs, the improved chemical resistance handles solvent attack and is perfect for indoor or outdoor applications. The nonflammable topcoat is especially effective with paint chips or quartz, where a high-build clear topcoat is needed to maintain the variegated look.

(800) 250-4519
www.westcoat.com

New resinous product extends working time

Dur-A-Flex Inc., a leading manufacturer of commercial, industrial and institutional resinous floor and wall systems, has expanded its Accelera Fast-Track Flooring family of fast-curing, low-odor products with the introduction of Accelera EXT. This unique formulation offers all the benefits of the popular Accelera product line with the added benefit of an extended working time. With a working time of up to 50 percent more than the standard formulation, maintaining a longer wet-edge during

the installation now makes large square footage projects feasible without added manpower.

Accelera EXT gives applicators more time to pour, spread, roll and broadcast, reducing the amount of hands needed on a large square footage project. Like all Accelera products, Accelera EXT is supplied in premeasured mix-in-pail kits consisting of a resin and hardener. For pigmenting, premeasured packs are available in 12 standard colors.

Accelera's unique formulation combats these issues by providing a stable working time in a variety of environmental conditions without the use of solvents.

(877) 251-5418
www.dur-a-flex.com

Company releases new pool coping forming system and augmented reality countertop app

A new concrete pool coping forming system called Z Poolform marks a breakthrough development in the construction of concrete pool copings and decks. Concrete Countertop Solutions, the innovative company behind Z Counterforms and Z Liqui-Crete, is behind the patented new system.

Z Poolforms are made from hard, PVC plastic and lock directly into the liner track on vinyl liner pools, or into a special receiver track on concrete and fiberglass pools. Rubber form liners are then inserted into the forms, giving users a variety of different profiles and textures to choose from.

Concrete Countertop Solutions currently offers eight different profile choices with complementing stamps and texture mats. Z Poolforms are reusable and easy to install. In product testing, a two-man crew installed the entire system in under two hours. Founder and President Ed Baldoni expects this new forming system to save contractors time and effort during installation, and to ensure more consistent results than traditional Styrofoam forms.

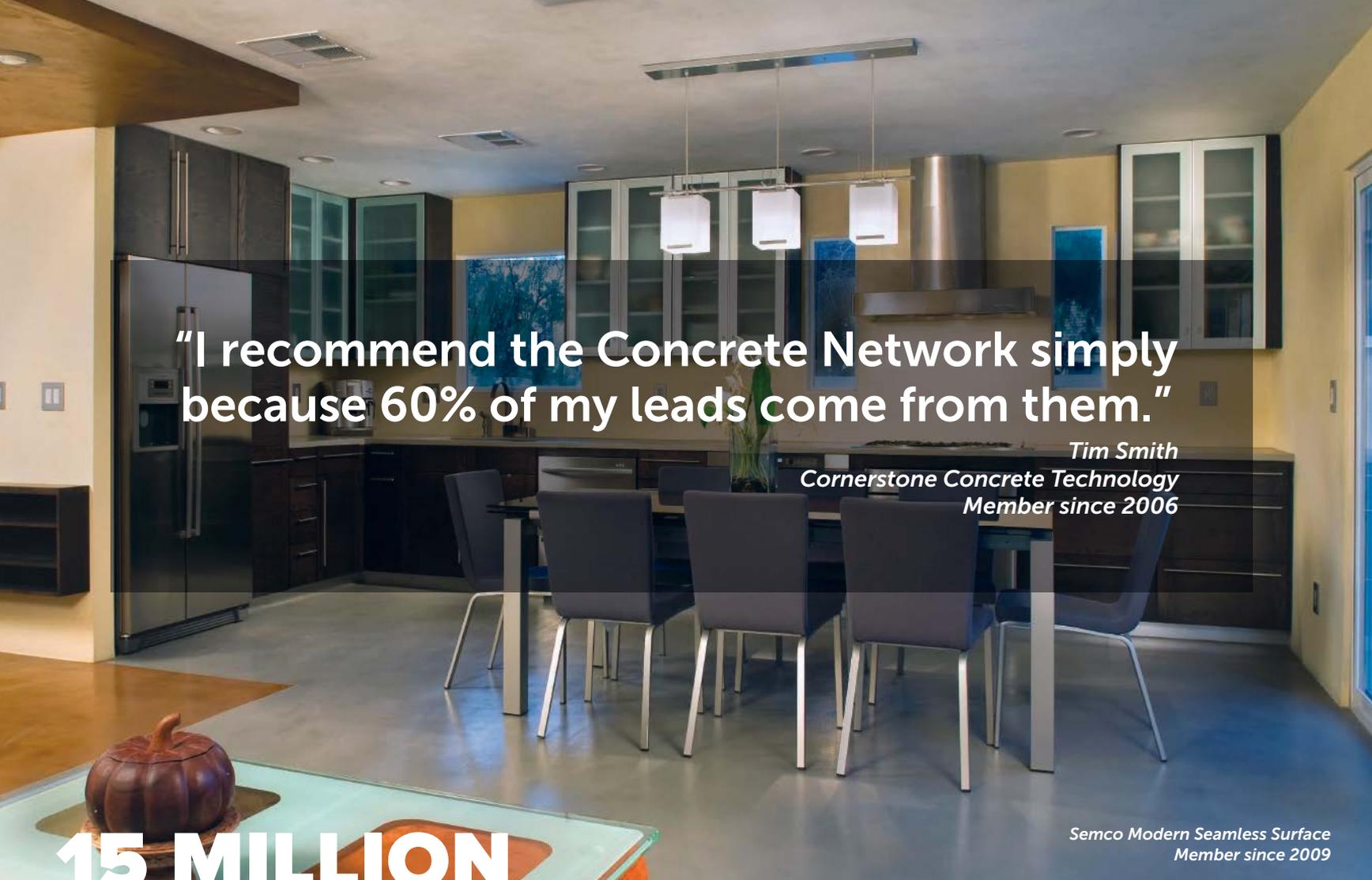
In other news, the company also recently released its new iPad and Android tablet app, Z Counterform Visualizer. This new app can transform current countertops into new concrete countertops with one simple point of your tablet's camera. Using augmented reality technology, you can design and share your ideal countertop.



This new sales tool allows you to select an edge profile, stain color and sink model to help give customers a better idea of what their finished countertop could look like.

Once the Z Counterform Visualizer App is downloaded to your tablet, simply print out the app target, align the target on the front edge of your existing countertop, point camera at target, and watch the countertops transform.

(570) 587-3799
www.concretecountertopsolutions.com



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Workshops from the Heart

Concrete Decor Show pro bono endeavors brighten stay for families of the ailing

by Stacey Enesey Klemenc

At the seventh annual Concrete Decor Show in San Diego, California, world-class instructors and eager students from around the globe joined their talents and enthusiasm to breathe new life into the outdoor surroundings of the Bannister Family House, which provides a home-like environment for people with family members in long-term or critical care at the nearby UC San Diego Health.

Each year, promoters of the Concrete Decor Show choose a nonprofit organization in the show's host city that will benefit from a makeover to its facilities. With donated materials and their own sweat equity, workshop participants practice newly

learned or honed skills in a real-world work environment and leave behind beautiful concrete to brighten people's lives.

The 2016 recipient, the Bannister Family House, is a facility funded by a generous donation from the late Ralph Bannister and named in honor of his late wife and daughter. It opened in May 1994 and since then, more than 4,000 families from 50 states and 23 countries have enjoyed its comforts. It gives families a place to sleep, to rest during the day, prepare meals, launder clothes, and space where children can play and lead relatively normal daily lives.

Improvements made during the workshops held Sept. 25 and 26 included

a bas-relief concrete mural on a large retaining wall, an engraved sidewalk, a built-in barbecue and concrete countertop, a seating wall, carved concrete rock features on a retaining wall, a pattern-stamped patio and a stained tree of life-like design in a courtyard complete with an inlaid LithoMosaic heart.

San Diego-based landscape architect Amanda Conahan and T.B. Penick & Sons created the conceptual design for the Bannister Family House. Crews from T.B. Penick and the Associated General Contractors of San Diego helped with much of the preliminary work.

"When we were first approached

to partner with the Concrete Decor Show we could have never imagined the outcome would be as rewarding as it has been,” says Jana Fortune, the Bannister Family House liaison for UC San Diego Health. “Our ‘home away from home’ for families facing a medical crisis has been transformed with outdoor spaces that are truly an oasis for our residents when not at the hospital.”

Fortune says she was impressed with everyone involved with the transformation as they were “conscientious, caring and compassionate” toward the house’s mission and to those it served. Now that the dust has cleared, she says she misses everyone who was there before and during the show and wanted to extend a heartfelt thank you for their time, talent and hard work.

“Concrete Decor Show and its staff are class acts and anyone affiliated with the show should be proud of the lasting mark the industry has left at the Bannister Family House and all of the families it will house in the future,” Fortune says.

It is estimated that the Concrete Decor Show’s in-kind gift to The Bannister Family House exceeds \$250,000.

The following workshops were held to makeover the Bannister Family House:

Creating Outdoor Elegance with Concrete Stains

Trainer: Rick Lobdell, Concrete Mystique

In the courtyard at the Bannister Family House, master designer and artisan Rick Lobdell led a class that showcased ways that design and minimalist use of color can create an outdoor sanctuary for hospital visitors who seek quiet reflection, solitude or family time.

Without the use of stencils, students explored how to create beauty through the art of free-hand painting with stains. Students learned how to apply color theory to a project using the same basic color at full strength and diluted.

While the design was saw cut ahead of time because of its complexity, Lobdell says, students took part in masking off the design and applying the stain. “We used one color twice to make it look like two different colors,” Lobdell says. “It works really well.”

Lobdell says his students tell him they appreciate the workshops he leads as they are live projects, not demonstrations. Because it is a “live situation,” there are many obstacles that must be handled such as severe weather conditions (it was around 100 degrees F both days), people from other classes walking on the design and having to share common space with others working on projects nearby. Also, real



problems may pop up that need to be addressed if the result is going to be a quality floor.

In this workshop, “We had added grit to the urethane to make the surface slip resistant and I wasn’t paying attention when the students were pouring. There was extra grit at the bottom (of the pail) and they just poured it all out.” There were a few hectic moments there, he says, especially with the “temperature way up there.” But he remained calm and quickly scraped up the excess grit while they were mixing the next batch.

“It was a common mistake but most of the students hadn’t seen it before,” he says. “You have to get the urethane perfect or you’ll have complications down the road.” This misstep scared the students, he says, but in a good way. “They got to learn how to handle a mistake when it happens on a real job. They really appreciated that.”

Westcoat donated the water-based stains and urethane for this workshop.



Photos by Concrete Decor Staff



Stamped Overlays for Public Spaces

Trainer: Julio Hallack, Concrete By Hallack

Julio Hallack led this workshop that showed the attendees the different steps involved with successfully mixing, placing, staining and sealing a quarter- to half-inch stampable overlay. The session included surface preparation and installing a primer, and covered the importance of dealing with crack repairs, and control and moving joints because, as Hallack says, “Not all the joints are the same.”

“The area where we worked was at times challenging due to the access and being so close to the hill,” Hallack says. Chalk

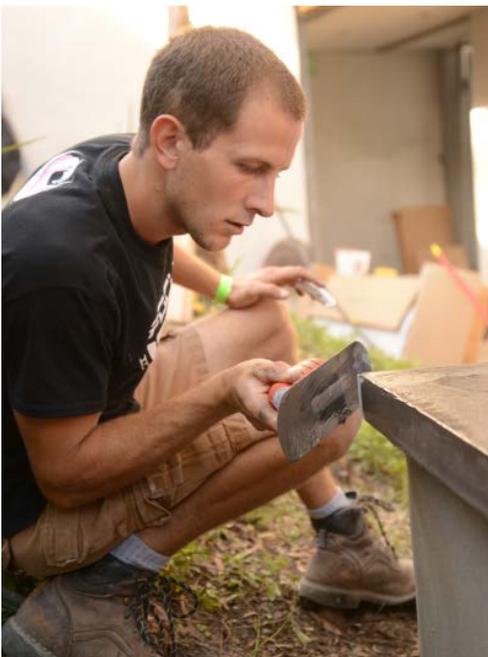
another one up for the real world.

One of the students, C.J. Salzano of Salzano Custom Concrete in Centreville, Virginia, had attended workshops at two prior Concrete Decor Shows. He says he took this one because his company performs stamped overlay work, and he had some specific questions about some installation challenges he wanted to talk to Hallack about. “I wanted to get Julio’s ideas and watch his technique,” he says.



The thing he liked best about the workshop was seeing someone else demonstrate proper procedures on a live project. To him, that was the most valuable take-away he got from attending this workshop, which he recommends to colleagues.

Westcoat donated most of the products used for this project. Hi-Tech Systems donated the two-part polyurea to fill in the moving joints and cracks. Proline stamps were used.



Concrete Countertop Fabrication from Start to Finish

Trainer: Del Turley, ElastoCrete

Participants helped create a concrete countertop and sitting wall caps and put the finishing touches on a built-in barbecue installed earlier by a crew from T.B. Penick & Sons. The basics of building a successful concrete countertop was demonstrated, including mold making, mixing, placing cement, staining and sealing with water-based acrylics.

Workshop products were donated by ElastoCrete.





From Concept to Completion: Bas-relief Public Mural

Trainer: Cindee Lundin, The Studio by Cindee Lundin

Under the watchful eyes of Cindee Lundin, participants helped to create a bas-relief public mural at the Bannister Family House. Titled the “Ebb and Flow of Life,” the mural was created by integrating concrete with texturing, sculpting, coloring and design techniques.

It was a busy two days for the bas-relief participants, as most stayed until 8 p.m. to help apply, color, texture and carve the design on an existing exterior concrete wall using a vertical concrete mix. They also colored and helped install detailed elements made prior to the show.

According to Lundin, “The design depicts the ebb and flow of our lives that go forward in the waves then are suddenly shattered by an event.” The doves, 40 in all, symbolize love and hopefulness taking flight after a fall, she says, and the feathers engraved on the walkway represent the little pieces we leave behind. Yet, through it all, “We are still able to fly.”

Lydia Phillips of Murals, Mosaics and More by Lydia in La Mesa, California, had never worked with concrete before and took the class to learn a new technique. A muralist by trade, she says Lundin’s project showed her how versatile concrete can be but, more importantly, “I learned that circumstances are not always under your

control and that troubleshooting is part of what happens in a real-world project.”

Scott Harrington of Harrington Homes in Eagar, Arizona, says he took the class to “explore the artistic side” of concrete even though he’s a general contractor. He says he learned “lots of different pieces, which made for good (if somewhat long) training.”

“Cindee covered a lot of different materials, techniques and dealing with unforeseen problems on the fly,” he says. It was a very ambitious project, but in the end, “It was finished and looked great.”

Workshop products were supplied by Stone Edge Surfaces (formerly Flex-C-Ment), EZChem Inc. and Polytek Development Corp.



Sculpting Rock Features for the Ultimate Courtyard

Trainers: Troy Lemon, Cornerstone Decorative Concrete; Warren Ness, Rock Sculptor

In this “rockin’” workshop, attendees learned how to use vertical carving mixes to sculpt a stone facade for a large-scale retaining wall in the Bannister Family House courtyard. Workshop instructors Troy Lemon and Warren Ness shared their experience and technical know-how to help participants learn new tricks of the trade for carving, texturing and coloring concrete to make it look like natural boulders and chiseled stone.

Ness headed up the boulder-making segment of the workshop, which included coloring as well as carving. Besides including greenish “moss-covered” areas on the faux rocks, Ness demonstrated on a massive rock “outcropping” how to create realistic-looking lichens, simple slow-growing greyish plants that often grow on rocks. As a finishing touch, students eagerly created their own.

In addition to placing and carving stonework on the retaining wall, Lemon and a group of students created a free-standing wall that initially was meant to serve as a practice piece that would be destroyed at workshop’s end. UC San Diego Health representatives asked if they could keep that impromptu piece of decorative concrete — which was a mix of faux dry stack limestone, wood planks and metal fasteners — and move it elsewhere on the property. Lemon and his team gladly



agreed, and even included the hospital’s name on the front.

Stone Edge Surfaces (formerly Flex-C-Ment) donated the mix for stone making. Brickform and CTS Cement Manufacturing Corp. also donated products. 🛠️



Photo courtesy of Troy Lemon

THANK YOU!

Several manufacturers donated products used to spruce up the outdoor area including:

- Westcoat
- Stone Edge Surfaces (formerly Flex-C-Ment)
- ElastoCrete
- Kraft Tools
- Proline
- Hi-Tech Systems
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Circle Reader Service Number 49

Infographics:

A picture is worth a thousand words

by Lindsay Chelf

LATELY, it seems that you can't read an online article or browse social media without coming across an infographic. Considered one of the most powerful marketing tools in use today, is it just a trend that will soon be on the way out or is there more than meets the eye to this form of visual media?

As a whole, society suffers from "information overload." According to research, we receive five times as much information today as we did in 1986, and because our brains can only handle so much, we simply can't keep up with all the facts, figures and data thrown our way daily. In fact, a study found that users typically read 28 percent of the words on a webpage during an average visit and are more likely to read less. That doesn't bode well if you rely solely on blogs, press releases or articles to convey important information to your audience.

This is where infographics step in and show their value as the perfect counter to information overload. A combination of the words "information" and "graphics," they convey data through images, charts or other visual means designed to make the information easily understandable at a glance.

Harvard Business Review calls infographics "an instant revelation." The brain processes text sequentially but images simultaneously, so information in a visual format is immediately conveyed. Think of it this way: it's much easier to draw a circle than to describe it! Our often-overloaded brains love when most of the work is done for them, which may be why infographics are 30 times more likely to be read than an all-text article.

Facts speak for themselves

If that isn't enough to convince you why you should integrate infographics into your marketing, here are a few more convincing facts:

People more readily share infographics. On Twitter, for example, tweets containing infographics are retweeted 832 percent more than their text-only counterparts.

Infographics increase brand awareness. Subtle placement of a logo or brand colors on an infographic can serve as an advertisement for your business or organization. People are much more eager to share a branded infographic than they are an ad, and it gets your name out there just as well as an ad, if not better.

Infographics drive website traffic. Including your website or contact information on an infographic will lead readers back to your site. This can increase exponentially if your infographic is shared on blogs (make sure you're credited!), Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest or other social media, as it will link directly to your website or social media account.

Infographics position you as a thought leader. Putting an abundance of research into an easy-to-digest graphic shows expertise and knowledge on the subject. Your reputation and credibility as a leader in the industry will be solidified.

— INFOGRAPHICS: THE CURE FOR — INFORMATION OVERLOAD

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Every day, our brains are exposed to the equivalent of **34 GIGABYTES OF DATA** most of which we barely even absorb. **Infographics** are an excellent way to get a message seen and heard through all the white noise of our day-to-day lives.

It's not always easy to figure out what topic to cover in your infographic. Here are four suggestions to help get you started:



Choose the right words

Now you know why you should use infographics in your marketing efforts, but you also need to know what to say and how to say it:

Tell a story. What is the main message you want people to take away from your infographic? Start there, using a relatable hook or question to draw them in. Then, break it down into smaller, easily digestible pieces. People enjoy narratives, not info-dumps.

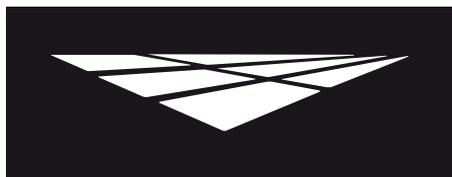
Know the facts. When compiling data for your infographic, be thorough in your fact-checking. You don't want incorrect information on a graphic that bears your company's name. Come up with the facts first and let them guide your message. It's much easier for the data to drive the topic, rather than picking a message first and trying to find stats to support it.

Obey the laws (of design). While you may want to cram every little fact into your infographic, people are more drawn to simple design with white space around it. It's easier to read and avoids that dreaded information overload. Instead of spelling things out, use charts or graphics to help tell your story. Keep your color scheme and font usage simple as well.

Make it yours. Be proud of all the hard work you've put into your infographic. Let the world know that it's yours by using your brand colors or including your logo. This helps solidify brand recognition and informs people that you're a thought leader. Remember to tout these graphics on your website and social media accounts.

If your marketing experience is limited to press releases, ads and articles, don't be afraid to add infographics to that mix. Armed with the above knowledge, you can create informative and eye-catching graphics to share with clients, colleagues and editors alike! 📱

Lindsay Chelf is the marketing coordinator at Constructive Communication Inc. With almost a decade of experience in writing and editing for publication, her specialty is the use of graphic design, video and social media in marketing for the architecture, engineering and construction industry. Chelf can be reached at (614) 541-9868 or at lchelf@constructivecommunication.com.



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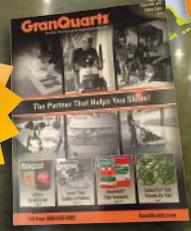


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Circle Reader Service Number 18

Expectation Management Should Be Part of Conversation with Customers

by Greg Iannone

HAVE you ever been in the process of completing or had just completed what to you was an amazing architectural concrete project only to be told by your client:

“It’s not what I was expecting.”

“Meh! It looks kind of ‘blah.’ I thought the color would ‘pop’ more.”

“I don’t like it.”

If so, you’re not alone. But why are these types of responses commonplace, especially with work that nearly all your peers would deem to be quality work?

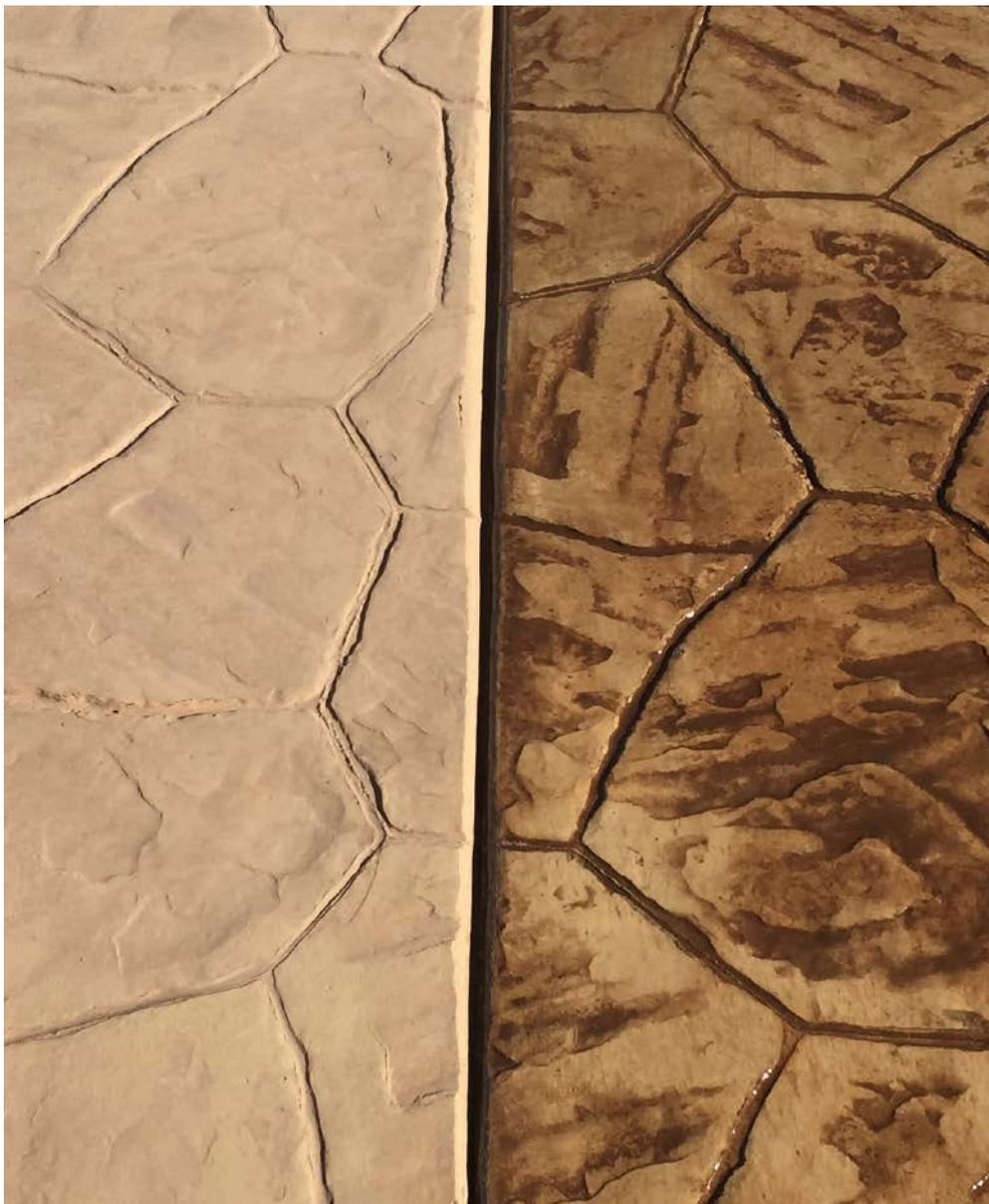
Two words: expectation management or, to be more precise, lack of. What does this mean? Expectation management is the ability to effectively communicate to the client the means and methods of how you’re going to deliver on your promise of a beautifully completed project. This includes describing in detail (and in a language easily understood) every step of the project from beginning to end, and what can be expected during each step.

When details are important

Years ago while working for a large construction chemical and cement products manufacturer, we had an inside joke about being careful about how we approached the lab with questions. For example, if we asked, “What time is it?” the chemist would spend the next 20 minutes explaining in fine detail — and in terms we didn’t understand — how to build a watch which could precisely tell us the time. We would leave feeling dazed and confused. We simply wanted to know how a product would behave or perform under certain conditions and not how the product worked at a molecular level.

In the world of decorative concrete, sometimes the opposite is true. Sometimes we don’t give enough information or detail as to how we’re going to deliver on what we agreed to provide. The key is, unlike the story about the chemist and the watch, giving customers the proper amount of information in a language they can understand.

Your clients have ultimately decided to



During.

Finished.

Photo courtesy of Carlton Concrete

enlist your services for various reasons: word of mouth, advertising, the local home show or otherwise. You’ve met with them and shown them your portfolio of completed projects which showcases your ability to deliver quality finished products. So far so good.

But don’t forget to tell them how you’re going to get from a concept sketch or

pictures from a project portfolio to the completed project. After all, most decorative projects aren’t completed in a single day, so you need to explain the process of how you’re going to get from start to finish.

Hardscape scenario

Let’s use the scenario of a hardscape stamp project in a residential application.

The client, with the contractor's input, has chosen a seamless texture pattern with accentuated saw cuts. For coloring, you two have agreed to use a buff integral color followed by a rich release powder and sealed with a medium-gloss sealer to give proper color pop and enhancement without a candy-coated look.

You've explained what will be involved in the project, including proper fill material and soil compaction, placing and imprinting the concrete, the amount of time anticipated to complete the project and, of course, what it will look like once it's been sealed. From our point of view this all sounds very reasonable, right? The schedule has been drafted and the steps from beginning to end are clearly outlined.

So what's wrong with this picture?

Contractor confidence boost

Remember, your clients only know what the project is supposed to look like when it's finished (as in the portfolio pictures). When the clients leave for work on the day of the pour, they wave goodbye and are excited to see the results of your work when they return.

Now, imagine the clients' surprise and disappointment upon returning home to see their freshly stamped concrete looking dull, dusty and blasé — without any aesthetic appeal. They ask themselves: Was the work performed poorly? Were the wrong colors used? Did the contractor do something to cause this unsightly and wholly unacceptable mess?

While this is obviously an exaggeration, it's not unheard of and often leads clients to question all aspects of the work performed, from the craftsmanship and quality down to the most inconsequential detail. Once a customer's expectations have been compromised, it's nearly impossible for them to be properly restored. It will be like pushing a boulder uphill for the rest of the project, with the client forever calling into question even the most basic building practices.

This is a good example of where managing a customer's expectations is vitally important. Along with talking upfront about the steps involved with completing the project, you should also include detailed explanations of what to expect along the way.

Include something like, "Now, remember, once we imprint the concrete it will look dull and dusty. It won't appear as it should until we return in a couple of days and clean the surface by removing the release powder and washing down the concrete. Only then will you have an idea of what it's going to look like once it's been sealed."

By letting the clients know this trivial yet vital information upfront and in writing, you'll help set their minds at ease. Now when they return home to find their freshly imprinted concrete dull and dusty, they'll expect it and know it's normal, just as it was explained to them. They'll look at the contractor with confidence knowing that he or she is performing as they hoped and expected from the beginning.

Effectively managing expectations can lead to more work, less callbacks and, therefore, higher profits. All good things if you ask me. 📱

Greg Iannone is sales manager for Innotech Decorative Concrete Products headquartered in Twinsburg, Ohio. He has worked in the concrete construction industry for more than 30 years and has provided training seminars throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico, as well as Mexico and Japan. He can be reached at (877) 829-7880 or GregI@Innotechdcp.com.

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ARTISAN IN CONCRETE

Clem Carrion, Visual Artisan Kissimmee, Florida

by Jacqueline Valle

FOR a man who was an Eastern Airline employee for years and owned his own pest control company after that, he found working with his hands, LEDs and chemicals familiar territory. So when the economy began to tank, it wasn't that far of a stretch when Clem Carrion founded Visual Artisan in December 2007, a concrete business that specializes in concrete countertops, innovative lighting and metallic epoxies, as well as faux wood and stone.

Carrion was a self-starter who practiced at home after taking some courses at JPJ Technologies in Sheridan, Oregon, on how to make rocks, waterfalls and boulders out of concrete. His work in his own backyard grew his clientele from word of mouth and friends who saw his projects and wanted them in their homes, too.

That's when Carrion decided to focus on renovating homes, but he wanted to do something that set him apart from others in the industry.

On one of his jobs that involved rehabbing a condo in downtown Orlando, Carrion proposed to make a water feature lit with LEDs out of existing columns in the middle of the living room. The client, who wanted a feature that would stand out, loved the idea. It was his first paid LED and concrete gig and it ultimately helped build his client base, he says.

"I noticed that bars and restaurants wanted unique floors and countertops, too, so that's when I got into that," says Carrion.

With a continuous thirst for knowledge, Carrion sought out training and took a class on faux finishing for floors and countertops by Faux Effects. That slowly opened the door to the world of epoxy.

"I believe that even though I have some knowledge, if I

walk away with one thing that I didn't know then I can just get better," says Carrion about the benefit of training classes.

No (visible) strings attached

For a man who likes to learn and think outside of the box, there was no limit to what he could do and he began creating things that had "the wow factor." He recalls walking into a restaurant or hotel and envisioning how he could incorporate LEDs without the wiring being visible.

"With concrete I'm thinking, OK, how can I put in LEDs or fiber optics?" says Carrion, noting that there's so much opportunity for creative contractors to combine concrete with lighting. "One thing led to another and I started exploring that topic. Now I teach other individuals how to add fiber optics to their concrete." He uses both fiber optics and LEDs in concrete, he says, and when clients request lighting, most want both.

Another "wow factor" Carrion likes to incorporate into his projects is real copper powder, which he often includes in his concrete sinks. While it's not hard to work with, it does involve more steps. "You're adding at least two to three days more work because of the process," says Carrion. "But because it's real copper, the end result is very realistic." He notes when you want the copper to have a

patina, you apply acid to the finished product before you seal it. This "aging process" takes about half a day.

Manipulating metallics

The thing Carrion says he really likes about a metallic and epoxy mixture is that there are options as to how it can be manipulated. "When it comes to manipulating the metallic



A one-man show, Clem Carrion has won two different awards for his checkered-flag floor — one from Surecrete, where he came in third place, and the other from The Concrete Protector. He also won an award from The Concrete Protector for his Woodcrete look.



Photos courtesy of Architectural Concrete



mixture, I call it the wiggle,” says Carrion. “It’s all about timing and the wiggle.”

Using a tool called a Magic Trowel that resembles a squeegee with a flexible blade, “You can actually take one color, do the wiggle and it’s almost like you’re getting two or three colors from it,” he says.

Going for the grain

While people love metallic finishes, they are also clamoring for Carrion’s “Woodcrete” look, he says. Years ago, he took a faux painting class and learned how to make floors with realistic-looking wood grains and since has learned

more techniques from Andy Franklin with The Concrete Protector based in Wapakoneta, Ohio.

“You use a broom in order to give it a grain look and since I had experimented with different trowel finishes, I decided to incorporate it into my work,” says Carrion. The process also involves dragging a trowel to create a weathered look. He gets his best results, he adds, using a broom-trowel combination.

To achieve the finish, Carrion first preps the concrete. He says about 80 percent of his projects involve concrete slabs that have glue from old carpet, thin set from tile that’s

been removed or vinyl flooring. In these cases, he grinds the concrete slab until it’s smooth and then acid etches the surface and washes it with water so it can bond with a new concrete overlay. He then adds a dark, integrally colored grout layer about 1/8 inch thick. The next day he lays out the pattern for the planks using 1/4-inch-wide fiber tape. Then he mixes the top layer with a light integral color.

“That’s where I use the trowel and broom technique to give it that wood-look texture,” says Carrion. “I also use a small chip brush to make it look like there are knots in the plank.”

Once everything is dry, he peels off the



tape and cleans the floor. Then he colors the planks using a chip brush to stain each one individually, using three or four different water-based color stains.

In addition to “Woodcrete,” Carrion also has a similar finish he calls “Logcrete,” which is created with a stamp and then hand carved to enhance the look. He also uses chip brushes to make notches.

These techniques, along with his attention to detail, are what set him apart from the rest. But, he says, like everyone else he isn't perfect.

Mistakes make the man

“I'm not afraid of making mistakes,” says Carrion, and he's upfront about that with his customers. If he does err, he's got enough tricks up his sleeve to remedy almost any situation. “I'll enhance it to make it look like art.”

His advice to others getting into the business is never to sell a service you haven't actually done. Practice on your own home or a friend's home first. Because if you don't, that's when you can really end up with problems.

“It's one thing doing a sample board and then another is a 2,400-square-foot house,” says Carrion. “It's sad because I get calls to

repair other contractors' work. It gives us contractors a bad name but it gives me the opportunity to learn from someone else's errors and be creative in order to fix their mistakes.”

Currently, Carrion is working on a water park for Universal that features a big volcano with a concrete cave outfitted with a fiber optics installation. 📱

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Ultimate Cliffside Entertaining Area is Like Poetry in Motion

Graceful Curves, Malibu, California

by Stacey Enesey Klemenc

“GRACEFUL Curves.” That’s what Scott Cohen and his team at Green Scene Landscaping and Swimming Pools call a recent backyard masterpiece in Malibu, California. Cohen describes it as the ultimate entertaining backyard that has everything and then some — including a pool that makes you feel like you’re in a giant lake.

Taking full advantage of the 180-degree Pacific Ocean view, Green Scene built a vanishing edge pool with a curved Baja shelf and an extra-deep spa with an illusion edge of water spilling all the way around. A Baja shelf, also called a sun shelf, is basically a platform in the pool that’s about 6-12 inches under water, a perfect spot to sunbathe in the pool in a lounge chair. Nestled next to the water features are a cast-concrete seating wall surrounding a sunken fire pit made from cast concrete and natural stone.

There’s also a raised yoga deck overlooking the canyon and ocean beyond. Resembling the planet Earth, it’s acid stained with blue, amber, green and tan hues.

Then there’s the oversized outdoor kitchen with countertops seeded with sea shells,

Project at a Glance

Client: A yoga instructor and her husband in Malibu, California

Contractor: Scott Cohen of Green Scene Landscaping and Swimming Pools in Chatsworth, California, www.GreenSceneLandscape.com

Scope of work: A backyard entertaining area comprising a 110-square-foot patio for yoga overlooking the Pacific Ocean adjacent to an 800-square-foot vanishing edge swimming pool, swim-up bar, conversation area with fire pit, wayfinding paths and outdoor kitchen. The work was completed in October 2015.

Challenge: The project had to adhere to the principles of feng shui and pass the scrutiny of the California Coastal Commission.

Products used: Cast concrete embedded with seashells and abalone, acid stains from Triple-S Chemical Products Inc., LEDs, Cantera stone



Design by Scott Cohen for GreenSceneLandscape.com

Cantera stone and abalone that’s polished to a smooth-as-glass finish. And let’s not overlook the swim-up bar, “where people in the pool can interact with friends who don’t want to get wet,” Cohen says. “It has that same shell finish and it’s absolutely beautiful.”

To brighten nighttime gatherings, the job’s concrete countertops and cast benches feature recessed channels under the cantilevered edges that include LED lighting. “At night it just glows down the channel,” says Cohen. “It looks really cool.”

Feng shui first

The homeowners, one a well-known yoga instructor who has been featured on the cover of a popular yoga magazine, wanted a natural free-flowing design that would “pull the Pacific Ocean into the backyard.” She and her husband also wanted the perfect blend of the feng shui elements of earth, water, fire, wood and metal to encourage natural energy flow. In the most rudimentary terms, feng shui is the Chinese

art or practice of siting buildings or objects to optimize energy and luck.

The homeowners worked with a feng shui master while deciding on the backyard layout and particulars of the design and relayed those desires to Cohen. Feng shui advocates, says Cohen, “follow the design principles almost like a religion.” While Cohen has worked with masters before, “I have a natural tendency to design within their guidelines without knowing all the rules,” he says. For this project, “No modifications to my design were made.”

With a lot of “ying and yang going on,” Cohen says, the yard centers around a free-form pool with a 40-foot-wide infinity edge where the outer wall is built with tile and stacked stone to enhance the sound of the overflowing water. Cohen placed the large circular sunken fire pit adjacent to the spa which allows the fire and water elements to interact. One of the most interesting feng shui guidelines, he notes, is when you’re combining the elements, fire should be lower than water.



“One of the main principles of any good design, but certainly in feng shui, is the flow through the space,” explains Cohen. “One of the greatest compliments I’ve ever received was that walking through the space feels like poetry.” From above, you can see the project’s sweeping curves repeat a nautilus shape throughout the backyard expanse.

Challenges big and small

Authentic pavers of Cantera stone, a quarried, volcanic rock found exclusively in Mexico and Central America, were used for wayfinding paths that were accented with hand-carved Cantera stone planters and fire bowls. The softness of this stone proved a challenge, Cohen notes, as some of the pavers broke during installation. “Concrete pavers are much more resilient,” he says, “but the client didn’t want them switched out with concrete.”



See it on TV

This project recently aired on HGTV’s “Ultimate Pools” and on the Travel Channel and is re-telecasted about once a month. It’s also available on demand from Apple TV.

You can watch a short video of the project on Green Scene’s Facebook page:

bit.ly/2fxRyZa/

and the “Ultimate Pool” clip here:

youtu.be/9k90r3ILJ6A



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But the soft Cantera stone was the least among the setbacks Cohen faced. The biggest challenge was overcoming the permit process, Cohen says. “I wasn’t sure we were going to get there.”

It took two years to get the permit to build from the California Coastal Commission, whose mission is to protect the state’s coast and ocean by regulating environmentally sustainable development. It took another seven months to build the job.

“Construction was no easy task,” Cohen says. The pool, built on a slope overlooking the ocean, needed to be firmly anchored into the hill. From a shotcrete standpoint, he says, it was quite a project. It took 120 cubic yards for the footing and another 120 cubic yards for the pool shell. “That’s 12 trucks for the floor and another 12 for the pool.” Typically, four trucks would have done the trick. “But we needed really deep footings.”

In the end, the result was worth all the effort put forth. “This is a great example of good outdoor room design where everything interplays with each other, from the sprawling outdoor kitchen and the deck’s swim-up bar to the conversation area with a fire pit in the center and the infinity spa which has water flowing over all sides,” Cohen says.

“I never tire of going from concept to an idea floated into a 3-D image on the computer to the customer saying: ‘Let’s build it.’ And then when it all comes into fruition and the results are spectacular it’s personally very rewarding.” 📱

Vanessa Salvia contributed to this article.

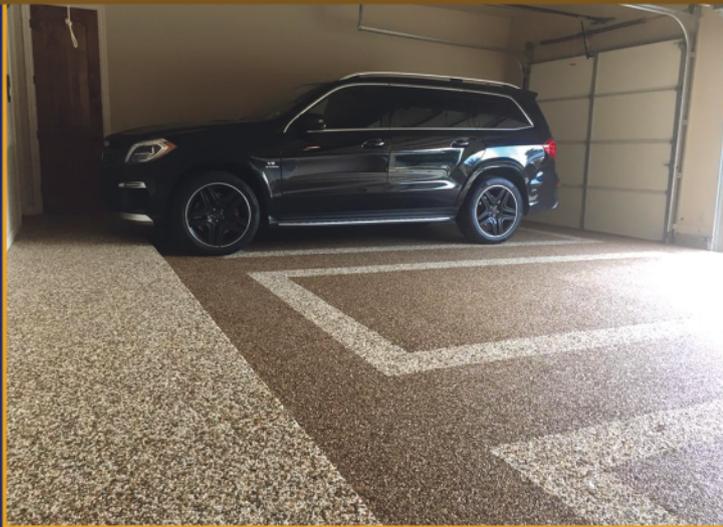
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Make the Most of the **DAILY GRIND**

There's a grinder/polisher model available for just about every task, whether it's prepping the floor of a big-box store or finishing a basement or small office. Finding the right tool for the job can make a big difference in speed and efficiency, so know what you want before you go shopping.

by K. Schipper

THERE'S a lot happening in the grinder and polisher market today, and much of it is good news for anyone looking to incorporate finishing and refinishing into a business mix.

Whether your preferred clients are homeowners installing a new concrete floor, or upgrading an old one, or you're looking for commercial projects — think anything from schools to office buildings to airport terminals — to finish and maintain, there's equipment out there that will fit your needs.

Still, it's not an easy decision. Over the past 20 years, the market has grown to include a variety of heads, electric and propane power systems for both the grinders and vacuums, and a host of tooling.

The bottom line: know just what market you're hoping to serve, do your research and then ask lots and lots of questions.

Know your market

Many people get into the concrete industry with little more than hand tools, a strong back, sturdy knees and a willingness to work. A grinder can represent a large capital investment, whether you're looking at hand-controlled models for four figures or ride-on versions that can sell for upwards of \$100,000, depending on the size.

With that said, it's important to know just what you need before you write that check. And, to do that, you have to know your market.

First off, what do you want to do?



Photo courtesy of WerkMaster

There's certainly a demand for big machines, but manufacturers are also finding that many companies are looking for smaller models that can easily be moved from job site to job site and carry modest price tags.

David Padgett, CEO of Concrete Polishing Solutions in Norris, Tennessee, and chairman of the International Polished Concrete Institute, says the right machine can both grind and polish.

"However, you have to remember that a grinder is more for surface preparation and concrete repair," Padgett says. "Defining a polisher gets vague because anybody that has a floor buffer has a polisher. It can be anything from a buffer to a large planetary machine."

Still, polishing is probably the smaller portion of most people's work, according to Jamie Krueger, product manager for surface prep and polishing equipment for the Olathe, Kansas-based Husqvarna

Construction Products Americas. He says in terms of square footage, many people find they do more grinding, whether it involves removing glues, mastics and coatings, or prepping a surface.

Once you know what sort of work you're going to be doing, it's easier to begin narrowing your choices. Smaller jobs may need a walk-behind machine in the 21- to 40-inch range, while larger ones may require a ride-on machine that can weigh thousands of pounds.

Obviously, a larger grinder will cover more square feet in a day.

"Larger grinders also can't get into every location," says Krueger. "Interior residential

An advertisement for Reliable Diamond Tool, Inc. The background is a blurred image of a worker in a red hard hat and safety glasses, working on a concrete floor. Overlaid on the left is a circular logo with a worker's head and shoulders, surrounded by the word "RELIABLE" at the top and "DIAMOND TOOL, INC." at the bottom. In the center, the words "RELIABLE RESULTS" are written in large, bold, blue and white letters. Below this, the text "Call for more information on our Polishing Systems" is written in a cursive font. At the bottom, contact information is provided: "Reliable Diamond Tool, Inc. • Phone: (877) 938-2523 • Fax: (623) 465-4576 • info@rdtusa.com".

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doors may only be 28 inches in width, so if your grinder is 32 inches, that's a problem. On the flip side, if a contractor is bidding on a 40,000-square-foot school job, doing the work with a 21-inch grinder wouldn't be efficient. That's why we distribute single- and three-phase machines from 10 to 32 inches to cover the full range of applications."

Then, there's the issue of wall edges and corners. Ralph Newbiggin, COO of Burnaby, British Columbia-based WerkMaster, says that company's machines can get within 1/8 inch of any wall.

"Obviously, you can't get quite into a corner. You always have a small arc left, but we're talking about maybe 3/4 inch," he says. "We recommend a fine tool or reciprocating tool to get into this last part."

Still another important consideration is the weight of a machine. CPS's Padgett notes that a truly heavyweight grinding machine may require a loading dock, a box truck and a licensed commercial driver to get it from job site to job site. Even a 3,000-pound machine can put a strain on a pickup lift gate.

However, there are also smaller machines on the market. Josh Jones, president of Substrate Technology Inc. in Morris, Illinois, says his company is introducing a line of smaller grinding machines, and weight was an important consideration.

"Our smallest machine until now weighed 850 pounds and is a big, heavy machine," he says. "Our newest offering, which we call the Junior, weighs in at 400 pounds and breaks into two pieces. Two people can get it in and out of a truck, onto

a cart, down some stairs and put it back together again in 10 minutes."

Power up

Still another consideration is the power supply. Many manufacturers make models that run on propane, while others are electric. Both have their advantages and disadvantages.

At Diamatic USA in San Diego, Steve Klugherz says that the company is back-ordered on its new single-phase electric model that sells for under \$10,000, and is excited by its electric burnisher line for polishing to the point of phasing out its propane models.

"The electric allows people to rejuvenate concrete floors with other workers in there and not worry about fumes contaminating

Quality Diamonds: A Polisher's Best Friend

by K. Schipper

Although a good grinder/polisher will take other types of pads besides diamonds, the industrial version of the gemstone is a must for a wide range of tasks. And, there's the rub: just as with jewelry, these diamonds are seen as being expensive.

Those in the industry say it's a perception people need to get past. Good diamonds can save labor, and it's there, rather than with the grinder attachments, that costs really lie.

David Padgett of Concrete Polishing Solutions and the chairman of the International Polished Concrete Institute says studies have shown that 82 percent of the cost of being a polished concrete contractor is in labor, not materials.

"It has to do with the number of souls you put on a job and how much it costs to put them on that job and to keep them employed between jobs," he says. "What you're really selling is labor."

For that reason, Padgett adds, it's critical to buy equipment and tooling that will cut those costs as much as possible.

Of course, it's important to know what you're paying for tooling per square foot to figure your profit margin, but the reality is it often comes down to handful of cents per square foot, according to Ralph Newbiggin of WerkMaster.

"We've heard many times that the price of diamond tooling is so expensive," he says. "However, if you're charging \$6-\$7 a square foot and you're paying five or 10 cents a foot for the cost of tooling, it's a rounding error."

To further back up that contention, Newbiggin says WerkMaster is in the final stages of developing a job-cost calculator app that should allow contractors to easily see their costs while working up a quote.

It's a complaint Josh Jones of Substrate Technology Inc.



Photo courtesy of Husqvarna Construction Products

says he's heard many times, too. However, his company tries to view diamond tooling as a quality product, rather than a commodity.

"We like to talk about the long-term advantage you get with a quality product," Jones says. "If I sell a tool for \$100, and it gets 30,000 square feet, and you're using a tool that costs \$50 but gets 10,000 feet, where's your value?"

The important thing, says Steve Klugherz of Diamatic USA, is that you're using a tool that lets you get the production and speed out of the machine you're using.

Jamie Krueger of Husqvarna Construction Products Americas agrees. "Great diamond tooling will increase your production rates, give a much better end result and make the job more profitable," he says. "It can also keep the contractor's labor cost down because you can save steps using better tooling."



Photo courtesy of Substrate Technology Inc.

Most people associate grinders with concrete polishing, but the right machine can be used for anything from removing glues, mastics and coatings to other surface preparation jobs and even burnishing.

vegetables or cheeses or killing pets with carbon monoxide,” he says. “A lot of people have bought propane to do their extra work, but I’d say a large percentage of those guys aren’t handling the propane machines correctly.”

That may include not wearing a personal monitoring device for carbon monoxide, incorrectly maintaining the machine or ignoring the carbon monoxide alert signal.

STI’s Jones is quick to acknowledge that people aren’t always good about maintaining their equipment, and propane-powered machines require maintenance much more frequently. However, he says propane is safe for indoor use.

“Our products have been tested to conform to the state mandate in California, which means all the other states accept it because California is the most-strict,” Jones says. “You have to have proper air flow, but the machines are also fitted with carbon monoxide sensors with active interrupts. If you have an unsafe amount of carbon monoxide, the machine will run for 10 seconds and



Propane-powered grinders offer plenty of versatility free from electrical power, which may not be available at some job sites.

Photo courtesy of WerkMaster



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then shut down.”

The big advantage with a propane-powered machine is that it frees up the operator to move around on the job.

“That’s particularly true on larger jobs, where your power may be hundreds of feet away from where you’re going to be grinding,” says WerkMaster’s Newbigan. “A propane machine can go where the machine needs to go, you don’t need to take a generator, and you don’t have to wait for an electrician to come along and attach a pigtail to the power board.”

Not only does propane eliminate the cords for the grinder itself, but also for the vacuum, which is a must with dry grinding and polishing. Diamatic’s Klugherz estimates 99 percent of work on concrete can be done dry.

STI’s Jones says the most important aspect of the vacuum is that it’s sized for the machine being used, and then properly cared for.

“There should be no visible emissions coming from under the machine,” Jones says. “If you don’t maintain the vacuum it doesn’t matter what you’re using.”

‘Best opportunity’

If you’re confident you have a market for grinding and polishing services, buying a machine and tooling isn’t any different from any other capital investment. Just be sure to ask lots and lots of questions so you don’t end up buying a machine that won’t meet your needs from a company that ignores you after the check clears.

Jones suggests starting with discussion boards and industry forums. “But remember, that’s not necessarily qualified knowledge.”

From there, it’s time to look at “everything on the market,” says Newbigan. And, if a particular manufacturer catches your eye, look at what’s online, including videos. Also, don’t hesitate to ask for references.

Ask about the manufacturer’s training programs, support and warranty. And get a referral to the manufacturer’s nearest dealer, as well.

“Even though they’re the middleman, they’re going to be close to your location, and they’ll be the one to help you if you have a problem,” says STI’s Jones. “Put the dealer to the test: have him come out and do

a demo. And, if they won’t do that, go on to the next guy.”

Perhaps one of the hardest questions to answer is where do you want you and your company to be in three and five years. If you have visions of growing your business (and you probably do), then look at a company that has a deep product line, say both Diamatic’s Klugherz and Husqvarna’s Kruger.

“If you plan to stay in business, look for the highest quality machines with the deepest line extension,” says Klugherz. “You might want an inexpensive first machine, but you need a reliable piece of equipment to build a company around.”

“Remember: it comes down to what’s the best machine for you,” says Newbigan. “It’s all about leaving your customer incredibly satisfied. You want the machine you think will give you the best opportunity to delight your customer at the most cost-effective price.”

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Photos courtesy of Spirit Stone

Spirit Stone

*Concrete contractor
crosses over to the art side*



by Jacqueline Valle

FOR a man who's been into concrete as far back as he can remember, the business has changed a lot since he ran Carl Concrete Construction in Greensboro, North Carolina. Now co-owner of Spirit Stone, Bill Carl has moved away from the traditional uses of concrete to its more artistic side.

Back when Carl first started out in the 1980s, things were a lot different — the tools, the techniques, the mixes. He doesn't remember any big crews, he says, because there weren't many big jobs. However, he

does recall working on a parking deck that was "a pretty big deal."

Before he was 35, he worked on a lot of commercial projects interspersed with residential jobs. Business was cyclical in nature, he says.

"I was doing decorative concrete before it was actually called decorative concrete," says Carl, adding it was all just part of his regular business. A lot of his work entailed designing and building fountains, benches, tables, fireplaces and countertops. And he was one of the first in his area to have a set



of rubber stamps “way back when.”

Since 1995 or so, “I specialized in architectural and high-performance concrete. My standard practice was to meet or exceed ACI standards on every project, period,” Carl says. “I can’t say I had my own system, but I did practice techniques that were not commonly used.” He notes he used “a straight cement 5,000 psi” mix for everything and often added an integral color.

Over the years, his techniques have changed as his business evolved. “I can’t say I’ve never poured into a mold but I can say I never had much use for them.” He used to work “the old boy way,” Carl says, “Form, pour, strip, finish — that’s the method I used whether it was on the job or on a product.”

Getting into the spirit

About three years ago, making products became Carl’s sole focus when he and his wife, Julie, began their newest venture, Spirit Stone. He started out modifying common applications in the production process but he soon found them too restrictive to accomplish the tasks at hand.

Carl says he had no choice but to eliminate practically everything he had ever used from his decades-old repertoire, “leaving only me, concrete and one tool.” He has since added a second tool but uses it infrequently. “I’d say 99 percent of everything I do is done using one tool.”

Doing everything by hand without the aid of machines, Carl says he doesn’t use

molds or armature to craft his products. Eighty percent of the things he makes are made with a continuous process “at slumps from 0 to soup,” and 99 percent of the coloring he uses is acid stain.

He can’t find the words to exactly explain the process he uses to sculpt his wares but says he uses a palette in much the same manner as a painter. “The mix is straight up cement, sand and rock,” Carl says. He routinely manipulates the ratios and scales depending on what he’s making. He adds that he uses no mechanical reinforcement and if there’s a “secret sauce” in the mix, he isn’t saying.

The name Spirit Stone comes from the emotional reaction people have had from observing Carl and Julie’s work, which was recently displayed in September at the juried fine arts festival at the Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center in Dowell, Maryland, on Solomons Island. There, the couple won the Best of Show honors.

While a lot of what Carl does now is art, he doesn’t consider himself an artist. “It’s not me as an artist revealing myself through the material,” he says. “The concrete is revealing itself through me.”



Merging art and concrete

Concrete is an unusual material because it can mimic almost anything and produce results that are often unintentional. Some of Carl's favorite pieces are ones that Julie "messes up on" that he has to lend a helping hand to save. But then she completes them with her engineering skills and finesse. "Those pieces tend to be spectacular," he says.

One of the more unique items the duo crafts are cremation urns — selling them at shows and events as well as online at memorials.com. While people have a hard time dealing with the topic of human ashes, Carl notes it's getting better. One recent

request involved adding the remains of a family's grandmother to a concrete mix and making 17 keepsakes for her kin. Carl, who notes they also make memorial benches, says they'd like to see more of these kinds of projects.

Other notable work the pair produces are whimsical garden pieces, clocks, oil diffusers, jewelry, wall hangings and figurines. "We're going outside the concrete industry and we're presenting it to a group of people who have never seen concrete like this before," says Carl. "It's simple in its basic form yet so hard for most to comprehend." 📱



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Don't Let Ghosting Haunt Your Work

by Chris Sullivan

Question: In our case, we have integrally colored concrete. My contractor placed blue painter's tape on the concrete for a few days to mark the placement of cabinetry. The tape was removed and the concrete was sealed with two coats of 25 percent solids acrylic sealer and two coats of acrylic finish. A few days later the concrete was discolored and had evidence of where the tape had been placed. No surface damage to the concrete was evident.

Why did this happen and how can it be fixed?

Defining the issue

This issue is called ghosting or shadowing. The good news is that over the past decade the number of questions and complaints like this has greatly declined. I attribute that to experience, more people talking about the predicament and the internet.

I can remember researching the topic for a presentation on troubleshooting about 10 years ago, and there was nothing out there. It seemed I was breaking new ground on the subject. Today, a quick search brings up lots of articles and blog posts from professionals and DIYers alike.

Ghosting or shadowing occurs when contamination, residue or discoloration from a previous covering appears on your decorative finish. It usually shows up as a translucent mark in the same shape as the previous source and, in many cases, ruins what would otherwise be a beautiful floor.



Photos courtesy of Chris Sullivan

Blue painter's tape used to mark off the location of cabinetry on an integrally colored concrete floor leaves glue residue when the tape is removed. Ghosting occurred after the sealer was applied.



Car tire cleaner that spilled on a driveway is not evident until a sealer is applied.

Getting to the source

The major sources of ghosting and shadowing are:

- **Tile.** Probably the most common culprits are ceramic and stone tile. The difference in moisture transfer between the tile and grout create a permanent difference in the concrete. The difference from the grout lines transfers through thin overlays and shows up in translucent stains and coatings.
- **Vinyl composition tile.** VCT is another common source. The same mechanism as tile causes the issue with VCT, only the lines are usually thinner because the tiles or sheets touch each other.
- **Wood.** Shadowing or ghosting can occur not only from wood flooring, but also when plywood or lumber is left on newly placed concrete. During curing, a differential in moisture under the wood compared to exposed concrete causes these marks.
- **Cans and pails.** Typical construction containers left to sit on the concrete during curing create distinct shadow rings.

- **Contamination.** Soda, coffee and tobacco are all acidic. These mild acids can micro-etch the concrete. The etch is often light enough that you don't see it when the concrete is dry and/or unsealed, but once a stain or sealer is applied the ghost mark in the shape of a spill or spit is noticeable.
- **Previous construction.** A back-filled trench or core from a repair in the concrete can often shadow through, even if 2 inches of concrete are placed over the repair.
- **Tape.** This one is probably the least known, but most deadly. The glue from tape migrates into concrete and when the tape is removed the glue residue remains. This area resists stain and sealer and makes for long unsightly shadow lines.
- **Internal elements.** When it comes to full-depth concrete, anything in the concrete needs to be placed deep enough to avoid shadowing. Rebar and radiant heat tubes can cause shadowing if they're placed too close to the concrete surface.

Dealing with the problem

The best way to deal with the issue is to avoid it. If you're in the business of staining,

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sealing, coating, polishing or overlaying, you need to consider every floor a potential candidate. This is especially true when you're working on a floor that had some previous floor covering removed.

Other obvious ways to avoid the issue are to make sure nothing sits on the floor during the initial 30-day curing period, and never tape directly to the concrete before or after sealing.

If an overlay or opaque coating is going to be applied to a floor with the potential for ghosting or shadowing, a high-solids primer or crack-suppression system is a must. These resin- and cement-based primer systems act as physical barriers and prevent shadowing from appearing on the surface.

In the case where tape was applied or some other resin-based contamination is present, a solvent or chemical cleaner can be used to remove the residue.

When the concrete is damaged or the potential shadowing is not moisture related, a thin overlay can be used. It will cover the issue and provide a new surface on which to work. This is not a good candidate for moisture-related shadowing because the overlay is not thick enough to block the shadow from transferring through.

The real bummer with ghosting and shadowing is that there isn't a lot that can be done once it shows up. In many cases, it's a pattern covering the entire floor, so spot treatment is not feasible. Even with small areas like tape marks, finding a coating or stain to cover the issues while still having it blend in with the new decorative finish is difficult.

An easy way to test for shadowing issues is to spray the surface with water prior to applying the sealer. In many cases, the water will darken surface areas where potential ghosting or shadowing may occur.

Back to the original question

Getting back to the issue with the tape on the integrally colored floor, the options for repair are limited. A tinted finish can be applied to try to hide the tape marks. Another option requires stripping all the sealer, using a solvent to remove the glue residue, then using a stain or dye to touch up the color before resealing.

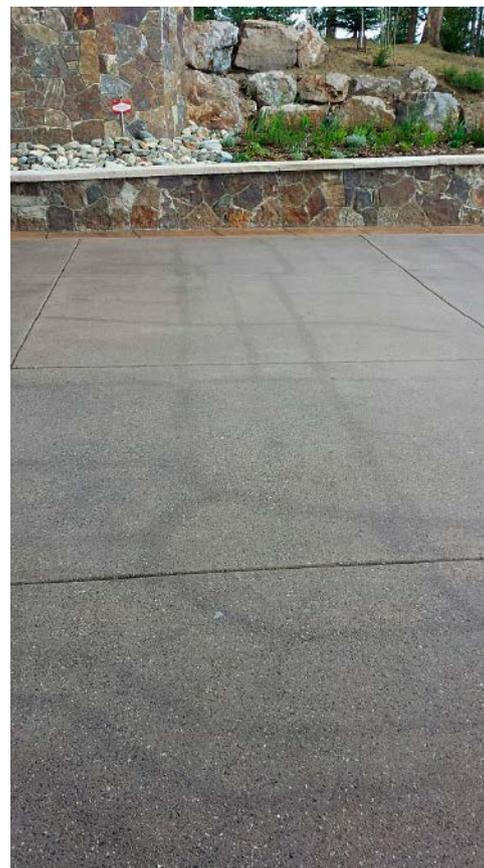
In my experience, none of these options produces a seamless repair, and some part of the ugly ghost or shadow remains visible. The success of these types of repairs usually comes down to how artistic you can be in

covering the spots, and how understanding the client is.

I've seen ghosting and shadowing on concrete 2 inches thick, on thin overlays, through stains and dyes, on integrally colored and gray concrete, as well as on sealed and polished concrete. Overall, it can occur on any surface.

As with most decorative finishes, aesthetics and color are a major part of the finish, so ghosting and shadowing are especially detrimental in a decorative concrete project. Shadowing and ghosting are issues that don't occur very often, but when they do they can be permanent and very difficult to hide. A little extra time on the front end in regards to testing the surface and using a primer or topping can go a long way to avoiding costly repairs if shadowing and ghosting do occur. 🛠️

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.



Radiant heating tubes in this driveway are too close to the surface and showed up as shadows.



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Photos courtesy of Rick Lobdell

Add Dimension to a Tile Pattern

by Rick Lobdell

In the previous two articles, I discussed my bread-and-butter designs. I probably do one of those designs every other week and sometimes twice a week. They're quick and easy once you become familiar with them. Practice drawing them on your warehouse floor a couple of times until you get used to the routine.

Typically, on a large-scale job, one or two of my employees start the basic layout of the ashlar pattern and I follow connecting all those dashes I told you about. I'm so fast at it that two employees will barely stay ahead of me. I can't stress enough to practice on your own time.

The ashlar pattern article has a lot of details to read and try to understand. I know it's a lot to take in but I must warn you the next couple articles are going to get even more complicated. This one will be a great addition to your basic tile pattern. There are so many things you can do with design once you perfect laying out a basic tile pattern.

In this article, I'm going to explain how to add borders around the tiles. By doing

this, you'll get four new design options all at one time. It's quick and easy to do while you're laying out that basic tile pattern you've already started practicing.

Find center

First, start with a border around the room. I never go below 6 inches or over 12 inches. Then find center (refer to my "Basic Tile Pattern" article for details and images). Basically, choose either the length or width of a room. Measure twice from wall to wall and mark the middle of each measurement with small dashes that are within 6 feet of each other. Then measure once through those two points to find the true center and mark it.

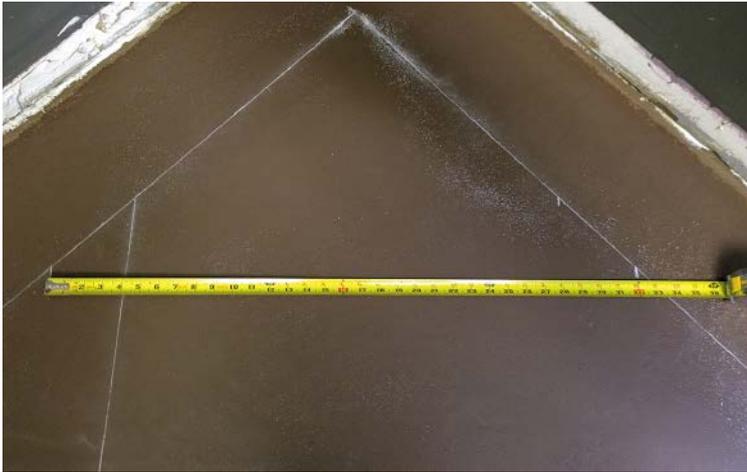
After you have those three marks, place a 6-foot straight edge across all three with its 36-inch mark on the center point. Remember the fourth is not important and could make your initial lines off square if you aren't careful. Chalk two lines through those three points and check to make sure they are square.

Add borders as you measure out tiles

When you start measuring out your next tiles add a border to your measurements. It can be the same size as the outside border you did around the room. As an example, I'm going to create a 2-foot tile pattern with 4-inch borders around the tiles.

While measuring a 2-foot tile add 4 inches to the existing line, 2 feet off the





line, then another 4 inches after that line. Remember just like in the “Basic Tile Pattern” article, make these dashes as far to the edge of your outside border. This helps keep everything as square as possible. Do this in all directions off your initial lines then chalk those lines out. Immediately, you’ll see a 2-foot tile in the center with 4-inch borders in all directions around it. From there you repeat the measurements until you finish the layout.

Take advantage of this layout

Now that the design is completely chalked out, you can adjust the intersections depending on the client.

First, you can leave them just the way they are where you have 2-foot tiles and 4-inch tiles with borders traveling through. This is

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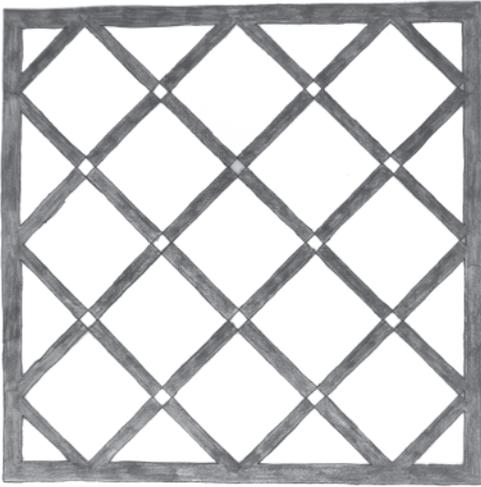
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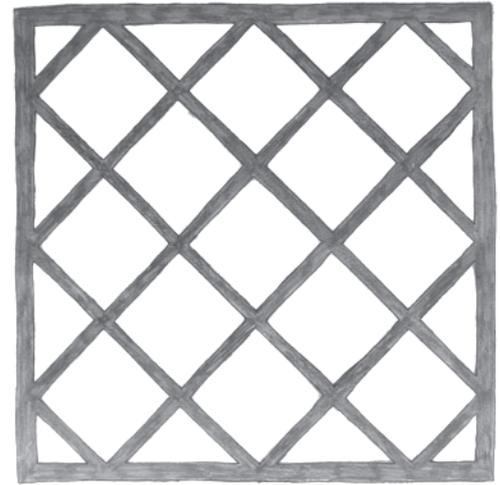
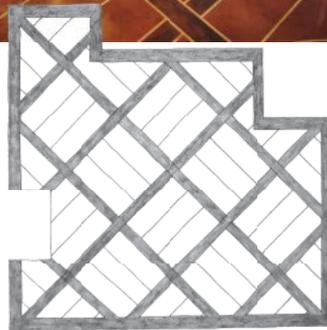
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PROJECT PROFILE



a great look and easy to cut. It is also easy to stain because you have so many stopping points (see images at left).

Second, you can erase every other direction of the lines. This will create a basket weave on the floor. Still a great look and still easy to stain (see below).



Third, you can erase all the intersections. This will make the borders appear to be one very long border through the space. It is a very contemporary look but staining gets complicated because you have no stopping points.



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Finally, you can have fun with the fourth design idea. After erasing all the intersections, you can add an extra line in two directions and make the tiles appear 3-D. If you choose to add this extra border, you need to understand the best point of view for it as the 3-D illusion will look different from every direction.

You want to take advantage of the direction that will be seen the most. Many times if the surface is outside, I create the 3-D effect toward the house so when the clients look out their windows and doors they see the tiles dropped.

Once I did the reverse and it was really cool. When the clients were in their pool, they saw dropped tiles. When they were in their house looking outside, the tiles appeared to rise.

I suggest walking through all of this with your clients once you draw the initial layout. It's fun to see their reactions when you erase lines and change the entire design in seconds. You can also add them right back if they choose the original layout.

Add the 3-D lines

At this point, once you decide the 3-D direction, you can chalk out all the 3-D lines. Typically, I make them half the size of the main borders. Since we have 4-inch borders, let's make 2-inch 3-D borders.

Measure 2 inches off one direction of each border, starting in the middle so you can see what you're making. Consider your borders as having an inside and outside edge and you're chalking an extra line on all the inside edges. This will help you remember the direction you're visualizing.

After you chalk all those out, erase every line that crosses your 4-inch borders and the small ones that cross the 2-inch borders you made. Use the intersections of the inside corner of the 4-inch border and the outside edge of the 2-inch 3-D border and make a small line. This final line will sell the 3-D aspect of the floor to your clients.



Once you do that in every intersection of the 2-inch borders, you're done and ready to cut. Good luck on that part. All the times you have to start and stop might drive you crazy but remember the final look will be amazing and your clients will love it. 🛠️

For a video overview of this process, see

youtu.be/qZpf8nvqhwE

Rick Lobdell, a classically trained artist with a masters in fine arts in painting from the Savannah College of Art and Design, has also studied math and drafting. In this series, the owner of Concrete Mystique Engraving in Tennessee will explain how he lays out his well-known designs. He can be reached at rick@concretemystique.com.

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Bring It to the Table

By Jacqueline Valle

FABIEN Mené, a French native and art collector, never thought he'd find himself working in decorative concrete. It all started after studying art at the Charles de Gaulle University — Lille III. The idea of creating stenciled tables came to him after making bar counters in a class and wondering if he could add a stencil to the bottom of a casing.

"I did some research and saw this technique was scarcely used," says Mené. "So I decided to keep on that track to make more and more elaborate patterns and effects."

After graduating, he moved to Brussels, Belgium, a vibrant city filled with street art, where he spent three years gaining inspiration from art exhibitions. From Brussels he traveled to Australia, where Mené met his now-wife, Genevieve. They relocated to northern Canada in an area inhabited with Inuits, a Native American people also called Eskimos.

Isolated from much of the world, Mené devoted his ample free time to develop and improve his stencil-based style that begins with drawing a pattern on leather, cutting it with a scalpel and placing it at the bottom of his concrete framework before the pour. The stencils

are reusable, usually up to five times, and are also customizable. Sometimes he'll use a rotary tool to carve directly into the concrete to add small details.

"After my daughter was born, we decided to move back to Quebec City where I took a class on concrete to understand the basics," says Mené. He also got a job with a company that polishes concrete floors and learned a lot about the techniques and chemicals used in the process.

Since this introduction, he began making concrete counters and tables and has been doing so for about a year.

Mené uses regular concrete to build his tables, as he likes the idea of transforming a simple raw material into an elaborate finished product. The actual table-making process isn't time consuming, he says, but finding the right pattern and color and pairing them with an appropriate base that aptly suits the stencil definitely is. Typical tables weigh between 30 and 60 pounds.

"The table takes longer to complete in my head than it actually does when it comes down to it," says Mené. Polishing adds a few hours to the process.

To date, the most unusual table he's made is a wooden-effect table



where he mixed up the recipe and the surface cracked. This "accident" led Mené to set it aside since he still felt it was a beautiful piece. He later accidentally spilled acid on it and his results were astounding. "I found myself with a wonderful table and I now try to obtain the same effect on purpose!" says Mené.

He recently opened Kind Of Béton, a small business that promotes his tables on Facebook. Mené plans to adapt his stencil and acid polishing techniques and open an innovative flooring shop in the near future. 📱

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Photos courtesy of Fabien Mené

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