

**Refinishers Warehouse Newsletter**  
**Volume 4, Issue 1**  
**Second Quarter 2004**

**In the Eye of the Beholder ..... COLOR**

I occasionally get asked about custom colors, or color matching. "Will it be 100% exact match, guaranteed? And if not, why not?" Or has a customer of yours ever expressed disappointment over the custom color of a re-coloring job? Or after finishing a job, you caught yourself thinking "this isn't exactly how I envisioned it"

Well, the reason why a color may not look as we envisioned it is simple: color is very complex. It is complex because our perception of color is influenced by many factors, including, but not limited to, the following: light sources, different materials, arrangement of colors, atmospheric conditions, the shape of an object, number of layers of the applied coating, differences in lots or batches of base color, differences in the actual pigments, and mixture of actual lighting conditions. Some colors dry lighter and some dry darker.

Last but not least, color chips in the fan decks and color charts are made from inks, not paint. Provided there are no obvious errors, either with the ordered coating or the re-coloring job, consider these points.

LIGHT is the reason why we perceive color in the first place. Therefore, it is easy to imagine why different light sources create different perceptions of the same hue. Even the same light source combined with daylight from a window or door will create different perceptions depending on the time of day. All materials absorb and reflect light differently.

In addition, a rough surface reflects light differently than a smooth surface: even if it is made from the same material. Thick materials absorb light differently than thin material, and so on. The distance to a light source must also be considered.

For example, it may not be a good idea to show a color sample close to the light source so the customer "can see it better in the light." Instead, hold the sample at a distance how it will normally be viewed, or if you are re-coloring a countertop, hold the sample close to the counter, so the customer will see the sample in the actual conditions.

When doing a re-coloring job, you should also note that the arrangement of existing colors will influence the final look. Your re-coloring job does not exist in isolation but rather reflects all surrounding hues. Consider that lighter surfaces next to darker ones appear lighter than they actually are and dark surfaces appear even darker.

Unless absolutely flat, the shape of a surface creates various contrasts of lights and darks. The number of pigment layers of applied coatings changes the color perception insofar as more layers translates to darker, less vibrant colors. To

cover completely, but yet not get too heavy of a buildup, use three coats as described in our manual. (Two light coats, one final wet coat.)

Finally, everyone perceives color differently due to individual physical makeup, vision, medications, age, etc. Perhaps this information will help create a better understanding of why something doesn't look exactly the way anticipated.

Since the perception of color obviously goes beyond chemical formulas and mixing ratios, what can you do to minimize the potential problem? We suggest that for every custom color job, you spray a paint chip color sample and have the customer sign off on the color. Ideally, spray a color sample on a scrap of the actual material. If this is not possible or practical, try a close match. This is important because even though you have completely covered the original color, it influences the way the new color is perceived due to the varying degrees of light absorption and reflection.

In summary, using a color sample on actual or similar material, viewing it under actual lighting conditions and considering other points mentioned in this article, all combined, should reduce the element of surprise.

### **PAINT PERFUME?????**

I recently saw an ad for **PAINT ODOR ELIMINATOR**, for solvent based coatings. According to one of our manufacturers, Do Not Use. It masks the coating making it smell nice. Making the coating smell pleasant could give your customer a false sense of SAFETY and could result in a LIABILITY to you. Paint smells bad for a reason, because IT ISN'T SAFE. So don't even think about adding this additive to your coatings. We have had "FLAVORS" for the coatings for years but we don't add them because of the possible Liability, both for us and for you.

**ALIPHATIC and AROMATIC COATINGS:** The main difference is in the resins used in making the catalysts. They produce different qualities.

ALIPHATIC coatings (Superglass 9000, 2000 and Spectrum) are generally more durable, and the gloss and color retention is far better than aromatic coatings. Aliphatic paints are used by aircraft manufactures because they don't yellow with ultraviolet light (UV-sunlight).

AROMATIC coatings (Superglass 7000) are not light stable, they can yellow from the sun (UV). (Sometimes noticeable in White). They usually have faster cure times than Aliphatic coatings. They are generally more toxic, but have better chemical and stain resistance.

### **CONSISTENCY OF COATING, COLOR TO COLOR.**

I have been asked why the Superglass 9000 Clear is like water compared to Superglass 9000 White or Black or a custom color. That has to do with the

addition of colored pigments. As an example, a gallon of 9000 Clear might weigh in at 9 lbs. When the Titanium White pigment is added, it can add up to 3 lbs to that gallon of coating. Thus the coating will be thicker. A quart of pure pigment Titanium weighs in at 4 3/4 lbs. A quart of PhthaloBlue pigment only weighs 2 1/4 lbs. Burnt Umber weighs 3 1/2 lbs.

So the color and the pigments in a particular color, determines the thickness of any coating. When you thin 9000 Clear, you may not use as much thinner or any thinner, compared to thinning white or a custom color, where you might thin 10, 20, 30% or more. This also applies to Superglass 7000 and 2000 coatings as well.

**OVER THINNING? DON'T DO IT.** The labels on our coatings tell you how much to thin each product. Are you aware that greatly OVER Thinning, actually damages the catalyst, thereby resulting in a WEAKER overall coating. If the label says 10 to 30%, please don't thin it 50 or 60% to try to save a couple of ounces of coating per job. In the long run the coating will fail or will not last as long.

## **RECAP OF IDEAS AND PRODUCTS**

**FAUX GRANITE LOOK:** In the past couple of years, I have introduced you to the technique of Faux Granite, where, after you apply the base coats of color, you speckle the countertop with contrasting colors. Those of you who have tried this, report that now you do very few solid color Almond or White countertops any more.

You have converted your customers to the **NEWER and BETTER LOOK**, and *INCREASED* your profits as well, by charging more for this look. **ADD A CLEAR COAT**, using about the same amount of clear as you did with the base coat. This will give your counter more protection, but more important, it will add a depth that will just enhance the overall appearance. (Some refinishers are charging \$45 to \$85 extra for this dear coat)

**HAMMER EFFECT:** This coating is only available in four colors, Blue, Green, Silver and Charcoal (Black), at this time. You can intermix these four colors and create many variations. Those that have tried this have said the effect is tremendous, that home owners rave about the look. One example would be to do the inside of a claw foot tub in the silver or the black Hammer, as well as the inside of the pedestal sink. Do the outside of the tub and the pedestal in a contrasting color or white. It's such a different and exciting effect.

One customer said he was having trouble selling the Silver Hammer, "I mean who wants a silver bathtub?" Good thought, so he changed the color to "Antique Pewter" and has sold a ton of jobs. Another customer, uses the Black (or Charcoal) Hammer on countertops and his customers just love the effect.

**GROUT COLORANT AND SEALER:** This is a water based product that is used to renew the existing color of grout or totally change the color of tile grout. It's a one part product, you apply with a small brush along the grout lines. This is an excellent ADD-ON to your refinishing business.

**FIBERGLASS TUB REPAIR PANELS:** This is a one piece, vinyl repair panel, used to repair the bottoms of fiberglass tubs and showers, when they are structurally damaged. It comes complete with the two part epoxy glue, mixing bucket, gloves and the repair panel. You can repair the bottom of a tub in about an hour, and when done correctly, the tub looks like it came from the factory.

**FAUX FINISHING:** A technique normally used on walls in homes but can be adapted to use with our products on countertops for a totally new and different effect. It's time consuming, but for a custom job in a private residence it can pay very nicely.

We will continue to look for, develop, and pass along new products and / or ideas. If you would like to see something or have heard of something, pass it along so we can share it with all.