

sikkens

FOCUS

The Sikkens Customer Magazine

Spring 10

The Eco-Logical System has Arrived

New Australian Supercar to Wear AkzoNobel Colors

AkzoNobel Support 2010 Victorian of the Year

Acoat Selected PCE Bootcamp a Huge Success



 **Eco-Logical**
The Natural Choice.



AkzoNobel

Colorbuild™ Plus
Setting the new standard
in undercoats



Colorbuild Plus is a new generation color primer system, giving exceptional performance to meet the most exacting standards of today's bodyshop. It can closely match any car body color to produce a finish with perfect color match even faster, and at lower cost. Colorbuild Plus is part of the Sikkens Eco-Logical System, encompassing product and business support, technical training and products compliant to EU VOC standards. The improvements in bodyshop profitability go far beyond what can be achieved with the conventional grey and tintable primers. Colorbuild Plus sets a completely new standard in undercoats.

Welcome



Welcome to the Spring Edition of FOCUS. The last few months have been very exciting as I approach my first year in the chair and we head towards the final quarter of 2010.

I am particularly excited about our future following the appointment of Lance Weiss who will focus on strategic key accounts and Phillip Adams who joins our Marketing team. Both will be integral to our future growth and brand development.

Our plan for the remainder of 2010 is to work on the further development of our existing portfolio through specific business and marketing activities that will be underpinned by extensive market research, advertising campaigns, product development and technical training. This will continue to be supported by our national and state management teams.

With exciting developments in Acoat Selected PCE, we recently ran our second Boot Camp headed by Robin Taylor, National Services Manger. Robin and his team did a tremendous job and the feedback from all attendees was that it was an overwhelming success. Congratulations to Robin and the entire Acoat Selected Team.

AkzoNobel continues to maintain its global focus on sustainable solutions and we in Australasia are delighted to be supplying many of our customers with the Eco-logical range of products. The feedback has been great and we are pleased with the amount of new customers making the switch to waterborne. It is particularly important for our business as we develop a sustainable solution for our distribution partners and customers across Australia and New Zealand and we look forward to further developing our low VOC range.

With September fast approaching, the 2010 Formula One Singtel Singapore Grand Prix is virtually upon us. This is the premier promotional activity for AkzoNobel across Asia as we embrace our relationship with the Vodafone McLaren Mercedes team as the official supplier of Sikkens coatings. We have developed 'The Grand Prix Promotion' for our business partners, customers and staff, offering the chance to be part of the action in Singapore. We look forward to a great racing weekend.

I would like to thank all of you for your continued support, and I hope that you find our 2010 Spring issue of FOCUS both informative and newsworthy.

Joe McFadries
General Manager
AkzoNobel Car Refinishes, Australasia

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Industry Events

NACE 10th to 13th October Las Vegas, USA	SEMA 2nd to 5th November Las Vegas, USA	CRSA Conference 13th November Gold Coast, AUS	Collision Repair Expo 12th to 14th May 2011 Melbourne, AUS
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Australia's First Production Supercar to Wear Sikkens Colors

As the final exterior design of Australia's first production supercar nears completion the team at AkzoNobel is preparing its exclusive palette of colors.

The first exciting model to emerge from Australian sports-car manufacturer Joss Developments is edging towards the end of its exterior design phase at the company's Advanced Automotive Design Centre in Melbourne. Internally coded JP1, the stunning mid-engined two-seat supercar is a breath-taking shape laid down by the company's technical director, Matt Thomas. The car's sleek looks embody the industrial designer's impressive CV as well as those of his hand-picked team, a group of highly skilled artisans whose marks have been made with European luxury car brands as well as in Formula 1, Le Mans, IndyCar racing and the World Rally Championship.

The vision of Joss Developments is simple: to be Australia's first production supercar company. Achieving this will make it Australia's fourth car-maker, albeit one which builds exclusively for the highest end of the automotive spectrum.

This is not a task for the faint-hearted. The magnitude of this challenge would daunt the most ardent entrepreneur but Thomas and his team have mapped the route and are completing each task as required. The path from sketch to showroom is a complex one but Australia is one of only five countries in the world that can do it, something Thomas says requires the best knowledge, materials, products and people.

This is where AkzoNobel comes into the picture.

Matt Thomas: "We need the best technology partners for this project and that is why we wanted AkzoNobel on our team. It's as simple as that.

"The quality- and weight-optimisation programmes for this car are exhaustive. Every element that will go into producing them must meet stringent standards.

"What's more, this car will take on Europe's best so when it came to the car's exterior finish we simply looked for the best European products - and all roads led to Sikkens," said Thomas.

According to Stephen Read, AkzoNobel's Marketing Manager, the opportunity to dress such a powerful design is both exciting and challenging.

"Because this car's light-weight carbon-fibre body will weigh around 45 kilograms we need the lightest paint with the best possible finish.

"To achieve this the Joss supercar will wear Sikkens' latest waterborne paint technology.

"Being one of only a few to see the car's design I was quick to conclude that the final color and finish will play a vital role in maximising the car's visual impact.



"This is by far one of the most exciting projects in the Australian car industry and I'm thrilled AkzoNobel has been involved since the start of its development," said Read.

The Joss JP1 is currently undergoing technical development. The company's first pre-production prototype models are underway and will become their development vehicles which will undergo a raft of tests both locally and overseas. These first test units are currently scheduled to hit the road by late 2011.



Collision Repair Expo Attracts International Exhibitors & Seminar Speakers

Exhibition space sales and special event planning are well advanced for the Collision Repair Expo to be held at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre from Thursday 12 May to Saturday 14 May 2011.

Held every two years since 2007, the Collision Repair Expo is produced for collision repairers by an industry led committee and is hosted by the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA). Executive Director of the AAAA, Stuart Charity, said the Expo now attracts international exhibitors and seminar speakers to create a world class event.

"With a strong focus on technology, this international input will bring the latest information and products to Australia," said Stuart Charity. "In 2011, we will offer the most comprehensive education program, including seminars and demonstrations presented by leading experts.

"The exhibition will present an exciting array of equipment and products. At this early stage, 70% of the exhibition space is already sold to top local and international brands," said Stuart Charity.

Akzo Nobel is the major sponsor of the 2011 Collision Repair Expo and looks forward to collaborating with the management team to produce the largest event of its kind in Australasia. "Having participated in the 2007 and 2009 Expos, we are both excited and privileged to be the major sponsor of the collision repair industry's main event," said Akzo Nobel Marketing Manager Stephen Read.

"Our commitment to supporting Australia's major Collision Repair Expo is important to our business. We look forward to showcasing our new low VOC Eco-Logical range, taking a step towards sustainable solutions and products, whilst working towards a greener tomorrow.

"We had great feedback about our involvement in the previous Expos. We aim to step it up a notch in 2011 and we hope all collision repair businesses will put the Collision Repair Expo date in their diaries now," said Read.

The Collision Repair Expo will again be co-located with the Australian Auto Aftermarket Expo, which will showcase a comprehensive range of automotive aftermarket parts, accessories, tools and equipment from the industry's leading companies and brands. To learn more about the Collision Repair Expo, please visit www.collisionrepair.com.au

AkzoNobel Announces Key Appointment



Strategic Relationship Manager

AkzoNobel has appointed Lance Weiss to the position of Strategic Relationship Manager, effective 5th July 2010.

Lance is responsible for developing, maintaining and strengthening links with the key industry stakeholders and influencers. Through close collaboration he will identify and develop long-term plans and strategies to ensure that AkzoNobel continues to be at the forefront of industry development and is able to offer the best productivity driven solutions to all sectors of the market.

Lance is working closely with our Sales and Marketing teams to strengthen AkzoNobel's position in the market and to ensure that we are continually adapting our programs and offering to the ever changing marketplace.

Lance joins us with over 35 years in the automotive industry, has a proven track record in sales and marketing within the Collision Repair industry and has worked to develop close links with the key players and influencers in all sectors. We are particularly pleased to welcome an individual of Lance's calibre to the team.

CRA at the Crossroads

The Garden City in the Land of the Long White Cloud, New Zealand's Christchurch welcomed delegates to the 97th Annual Collision Repair Association [CRA] Conference on 26-29 May.

The Christchurch Convention Centre hosted the industry's biggest annual event as over 300 attendees turned out for this year's conference themed 'Crossroads to Success', exploring a range of important topics addressing the challenges and opportunities of the current economic climate.

Once again a platinum sponsor of the conference, AkzoNobel played a key role in ensuring the viability and success of the event. Despite the difficulties of the recent recession, the mood of the conference was upbeat and participants came eager for new ideas to improve their businesses.

Maintaining strong ties to AkzoNobel Australia, the recently formed Otbury Group supports AkzoNobel brands throughout New Zealand. Evan Thompson, General Manager Otbury Group Ltd understands as well as anyone the recent pressures on the industry.

"Throughout the recession the industry faced a lot of challenges with pressure from insurance companies for more efficient use of money and cycle times etc. There are legislative changes regarding dangerous goods, spray booth compliance and health and safety compliance. Work volumes dropped considerably, so paint and panel shops have had to adjust their business considerably. The whole conference centred around ways to cope with where the industry's currently at," Thompson said.

National and international key note speakers included industry experts Nick Baloglou and Mark White who shared their extensive experience. Motivational speaker, extreme athlete Steve Gurney delivered his insights on overcoming obstacles, while entrepreneur Tony Baker offered insight into business success.

The CRA also co-ordinated with I-CAR NZ, allowing interested participants to undertake additional training on the afternoon before the conference.

Robin Taylor, National Services Manager, AkzoNobel manages the bodyshop support/ consultancy program across Australia and New Zealand. Taylor took the opportunity to attend the CRA conference on behalf of AkzoNobel in order to maintain close ties and stay abreast of the industry issues across the Tasman.

"In many ways the NZ market is similar to Australia, but there are also significant differences. For example, their market is dominated by a lot of Japanese imports and they have a lot of issues around parts process that we don't have in Australia," said Taylor.

"I went in order to build relationships, continue understanding the issues in their market, and developing programs to assist our customers.

"They had excellent speakers. They often reinforce what we already know; things that we need to do and it keeps you on track."

Next year's New Zealand CRA conference will head to Australia to coincide with the AkzoNobel-sponsored 2011 Collision Repair Expo in Melbourne from 12-14 May.



The Eco-Logical System

Waterborne products are becoming increasingly important in the Australian market, due to increased awareness of global warming, climate change, the impacts of Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) on the environment and the legislations implemented in Europe and America.

Although waterborne is not a new phenomenon and has been around for a decade, paint manufacturers continue to improve and heavily promote their waterborne systems, as it is in the foreseeable future that legislative pressure in Australia will take place.

AkzoNobel have introduced the Eco-Logical System, a range of innovative quality Sikkens products which are compliant to EU VOC standards, connected with unique training and support from AkzoNobel's waterborne technicians.

The Eco-Logical System dispels any myths about waterborne being slow, as the system is a faster painting process compared to conventional base and clearcoats.

With state of the art technology used throughout the range, customers will be pleased with the excellent appearance, flow and high gloss. "Eco-Logical is a highly advanced specialized system, it gives us a competitive edge as the training and support connected to this system is quite unique. Our technicians are expertly trained in waterborne products," said Marc Vallekoop – AkzoNobel Technical Service Manager.

AkzoNobel will assist your business with making the switch to waterborne technology. By gathering best practices from North America and Europe and adapting them to bodyshops in Australia, the AkzoNobel highly skilled waterborne trained technicians will work with you and your team to ensure success in everything from proper preparation, color mixing & matching, basecoat application and clear coat application.

AkzoNobel believe strongly in a responsibility to help preserve the environment and reduce its ecological footprint, while at the same time helping customers find practical and sustainable solutions to their business challenges – the Eco-Logical System reflects this concept.

The Eco-Logical System is not only composed from innovative quality Sikkens products; consisting of Colorbuild Plus, Autowave MM and Autoclear LV Superior, Eco-Logical is matched with training by skilled waterborne technicians and a support system to help improve your business.



Colorbuild Plus True Mixing Color Primer System

Colorbuild Plus is a state of the art color primer system, giving an undercoat that closely matches any car body color. That means a perfect color match can be produced faster, and at lower cost.

The improvements in bodyshop profitability go far beyond what can be achieved with the conventional grey and tintable primers.

Colorbuild Plus sets a completely new standard in undercoats. Colorbuild Plus is very easy to use, it requires just six colored primers to produce a full spectrum of both colors and grey shades.

There is no need to add costly topcoat toners; with Colorbuild Plus primers, car colors can be matched closely. As a result, less topcoat is needed for hiding, saving on consumption of one of the most expensive paint items. What's more, there is no risk of compromising primer performance through excessive dilution by adding a topcoat.

A color-matched undercoat also makes stone chips less visible, giving increased customer satisfaction. The improved build covers preparation areas more quickly, reducing the likelihood of rework.

This multifunctional primer system can be used for both sanding and non-sanding applications. Colorbuild Plus can be applied directly to metal, plastics and OEM coated panels. The unique, versatile color concept will guarantee excellent color accuracy of the basecoat, even for the difficult colors.

Colorbuild Plus also offers all the top quality application properties and excellent flow that customers have come to expect from the Sikkens brand. It sprays smoothly, has a high build, dries very fast and sands fast and easily. Due to these excellent qualities, errors, throughput time and costs are reduced. For both sanding and non-sanding application, Colorbuild Plus meets the exacting standards required in today's collision repair market. Colorbuild Plus, setting the new standards in undercoats.



Growing with the Chinese Auto Industry

For those of us of a certain vintage, it is sometimes difficult to reconcile the images we see of China today with the images imprinted in our minds of the streets of Beijing, filled with millions of cyclists.

Back in the seventies, China was the land of foot power, and even in the mid-eighties, China was producing less than 10,000 passenger vehicles a year. But times have changed and last year China surged past the United States and became both the number one producer of motor vehicles, with more than 13.79 million vehicles rolling off the assembly lines, and the largest market.

Like the Japanese automakers of a generation ago, Chinese automakers have been forced to confront perceptions among western consumers that the Chinese-made vehicles don't measure up to western standards for quality and technology. While that may have been true in the past, the Chinese manufacturers are rapidly closing the gap, and these days Chinese quality standards are pretty close to western standards. They've learned much as a result of the joint ventures, and developed a sizable force of outstanding designers and automotive engineers.

Barry Edney, Marketing Manager Asia for AkzoNobel Car Refinishes, says that it is not just the quality of the Chinese vehicles that is improving, but the designs as well.

"These days, Chinese manufacturers are turning out some great-looking cars, and making giant strides on quality and technology," says Edney. "Some of the vehicles shown recently at the Beijing Motor Show were very impressive."

China has only recently begun to enjoy success as an exporter, in large part because its designs did not meet the needs of the international market. But this too is changing, and the industry is especially intent on making inroads into the developing world, with a particular focus on Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East. Last year, Chinese exports totaled 369,600, with Chery ranked as the number one exporter. Exports are expected to increase to 4,000,000 vehicles by 2020. With more and more Chinese made cars now meeting both quality and safety standards for western markets, it is inevitable that the Chinese industry will increasingly test the market in Europe and North America.

With the number of vehicles on the road in China rapidly increasing – it will soon exceed 200 million and could well approach 400 million by 2030 – both the government and manufacturers are pursuing energetic research to produce more environmentally

friendly vehicles, to increase fuel efficiency, and to exploit alternative propulsion. The push is on to significantly increase the proportion of hybrids and electric vehicles on the road, and at this year's Beijing Motor Show, domestic manufacturers presented at least twenty electric models. There is every possibility that China will assume a leading role globally in the electric vehicle segment.

Early on, AkzoNobel Car Refinishes recognized the vast potential of the Chinese market and began developing partnerships with both global and domestic producers. "We were very strong with companies like Volkswagen and General Motors," says Edney. "Of course, with the rise of the domestic makers, we've moved to establish good relationships with them as well. Probably our best relationships these days are with three key players – Chery, Brilliance and Geely."

Edney says that AkzoNobel's early interest in the domestic makers has really paid off. "We're the only multinational paint company with

a strong relationship with the Chinese manufacturers, and that puts us in an excellent position as the market grows." AkzoNobel Car Refinishes is a major provider to Chery, and received approval last year from Brilliance and this year from Geely.

"What's been happening in China is absolutely incredible," says Edney. "They just go from strength to strength. Everything about it is on a scale you couldn't have imagined just a couple of years ago, the growth in the market, the improvement in quality and design and the sheer energy. It's a little bit overwhelming at times, but it's fantastic to be involved in such a dynamic market."





Marc's Tech Tips

Two Birds with One Stone!

By Marc Vellekoop – Technical Services Manager

The key concept behind the Sikkens Eco-Logical System is to cut back on solvent emissions, and one of the important overlooked elements of the Eco-Logical System is the waterborne degreaser.

On an average repair of 3 panels, solvent Vs waterborne calculates as follows:

- 123 grams less solvent omitted by using a waterborne basecoat
- 116 grams less solvent omitted by cleaning the gun with a waterborne gun cleaner
- Total: 239 grams less solvent

Now, implement a waterborne degreaser! The repair process involves several cleaning steps; you are omitting 100 grams less solvent each time using a waterborne degreaser; therefore approximately

300 grams less solvent is omitted by simply switching to a waterborne degreaser. This has a larger impact of low solvent emissions than using both a waterborne basecoat and a waterborne gun cleaner.

Degreasing steps often are executed in the workplace without extraction or wearing a mask so employees are most likely exposed to this product. A waterborne degreaser not only reduces solvent emissions, it is less harmful to employees.

Not only are you reducing your impact on the environment, a waterborne degreaser improves workplace health and safety and enhances your business. Now that's hitting two birds with one stone.



Sikkens Training Dates 2010

Painters Training (PT)
6th – 9th September

Problem Prevention (PP)
4th – 5th November
13th – 14th December

Color Tinting (CT)
25th – 27th October

Painters Training Waterborne (PTWB)
20th – 23rd September
15th – 18th November

Rapid Repair Training (RRT)
9th – 10th November
30th – 1st November

Color Training Waterborne (CTWB)
13th – 15th September
6th – 8th December

To register for the above courses please contact us on **03 9644 1711**.

Courses are held at the AkzoNobel Car Refinish Instruction Centre (CRIC) in Port Melbourne.

Gold Coast's Busiest Repairer Banking on Autowave

Arguably the Gold Coast's busiest panel shop, Wells Smash is set to take the plunge into waterborne with Sikkens Autowave as owner Mark Wells strives to make his business more eco-friendly and efficient.

Wells started in the smash repair industry back in 1976, joining the family business at Wells Bodyworks in Hobart. By 1980, he was running the panel shop which he built into the largest in Tasmania.

Retaining the shop in Hobart, Wells moved north to the Gold Coast in July 2005 and in just five years has created another thriving business.

"We started off with one guy up here, now we have 35 staff and we've probably repaired more vehicles than anyone else on the Gold Coast," Wells said.

Business savvy Wells is also part of the Smash Tech group which has six shops on the Gold Coast in addition to his own individual shop. Wells Smash is the Gold Coast's only Smash Tech repairer for Suncorp.

"We do repairs pretty well generally across the board, but our specialty is the Smash Tech work which is for damage under \$8000 and the vehicle is still driveable. Suncorp direct them to my shop purely and simply for efficiencies, quality and turnaround time," Wells explained.

With ever-increasing pressure to deliver high quality, high volume and low cost, Wells is constantly looking for a competitive edge, prompting the switch to Waterborne.



"The goal for the business is to stay competitive and maintain the levels of work we have at the moment," Wells said.

"We've been using AkzoNobel products for 12 months and we're about to switch to waterborne products now. All the machinery is here at the moment and the guys go on training next week. I've painted a couple of vehicles in waterborne at this stage. So far, the product is very good.

"I'm excited by the fact that we will be going to water; number one, for the environment side of things, but also for the newer technologies. I believe it will make us more efficient."



PCE Bootcamp Second Workshop



Due to the success of the 2009 Process Centred Environment Boot Camp, AkzoNobel ran a second Boot Camp July 29th – 30th for shop owners and managers in the collision repair industry who want to be more effective at introducing changes into their workshop.

National Service Manager Robin Taylor, who heads up the Acoat Selected team, runs the Boot Camp and delves into the philosophy 'The Science of Change'. "We teach and discuss many aspects and formulas about change. Both Boot Camps were very successful and we had some great feedback from our customers."

"A formula for change is one of the areas we discuss in the Boot Camp. This focuses on how the leaders of an organization must recognize and accept the dissatisfaction on how things are, and then educate their employees on how to improve the business. It is important to deliver such formulas in a situation our customers can relate

to. To illustrate the concepts and principals we deliver the course in an interactive environment with case studies, demonstrations and enjoyable activities," explains Taylor.

Lyn Loverso from RP Panels Victoria said, "I was initially worried about the Boot Camp being the only female on board, however found the sessions very enlightening and eye opening. There was a lot of useful information related to the different roles in the business and from both a male and female point of view. We explored a different range of applications to improve our businesses."

John Jakutavicius from Double O Crash South Australia described the Boot Camp as "extremely useful. I recommend these Boot Camps, it was interesting to see that everyone suffers from the same problems and our business was not alone."

AkzoNobel have developed this unique training program to build the framework to reduce waste, increase efficiency, enhance customer satisfaction and ultimately improve business profitability. With a huge sign up of attendees for the July 2010 Boot Camp, AkzoNobel were pleased with another successful workshop.

Stay posted for more PCE Boot Camp dates.

Upcoming Acoat Selected Events

NSW

18th November
Technical Seminar Color
Matching

ACT

19th November
Technical Seminar Color
Matching

VIC

8th September
Technical Seminar

23rd – 24th October
Regional Performance Group

SA

23rd – 24th October
Regional Performance Group

16th November
Technical Seminar

NEW ZEALAND

27th – 29th November
Auckland Regional
Performance Group

09 PCE Boot Camp Results

Craig Raxworthy, Company Director of Raxworthy Auto Body Repairs, attended the 2009 PCE Boot Camp; "I found the Boot Camp incredibly informative, I was able to understand the changes I could make in order to gain higher profitability and increase customer service. With the changes we implemented I have seen growth in the business, and I highly recommend the PCE Boot Camps for bodyshops looking to grow their business."



2010 Victorian of the Year Stephanie Alexander

Acclaimed cook, food writer and 2010 Victorian of the Year recipient Stephanie Alexander tells 'FOCUS' about her foundation and the important part AkzoNobel has played.

Background

Stephanie founded her not-for-profit Kitchen Garden Program in 2001 as a pilot at Melbourne's Collingwood College. Nine years later this national program involves 139 primary schools located in each Australian state and territory.

The program's aim is pleasurable food education for young children. Children across Years 3 to 6 spend 45 minutes each week in an extensive vegetable garden they have helped design and build, and which they maintain on the school grounds according to organic gardening principles. Equal importance is given to the one and a half hours spent each week in a purpose-built kitchen preparing and sharing the meal from produce grown in the school garden.

Why have a Kitchen Garden Program?

"Not all kids eat well," says Stephanie. "Some families do not eat together regularly and have forgotten how to prepare meals using fresh, seasonal foods. One in four Australian children are overweight or obese. These symptoms of our busy world are likely to become habits of a lifetime for our children and lead to serious health issues in the future.

We believe that introducing children to good food as early as possible is the best way to grow a good food lover for life. The program is currently supported by the Victorian State government and the Australian government. It also connects schools with their wider community offering opportunities for volunteer participation and local business sponsorship."

Stephanie continues "an evaluation undertaken by the University of Melbourne and Deakin University (June 2010) found the program is encouraging

positive health-behaviour change in participating children with significant cross-over benefits to the home and broader community."

AkzoNobel's involvement and the red watering can

Akzo Nobel Car Refinishes Australia has assisted the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation by painting over 200 watering cans fire-engine red.

Stephanie explains "the cheerful red watering can is part of our logo but we found it impossible to find these items in the marketplace. All we could find to buy were galvanized watering cans. However, fortunately we discovered it would be possible to apply automotive refinish to our watering cans. Luckily for us AkzoNobel came to the rescue!

Schools display the watering can at the main office so that visitors to the school can be alerted to the fact that this school has a Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program. It is an important moment for a participating school when I present it with its red watering can.

We are absolutely thrilled and very grateful for the support given to us by AkzoNobel."

Future goals of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation

The vision of the foundation is to continue to lobby government and corporate partners so that this important program can continue to expand. Ideally the foundation would like to see that any primary school in Australia that wants to embrace this program can do so.

Website: kitchengardenfoundation.org.au

*By Lisa Montague,
with additional material from the foundation website*



Going the Extra Mile

Western Paint Supplies Dubbo, NSW

After 26 years in the business, David Armstrong knows a thing or two about paint and how to sell it. Armstrong's business racked up record sales last year and is literally going places.

With around 100 smash shops in his region, Western Paint Supplies services about 30-40% of the local market, an area that stretches across thousands of kilometres.

"It's a huge area. We go up to Glen Innes which is probably an eight-hour drive. I've just come back from calling on customers in Bourke and Cobar; that's about a 1200km round trip over two days," Armstrong said.

Relationships and hard work have proven the keys to his success, according to Armstrong. "You have to put the extra mileage in. Although it's a costly exercise and time consuming to do it, we call on most of our customers every two weeks.

"When I do the New England run, Narrabri is my first stop for the day. I go to the main shop and do his stock take, give him all the stock he

needs and then I usually just hang around talking. It's about building relationships with your customers. Then it's another hour and a half to Moree.

"Out here, it's a long way between customers, sometimes people don't realise how far you have to travel to do things."

Renowned as all-round paint specialists, Western Paint Supplies' team of nine expert staff provide professional advice for a wide range of quality products.

"We don't just sell auto finishes. We're a one-stop paint shop which means we're pretty diverse. We've got a lot of industrial products, automotive repair equipment, specialised protective coatings, house paint... A person can come here and paint a house, car, pool, tractor - whatever they want," Armstrong said.

"We've been selling AkzoNobel products for 20-25 years. The products really are tremendous. I think Sikkens is the best auto refinish product on the market - I know it is.

"The support from AkzoNobel is excellent. We've got our own rep who lives here in Dubbo. That's been a real advantage to our business. It's a great relationship; we work together as a team."

Below from left: David Armstrong, Glenn Turner, Rick DeGraaf and Jamie Smedley.



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Queensland Branch
Underwood
Tel: 07 3290 3377

To find a distributor in your area
please visit www.sikkenscr.com.au

If you would like more information
on any of the topics in this issue,
or should you have any questions
please contact us on 03 9644 1711.