

Spring set to paint a colourful picture

The paint category is set to boom this spring, with a wave of construction due to begin, dating back to the end of last year, according to Paint Place CEO, Mark Sutton.

Mr Sutton recently reported that although the current market for retail has been inconsistent, Paint Place is preparing for a stronger spring period than last year, “with consumer confidence returning, judging from current sales.”

In preparation for the up-beat spring season ahead, Mr Sutton said Paint Place will focus on offering an exceptionally high level of service to both trade and DIY customers.

“Paint Place is concentrating on our ‘Painting Made Easy’ vision, in regards to offering a full service experience for all projects. This is

what the contemporary customer expects. It is not just about having stock or service – it is an integrated solution that encapsulates retail marketing, trade service, visual merchandising and buying opportunities. We are uniquely positioned to offer this level of support to all of our customers and to close the loop on the painting experience,” Mr Sutton said.



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Paint Place CEO Mark Sutton said the paint group is investing in a Design Bar concept to ensure choosing paint is an enjoyable experience.

However, the challenge for specialists is to ensure we are always building capacity and awareness around the skills, and to deliver a great in-store experience for all customers, Mr Sutton said.

“It’s an integrated approach that includes training, visual merchandising and marketing. We are doing this through our training programs, which include a training website, conference, roadshows and a week long management course we provide to members,” he said.

“You can’t have a great in-store experience without a store that looks the part. We are investing with our supplier partners in a market leading Design Bar concept that will make choosing paint and colour an easy and enjoyable experience. In addition, we have a comprehensive program that allows our stores to maintain their own unique personality, as well as providing a uniform approach to ‘Painting Made Easy.’”

“We also have our business development managers on the ground, to help monitor standards and assist members in building their store capacity and potential. You could say that Paint Place has evolved to a ‘full service’ model,” Mr Sutton said.

Current market trends

It seems paint customers are continuing to opt for quality finishes over cheaper versions that are starting to appear in the

market. These are tiers in our market that haven’t had much promotion until recent times, according to Mr Sutton.

“Customers really understand the ‘get what you pay for’ concept when it comes to paint. We’re about to launch our annual spring trend colour forecast that features colours and themes specifically developed for the Australian consumer market. This year’s trend colour collections were developed by trend forecaster, Lucy Sutherland, and were brought to life through room settings by Melbourne stylist Deb McLean (Doswell & McLean).”

“In terms of accessories, we have found that customers like value propositions but are also keen to make sure they get the job done right the first time (rework is everyone’s painting nightmare). Any advice on the right accessories is always welcome rather than seen as a ‘sell-up’. All our customers are in our store seeking advice but also want choice and inspiration so it’s important that we provide that,” Mr Sutton said.

The machine age

So what trends are developing in paint stores and why are paint customers demanding much more in regards to service, quality product and colour matching?

It seems Australian paint counters, particularly in independent hardware stores, are still dominated by the manual tinting machine, but in this modern age, a computerised approach to colouring paint has proven to be a more accurate alternative.

Although automatic tinting machines have been used in Australia and New Zealand for many years, the majority of these machines are found in paint company trade centres or big box retailers, according to Bruce Peters,

sales manager for Fast and Fluid Management – who are leading manufacturers of paint tinting and shaking equipment.

However, it seems paint technology has moved forward very quickly, resulting in the emergence of highly efficient automatic tinting and mixing machines that challenge the viability of the traditional manual Blendorama dispenser.

In fact, in today’s market, a paint counter is often not only fitted with an automated tinting machine, but also an automatic clamping paint shaker or mixer, at a price point that will surprise even the harshest sceptic.

Automatics are life savers for big box retailers because they “McDonaldize” and de-skill the process, putting the job in the hands of the computer and technology, according to Mr Peters.

In large outlets, where staff are moved from department to department, training time may be short so automatics, like Fast and Fluid’s “Accutinter” models then become a big attraction, he said.

“In smaller stores, artisan skills exist and staff are trained well. These skills, combined with automatic technology in the paint counter, makes for a very powerful blend of know-how and experience, together with speed, accuracy and efficiency,” Mr Peters said.

When high speed is the issue, the Accutinter models are the Olympic champions, squirting out multiple tints at once. If a formula requires 10Y, for example

(300mls of colourant), one may think it could take several minutes to complete. The fact is an Accutinter typically does the job in a matter of seconds, according to Mr Peters.

“Technology is also raising a customer’s expectations in-store. They will have experienced the zap of a spectro, which finds a perfect colour match in seconds,



The Accutinter 1500 is designed for small to midsize hardware stores with low to medium volume tinting needs.

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sends the formula to the dispenser and then they see their paint mixed in an automatic mixing machine delivering a perfect blend of colour throughout the paint,” Mr Peters said.

It is impressive machines such as this, that are changing customers’ expectations and why it is critical that paint retailers use the right tools. This then ensures that colour errors are reduced, tinting and mixing time speeds up and the overall improvement in customer experience and satisfaction are all part of the impact of the new age equipment required to sell paint.

The perfect colour choice

So when it comes to assisting your customers in making the right colour choice

for the job, how do you help take the stress out of their decision?

One of the biggest tips is to get your customer to start painting in a small room, such as a bathroom, or small hallway so your customer can see the results quickly and then know if they need to make a change right away. Ask them what sort of mood they are aiming for in the room that they wish to paint, reminding them that soft cool colours will create soothing moods while stronger colours will prove to be more dramatic. For example: do they want a child’s room restful or exciting?

Also remind your customers to pay attention to the lighting within the room. If there is a lot of natural daylight, this will bring out the truest colour in paint, while

fluorescent lighting can cast a sharp blue tone into paint work.

When testing the colour of the paint – tell your customers to also go beyond their comfort zone, and fill a large poster with the colour or a large area of the wall and remember to view the colour from the next room so you can see if the colour flows from room to room. And give them the option of considering different paint finishes such as a matte finish on the walls and a semi-gloss on the trim.

So as you prepare your paint department for this spring, remember your customers will be more educated than ever on colour, finish and paint quality. Be prepared for this well-educated customer, so you can answer even the most demanding questions.

New garage door roll in

Garage doors are often a significant part of a home’s exterior and can influence aesthetic appeal. New Hammerite Garage Door Paint is specially formulated for metal and wooden doors and enables the garage door to have an ‘as new’ finish year after year.

Providing a long lasting gloss finish, the Hammerite Garage Door Paint is also highly resistant to flaking and discolouration.

Transforming the look of your customer’s garage door has never been easier. DIY’ers simply start preparing the garage by rubbing it down with coarse sandpaper or a wire brush, then wash with water and a diluted detergent to remove any dust, grease or dirt,

which may prevent the paint from sticking to the surface.

For best results, wait until the surface is completely dry and begin with the edges of the door, which are not visible when shut. Once the edges are dry, close the door and paint from the top of the door and work downwards in stages. Advise your customers to apply one thin coat to begin with, followed by a second if necessary.

Hammerite Garage Door Paint 750ml provides coverage for two standard single garage doors or one double door. Available in six colours: black, red, Buckingham Green, Oxford Blue, white and chestnut.

For more information visit: www.hammerite.com.au



Smart wall paint gains momentum

Winner of the FM Office Product of the Year, Smart Wall Paint, by Smarter Surfaces is leading the way in paint innovation currently.

Developed by Irish businessman, Ronan Clarke, Smart Wall is an innovative whiteboard paint, transforming any smooth surface into a functional place for writing on – including: boardrooms, offices, schools, children’s bedrooms, restaurants, even gymnasiums.

The idea came to Mr Clarke, who was a former construction worker and was required to cover the walls of an office in whiteboards. Two years later, he had completed enough research to develop a paint product that would produce the same surface as a white board.

Manufactured by the former Smart Wall Paint, Smarter Surfaces now has 33 distributors worldwide and the high quality commercial grade paint has a 10 year guarantee.

Available in white finish or clear, the paint also has a low odour and low VOC and may be purchased in a kit, including: paint to cover a specified area, a roller handle and sleeve, sanding block, gloves, microfiber eraser cloth and application guide.

Smarter Surfaces products not only include Projector Paint, creating a projection surface on any smooth wall, but also Magnetic Paint and Magnetic Whiteboard Paint, which may be used with flat, strong magnets, such as neodymium magnets for optimum performance. Magnetic Paint creates a magnetic surface in mid-grey which can be top coated with whiteboard paint to create a magnetic and whiteboard surface.

For more information visit: www.smartersurfaces.com.au



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Accutinter 1500

A great fit for small and midsize hardware stores with low to medium volume tinting needs. Its small footprint saves space, and the simple design makes it easy to operate and maintain.

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Spring towards an earthy new palette

Spring will bring with it a slightly masculine air this year, as consumers throw open their windows and bring in the fresh spring air. This is the forecast from leading colour experts at Dulux, who predict earthy browns and greens will be the hero colours for the 2015 spring season.

“Think about a formal room or a casual sanctuary and create the mood of a library or space to escape. The ambience will not be strictly traditional in style, but rather will have a sophisticated mix of old and new items, with plenty of plants to bring nature inside,” Dulux Creative Consultant and Stylist, Bree Leech said.

With the reduction of our impact on the earth continuing to be a crucial community goal, consumers aspire, more and more to get in touch with nature on a more personal level. In response to this trend, the Dulux Earthworks palette includes the range

of greens discovered in our own landscapes, forests and gardens and explores the desire to have greenery in homes and workspaces. The nature-inspired greens include soft silvery greens through to moss and sage leaf, as well as beautiful earthy sepia browns and ochres.

“Natural colours, such as green and neutrals with green undertones, will be pivotal this spring. This includes earthy colours, such as Dulux Federal Fund and Dulux Peppercorn Rent and brighter shades, such as Dulux Gooseberry Fool and Dulux Domain. Even the most neutrally toned home can benefit from splashes of colour,” Dulux Colour Expert, Andrea Lucena-Orr says.

Above all, homeowners should remember a fresh coat of paint is a simple and inexpensive way to add colour, personalise or create a place to feel comfortable, inspired and happy.

On-trend interior colours for spring 2015 include:

Domino: The perfect charcoal or ‘near black’, which works with many other hues and can be used anywhere inside or outside the home to create a moody ambience.

Peppercorn Rent: A dark deep mesmerizing brown, perfect to enhance a living room or bedroom and inject a warm sense of nurturing and security.

Canadian Pine: A gorgeous deep green perfect for casual and formal living spaces, as well as bedrooms, which works well alongside browns, beiges and soft blues and greens.

Grape Leaf: An earthy green that will enhance any space in

the home and will naturally project the feeling of relaxation and tranquility.

Natural White: A crisp, clean contemporary white that will feel fresh and bright and will present underlying warmth.

Deduction: This mid-based green has a slight yellow/green undertone which schemes well with natural, earthy colours, such as deep browns, charcoals, stones and burnished oranges.

Dulux creative consultant and stylist, Bree Leech, said consumers can easily create a stylish and sophisticated feel by pairing brown with a limited palette of neutrals. Simply add a highlight of green to brown, to lift the mood, but make sure your customers have one colour as the hero and the other as a support, as colours can be lost in equal amounts, Ms Leech said.

For more colour or painting advice, visit the Dulux ‘how to projects’ online: www.dulux.com.au



On-trend colours for spring include soft silvery greens through to moss and sage leaf.



Earthy browns and greens are this spring's hero colours.

Taubmans launches new generation Colour Galaxy Fandeck

Australian designers are among the most trend-forward paint specifiers in the world, according to Taubmans, which this month launches the new Colour Galaxy Fandeck.

It has been 15 years since Taubmans released a new fandeck, and after extensive market research into how design professionals use their decks, the Colour Galaxy Fandeck was created as a tool to support the Taubmans Colour Galaxy online.

Australian designers are increasingly inspiring their clients to make bold choices in paint, so we have designed a new fandeck which clearly presents both the classic and trend driven colours, Taubmans' head of marketing for trade, Trevor Lowder said.

The new Colour Galaxy Fandeck features 1505 hand-selected shades divided into two main sections. The first section titled, 'Whites, Neutrals and Mineral Tones', will feature old favourites, plus new directional shades. The new fandeck is designed to bring a robust selection of these colours to the front of the deck, making the colours easily accessible and the selection process much simpler for specifiers.

The second section, titled the Spectrum Colours, takes its name from the hugely popular Spectrum Fandeck produced in 2000. The colours featured include both muted and clear palettes, featuring fantastic accent colours that both short-term and long-term global colour trends. This section also incorporates 31 brand new colours that have been added to the Taubmans Colour Galaxy.

Every leaf in the Colour Galaxy Fandeck displays seven generous colour swatches. The leaves that feature whites have darker shades in the centre of each leaf layout, which acts as a guide to the nuances of the colours on either side of it.

The embossed black cover features a magnetic closure, making it both comfortable to use and easy to work with. The isolator included with the Colour Galaxy Fandeck also features black, grey and white backgrounds, providing additional contrasts to help select the perfect colour. The isolator is also not attached to the fandeck to offer increased freedom when utilizing this tool.

Taubmans also recently commissioned muralist, Stephen Baker, to create artwork



for a limited edition Colour Galaxy Fandeck bag to celebrate the history of the brand. 'The Painter' depicts an image of a sign painter, in Stephen's signature colour blocking style, and was inspired by Taubmans' founder, George Taubman. George, a Sydney sign writer, decided to create his own paint brand in 1901 to supply himself with the highest quality of paints needed for his trade.

For more information on Taubmans visit: www.taubmans.com.au

Finish a weekend of painting by Saturday arvo!

Introducing the newest addition to the Wagner FLEXiO family of indoor/outdoor paint sprayers, the FLEXiO 990 Direct Feed. Ideal for those big painting projects around the home and garden.

It features a direct feed system for non-stop painting by drawing paint directly from the paint can, making it possible to finish

painting projects much faster. No more bending down to a roller tray. When there's a lot of painting to be done, the FLEXiO 990 saves time with continuous painting.

With the revolutionary i-Spray nozzle technology, everything from interior wall paints to varnishes and lacquers can be sprayed undiluted and deliver a perfect finish. You can also spray thick exterior acrylics onto coarser surfaces. The nozzle can be adjusted to spray horizontal, vertical, narrow and wide patterns, and provides fast, even coverage with low overspray. Instead of applying two coats of paint with a brush or roller, using the FLEXiO 990 allows the user to spray the same amount of paint in much less than half the time.

For smaller projects the FLEXiO 990 can quickly be converted from a direct feed system to a handheld

sprayer. It comes with a second standard spray attachment for spraying lacquer, varnish, stain and other thinner materials.

The FLEXiO 990 also features the unique X-Boost® turbine which makes it three times more powerful than other HVLP (high volume, low pressure) sprayers and allows it to spray most conventional coatings without the need for dilution. With adjustable air pressure and material flow, the power of the turbine can be varied to suit any coating perfectly, for precise control. Warm air surrounds the spray jet for quicker drying time and a fast working speed.

The practical Click & Paint® split-gun design allows the user to change from one colour or type of paint to another in under three seconds. Quick and easy set up and clean up make the FLEXiO 990 a dream tool for any DIY enthusiast. In addition, it has a flexible 7 metre long hose for two-storey reach, and delivers a professional quality finish.

It's time for a smarter way to paint. Paint fast with Wagner. For more information visit www.wagneraustralia.com.au.

