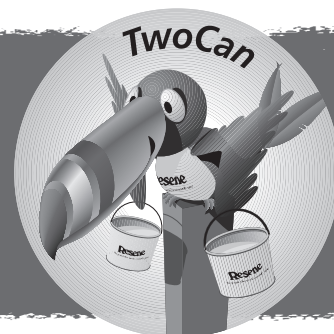


“ One thing you can be sure of when it comes to paint, colour and wallpaper, is that things never stand still and the options are constantly evolving and changing. Customers are looking for something different and as they move through various life stages they change their walls and finishes to suit. This desire for regular change is what keeps us all busy as we all adapt our products and services to suit the changing needs of customers. It’s always good to stop and take time to think about whether what worked best yesterday is still the right answer today or whether it needs a tweak or a more major overhaul in the future... ”



One of those days

We’ve all had one of those days, or weeks, where no matter what we do, nothing seems to go right. If it’s any consolation you’re not the only one. Dane shares his worst decorating day with us...

“Well I know everybody has a really bad day in the first few years of working for themselves, so here’s my story.

It started off like every other morning, shower, coffee and drive to the job. On my way to work I get a phone call so like every tradesman you answer the phone in hope it’s a potential job. Not 30 seconds after saying hello I see the red and blue lights of the police in my rear view mirror. Great!! \$80 dollar ticket for talking on my phone.

I get to the job and pull up on the brand new driveway, open the side van door and boom paint gushes out all over the driveway. A 4L of Sureseal had fallen over and the lid had popped off. I grabbed dirt and threw it on and scooped as much as I could up then rip roared as fast as I could to Resene to get as many bottles of turps as I thought I would need to clean it up. And then what do I see in my rear view mirror but the too familiar red and

blue lights again? Awesome!! This time a ticket for speeding and from the same cop!

I finally get back and got the driveway cleaned up as best as possible then thinking to myself right let’s get some work done... ‘wait a minute where’s my tools I left in the garage?’ The site had been broken into and everything had been stolen! You have got to be kidding me!

At this point I had had enough so I went home to make calls to my insurance company. Worst day of my working life.”



Stand out from the crowd

When you’re in the business of painting houses, keeping existing customers happy as well as expanding your client pool is a fine balance to strike. Between old and new clients, there are a few ways you can make your business stand out from the crowd.

Compare

Don’t go ignoring other businesses in the area. Rather than turning a blind eye to your competition, you should actually get to know it extremely well.

In order to stand out from the crowd, you need to know what it is you’re standing out from! Compare your business offering with others in your locality – are you more flexible, better equipped or more experienced than others? Perhaps you’re a newcomer and don’t have a very big client pool, but you’ve got a wealth of experience completing paint jobs involving tricky cutting-in work.

You might have fewer staff than other businesses (perhaps you work alone), but you make up for your lack of numbers with detailed knowledge regarding specialty paint products. Or maybe you only take on paint jobs, while others may have a ‘jack of all trades, master of none’ approach.

By comparing yourself against the competition, you’ll quickly be able to work out what your unique selling propositions (USPs) are. And that’s the next salient point...

Differentiate

That’s right – you need to do more than just compare yourself against other trade businesses in the area. It’s essential to hone in on differentiators between your business and other ones out there.

You’ll never stand out if you’re blending into the background like a wallflower. Find out what makes your business unique and play this up.

Sure, you’ll still have other features in common with local tradespeople. But it’s your USPs that you’ll want to rely on when marketing your services to potential clients. And there we have the next important step...

Smart brochures

Once you’ve compared your business to others and worked out what makes your offering so special, you need to demonstrate this to your clients.

There’s no point putting together a marketing plan if you don’t act upon it. Producing smart brochures is a good way to show existing and potential clients what you offer and why you’re the perfect tradesperson for the job, in a tangible manner.

But what should your brochure include? In order to make your business stand out, you need to make sure your brochure does the same. Clashing colours and mixed fonts can be jarring, so avoid these at all costs. Instead, pick strong hues akin to Resene Nero, Resene Roadster or Resene Supernova. If you’ve got a logo, be sure to include that on your brochure, business cards and even work vehicle for absolute consistency.



>> In terms of the information provided, make sure it's clearly written and free of spelling or grammatical errors. Provide enough information for clients to see what you offer and how you can help them, but don't opt for a tiny font and an overload of information. In this sense, balance is key.

Headings should be bold, to capture a reader's attention. Be sure to include essential contact information so interested homeowners can actually get in touch with you to organise renovations. This includes your daytime phone number as well as email address. If you've got a social media presence, include necessary details, whether it's your Facebook page name or Twitter handle.

Finally, remember to include a call to action. Do you want clients to call you,

email you or simply drop round to your showroom or office (if applicable)? You might differentiate yourself by offering a free quote coupled with a discount on future jobs. Or perhaps you guarantee a certain level of client satisfaction. Whatever it is that makes your business stand out – and will encourage clients to pick up the phone – be sure to list it clearly on your brochures!

And remember, brochures won't do any good sitting in a box in the corner somewhere. Once you have a brochure, that's half the job done, then you need to get it into the right hands. There are a myriad of ways to do this, from direct mail, letterbox drops, local expos and events and more. Every business is different so try out a few options and see which ones give you the best results.

Chill out

With winter comes chills, frosts, cold air and Resene wintergrade products. As the cooler months are just around the corner, the production boys and girls are cranking up the supply of **Resene Wintergrade products** to help you keep working over winter. These products can dry at temperatures down to a chilly 2°C, which means you are buying yourself an insurance policy against the cold.

The Resene Wintergrade range is available now and has something to suit a wide range of projects including: Resene Wintergrade Hi-Glo gloss, Resene Wintergrade Sonyx 101 semi-gloss, Resene Wintergrade Lumbersider low sheen, Resene Wintergrade Quick Dry primer and Resene Wintergrade X-200 waterproofing membrane.

You can also request Resene Wintergrade Roof Primer, which we can make to order for you.

Plus you can also order in Resene Wintergrade Summit Roof in batch sizes of 200 litres or more, ideal for those larger projects that can't wait until summer.

If your hands start to feel the chill, ask your Resene ColorShop for your free handwarmer – only while stocks last.

When you're using standard paint over the winter, keep an eye on the temperature, both on the surface and in the air. Remember a surface can be a lot colder than the air that surrounds it so you may find it's best to change your order of work and work on surfaces like plasterboard in the early morning and move to areas like concrete, which tend to be cooler in cold weather until they have had a chance to warm up a little.

Dress up walls with the latest wallpaper trends

"Whatever you have in your rooms, think first of the walls: for they are that which makes your house and home."

So said William Morris one of the founding fathers of 19th century wallpaper design.

It's a perennial statement that still makes sense today when considering an interior scheme.

Contemporary society inhabits a much smaller world than when Morris was alive, so today, abundant media and internet services expose international trends to this market that allow a myriad of styles to influence decision making when considering a new interior scheme.

To many, this can be a challenging exercise, trying to select the appropriate look.

However, one usually finds that the market has a way of throwing up common denominators of style that will set the tone of interiors for a period of time.

Of course one of the perennials in this market is plain textured wallcoverings.

They provide the ideal vehicle for dressing walls with subtle profiles of woven fabric, stone, plaster or concrete plus many more effects that come in a wide colour palette to suit all areas of the house.

Flowers have always been an inspiration in designs for both textile and wallcoverings, they wax and wane in popularity, and presently they seem to be making a resurgence. We are now seeing in some collections a return to the golden age of floral design created by artists and executed by craftsmen. Beautiful floral design in both layout and colour can be seen in collections such as Eijffinger's Ibiza.

Geometric design may also be making a resurgence with heavy exposure at London Design Week 2014. They seem to be trending to a simpler look using simple elements of squares, triangles and employing a multi-layer, multi-colour approach to generate interest.



Feature walls remain a strong trend, allowing an ideal way of expressing one's own preferred style and taste as a statement wall. Currently, what's proving popular in this area is Faux Textures.

Examples of these would be simulated brick walls, sea blown driftwood, industrial timber, riveted metal plates, all displaying eye catching 3D looks that lift them out of the ordinary and are vastly superior to the old brick and ivy Granny may have had on the wall.

Feature walls now open the door up to a vast array of weird, wonderful even quirky images. The choice is wide and eclectic, though old bookshelves, antique suitcase stacks and images of wine crates feature in a number of collections.

Wall murals are another way of creating feature walls. Komar's mural collections have always been popular in this area, offering a comprehensive selection of images covering many different themes, though interestingly world maps have always been top of the list.

The logical progression in this area was the introduction of a digital print service that allows you to customise an interior by uploading your own high resolution image to create something truly unique. Resene offers this service, known as Resene WallPrint online at www.resene.com/wallprint. With the easy to follow instructions you can get images made for your walls, digitally printed on easy to hang paste the wall wallpaper.

New to the Resene wallpaper collection are the Walltrends III and Habitat collections, as well as a vast array of other ranges released in late 2014.

View the Resene wallpaper range at your local Resene ColorShop or online in the Resene wallpaper library, www.resene.com/wallpaper. Before making your final choice, always view a sample in a wallpaper sample book to get the effect of the colour, detailing and texture.



Catch you next month!

TwoCan, Editor.

