

THE CONSULTANCY

WINTER 2019/2020

FRESH LOOKS FOR A NEW DECADE

THE COLORS
AND COATINGS
WE'LL SEE IN 2020



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CONVERSION VARNISH
VS. URETHANE



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NEW OHIO LOCATION

ACCESSA

Winds of Change Keep Blowing



Accessa Customers, Partners, and Friends,

2019 has been quite a year for Accessa with new opportunities, new programs, and plenty of new faces. Through three quarters, I could not be more pleased with how the entire team has come together to achieve our goals and execute another great year.

Here's an update on what's new at Accessa:

SALES. Our new Sales & Business Development Managers Kevin Fine (East) and Matt McGraw (West) have been grinding hard to learn the industry, markets, and of course, opportunities. Additionally, the goal of growing the Technical Coatings Consultant (TCC) group is on pace with the transition of Joe Binder to TCC (Chicago); Dan Foreman getting more active as a TCC in northern Indiana; and the active recruitment of a TCC for the northeast Ohio territory.

OPERATIONS. The Ohio branch relocated from a small outpost to a new, build-to-suit facility a couple of miles away. The new facility allows for Ohio to be more self-sufficient in serving the greater northeast Ohio market, including improved inventory management and production. Delivery service is also being expanded out of the location in order to position the branch to increase its revenue share.

ACCESSA COLOR PROGRAM. The Accessa Color Program is well into the soft launch phase, and the feedback has been incredibly positive. The goal for the remainder of 2019, leading into 2020, is to continue to build momentum and create buzz around the following systems within the program:

AcromaPro XP Color Program. Using the Matador Plus paint base and Opti XP industrial pigments, the AcromaPro XP Color Program offers formulas for the colors in the Sherwin-Williams ColorSnap and Benjamin Moore fan decks. Combined, there are nearly 3,000 color formulas available.

Accessa AccuStain AS Series Stain Program. Using the AccuStain stain base from AcromaPro and the Opti XP industrial pigments, the stain series offers 64 pre-formulated stains, as shown in the AccuStain chip set.

ICA Color. The ICA Color system uses the ICA OP400 paint system along with the ICA PC pigments to provide three fan decks' worth of color formulas (ICA, RAL, and NCS), totaling over 2,300 formulas.

ICA Stain Systems. The go-to solventbase stain systems include the ICA IN stain system and the ICA INK stain system.

HIRING. It's no secret that the company has and will continue to make positive changes and additions to the team. Opportunities are extremely rich in all markets, and the company will continue to gear up to seize them. As part of the effort, I would like to welcome the following new teammates:

- **Patrick O'Connell** – Warehouse/Production Associate, Denver, CO
- **Gus Moore** – Management Trainee, Indianapolis, IN
- **Matt McGraw** – Sales & Business Development Manager - West, Indianapolis, IN
- **Kevin Fine** – Sales & Business Development Manager - East, Indianapolis, IN
- **Dustin Parrish** – Production Associate, Arthur, IL
- **Taylor Fittro** – Production Associate, Elkhart, IN
- **Stephanie Bloom** – Lab Technician, Elkhart, IN
- **Jason Williamson** – Branch Operations Supervisor, Millersburg, OH

Q4 AND ECONOMY. Over the last several months, the economy at large seemed to hold steady, although a plateau was certainly felt. In some industries, more of a pullback was evident. Thankfully, the economic malaise to date has been fairly minor and sporadic, allowing for a soft landing. As we look into Q4 2019 and the first half of 2020, most economists expect varying degrees of recession-like conditions to hit different economic segments. The silver lining is the consensus seems to point to more of a flat-lining economy versus a downright fall in output.

As the holidays near, I am mindful of all the wonderful things to be thankful for. I am incredibly grateful for each of you—our customers, vendor partners, and others who are part of the Accessa family. And I am beyond thankful that I get to be a part of it. If there is anything I can do to help you, or if you have any feedback, please skip the email and give me a ring. I'd love to hear from you.

Happy holidays,

Joe Todd, President, Principal

EVENTS

On the Road with Accessa *WHERE WE'LL BE THIS WINTER*

We'll be traveling to two shows over the next couple of months. If you're in the neighborhood, stop by our booths!

MIDWEST TOOL EXPO & AUCTION

January 24-25, 2020

Michiana Event Center | Shipshewana, IN

MT. HOPE SHOWCASE

February 13-15

Mt. Hope Event Center | Mt. Hope, OH

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



INDIANAPOLIS

Accessa Opts for LEGOs Over Candy on Halloween

Accessa joined the Heroes Foundation's Team JOEY Program to deliver LEGO sets to Riley Children's Hospital patients on October 31. To date, Team JOEY has delivered thousands of LEGO sets to pediatric cancer patients across Indiana and neighboring markets.

The Heroes Foundation invites corporations, organizations, and individuals interested in participating in a LEGO drive to help brighten the days of children battling cancer. Your business can serve as a collection spot for LEGOs and/or take up monetary donations to go toward the purchase of LEGOs. Interested in joining the cause? Contact Team JOEY Program manager Kelly Canada at kcanada@heroesfoundation.org.

Learn more at heroesfoundation.org

MEET OUR NEW HIRES



STEPHANIE BLOOM *Lab Technician*

Stephanie is from Goshen, IN and works as a lab technician in the Elkhart facility. She enjoys baking, painting, and spending time with her kids, Brantson, Rhylea, and Rhegann.



KEVIN FINE *Sales & Business Development Manager - East*

Kevin recently joined the Accessa team as the sales and business development manager for the eastern U.S. He lives in Indianapolis, IN with his wife, Rose, and their three children, Jake, Maggie, and Amelia. Kevin enjoys playing sports with his kids and following teams from his alma mater, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.



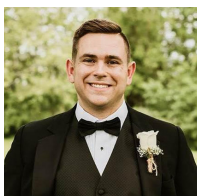
TAYLOR FITTRO *Production Associate*

Taylor lives in Elkhart, IN, where she works at Accessa in production. She loves art and enjoys painting in her free time.



MATT MCGRAW *Sales & Business Development Manager - West*

Matt is the new sales and business development manager for the western U.S. He lives in Indianapolis, IN with his wife, Stacy, and their three children, Mallory, Henry, and Maren. In his spare time, Matt enjoys golfing and spending time with family.



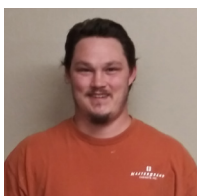
GUS MOORE *Management Trainee*

Gus joined Accessa this past summer as a management trainee and is currently serving as a customer service concierge. He is a graduate of the University of Indianapolis and lives in Plainfield with his new wife, Kailey, whom he married in June. Gus enjoys spending time with his family, racing, and swimming.



PATRICK O'CONNELL *Warehouse/Production Associate*

Patrick works out of the Denver, CO office, where he pulls orders and loads trucks, among many other things. In his free time, he enjoys collecting old muscle cars, which he has done for the past five or six years.



DUSTIN PARRISH *Production Associate*

Dustin is a lab technician in the Arthur, IL facility. He and his wife, Katrina, have been married for four years and live in Garrett, IL. Outside of work, Dustin enjoys hunting and cheering on the Indianapolis Colts.



JASON WILLIAMSON *Branch Operations Supervisor - Millersburg, OH*

Jason is the branch manager at our new Millersburg, OH facility. He lives in Warsaw, OH and has three kids, ages 12, 15, and 18.

What's Hot in 2020: Trends for the Start of a New Decade

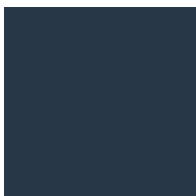
Out with the old and in with the new! As we head into a new year, top designers and paint manufacturers make their predictions for what's hot, what's not, and the trends we'll see going forward.



photo: Sherwin Williams

2020 COLORS OF THE YEAR

SHERWIN-WILLIAMS: NAVAL

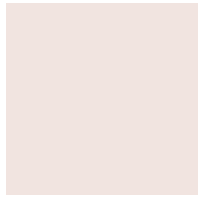


Calm. Timeless. Confident. This year's deep navy blue selection is a reflection of Sherwin-Williams' belief that 2020 will be about getting outside comfort zones and empowering change. Inspired by Art Deco, this deep shade evokes a sense of confidence that pairs timeless color with a fresh take to usher in a new era. Plus, the midnight sky color pairs well with plant life, which is a growing addition in homes and office buildings for fresher decor and healthier environments.

In addition to the color of the year, Sherwin-Williams also revealed 45 hues in five palettes that they say are meant to bring joy, serenity, and focus to the mind, body, and spirit. The selection includes a wide spectrum of blues, shades of terracotta, warm neutrals, deep greens, and even pinks, bringing warmth and

2020 COLORS OF THE YEAR

BENJAMIN MOORE: FIRST LIGHT



"First Light" is a soft, pale pink that Benjamin Moore experts selected, in part, because they kept seeing it show up in their travels around the world. Versatile for a number of rooms and instances, this rosy

shade offers a neutral backdrop that is both warm and inviting. Though closely related to the overused "Millennial Pink" of the past few years, the new hue may work best as a delicate accent color.

"We thought it was really indicative of fresh thinking," said Andrea Magno, director of color marketing and development for Benjamin Moore. "We're on the dawn of a new decade and we thought, 'How do we want to embody that?'"

BEHR: BACK TO NATURE



Behr is headed "Back to Nature" this year with a beautiful light green that is calm, gracious, and balanced. Inspired by natural elements like meadows and biophilia, this color brings the

outdoors in, influencing inhabitants with creativity, problem-solving, and mood-boosting properties.

"It's kind of like nature's neutral—just infinite varieties of green, from very very light greens to very dark, mysterious green; to glamorous emerald greens and citrus greens," said Erika Woelfel, Behr's VP of color and creative services. Behr also released its 2020 Color Trends palette this past summer, which includes three palettes of five colors each that are "inspired by the world around us." The collection is broken up into "Worldhood's" warm, earthy reds, browns, oranges, and yellows; "Restore's" greens and blues; and "Atmospheric's" soft neutrals, grays, and whites, with a pop of dusty lilac.

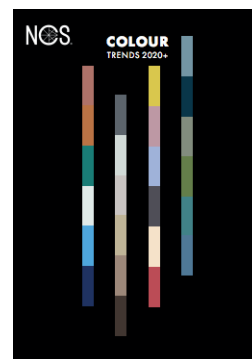


VALSPAR: NATURE-INSPIRED SHADES

Valspar never chooses just one color for the coming year. Instead, they select 12 shades that will dominate homes in the coming year. Like many other designers and paint manufacturers, they're also seeking inspiration from the great outdoors. This year's collection is a far cry from last year's bright, almost-neon shades with practical colors for every room of the house that includes a mix of pale, natural hues found in nature.

"Earth's prescription for the chaotic, busy lives we all live is to bring the tranquility of nature and the outdoor world into the home," said Sue Kim, Valspar color marketing manager.

NCS: BOLD & CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE



Natural Colour System (NCS) recently released its 2020 color trends, drawing on expertise from world-renowned designers to forecast what's coming in the next few years of cross-industry design. Among them were the organization's predictions for interior

coatings trends, revealing a bold mix of colors that reflect current culture and style.

To view NCS's Colour Trends 2020, visit: <https://ncscolour.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/NCS-Colour-Trends-2020.pdf>



photo: leekes.co.uk

TRENDS FOR EVERY ROOM OF THE HOUSE

KITCHEN

COLOR YOUR WORLD. One of the biggest trends seen across multiple sources is the belief that all-white kitchens (or any room, really) are out. Today, we celebrate color—even in the kitchen, where white and neutrals have traditionally reigned. Look out for dramatic pops of color in unusual places, too, including cabinets and even appliances (specifically refrigerators).

STAINLESS STEEL IS OUT. Stainless steel might seem new, but it's actually been around for about 15 years, and experts say it's time to retire. While stainless steel may be the more classic option, colored appliances are taking over, and black and white are even making a reappearance! Among colored appliances, yellow is coming in hot.

SUSTAINABLE IS IN. Homeowners and interior designers are now prioritizing responsibly-sourced appliances and decor, preferring cabinets and other structures made from upcycled or sustainable materials. The leader in sustainable kitchens? Surprisingly, it's IKEA, who uses eco bamboos and other repurposed materials in their designs. Melody Weir of NYC-based design agency Melody Weir, Inc., predicts that the options for sustainable materials will be virtually limitless over the next few years.

GOLD TAPS TOP BRASS. Last year, we reported that brass taps were on-trend. Designers now have a wide array of choices when it comes to colors and finishes for sink hardware, but gold is winning out in 2020. "Sinks have moved up on the scale of importance in kitchen design," said Joan Fraser, product development and training manager for Smeg.

COUNTERTOPS THAT DON'T CONFORM. Granite countertops are a thing of the past. Now, experts are turning to the stunning beauty of white marble (with as many "veins" as possible) and white quartz, which is loved for its easy upkeep and ability to emulate stone. Plus, new lifetime sealers make natural stone a viable low-maintenance option.

A Word on Cabinets

Cabinets always seem to take center stage when it comes to yearly kitchen trends, and this year is no exception.

(MORE) COLOR. In just the past 20 years, we've seen trends go from light wood to white to dark wood and now to...color. Look out for dramatic colors like turquoise, avocado, or lemon, which stand out well against dark backsplashes.

GLASS. In a surprising twist, glass is taking over as the material of choice in future-facing kitchen cabinet trends. As part of the trend toward simplicity and organization, glass-front doors are being used to showcase only the essentials for a cleaner look. In addition, colored, tempered glass is making an appearance for bold modernity.

HANDLES. Designers agree that less is more when it comes to cabinet hardware. On-trend today is everything from cut-out handles to touch release and even no handles at all. If handles are used, brass is the metal of choice.

ORGANIZATION. Inspired by the organizational tactics of Marie Kondo that have swept the nation over the past year, cabinets are becoming increasingly clever with their ability to hide appliances, messy cords, and more. Built-in organization is making a massive comeback for effortless cleanliness.

EDUCATION



photo: bhg.com.au

BATH

Whether you prefer a compact, modern bathroom or a large, luxurious one, the main thing to remember is that bathrooms should be a place of stress-free relaxation. To accomplish this, modern trends are leaning toward ideas that simplify bathroom elements to promote cleanliness, organization, and calm.

PLANTS AND BIOPHILIC DESIGN are top-of-mind for mood-boosting properties.

SMALLER, TEXTURED TILES outshine overly-extravagant ones.

WOOD will start to replace the cold ceramics of traditional bathrooms.

CONSOLE-STYLE VANITIES are the new trend

STATEMENT TAPS (in gold, copper metallic, and matte black) provide cheap and easy updating.

OFFICE

The modern office is about more than just decor for the sake of decor. It's about functionality and employee wellness/engagement. Not only do these 2020 office trends help keep employees happy, but they promote productivity and well-being, producing long-term positive effects as well. While the hippest millennial-run offices now offer everything from kegerators to ping pong tables, these trends transcend fads for the ultimate collaboration and company success:



photo: urban-office.com

COMFORT AND FLEXIBILITY

First and foremost, offices are about work. With more offices going to open floor plans to promote collaboration, it can be hard to find a quiet space to take a call or work, especially in city high-rises. New offices are installing telephone-booth-style "pods" (some wood) where one or two employees can fit comfortably.

SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS

More millennials are choosing to work only for companies that demonstrate corporate responsibility. This includes everything from recycling programs to the materials their cabinets and desks are made out of. BHO Interiors predicts that in 2020, companies will increasingly opt for sustainable furniture and design, even if it costs a bit more.

BIOPHILIC DESIGN

See a theme? Plant life is popping up everywhere, from home life to work life. More and more designers and architects are incorporating biophilic design into their layouts for increased beauty (think "living walls"), sustainability (cleaner indoor air), and wellness (plant-powered mood boosts).

SMART TECH

"The future" is officially here. In 2020, we'll see even more technology take center stage, but this time, it will be more mobile and wearable than ever. We're used to seeing mounted TV screens, but offices will start to incorporate more "smart" technology in everything from lighting systems to heating and cooling to automatically adjust and use less energy.

WARM COLORS

In keeping with their 2020 Color Trends palette, Behr predicts warmer colors making a resurgence in offices, especially those in the home. If you want something more eye-catching, Behr sees a trend in warm hues with a slightly rustic feel in order to create a more inviting environment.

WHAT'S THE BUZZ? ITALIAN URETHANES



By Joe Todd

Custom cabinet manufacturers have more and more options available than ever when it comes to finishing lines—but the best choice isn't always clear. Letting just one or two factors determine the direction they go can be hasty; a lesson that rings true when considering whether to stick with a current conversion varnish system or listen to the buzz surrounding urethane systems.

In examining the advantages and disadvantages of each coating type, it's important to make sense of the similarities and true differences between conversion varnish and urethane before making a decision.

CONVERSION VARNISHES

Accessa Coatings Solutions works with both types of coating technologies on a daily basis throughout its markets, from the Colorado front-range to the rolling hills of eastern Ohio and everywhere in between. While interest in urethanes is growing more and more, the lion's share of cabinetmakers still use conversion varnishes as their go-to finish system. This way, they can create their custom cabinet look while also achieving the Kitchen Cabinet Manufacturers Association's performance standards when using conversion varnish.

These same qualities are often sought out for the residential furniture market, where conversion varnishes are commonplace. Conversion varnishes have many advantages, including:

- Quick dry time (so a product such as cabinet doors or furniture pieces can be finished and stacked fast, making it possible to ramp up production when demand is high)
- Powerful mechanical strength
- Long pot life
- High percentage of volume solids

Simply put, conversion varnish systems are a proven workhorse in the wood manufacturing industry.

On the other hand, conversion varnish isn't always the right finish for every shop. Performance and price must be carefully considered. If you're evaluating how well a coating will work with your current process (and if significant changes would be necessary to make a change), you must consider "Is it worth the cost?" From a performance standpoint, you have to determine how the product sprays, dries, and lasts, among other things. Conversion varnishes come up short in some areas. Leading manufacturers of urethane coatings report the disadvantages of conversion varnishes as:

- Limited film build possibilities
- Less chemical resistance
- UV instability
- Poor recoat windows
- An inability to achieve a buffed, high gloss wet look
- Inability to get clear, low, and dead flat matte sheens

One of the key drawbacks to a traditional acid catalyzed conversion varnish system is formaldehyde. While conversion varnishes are used extensively in the United States, it's a huge "no-no" in European countries due to its formaldehyde content. In order for the resins in a conversion varnish to cure and harden, an acid catalyst must be introduced. The crosslinking process of the acid and resin produces a byproduct of

EDUCATION

formaldehyde, which can continue to off gas up to 28 days until the coating is completely cured. All is not lost, however, as new formaldehyde-compliant conversion varnishes have been introduced into the marketplace, such as AcromaPro's Bernyl FF line.

About 80% of the products Accessa customers manufacture are put into service within 10 days of being finished. Though the conversion varnish's cure isn't complete within 10 days, it is relatively hard and suitable for use at this point. With that said, what do consumers believe regarding formaldehyde emissions in their home or office, and what is its impact?

URETHANES

While urethanes have increased in relevance over the last few years, Accessa has been a market leader since 2001, when it began importing urethanes from Italy. Accessa's Italian partner, ICA, says the finish's attributes include excellent mechanical and chemical strength, outstanding moisture resistance, exceptional clarity, non-yellowing properties, application versatility, and strong UV resistance.

Accessa works with a wide range of clients who say that urethane coatings are often the best choice for use in more industrial and commercial settings, such as restaurants and offices, where there is more wear and tear compared to residential use. One of Accessa's customers (a manufacturer of high-end office furniture) uses urethane throughout all of its finish offerings. The company has built furniture for conference rooms, private offices, reception areas, and training spaces. With clients in Europe and other countries around the world, the customer must make sure its tables, desks, and chairs meet more stringent environmental standards, as well as BIFMA's performance requirements. Because restaurant tables, hospital furniture, and office desks are susceptible to frequent cleanings with strong chemicals and detergents, a longer-lasting finish is attractive to many customers, with a growing market crossover to the residential side.

Beyond dry film performance characteristics, urethane can also produce a look that conversion varnishes can't, partly due to how well the film can be built. The glossy, glass-like finish seen on some urethane-coated products is achieved through a lack of restriction on dry film build. Conversion varnishes are typically only sprayed to a total of 4-5 mils dry film, while urethanes can be built up to 10-12 mils dry film in some cases. On the flip side, with open grain woods, urethanes allow you to get into and seal the

pores of the wood without bridging the grain. This close-to-the-wood, open pore look is generally unable to be achieved successfully with a conversion varnish.

In keeping with the aesthetic theme, Accessa continues to see sheen trend in the lower direction. While 20 sheen seems to be the most common sheen used today, the demand for 10 sheen and dead flat (0-5) sheens is certainly on the rise. Conversion varnishes simply don't offer a satisfactory level of clarity at such low sheens, especially at the dead flat level. This clarity factor is an area where urethanes dominate. The designs of barn wood, driftwood, weathered wood, and similar materials (while still maintaining clarity and a "no finish" look) are easy to achieve with urethane systems.

A typical urethane system requires a hardener to be added to the base in order for the system to fully cure out. Unlike a conversion varnish with an acid catalyst, the hardener does not actually cause a chemical reaction. The lack of chemical reaction produces one of urethane's best features—no formaldehyde emissions. The formaldehyde-free nature provides for a safer finishing environment, as well as a more consumer-friendly approach, due to less HAPs being emitted in the home or office.

The potential downside of this is the health hazard of isocyanate-based hardeners. Isocyanates are a known carcinogen; therefore, proper personal protective equipment is necessary for finish applicators.

Additionally, urethanes tend to be more expensive in price per gallon compared to conversion varnish. If opting for a traditional urethane, a pot life of 3-5 hours may be difficult to accommodate if you're accustomed to a conversion varnish pot life of 8-24 hours. That said, ICA's acrylic urethane systems offer pot lives of 8 hours plus, often negating the short pot life argument.

BOTTOM LINE

If you're deciding between conversion varnishes and urethanes, you must set an expectation for how you want coatings to perform and what look you want to achieve. Before you start wringing your hands at a possible change, you must carefully weigh the pros and cons and ask yourself: "What does my customer want?" Answering this will help determine the best path forward, and may open the door to a new market, increased sales, or improved marketability of your product.



New Ohio Facility Successfully Opened

We've expanded! Our new facility in Millersburg, OH was successfully opened on October 1, 2019, allowing us to provide our northern OH and western PA customers with faster, more localized service. Previously, our smaller OH facility existed to serve local needs, while larger orders were shipped out of Elkhart, IN. Now, the new 3,600-sq. ft. building allows us to work out of a more efficient space, provide more inventory, and extend our production capabilities.

"Opening our new location is an important step towards our goal in providing a regionally-robust service model to our customers," said Les Yoder, Accessa Operations Manager. "Accessa is committed to a service-first attitude by being as responsive as possible when and where customers need us."

Please note our new address:

5740 CR 201

Millersburg, OH 44654

The new Accessa location has also purchased a new delivery truck, providing greater opportunities for new business and a full-service delivery route. In addition, the operations team also welcomes Jason Williamson, new branch operations supervisor at the Ohio facility.

Congratulations and thanks to Les Yoder and the entire Accessa team for the launch of this new location!

ACCESSA IN THE FIELD



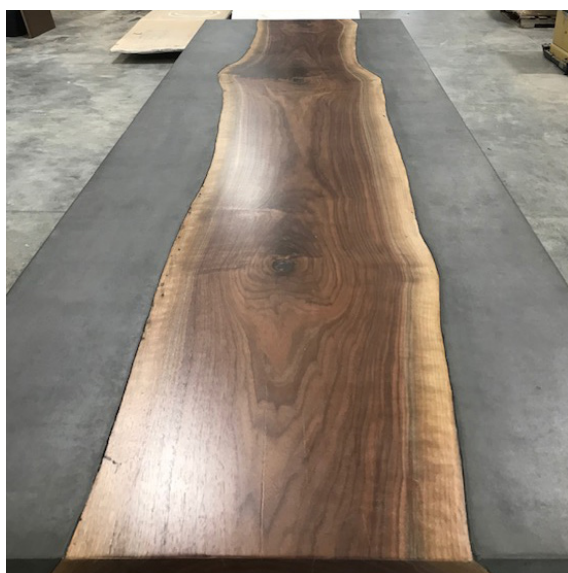
THE WORLD'S LARGEST STARBUCKS

The highly anticipated "world's largest Starbucks" finally opened on November 15 in Chicago, IL, replacing the old Crate & Barrel building on the city's Magnificent Mile. One of only five stores dubbed "roasteries" worldwide, the four-level location is the last and largest of the chain's grand coffee palaces. An Accessa customer has been hard at work helping bring the grand building to life with high-quality coatings to protect many of its wooden features and furniture. Congratulations on completing this monumental project!



CRUISE SHIP MAKEOVER

Most cruise ship estate rooms are now made of metal since wood is not a safe or ideal building component for a "floating city." Accessa's Perfection Electrostatic Paint line has been a go-to for many of these cruise ship overhauls. The InviraNamel Alkyd Enamel product will be used to repaint all four walls and the ceiling of estate rooms on a major cruise line to provide a like-new appearance and feel. This Perfection Electrostatic Paint product is uniquely qualified for this type of application due to its electrostatic capabilities. Combined with the Ransburg #2 unit, the customer is able to achieve 95-98% paint transfer efficiency, drastically reducing overspray and wasted product.



LIVE EDGE

Recently, we assisted one of our commercial furniture customers in a unique project. The goal was to encase live edge wood surfaces in concrete as a focal point table in a hotel. This look was created using Accessa's ICA Acrylic OAC929, giving the wood slab a rich, wet feel. The result was a beautiful and unique piece that will soon be gracing a Marriott dining room.

If you would like to see your project featured here, please email vtoddjr@accessa.com.



accessa.com
P: 800-593-0126 F: 317-879-2051
info@accessa.com

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