

# THE CONSULTANCY

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2015



## THE RIGHT COATING OPENS GLOBAL DOORS FOR TOTAL CONTROL SYSTEMS



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**METAL PRETREATMENT  
PROS & CONS**



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**ACCESSA ENTERS  
CHICAGO MARKET**

**ACCESSA**  
Coatings ■ Solutions

**HiT**  
SOLUTIONS

## Welcome to The Consultancy



As we move toward the end of the fourth quarter, 2015 continues to be a strong year of growth for Accessa Coatings Solutions and HIT Solutions. We have outstanding new people on our team, both in sales and operational roles, and the diversification and “bread and butter” account growth we have experienced over the last 6-18 months is a positive trend.

Accessa is always looking for opportunities to improve. In this same vein, Accessa is a good company with good people, working its way down a path toward being a great company for our clients. Accessa has implemented practices to draw out the greatness from within.

Writer and leadership expert Jim Collins and his research team identified a set of elite companies that made the leap to great results and sustained those results for at least 15 years. He documents their findings in best-selling book *Good to Great*. An excerpt follows:

“I want to give you a lobotomy about change. I want you to forget everything you’ve ever learned about what it takes to create great results. I want you to realize that nearly all operating prescriptions for creating large-scale corporate change are nothing but myths. *The Myth of Revolution: Big change has to be wrenching, extreme, painful—one big, discontinuous, shattering break. Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. Totally wrong.*”

Collins goes on to make the case that companies that make lasting change from good to great do not do so by means of a dramatic process. There is no miracle moment. “Instead, a down-to-earth, pragmatic, committed-to-excellence process—a framework—kept each company, its leaders, and its people on track for the long haul,” he writes. “In each case, it was the triumph of the Flywheel Effect over the Doom Loop, the victory of steadfast discipline over the quick fix.”

This flywheel is essentially your company, and your job is to get the flywheel to move as fast as possible, because momentum is what will generate superior economic results over time. As the momentum of the heavy wheel kicks in your favor, it spins faster and faster, with its own weight propelling it. This is the Flywheel Effect. “It’s what it feels like when you’re inside a company that makes the transition from good to great,” Collins writes.

Accessa is asking itself and its team members if we have our shoulder pressed against the flywheel, pushing with our best effort, to become more valuable to our clients. The year 2015 has been and will continue to be a year of transition as we engage in new habits, welcome new people to our team, and focus on continued growth and strength of the company. The management team will continue to lead the push of the flywheel and recruit people who are looking for an opportunity to join the push. We will practice patience and willingness, and embrace our new path forward as we grow from good to great together. My ear and that of the management team will always be open to feedback and ideas from our clients. We are committed to making sure our successes grow in number and strength as we work united to accomplish our 2015 goals.

Joe Todd  
President, Accessa Coatings Solutions and HIT Solutions



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Accessa Coatings Solutions puts top-performing coatings, industry expertise and personal service to work so clients can build bigger, stronger businesses.

HIT Solutions’ service-first attitude and partnerships with pioneers in research and development support its mission to be the preferred logistics provider of value-added services and adhesive, surface treatment, metal working, and chemical specialty products.

# CONSIDERING STEEL PRETREATMENT

## HIT Solutions

There is much more than meets the eye when it comes to painting manufactured steel goods. To get the most durable finish possible, a pretreatment process for metals such as steel is essential. Pretreatment is simply the process by which you clean and prepare a metal, such as steel, aluminum or brass, and it's used in a multitude of industries, including automotive, appliance, construction, electrical components, aviation, packaging and more.

### Individualized pretreatment process

Pretreatment is not a one-size-fits-all process. The level and type of pretreatment needed to meet your needs depend on how your product will be used, the specifications it has to meet, your budget and the kind of environment in which you're working

For steel, you will have anywhere from a single-stage to multiple-stage cleaning:

1. The first step is an interim one involving a spray- or immersion-type cleaning using an alkaline solution, followed by a simple rinse with water.
2. If the product requires better paint adhesion than can be achieved with a basic cleaning, a traditional conversion coating, such as one containing iron phosphate or zinc phosphate, will be applied. If environmental impact and standards come more into play, a new non-phosphorus pretreatment called a "transition metal coating" can be used. Both of these types of coatings increase the surface area of the metal to maximize paint adhesion. A fresh water rinse would follow.
3. A third possible step could include a sealer to cover any voids that you missed in the previous stages or to provide extra protection against rust and corrosion.
4. The final step is usually a trip to the drying oven before your final coatings are applied.

### Pros and cons of pretreatment

Pretreatment is not a one-size-fits-all process. The level and type of pretreatment needed to meet your needs depend on how your product will be used, the specifications it has to meet, your budget and the kind of environment in which you're working. For steel, you will have anywhere from a single-stage to multiple-stage cleaning:

**PRO:** The primary advantage of steel pretreatment is that it provides a higher-quality end product and prevents the chances for corrosion so your metal goods last



longer in the field. If it makes sense for you and your industry, implementing a pretreatment process can set you apart in your marketplace and add value to your manufactured goods.

**CON:** The biggest disadvantage is that it introduces new steps and added costs to your current process. If you're spending more on energy costs, chemistry and manpower, you need to make sure it's worth your while. Consider:

- How many people will be needed to carry out the process?
- What are the energy needs and the expected expenses?
- How much floor space will be needed for this cleaning?
- How much capital investment will it take?
- And will the end results really be a benefit to me?

Before pulling the trigger on a pretreatment process, make sure your vendor partner like HIT Solutions knows enough about your needs and priorities to recommend a plan that will work well for you. This supplier should be looking at what you're doing, what you want, your equipment, what cleaners you're currently using, your available floor space, temperature in the space in which you'll be treating the metal and more. Ask your representative tough questions related to their products to find what they know and don't know.

There are always new twists on existing chemistries in the areas of coatings and pretreatment. Be sure these innovations are working for you.

***If you would like to talk to a consultant about metal pretreatment, contact HIT Solutions at 877-771-4HIT.***



# HOW TO BUY YOUR NEXT COATING

By Vince Todd

Whether you are shopping for a new coating, evaluating a coating you have in use or on the brink of ditching your current coating, three factors should be considered:

1. Service and Support (50%)
2. Product Quality (35%)
3. Product Cost (15%)

How people measure the importance of each factor is typically how they fail in the decision-making process. Based on my decades of experience in this industry, this is how I have seen customers be most successful.

## IT'S 50% SERVICE AND SUPPORT

If you get a great price on a coating but it shows up a week late, finishes matte when you wanted shiny, and your vendor doesn't return phone calls to get the problem fixed, that low price doesn't seem so attractive, does it? That's just one example of why service and support are so critical and should be weighed heavily.

Measuring service and support isn't a simple number. You have to consider more qualitative evidence. If you're talking to a prospective vendor, ask them how they handle communication, delivery issues and product troubleshooting. Compare their promises against how your incumbent vendor has performed for you.

If you're in a relationship with a vendor, think about how they have served you in the past. Say you gave them a purchase order for 1,000 gallons of coating XYZ on July 20 and it didn't show up within the pre-agreed lead time — or never was received. Perhaps the order was never processed and you never got a phone call or a confirmation of receipt about it. You should see or talk to your representative on a regular basis, however "regular" you need. When you ask your rep a question, he/she should follow up in a timely manner.

Everyone is different and has different needs. If your vendor fails to address common sense issues that irritate you, making your life more difficult, that's important. Factor these issues into your evaluation. Measure the accuracy of delivery orders to make sure your expectations are met. Be sure your representative does what he/she says they're going to do.

## IT'S 35% PRODUCT QUALITY

The quality of the product is a more straightforward factor to evaluate. If you've never used a coating before, be sure it meets the specs you have provided to the vendor. If you're looking at multiple coatings, subject each to the same battery of tests to see how they match up.



You'll likely be measuring durability (according to the expected environmental conditions and usage), the appearance of the final finish, how well and quickly the coating dries, percentage of solids, and more. Ask yourself how each coating's features bring value to your end product. This is the true test of quality.

## IT'S 15% PRODUCT COST

Unfortunately, it's usual for customers to look at price first. That simple "cost-per-gallon" seems straightforward to measure, but it's not — more here. To be a smart buyer, ask the product representative why their coating is better than another one. Is the rate of solids higher? What is the actual applied cost? How many widgets can you get out of a gallon of paint of the incumbent vs. the proposed coating under the same conditions? Which will contribute most to your bottom line?

## IT'S 100% UP TO YOU

There are only two positions in the race: first and last, and no one wants to be last. In order to stay up front, you have to have a process in place to consistently evaluate your vendors and products. Your process can be monthly, quarterly, biannually; the important thing is to get it done. Retest each coating to be sure it still hits the marks and meets the same specifications you required from your vendor on day one.

The bottom line in any assessment is answering the question, "How much value is this coating bringing to me?" When a coating isn't adding value to your end product (and work life), based on the service and support provided, product quality, and applied cost, it's time to look elsewhere.

When you are considering a coating and vendor switch, judge whether the prospect is equal to or better than the incumbent. Figure out if the applied cost is better. Related to service and support, ask the new guy for references.

If a frustration, pain or challenge arises related to your coating and you aren't getting relief, look elsewhere.

AcromaPro unveils wood coatings line to satisfy demands for high performance and environmental standards.

- ## REMINDER – HAPs-Compliant System

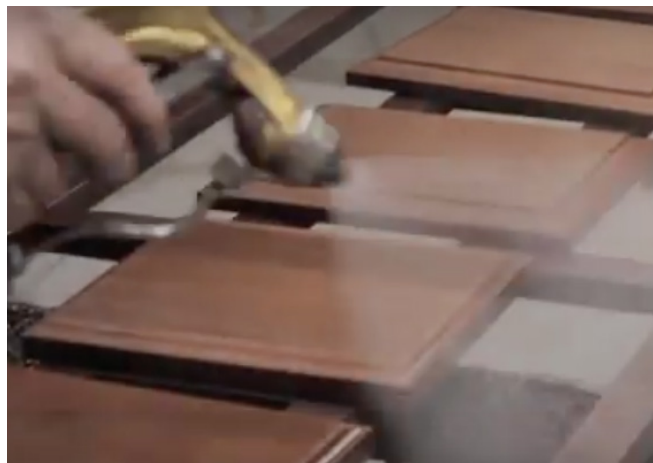
- With the addition of the **Innovat HC** and the **944 HF Slow Catalyst**, Accessa is able to offer a complete HAPS-compliant, conversion varnish system.

With **Innovat HC** you can achieve the smooth feeling, low odor and exceptionally durable products you want. This flexible, user-friendly system consistently delivers the highest-quality results so you can achieve an attractive finish while meeting environmental standards.

**CUSTOMER TESTIMONIAL:** A new customer who has started up with this product sent a note the other week, and I quote:

“That Innovat HC is ... so smooth, looks great, sands easily and durable. Loving it!”

This was an unsolicited response from this new customer who had been using a competitor's clear coats for many years.

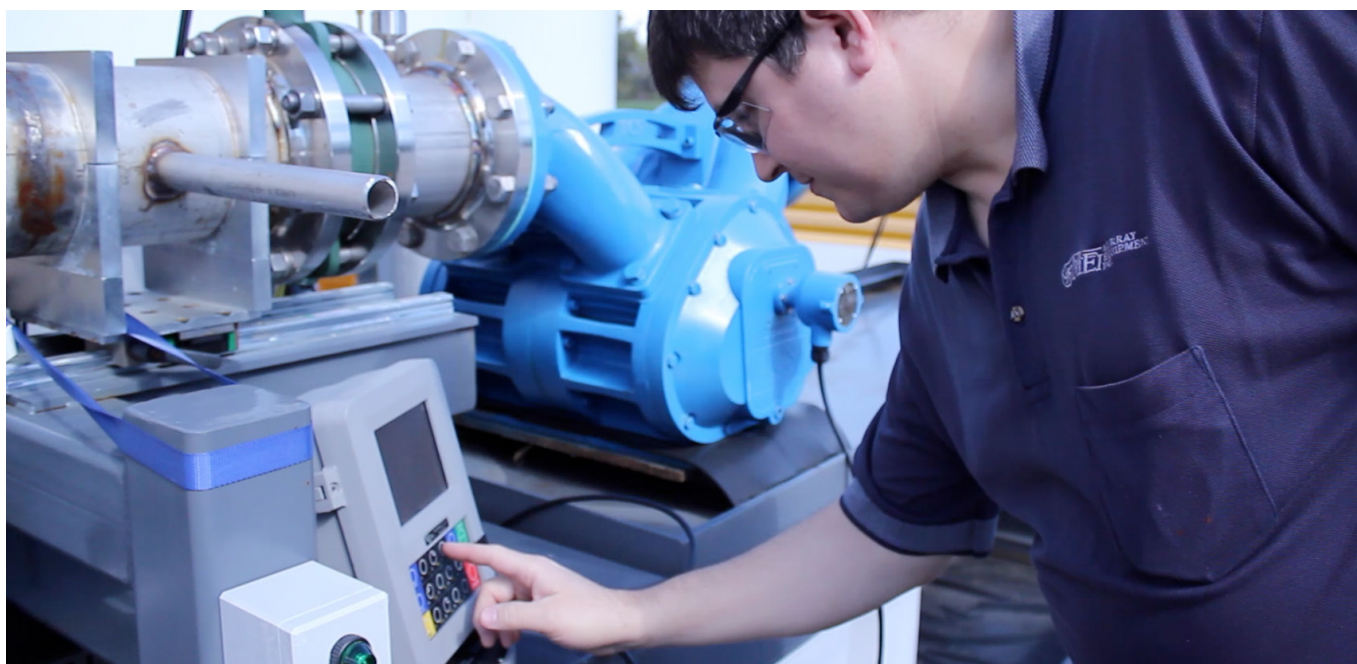


## HitSol HSC302

HitSol HSC302 is an acid-based liquid cleaner concentrate. HitSol HSC302 is designed for use in removing scale, oxides, and hard water deposits. HitSol HSC302 will also remove rust from iron and steel and brighten soft metals such as aluminum and copper alloys. It can also be used to prep metals for painting, and/or cleaning clogged and scaly spray nozzles from pretreatment line.

## HitSol Rinse Aid 85

HitSol Rinse Aid 85 is a silicone-free defoamer and rinse aid that may be used as a tank side additive to boost cleaning, reduce foaming at 110-120°F, and as a rinse aid in rinse water tanks for increasing wetting and reducing water spotting.



We tested a lot of products with a lot of labels that you know, but when we found the right product, it was the one that could take care of our customers.

## The Right Coating Opens Global Doors

This story about Accessa and Total Control Systems first appeared in the June 2015 issue of Products Finishing magazine.

Biodiesel is known as an attractive alternative to traditional petroleum diesel fuel. It's clean burning, renewable and gentler on our fragile planet. But when it comes to biodiesel's effect on paint, it's anything but nice.

This was the challenge Total Control Systems faced when the Fort Wayne, Indiana, company wanted to expand its production to include products made to handle the ever-increasing demand for biodiesel-compatible meters.

TCS is a leading ISO-9001 certified manufacturer of piston and rotary positive displacement flow meters that are designed to provide superior performance in custody-transfer measurement of refined fuels, LPG, fertilizers, chemicals, alcohols and solvents.

TCS manufactures flow meters mainly for the petroleum industry. Transport trucks, aircraft refuelers, home heating oil equipment and boats often include TCS meters.

The agriculture industry kept the company's focus until about 2000, when leaders there decided to branch out into the meter business and serve a wider range of industries. Around 2005, the company started making products available to more customers and industries.

*"At that time, painting became a big issue for us," says David Musselman, the company's CFO and COO. "We were branching out with customers who used biodiesel, which tends to remove paint."*

Musselman and his team began to experiment with many promising industrial coatings—including automotive paint—with the No. 1 criterion being its ability to stand up to biodiesel, and the second concern being the coating's ability to stand up to ethanol.

Another major concern from an operations standpoint was VOCs. For environmental and employee safety reasons, Musselman wanted a paint with a low VOC rating.

### Hunting Down a Coating

The environments in which TCS's customers use meters are harsh, to say the least. First, the meters have to withstand the wear and tear of delivery, often in open-air trucks, across the United States and beyond. TCS has customers in Australia, Singapore and the Middle East, with more than half of their business going across the water.

*continued on the following page*

## Case Study

For overseas customers in the Middle East, heat and sand thrash everything exposed to the elements. TCS Production Supervisor Steven Plummer equates it to a sandblasting effect.

*"When we're dealing with customers on American shores like refueling stations in Alaska or on naval piers, the meters are out in the saltwater splash," Plummer says. "These are concerns that will take the paint right off."*

After talking to other manufacturers and distributors, and having no luck, Musselman met with the Accessa Coatings Solutions team from Indianapolis. To find the right product for these tough jobs, Accessa Coatings Solutions and TCS carried out a salt spray test, scratch test and many soak tests in which painted products were immersed in biodiesel and ethanol. Musselman says they just sat back and waited for the paint to peel off. In the case of the Accessa Coatings Solutions product, that didn't happen. They knew they had a winner.

*"We tested a lot of products with a lot of labels that you know, but when we found the right product, it was the one that could take care of our customers," Musselman says.*

*"It could handle the biodiesel, the salt environments, the ethanol, and it could stand up to being on a truck in an outdoor environment. Once we found that product, we locked in on it and have been using it ever since."*

### Low VOC

The Accessa product also fit the bill for having low VOCs, so it was safe for employees to use, but just because the employees had the coating didn't mean the job was finished.

Bill Adams is the Accessa Coatings Solutions consultant on the TCS account. *"One of the unique challenges with TCS was the application process, and we worked very closely with equipment representatives and TCS to be sure we were supplying not only the material, but also the correct way to apply that material,"* Adams says.

Ted Mowery is one of the men applying the signature blue shade Adams helped TCS find. He knows the day-to-day problems that come with painting industrial parts. With each custom part and paint application change, there are challenges.

He can use the same paint and primer, but they will perform differently in different conditions, so Mowery has to be able to tweak the application process to get the finish he's looking for.

*"Ambient temperature and humidity are really big problems, even in a climate-controlled setting, and this paint tends to be pretty consistent and reliable,"* he says.

The application process Accessa Coatings Solutions helped develop includes two products. First, a fast-drying acid wash primer is sprayed by HVLP. TCS sprayers then use the Accessa Coatings Solutions INVIRathane—low VOC polyurethane paint—sprayed either electrostatically or by HVLP at about 3 to 4 wet mils.

Mowery values versatility, reliability, ease of use by the operator and a quick dry time.

*"When the customer takes the part out of the box, we want him to know he bought a quality part,"* Mowery says.

He relies on Adams to respond quickly to any issues and find answers so TCS customers get what they need. Adams is often on the floor at TCS helping Mowery, Plummer and their team improve. In the rare instance of adhesion issues or application problems, he is there, with an equipment representative if necessary, to help solve the problem so the application process is successfully moving forward.



**When the customer takes the part out of the box, we want him to know he bought a quality part."**

### Having the Right Partner

Without having a partner in place to research, test and deliver a complete coatings solutions package that worked, Musselman says TCS would not have been able to successfully expand its production into the petroleum industry. With a partner like Accessa Coatings Solutions at the ready to troubleshoot any problems, issues or concerns, Musselman says TCS can confidently keep growing its business.

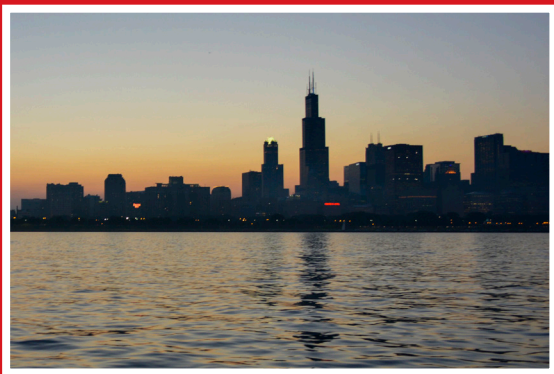
*"The main thing we want in a relationship with any partner is an open communication line and clear expectations,"* he says. *"Product availability and consistency are critical to keeping production moving and customers happy. We want an all-hands-on-deck response because our customers expect that and we have to expect it, too."*

**For more information about Total Control Systems, visit [tcsometers.com](http://tcsometers.com).**



**Watch the Total Control Systems case study video, available from [Accessa.com](http://Accessa.com).**





## Accessa Enters Chicago Market

Accessa Coatings Solutions is now serving Chicago-area customers whose businesses rely on high-quality coatings. In an agreement with Chicagoland Finishing Materials (CFM), Indianapolis-based Accessa Coatings Solutions will use CFM's operations to provide local services to Accessa's Chicago area accounts. The relationship will provide responsive customer service, extensive coatings industry expertise and a range of product brands to customers.

Chicagoland Finishing Products' Joe Binder and Brian Peskuski will continue to handle accounts on behalf of Accessa Coatings Solutions.

## Southwestern Indiana

GET THE COATINGS YOU NEED WHEN YOU NEED THEM

Accessa Coatings Solutions has expanded delivery service to every Wednesday. Manage inventory more efficiently and put top-performing metal and wood coatings to work more readily in Southwestern Indiana.

Accessa Coatings Solutions' new weekly truck delivery service runs every Wednesday for manufacturers in Indiana counties including Dubois, Daviess, Martin, Orange and others.

While traditional carriers will still be used effectively, having more control over delivery supports Accessa's goal to be as responsive as possible when customers need us. All Accessa truck orders need to be received by 4 p.m. EDT on Monday in order to make the truck delivery on the following Wednesday.

**Contact your Accessa Coatings Consultant today at 812-345-6821 or 1-800-593-0126. Visit [accessa.com](http://accessa.com).**

## We've Been Hiring!

**As we continue to grow, we are hiring more great team members to better serve you.**

### CONSULTANT TEAM

- Coatings Consultant **Chad Everett** joins the team in Northern Indiana and Southern Michigan.
- Brian Gould takes on the role of Distribution Consultant.
- Eric King joins our team as a Coatings Consultant in Southern Indiana and Northern Kentucky.
- STRATEGIC ROLE CHANGE: Longtime Accessa employee Jim Pryor is now our dedicated Technical Coatings Consultant. He is supporting all Coatings Consultants on the technical side.
- Coatings Consultant Ryan Morton joins our Central Indiana team.

### PRODUCTION TEAM

- Nick Ramsay fills a supervisory position in Elkhart, Ind., office. He comes to us from Sherwin-Williams, where he performed lab work and production support. Nick also worked in a finish shop for 12 years.
- Michael Johnson is extending the current production team in Elkhart.
- Michael Pearce has joined the Arthur, Ill., production team.



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