

“ 24 hours in a day sometimes just doesn't seem like enough to get through everything on your to do list, especially if you have clients with screamingly urgent work. It then becomes a juggling act to try and keep everyone happy and still manage to find time to eat and sleep. Inevitably a ball might get dropped here and there as you try and juggle more and more. When you're finding you have more work than time, some clients may be more understanding than you expect... while some might not be able to move their deadlines, others may be able to accommodate a change in plans to ease some of the pressure... ”



Hard to miss

There's nothing quite like a shot of fluoro to really make something stand out and attract attention. While Resene has always had some very bright colours – think Resene Turbo or Resene Wellywood painted on all walls and you'll know what we mean! – we've never really ventured into the fluoro category... until now.



Now you can recreate the high vis highlighter pen look on walls and art with Resene FX Fluoro paint. Available in five colours – blue, green, yellow, orange and pink. It's ideal for use for after dark events and locations with blacklight for a striking fluoro effect. As a little fluoro goes a very long way in attracting attention, it comes in handy 250ml and 80ml packs so you don't need to buy bucketloads to make a statement.

Look out for the new fluoros coming to your Resene ColorShop and selected resellers.

How to manage your client's expectations

Between painting a perfect porch for Percy, redecorating Rhonda's living room and carving out a new kitchen space for Carla, trade jobs can quickly become overwhelming.

There are only 24 hours in a day, and not all of these can be used to get the job done. You do need sleep and your downtime, after all!

However, if you're aware of a few tricks to manage your clients' expectations when completing renovations or interior design work, you may find that running a trade business is a lot more streamlined and manageable.

1. Set boundaries

The thought of taking on a massive job may be promising. If you nail the job, you may secure future work in a similar vein. Big, complex jobs may also be promising when it comes to payment, too.

However, if you dive in too deep, you could severely damage your brand. There's nothing worse than someone committing to something that they're simply not capable of doing.

Understand what your skill set is as well as your time availability. You'll be able to set boundaries accordingly to ensure you deliver on your promises.

2. Understand your niche

Whether you're doing minor repairs and renovations for multiple clients or prefer to work on a project-by-project basis will depend on your own circumstances and work ethic.

You might be known as the go-to tradesperson in your area for small jobs on an emergency basis. If you're the kind of person who likes plenty of variety and are skilled at an array of small tasks, such an approach could be good for your trade business.

Alternatively, you might prefer to work with just one or two clients on significant building or trade projects. Being able to offer an end-to-end service (or at least having go-to contractors for other elements of home renovations) allows you to build close relationships with your clients.

If you're accustomed to completing lots of small jobs but over-commit yourself to big projects, you may struggle to meet clients' expectations. Big projects can be slow-burning, but that doesn't mean you can't be attentive.

Meanwhile, clients who need emergency repairs will rely on your availability – they'll be sorely disappointed if you're unable to attend to their homes for a fortnight, because you're busy laying foundations elsewhere.

Understand your niche and take on clients accordingly. Everyone will be a lot happier – you included!

3. Explain challenges

It's important to explain potential pitfalls to clients as early as possible, and in language they understand.

For instance, if you're having trouble sourcing materials from a supplier, don't cross your fingers and hope for the best. Call the client as soon as the issue arises, explain your predicament and offer a solution. This might be just a case of rescheduling the work to a new time that suits the clients based on the expected arrival of the materials.

Challenges are bound to arise when working as a tradesperson. Tackle tricky issues head on – don't ignore them.

If a project is going to be delayed, your client's costs are going to increase or there is an issue accessing the materials you need for their project, inform them straight away. By keeping clients involved throughout the process, you'll find it a lot easier to manage their expectations.

Going green

It always pays to take care when you decide to put down a paint bucket or can, as you never quite know when it might end up unexpectedly in the way, as Paul found out...

"A few years ago my business partner and myself were painting the local playcentre in a lovely colour of Permanent Green. As we do on most occasions the paint is sat down beside the van so it is convenient for top-ups.

Unfortunately for us on the day, due to the fact we are both Volunteer Fire Brigade guys, the alarm decides to go off. Even though we were working directly next door to the brigade we still jumped into the van and reversed out and off to the callout.

Oblivious were we to the fact that the paint had been left behind the van at the time.

Imagine how embarrassed we were to return and find a lovely green coloured driveway merging onto the road outside. We both looked at each other laughing at first but also thinking how the h... are we going to deal with this? Of course we did our community duties to both the brigade and

the playcentre by cleaning up the lovely green and then of course a trip to our local Resene shop to get some more! Tip: Never leave your 10 litre pails sitting behind your van even if you are not on voluntary duty!"



Opacity of paints

Thanks to the Master Painters for sharing their fact sheet 14 with us...

MPNZA is aware that there is, amongst some sectors of the building industry, a belief that colour choice does not affect the opacity of architectural and decorative coatings. The fact is, however, that colour does affect opacity or hiding power of the paint. Unless properly handled opacity problems can also affect colour tone so that the desired shades are not obtained.

Problems arise in commercial work where a specification is issued, quoted on by the painter and/or a paint company, before the colour(s) is known. If a painter quotes on 2 or 3 coats, but additional coats are required, a costly dispute may result.

If the colour is known in advance a suitable system can be prepared and quoted. In some cases a special factory mix batch may be required. This may involve an allowance for lead time or additional cost for exterior quality light fast pigments. To address these problems the industry needs the cooperation of architects, specifiers, designers and builders to provide this information, to avoid conflict when the job is being painted. MPNZA members are able to work with these groups to provide custom specifications.

The technology behind Australian/NZ formulated broadwall interior and exterior self-priming latex (water-based) paints is at the forefront of world coatings technology. Australian/NZ tinting systems are more sophisticated and more accessible to trade painters and DIY market than in most overseas countries. It is however wrong to assume that all Australian/NZ formulated paints will provide uniform opacity across the full colour spectrum using a standard two coat system.

The increased use of organic pigments, due mainly to legislative restrictions on the use of inorganic pigments such as lead chromates, has adversely affected the opacity or hiding power of certain latex paints. This is particularly noticeable in regard to paints based on red, yellow and orange pigments. Compared with lead chromate pigments, paints tinted in house or at point of sale with organic reds, yellows and oranges may provide considerably less hiding power.

Opacity is largely influenced by the relative refractive indices of the pigment and the medium as well as the particle size and distribution of the pigment, that is, the shape and degree of aggregation of the particles, the proportion of pigment in the vehicle and the thickness of the applied film.

Since for white pigments there is little or no absorption of light, the hiding power of white paints depends entirely on the scattering of the incident light. The higher the refractive index of the pigment relative to that of the medium and the nearer the particle size to the optimum, the greater the scatter and the greater the opacity of the paint.

The hiding power of a paint containing a coloured pigment is also dependent on the ability of the pigment to absorb light, as well as to scatter it as a result of its refractive index and particle size distribution. With black pigments good hiding power is obtained owing to the almost complete absorption of light and refractive index as such contributes only little to the effect. For other coloured pigments both of these properties, absorption and scatter are wavelength dependent and the end effect is a complex combination of all the various factors involved.

All inorganic pigments have high refractive indexes, and hence, when used to colour paint give high opacity. Such colours from inorganic pigments generally include white, black, and yellow, red and green oxides. Colours comprising combinations of inorganic and organic pigments may have high opacity, depending on the proportions.

Pale yellow and apricot colours, which have organic yellow, red or orange pigment in combination with white, have been found to lead to coverage problems due to refractive index reduction. The number of topcoats can be reduced significantly however by first applying a top quality undercoat tinted grey or tinted from the same colorants as the selected colour. The key is to obliterate the surface and leave a solid, uniform base prior to application of the topcoat.

This information is not intended to discourage the public, paint specifiers and others from specifying colours of their choice. It is intended merely to point out that paint tints based on red, yellow and orange may need additional coats to achieve the hiding power required.

Resene recommends specific undercoats (available in solventborne or waterborne) for some of these colours to help with opacity – your Resene ColorShop staff can help you to choose the best paint system for your project and the chosen colour.



Catch you next month!

TwoCan, Editor.

