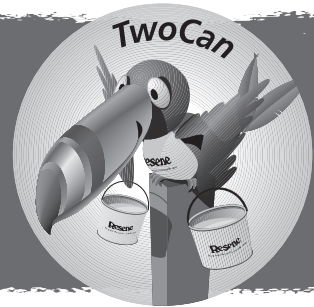


“ Welcome to 2020 – a fresh year and a fresh new start. There’s something about a New Year that helps put last year’s dramas in perspective and behind you and encourages looking to the future with a fresh sense of optimism. While it is tempting to take the hare approach and go full speed, usually the turtle approach of slowly and steadily working towards your goals, is far more productive and manageable in the long run. A little done often is a great way of making progress on things. Even though it’s early in the year, our own team have been beavering away on new projects too so we’re looking forward to having some extra new things to share with you in the coming months... ”



Think on your feet

Thanks to everyone who entered the Resene Decorating Funny Stories and Tips competition last year. We were delighted to see some very funny stories and handy tips.

Our story winner was John McCarthy with his very quick thinking solution...

“First day with a new painting firm, I was dropped off at a huge house in the country and told to undercoat all the timber spindles and banisters on two large flights of stairs. He said all the gear was on site and hurried out the door.

It didn’t take me long to find that all the gear was there, except any



brushes or rollers... this was in the days before mobile phones and the house was miles from anywhere so I had to get creative.

I filled a tray with undercoat, put a plastic bag over my hand and removed one of my newly purchased sports socks.

I put the sock over the bag on my hand and used it to paint the spindles, this not only worked but worked so well, I blitzed through all the staircases before the boss got back. Needless to say he was impressed with the progress. That’s what I call thinking on your feet!!”

If you’ve thought of a funny decorating story but didn’t get a chance to enter it in the competition, we’d love to hear it. Please send it to us at update@resene.co.nz. If we print it in a future TradeLines we’ll reward you with a \$50 Resene credit and some colourful m&ms!



Spray away

If you find yourself regularly applying a lot of semi-gloss waterborne enamel, we have a treat in store for you. **Resene Lustacryl Commercial Spray Grade** is a semi-gloss waterborne enamel that may be used in all areas traditionally reserved for solventborne

enamels. Designed specifically for spray application, it’s non-yellowing and fast drying with easy water clean-up.

It can be used wherever you might normally use Resene Lustacryl, and is especially ideal for solid timber doors and joinery.

Available in 10 litre white and colours off white at Resene ColorShops and selected resellers.

Fresh finds

Patterns, plains, bolds, neutrals or textures, when it comes to wallpaper there is a huge range of designs and styles to choose from and fresh options are released regularly. To help you and your customers keep up to date with the new collections, we have gathered together new wallpaper releases on our website, www.resene.com/wallpaper. This is updated regularly with new collections and gives you and your clients a taste of some



of the options available. It’s a handy snapshot of the look of each book before your client browses through the wallpaper collection at your Resene ColorShop.

And if you or your clients need some fresh ideas for paint and colour, check out our latest looks page, www.resene.com/latestlooks, a collection of styled shoots showing a range of on trend and classic colour combinations and decorating ideas. New looks are added regularly.



Beat the heat

Remember when it's hot outside your paint will be feeling it too. Consider using **Resene Hot Weather Additive** to slow your paint's dry time. Try and paint on



the shady side of the building, out of the direct sun. And remember, cover up where you can and apply sunscreen lotion on the rest!

4 ways to stand out from the competition

Standing out in the painting and decorating industry is crucial for success, but how can it be done?

In an industry where every other business claims to be the best at what they do, it can seem difficult to set yourself apart from the competition. While a lot of small businesses understand that standing out is key to success, many fail to put this theory into practice – however, it's easier to do than you think.

Here are some ways to help you stand out:

1 Find your niche and nail it

The phrase 'target everyone, reach no one' is an important rule to remember when marketing your small business. While casting your marketing net as wide as possible may seem like the most fruitful way to reach a broader audience, if you're only focused on a specific regional area and type of work, a lot of your marketing may be going to waste.

Your audience want to feel that you're speaking to them and answering their needs, but if your appeal is too broad, the message may feel generalised, diluted and impersonal.

A great way to stand out is to shorten your net and target a smaller, more defined group of people. When you find your niche (i.e. your desired clients), you can begin tailoring and targeting your marketing based on the group's problems, needs and outcomes. This is an easier and more effective way to make an impact, ensure your time and money is used more efficiently and increase your chances of converting prospects into paying and satisfied customers.

Rather than try and meet all the needs of a broader audience – focus on meeting and exceeding the desires of a smaller, more targeted group instead.

2 Offer unbeatable customer service

While plenty of businesses promise excellent customer service and satisfaction, it turns out that saying it isn't good enough, as demonstrated by a study by Lee Resources. The research found that around 80 per cent of companies believed they delivered superior customer service. However, just eight per cent of people said these same companies delivered the level of customer service they promised.

In this instance, actions speak significantly louder than words, so be sure to give clients a solid reason to choose you, and to come back.

A great way to determine whether you're pleasing current customers is through client experience surveys. Whether through social media, email or physical forms, ask your clients to rate you and your service out of 10 in the following factors:

- Service quality.
- Reliability.
- Communication.
- Price.
- Convenience.

These are just five options – you can add more to target specific areas you'd like to get feedback on. It's good to check the feedback before and after you make changes to make sure the changes have been for the better.

Client experience surveys can help identify which aspects of your business need a little work or changing altogether so you can improve your chances of attracting new clients and keeping existing ones.

3 Devise a USP (unique selling proposition) from your client experience survey results

It's no good spending time and effort conducting client experience surveys if you don't do anything with the results provided. Not only is this a great opportunity to address customer pain points and fix any underlying issues, it can also help you to discover a unique way to set yourself apart from the competition.

For example, if your customers didn't rate you highly in the sustainability department, you could turn this concern into an advantage by joining the Resene Eco.Decorator programme. After passing assessments in sustainable and waste management practices, alongside project plans and project sign off processes, contractors can become – and promote themselves as – an authentic Resene Eco.Decorator.

Clients will be able to see that you're associated with an industry leader and you're passionate about practising only environmentally friendly methods – qualities that aren't easy to come by.

4 Offer small extras instead of reducing prices

Cutting your costs may seem like an easy fix when trying to stand out from the competition, but often it's not the best answer:

- Lowered prices may attract lower-quality clients who don't match your desired target audience and who may not require a similar style of work you normally provide. This can decrease the standard of your future portfolio.
- No matter how low you go, there will always be someone else offering a cheaper alternative.
- Charging reduced prices can result in lower commitment levels, meaning that lower-touch clients may not use your service again.

Instead of dropping prices, offer inexpensive extras that don't take long to execute. Simple things like offering to vacuum after a job, changing lightbulbs while you have the ladder in the room or even scheduling the job after hours or in a weekend to show you're willing go to the next level for your customers, which can really make a big difference to your client retention and the word of mouth referrals you get.



Catch you next month!

TwoCan, Editor.

