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INSIDE: SEMA Coverage • Wrapping Up Wraps Part 2 • and More

WINDOW FILM™

Architectural - Auto - Decorative - Paint Protection - Security
Volume 15 - Issue 1 - January-February 2011

Shuffling the Deck

IWFA Manufacturers' Committee Creates a New Kind of Game

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Also Inside:

- A Chat With Solutia's New President
- Industry News and More

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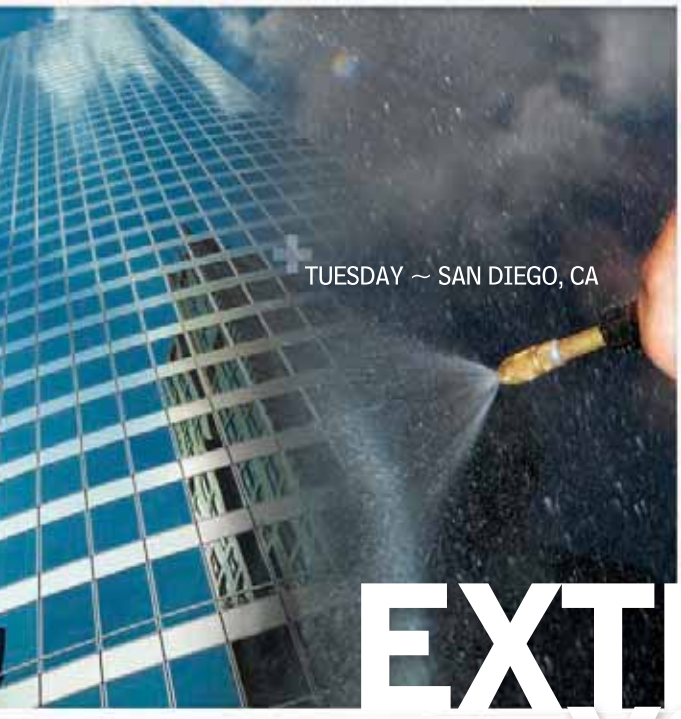

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DEAR READER

KATIE HODGE

My Anti-Resolution

Across the globe, everyone cheered as the New Year started. Among friends and via television everyone started proclaiming their New Year's resolutions and hoping that 2011 would bring success in personal and professional ways. I, for one, am not a big fan of resolutions. I never seem to keep them and, frankly, they seem like just another bunch of hopeful wishes. How many people really make it past the first three or four days of going to the gym? In fact, aren't resolutions more about what you failed to do in 2010 than what you are going to do in 2011?

So my resolution this year is not to have a resolution based off of last year—think of it as an anti-resolution. Therefore, I choose to look forward and I am excited for 2011.

The window film industry has a lot to look forward to as well. Consumers are becoming more aware of window film and its benefits and when you look at the amount of glass that is as yet unprotected by film, the opportunities are endless. While so many industries are struggling to make money, the window film industry has maintained its success and even managed to grow.

If the SEMA show was any indication, paint protection film is going to take off. Tinters and shop owners were intrigued by demonstrations and stopped to watch and discuss what they were seeing. In addition to paint protection, our two-part article on vehicle wraps sparked a lot of interest in vehicle wraps as a value-added option for window film businesses. Don't be surprised if you hear more about wraps in 2011.

We can't talk about the future and not mention the advancements that are being made to improve film. Technological advancement is at an all-time high and our products are better than ever. There truly is a product for any need. I'm raising my glass to technological developments in 2011. I am curious what we will be talking about this time next year.

We also have lot of exciting things happening here at the magazine. Our Film'd video series has sparked a lot of interest and I've found that it's a great vehicle to tell you a story in a new way (you can find all of the current episodes at www.windowfilmmag.com/studio). We are also reporting real time with our Facebook and Twitter pages. If you don't have time to check the website every day you can get the latest news straight to your newsfeed or Twitter account. Head over to www.windowfilmmag.com and click on the Facebook, Twitter and Linked In icons to connect with us. We also want to encourage you to get interactive. If you do a window film job that you think is particularly cool send it over to us and we may put it up on our Facebook page for our friends to see.

Also, we hope you make September one to remember. The 2011 International Window Film Tint-Off and Conference™ will be taking place in Memphis, Tenn. September 15-16. The best tinters in the business will be there to show off their skills. Education will also be a part of the two day event, which will be co-located with Auto Glass Week™. I look forward to meeting you there.

As this New Year begins allow yourself to be excited about what your window film future has in store for you. Check out something new and let us know how 2011 is treating you. WF

WINDOW FILM MAGAZINE

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OPEN 24/7

MANNY HONDROULIS

Professional Proposals Using Word

This column marks the end of our Microsoft Office series. I have described how PowerPoint can be used to make sales presentations, showed how Excel can make estimating a breeze, and discussed how Access can help track your prospects and leads. The last component of Microsoft's office suite is Word—a word processing program that allows you to write a professional proposal.

Start with a blank Word document and just type away. I suggest using a standard business letter format using Arial or Helvetica font for all of your proposals. Your company name and tag line, if applicable and appropriate, should be in the header. You can also include company contact information (address, phone, fax, e-mail, and website) in either the header or footer. Once you have the basics of your stationery done, you can begin customizing your document for any given project.

Include the date at the top, along with the name (salutation, first name, and last name), company, and company contact information of the recipient. Provide a subject line, similar to what you would do in an e-mail, to help the recipient know the purpose of the letter. Address the letter by calling out the recipient using salutation followed by last name.

The opening paragraph should be devoted to introducing the purpose of the letter. For example:

Dear Mr. Smith:

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"The beautiful thing about Microsoft Office is that its various components can be used in conjunction with one another, meaning that you can copy cells from an Excel spreadsheet and paste them into a Word document."

Now, here's where we get fancy. The beautiful thing about Microsoft Office is that its various components can be used in conjunction with one another, meaning that you can copy cells from an Excel spreadsheet and paste them into a Word document.

In this case, to describe the glass surfaces to which window film will be applied, start a quick Excel spreadsheet and label cells A1, B1 and C1, "Quantity", "Width" and "Height", respectively. Then describe the scope of work by entering the appropriate numbers into columns A, B and C. Copy the cells and paste them into your Word document.

Then insert the terms and conditions of your proposal. I like to communicate the duration of the proposal's validity, the recommended film type, payment terms, warranty information, customer requirements, total project price and anything else you see fit.

Your closing remarks should express your appreciation for the opportunity to submit the proposal and instructions on how the recipient can move forward with the project. Finally, sign your name using a digital signature. To create a digital signature, sign your name using a blue felt tip pen on letter paper in landscape, not portrait, taking up almost the entire eleven inches of the page. Scan the paper and save the image as a JPEG. Copy the JPEG and insert it into your Word document.

After writing your document, proofread it for mistakes and then run the spell checker – yes, Microsoft Word will tell you if you have misspelled a word.

When using a word processor, remember to use one space between sentences. The use of two spaces is for typewriters. If you want to increase the likelihood that the reader won't overlook an important point in your proposal, place those words in a bold typeface.

Once the document is complete, save it, and then convert it to a PDF so that the recipient can't edit the document easily. If you don't have the full version of Adobe Acrobat, you can upload your Word document to a free online PDF maker such as PDF Converter (www.freepdfconvert.com).

A typed document always looks more professional than one that is handwritten. Consider using Microsoft Word when writing all of your proposals, especially for projects large in scope. **WF**

Manny Hondroulis is marketing manager for Energy Performance Distribution in Baltimore. Mr. Hondroulis' opinions are solely his own and not necessarily those of this magazine.

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ASK THE EXPERT

DONNA WELLS

Communication = Success

Hello again and welcome to Ask the Expert! First, I would like to thank everyone who spent a few minutes with me at SEMA. It was wonderful seeing so many colleagues in one place. It is always nice to share a few "war stories" with those from the industry and I did meet some new people who have entered our industry at SEMA as well—a big welcome to all of you.

While at SEMA, I was asked an interesting question a couple of times. The question is, "What do you believe is the single greatest key to success in business?"

In my opinion, communication is the single greatest key to succeeding in business. Many of us have a difficult time communicating with our employees, business colleagues and associates. If you do not state your position clearly then people make assumptions. Those assumptions may not be what you were trying to communicate. So, the real question is, "how do you find the path to communicate clearly?" Here are some helpful tips for you to ponder:

1. Listen before you speak. Communication is based on two major components, listening and speaking. When in conversation, you may be listening, but are you hearing what the other person is saying? Most people want to express their opinion without listening to the entire thought first. If you listen before you speak, you may find that what you thought you were going to say may be the wrong reply. Listening is a powerful tool. Utilize it.

2. Think before you speak. When you are ready to say something, make sure it is exactly what you would like to express. For example, one of my clients was recently on a jobsite and his installation team arrived late. This delayed the team's arrival for the second job. The two jobsites were less than five miles apart. When leaving the first jobsite my client asked his team if they were going directly to the next jobsite and they answered yes. Unfortunately, the installers showed up 45 minutes later. When my client asked his team where they had been, they replied that they had stopped for lunch. If they would have said they needed to stop for lunch before going to the second site my client would not have been standing around for 45 minutes wondering if they had gotten into an accident, had car trouble, etc. If you communicate exactly what you would like to express you will save yourself a lot of frustration and misunderstandings.

3. Think about the tone of your voice. You can navigate a conversation simply by changing your voice. If you are happy, sad, angry or frustrated, it can be detected in your tone. Most of us have been in the situation where you are on a jobsite and your client is, shall we say, overly picky. The client is pointing out every little issue in the film and installation. You are ready to explode. At that moment one of your team members taps you on your shoulder and asks you a question. You unfortunately answer with an irritated tone. The team member believes he did something wrong and adopts an attitude. Remember what your parents used to say, "Speak to others the way you would want them to speak to you." Food for thought!

"Remember what your parents used to say, 'Speak to others the way you would want them to speak to you.'"

4. Think about your body language. You may not know it, but your body speaks its own language. If you can, take notice of where you place your arms, hands, legs, etc. while you are speaking to others. Are you pointing your finger at someone while trying to make a point? Are you leaning forward during the conversation? Do you have eye contact with everyone involved in the conversation or are your eyes wandering around the room? All of these movements tell others if you are interested or not in the conversation. Communicating with your body is just as important as the words you use.

If you and your team are communicating effectively and efficiently you are well on your way to success! WF

Got a question for Donna?

Please e-mail it to us at khodge@glass.com. Individual names and company names will be withheld upon request.

Donna Wells has worked in the window film industry since the 1980s and is currently sole proprietor of Image Imagination in Huntington Beach, Calif. Ms. Wells' opinions are solely her own and not necessarily those of this magazine.

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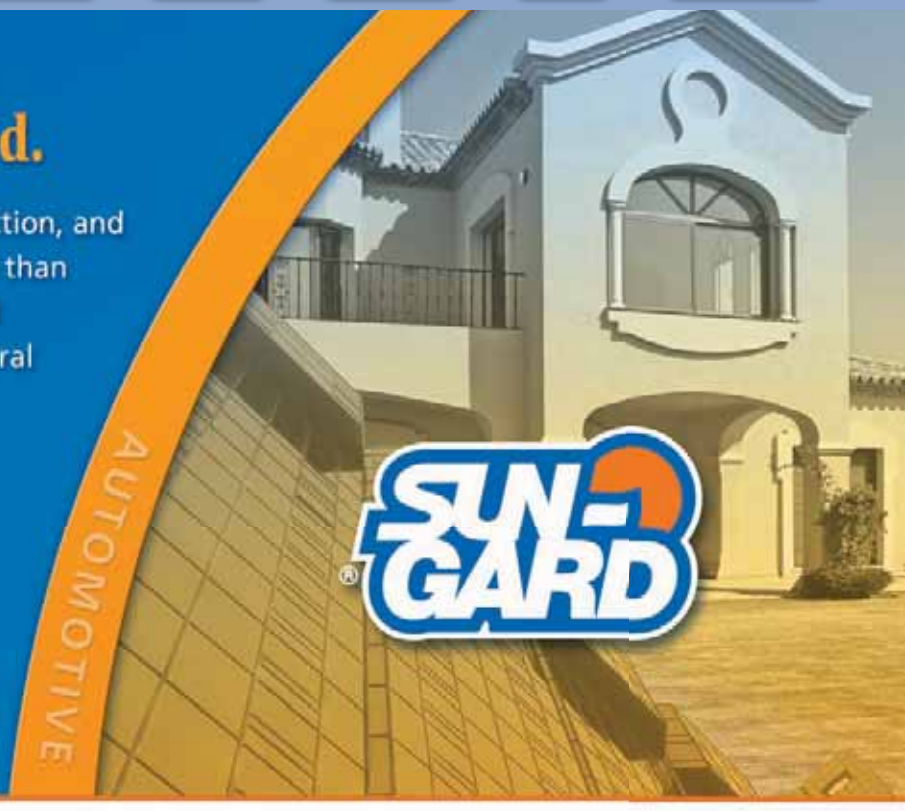

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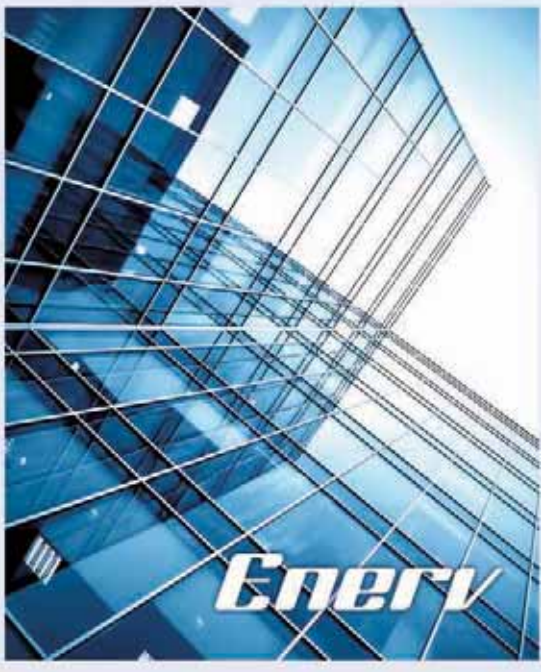

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SECURITY DECORATIVE DESIGN ART-LOVIEW NANO SHIELD

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NEWSWORTHY

THE LATEST INDUSTRY NEWS

Company News

Solamatrix Acquired by Madico

Solamatrix, with headquarters in St. Petersburg, Fla., above, was acquired by Madico late last year.

Solamatrix has been acquired by Madico. An announcement was issued by the president and CEO of Solamatrix, David Fletcher, saying that both companies plan to continue serving their markets independently.

"We are pleased and proud to become a part of Madico's worldwide operations," said Fletcher. "The synergistic opportunities are enormous because we can leverage corporate strengths from both companies in technology, manufacturing capability and marketing expertise to expand the success and rapid growth of our window film business. Our range of product offerings will increase; our product quality and customer service will reach new heights, and as we expand our operations, our employees and customers will share in what promises to be a very exciting future."

"This is an exciting time for Madico, one of the oldest names in the window film industry. Consecutive years of growth have driven us to seek expansion capacity to meet customer demands," said Bob Connelly, Madico president and CEO. "Our ability to gain that capacity and link our future activities with Solamatrix, one of the youngest and most dynamic organizations in the industry, is a strategic win for both organizations. Through this acquisition, Madico demonstrates its long-term commitment to the window films market and positions us for continued growth while maintaining the quality and service our customers expect."

Legislative News

IWFA Urges Congressional Leaders to Keep Window Film Included in Tax Credits

During the final days of the congressional session, the International Window Film Association (IWFA) sent a letter to congressional leaders asking them to continue to include window film products in energy legislation.

Regardless of the outcome of the legislation, since the IWFA has been active in advocating window film, the industry is believed to be in a favorable position with both Houses.

A letter was delivered to the Senate and the House of Representatives and had been signed by manufacturer members of the association including 3M Company, HanitaTEK, Solutia, Madico and Solar Gard Specialty Films.

"We appreciate the work of industries like window film who understand the importance of pushing through legislation like Home Star during this critical time," responded Senate Energy and National Resources Committee Chairman Jeff Bingaman, a democrat from New Mexico.

There were no updates to the legislation at the time of press.

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Solar Gard® Releases Results of Environmental Product Declaration

Solar Gard Window Films, a division of Bekaert Specialty Films, has completed an environmental product declaration (EPD) in regards to their window film. The EPD can scientifically prove that Solar Gard's architectural films can have a positive net environmental impact. Essentially, it has been proven that these films save enough energy to outweigh the cost of producing them.

The EPD is an assessment of the environmental impact of a product. Solar Gard had the EPD performed under ISO 14040 and 14025 standard for Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) which is accepted across the world as a comprehensive validation of a product.

After reviewing Solar Gard's results it was clear that the company was serious about understanding the importance of their product.

"Solar Gard's is the largest EPD ever completed," confirmed Julien LaFond, principal of Altanova, the organization that reviewed Solar Gard's EPD data. "Their use phase analyzed the broadest number of geographies and building types, and they studied more products than any other manufacturer to date."

Solar Gard challenges other companies to back up their "green" claims and be able to prove the science behind their product.

"We believe all manufacturers making environmental claims should commit to transparency and this study proves scientifically that Solar Gard window films are a viable and legitimate energy-saving and environmentally-responsible solution for improving the building envelope. It is shocking that so many companies claim environmental and energy-saving attributes when they do not have the science to support what they say. Claiming there are no international standards by which to measure the environmental impact of a product is simply an excuse to continue greenwashing," states Christophe Fremont, president of Solar Gard.

People News

Hodge Promoted to Editor of Window Film Magazine

Key Communications Inc., publishers of Window Film magazine, has announced the promotion of Katie M. Hodge to the position of editor of Window Film magazine.

Katie Hodge

Hodge, who holds a degree in journalism and electronic media from the University of Tennessee, has served previously as the assistant editor of Window Film magazine. She has also written for Window Film and other publications as part of the Key Communications editorial team for more than two years.

"I'm excited to continue to keep the window film industry informed on the latest news and products," says Hodge. "I'm looking forward to using a fresh approach in the way we report the news and bring new, innovative stories and ideas to the industry." She succeeds Ellen Rogers as editor. Rogers will continue to edit Key Communications' *Architects' Guide to Glass* and *Decorative Glass* publications.

"Katie has really made the window film industry her own," said Window Film publisher Debra Levy. "We are delighted to see her in this new expanded role."

The announcement comes just months before the next International Window Film Tint-Off and Conference™, to be held in Memphis Sept. 15-16. "I hope everyone who hasn't yet, gets a chance to meet Katie there," Levy said.

Hodge can be reached at khodge@glass.com or 540/720-5584, ext.130.

Event News

Room Block Opens For International Window Film Tint-Off and Conference™

Discount rooms are now available to International Window Film Tint-Off and Conference™ attendees for only $99 per night plus tax at the Memphis Marriott Downtown. The event, managed by Window Film magazine, will be held September 15-16, 2011 in Memphis.

You may reach the hotel directly at 800/266-9432 or reserve online. You must reference that you are with window film to receive the discounted rate. WF

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NOTEWORTHY

NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Directed Electronics Enters Film Industry

Directed Electronics, a company known for its consumer-branded vehicle security and remote start systems, has added a window film line, Viper Window Film, to its product offerings.

Viper Window Film will feature three individual product lines. According to the company,

Viper Ultra Film was developed to reduce the temperature inside vehicles and is available in different sizes and colors. Viper Security Film was designed to strengthen vehicle glass while Viper Ceramic Film offers the benefits of typical window film without changing the color of the windows drastically.

Select Viper officials said they expected to begin offering the film in late January.

www.directed.com

Trading Glossy for Matte

3M has introduced a new line of paint protection film that has a matte finish. The 3M VentureShield Paint Protection Matte Finish Film 7710 offers an alternative look to the traditional glossy paint protection films.

The matte finish film can be used on any make or model car and can be custom cut to the vehicle. The film is 8mil including the adhesive and can be installed like any other VentureShield film. In order to create the matte look there is no clear coat on the film. It can be used to coat an entire car or to create style features like racing stripes on the hood or side of the vehicle. Like other 3M films it is recommended for professional installation only.

www.3M.com

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On the Surface

Most of the industry's window films are used to protect what lies inside the windows, however there are other film products that protect the windows themselves. Surface Guard 12330L UV protective film is used to coat glass and high gloss frame surfaces during manufacturing and installation.

According to the company, this 3mil film provides a protective layer against water/condensation, heat, high surface energy, scratches, soiling and marring. The film is designed to protect windows during fabrication, shipping and installing and, according to the company, can be easily removed when finished.

www.surfaceguard.com WF

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State of SEMA

SEMA Show Stays Strong

by Katie Hodge

It was rare to find a negative opinion on what the SEMA Show 2010 had to offer this year. With a steady crowd of window tint shop owners passing through the aisles, exhibitors commented that the show was an improvement from last year, both in quantity of attendees and quality.

As usual, the latest technology was also on display. Window film companies showcased many window film varieties as well as a large amount of paint protection film. Booth after booth featured demonstrations of paint protection film as attendees gathered to observe installations in progress.

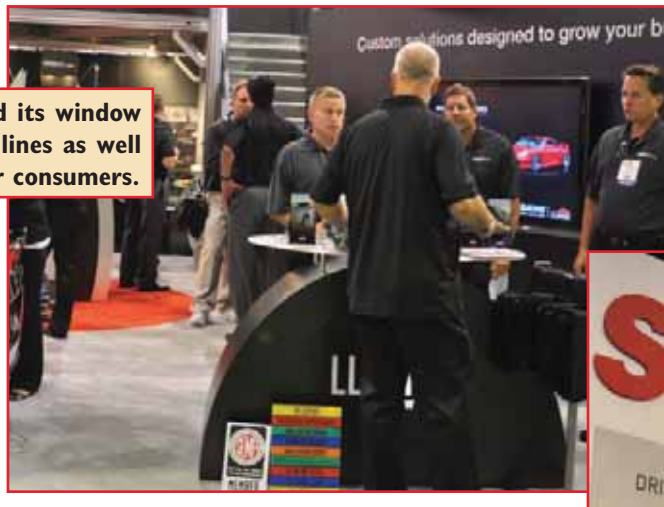
"I thought the SEMA show was totally phenomenal. I loved the new films, technology, the new products, the cars, and everything about the show," says attendee Rob Stortroen of Star Trims Automotive in Riverton, Wy. "It was also very educational. I got a chance to talk with all the different film companies and also got a firsthand look at each of the various films and what makes them different from one another. "

After a week of networking and learning about the latest products the SEMA show crowd left with high hopes for 2011 and looking forward to the next gathering in Las Vegas.

This year's SEMA Show will be held in Las Vegas November 1-4, 2011. WF

Wintech also brought a wide selection of films to SEMA including its heat rejection films, design art films, and a variety of other decorative films. In particular, Wintech had its LOVIEW design art film on display.

At Nexfil USA, attendees learned about its Nano IR films and heat-rejection testing. Nexfil president ShinSoon Lee (left), who traveled from South Korea and Nexfil USA president S.W. Choi (right), were on-hand to meet attendees and exhibitors.



The Solutia booth featured its window film and paint protection lines as well as its new car care kits for consumers.

Companies such as Sun-Gard expanded on their product lines. New additions, including the new charcoal automotive window film line and the DefenZall paint protection film, were on display for dealers to observe and discuss.

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American Standard Window Film (ASWF) showcased its flat and decorative film lines. "We have two new dual-reflectives, plus the normal silver and solar bronzes, safety, security and anti-graffiti films," explained president Michael Martin (center).

At the Johnson Window Films stand, window film was on display and constantly being used for a special demonstration. "We're displaying the renegade film, which is a new all-dyed film that is 1½mil and comes with a lifetime warranty," said director of training Fred Zwilling (left).

New companies with emerging technology could also be found. Sputter Technologies Corp., based out of Tempe, Ariz., (pictured from left to right: Vijay Merchant, Bud Asher and Urmi Asher) arrived at SEMA to present its ceramic window films, which the company says can withstand all different types of climate conditions.

SunTek focused on its new automotive line called CXP. "Basically we have taken our carbon technology and expanded on it to create a nano-hybrid carbon product. It's a non-interfering, non-metal, lifetime warranty product with great solar performance," says Jennifer Shorr, vice president of sales and marketing.

Demonstrations were also a big part of the sights at SEMA. Paint protection displays were taking place all over the floor at booth's like XPEL, 3M (pictured above), Avery Dennison and Sharpline Converting.

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Lights of the Roundtable

An Interview with the Members of the IWFA Manufacturers' Committee

by Debra Levy

During the past year, the International Window Film Association (IWFA) has greatly expanded its reach and depth through a series of very subtle and targeted moves. First, the association attracted the participation of window film manufacturers, who had previously been served by the window film committee of the Association of Industrial Metallizers, Coaters and Laminators (AIMCAL). "The move by the manufacturers from AIMCAL to IWFA has been huge for us," says IWFA executive director Darrell Smith. "It's allowing us to create opportunities for and awareness of window film like never before."

Window Film magazine publisher Debra Levy held a roundtable with committee members including Smith, Jim Black of Hanita-Tek, Charles Calisto of 3M Company, Scott Davidson of Johnson Window Films, Kathryn Giblin of Bekaert Specialty Films, Tom Niziolek of Madico and Lisa Winkler of Solutia. Our candid discussion about their successes thus far, and where they believe the industry is going, follows.

WF—*One of the 'raps' against window film, whether warranted or not, is that the awareness of its advantages as a building product is limited. How would you respond to that?*

KG—It's a valid comment; awareness is limited, but it is also a tremendous opportunity as its potential has not been realized yet.

LW—Film is able to compete with advanced glazing and other energy-saving products. We know that. We also know we have to be able to prove it for the standards-setting groups and others. We, as an association, knew we needed to control that message more.

DS—We came to the realization that the fenestration industry controls the dialogue around energy-efficiency and we needed an entry ticket to that table. That ticket was NFRC and it took us over 10 years to receive the NFRC rating.

WF—*I would expect that it's hard for some IWFA members to see the value in this. Is that the case?*

LW—It is hard for dealers to realize why this is important until they think about it. They may say 'hey, all these efforts, the National Fenestration Rating Council [NFRC] ratings, etc. aren't doing anything for me …'

JB— …but they are. The dealers just haven't seen the results yet. We need to get window film accepted as a viable alternative before a variety of building groups—that's what leads to greater acceptance and, ultimately, more window film sales. The dealers haven't seen all the results from this year, but they will.

SD—Dealers are starting to realize this. They may say 'hey, I didn't get this job, but I would not even have had an opportunity to bid were it not for the work the IWFA is doing.' In the past, a building owner may have set about replacing glass without realizing film could solve his problem, or the architect might have missed a cost-efficient alternative that film provides. That happens less and less nowadays. Maybe you did or didn't get this particular job, but without the work of the IWFA you wouldn't even have been able to bid this job.

DS—We have found you can provide them [architects, builders,

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Kathryn Giblin (far left) briefs members of the IWFA manufacturers' committee. Circling from Giblin's right are Scott Davidson, Jim Black, Tom Niziolek, Charlie Calisto and Lisa Winkler. Executive director Darrell Smith is partially obscured behind Giblin.

building owners] the information about film, but it has to be reinforced and repeated. We need to retell the story of energy-efficiency, of environmental responsibility and of cost-savings over and over to resonate with those groups.

Let's take our work with the NFRC. If we aren't involved with major building codes, if window film isn't tested and rated, then legislators and building code officials may never understand why it's important. We needed those ratings for credibility, for legislation and for tax credits. Not every member will understand the value right away.

WF—It's a long-term strategy then?

CC—Exactly. Our members, and the industry as well, need to understand that we wouldn't be where we are without the efforts of the IWFA. It's taken a lot of effort to help educate people so that something like the tax credit gets put in place. Window film is one of only a very small list of building materials specifically mentioned in the proposed legislation. That is an amazing feat.

SD—Most dealers have to use their efforts on a day-to-day basis to get the next sale tomorrow. They know that their world is influenced by factors in the larger world, but don't have time to influence them. This is something IWFA does for them.

CC—It's a domino, or should I say a snowball, effect—and they need to get a sense of that. It's a huge undertaking.

KG—For example, we are developing overseas opportunities, too. Globally, there are standards being developed and created that could affect North America and vice versa. It is important that the IWFA keeps abreast of these to ensure that we are aware and continue to act on all opportunities that are available for window film.

And that is IWFA's goal: to continuously drive and facilitate the expansion of the window film market in the United States and worldwide. We are doing so through four major initiatives: research, advocacy, communications and education.

CC—We plan to increase the total market size for window film and reduce barriers to growing the market. We recognized that in order to do so we needed a uniform platform from which to work.

KG—That's why the move from AIMCAL to the IWFA manufacturers' committee was crucial. We moved because it made sense for all parts of the industry to join together under a unified platform. Aligning under one brand and one umbrella

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Lights of the Roundtable

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makes sense. The manufacturers already had strong partnerships among themselves with trade associations and other groups. It makes sense to forge a closer relationship with dealers and distributors, as well, so we all speak with one voice.

JB—The timing also was right. Our task is a bit different than most of the other AIMCAL groups. It's legitimizing the product. Not everyone can appreciate that right off the bat.

KG—Our manufacturers' committee has six members. It's still evolving, but the core is there. Our job is to promote the industry as a whole.

CC—And now it's time for us to unify and promote window film as a whole at all levels, including dealers and distributors.

WF—*Didn't being part of AIMCAL serve the manufacturers well, though?*

DS—It did for a long time. You have to remember that in the beginning of our relationship with AIMCAL most window film suppliers made other products as well. AIMCAL members were suppliers of raw polyester films for tons of applications. We utilized their technical expertise as well. There were distinct market or distribution issues then, just as there are now. Once window film grew as an industry, it was time for not just manufacturers but the dealers and distributors to be involved, which was the beginning of the IWFA.

The dealer and distributor members are critical to the IWFA. That is our future. We need to communicate that value to everyone in the industry so we can grow it together.

CC—The U.S. industry has matured. We need to help dealers see film in a new way. It's a solution. It's an energy-saving product, it's a cost-saving product. We need to help the dealers market these advantages. We need to march forward together and grow IWFA's membership.

WF—*The sad reality is, and it's true for almost all associations, that the development successes you have benefit non-members as well. It's a value for the entire industry.*

CC—More than 38 state tinting laws have been impacted by the work of the IWFA. IWFA has built legitimacy for window film. The tax credit for window film would not exist without the IWFA. Who else would have taken up that cause? Most of the utility rebates came about as the result of work by the IWFA. Just look at all the efforts we have put forth in Florida—the consumer alert and more. Membership dues of $175 a year are a small price to pay for such successes.

WF—*Can you explain exactly what the IWFA did in Florida?*

CC—Well, for a variety of reasons, the shutter industry became unglued. They came after our industry screaming and yelling. They were trying to limit our business and we became aware of it.

The Florida Attorney General's (AG) office wasn't really aware of the full benefits and properties of window film. But through our efforts we were able to educate them so they could be aware of what the real problems were. IWFA member businesses in Florida were saved because of this.

KG—Now they consider us a resource. The key is that we are adding the role of watch dog and we are building long-lasting relationships with organizations such as the Florida AG's office. To do this, we needed a bunch of resources that only a manufacturers' group could provide. Dealers and distributors couldn't have done this on their own.

WF—*Let's shift gears a bit and talk about Home Star and Building STAR. How do you think these two initiatives will affect the film industry?*

DS—This is where the real value of IWFA comes in. IWFA was involved from the start. We did the energy analysis and the research. We provided data and more data. When a congressional staffer wanted it in the morning, we worked all through the night before to get it there. The result is proposed legislation that specifically mentions window film—huge.

WF—*What can you tell me about those efforts?*

KG—There are four areas. The government and advocacy areas focus on legislation. We have an excellent lobbyist firm that we brought on one year ago and they identified the opportunity with Home Star and Energy Star and helped us be included in that proposed legislation. More recently, they have been helping us lobby

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Committee members include Jim Black (far left) and Scott Davidson (immediate left). Below: Lisa Winkler makes a point during a committee meeting in August.

for an extension on the tax credits in which window film is included under 25c. They, for example, found that window film should qualify for tax credits and we went to the IRS with the information and they said 'you're right, you qualify.' That's why the tax credits are there. Lisa [Winkler] chairs the research/technical area.

LW—The Research and Technical subcommittee is the back end. We deal with the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers, the Glazing Industry Code Committee, NFRC, the building codes and others. They have very technical discussions and we need to be able to speak their way. We have to provide clear, technical information.

CC—We have been working to get window film specifically called out by name in legislation rather than having it under the cover of insulation. We have succeeded. It's a great victory. The government is saying that window film is, in fact, an energy-savings component. And IWFA did this quietly. The dealers and distributors don't see the 30 to 40 visits to the Hill [Capitol Hill] that helped make it possible. Regardless of what happens, window film is now known on the hill, known as an energy-efficient cost effective alternative to new windows. It's as exciting as heck.

WF—How do you think the legislation will fare when it comes up?

CC—We hired HBW (IWFA's lobbying firm) and we had lobbyists at the table. We are giving legislators and their staffs the information they need to make something happen. We jumped through every hoop the legislators asked us to. That's how you earn your stripes with those groups.

LW—Regardless of the outcome, it's brought window film to exposure we have never had.

DS—The chief of staff of one of the senators involved with energy told our lobbyist that 'your industry is well-known in Washington.' That's a big change. So much of what we did in the past was explain what window film is. We don't have to do that any more.

WF—What about the other two committees?

KG—I chair our Communication/Education committee, which has brought a public relations firm, Schwartz Communications, on board. We are also in the process of updating our website and are going to look to consumer awareness as well. Tom Niziolek chairs the Alliances/Membership committee.

TN—Our mission and vision is to bring synergy across the globe, to bring everyone together and to have one voice—whether it's in Florida or Australia or Latin America.

The more we can create that interlinked committee activity, the more successful we will be.

Look at the progress we have made in a very short time. We had a history of being defensive and reactive. Now all we have is proactivity and opportunity.

CC—Here you have six manufacturers who are working hard to help the industry. Our hope is to see an increase in membership as the benefits of all this work goes to non-members as well. Those other folks are benefitting, too. Should they become members and help us to do more faster? Absolutely. **WF**

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Up to the Mike

Solutia's New Division President, Mike Donnelly, Talks to Window Film Magazine

At the recent SEMA Show in Las Vegas, Window Film publisher Deb Levy sat down with Mike Donnelly, the new president of Solutia's Performance Films division, to talk about the industry and his new position.

Window Film: How was the transition into your new position?

Mike Donnelly: It's been pretty intense, to be honest. This is a very exciting and dynamic business and there is a lot to learn. I didn't come from the window film business so I have been doing this for seven weeks now and I am still transitioning and still have a ways to go.

Window Film: Tell me a little about your goals for Solutia.

MD: The goals in this division are grow, grow, grow. We see this division as an opportunity. Solutia has gone through its own transformation from bankruptcy, to out of bankruptcy, to shedding some bad assets. Right now it sits on a platform with three very good divisions. With an intent to grow the company, we recently made two acquisitions, one for window films (Novamatrix) and the other for our Advanced Interlayers division. We made an acquisition in Germany of a business called Vistasolar. We think we can grow the Performance Films division in double digits over the next five years. We see opportunities in things like energy as the world refocuses more on energy savings. We have some really good projects like the Enerlogic architectural product that we just introduced that will take advantage of that market. As people become more energy-conscience we think that category awareness will go up and so we think it will create a lot of growth opportunities for us and the industry in general.

Window Film: What direction do you think the industry will take over the next few years?

MD: The world is changing and getting back to an energy focus. That is going to be big for us. You will see more and more energy-related products coming out. Weight-reduction films—those that have the capability to reduce

"I would guess that most people think of window film as a low-tech cheap pair of sunglasses that you put on your car or home to keep out the UV light. Yet, the amount of technology that goes into these products is much more than I could have imagined."

—Mike Donnelly

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Mike Donnelly Résumé

Title: President and general manager of Solutia's Performance Films division.

Education: Bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Maryland and an MBA from the University of Chicago.

Last Job: President and general manager of Solutia's Technical Specialties division.

History with Solutia: Joined Solutia as part of the Flexsys leadership team in connection with Solutia's 2007 acquisition of Flexsys.

Experience: Nearly 40 years of manufacturing, business and leadership. Worked for Akzo Nobel for eight years and Stauffer Chemical Company for 15 years.

Solutia's new division president, Mike Donnelly, sat down to talk to Window Film magazine at the recent SEMA Show in Las Vegas.

weight—will be big. So if you look at our Enerlogic product, for example, you apply it to a single pane of glass and get double-pane benefits, which obviously has energy savings as well as weight-saving benefits. We are going toward higher technology products. Historically [the industry's focus] has been more around tinting products. Now there is a lot more technology going into products and the winners are going to be the ones investing in and developing higher technology products.

Window Film: What do you think the biggest challenges are facing the industry?

MD: Category awareness. This is an industry that is under-penetrated in terms of the amount of film that is on glass. That is the bad news and the good news is that it is under-penetrated and provides us with a lot of opportunity. We are focused on getting that category awareness out there and capitalizing on the green movement.

Window Film: Is there a need for a specific product in the industry?

MD: I'll go back to our Enerlogic product because we think it's a game-changing technology. Think about the number of windows in the world that are single pane or inefficient. Simply by applying this film you get a steep change with a little money. It's in its infancy, but we've seen very good growth in the first year. We are introducing a second version of that product at the end of this year [2010] or beginning of next year which we think will continue to make that product grow.

Window Film: What has your experience taught you about the product?

MD: It's a highly technical product. I would guess that most people think of window film as a low-tech cheap pair of sunglasses that you put on your car or home to keep out the UV light. Yet, the amount of technology that goes into these products is much more than I could have imagined. It's high technology and will continue to evolve to higher levels of sophistication. It

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Up to the Mike

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Getting to know Solutia's dealers and distributors is high on Donnelly's to-do list.

gives us a competitive advantage because a lot of film companies are smaller than Solutia. We have a lot of resources and are committed to growing the product line.

Window Film: I had the privilege of interviewing both Kent Davies and Ray Kollar in the not-too-distant past. This does speak to the fact that there have been a fair number of changes in management at Solutia Performance Films in a short amount of time. Have you thought about how to handle walking into a situation that's undergone that amount of change?

MD: I haven't thought about it in the context that you are talking about it. To give you a little background about my career—I've done a lot of start-ups around the world, building organizations, getting them up and running. I've been in situations where turnarounds were needed. I built a business in the rubber chemicals side that is really a model business for that industry. The issue here is getting the growth expectations that we want out of this business. Those expectations are very high. My goal is to get us to move faster than we thought we were going to and get us there sooner and better [than the competition].

"I have been involved in a lot of start-ups and that has been by choice. I like being in places where there is activity and change and challenge."

—Mike Donnelly

Window Film: It does seem that Solutia has a great amount of faith in these products line, but as you were saying, they haven't felt like the results have been there as soon as they wanted. Would that be accurate?

MD: I wouldn't quite say it like that. I think Solutia has looked at where we need to go from here. The focus that's been put on this business in the last 18 months has been very good and was a step in the right direction.

Window Film: I know some of your larger competitors have really made major shifts in how they go to market. For example, some have eliminated their automotive films. Others have gone out with a strong environmental message. Is Solutia considering a move like that?

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MD: We have a very good portfolio of products and that's important for our dealers and distributors and the marketplace. With the Novomatrix acquisition we have really rounded out our portfolio in terms of super premium products-that was their niche. We have acquired some people who are very good at marketing and branding. It's creating opportunities for us to take their model from the East to the West. It has created a really strong presence in the East for us, which everyone knows today that is the place to be. So we look to not give up any of our broad portfolio. We are looking at both architectural and auto as growth platforms, particularly architectural. There is so much talk about the green buildings and we see that as a wave that should continue.

The integration of Solutia's different brands was on display at the SEMA show.

Window Film: I know that at least one of your predecessors was criticized for being a great strategist but maybe not having the rapport with the dealer network that would have brought some different results. I would expect that communication with the dealer network is very important to you. What kinds of things are you going to do to make the dealers feel good about the management change?

MD: It always starts with communication and just getting out there, meeting the dealers and distributors. The first objective is to listen and understand what their needs are and then figure out how together we can do better in business. The other part of it is that, in terms of fulfilling their needs, you can have a great strategy, but if you don't have the execution then you don't get there. This is a business that has a strong customer and service focus. We have to be number one there. We feel we are now, but the world doesn't stand still. We need to up our level of customer and technical support—getting the product there on time, when they want it, filling the orders accurately the first time. If you are running a business properly you can't just be an expert in strategy or manufacturing you have to have the whole package.

Window Film: You strike me as someone who puts a lot of pressure on yourself. Am I getting that right?

MD: I'm driven. I have been involved in a lot of start-ups and that has been by choice. I like being in places where there is activity and change and challenge. At the same time, I would like us to have fun and be a team and enjoy our successes. To be successful you have to be driven and get everyone moving in the same direction. The Giants didn't win the World Series by not practicing a lot and working hard and we should do the same.

Window Film: How are you personally going to define success in this position?

MD: That will be defined by the market. The customers will define that for us. If they are happy with us then that will be a sign of success. I can sit here and give you growth numbers and—obviously we will have objectives there—but at the end of the day it's about how the market is receiving you and your organization and its products. **WF**

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Wrap it Up!

Professionals Share Advice on Vehicle Wraps

by Katie Hodge

Part Two in a Two-Part Series

In any business or industry there are certain decisions that can make or break you. Researching trends, talking to experts and receiving adequate training make a huge decision significantly less risky.

The window film industry is no different. Shops are looking for ways to grow and expand and adding vehicle wrapping to a shop's available services could bring in substantial income—as long as the addition is made carefully.

Shopping List

Knowing what equipment to add to a shop can be overwhelming for a new wrapper. Researching options and listening to the advice and expertise of a wrap veteran can prove valuable.

"I contribute my knowledge to looking online, reading trade magazines, following the industry, looking to see what material is new," says Arthur Meeker, managing member of Xtreme Grafx in Albany, Ore.

The basic equipment needed to both design and install wraps include a laminator and a printer. Without these two vital pieces of equipment a wrap shop will be dependent on another company to print their product for them. In addition to these, a wrapper would also need access to a fairly powerful computer and software.

"The images we make are really big at full scale and the file is big. If your computer isn't pretty stout you will be looking at the hour glass forever," advises Dave Dorsey, the owner of Aurora Graphics in Wichita, Kan. "You will also need design software. Even if you are using art from a company like ours you will need design software to put it all together."

New wrappers should educate themselves on the many software programs available.

"There are two basic types of software," explains Dorsey. "The first is a bitmap editing software like Photoshop. The other is a vector-type software like Adobe Illustrator or Corel Draw."

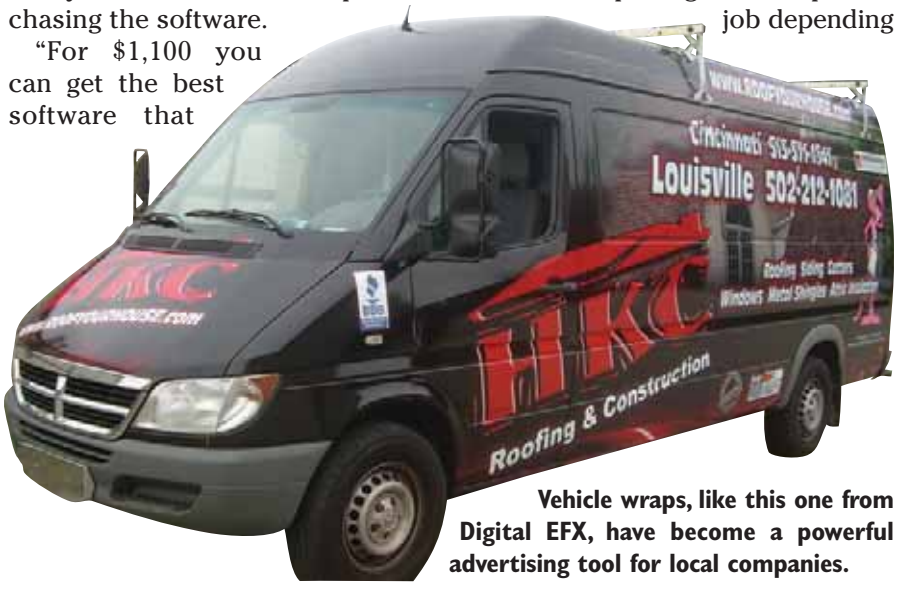
Shopping carefully and doing research can pay off for a new company. Unwelcome surprises, such as yearly updates, can become costly. Experts say these are not always disclosed when purchasing the software.

"For $1,100 you can get the best software that money can buy. Updates for Corel are $40 a year and updates to Photoshop are $199 a year," says Dorsey. "They are cheaper to buy, cheaper to upgrade and they are ten times more powerful. If I catch a new guy getting in, that is what I tell him. The design software is the make-or-break of your efforts. At the end of the day people are going to judge your work by what it looks like and how well you installed it."

The Price is Right

Learning the skills and obtaining the materials will get a new wrapper headed in the right direction, but learning to price wrap jobs appropriately can be a challenge.

Matt Richart, co-owner of Digital EFX in Louisville, Ky., and his co-owner Dallas Fowler developed custom pricing that will price a job depending



Vehicle wraps, like this one from Digital EFX, have become a powerful advertising tool for local companies.

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The Bentley started off silver before Digital EFX wrapped it in matte black.

upon the difficulty of the install, as well as the amount of materials used.

"A lot of people will charge flat rate fees for everything," says Richart. "It takes longer to wrap a volkswagen Beetle, where there are no flat sides, than it does a box truck."

Richart's company has flat rate fees for materials, but their install price varies depending on how challenging of a wrap install it is.

"On the install side of it we would charge about [twice the amount] per square foot to install on a volkswagen Beetle," says Richart. "Let's say it's a cleaning company and we wrapped their Beetle…and they came back with a box truck later we would charge them the same for materials, but must less for the cost of the install. The install price is almost half because it's not as difficult to wrap a flat box truck."

"There are three things you can get: price, quality and service," adds Dorsey. "You can usually get any two of those three. You can have great quality and great service, but it's not going to be cheap."

Pricing can differ depending on location and competition and there are shops who offer flat rate fees for entire jobs.

Selling the Product

Once the equipment, training and pricing system is set in place then it's the wrapper or owner's job to go sell wraps. Using wraps as an advertising outlet for companies has become 90-percent of Richart's work in Louisville.

"Every year more companies see the value of vehicle wrap and they are cutting out a lot of their yellow page ads, billboards, and television ads for vehicle wraps. I'm not saying that vehicle wrapping is as effective as a billboard or radio or TV advertisement, but the money that they spend on a vehicle wrap is more cost effective than any other type of advertising," says Richart. "In Louisville, in our main newspaper on a Sunday morning an ad for one day would cost us $4,200. You could wrap an SUV, a large one, or a van or a box truck for that price and drive it for five years."

Explanation Warranted

Explaining to a potential customer the power of a permanent means of advertising during tough economic times can be powerful.

"Vehicle wrapping is the only form of advertising that you have something tangible in the end. When a customer or client wraps their vehicle they either eventually remove the wrap and rewrap it with a new message or they remove the wrap and sell their vehicle. So they end up with something tangible either way," explains Richart. "With wraps you are basically taking a billboard and wrapping it around your car and driving it to people."

The opportunity for vehicle wrap companies is there and as long as the job is done well a new business has the conditions to develop.

"I think it's still on a growth curve because a lot of municipalities have cracked down and limited small business from being able to put signs up and stuff so the best way to market is a vehicle wrap," says Meeker. "You pay for it one time and it will work for you 24/7. You can't go down to your local shopping center and put your sign out in front of the building and walk away but you can park you car and everyone will see it coming and going."

After hours of training, purchasing of new equipment and loads of practice all that is left is to jump into wrapping and start completing jobs. However, remember that there are people out there to help if wrapping begins to feel overwhelming. Pick someone in the industry and use them as a mentor. Call them with technical questions or for advice on materials and equipment. **WF**

Must Have's

- ✔ Training, training, training
- ✔ 54-60-inch printer (solvent ink)
- ✔ Cold laminator (60-inch)
- ✔ Production tables
- ✔ Vinyl plotter (24, 36 or 54-inch wide)
- ✔ Strong computer
- ✔ Software
  - ✔ Vector software
  - ✔ Photoshop
  - ✔ Vehicle template software
- ✔ Digital camera
- ✔ Vinyl
- ✔ Isopropyl alcohol, shop rags, blue tape, knives, rulers, tape measures, magnets, heat guns/blow torches/hair dryers, tool box
- ✔ Pricing System
- ✔ Mentor (technical tips, advice, material/equipment recommendations)

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Have an addition for the calendar?
E-mail khodge@glass.com
with suggestions.

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FILM STARS™

Tinter Shines by Going Above and Beyond

David Zuck never really goes home from work. He may leave the All American Window Tint building in Hermitage, Tenn., at the end of the day, but he is always thinking about window tinting and promoting the company he works for. In the four years that Zuck has been a manager there he has done much more than just tinting cars.

Zuck has become an amateur guerilla marketer. Outside of tinting and his work hours you can find Zuck handing out business cards, sporting his company shirt on days off, making notes about large unprotected houses he sees and training or mentoring new tinters who have joined the shop.

Owner Lisa King has watched Zuck help build the business.

"He is professional, dedicated and always willing to share his skill and knowledge," says King. "He is never shy of a challenge and has impressed numerous customers with his inventive ways of conquering a difficult job. He has no fear of a hard job and works tirelessly."

Zuck started tinting in 1988 when he was trying to figure out how to afford a tint job for his own car.

"I was not going to pay $250 to have my back window tinted so I bought some film and started from there. Eventually my friends wanted me to do their cars."

Zuck originally owned and started All American Window Tinting a decade ago and eventually sold it to his good friend King and rejoined later on as a manager. Because of his affiliation with the company, Zuck works extra hard to promote the company.

David Zuck has become a tireless guerilla marketer for his tint company. He always tries to promote the business, even during his free-time.

"In a way it's always been my name out there and my reputation. Even though I don't own it anymore I still feel like I am representing the company," says Zuck. "If I couldn't be happy with a job then I wouldn't ask my customers to pay for it. We tell trainees that if you have a question whether or not something is acceptable then it's not acceptable."

Zuck has left his mark outside the bay as well. Zuck has worked tirelessly to improve business and mentor new tinters.

"Don't be afraid to ask questions," Zuck advises them. "Don't pretend you know something if you don't. Never take shortcuts. Quality is what is going to keep you in business and what is going to keep your business coming back."

In the future, Zuck hopes he can help the business continue to grow.

"Ten years from now I would imagine us having two to three locations. I'd like to see us grow in size and never let up on quality. Quality is definitely number one."

When Zuck does take time off from tinting and promoting you can likely find him riding his Yamaha motorcycle through back roads and enjoying the scenery.

Do you know someone whose efforts stand out above the rest? Then we want to hear from you with your nominations for "Film Stars." E-mail your nominations to Katie Hodge at khodge@glass.com. WF

Do you know someone who is a star among window film tinters? Then we want to hear from you with your nominations for "Film Stars." E-mail your nominations to Katie Hodge at khodge@glass.com.

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