

The Heat is On!

You may have noticed that it's pretty hot outside. Unless you're summering this year in Smolensk or McMurdo Station in Antarctica, temperatures this summer seem to be a tad on the warmer side than usual. Global warming or whatever, it's been an extraordinarily hot summer so far. How hot? Delis in New York are roasting their pastrami right on the sidewalks this year. Folks in Maine are slathering themselves in just as much as butter as their lobster rolls. And people in Texas are simply bursting randomly into flames. *That's hot*, he said in his best Johnny Carson voice.

As the six of you who read this column know, I recently moved into a home that our esteemed Publisher Hans Mugler refers to as "that van down by the river." As I have been renovating it over the last eight months, I neglected one important thing: *air conditioning*. I am what you might call a devotee of air conditioning; a

fervent believer that it is the most important invention of the 20th century--narrowly edging out things such as the semiconductor, polio vaccine and sliced white bread. I simply cannot fathom what life must have been like in those heady, sweaty pre-AC days when people went about their business apparently wearing clothing made entirely from wool and asbestos and not wearing any deodorant, which had to lead to fairly malodorous conditions.

At any rate, I had meant to get bids on AC installation earlier, but dawdled until, in the best tradition of St. Louis weather, the season went immediately from winter to summer, without even a day of spring in between. Suddenly, I was scrambling for companies to come out and install AC. I spent the last week before hav-

ing the AC installed literally gasping in my house as daytime temperatures hovered in the 90s and nighttime temperatures seemed even higher. When I finally got the AC, I literally didn't want to leave the house. I wanted to spend my days lying on the wood floors with my face pressed against the register, breathing in chilled air.

As hot as it's been this summer, you can bet your customers are feeling the same way. Think anyone's dying to do their decks right now? Think anyone's planning on painting the outside of their homes when it's hot enough outside to melt an aluminum stepladder?

Ahh, but hopefully the AC is on *inside* their homes, and they might easily be convinced to remove that horrible flocked '70s wallpaper, start that kitchen project... or that bathroom project...or repaint the 15-year-old daughter's bedroom that was last painted when she was five and liked Strawberry Shortcake.

You have to be aware of what's going on in the world around you...and flexible enough to react to conditions so that your sales can take advantage of what's going on. Too many times, dealers sit back on their haunches and complain about what's going on in the world and how it's driving their sales down. You simply cannot afford to do that. You have to find the silver lining in the cloud that is darkening and preparing to dump flood levels of rain on you.

I'm not suggesting that you join Optimists International, but you can't run the cash register while you're wringing your hands. Sometimes it's true that you can't make lemonade from the lemons you're handed. But there are plenty of other things you can make from lemons—and sell! **TPD**



associate publisher
JOHN F.D. TAFF

the PaintDealer

111-A North Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-4301
Toll free: 800.984.0801
Main: 314.984.0800
Fax: 314.984.0866
www.paintdealer.com

Publisher Emeritus
Chris Mugler

Publisher/President
Hans Mugler
hmugler@paintdealer.com
800.984.0801 x12

Associate Publisher
John F.D. Taff
john@paintdealer.com
800.984.0801 x 27

Editor
Jerry Rabushka
jrabushka@paintdealer.com
800.984.0801 x16

Art Director
Kathryn Tongay-Carr
kathy@paintdealer.com
800.984.0801 x 14

Circulation Manager
Gail Hern
gail@paintdealer.com
800.984.0801 x 17

Sales Department

LaTonya Brumitt
latonya@paintdealer.com
618-488-6829
Eastern Canada, AL, FL, GA, IN, KS
KY, MD, MS, PA, TN, SC, VA, WV

Sue Oden
sue@paintdealer.com
417-207-0486
AK, CT, DC, DE, HI, IA, MD,
ME, MI, MN, NC, ND, NE, NH,
OH, RI, SD, WI

Steve Mosier
steve@paintdealer.com
618-520-0276
Western Canada, AR, AZ, CA,
CO, ID, IL, LA, MA, MT, TX, NJ, NM,
NY, NV, OK, OR, UT, VT, WA, WY

Canada Post International Publications Mail Product (Canadian Distribution) Sales Agreement No. 40031787. Send returns (Canada) to BleuChip International, P.O.Box 25542, London, Ontario, N6C 6B2.



PARTNERING WITH INDEPENDENT PAINT DEALERS

SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE • CELEBRATED PALETTES
CALL 888.444.7903 TO LET RALPH LAUREN PAINT HELP GROW YOUR BUSINESS

RALPHLAURENPAIN.COM