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VOLUME 26 - ISSUE 4 - JULY/AUGUST 2022

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WINDOW FILM™

Volume 26, Issue 4 | July/August 2022 **MAGAZINE**



On the Cover
 Los Angeles' STM Advanced Window Film Solutions completed a 2,400 square-foot, custom-film project showcasing an array of citizens towering amongst a city as one.

22 Cloud Nine
 More than half the households in Los Angeles speak a non-English language at home as their primary language, according to Data USA. Los Angeles' STM Advanced Window Film Solutions coordinated with Lux Graphic Imaging in Shirley, N.Y., for a cross-country, custom film installation signaling the sway of singularity.



26 Annual New Products Guide
 Scanning for new product offerings? WINDOW FILM magazine's third Annual New Products Guide features a closer look at the latest in industry architectural and automotive window film, paint protection film (PPF), software, tools, printers and services.

DEPARTMENTS & COLUMNS

Dear Reader	4
Ask a Pro	8
Open 24/7	10
Bottom Line	12
Tint my Ride	14
Guest Column	16
News Pulse	18
Film Stars	20
Film Jobs	38
Supplier's Guide	42
On the Horizon	43
Business 1.0	44



32 Gangs & Graffiti
 The U.S. spends more than \$12 billion on graffiti removal per year, according to Santa Clarita, Calif., officials. Drilling deeper, the city spends more than \$600,000 a year on graffiti removal. Is anti-graffiti film the solution?



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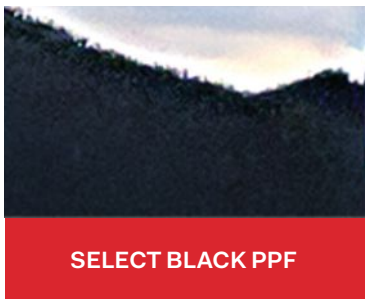
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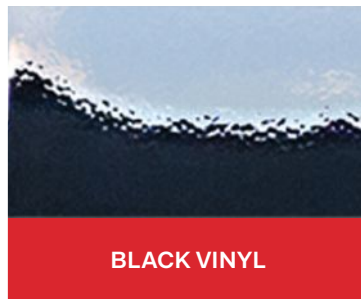


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Me Time

Since 1949, every May, we observe Mental Health Awareness Month here in the U.S. Each year, Mental Health America conducts activities based on a different theme. This year's theme is "Back to Basics," an effort to provide foundational knowledge after two years of pandemic living.

Bursting the Bubble

Talks of a recession ... skyrocketing inflation ... a significant war between Ukraine and Russia. Is it 2030 yet? We need to hit reset on an overwhelming decade.

**"Is it 2030 yet?
 We need to hit reset
 on an overwhelming
 decade."**

Our industry is not immune to this period's expansive impact. I covered the topic of societal security last issue by chatting with Brad Campbell, CEO of Riot Glass and Campbell Corporation in Huntington Beach, Calif. See page 54 in WINDOW FILM magazine (May/June 2022) for more.

"Things have become so out of balance that even if we corrected course today, the latency of the effects of that correction would still lead to dramatic year-over-year crime spikes for years to come," Campbell explains. "[It] saddens me to say that, but this is a global problem, and it will be decades, not years, before we see our way out of this. Window film businesses with staffing and infrastructure in place, a culture of responsiveness and a high-touch service level, will see growth like never before."

As society wades its way through these strange days, it's reassuring to

know that we work around an industry assisting critical problems. Whether you're an industry supplier, dealer, event organizer or writer, you're pushing positivity forward.

"Glass and window businesses have thrived through these times because of security issues," adds Danny Maldonado, president of Prestige Window Solutions in Redondo Beach, Calif. "Even though terrible and disgusting things are happening in the world, resulting in us getting business, it feels better knowing that we're providing a solution that creates comfort for customers and allows them to feel safe."

This issue hones in on the battle against graffiti and vandalism, facets of societal security that suppliers and dealers have answers to (*see page 32*). Anti-graffiti film allows dealers to peel off scratching, spray paint, and acid etching with ease and foster cleaner communities.

Persistent Problems

"It's all gang-related," says Gil Guerra, owner of California's Team GK Glass Tinting. "The worst thing is when you have seven windows on your storefront—If I walk by and write my name, you scratch my name out and write your name, and then another guy scratches both out and writes his. Once they start, they don't stop. Anti-graffiti film works."

Surroundings and mental health go hand-in-hand. Correction may be a ways off, but I'm proud to write about people and products that push back against boundless uncertainties. **WF**

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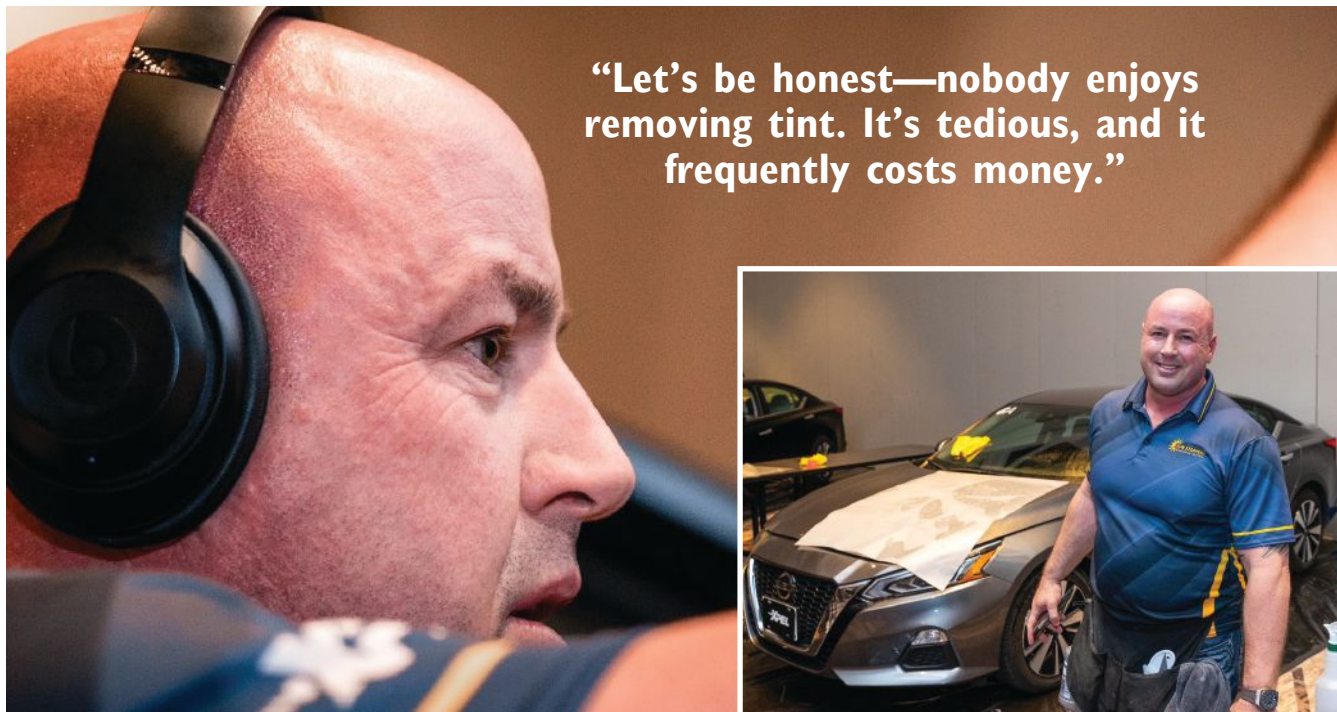
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Dirty Jobs



“Let’s be honest—nobody enjoys removing tint. It’s tedious, and it frequently costs money.”

Sun Stoppers founder Mike Burke says a career in window film isn’t always flashy.

Let’s be honest—nobody enjoys removing tint. It’s tedious, and it frequently costs money. I think avoiding removals is a mistake, and here’s why: new car inventory shortages will be with us for a while, and with them come a pool of cars with aging film. Cars with cheap, five-to-10-year-old film are bubbling, delaminating and fogging up. The value of those older cars keeps rising simultaneously. Taking off old film and replacing it increases the resale value because no one wants to buy a car with bubbled-up tint.

Rip it Off

Business owners find it unnecessary to market to people whose cars are already tinted. Still, there is a missed opportunity. The price of window tint has increased exponentially over the past few years from an average of \$200

to now \$1,000 for some cars.

I see more and more cars with film so bubbled that it’s a safety hazard. Anyone who bought this cheap film several years ago is now a prime candidate to be educated on the reasons why it’s worth springing for more expensive products. They can see the evidence right on their own car. A marketing campaign aimed at people with older cars looking to replace their film can bring all of them to your door.

Back to the hassle and expense of removing tint—veteran tinters don’t want to do it, and you don’t want them doing it anyway. You’re paying them to put tint on, not take it off. If they’re salaried, having them do removals will cost the company money. If they’re on commission, you won’t be able to get them to do it because the pay is too low.

This is where a tint removal specialist comes in. You can train a new young guy in a couple of days. His labor at \$15-\$20 per hour is practically the only overhead. Water, a steamer and a couple of razor blades can make \$100-\$200 on a removal. Plus, you’ve just created a new tint customer.

There is a massive opportunity for substantial returns if your shop is willing to do removals. **WF**

Mike Burke has been in the window film industry for 33 years. His company, Sun Stoppers, has more than 63 locations in 19 states and offers residential and commercial tint and decorative film services as well as automotive tint, paint protection, and ceramic coatings. If you have a question for Burke to tackle in a future column, email him at mike@sunstoppers.com.

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Understanding the NFRC's Importance

Have you ever needed to compare the performance characteristics of one film to another? The answer is yes most likely. So how do you do it? Do you compare the stats of one sample card to another? That seems easy, doesn't it? Well, it is. But is it fair? The answer to that question depends upon the films you're comparing.

Compare and Contrast

If you're comparing films manufactured by the same company, the answer is generally yes. That is because the manufacturer uses a consistent process to test the statistics of the various films in its product portfolio. But if you compare films manufactured by different companies, then the answer is no most likely. So what do you do? How can you compare films manufactured by different companies in a fair manner?

Before answering that question, look at various sample cards you have in your possession. See if a disclaimer states how the manufacturer tested the film's performance stats. As you read sample cards from different manufacturers, you will notice a wide range of test "standards" that manufacturers use to test their films.

Some companies test their films on glass using metering equipment. Others calculate film stats from online simulations. Some test on 1/8-inch glass. Others test on 1/4-inch. Besides glass thickness, glass type, visible light transmission, metering equipment and the testing procedure can vary from one manufacturer to the next. There isn't necessarily a right way or a wrong way. The truth is, there is no consistent standard employed by every supplier. The bottom line—comparing films based on sample cards from different manufacturers is not necessarily an

Manufacturer: XPEL Inc			
Film Series/Model Number	CPD Number	Film Tint	Film Location
Evening View 25	XPL-K-001	GY	Interior
Evening View 35	XPL-K-002	GY	Interior
Evening View 45	XPL-K-003	GY	Interior
Silver 20	XPL-K-004	SR	Interior
Silver 20 4Mil	XPL-K-005	SR	Interior
Silver 20 8Mil	XPL-K-006	SR	Interior
Silver 30	XPL-K-007	SR	Interior
Silver 45	XPL-K-008	SR	Interior
Silver 45 4Mil	XPL-K-009	SR	Interior
Silver 45 8 Mil	XPL-K-010	SR	Interior
Bronze 20	XPL-K-011	BZ	Interior
Bronze 20 Exterior	XPL-K-012	BZ	Exterior
Bronze 35	XPL-K-013	BZ	Interior
Daylight 20	XPL-K-014	GY	Interior
Daylight 35	XPL-K-015	GY	Interior

Source: NFRC

The NFRC provides users with the ability to research performance.

"apples-to-apples" comparison.

So, what can you do if a prospect asks how your silver 20% film compares to the competition's silver 20%? This is where the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC) comes in.

The NFRC is an independent non-profit organization that evaluates and provides useful information to consumers with respect to windows, doors and window film.

Participating window film manufacturers submit their various films for NFRC testing. Using a standardized test procedure (glass type, metering equipment, methodology, etc.), the NFRC calculates the performance of different films and publishes those results for public consumption.

Here's how it works. Visit the NFRC's "Applied Film" page at [https://](https://search.nfrc.org/search/apd_film/film_search_default.aspx)

search.nfrc.org/search/apd_film/film_search_default.aspx. Choose a film manufacturer and then navigate to the desired film. Here you can see the film's solar heat gain coefficient, visible light transmission and U-value on different types of glass as tested, calculated and published by the NFRC.

You can then compare those statistics to those of another film chosen from the NFRC's website. This is a quick, easy and accurate way to compare the stats of one manufacturer's film to another's.

Consider bookmarking the NFRC website and use it the next time a prospect asks you to compare one film to another.

WF

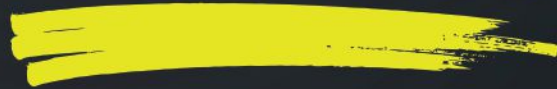
Manny Hondroulis is the vice president of Energy Distribution Products in Baltimore.



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Wading Through Hot New Products

We're known for our service and product selection at St. Louis Best. To maintain our reputation and grow our business, we take a proactive approach to new products, and it works. We've been first to market with multiple products, sometimes years before competitors. Here are ten ways to ensure a successful product launch.

1. Make sure you're an expert on your current product and service offerings before branching out into new ones. This ensures you and your team can take on something new.

2. Pay attention to what's up-and-coming in the window film industry, so you can try it early and get comfortable with it. The visibility and excitement of a new product rollout are great, but you don't want to compromise work quality.

3. When looking for new products, start with manufacturers you know and trust. They're more likely to bring other products that work for you to market, plus you already know what level of training and technical support you'll receive.

4. Once you've identified something new that will elevate your portfolio, talk to the manufacturer. Then find a non-affiliated expert who has experience with how the product performs. You want both in-depth information and unbiased feedback.

5. When the product you're considering checks out, it's time for testing. We make this a team effort. We try new things out ourselves as owners,



St. Louis Best installer Daniel Trulove heat shrinks and applies film.

invite our installers to do so and compare notes.

6. Don't rush the testing phase. Depending on your workflow, it could take months to get ready to bring something to market. We've tried some products and still don't offer them because we're not convinced they're the best.

7. Don't just take someone else's word on testing. Many products fail because of installation errors. If you don't know a new product well enough to install it, you can't evaluate it.

8. Be aware that some brands with great marketing are not-so-great products. If you're thorough, you won't learn this the hard way. We've found that the best manufacturers put money into research and development instead of marketing.

9. When a new product comes in, we educate ourselves and train on the product extensively. You don't want a solid product to get a bad rap because of incorrect installation, and you want to protect your name. It's what customers remember.

10. Officially announce new roll-outs everywhere you can. Post on social media, send emails and pay for ads if you have the budget. Reach out to good customers by phone as well. This is well worth the time and how we work with car dealerships, too. Many in our area once had multiple suppliers, and we've become their one-stop-shop.

The Bottom Line

If you're going to remember one thing about new products, make it this: do your homework. We're continually educating ourselves, even after being in business for 30 years. For us, it's not the popular opinion that matters—it's what works. We stand behind everything we do, and our reputation is built on treating customers with respect and dignity. This uncompromising attitude is what drives our method for launching new products too. Good luck out there! **WF**

Colin Wright and Seth Dwyer, co-owners of St. Louis Best Films and Coatings.

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Take It from Me

WINDOW FILM magazine debuts a new column with this issue—Tint My Ride by Joe Doyle. We hope you enjoy Joe's insights.

Welcome!

I started tinting windows in 1985 and still do it full-time today, so I have a few things to share. I'm self-taught, learning almost entirely from a dealer's lot where I put vinyl stripes on new and used cars, trucks and custom conversion vans. You can trace many of my techniques back to this beginning.

Shared Wisdom

My name is Joe Doyle, and I believe I'm the original "Tint My Ride" in Florissant, Mo. My goal is to provide you with tips and information to increase your talents so that you can better apply film and thus be more efficient than the next guy.

It's Only Water

Let's start small. How do you deal with water streaks on door panels? Wet the whole panel evenly when applying the film. If you want it to dry evenly, then wet it evenly. Spray the whole panel just before applying the film or while you are doing it. Don't be scared. I've never had an issue doing this. Use your hand to smear it around evenly if needed.

Next, let it stay wet, keep working and let the panel dry on its own. Tint the right door and, by the time you tint the left, the right will be half dry. Now soak up any puddles in the door pull, but don't dry the panel. If you want it to dry a little faster, smear it around with your hand or wipe lightly with a towel. Do not try to dry it completely.



Joe Doyle's own personal Dodge Charger shows off his custom-stripping abilities.

Charged Up

Now for something big, I mean really big: The Dodge Charger, Challenger and 300 rear windshields.

These three cars do not have a higher grid that needs to be scraped down. The chemical in the grid reacts with water. The Dodge Dart and Chrysler 200 do not have this problem. Think of your customer if he paid \$70,000 for a Charger Hellcat. He will not be happy seeing the tint guy scraping off the factory-applied coating on my new car.

I hear that the defroster still works after scraping, but I won't do it and never have. My solution? Let it react with the water, and get it out of its system. My option is easier than scraping. All you need is the "clear" from a previous rear windshield of a Charger, Challenger or 300. "Clear" is what I call the liner that you peel off the film before you wet it and install it. I have one for each car that I use over and over. I have three clears that have been previously heat-shrunk and perfectly cut to size.

When you bring one of these cars into the shop, begin by cleaning the rear glass as usual, then spray the inside windshield with whatever soap solution you prefer. Take the clear, apply it to the glass and then smooth it out with your hands—not a squeegee—leaving ample amounts of water trapped inside. Then, let it sit and tint the rest of the car, but re-wet the windshield every hour or so, pulling the clear back and spraying it again.

Of course, don't do this in the sun. After the rest of the car is done, I move on to the next job, keeping the windshield wet for four hours. After roughly four hours, tint the glass as usual and remove the clear soaker just before installation. The average amount of "peanuts" I get is two, and they can be removed easily. Of course, you charge accordingly for these cars, and I tell the customer to expect the job to take six hours. Good luck!

WF

Joe Doyle is the owner of Tint My Ride in Florissant, Mo.



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Answering Six Common PPF Questions

The global paint protection film (PPF) market has doubled over the past five years and continues to grow. As a supplier of thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) for PPF, we increasingly find ourselves answering questions from installers, consumers and others with a vested interest. These are six of the most common.

1 What ingredients make up PPF?

Four components comprise PPF.

1. The surface layer consists of a thin coating, usually acrylic or urethane-based and is designed to provide stain resistance.
2. The next layer is considered the core and is made of TPU. This TPU is stretchable, long-lasting and durable for preventing paint chips by absorbing stone impacts.
3. Below the TPU is a thin adhesive layer, most commonly acrylic-based. This is designed to bond the TPU layer to the vehicle's surface and formulated to result in a strong bond while enabling clean removal with no damage to the vehicle finish.
4. Protecting the adhesive is a liner film made of polyester and removed just prior to the installation process.

Together, these materials are roughly 10 mils thick (0.25 mm).

2 How do PPF products differ?

There are many differences, most significantly recognized through the surface coating and TPU chemistries. Coatings are most commonly formulated with either self-healing or maximum stain resistance. Maximizing self-healing compromises stain-resistance and vice versa.



PPF's stain resistance and self-healing properties continue to advance.

The performance characteristics of TPU depend on its chemistry, which can be changed and tailored to meet specific needs. The right stretch properties, achieved with consistency, are critical to the installation process for yielding an efficient and high-quality installation. Some TPU will turn yellow or lose mechanical properties following long-term exposure to the sun's powerful ultraviolet (UV) radiation. A TPU best formulated for long-term durability and non-yellowing can maintain a colorless optical clarity that not only protects the vehicle's finish but makes it look great at the same time.

Finally, ideal adhesives will provide the optimum level of initial tack with time for repositioning during installation. Long-term bonding should prevent edge lifting and result in

clean release without paint removal or leftover residue if removal is necessary.

In its final construction, PPF made with carefully selected materials can protect the vehicle's finish for more than a decade.

3 Why does some PPF have a greater life expectancy than others?

The chemistry of the components matters. Any sacrifice to the quality and performance of any individual ingredient can result in undesirable performance. A premium PPF product starts with premium materials. Any compromises could be recognized through staining, scratching, yellowing, peeling or cracking. With lesser materials, performance suffers.

Accelerated weather testing is a valuable tool used to predict and quantify effects of real-world exposure over time. Advanced knowledge of these tools and the materials science behind the ingredients increase the accuracy of such predictive testing. These tests are notable for their ability to condense testing timelines from months or even years to a few days—saving significant time and money for vehicle owners and installers alike.

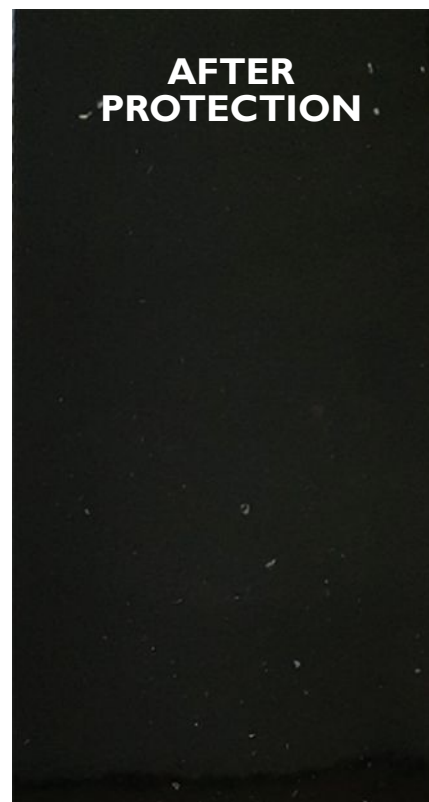
4 Why Consider TPU for PPF?

TPU is a remarkably versatile material with basic properties that lend themselves well to PPF. The chemistries of TPU can be manipulated to deliver specific characteristics, including several that are central to PPF performance, such as optical clarity and resistance to yellowing, impact resistance and the ability to stretch and return to the original form. It also can be processed to deliver innovative PPF characteristics, such as creative colors and finishes.

5 How is chip protection performance determined?

There is a test method specifically designed to quantify this capability, much like the accelerated weather tests mentioned previously. Using an apparatus known as a gravelometer, 250-300 stones are launched at a panel at a speed of 30 to 60 miles per hour—parameters established in SAE J400: Test for Chip Resistance of Surface Coatings.

Previously titled SAE International, the Society of Automotive Engineers is a U.S.-based association and standards developing organization for engineering professionals in several industries.



These images demonstrate the difference between an unprotected surface and one with TPU protection.

6 What are the latest trends and innovations?

Current trends are focused predominantly on three areas.

1. Continued optimization of surface capabilities. Specifically, improvements and optimization of stain resistance and self-healing properties—two areas that can contribute to the extended life of the PPF.
2. Full-body coverage and film thicknesses for efficient installation. These go hand-in-hand. Consumers increasingly are interested in going beyond the traditional partial installations (hoods, bumpers, etc.) and instead installing PPF over the entire vehicle body. It's not surprising; full-body PPF provides the ultimate protection not just from stones and road debris but also from sunlight and UV rays that can affect paint color over time. By optimizing the thickness

of TPU according to placement on the vehicle, the overall investment is more justified by the vehicle owner.

3. Colored PPF is primarily used for accent features at this point, for example, on roofs and trim. Matte PPF can be applied to transform the finish of a typical gloss paint through a full-body application. We anticipate that the performance and availability of colored PPF products will provide more opportunities for restyling as a paint alternative in the coming years.

This is an exciting time in the PPF industry. Demand has never been higher, and PPF brands are becoming more active with innovation to bring these and other new developments to the market.

WF

Jason Schaner serves as applications engineer for Surface Protection at Lubrizol Engineered Polymers.

What were WindowFilmMag.com's top stories since the last issue? Here are the hottest topics in the industry:

1



Five Mistakes New Shop Owners Make

Business ownership is a learning experience. Chris West, director of automotive films, XPEL, says there are common mistakes he sees new shop owners making. Hear the errors he made—and learned from—on the road to success.

► Visit windowfilmmag.com and enter “five mistakes” into the Search box to locate this story.

Johnny ‘Blades’ Gonzalez and Co. Move Latinos in Tint Forward



Johnny ‘Blades’ Gonzalez asked a colleague working beside him at a Houston truck accessory shop a rhetorical question 10 years ago: “Are you done?” He said, “Quitting time is at 4 p.m.” The colleague had boasted to

2

Gonzalez that he had finished a \$300 tinting project—as Gonzalez continued spraying filthy truck bed liners and inhaling dust particles. Learn how Gonzalez turned envy to ambition.

► Visit windowfilmmag.com and enter “surfing” into the Search box to locate this story.

Mental Health Awareness Month: Film Companies Spotlight the Need

3



Kris Queen battled his second meningitis case in December 2021. It forced the tinter to take stock of his mental health. Mental Health Awareness Month, observed in May, had a theme of “Back to Basics,” an appropriate designation for this period of Queen’s life.

► Visit windowfilmmag.com and enter “mental health” into the Search box to locate this story.

4

National Small Business Week: Owners Share Struggles and Successes



National Small Business Week, observed from May 1 to 7, celebrated American entrepreneurs’ economic contributions. Speed bumps may compose the road to a successful startup, but Tim Ham, owner of Felony Film in Atlanta, Ga., trusted the process. The installer’s record includes 10 felonies inspiring his company’s name.

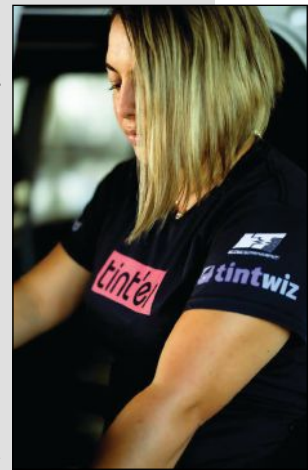
► Visit windowfilmmag.com and enter “felony film” into the Search box to locate this story.

5

A Fork in the Road

New business owners must make crucial decisions. Many choices are made each day, but what happens when a dilemma presents itself, and you have to find a resolution? Determining the correct adjustments can be daunting to the point of pushing you to flip a coin and letting destiny decide. Cheyanne Kahele, owner of Kaloko Tinting in Kona, Hawaii, details her decision-making process in her blog.

► Visit windowfilmmag.com and enter “fork” into the Search box to locate this story.



For the full stories, go to WindowFilmMag.com and enter the keywords into the search bar. While there, stay up with all the Window Film News by signing up for our free weekly e-newsletter.

A Business' Succession Plan is Vital

James Kirk Jr. died in his sleep on March 18, 2022. The 40-year old Kirk, who owned 1st Pane Glass and Calibrators in Rock Hill, S.C., passed before writing a will or signing an operating agreement in the event of a business partner's death. The fate of that glass-related business is now in the hands of a probate court. Cedro Rodriguez, president of ADS Window Tint in Kennewick, Wash., is taking steps to avoid such an outcome for his company, should he meet with an untimely demise.

Passing the Torch

"My focus has always been the safety and security of my family," says Rodriguez, whose succession plan keeps the business in his family. "Our oldest daughter is 27, and she was raised in the industry. She's been with us for five years now; she's our shop manager and an officer in the business. We have a built-in failsafe, a fortunate thing for us."

Business management consultant ALL Strategy in Vancouver, Canada, says that family businesses comprise 80 to 90% of all firms worldwide, and the largest 500 generate \$6.5 trillion in annual revenue. Rodriguez, who also works with his wife, understands the unpredictable nature of life.

"My dad tragically passed away," Rodriguez says. "He had a heart attack more than a year ago, and we're still reeling from that. He worked with me for 11 years in the business, which was great. Working with family is the best and the worst. I'm glad I had the opportunity to work with him. He would have only been 67."

According to financial media website Investopedia, the "term succession planning refers to a business strategy companies use to pass leadership roles down to another employee or group of employees. Succession plan-



A member of Joe DelGiorno's team installs residential film.

ning ensures that businesses continue to run smoothly and without interruption, after important people move on to new opportunities, retire or pass away."

Succession planning frequently signals training the next generation to take over the business. Planning evaluates a leader's skills, "identifying potential replacements within and outside the company and, in the case of internal replacements, training those employees so they're prepared to assume control."

There are special considerations to weigh when constructing a succession plan.

"One way to succession plan in a business partnership is for each partner to purchase a life insurance policy that names the other partner as the beneficiary," the article states. "This type of succession plan is called a cross-purchase

agreement and allows the surviving partner to continue operating the business."

If a partner passes at a time when the surviving partner would not otherwise have enough cash to purchase the deceased partner's ownership share, the life insurance proceeds render that purchase possible.

Key person insurance, also called key man insurance, is another critical facet of a potential succession plan. According to American personal finance company NerdWallet, it a "life or disability insurance that a business carries on its core employees. If the key person dies or becomes disabled, the insurance policy pays the business to help replace them."

Wake up Call

"A friend of ours who had a mechanic shop died, and it became a huge mess," says Joe DelGiorno, owner of Denver, N.C.'s, Tint Shop NC. "There was a lot of guessing. We're going to re-do our will next month."

Fifty-three-year-old DelGiorno works with his wife and currently has a succession plan to ensure his business' survival in the event of death. "My middle brother was dead at 41, so you never know what could happen," DelGiorno adds. "We're not going to live forever."

Arranging a succession plan, diving into life insurance options and creating a will are serious undertakings. But Rodriguez hasn't allowed the fear of the unknown to steal his joy. From his first coffee to lock-up, he operates with the same passion he did prior to preparation.

"The mindset I have is the same I had when we started," Rodriguez says. "I can't believe I'm 45, and while we are setting ourselves up for success and an exit, it still feels like business as usual. I'm excited to work on this new Rivian, [Tesla] Plaid and the latest Super Duty." **WF**

Fishing for Film

Steve Walsh was fishing with a friend when he first caught word of window film in 1988. An acquaintance worked for an installation company in the United Kingdom, and 17-year-old Walsh was working at a local tire business. Walsh “didn’t have a clue about window film whatsoever,” but damaging and destructive trends brought a potential opportunity.

The Perfect Cast

“I was a young kid fitting tires at a local place going nowhere fast,” Walsh says. “When I started in the window film industry, I traveled around the country, visited different places and worked all over the UK. It gave me something to work towards—learning a new trade. We were putting safety film on all of the windows at army barracks.”

The Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) detonated a truck bomb on Bishopsgate, a major street in London’s financial district, on April 24, 1993. The Bishopsgate bombing killed one, injured 44 and generated more than \$400 million in repairs. The tragedy tied



Steve Walsh, owner of Invisifilm.

into Walsh’s subcontracted work.

“Window film companies had the government contract safety and security film and bomb blast film on all the army barracks, banks and government buildings throughout the UK,” says Walsh, whose career first involved solar film installations in the commercial sector. “We put hundreds of thousands of square feet of bomb blast film all over the UK. It was a massive industry back then.”



Senior installer James Bishop is an integral component of Walsh’s team.

Walsh says it took him six to 12 months to grasp the art of flat glass applications, which arrived when window film was far less advanced.

“The film used to be a dry adhesive,” he adds. “When you pulled the film off the roll, there was no liner to take off; you would wet the film and stick it on the window. That’s how long ago it was.”

I’m Coming Home

“I was married at 18, had my first child at 19 and the second at 21,” Walsh says. “I wanted a change, so the kids weren’t just ‘heads in beds.’ In the year 2000, after 12 years of commercial window film, I decided to train myself to tint vehicle windows which would keep me based near home. For the next 15 years, I helped build a successful vehicle tinting business at a window film company called Durable.”

After a decade and a half at Berkshire, England’s, Durable, Walsh founded Invisifilm in 2015.

“Going from a team member to an owner was scary,” says Walsh, whose company now has two locations in Manchester, England. “When I started Invisifilm, rather than pay the house off after 25 years, I used the money to start the company. I should have paid the house off with the money. I paid it back within the first month of business.”

The company—XPEL’s 2019 Northern UK dealer of the year and 2021 National UK dealer of the year—has seven installers.

“I’ve always been the hardest worker and outworked everyone else throughout my career,” Walsh says. “In the last few years, I’ve slowed down on the tools and spend most of my time managing the workload. I’ve got an incredible team behind me, so I’ve tried to encour-

age the guys to be different than the average person if they don't want average results."

Walsh works on cars for a living, but his origins featured public projects facilitated by security concerns. Today, he looks at vehicles through an objective, analytical lens free of automotive passion.

"People talk about engine sizes with customers," Walsh says. "I'm talking about family, holidays, how great the job will look and promising late and delivering early. There's nothing worse than saying it will be done in two days and then it's done in three. I'll say three and then surprise them. It's about building relationships."

Distinct Clientele

The film industry is global, no question. But daily demand varies by city, state and country, as Invisifilm's customers demonstrate.

"We're not doing daily cars, but we're not marketing to do either," says Walsh, a member of industry Facebook group Window Film Pros. "I've never paid for a Google, Instagram or Facebook ad. All the work is from word of mouth.

Paint protection film (PPF) comprises 95% of the company's overall sales, with automotive tinting coming in at five percent. "It's grown quite big over the last four to five years," Walsh says. "But in the UK, it's the high-end stuff. Everything is Lamborghini, Ferrari and Porsche. It's the 1% of the wealth that gets PPF."

Walsh is focused entirely on family. His youngest daughter Stephanie handles the administrative work at the company, which has allowed the 34-year Film Star to give back to those closest to him.



From left to right: Senior installers James Bishop and Tom Thorley apply film to high-end exotics daily.

Cloud Ni

Custom Printed Film Elevates Above Traditional Options

by Chris Collier

More than half the households in Los Angeles speak a non-English language at home as their primary language, according to Data USA. Encompassing roughly three square miles, Koreatown wears that diversity proudly. Los Angeles' STM Advanced Window Film Solutions coordinated with Lux Graphic Imaging in Shirley, N.Y., for a cross-country, custom film installation signaling the sway of singularity.

Corporate Customization

"We delivered a product that created a workspace to match the cultural diversity of the area as well as the people working in and visiting the space," says Hann Kim, president of dealer STM Advanced Window Film Solutions in Los Angeles.

The 2,400 square-foot project showcases an array of citizens towering amongst a city as one. Extending the expanse of half of the building's front windows, the display peaks at eight feet. Lux Graphic Imaging printed the piece and brought Kim's ideas to life.

"Continuity of the graphic across the building and getting the right opacities of an [etch look was most challenging]," Kim adds. "... We provided them with accurate measurement and the numbering of the panels. Lux provided a proof that showed what it would look like."

Lux Graphic Imaging previously focused on window film installation, but today, the company primarily supplies window film companies with printed products. Custom film comprises 97% of all decorative film sales at the business.

"Three percent is probably some type of generic frost, basic gradient film or a dual feather gradient," says Mike Pisano, chief operating officer at Lux Graphic Imaging, of a fading option. "... It's going up every year as awareness

comes about. As more designers and decorators know they can think of it and do it—knowing that it can be put onto film—it's getting bigger and bigger."

Life in Layers

"We started in decorative film in the '90s, [selling] basic frost and black-out films," Kim says. "Those have a certain amount of limitations. Our customers are looking for something a little more unique—a little more identity-based for their company. You have to stretch your imagination to develop a design or concept that's fitting for the client, individual or company."

Decorative films compose an estimated 50% of the business at STM Advanced Window Film Solutions. Custom film makes up more than half of that percentile. The process is lengthy from start to finish, but additional factors facilitate higher fees.

"There's design time, a set-up fee, installation, materials and tax involved with the material," Kim explains. "You have to break down and itemize each line item you're billing for."

New construction has slotted opportunities for dealer Naples Tint Company in Naples, Fla. The company has seen decorative film sales climb to 15 percent overall.

"I attribute that to new residential glass codes requiring energy-efficient glass and less of an extreme need for solar control window films," says Matthew Sandherr, owner of Naples Tint Company. "It changed my focus on new construction to, 'They're putting [in] clear-front, impact and energy-efficient doors and clear shower enclosures. [Decorative film] was something we could offer to thousands of new homes being built in the area.'"

continued on page 24





ne

Los Angeles' STM Advanced Window Film Solutions turns ideas and visions into art with custom-printed decorative film.

Cloud Nine

continued from page 23



Naples Tint Company works with supplier Vetrilite to achieve memorable designs.



Custom film facilitates 97% of all decorative film sales at Lux Graphic Imaging.

Decorative Film Artists Compete

The International Window Film Conference and Tint-Off™ (WFCT) returns to San Antonio Sept. 14-16, 2022 with its first-ever Decorative Film Competition. The showdown is designed to honor the window film installers who complete the best decorative film installations. Each competitor will be judged on professionalism and the ability to apply film to a specified glass efficiently and expertly. The registration deadline is July 15, 2022.

Prize Package

First Place: \$5,000

Second Place: \$2,500

Third Place: \$1,000

International Window Film Conference and Tint-Off™



Vetrilite of Coral Springs, Fla., supplies film to dealer Naples Tint Company and assists with an increased slate of distinct, decorative desires. “40% of what we do is custom for shower enclosures and front doors,” Sandherr adds.

Pricey Printing

Dealers in the commercial sector facilitate the bulk of Lux Graphic Imaging’s business. Pisano oversees a design department and manages a lineup of printers. He says it’s a costly

process most dealers don’t comprehend. “People think, ‘I’m going to buy a printer—I’m going to get right into it and make a boatload of cash,’” says Pisano, who noticed an uptick six years ago. “Eighty percent of window film dealers don’t realize what’s truly involved in becoming a big printer of decorative films. I don’t think they realize the costs involved in proper machinery, staff, designers and maintenance. As the machines get bigger, it’s like running a Lamborghini every day.”

Has frosted film peaked in the architectural world? Pisano thinks newer architects and firms on the cutting edge are moving away from basic films and shifting more towards custom printed options. Sandherr says dealers miss opportunities when dismissing non-traditional options.

“Tell the customer, ‘These are our traditional options; it’s a neutral way to go. But we can also do this,’” he says. “The right client is going to want to do the custom work. It might not be the perfect fit for the more economical client, but at least you’re not leaving it out of the picture.”

It’s a venture that Kim vouches for. “It would take doing at least one project—maybe in their own space with some conference windows,” Kim says. “Work through the process with a company who could potentially provide mockups, examples and renderings that could be presented to the client.”

Welcome Back?

Microsoft surveyed 31,102 workers around the world between January and February 2022. Nearly half of leaders say their company already requires or is planning to require employees to return to in-person work full-time in the next year.

On the other hand, the ADP Research Institute published a report titled "People at Work 2022: A Global Workforce View." The initiative surveyed more than 32,000 workers in November 2021 from the U.S., India, the Netherlands and other countries. Sixty-four percent cited that "they have already, or would consider, looking for a new job if their employer wanted them back in the office full-time."

As employers and their team members clash on the now controversial idea of the cubicle, creative solutions shine in the foreground.

Win This Printer

A Mutoh Printer complete with training and accessories worth \$30,000 will be given away at WFCT 2022. Visit Mutoh on the show floor for a sneak peek of what the printer is capable of. Details on the drawing: All registered attendees* at the International Window Film Conference and Tint-Off™ (WFCT) are entered to win. Each day of the show, a finalist will be selected and announced on location and through the WFCT Mobile App. On Friday, September 16, the three finalists will be drawn from for one lucky winner to be announced at 1:30 p.m. on the show floor. Mutoh will ship a brand new printer to the winner.

*Sponsors and non-exhibiting suppliers are not eligible for the daily drawings.

"The only limitation in this field is your imagination," Kim says. "You have to think beyond what is currently available. Look at photos and environments; you don't know what you will get. When you present something, it's quite

extraordinary how the client responds to it." **WF**

Chris Collier is the assistant editor for WINDOW FILM magazine. Connect with him on LinkedIn and Facebook.



Out with the old. In with the new.

Avery Dennison® Dusted Crystal Film features adhesive with outstanding removability for transforming interior spaces

Create new, dynamic spaces for privacy or room flexibility with the all-new Dusted Crystal decorative architectural window film from Avery Dennison. The film features a remarkable, first-to-market, wet-apply quick-release adhesive that allows the film to be repositioned during installation and removed easily after drying with virtually no residue left on the glass. Dusted Crystal is available in a matte and luster finish.

Experience the difference of Dusted Crystal. Visit graphics.averydennison.com/dustedcrystal

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A Summer Showcase

Third Annual Window Film New Products Guide

Architectural Window Film

Automotive Window Film

Paint Protection Film (PPF)

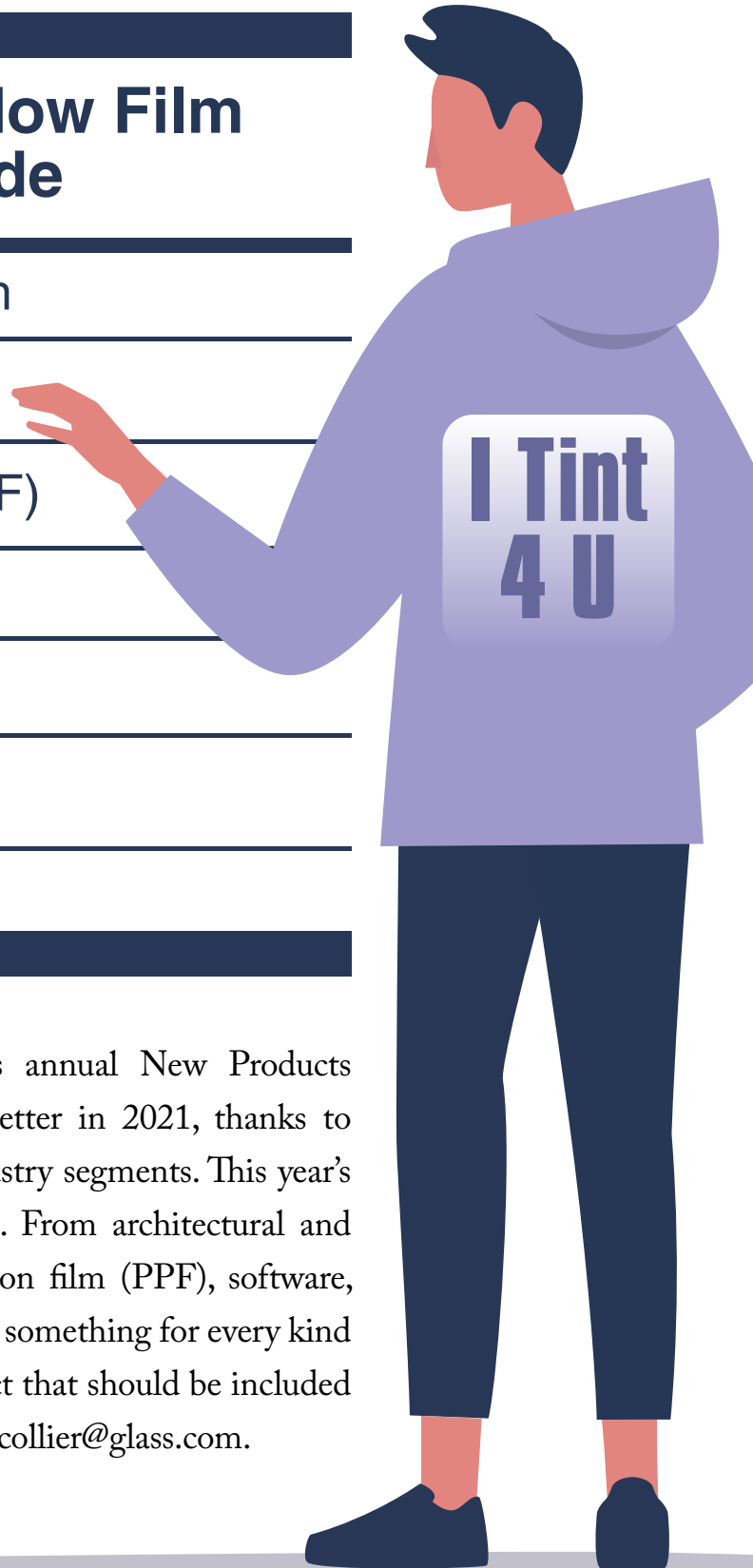
Printers

Services

Software

Tools

WINDOW FILM magazine's annual New Products Guide was bigger and better in 2021, thanks to submissions from all industry segments. This year's Guide carries that momentum forward. From architectural and automotive window film, paint protection film (PPF), software, tools, printers and services, 2022's list has something for every kind of film star. If you know of a new product that should be included in a future issue, email Chris Collier at ccollier@glass.com.



Architectural Window Film Avery Dennison Ups the Atmosphere

Avery Dennison Dusted Crystal Architectural Window Film features a frosted effect allowing for privacy while still transmitting plenty of light, according to the company. Its wet-apply, quick-release clean adhesive allows the film to be repositioned during installation or removed easily after drying while leaving virtually no

residue on the glass. The adhesive also doesn't permanently stick to itself, potentially saving the installer time when removing the film from its liner.

► www.averydennison.com

20/20 Vision

Geoshield launched its new interior and exterior films for architectural applications called 20/20. This film is a neutral 20% film available for both interior and exterior applications.

The 20S interior film is a sputtered charcoal that is safe for use on double pane windows. The 20X exterior film is a grey stainless steel that is safer on riskier and restricted applications, according to the company.

► www.geoshieldusa.com

Automotive Window Film Hybrid Heat Rejection

Maxpro's XCL PRO window film is a multi-layered hybrid that provides superior infrared rejection (IR) with low reflectivity, according to the company. More durable than



traditional dyed and metalized window films, XCL PRO's enhanced design delivers aesthetically pleasing, long-lasting results for drivers.

► www.maxprofilms.com

STEK Flexes its Muscles



DYNOflex is a thermoplastic polyurethane film (TPU)-based windshield film that can be installed without using heat guns, per the company. It is designed to protect windshield damage from rock chips as auto manufacturers begin to incorporate windshields featuring complex features that lead to costlier replacements. It is also hydrophobic, which allows the driver better visibility when it is raining. As it doesn't require shrinkage, it can be installed in a relatively short time.

► www.stek-usa.com

Eastman's Ceramic Tint "Evolves"



Eastman Performance Films announced its launch of a new ceramic tint, SunTek Evolve. This film is designed to block 99% of harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays and can reject up to 94% of infrared rays (65% total solar energy rejection), which facilitates cooler cabins and reduced interior fading. The reformulated coating with improved scratch resistance and increased glide helps with quicker, better installs. Evolve also offers numerous tint options so drivers can achieve the desired look or upgrade existing factory-tinted glass, according to the company.

► www.eastman.com

continued on page 28

A Summer Showcase

continued from page 27

Cooling Down Summer



Wintech introduces XP (Xenium Premium) auto window film. XP is the company's Nano-Ceramic film featuring 95% rejection of Infrared (IR) on all visible light transmission (VLT) options. Available VLTs include five, 15, 35 and 70%.
||> www.wintechusa.com

IVIOS' Film Fights Imperfections



IVIOS offers the new Axion Automotive Windshield Protection Film Series with hard coating technology, providing scratch and abrasion resistance for windshields. The Axion film also provides over 99% UV protection and 50-70% IR blocking. The film has a water contact angle of 110 degrees, increasing water repellency.

||> www.iviosfilm.com

Paint Protection Film (PPF) Far-and-wide Protection



Global Hi-Tech Films' PPF is constructed with a pro-quality, six mil thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) film featuring a self-healing hydrophobic topcoat designed to protect paint finishes from scratches, scuffs and stains. The pressure-sensitive mounting adhesive is installer-friendly, and the silicon liner is easy to remove, according to the company.

||> www.globalwindowfilms.com

Protekt the Investment

Madico's Protekt paint protection film (PPF) keeps cars looking new for longer with a top coat protecting against common road debris such as gravel, tar, and bug residue. The product is optically clear and virtually self-healing, ensuring minor scratches and abrasions in the film disappear over time. The Madico Advanced Cutting System (MACS) offers an ideal pairing that helps dealers cut precise PPF patterns, according to the company.

||> www.madico.com



Printers

Mutoh Makes Moves

The Mutoh XpertJet 1641SR Pro 64" Eco-Solvent single head, four-color (CMYK) printer builds upon Mutoh's made-in-Japan reputation. It delivers optimal print quality and outstanding speeds, according to the company. It is powered by Mutoh's new genuine VerteLith RIP Software, bundled with Mutoh's FlexiDesigner Mutoh Edition 21.



VerteLith RIP optimizes the XPJ-1641SR Pro's capabilities and produces the best-possible gradients, skin tones and vivid colors. This printer features Mutoh's new AccuFine Print Head, which achieves dot placement accuracy and an increased nozzle row length for 35% faster print speeds. The XPJ-1641SR Pro is paired with Mutoh's GreenGuard Gold certified MS41 Eco-Solvent ink, suitable for use in sensitive environments such as hospitals and child care facilities, providing users a larger color gamut, durability and enhanced dot gain.

||> www.mutoh.com

continued on page 30

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A Summer Showcase

continued from page 28

Roland Rolls Out Enhancements



Roland's third-generation TrueVIS VG3 printer/cutters expand on previous generations with automated features, added usability and broader color choices. Higher print quality, productivity and ease of use can be expected from those of past models. The printers come equipped with a seven-inch LCD touch-panel control, auto-calibration and other automated tools. In addition, eight-color ink configurations offer a variety of colors. The VG3's four FlexFire printheads work with other prominent features to create custom graphics. Roland also offers the DG TrueVIS SG3 series in two sizes to deliver graphics.

► www.rolanddga.com

Services

Hands for Hire

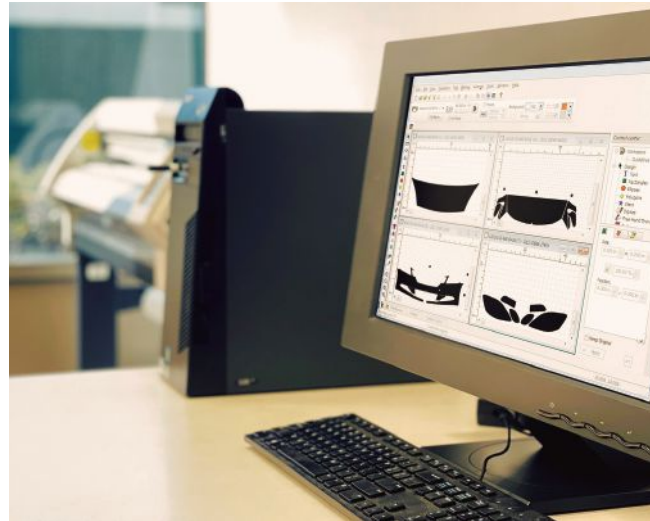


Taking on large-scale projects is an overwhelming undertaking for small dealers. Having their main crew tied up for weeks or months can be detrimental to the rest of their operations. KAM Unlimited Inc. is a nationwide window film subcontractor, providing labor for large-scale projects so company owners can focus on advancing sales and maintaining their business. KAM currently services window film, resurfacing film, and wet glaze projects.

► www.kamunlimited.com

Software

Johnson Window Films Goes Technical



Johnson Window Films has introduced FitPro, precision patterning software to help eliminate the dangers of hand cutting, reduce installation times and improve work efficiency. The software includes instant access to new patterns and updates, custom file manipulation and saving and technical support. Patterns are pre-nested for efficiency (manual nesting also available), and the platform supports multiple plotters.

► www.johnsonwindowfilms.com

Tools

Checking Up With EDTM

The latest edition of the Glass-Chek ELITE from EDTM can measure glass and space thickness of a window and identify the low-E coated surface of a window. It can also identify the type of low-E coating in a window with a meter that displays the number of silver layers in a soft coat low-E. For window film technicians, this information can set expectations for customers. The GC3200 can also identify laminated glass in a window and measure the thickness of the laminate inner-layer. A graphical display shows an illustration of the profile of a window. Additionally, the meter will store the most recent 28 measurements taken by the user for later use.

► www.edtm.com

WF





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DYNOflex WINDSHIELD Protection Film

DYNOflex is our revolutionary heat-gun-free TPU-coated windshield protection film that is easy to handle and requires little time to install. It won't waste your time and help you provide a premium service to as many customers as possible.

GANGS & GRAFFITI

A California Canvas

by Chris Collier

The U.S. spends more than \$12 billion on graffiti removal per year, according to Santa Clarita, Calif., officials. The city itself spends more than \$600,000 a year on graffiti removal. Matt Castleman, owner/operator at C.B. Tint in Campbell, Calif., vouches for anti-graffiti film as an antidote for an issue he's battled since 2006.

Preemptive Protection

"The good thing about graffiti film is that you can look at a place and know if you have a customer before you walk in the door," Castleman says. "You see damaged glass, you can use that in your sales presentation: 'Look at your neighbor—this is what is going on here. It's only a matter of time.'"

Shawn Schauwecker, owner of Extreme Window Tinting in Corona, Calif., uses a similar strategy by pairing

products into a package deal.

"If I go in and they want a price for solar film on a commercial storefront, I always ask if they've thought about anti-graffiti film," he adds. "Three doors down, your neighbors got hit, and they scratched the whole glass. This is preventative. If you put it on your glass, and it gets scratched, we can peel the film off, and your window's not damaged."

Anti-graffiti films act as a sacrificial barrier to control vandalism and provide a cost-efficient alternative to replacing battered glazing. Typical applications include retail storefronts, product displays, schools, transit systems, elevators and escalators, vending machines, restroom mirrors and museums.

"Many companies will build a new storefront and look around to see how much graffiti is on other storefronts around them," Schauwecker says. "If it's



Shawn Schauwecker, owner of Extreme Window Tinting in Corona, Calif., re-applied anti-graffiti film at Modern Parking in Glendale, Calif.

a single or dual-pane window, a dual-pane window will be costly to replace. It's like car insurance; you don't need it until it happens."

Installation, which protects against scratching, spray paint and acid etching and assists in retaining broken glass fragments, allows business owners to circumnavigate a potentially costly glass and glazing expenditure.

"It's all gang-related," says Gil Guerra, owner of California's Team GK Glass Tinting. "The worst thing is when you have seven windows on your storefront—If I walk by and write my name, you scratch my name out and write your name, and then another guy scratches both out and writes his. Once they start, they don't stop. Anti-graffiti film works."

continued on page 34



Anti-Graffiti Film Suppliers

3M

Avery Dennison

Climate Pro

Eastman

Graffiti Shield

Johnson Window Films

Madico

Maxpro Window Films

Solar Gard

Solyx

Wintech Window Films

XPEL

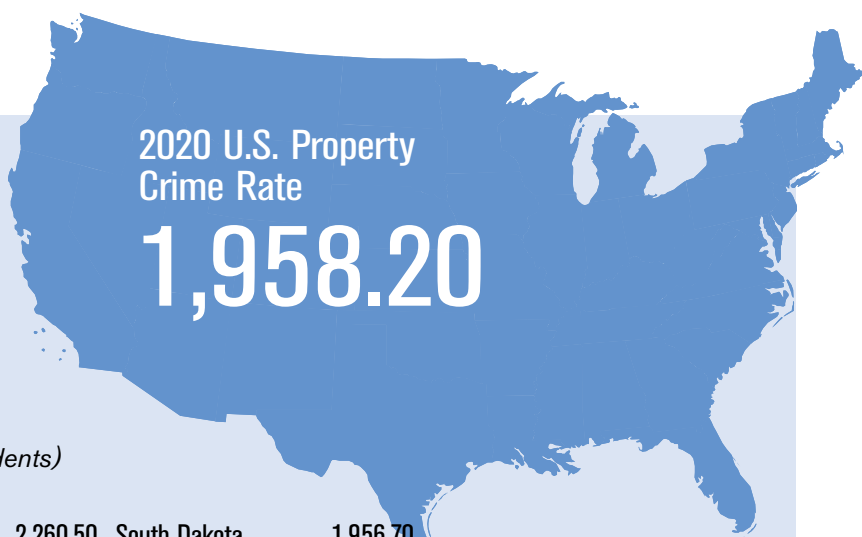
After



Crime Let Loose

The arrival of a once-in-a-century pandemic and societal unrest colored 2020's portrait. Take a look at the 2020 U.S. property crime rate in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, which comes in at number one.

(Reported property crimes per 100,000 residents)



District of Columbia . . . 3,493.00	Alaska 2,260.50	South Dakota 1,956.70
Louisiana 2,884.40	Texas 2,245.00	Nevada 1,926.60
New Mexico 2,841.90	Arizona 2,227.70	Nebraska 1,909.20
Colorado 2,833.80	North Carolina 2,226.50	Ohio 1,850.30
Washington 2,732.40	Kansas 2,199.10	Indiana 1,783.20
South Carolina 2,721.10	California 2,138.90	Kentucky 1,779.50
Oklahoma 2,705.60	Alabama 2,136.80	Florida 1,769.40
Oregon 2,659.00	Minnesota 2,124.90	Iowa 1,698.20
Arkansas 2,613.40	North Dakota 2,124.10	Pennsylvania 1,644.10
Missouri 2,531.00	Montana 2,120.80	Wyoming 1,610.60
Tennessee 2,492.80	Mississippi 2,101.60	Maryland 1,609.80
Utah 2,464.40	Georgia 2,007.40	Connecticut 1,565.10
Hawaii 2,411.40	Delaware 1,961.40	Illinois 1,559.40
		Wisconsin 1,485.70
		Virginia 1,456.40
		New York 1,410.70
		West Virginia 1,399.40
		Michigan 1,360.90
		Rhode Island 1,245.50
		Vermont 1,217.00
		New Jersey 1,158.20
		Maine 1,156.20
		Idaho 1,111.90
		New Hampshire 1,098.90
		Massachusetts 1,053.20

Source: Statista

Cause and Effect

"I think most of it is people carving their initials or gang signs into the glass," says Schauwecker, who connects 30% of total sales to anti-graffiti work. "I tell customers if it gets vandalized, don't let it continue on the same glass. Someone will write something on the glass, and if you don't replace the film right away, someone else will cross it out and put their name."

Anti-graffiti film comprises 40% of C.B. Tint's sales. Castleman applies and reapplies the film in bathrooms, escalators and elevators in malls throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. Monuments aren't safe either. Vandals defaced the 142-name San Jose Vietnam War Memorial in Spring 2019.

"With tint, it's wham-bam, see you in 20 years if you need me—please give me a referral," Castleman explains.

"With anti-graffiti, you're getting three to four years max before it needs to be replaced; and that's if they don't tag it. You're creating a cash-flow customer by installing this film. They're going to need you again."

California Penal Code 594 PC specifies the crime of vandalism as maliciously damaging, destroying or defacing another person's property. Vandalism is a misdemeanor if the damage is less than \$400.00. But the charge can be a felony if the amount is \$400.00 or greater.

"I do a lot of McDonald's," says Schauwecker, who also applies anti-graffiti film at several KFCs and Starbucks. "Some of those get hit a lot. The managers will call me and say, 'We need this replaced right away.' The worst thing is walking up to a restaurant, the windows are vandalized and customers are [questioning] what area they're in."

A Whole Different Ballgame

"I think it's intimidating for the same reason security film is intimidating—it's a thicker film," Castleman adds. "Anyone who deals primarily with cars is less willing to take on thicker films because the installation is more difficult than a regular film. Anti-graffiti film is heavy, rigid and has a very sticky adhesive; fingerprints will show up. There's a lot that can go wrong."

Suppliers sell the product in various densities. Graffiti Shield's Glass Shield is a four- or six-mil thick film.

"There is more risk for contamination because you're outside and have wind blowing that can turn your film into a flag," Castleman says. "There's a lot you can't control. But there are ways to avoid contamination. Contamination primar-

continued on page 36

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GANGS & GRAFFITI

continued from page 34

ily comes from the top. You're spraying the top, gravity rolls down and anything on that top, nasty gasket rolls down. We are trained not to spray the top four inches of the glass. We will spray the film but not the glass."

In an industry where slow season reigns supreme during the colder months, Schauwecker says that anti-graffiti film is a year-round solution built to sustain businesses—rain or shine.

"I used to use a four mil anti-graffiti film—it's a lot easier to install than the six mil," he explains. "I stopped using that years ago. I'll strip and re-do windows that I never did initially, and it's four mil. It's easier for you, but there is a bigger chance of vandals scratching through the glass." **WF**

Chris Collier is the assistant editor for WINDOW FILM magazine. Connect with him on LinkedIn and Facebook.

▶▶ ccollier@glass.com



Matt Castleman, owner/operator at C.B. Tint in Campbell, Calif., has battled vandalism with the product since 2006.

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Protracted Protection

El Pollo Loco Restaurant Chain Goes Graffiti Free

El Pollo Loco, which now operates more than 400 company-owned and franchised restaurants in the Southwestern United States, invested millions of dollars in renovating the look and layout of numerous California locations. Management explored long-term investments after one particular facelift. That's where California's Team GK Glass Tinting came in.

“I have been using Graffiti Free film for over 20 years and have never had a customer need to replace a window. The film does an amazing job of protecting the glass from damage.”

—Gil Guerra, owner of Team GK Glass Tinting

The Solution

“I have been using Graffiti Free film for over 20 years and have never had a customer need to replace a window,” says Gil Guerra, owner of Team GK Glass Tinting. “The film does an amazing job of protecting the glass from damage.”

Madico's Graffiti Free film protects both glass and other smooth surfaces from harm, according to the company. Optically clear and distortion-free, Graffiti Free window film acts as a sacrificial barrier protecting glass from costly graffiti, etching or high-traffic



The Graffiti Free installation covered all of the location's exterior glass.

wear. After an event occurs, damaged film is removed, and a new layer is installed at a cost less than that of removing and replacing the glass.

Prolonged protection followed the initial 2013 installation, which covered all of the exterior glass at the El Pollo Loco location. El Pollo Loco, which has served the Los Angeles area since the early 1980s, chose to have the film installed on most of its Los Angeles area restaurants and entered a maintenance contract with the installation company. The maintenance contract guarantees that any film-protected glass damaged by graffiti or etching will be

quickly repaired by applying a new layer of Graffiti Free film.

Job Well Done

Management at the various locations are pleased with the installation results. With the ability to quickly remove any graffiti, their patrons can continue to be welcomed into a pleasant dining atmosphere. The fast removal also prevents re-offending from taking place at the same location. The El Pollo Loco chain continues renovating restaurants across the Southwest, with anti-graffiti film playing a pivotal role in protecting the new exterior glass from damage. **WF**



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They'll Never Change

“I need your help, Mr. Hill,” the early morning caller began, “and I hope you have a minute to talk with me. My name is Al Reed. I’ve been reading your monthly articles in WINDOW FILM magazine for the past few years, and I think you can provide me with the kind of advice I need.”

Take it From Me

I don’t like to advise anyone because no good comes from it usually. I have found that if you give someone advice and things turn out good, they typically assume that their fortune was due to their quick thinking and never give you any credit for your advice. But, if your advice doesn’t work for them and things go badly, you are quickly blamed.

However, we humans have this thing called an ‘ego.’ Sometimes we like to think—maybe even believe—that we are wise about many things and people would like our opinions and advice on something.

“Okay, Al,” I replied. “Let’s hear it.”

“Well,” he said, “I’m fed up with the people I’m working for, and I want to quit as soon as possible.”

“I see, and I suppose you have been told that I do a little recruiting work and you would like me to help you find another job. Is that it?”

“Oh heavens no,” Al replied. “I’m not the least bit worried about finding another job. Companies are begging for help right now.”

“Then I don’t understand. What advice do you want from me? I don’t see how I can help you.”

“I know you can help,” he began. “As I said, I have been reading your articles for a while now. I know that underneath that calm, nice-guy appearance you try so hard to project, there is a

twisted, evil, diabolical, sneaky, scheming, cynical—”

“Hey, that’s enough,” I interrupted. “You’re gonna give people the wrong impression of me. Now, do you want my help or not?”

“Yeah, I do ... sorry. So here’s my story. I came to work for my current employer a little over three years ago. When I started, I was told that I could advance in the company as fast and far as my talent would take me. But I just kept getting one lousy assignment after another. I wasn’t appreciated or respected, and worst of all, the first advancement opportunity went to someone else ... because, I was told, they had more experience and had been here longer.”

“Okay, Al. What do you want from me?” I asked.

“Mr. Hill, I want you to tell me how to get even with them for how I’ve been treated. I feel that you will know how to do it.”

“Actually, Al, I think you should sit down with your boss and tell them how you feel.”

“A waste of time, Mr. Hill. They’ll never change.”

“You don’t want to give it at least a try, Al? You might be surprised.”

“Mr. Hill, I’m telling you. They are never going to change. They don’t care about their employees. So are you going to help me or not?”

“Okay, I’ll help you, but you have to do exactly as I tell you. No deviation. Agreed?”

“Absolutely. Tell me what to do.”

“Here’s the plan, Al. You have to become the best employee they’ve ever had. Do the dirty work with a smile on your face. Even volunteer to do the hard stuff if it comes up. You come in a little early every day and never leave at the

end of the day without asking your boss if anything else needs to be done before you go. You never criticize, whine or complain. Be as positive as possible and no matter how busy you get, be supportive and helpful to your coworkers.”

“I’m not getting it, Mr. Hill. How does this get even with them?”

“Al, after you have become the best thing that ever happened to them, you quit. It will devastate them.”

“Now I see. Great idea. I’m all in on this.”

A couple of months passed, and I hadn’t heard from Al. I thought I should call him.

“Al, it’s Lyle Hill, and I haven’t heard from you, so I thought I would give you a call to see how the plan I laid out for you worked.”

“Well, it was kinda strange. I did exactly what you told me to do, and after a few weeks, some strange things started happening. They gave me a raise without me even asking for it. And they started giving me more responsibility and asked me for my opinion on a few things. I can’t totally explain it, but I started to feel like I was part of the team.”

“So I’m guessing they were pretty shocked and disappointed when you quit, right?”

“Oh, I’d never quit now,” he replied emphatically. “You see, they’ve changed. They’ve really changed.”

“Yes, Al ... I guess *they* did.” **WF**

Humor columnist Lyle R. Hill is the former owner of a window film company in the Midwest. He also serves as president of Glass.com®, an information portal and job generation company. Hill has more than 50 years of experience in film and glass-related industries and can be reached at lhill@glass.com.



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