



By Diane Franklin

A Golden Opportunity

Golden Artist Colors Inc. Revitalizes the Decorative Painting Market

Golden Artist Colors Inc. has pulled off the perfect transformation to meet the needs of today's professional decorative painters and finishers. Founded in 1980, GOLDEN was originally known for fine artist paints. About a quarter-century later, the company saw an opportunity to serve the growing decorative finishing market and launched the Proceed® Professional Decorative Painting System of high-performance products.

Shortly after the launch, however, the decorative painting industry experienced the one-two punch of a housing bust in 2007 and a collapsing economy in 2008. While the products themselves received rave reviews,

the market to support them was no longer sufficient to sustain the line.

GOLDEN faced a choice: Discontinue the Proceed line entirely or make improvements and relaunch the products to appeal to a wider market. Believing in the products and the people who were using them, the company chose option No. 2, introducing two new lines—Lifestyle Finishes™ and GOLDEN® Pro Finishes—with an eye toward providing the professional decorative painting market with unique products at attractive margins.

“Both of these lines are available to independent paint and decorating retail stores,” says Dana Rice, market development specialist for Golden Paintworks,

the company's commercial coatings division. "We're concentrating on Lifestyle Finishes with a 3-foot planogram, making it a complete package for the paint and decorating store environment."

Earlier this year, ALLPRO recognized the value that the Lifestyle Finishes line offers the decorative finishing market and accepted Golden Paintworks as a vendor member.

Golden Paintworks launched Lifestyle Finishes earlier this year to align with today's freshest trends. The line includes 18 decorative finishing products featuring tintable metallic paints and natural-looking textures. The target audiences for Lifestyle Finishes are professional decorative painters and finishers, professional painting contractors, architects, designers and specifiers.

"What we're trying to accomplish with the line is to dial in on the idea of home as sanctuary," says Rice. "We're offering a full range of finishes—everything from natural and earthy to sophisticated and even a bit of 'bling' in the form of a glass bead texture that beautifully catches the light."

GOLDEN Pro Finishes is likewise targeting this market with such products as glazing mediums, slow-dry fluid acrylics, tinting dispersions, cracking size and clear topcoats in both gloss and matte finishes.

Lifestyle Finishes features a glazing medium and improved formulas for all of its metallic colors, which include bronze, copper, gold and pearl. The line also encompasses a variety of acrylic textures, emulating such looks as weathered granite, fresco, adobe and Venetian plaster.

The Lifestyle Finishes 3-foot planogram includes attractive signage, inspirational images, printed brochures with a holder, handpainted decorative samples of all the products and an accompanying line of professional tools.

"Handpainted samples are one of the big things we do as a company," Rice says. "We feel it's important to provide the handpainted materials so people can see and touch the real thing."

GOLDEN is supporting the relaunch with online content that is accessible on the Golden Paintworks website (goldenpaints.com), through social media on Facebook and Pinterest and with application videos and downloadable content, such as step-by-step application guides.

Throughout its history, GOLDEN has developed a reputation for working with artists to make product improvements to better serve their needs. The GOLDEN Custom Lab is the only facility of its kind dedicated to creating products to the unique specifications of individual artists, conservators, designers, architects, manufacturing companies and other creative clients. GOLDEN also has a dedicated staff of material and application specialists who can answer questions about any GOLDEN products and how they are used. These knowledgeable people are available by phone or email

five days a week during regular business hours to serve retailers, artists and other creative individuals.

What makes the 200 employees of Golden Artist Colors particularly attentive to customers' needs is that they are also owners of the company. GOLDEN implemented an employee stock ownership plan about 15 years ago, and the company is now majority-owned by its employees.

"One of the things that makes GOLDEN strong is that we have a company culture of working together," Rice says. "We're like a family. We take pride in what we do. Our product has quality and consistency when it goes out the door, and our fulfillment rates are high. It's a win for the customer, and it's a win for us." ●



The planogram for Golden Paintworks' Lifestyle Finishes line showcases the limitless possibilities it offers.