

An In-Depth Look at Benchmarking

BY the time this story goes to press, the Rockheads Group will be 113 members strong, and no wonder. It's been a growth machine since 2014, offering its members huge assets that include deep discounts with top-tier vendors, best practices and networking between members, and a very cool feature called Benchmarking. A general overview of these features was presented in the October 2023 issue of the *Slippery Rock Gazette*. However, it's the Benchmarking process that's the gist of this story, as explained by Rockheads Executive Director, Rich Katzmann.

"We survey our membership all the time to align what we're offering with what they feel is valuable. What we do, once a year, is reach out to our members and request very confidential financial and operational information, so we can compile an analysis of the group as a whole, as well as how they individually compare to the rest of the Rockheads. It's sent out as a fill-in-the-blanks spreadsheet that matches and mimics their financial statements. A small shop owner can easily do it themselves or a bigger shop can send it to their finance person, who can go into their profits and losses and in their balance sheet. In most cases, within a couple of hours, a member can fill out the 60 to 70 pieces of information that we are asking for."

The Nuts and Bolts of Compiling

Once the data is obtained, its elements are divided into usable parts, with gross revenues being the key ingredient. For example: shops are divided into categories such as from \$3 to \$5 million, \$5 to \$10 million, and \$10 to \$20 million per year and so on, continued Katzmann. "It doesn't do any good to compare the metrics of a 3 million dollar shop to a 10 million dollar shop, or a rural shop to a suburban or big city shop. That would be like comparing apples to oranges. We want to make sure that each shop is looking at a comparable shop, and how they compare against them. We'll take and calculate everything you can think of

by Peter J. Marcucci

Photos Courtesy Rockheads Group

such as SG&A (sales, general and administrative costs) and what you are selling your products for, and to whom. Is it to a walk-in, a dealer or an architect? How about a commercial customer or a big box? What are they paying for your product? So we're compiling these things at the highest level, and keep peeling away the onion, so to speak, asking what are you paying for your materials or your direct labor for templating, programming, fabrication and installations per square foot. How much for advertising, direct and non-direct payroll, benefits and healthcare. So it's total costs from beginning to end, so our member shops can look at what they're paying versus the industry or comparable shops. This is not just about dollars and cents. It's also about improving efficiency at every level and helping everyone to see the big picture."

[Please turn to page 2](#)

Rockheads Executive Director Rich Katzmann Demystifies the Benchmarking Process



Department of Labor Announces New Silica Enforcement and Compliance Initiative

IN Late September, the U.S. Department of Labor announced that its Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) launched a new initiative focused on enhancing enforcement and providing compliance assistance to protect workers in the engineered stone fabrication and installation industries.

"Many workers in the engineered stone industry are experiencing illnesses so severe that they're unable to breathe — much less work a full shift — because of their exposure to silica dust," explained Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health Doug Parker. "Among

OSHA Supplements Current Efforts to Address Serious Workplace Danger in Engineered Stone Fabrication and Installation

them is a 27-year-old worker in California who went to an emergency room with shortness of breath in 2022 and whose lung biopsy later revealed he had silicosis. Since then, he has been on an oxygen tank and unable to support his wife and three young children financially."

Supplementing OSHA's current National Emphasis Program for Respirable Crystalline Silica, this initiative will focus enforcement efforts on industry employers to make sure they're following required safety standards and providing workers with the protections required to keep them healthy.

[Please turn to page 4](#)

Rockheads Group

Continued from page 1

Valuing, a Huge Advantage of Benchmarking

Katzmann went on to explain, that after all these metrics are compiled, big numbers such as net profits and EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) shows how each shop compares relative to the rest of the Rockheads and the importance of valuing. “If any of our shop owners are thinking about valuing their business, whether they are going to give it to their son or daughter, sell the business or for tax purposes, EBITDA is the number one factor in determining how much money the business is generating and what the business is worth. So we provide that EBITDA and net profit information. Additionally, at one of our live events, we had a few Rockheads members who regularly purchased companies describe how they translate EBITDA to purchase price and what the companies can do to raise their value. This really helped everyone to figure out what these businesses are worth at the end of the day, because that’s what an acquiring company wants to know.”

Put in a simpler way: if a company’s current revenue is \$5 million per year, and is currently making a million dollars per year in profit, multiples (other factors) will be applied to these numbers, offering clarity and a final dollar amount for an owner or investor to value that business. This is a huge advantage for a buyer or seller,



Jon Kaplan and Rich Katzmann present a benchmarking review at the recent Oklahoma City Rockheads conference. Benefits of benchmarking include Valuing and a built-in early warning system of market fluctuation.

but there’s another important factor called Top Heavy, Katzmann explained. “Say all of your business comes from just one big box store or just one or two major customers. Well, that’s pretty darn scary for someone looking at buying your company, and that’s going to push your multiple down, because if even just one of those customers goes elsewhere, you’ve just lost a huge portion of your revenue, because so much of your business is tied-up in just a few companies. Conversely, if you’re diversified, and only 15 to 20% of your revenue is lost, let’s say from a big box customer, that’s a great opportunity to make up the difference from another area, such as builders, remodelers or homeowners. We ask all the right questions, and because of this we can explain who our members are selling to

and at what percentage. So there’s a whole bunch of different factors that Rockheads can supply that can be used and implemented by shops to drive those multiples up. We capture all the breakdowns including material types, and share them back to each member.”

Growing Pains Eased Through Benchmarking?

Another major consideration in using benchmarking is growth; Should I stay, or should I grow? Do I have enough growth capitol, and is the timing and market ready? These questions and more are enough to keep even the most savvy shop owners up at night. But not to fear, the Rockheads are here, continued Katzmann. “Let’s say a shop wants to get to \$10 million in sales per year. They have a 3 year plan, and then want to get to \$20 million. What we can show them is this: you are currently a \$5 million dollar company, and here’s how you compare against your peers across the metrics. You’re a pretty good shop at \$5 million, but if you want to get to \$10, holy cow! You better change this number by 25%, because a specific metric is more expensive when you get to \$10 million than it is at \$5. So we can show them the financial path of how to get from 5 to 10 to 20, and that’s a huge benefit. When I hear back from our membership, this is one of the things that they bring up, and a clear path forward that they can see.”

An Early Warning System

There’s one more big benefit to benchmarking, explained Katzmann, called early warning detection. “In July of 2022, we were already hearing that tract building

was slowing down and getting indications of what the industry was going to look like in 2023. So if you own a company and you know where you’re sitting, you now know what you need to do during your strategic planning and budgeting, thinking, ‘Hmm, I’m too heavy into tract building. Maybe I need to hire a new sales person whose strong points are working with designers or multifamily construction.’ Our members can definitely use benchmarking for planning, and to match their business with what the environment is going to look like next year.”

Safety and Confidentiality

Katzmann finished our conversation by stressing that any and all supplied information by Rockheads members is privileged for his eyes only. “This data is so confidential for these businesses, and rightly so. We deem this data classified, and it should not and never will get out to anybody. We’ve got firewalls and barriers set up, and I am the only one who sees their data with their names associated to it, and all kept locally by me. So even if there is a cyber attack, I am the only one who can put one and one together.”

In closing, the Rockheads’ benchmarking process has always been the cornerstone of what they offer, and certainly will continue to be in the future. For more information visit www.rockheadsusa.com or call Rich Katzmann at 815-210-1006.



“Thanksgiving Day is a jewel, to set in the hearts of honest men; but be careful that you do not take the day, and leave out the gratitude.”

– E.P. Powell

Natural Stone Institute Holds Colorado Study Tour



Study Tour attendees at the Gallegos Corporation Stone Yard

Over 100 members attended NSI's annual study tour, which took place in western Colorado September 10-14. Highlights of the event included a rare glimpse inside Colorado Stone Quarries' historic Pride of America marble quarry and fabrication facility and a trip to the Gallegos stone yard and marble shop in Gypsum. During the Gallegos visit, attendees enjoyed a fun Poker Run activity featuring their suppliers.

Gallegos CEO Gary Woodworth commented: "Gallegos Corp employees were extremely proud to welcome the NSI Study Tour to our West Campus Stone Yard and Marble & Granite Fabrication Shop. With the assistance of US Stone, Colorado

Flagstone, Northern Stone, Montes Stone, and Lyons Sandstone the Poker Run was a huge success and provided the attendees an opportunity to see stone from numerous NSI member quarries as well as our own quarry and custom stone fabrication shop."

Giuseppe Telara, General Manager at Colorado Stone Quarries echoed these comments: "Colorado Stone Quarries would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the NSI group that visited our facility and our Pride of America Mine. Your interest and presence were really appreciated, and we hope this visit created a memory that will last a lifetime!"

In addition to these tours, attendees also enjoyed exploring a portion of the Colorado National Monument and celebrated Brenda

The Study Tour also visited the Colorado Stone Quarries' Pride of America Mine.



Edwards during the second installment of the Women in Stone Legacy Series event. They also enjoyed plenty of networking and recreation time and participated in breakout discussions on topics important to the industry, including silica and safety, installer best practices, employee retention and recruitment, and a session for new industry employees who are eager to break through hurdles and learn from seasoned professionals. The annual auction raised \$57,000 in gross proceeds for the association and \$13,000 for the Natural Stone Foundation.

Attendees spoke positively of the event, especially praising the networking opportunities. First-time attendee Todd Bay (Delta Stone Products) shared that attending the study tour "opened my eyes to the immense opportunities in this rapidly growing industry." Board member Sal Banchitta (Simple Stone Care) agreed: "You never stop learning! I enjoyed the quarry tour and meeting

new faces. If you want to grow in the stone industry, come to the NSI study tours."

Planning is currently underway for next year's study tour, which will take place in Utah. Look for an announcement in early 2024 for dates and locations.

The Natural Stone Institute is a trade association representing every aspect of the natural stone industry. The current membership exceeds 2,000 members in over 50 nations. The association offers a wide array of technical and training resources, professional development opportunities, regulatory advocacy, and networking events. Two prominent publications—the Dimension Stone Design Manual and Building Stone Magazine—raise awareness within the natural stone industry and in the design community for best practices and uses of natural stone. Learn more at www.naturalstoneinstitute.org.

THE EASY & POWERFUL WAY TO HANDLE STONE



WOOD'S POWR-GRIP® VACUUM LIFTERS & HAND CUPS

- ✓ Specifically **designed for safety**
- ✓ Every product is **individually tested and approved** before shipping
- ✓ **USA Manufacturer** complies with **ANSI standards**

Visit WPG.com or call **800.548.7341** for more information on WPG's stone-handling products.



Share your project photos of Powr-Grip products in use @woodspowrgrip



Special Feature in this Issue...



SLIPPERY ROCK GAZETTE®

The Voice of the Stone Fabricator

An In-Depth Look at Benchmarking, by Peter Marcucci [Begins on 1](#)

Training, Safety and Education

Department of Labor Announces New Silica Enforcement and Compliance Initiative [Begins on 1](#)

Industry Calendar of Events and Training: November to January 2024..... [5](#)

Finding Growth Opportunities in an Uncertain Economy, by Ed Young [6](#)

Mastering Lead Generation, by Stephen Alberts [Begins on 8](#)

Do You Know Your Salary Cap? by Rick Phelps [9](#)

Industry Topics, Tips and Featured Columns

Try Something Different This Year, by Sharon Koehler [Begins on 13](#)

Stone Restoration and Maintenance Corner –Going from Polished to Honed,
by Bob Murrell [Begins on 17](#)

The Stone Detective and the Case of Oops, I've Fallen and Can't Get Up!
by Frederick M. Hueston [Begins on 18](#)

The Goober Baton Gets Passed to a New Generation, by Sam Venable [19](#)

Industry News

Natural Stone Institute Holds Colorado Study Tour [3](#)

Park Industries Celebrates Inaugural ParkFest, Unveils Four Innovative New Products [12](#)

MILE®stone Hosts Gauged Porcelain Installation Training [Begins on 14](#)

MSI Oklahoma Commemorates New Showroom Grand Opening [15](#)

Tenax Updates Brand with New Logo and Brand Identity [18](#)

Exciting Opportunities Planned for the Industry at TISE 2024 [18](#)

NTCA Five-Star Contractor Program Angles Up with Accreditation [19](#)

Marketplace [20](#)

Classified Ads [21](#)

Contributors & Staff

Rick Stimac **Publisher**

Larry M. Hood **Editor and Design Director**

G. William Brown..... **Graphic Designer**

Stephen Alberts..... **Countertop Marketing Co.**

Mark Anderson **Department of Humor**

Frederick M. Hueston **Stone Forensics Investigations**

Sharon Koehler **Stone Industry Consultant**

Rufus B. Leakin **Guru of Urban Folklore**

Peter Marcucci **Special Contributor**

Bob Murrell **Restoration Consultant**

Rick Phelps..... **Synchronous Solutions**

Justin Shaw **Stone Fabricator Elite**

Ed Young..... **Fabricator's Business Coach**

Sam Venable..... **Department of Irony**

Read our online edition at www.slipperyrockgazette.net. Use the Classified drop-down menu to browse ads and to place a classified ad, and the article links to view stories in the current issue. Send advertising inquiries to LHood@slipperyrockgazette.net, and comments c/o publisher@slipperyrockgazette.net. Subscription requests, a classified ad submission form, current and archived back issues and articles are available online at www.slipperyrockgazette.net.

New Silica Enforcement and Compliance Initiative

Continued from page 1

It establishes procedures for prioritizing federal OSHA inspections to identify and ensure prompt abatement of hazards in covered industries where workers face exposure to high levels of silica dust.

OSHA and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health identify silica dust exposure as a health hazard for workers involved in manufacturing, finishing and installing natural and manufactured stone, which includes the man-made, engineered artificial or cultured types.

When inhaled, very small crystalline silica particles expose workers to the risk of silicosis, an incurable, progressively disabling and sometimes fatal lung disease. Unsafe silica dust exposure can also lead to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or kidney disease.

Industries subject to the prioritized programmed inspections include those engaged in Cut Stone and Stone Product Manufacturing as well as Brick, Stone and Related Construction Material Merchant Wholesalers. Outreach efforts will continue to include additional industries that may work with engineered stone.

A July 2023 study released by the American Medical Association underscores the dangers for workers in these industries. The “*Silicosis Among Immigrant Engineered Stone*



Courtesy David L. Johnson & Margaret Phillips,
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

Countertop Fabrication Workers in California” study cited 52 male patients diagnosed with silicosis caused by occupational exposure to respirable silica dust from engineered stone. Of these patients, 20 suffered progressive massive fibrosis, 11 needed lung transplants and 10 died due to their exposures.

As part of the initiative, OSHA is sending affected employers and stakeholders information on the initiative, including fact sheets on dust control methods and safer work practices for engineered stone manufacturing, finishing and installation operations.

There are several resources available to learn more about crystalline silica hazards and protection including the 6-page *Hazard Alert Bulletin* focused on the countertop industry, available at <https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3768.pdf>

Application-Only up to \$400,000!¹

Apply Online:
Ascentium.info/Rock2023

ascentium
CAPITAL

¹Financing dependent on credit parameters.

Industry Calendar of Events

November 2023

Rockheads Group, 365 Call: Business Processes Part II

When: Thursday, November 2, 2023

Where: Online

ISFA: New Member Workshop

When: Wednesday, November 8, 2pm to 3pm

Where: Online

Visit www.isfanow.org/calendar for more information and to register.

NSI: Texas Stone Summit, One Day Workshop

When: Thursday, November 9, 9am to 3pm CDT

Where: Triton Stone Group, Austin, Texas

ISFA: Stone Industry Training Days

When: Tuesday, November 13 to Wednesday, November 14

Where: Zoller North America Headquarters, Ann Arbor, Michigan

NSI: Effects of Deicing Chemicals in Natural Stone **When:** Thursday, November 30, 11am to 12pm ET

Where: Online

Visit Naturalstoneinstitute.org for more info.

December 2023

ISFA: Stone Industry Training– Sales Rep Clinic, Part 8

When: Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Where: Online

Visit www.isfanow.org/calendar for more information and to register.

NSI: Virtual Quarry Tour

When: Thursday, December 14, 12:00pm ET

Where: Online

ISFA: General Member Meeting

When: Thursday, December 14, 2pm to 3pm

Where: Online

Visit www.isfanow.org/calendar for more information and to register.

January 2024

ISFA: Stone Industry Training– Sales Rep Clinic, Part 8

When: Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Where: Online

Visit www.isfanow.org/calendar for more information and to register.

The International Surface Event

When: January 24-26, 2024

Where: Las Vegas, Nevada

Visit www.intlsurfaceevent.com for information and to register.

Other regional and online event opportunities are available through the industry association websites listed above.

“The things you really need are few and easy to come by;
But the things you can imagine you need are infinite,
and you will never be satisfied.”

—Epicurus



INTRODUCING

Natural Stone Catalogue

This catalogue is a collection of images and material details to help buyers identify appropriate natural stone materials for their projects.

Developed by the North American Quarry Advocacy Group.

Powered by the Natural Stone Institute.

Find out more:
stones.naturalstoneinstitute.org

© MARK ANDERSON. www.andertoons.com



TRAINING & EDUCATION

Finding Growth Opportunities in an Uncertain Economy

Economic signals are all over the map. Depending on who you ask, we are in for either a good old-fashioned recession or something called a ‘soft landing’ or maybe no change at all. This makes it really tough for a shop owner to confidently plan for the next 12 to 24 months.

The good news is this uncertainty is also creating opportunities for shop owners that recognize them and are prepared to take advantage of them.

Increase Market Share

In uncertain economic times, it is common for shops to start cutting costs. An early victim is usually the marketing budget. It’s common when times get slow for shop owners to think they can’t afford to support their social media ad spend or their traditional advertising costs.

However, this can create opportunities for shops that are prepared to go against the norm. A shop that continues to advertise can maintain its sales level during slow times. If most of your competition has stopped advertising, this approach can even increase your share of the market - as the available market shrinks, you are able to pick up a larger percentage. Better yet, when the market eventually turns around, as they always do, the shop that increased its market share will grow much more quickly than those who stopped advertising.

Upgrade Labor

Some shops have already started reducing their working hours. Others have already started laying off employees.

This means, if you need to upgrade the quality of your workforce, there is a larger labor pool for you to select from. If you have a competitor that has cut back on shop hours, consider placing yard signs near that competitor and/or use geofencing and texts to advertise your current openings.

This cost-cutting mentality isn’t limited to the stone industry. Most businesses follow this model. If you have a good training program, there will be more

Ed Young
Fabricator’s Business Coach

quality applicants of all backgrounds to select from, allowing you the opportunity to upgrade your workforce.

Enhance Your Company Image

If you think the only factor you can compete on is price, then it’s time to introduce you to the UVP (unique value proposition). Your UVP tells prospective customers why they should buy from you instead of your competition.

Even though you fabricate countertops just like your competition does, your business still has characteristics that are different from your competition. Some of these are how well you execute your work, your level of customer service, the market segments you are experienced in, any special services you offer, and many more. The key is to craft a simple but compelling UVP.

A marketing strategy that leverages your UVP is the key to keeping your sales volume up while everyone else is slowing down. A solid strategy would include social media and an email campaign along with traditional marketing methods.

If you are struggling to craft a UVP or to define a solid marketing strategy, get professional help. While this will cost some money, it won’t cost nearly as much as all the sales you will lose without a strong UVP.

Pro tip: A strong UVP does not mention price! Properly crafted, your UVP will reduce the pricing pressure that normally comes with an economic downturn.

Improve Processes

If you have been struggling to find time and resources to work ON your business processes, this could be your golden opportunity.

Have you been thinking about implementing a different software package? This could be the time to tackle that project. Have you been wanting to build out your training program so you can finally grow your own in-house experts? Now is



the time to do it. Have you wanted to visit other shops in the organizations you belong to so you can see what everyone else is doing (better yet – send some of your key people on those visits)? Maybe this is the time to conduct your own safety training and conduct some self-audits.

Bring on New Product Lines

Are you getting more requests for porcelain but have struggled with it in the past? This could be the time to get some solid training and start building your procedures for working with those materials. Your consumables supplier can help you with getting the right tooling. ISFA can provide the technical training you and your folks need.

Increased pricing pressure is common during a downturn. Rather than reducing pricing on your main bread-and-butter products, consider taking on some lower priced product lines. This will give your customers an array of options to meet their budget requirements without hurting your primary business.

Enhance Your Customer Experience

This would be a great time to consider upgrading the overall experience of your customers. How long does it take to generate a quote? How can you improve the speed of following up on initial customer inquiries? What can you do that your competition is not willing to do? Is this the time to experiment with in-home sales? Is this the time to work on shortening your template-to-install lead time? Maybe now is the time to consider offering annual

countertop inspections and sealing services. Raising the bar on your customer experience can put a lot of pressure on your competitors – yet another way to gain market share.

For a business to grow profitably, key people must spend a large portion of their time working ON the business as opposed to working IN the business. While the uncertainty can be a bit scary, an economic downturn can present the ideal opportunity to work ON your business. Companies that execute well on these items will create a strong competitive advantage that will pay off handsomely – both now and also when the economy rebounds.

If you are struggling to reach your business goals or if you’re just stressed out or want to discuss this article, visit my website and schedule a call, or contact me at Ed@FabricatorsCoach.com. We’ll talk about your situation, and I’ll help you develop a plan to reduce the chaos, make more money, and get your life back.

“It behooves you, therefore, to think and act for yourself and your people. The great principles of right and wrong are legible to every reader; to pursue them requires not the aid of many counselors.”

—Thomas Jefferson

New logo...
New label...
Same formula.



Protects Against Graffiti
Enhances Color Tone
Stain Resistant
Non Yellowing
UV Resistant



Scan Here



TRAINING & EDUCATION

Mastering Lead Generation

The Ultimate Strategy for Countertop Shops

In the highly competitive world of countertop shops, finding and converting potential customers into loyal customers is a top priority for most shops I talk with. The key to success lies in implementing an effective lead-generation strategy that not only attracts potential customers but also nurtures them through the sales funnel. In this article, we'll explore the best lead generation strategy a countertop shop should follow to thrive in today's market.

1. Website Optimization

Your website serves as the digital storefront for your countertop shop. Ensuring it is well-optimized is the first and most crucial step in generating quality leads. Here's what you should focus on:

Mobile Responsiveness: In an age where mobile internet usage is prevalent, your website must be mobile-friendly to accommodate potential customers browsing on their smartphones and tablets. A responsive

Stephen Alberts
Countertop Marketing Co.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): Optimize your website for search engines to increase its visibility in search results. Use relevant keywords, create high-quality content, and build backlinks from reputable sources. A strong SEO strategy will help potential customers find your countertop shop when searching online.

2. Content Marketing

Content is king in the digital marketing realm, and for good reason. Creating valuable and informative content not only establishes your authority in the countertop industry but also attracts potential customers. Here's how to do it effectively:

Blogging: Regularly publish blog posts on your website addressing common countertop-related questions, maintenance tips,



installation processes, and customer testimonials. Post these videos on platforms like YouTube and share them on your website and social media. Video content has become increasingly popular and can capture the attention of potential customers in a unique and compelling way. There is nothing wrong with short clips! 30-60 seconds is a good length to shoot for.

Email Newsletters: Collect email addresses from interested visitors and send them regular newsletters with updates, promotions, and valuable content related to countertops. Email marketing remains a powerful tool for nurturing leads and keeping your brand top-of-mind with potential customers. You can do this once a month to stay in front of these potential customers.

3. Social Media Engagement

Utilize social media platforms to connect with your audience, showcase your work, and generate leads. Here's how:

Visual Content: Share high-quality images and videos of your countertop installations on platforms like Instagram and Facebook. Visual content is highly engaging and can attract potential customers. Inspire potential customers with visually appealing images of your countertops in various settings.

Engagement: Respond to comments, messages, and reviews promptly. Engage with your audience by asking questions, running polls, and conducting giveaways. Building a sense of community and interaction with your brand can turn casual social media followers into valuable leads.

Paid Advertising: Invest in targeted social media advertising campaigns to reach potential customers based on demographics, interests, and behaviors. Paid advertising can help you expand your reach and target specific groups of potential customers effectively.

4. Online Reviews and Testimonials

Positive online reviews and testimonials are powerful tools for generating leads. Encourage satisfied customers to leave reviews on platforms like Google Maps, Yelp, and Facebook. Display these reviews prominently on your website to build trust with potential clients. Potential customers often rely on the experiences of others when making decisions, and positive reviews can help you stand out in a crowded market.

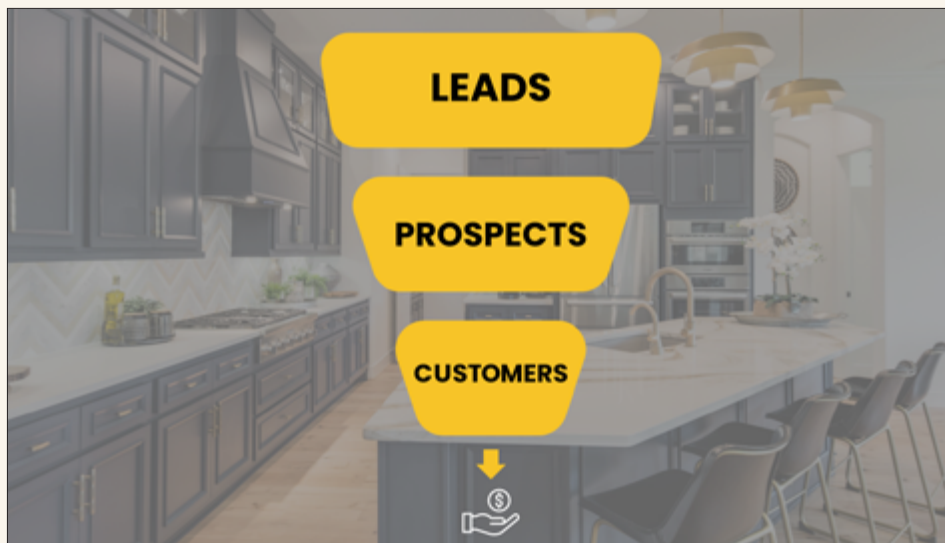
5. Lead Magnets and Offers

To capture the contact information of potential customers, offer valuable lead magnets or incentives. These could include:

E-books: Create e-books or guides about countertop selection, maintenance, or design tips in exchange for email addresses. E-books can position your shop as a valuable resource for potential customers seeking information and guidance.

Discounts and Promotions: Offer exclusive discounts or promotions to website visitors who sign up for your newsletter or request a quote. These incentives can entice potential leads to take the next step in their customer journey and consider your shop for their countertop needs.

[Please turn to page 14](#)



design guarantees that your site looks and functions well on all devices, offering a seamless user experience.

User Experience: Make sure your website is easy to navigate with clear calls-to-action (CTAs), a clean design, and fast loading times. A cluttered or slow website can deter potential leads.

design trends, and more. This content can help you rank in search engines and showcase your expertise. When customers find answers to their questions on your blog, they are more likely to trust your expertise and consider your shop for their countertop needs. I recommend about 2-3 posts per month.

Video Marketing: Create engaging videos showcasing your countertop products,

TRAINING & EDUCATION

Do You Know Your Salary Cap?

Just like a professional baseball team, your fabrication business has a salary cap. And like in baseball, the league sets your salary cap!

That's right, the league you want to play in sets your salary cap. If you want to play in the minor leagues, then ignore the salary cap and earn single digit returns – there are lots of players in the minors...

If you want to play in the big leagues and earn 15%, 20%, or even more fabricating countertops, then read on!

The math is simple, but to calculate your salary cap you will need to understand Throughput Accounting and how to calculate **Throughput Dollars (\$T)** and your **\$T Ratio** – the percentage of revenue that your \$T represent.

You will also need to understand your Income Statement (P&L) and Balance Sheet.

From your Income Statements, calculate the percentage of Revenue that you spend on materials with your suppliers. The industry average is around 35%... Take that percentage and subtract it from 100% and you have your \$T Ratio - the percentage of your revenue that stays in the business to pay your bills. Across the industry the \$T Ratio averages about 65%.

Next, calculate how much money you spend each month NOT COUNTING material costs. We call this your Operating Expense, or \$OE for short. You can get this number from your P&L, but you will need to check your Balance Sheet to make sure you don't have monthly payments on capital that only show up only on the Balance Sheet. Add all your monthly payments to calculate your average monthly \$OE.

As you are calculating your \$OE, break your expenses into two categories: 1) LABOR: Anything to do with Labor (direct, indirect, contracted out...), and 2) FIXED: everything else.

You now have all the ingredients you need to calculate your salary cap, so let's work an example.

To keep the math simple, our fabricating business does \$1,000,000 in Revenue a month. Materials are 35% or \$350,000 per month leaving \$650,000 \$T. Our total \$OE are \$550,000 per month, so our business

Rick Phelps

Synchronous Solutions

makes \$100,000 per month in Net Profit (\$NP) for a 10% Return on Sales.

$$\text{\$NP} = \text{\$T} - \text{\$OE}$$

$$\text{\$650,000 } \text{\$T} - \text{\$550,000 } \text{\$OE} = \text{\$100,000 } \text{\$NP}$$

Of our \$550,000 \$OE, \$400,000 is Labor, which means \$150,000 is Fixed.

Example: Next year we plan to grow our Revenue by 15% to \$1,150,000 per month and achieve an average 15% Return on Sales. What is our Salary Cap, assuming our Fixed expenses stay the same?

Revenue: \$1,150,000

Net Profit: \$172,500 (15% of Revenue)

\$T \$747,500 (65% of Revenue)

\$OE Fixed \$150,000

$$\text{\$NP} = \text{\$T} - \text{\$OE Fixed} - \text{\$OE Labor}$$

$$\text{\$OE Labor} = \text{\$T} - \text{\$NP} - \text{\$OE Fixed}$$

$$\text{\$OE Labor} = \text{\$747,500} - \text{\$172,500} - \text{\$150,000} = \text{\$425,000}$$

To achieve our objectives, we will need to hold our Labor costs to \$425,000 per month, an increase of just \$25,000.

With a little bit of math and a lot of discipline, and you can improve your bottom line and achieve your objectives.

Yet so few actually do...

Knowing things like your Salary Cap are critical for your success in business. If you weren't aware before now of how to do this basic analysis, don't sweat it! You could have invested in an MBA and STILL not know these basics!

We help business owners create amazing businesses. It's not rocket science, but it is logic and scientific thinking!

If you need help with your strategic planning, reach out to us at Synchronous Solutions! Contact us through our website www.synchronous-solutions.com/contact-us/.

Makita® XCV04Z Cordless HEPA Filter Dry Vacuum

Includes:

- 2 Anti-static hoses
- Crevice tool
- Nozzle
- Curved pipe
- Straight pipe
- Main filter
- Damper and pre-filter



Item# 11486

Makita® VC4210L 11 Gallon Wet/Dry Vacuum

Includes:

- Main Flat Nano Filters (Pair)
- Fleece Nano Filter Bag
- Disposal Bag
- 1-3/8" x 16' Anti-Static Hose
- Crevice Nozzle
- Cuff Adapter



Item# 5146

Makita® 9565CV SJS 5 inch Grinder & Dust Shrouds

- 13 Amps
- Lock-On Switch
- No Load Speed: 2,800 - 10,500 RPM
- Spindle Thread: 5/8" - 11 UNC
- Variable Speed Control Dial
- Overall Length: 11-3/4"
- Net Weight: 4 Lbs.

Item# 9375



Item# 11492



Item# 11493

Available at
BB INDUSTRIES
 Better Service • Better Value



Call 1-800-575-4401 or Order Online

www.BBIndustriesLLC.com

Take Control with Makita
 Makita Vacs and Shrouds for Dust Management on the Job Site



T-REX

MODEL S DUAL TABLE
FABRICATION CENTER

THE **FASTEST** COMPLETE FABRICATION CENTER IN THE STONE INDUSTRY



EXCLUSIVE
FEATURES

CALL US TODAY AT:

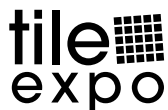
877.571.5599

FOR ALL DETAILS AND PRICING

 @PoseidonMachines  @PoseidonUSA1  @PoseidonUSA1

Visit us online at poseidonmachinery.com or call us at **877.571.5599**

INTERNATIONAL THE SURFACE EVENT™



The Largest North American Surface Event

Architects | Designers | Specifiers |
Retailers | Distributors | Contractors |
Remodelers | Installers | Fabricators
| Consultants | Quarriers | Importers |
Inspectors & Other Industry Pros

story books

**Access Your Specially Crafted
TISE Storybook for Your Career**



SCAN ME

Whether you are seeking to expand
your business offerings or get
educated on what's forecasted and
upcoming in the year --
TISE has the journey for you!

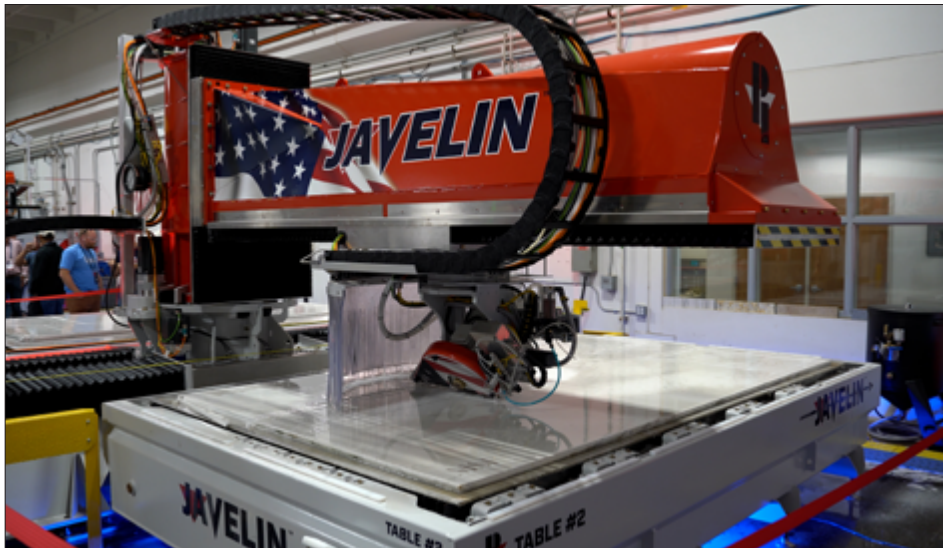
24-26 JANUARY 2024
LAS VEGAS

intlsurfaceevent.com

Access your TISE storybook and discover a **20% discount** promo code good for **Exhibits & Seminars** when you register for The International Surface Event 2024.



Park Industries Celebrates Inaugural ParkFest, Unveils Four Innovative New Products



Park Industries, North America's leading manufacturer of stone CNC machinery, announced the incredible success of their inaugural ParkFest event. Held on October 4th at their St. Cloud, Minnesota headquarters, the event was well-attended with over 125 fabricators and 45 vendor partner guests in attendance. ParkFest offered a diverse range of experiences for attendees, reflecting the company's commitment to innovation, education, and community building.

Highlights of the event included Park's industry-renowned educational session, the [Digital Stoneworking Expo™](#), three fabricator shop tours, an exclusive tour of the Coldspring quarry, tours of Park's state-of-the-art manufacturing facility, new machine reveals, a 70th-anniversary party, and more. ParkFest was the first event of its kind for the company, which focused on fostering camaraderie and collaboration within the already tight-knit industry during the planning process.

The most highly regarded portion of ParkFest was the new machine reveals, where Park announced and showcased four new machine solutions including the new [JAVELIN™](#). This groundbreaking CNC sawjet features advanced high-production sawing while boasting the smallest two-table footprint with the largest mitering envelope in the industry. The unveiling of the JAVELIN was a grandiose production featuring a massive silk drape covering Park's newest innovation with hundreds of guests packed into

Park's training center. A short introduction and development history of the machine from Mike Anderson, VP of Engineering, and Scott Christman, Director of Product and Growth, set the stage for the epic unveiling, set to music and lights. Upon the drape being pulled, the room quickly filled with applause and the flash of cameras as guests captured the JAVELIN™ performing its first demo.

The other machine launches included the [TITAN® 4000 series](#) featuring the TITAN® 4700 and TITAN® 4800, the fourth generation of the company's industry-leading CNC router, and the [HydroClear™ PRO 400](#), a high-production addition to their HydroClear™ PRO water recycling system line.

The excitement from the JAVELIN™ reveal spilled into the evening as guests spent time in the ParkFest Sponsor Pavilion networking with and learning from 25+ industry-leading vendors, experiencing demos and connecting with machine experts at five machine training stations, and enjoying beautiful Minnesota fall weather on Park Industries patio where the company offered dinner, drinks, and games to wrap up the event.

Park Industries' Director of Product and Growth, Scott Christman, expressed his gratitude for the overwhelming support and turnout at ParkFest. "This event was about more than just showcasing our products; it was about connecting with the heart of our industry, our partners, and our customers. We are



Park Industries welcomed over 125 fabricators and 45 vendor partners to their first-ever ParkFest celebration, held in October at their St. Cloud MN headquarters.



immensely proud to have brought together a community of like-minded professionals to learn, grow, and celebrate our shared passion for stone craftsmanship. He adds, "The response to our new machine reveals, especially the JAVELIN™, has been phenomenal. We believe this innovation will significantly enhance the stone fabrication industry and lead to improved profitability for our customers."

As they reflect on the incredible day of camaraderie and collaboration, Park Industries looks forward to continuing its journey of excellence in stone CNC machinery manufacturing. The company will remain steadfast in its commitment to delivering the highest quality products and fostering strong relationships within the community.

From a steadfast dedication to quality, customer service, and innovative technology, Park Industries began providing full-service solutions to the stone industry in 1953. Since then, they've grown to become North America's largest stoneworking equipment manufacturer. Their machinery, proudly American-made, is designed for maximum durability, minimal downtime, and high profitability. What differentiates Park Industries from other machine manufacturers is their unwavering commitment to providing Precision, Performance, and Peace of Mind®, an unmatched combination centered around increasing their customers' profitability and machine uptime. For more information on Park Industries, visit parkindustries.com and find Park Industries on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

Try Something Different This Year

Forgive me for pointing out the obvious but... the holidays are here. Ready or not, here they are. Halloween has come and gone, and we are staring into the face of the Thanksgiving/Hanukkah/ Christmas/Kwanza season. Throw in a couple of birthdays, maybe a bowl game or two plus maybe a New Year's party and before you know it, you have spent a lot of bucks during the holiday season, at a lot of different places. But with a little foresight and planning, your holiday spending can do some good, where it's needed the most.

Usually, at this time of the year I ask you to think about contributing to some of the different charities that need your help during the holiday season. Organizations like the Salvation Army Angel Tree or The Toys for Tots campaigns. But we all know

Sharon Koehler Stone Industry Consultant

that this is a different year than in the past. The economy is not great, and inflation is out of control. You may not have any extra to steer their way. It's understandable.

However, there is still something that you can do to help out. You can help to support companies that contribute to charities. Plenty of companies and businesses support local and national charities through their sales. The list of these companies is long, and the list below is not all inclusive, but you will see what I mean. (Keep in mind that neither I nor the SRG endorses these companies, except for BB Industries of course. It's just an informational list.)

Wildfang – They donate a percentage of profits from full-price goods to a rotating monthly charity. Charities have included Planned Parenthood, Black Girls Code, and Girls Inc.

Love with Food by SnackNation – For every snack box purchased, they donate one meal to a needy family through Feeding America.

Natori – When you purchase lounge wear, you can designate a charity to receive 1% of the purchase price.

Toms – This shoe company donates 33% of its profits to organizations that help with mental health and ending gun violence.

Sackcloth & Ashes - For every blanket sold, the company donates a blanket to a homeless shelter in the buyer's zip code, helping customers make a direct impact in their communities. Sackcloth & Ashes hopes to donate 1 million blankets by 2024.

Parachute - For every Venice percale bedding set sold at Parachute, it donates one malaria-prevention bed net in partnership with the UN Foundation's Nothing But Nets campaign.

Mable - For every toothbrush Mable sells, the company donates a toothbrush to a child in the U.S. and teaches schools about personal hygiene and sustainability.

The Right to Shower - The company sells natural and ethically made soaps and body washes, with 30% of profits going to build mobile showers in cities around the world to help the homeless.

There are many other small to mid-size companies that contribute to charities year-round. However, they aren't the only ones. Big, national companies help support charities as well.

BB Industries – They help to support several charities including Habitat for Humanity, Susan J. Koman Race for the Cure, and various veteran's organizations.

Warby Parker – They provide PPE and preventive health supplies to healthcare workers and communities in need when you purchase glasses.

Estee Lauder – This makeup and perfume giant has been contributing to breast cancer research for decades.

[Please turn to page 25](#)

SPEEDfolder...Simple & Free.



STORES JOB DETAILS



INTEGRATES WITH
GOOGLE CALENDAR



ORGANIZES JOB FOLDERS

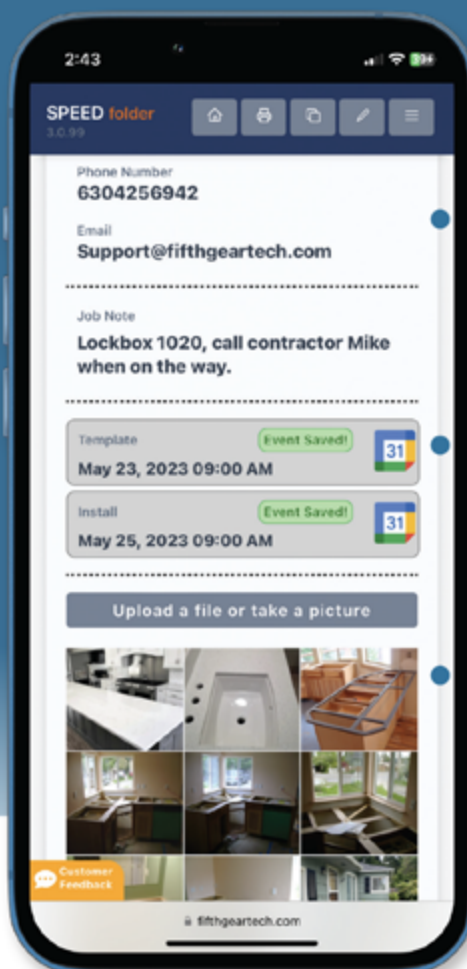


SCAN CODE TO GET STARTED



SPEEDfolder

ALL YOUR TEAM ON THE SAME PAGE



Get Integra at



BB Industries is the **LARGEST** National Distributor for Integra with over 250 colors

IN STOCK!

Integra products are trusted, pre-colored seaming and assembly adhesives formulated for quartz, natural stone, sintered materials, solid surface, and more.

Meets or exceeds Indoor Air Quality standards

Shop Integra Adhesives



BBIndustriesLLC.com



Integra Adhesives

BBI BB INDUSTRIES
Better Service • Better Value

Integra Adhesives are the tube innovator and have the best color match website to make it the easiest in the industry. All others are just imposters!



Three Easy Ways to Partner with BBI



- Phone
- Web
- In Person

Shopping with Us is So EASY!

www.BBIndustriesLLC.com 800-575-4401

MILE[®]stone Hosts Gauged Porcelain Installation Training



MILE[®]stone continued its MILE[®]stone Academy Essential Gauged Porcelain Installation Training events with the fourth event held in September, 2023.

The 3-day course was held in the Florim USA training area in a dedicated 5,000-square-foot space in the manufacturer's factory located in Clarksville, Tennessee, equipped with the latest fabrication tools and materials. The class featured hands-on techniques taught by experts. Certified Installers and/or Licensed Contractors, interested in expanding their expertise to include gauged porcelain, were taught how to prepare, cut and install 48x110-inch gauged porcelain tiles using mocked-up shower stall settings.

MILE[®]stone created the Academy to support its distribution network while also educating tile installers about gauged porcelain tile. Distributor customers were invited to reach out to Certified Installers and/or Licensed Contractors they have relationships with, to attend the course without a fee.

Attendees appreciated that MILE[®]stone is 'dedicated to educating the labor force'. As one participant relayed, "any company that will provide training for their material shows that they take pride in the finished product as well as the production."

After learning the skills to handle and install gauged porcelain tiles, and practicing during the length of the event, installers took a written exam to receive certification. The written exam featured questions on ANSI standards as well as the techniques they were taught.

Please turn to page 16

TRAINING & EDUCATION

Mastering Lead Generation

Continued from page 8

6. Online Advertising

Consider using online advertising methods such as Google Ads and Facebook Ads. These platforms allow you to target specific demographics and keywords, ensuring that your advertisements reach potential customers who are actively looking for countertop solutions. With targeted advertising, you can maximize your budget by reaching those most likely to convert into leads and customers.

7. Networking and Partnerships

Forge partnerships with builders, interior designers, and contractors. These collaborations can lead to referrals and mutually beneficial relationships that help you generate leads. Building a network within your industry can open doors to a steady stream of potential leads from those who trust and recommend your services.

The competition is brutal out there. A well-crafted lead generation strategy is crucial for success. By optimizing your website, creating valuable content, engaging with your audience on social media, and using various lead-generation tactics, you can attract and convert potential homeowners into satisfied and loyal clients.

Keep adapting and refining your strategy to stay ahead in this dynamic industry. With dedication and the right approach, your countertop shop can thrive and grow. This will help you get through the ups and downs in the market.

Stephen Alberts is the owner of the Countertop Marketing Co and STONE ENGAGE. They specialize in helping countertop companies grow the retail side of their business outside of word-of-mouth and referrals. They also offer software to help you engage more with customers and close more countertop projects. To learn more visit countertopmarketingco.com/ or stonengage.com/. You can also email Stephen at steve@countertopmarketingco.com.

MSI Oklahoma Commemorates New Showroom Grand Opening

MSInternational, Inc. (MSI), the leading supplier of flooring, countertops, wall tile, and hardscaping products in North America, is excited to announce the opening of its state-of-the-art Showroom and Distribution Center in Oklahoma City. Located at 5325 Southwest 36th St., Oklahoma City, OK 73179, this impressive 70,000 square-foot facility is set to cater to both residential and commercial markets in the greater OKC area and beyond.

In celebration of this new facility, [MSI Oklahoma City](#) hosted a Grand Opening event on September 28th. The event featured a delightful spread of food and beverages, including a generous charcuterie board, an assortment of beers, wines, seltzers, soft drinks, and more. Plus, friends from the Hawaiian Style Food Trailer served a spread of island-inspired food dishes.

MSI's latest showroom boasts dedicated, well-lit, and climate-controlled areas designed to inspire trade professionals and consumers alike, enabling them to make informed product and design choices. It will also include an interactive outdoor area and slab gallery, providing customers with a comprehensive experience as they embark on their next construction or remodeling project.

"Our showroom features an outdoor display area with our turf and putting green that customers can play on," stated Chance Hill, Branch Leader for MSI Oklahoma City. "We also have an extensive slab viewing area featuring many different quartzite slabs."



MSI Oklahoma City proudly presents a wide range of products to suit diverse customer preferences, encompassing lifestyles, trends, and budgets. In the slab gallery, it also features natural stone and the popular Q™ Premium Natural Quartz. The showroom and outdoor atrium area also display MSI's best-sellers like Everlife® Luxury Vinyl

Flooring and Arterra® Porcelain Pavers.

Given MSI's extensive product range, the space has been designed as a valuable resource for various business sectors, including residential remodeling, new home construction, multifamily projects, and commercial ventures.

[Please turn to page 16](#)



marmo meccanica

SPA

SPA
marmo meccanica



The Original Flat Polish Machine

Extension tables included * Full vertical support system available



Edge Polisher and Miter Processing



Visit us in Las Vegas at Booth #4224 for show specials!

THE INTERNATIONAL SURFACE EVENT

Marmo Meccanica • 1590 E. Highwood, Pontiac MI 48340 • 248-853-9000
info@marmo-na.com • www.marmo-na.com

MILE[®]stone Gauged Porcelain Installation Training

Continued from Page 14

This training event continues with four more events to be held through November of this year. A new, 1-day abbreviated, informational course is in development. MILE[®]stone will continue to develop

courses like these to support distributors' relationships with their local installers as well as educate installation professionals.

For more information on MILE[®]stone Tile, visit www.milestonetiles.com.



MILE[®]stone, the manufactured brand of Florim USA, is proud to represent sustainable tile, made in the USA. We are committed to the environment and community by encouraging the use of building solutions through environmentally friendly practices. Florim USA, declared a Benefit Corporation in December 2022, combines an approach to sustainability that intersects with a business strategy embracing three areas of responsibility: economic, social, and environmental. In addition to numerous green memberships, accreditations, and certifications, MILE[®]stone introduced the industry's first Carbon Neutral Porcelain Tile and is taking steps to become completely carbon neutral.

900lb. NO LIFT!

NO LIFT INSTALL SYSTEM

NEW POWER TILT
Installs Islands
SAFELY and EASILY!



JOIN US IN BOOTH #8771 AT TISE!
January 24-26, 2024

INTERNATIONAL
THE SURFACE EVENT



"I recently lost one of my best lead installers to back pain. The No Lift Install System has alleviated the need for our guys to lift heavy tops every day and eliminated the need to have two crews or extra help for oversized counters."

The system not only saves backs, but it's also a huge time saver. My only regret is that I didn't find No Lift sooner!"



Scott Lardner

President, Rocky Mountain Stone

MSI Oklahoma

Continued from Page 15

Raj Shah, Co-Chief Executive Officer of MSI, commented, "With our new showroom and distribution center, we have significantly bolstered our ability to serve our customers in the Oklahoma City area. Equipped with a dedicated team of local professionals, local inventory, and a state-of-the-art showroom, we are confident that we can provide the widest selection of hard surface products, unparalleled customer service, and the most robust distribution capabilities in the region."

The OKC showroom is open six days a week, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday - Friday and between, 9:00 am and 1:00 pm, on Saturday. Walk-ins from both consumers and trade professionals are welcome.

The opening of this new location will create more jobs for the local community. To learn more about open career opportunities, visit www.msisurfaces.com/careers/.

To learn more about MSI's complete product assortment, visit www.msisurfaces.com.

Buy Now and SAVE BIG!

SAVE \$995 on your No Lift Install System*

*Full details available at NoLiftSystem.com | Offer ends 11/30/23



Scan the QR code
for direct access
to this offer!

NO LIFT
INSTALL SYSTEM

NOLIFTSYSTEM.COM



"Where men are forbidden to honor a king they honor millionaires, athletes, or film-stars instead: even famous prostitutes or gangsters. For spiritual nature, like bodily nature, will be served; deny it food and it will gobble poison."

— C.S. Lewis

Stone Restoration and Maintenance Corner

Going from Polished to Honed

In recent articles I discussed re-honing countertops, vanities, and even floors. These surfaces do need periodic re-honing to remove any bad etching and scratching that has become too obvious from regular wear and tear. Even honed surfaces will ultimately show these wear issues, albeit much less than a polished surface.

But what about existing polished surfaces? Can they be transformed from a polished surface to a honed surface? There are obvious reasons for doing this, especially in a functional or heavy wear setting, such as a kitchen or flooring surface.

The easy answer is yes, of course they can be honed. However, there can be some problematic issues with this polished to honed operation. What do you do for all of the tight spots, like around the faucets, stove tops, sinks, and against the backsplash or other vertical surfaces? Ideally, all of the hardware should be removed, as this would remedy most of these issues except for the transition lines between the counters and vertical surfaces.

These tight spaces on the counters must be dealt with by tedious hand work. Use of diamond hand pads and even acids (for calcium-based stones) can help with these

Bob Murrell

M3 Technologies

Photos by Bob Murrell

hard-to-access areas. You need to dull these down so they will blend with the newly honed surface.

This is also true when transitioning a polished flooring surface to a honed surface. Low areas will still remain polished and will show up, big-time. These must be dealt with by either removing all lippage or as described above, on the countertops.

Use of a honing powder can be quite helpful in this scenario, too. You can use the center of a natural or white pad and some 150 grit honing powder to help make the transition, working around hardware or for low areas in a floor, in transitioning from a polished surface to a honed surface.

So, the next question comes up is: what level of hone will be required? The answer will depend somewhat on the type and color of the stone being worked. For a recent large white marble kitchen countertop, where all of the horizontal surfaces would be transitioned from a polished to a honed surface, the new homeowners decided that a 100 grit finish was the desired look. All of the vertical surfaces (backsplash and tiered center island splash)



Deep scratching staining and wear on the countertop. The previous owners obviously did not believe in cutting boards!! LOL!

would remain polished. This was really a very cool look.

Other stones may look better when honed to a 200 grit or even a 400 grit. Just remember, the higher in grit the surface is taken to, the more it will show both etching and scratching.

This particular polished white marble countertop was excessively scratched and etched. The previous owners must have used the counters for cutting and chopping. Can you believe it, lol? I know that many of you have run into the same problem, where the client doesn't have or even know what a cutting board is, lol!

The scratches in this countertop were so deep that it took quite a lot of passes, even using the 100 grit ELF flexible metal bond. Typically, a 220 grit would suffice for a starting point on countertop repairs. But hey, that's how the finished level of hone was decided. I really don't think that a 200 grit disc would have been very productive on these heavy scratches.

The extra-long marble double vanity was also honed and re-polished.

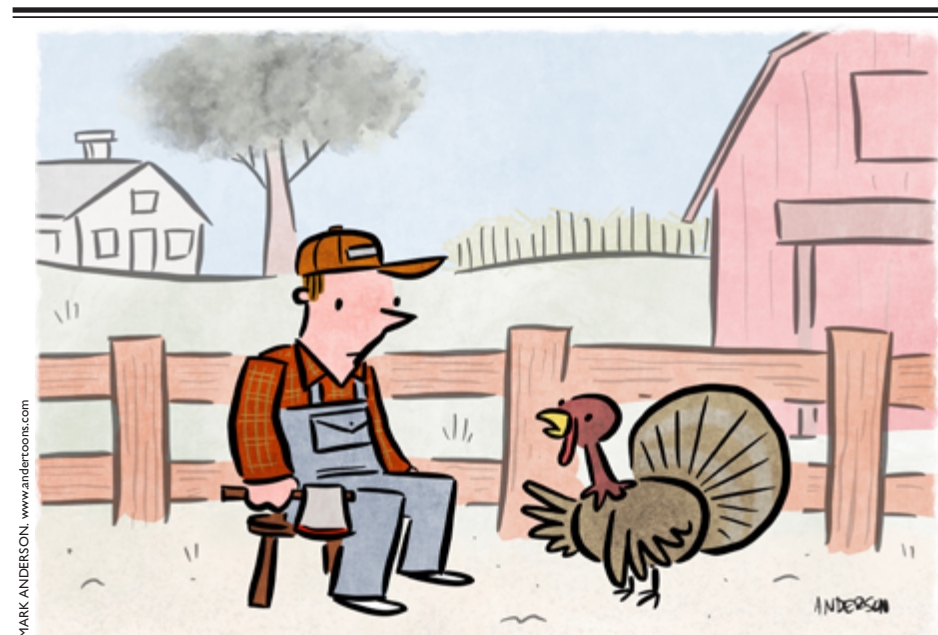


It was at this point that a 120 grit diamond hand pad was used in conjunction with the Majestic Heavy Duty Tile & Grout Cleaner acid product, to take care of the areas around fixtures and horizontal/vertical intersections. Diamond hand pads are a must, when dealing with countertops and vanities. The acid was used (undiluted) with a cotton swab, where the diamond hand pad could not reach. It took several applications to get the polish to dull adequately. Care should be taken when using undiluted acids around certain metals. Protect with masking and use caution. Keep some RTU Majestic No-Rinse pH Neutral Cleaner handy, to neutralize and rinse the acid after use.

Please turn to page 25



Test area completed on center island, where the 100 grit honed finish was decided. Notice the partition wall (foam core board) and the masking on the range.



"I've made my peace with Thanksgiving. Just do me one favor – don't take any crap from your sister, Evelyn."

Tenax Updates Brand with New Logo and Brand Identity

Tenax

IN September 2023, almost 70 years after its foundation, Tenax renewed its logo and its brand identity.

As Tenax evolves, they recognized they need players who can adapt to change. This is why they chose Marmomac 2023 as the perfect platform to introduce Tenax's new identity: A sneak preview that displayed their innovative strategy and drive to become the partner of choice in surface treatments.

In their ongoing mandate to bring surfacing to another level, Tenax has released these mission statements:

- *To generate value within the surface supply chain through research, technology and sustainable development.*
- *To be the go-to partner for companies that value the preservation of beauty with innovative solutions, leading the industry into the future.*
- *Radical, direct, inclusive: This is our prompt as we urge customers, partners and stakeholders to blaze a new path side by side, elevating surface treatments to the next level.*

In this new chapter in the history of the Tenax brand, certain principles are guiding this transformation.

- *Change is the engine driving the company, while staying faithful to the values that made the brand's history.*
- *Writing the new corporate charter with a robust position, mission, vision, and a unique design system.*
- *Including new partners, customers, suppliers and stakeholders.*
- *Proclaiming a revamped brand attitude oriented to the future.*

About Tenax's New Logo

The new Tenax logo fuses the letters "T" and "X" to reveal an innovative meeting point as well as a dynamic point of departure to reinterpret our values in a new shape.

Tenax SPA is an Italian company and world leader in the production of chemicals, abrasives and tools for the processing of natural stone, quartz and ceramic. For over 65 years it has been offering innovative and technological solutions for surface processing and treatment. With 6 subsidiaries in 4 continents, Tenax is now distributed worldwide in over 100 countries. For more information visit their website www.tenaxusa.com.

Smarter than the Average Bear

Two opportunistic bears on an Alaska military base raided a Krispy Kreme doughnut van that was stopped outside a convenience store during its delivery route.

The driver usually left his doors open when he stopped at the store but this time a sow and one of her cubs that loiter nearby sauntered inside, where they stayed for probably 20 minutes one Tuesday morning, said Shelly Deano, the store manager for Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson JMM Express. The bears chomped on doughnut holes and other pastries, ignoring the banging on the side of the van that was aimed at shooing them away, Deano said.

"I was beating on the van and they're not moving. I could hear them breaking open the packages and everything," she said. "I was like, 'They don't even care.'"

When the bears couldn't be roused, base security was called and sounded sirens meant to scare away the bears, she said.

The bears eventually came out and wandered in front of the convenience store and gas station a bit before heading into the woods.

It's not unusual to see bears on base or around the store but nothing like this has happened before, Deano said, adding that the delivery driver now closes his doors when he stops at the shop.

Exciting Opportunities Planned for the Industry at TISE 2024

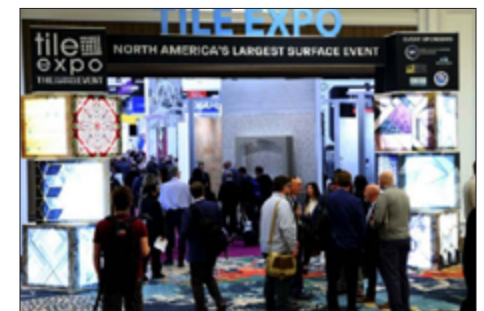
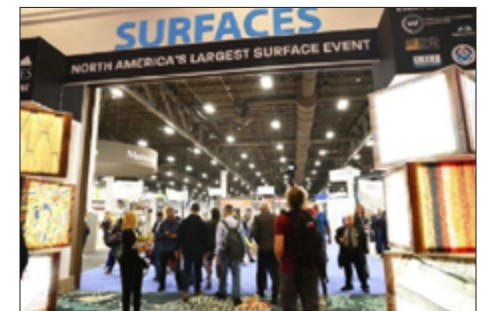
Registration is now open for The International Surface Event (TISE): SURFACES | StonExpo | TileExpo and exciting opportunities are planned for the industry. **Important to note, the 2024 event dates are January 24 – 26, making the event a Wednesday through Friday day swing.** The exhibit hall is nearly sold out and is packed wall-to-wall with flooring, stone, and tile exhibitors, services, and product offerings for industry professionals. A new line-up of special education experiences include PULSE Seminars, trainings and certifications, exhibit hall demos, panel discussions, a unique new set of Favorite Finds product tours, lounges, wellness programs, networking opportunities, and more. Do not delay registering as many items have limited capacity and are booked first-come, first-served inside registration. Register now at www.intlsurfaceevent.com/register to secure your first picks of experiences at TISE 2024.

"The TISE team is so excited to present the developments for the upcoming event. From the partners, our exhibitors, our speakers, and the industry press, the TISE 2024 event is packed with unique content, creative feature ideas, and space requests for new product introductions to exhibit – all of this will create an exciting new event experience," says Amie Gilmore, Show Director, The International Surface Event.

To help navigate the vault of amazing opportunities at the event, The International Surface Event team has developed TISE Storybooks for the different business classifications who attend each year.

Architects, designers, specifiers, distributors, fabricators, installers, retailers, dealers, inspectors, consultants, quarriers, importers and other industry pros should access their unique storybook to discover the event's top picks and highlights for their career and secure a 20% off discount code inside the storybook – good for 2024 exhibit passes and seminars.

TISE is carefully crafted to offer all career segments the opportunities to improve their businesses and careers. Whether you are seeking the newest products launches for the year, wanting to connect with your current vendors or discover



new ones, looking to get training and certifications that expand your business offerings, or get educated on what's forecasted and upcoming in the year – TISE has the journey for you!

The International Surface Event (TISE): SURFACES | StonExpo | TileExpo has served nearly 30 years as an industry marketplace for floor covering, stone, and tile businesses to come together, seek products and services, build relationships, and develop their businesses. For more information, please visit www.intlsurfaceevent.com. To view the sponsors of TISE, visit the industry association page on the event website. SURFACES is sponsored by the World Floor Covering Association; StonExpo is sponsored by the Natural Stone Institute and the Natural Stone Council; TileExpo is sponsored by the National Tile Contractors Association and the Ceramic Tile Education Foundation.

NTCA Five-Star Contractor Program Angles Up with Accreditation

Since 2008, the NTCA Five-Star Contractor Program has established high standards and requirements for its elite members who demonstrate exceptional craftsmanship and business practices for tile and stone installation contractors.

Over the last couple of years, NTCA has aimed to establish accreditation for these members, demonstrating their commitment to advancing the professionalism of the tile and stone industry, and providing third-party accreditation.

“This is very important if you want to be specified in labor qualifications, and necessary if we wish to have credibility with general contractors and project owners,” said Bart Bettiga, NTCA Executive Director. “It assures the qualification if anyone questions the program, and also assures the process was fair and impartial in approval or denial.”

The very first company to go through the new NTCA Five-Star Accreditation process was Columbia River Tile & Stone, Inc. “We are very excited to be a part of this amazing program,” said Jeff Occhipinti, owner. Dirk Sullivan of NTCA Five-Star Contractor Hawthorne Tile in nearby Portland, Oregon, urged Occhipinti to join.

“For some time I have known about the Five-Star Contractor program and its reputation for representing the top tier of our trade,” Occhipinti said. “We have always strived to offer the best environment for our employees and deliver the highest quality installations to our customers. The Five-Star Accreditation program is an important part of pursuing this goal.

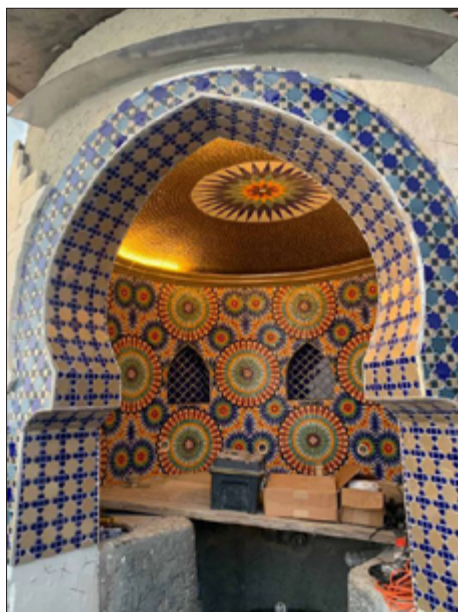
“As a Five Star Accredited Company, we are proud to uphold the highest standards while working towards the advancement of our company and our trade. Being a part of this program represents our commitment to education, industry standards and best practices. Additionally, we are looking forward to learning from other members and continuing to grow as a business. We feel truly blessed to be a part of such an amazing program.”

Re-upping for Accreditation

All companies seeking NTCA Five-Star Contractor membership—even existing NTCA Five-Star Members -- need to reapply and go through the accreditation process.

Why? By 2020 the NTCA was successful including NTCA Five-Star Member recognition as preferred contractors in commonly-used architectural specification platforms. This made it apparent that the NTCA Five-Star program needed to transform from a “company recognition” program into an official “accreditation” program which now includes a third-party review process.

“Since we enhanced the application process to give a much bigger view of a company overall, we only thought it fair that



The award-winning “Grotto” project, by Heritage Marble & Tile

everyone go through the application process, instead of grandfathering in companies that had a much simpler application process,” said Becky Serbin, Education and Curriculum Director, NTCA. “Otherwise, it is still the same NTCA Five-Star Contractor program but with a new enhanced application process and third-party evaluation of the application.” Existing NTCA Five-Star Contractor members have through the end of 2024 to reapply.

The first two existing NTCA Five-Star Members to receive accreditation are Heritage Marble & Tile in Mill Valley, Calif., and D.W. Sanders Tile & Stone Contracting, Inc., in Marietta, Georgia.

“My previous NTCA Five-Star Contractor membership allowed me to promote my company in a category of excellence,” said Martin Brookes, president. “Not only workmanship, but business best practices,” he said.



He credits NTCA’s Amber Fox and Becky Serbin and other committee members for developing and fine-tuning the NTCA Five-Star Contractor Accreditation process. Proud to be in this best-in-class group, Brookes added, “I hope others will seek out the opportunity to up their game and be recognized for their commitment and hard work in also becoming best-in-class. I look forward to the benefits of being an NTCA Five-Star Contractor, and the rewards that manufacturers and distributors recognize within this elite group of accredited tile contractors.”

For more information on the NTCA Five-Star Contractor program, visit www.tile-assn.com/page/ntca-five-star-accreditation.



Martin Brookes, Heritage Marble & Tile



Jeff Occhipinti, Columbia River Tile & Stone

Just Another News Day in Chicago

A Chicago television news crew reporting on a string of robberies ended up robbed themselves after they were accosted at gunpoint by three armed men wearing ski masks.

Spanish-language station Univision Chicago said a reporter and photographer were filming just before 5 a.m. one Monday in Chicago’s West Town neighborhood when three masked men brandishing firearms robbed them, taking their television camera and other items.

“They were approached with guns and robbed. Mainly it was personal items, and they took a camera,” Luis Godinez, vice president of news at Univision Chicago, told the Chicago Tribune.

Godinez said the news crew was filming a story about robberies in the West Town community that was slated to run on the morning news. He said the footage they shot was in the stolen camera, and the story never made it on the air.

Chicago police identified the victims as a 28-year-old man and 42-year-old man. Police said the pair was outside when the three men drove up in a gray sedan and black SUV. After the armed robbers took items from the news crew they fled in their vehicles.

No injuries were reported and no one is in custody, police said.

Godinez said Univision Chicago, the local TV affiliate of international media company TelevisaUnivision, is not disclosing the names of the reporter and photographer to protect their privacy.

“They’re OK, and we’re working on it together as a team,” he said.

The episode was the second robbery that month involving a Chicago news crew, after a WLS-TV photographer was assaulted and robbed on August 8 while preparing to cover a weekday afternoon news conference on Chicago’s West Side, the station reported.

The robberies prompted the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians Local 41, which represents TV photographers in Chicago, to warn about the growing safety threats to those who cover the news.

Local Union president Raza Siddiqui told the *Chicago Sun-Times* that some of the news stations affiliated with the union planned to take additional safety steps, including assigning security to some TV crews.

The Stone Detective

The Case of Oops, I've Fallen and Can't Get Up!

I woke up real early today, folks. The air in Florida was getting a bit nippy, you know, cause it's fall and the temperature's dropping into the 60s. Now, I understand if you're from up north, that 60 degrees ain't much, but down here, it's coat and gloves weather. So, I got myself dressed, grabbed my coat, gloves, and

Dr. Frederick M. Hueston, PhD

that trusty fedora, and was all set to leave when I hit a slippery spot on the mat right outside my door. Little did I know, that slip would lead me down



the rabbit hole of a slip and fall case later that day.

I strolled into my favorite diner with Flo holding down the fort behind the counter and the Admiral planted on his favorite stool. Flo was pouring me a cup of joe, flashed me a wink, and asked, "What's cooking this morning, sailor?" That sailor bit was new, and it set off the Admiral's usual tales from the high seas. I tried to tune him out, rolling my eyes at Flo for encouraging him, when my phone rang and saved me from more sea yarns.

On the other end of the line was a lawyer calling himself Mr. Smith, working for Dewie, Cheatem & Howe, or something like that. He wanted to know if I was a slip and fall expert, especially on marble floors. I cracked a grin and told him I was an expert at my own slips and falls. Then, I asked him to spill the beans on the case.

Mr. Smith spilled 'em, alright. He related how a lady slipped and fell in a hotel lobby, on a set of stairs, and now she was suing the place, claiming the floor was too slippery. I asked which side he was on, and he said he was representing the hotel. I told him I'd need to visit the scene, take some slip readings, and do a proper investigation. He agreed, and we set up a meet.

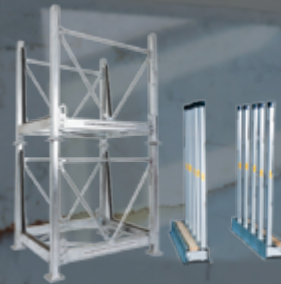
Next day, I headed south to the hotel, lugging my trusty slip meter – the Bot 3000, for those who are curious about my detecting hardware. I met with the lawyer and a bunch of hotel folks. I asked 'em the usual questions and they guided me to the spot where the lady took her tumble.

It was a fancy white marble floor. Just before the stairs, there was a long hallway from the conference center, and the stairs led down to the lobby. I set up my meter and started taking slip readings. All the readings came back safe.

[Please turn to page 22](#)

GROVES KNOWS STONE.

Durable and reliable material handling solutions play an important role in stone fabrication efficiency. Groves products are engineered to address every aspect of the fabrication process. So, whether you need to fabricate, move, store or transport stone, Groves offers rugged, high quality, dependable solutions to get the job done. Make the move to Groves – the titans of stone handling.



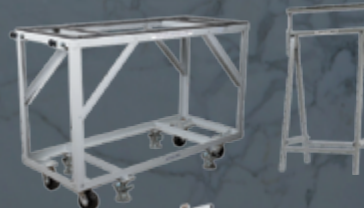
STORE IT.

Stacking Boxes
Bundle Rack Systems



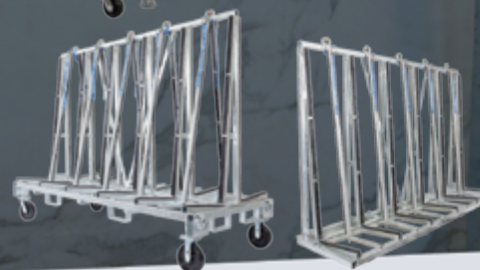
MOVE IT.

Heavy-Duty Shop Carts
Stone Dollies



MAKE IT.

Fabrication Tables
Fabrication Stands



TAKE IT.

Heavy-Duty Transport Carts
Single Sided Truck Racks

www.groves.com | sales@groves.com | 800.991.2120



**STRONGER.
SAFER.
SMARTER.**

The Goober Baton Gets Passed to a New Generation

One of my favorite childhood memories was the Thanksgiving Day when the Venable and Anderson families in Tennessee assembled under one roof and made a long-distance call to Uncle Tom and Aunt Fannie Stuart in Texas.

As any member of the Long-in-the-Tooth League can attest, long-distance telephoning was more complicated, not to mention more expensive, back in the day. None of this punching the area code and the number and instantly chatting. The plateau of high-tech excitement was considerably lower.

You had to go through an operator and choose your preferred mode of contact: person-to-person (more costly), station-to-station (less costly) or collect (cost borne by the recipient.) Then it took a moment or two for the operator to plug in the wires.

So what happened when Uncle Tom and Aunt Fannie answered? Did hearty well-wishes immediately commence? Latest news exchanged? Sports, weather and politics discussed?

Heavens, no. All the grownups — passing the household's lone receiver back and forth, of course — spent forever behaving like goobers from the 19th century. On the order of:

"Fannie, is this you?"

"Yes! Who is this?"

"It's Angie. I can't believe we're talking to each other."

"I know! It's just like we're in the same room together! Let me give the phone to Tom."

"OK, I'll give this one to Eva."

"Tom, are you there? This is Eva."

"Yes, this is Tom. Why Eva, I can't believe we're talking to each other."

Sam Venable
Department of Irony



"I know, it's just like we're in the same room together! I'm going to put Big Frank on now."

"OK, I'll give it back over to Fannie."

"Fannie, are you there? This is Frank."

"Yes! Why Frank, I can't believe we're..."

And blah-blah-blah until every adult brother, sister, aunt, uncle, cousin, niece, nephew (and heaven only knows who else might've wandered in off the street) exchanged "I can't believe ..." while all us youngsters rolled our eyes and nearly choked from suppressed laughter.

Thanks to Zoom, a passel of Venables, Terrys, Deatons, Hunters and Hills celebrated a recent Thanksgiving Day "together although apart." With the click of a few computer keys, the chasm between Tennessee, New York, Florida and North Carolina was reduced to a mosaic of smiling faces.

Naturally, the initial conversations began on the order of "Why, Ronny! You're right here with us! Happy Thanksgiving!"

And, "Why, Spencer! You're right here with us! Happy Thanksgiving!"

On and on. Over and over. Blah-blah-blah.

At least the Venable, Terry and Hill youngsters had it easier than we did a generation ago. They could click off their computer screens to roll their eyes and stifle a laugh in private.

Sam Venable is an author, comedic entertainer, and humor columnist for the *Knoxville (TN) News Sentinel*. His latest book is "The Joke's on YOU! (All I Did Was Clean Out My Files)." He may be reached at sam.venable@outlook.com.

"It is the Manners and Spirit of a people which preserve a Republic in vigor. A degeneracy in these is a canker which soon eats to the heart of its Laws and Constitution."

—Thomas Jefferson



ELEVATE YOUR BUSINESS



EXCLUSIVE PROGRAM BENEFITS:



Best Practices



Networking Opportunities



Benchmarking



Unlock Immediate Savings



TAKE YOUR BUSINESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Become a member of the Rockheads Group and join the league of "Best-in-class" stone fabricators in the U.S.

JOIN THE ELITE.

CONTACT: Rich Katzmann, Executive Director



(815) 210-1006



richk@rockheadsusa.com

WWW.ROCKHEADSUSA.COM

The Stone Detective

Continued from page 20

Now, like I always say in my seminars, those readings only tell you what's happening right then and there. All sorts of things could've made the plaintiff slip.

As I was putting away my gear, I spotted a bunch of cameras pointing at the stairs. I turned and asked one of the hotel workers if they had any footage of the lady's fall. They all looked at each other and shrugged. I suggested calling up security to check. A tall fella, looked like he could've played for the NBA, showed up after a while. I asked him the same questions, and he said, "Let's check it out."

We huddled in a room filled with screens. Luckily, we knew when the lady took her spill, so we could narrow it down. As we scanned through the footage, out of the blue, we saw our lady walking down that long hallway, moving fast, and she suddenly whipped out her phone, starting to text away. And just as she reached the top of the stairs, still glued to her phone, you can probably guess what happened next. She took a tumble down the steps.

I turned to the lawyer, grinning, and said, "Looks like she ain't got much of a case." He cracked a smile and said, "Good catch, my friend. And if that's not enough, your slip-test data will provide the facts we need to get her lawsuit thrown out of court." Another case cracked.

The Stone Detective is a fictional character created by Dr. Frederick M. Hueston, PhD, written to entertain and educate. Dr. Fred has written over 33 books on stone and tile installations, fabrication and restoration and also serves as an expert for many legal cases across the world. Send your comments to fhueston@stoneforensics.com.

The Slippery Rock Marketplace

Get the Latest in Industry News

STONE UPDATE MAGAZINE
Twice-monthly

Hard-Surface REPORT
Monitoring U.S. Imports
Every month

Slab & Sheet
Every 1st & 3rd Wednesday

Radio STONE UPDATE
Every 2nd & 4th Wednesday

Scan the QR code

or go to www.stonemag.com/srg

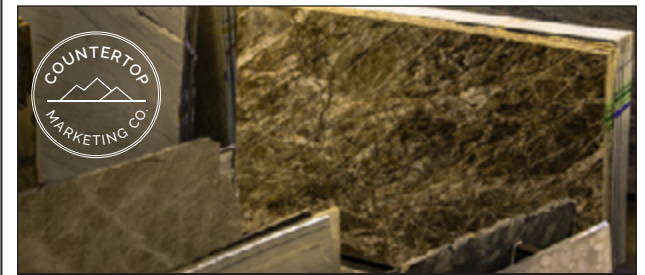
Quality Polyester, Vinyl Ester, Enhancers

STONE SHIELD

BBIndustriesLLC.com 800-575-4401

Abaco
MACHINES USA

AbacoLifter.tv



Grow the Retail Side of your Countertop Company

- ✗ You only get retail countertop jobs from word-of-mouth leads and referrals.
- ✗ You've tried marketing in the past and it didn't work to bring in jobs.
- ✗ You don't have a system to follow-up with homeowners in order to close more jobs.

BOOK A FREE STRATEGY CALL TODAY

to find out how we can help

<https://countertopmarketingco.com/>



HOW IS 2023 GOING?

Are you hitting your **GOALS?**

There are only a few months left in 2023, so it's time for a **check up** on your business.

Contact me for a **FREE BUSINESS ASSESSMENT**

<https://fabricatorscoach.com> Ed@FabricatorsCoach.com



Meet the GAME CHANGER EZ Installation Cart & NEW EZ Loader

With the EZ Loader Island Loading Device:

- **NO MORE** losing your best installers to due to injury from lifting islands
- **Transfer stone almost effortlessly** from a Hercules A-Frame to an EZ Installation Cart
- **Offload and install 1,000 lb. islands** with only 2 workers
- **NO MORE** letting big island installs disrupt your fabrication schedule by pulling extra workers from the shop

Item# 84215

EZ Loader Demo



Item# 4051

Designed to work with the EZ Cart and an 8 ft. Hercules A-Frame Kitchen Transport. See a video demonstration!

www.BBIndustriesLLC.com

800-575-4401

Makita

The unmatched quality and durability of Makita products have earned the trust of professional users worldwide.

Makita 9565CV SJS 5" Industrial VS Grinder

www.makitatools.com

To submit a print or online classified ad, use the online form at www.slipperyrockgazette.net/listingform – you will be sent a confirmation email. Send other ad inquiries to publisher@slipperyrockgazette.net.

2023-2024

Classified Ad Deadlines

DECEMBER 2023 ISSUE

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2023

JANUARY 2024 ISSUE

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2023

FEBRUARY 2024 ISSUE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2023

Ads not meeting guidelines will not be published.

For Sale

Comandulli Speedy Edge Polishing Machine For Sale. Edge polishing machine for sale \$14K OBO - Must sell! Located in Los Angeles, CA, the machine is in excellent condition, low hours, Model Speedy System, Year 2006, Automatic Tool changer, Pneumatic turntable for piece loading, pre-set programs visualized on "touch-screen" control panel. Contact us at 310-328-8000 or email elizabeth@delorenzo-marble.com.

2019 BACA Robo Sawjet for Sale. Excellent Condition, Low Hours: robot run time 575.18 waterjet run time 227 hp pump runtime 267.86 total saw motor run time 295.51 Machine located in the Southeast. Additional Information and pictures available. Priced to Sell: \$250,000. Phone: 904-613-6253, jennifer@jandjcorp.com.

Matrix Sebring Gantry Saw \$20,000 obo. 17 ft length overall, 138" cutting stroke, Saw Bridge feed 1/2 HP motor with variable speed control, Motor: 20 HP. Arbor Shaft Style. Only selling because we upgraded and don't have room to store it. Machine has been disassembled and ready to go. Freight not included. Contact: Cheryl Chapman, Setinstonem@gmail.com.

Park SS 150. 1998 Stone Shaper 150 with table. Good Working condition as it will assist in shipping. \$40,000. Contact: Jason, 913-371-7757, jason.speer@sturgis-materials.com.

Used 2013 Tomahawk Stone Splitter \$4900 OBO. Sold the biz and no longer needed! Has radius attachment to create fire pits too! An economical concept in "green" fabrication by using leftover slab pieces to create beautiful stone products. These precision pieces can be stacked, laid or clad with mortar - creating a chiseled

All Floor Restorer

Give Your Flooring A
GLOSSY FINISH

Terra Cotta
Laminate
Wood, Tile & More



SKM
(570) 383-3062
SKMProducts.com

wall - or laid out flat to produce innovative flooring and paving. Contact: Jon Hobson, 330-575-3871, jondhobson@gmail.com.

GMM Litox. Selling one of our GMM Litox 5 Axis shaping machines. The machine is currently under power and can be inspected. Please contact if interested to obtain further information. Link to product: <https://www.gmm.it/en/dettaglio-prodotto/5-axis-shaping-machines/litox-1000-cn2/>. Contact: Custom Architectural Stone, Inc., infocus-tomarchstone@gmail.com.

2016 Park Fusion. Single table saw jet with tilt table. Also includes overhead camera for part location. Still under power, ready for your immediate inspection. Machine location is in the Midwest, \$125,000.00. Contact: Brian, 641-799-3347, brian@millenniums-surfaces.com.

Business Opportunities

Turn Key Shop For Sale

Looking to get out of the business. Shop is located just outside Buffalo, New York. I am willing to take monthly payments, with some money down. We have 2 Intermac master 43 CNCs, a Yukon 2 bridge saw, overhead crane with vac lifters— everything you need to get started. Maybe some help, too – owner willing to stick around for the change over. Email stonetech45@gmail.com.

Successful Granite Fabrication Shop for Sale in Tenn. Cumberland County Tennessee continues to grow each year, and has a very large retirement community. No other local fabricator shop!

All other tops in area are sourced out of county, a lot of business to be had. We stayed 4-6 months out in manual shop. Contact for details of equipment, materials, and tooling available. Also, willing to stay on for a while to train. Contact: McGinnis Tile and Stone, 931-787-1156, mcginnistile@gmail.com.

Countertop Showrooms For Sale

Established North Alabama business with a focus on quality work and excellent reputation/reviews. Owner started the business in 2006 and wants to retire. Business has two showroom locations in high growth areas with ready made staff to support sales and service. Owner will provide help for smooth transition. Seller financing is available, however subject to final approval. Call 256-864-8050 or email info@nscountertops.com for additional information.

Custom Stone Fabrication Business For Sale. This Central MN business has an excellent reputation for quality work. The owner has been in the business for over 44 years, started this business in 2015 and is selling for personal reasons. Sale includes all the equipment, 16' Morgan Box truck, showroom displays, furniture, computers and software, etc. Owner will provide help for smooth transition. Real estate is leased and can be purchased. Phone: 320-251-9300, sdevine@warnert.com.

Help Wanted

Shop Foreman. Looking for a self-motivator person to assist in building our

The Slippery Rock Classifieds

STEINEX
WE SPLIT IT IN A SECOND

IGLOO SHERPA
640 X 450 120t

EXW Whitehall, NY

- 132 TON SPLITTING FORCE
- RIGHT LOADING CONVEYOR PICTURED
- 25.2" BLADE LENGTH
- 17.72" SPLITTING HEIGHT
- 15 KW PUMP UPGRADE
- 6.39" PER SECOND DESCENT
- 7.17" PER SECOND RETRACT
- REINFORCED 13.12' LONG CONVEYOR w/ HIGH SIDEBORDS
- TESTED and PRESSURES SET PRIOR TO SHIPMENT
- \$63,700.00 w/o CONVEYOR
- CURRENTLY IN STOCK, WHITEHALL, NY 12887



(518) 499-0602

ApexEquipment@aol.com

www.ApexEquipmentInternational.com

STONE INSPECTION & TROUBLESHOOTING

Stone Forensics will again be offering its popular Stone and Tile Troubleshooting workshop. The next class will be held January 2024 in Las Vegas, Nevada, presented by Dr. Fredrick M. Hueston. The program is designed to teach the basics of investigating stone and tile installation failures.

"The amount of failures, poor installations and other issues with stone and tile flooring are on the rise. This seminar is perfect for restoration and installation contractors as well as architects, building engineers and maintenance staff who have to deal with stone and tile installation and restoration," says Dr. Fred.

Class size is limited— register today.



For more information,
Call 321-514-6845
visit www.stoneforensics.com

Get a full 4 days of training, covering...

- The geology of stone
- Understanding the structure of different kinds of stone
- Slab & tile production
- Quarry techniques that affect the final product
- Stone and tile forensic investigation
- Problem diagnosis & troubleshooting
- Installation requirements
- Stone and tile restoration
- Lab Testing

company. Must have CNC experience and Auto Cad would be an added feature. Must have experience using a Donatoni CNC bridge saw, and a Flow Water Jet. Must be able to communicate with customers along with motivating and directing 4 employees. Compensation will be equal to your experience. Health and Yearly bonus included. Contact: Michael Germono, 1-408-431-8033, mike@baysidecommercialcaseworks.com.

Stone Countertop Fabricator. We are seeking a Granite Fabricator to become an integral part of Black Rock Design-Build Firm in HIGHLANDS, NORTH CAROLINA. We are searching for proactive, motivated, skilled, team-players to join our successful and growing business experienced working with a bridge saw a plus. This position requires fine attention to detail in a fast-paced environment. Minimum of 2 years experience with Granite fabri-

cation and installation. Drivers license required. Contact: Black Rock Granite and Cabinetry, Ltd, 828-482-4424, gerri@blackrockdb.com.

Stone Carver Opportunity. Immediate opening for skilled and accomplished stone carvers for marble carving (bas-reliefs, moldings) as well as lettering/engraving projects in both sandblasted and hand-cut letters, must have experience in marble and limestone. This is a full-time position and salary will be based on experience. Must be able to relocate to Northern Virginia. Call: 607-651-8585, sam@rugostone.com.

Help Wanted - Naples, Florida Jim Lytell, Inc. is hiring for Marble and Stone Restoration Technicians. Will train, but experience preferred. Looking for a change? Call us today! Good driving record a must! Drug free company. \$18-\$30. Contact: Jim Lytell, Phone: 239-948-3000. Email: office@jimlytellmarble.com.



welha

WHITE LION BRIDGE SAW BLADE

Arrix diamond layered technology for high speed cutting and no chips!



Scan for more info!



No blade changes between material

✓ quartzite

✓ quartz

✓ granite

✓ marble

Stone Restoration Corner

Continued from page 17

Once most all of the polish was removed from the counters and they were honed to a consistent flexible metal-bond ELF5-100 grit finish, a 100 grit PLP diamond impregnated pad (dip) was used to help reduce the honing pattern swirls. Even when you do many, many passes, honing patterns (especially when using metal-bond diamonds) can be almost unavoidable. This is where the 100 grit PLP brings everything to a consistent soft look. When you run the PLPs wet, they cut better, so the whole process is done wet. Of course, this means that everything must be Taped and Draped, partition walls should be used, and the floor should be protected as well.

Leaving the honed areas at a 100 grit level increases the surface area, thereby exposing the stone to staining. Honed surfaces should most always be sealed using a high-quality oil and waterborne stain-resistant impregnator. I personally prefer solvent-based impregnators as I believe they penetrate better and should theoretically last longer. In my opinion, most every natural stone countertop should be impregnated, with only a few exceptions. This is especially true of honed and textured surfaces. Akemi Pearl was chosen for use on this project.

The project turned out really well and the clients were extremely pleased. The honed countertops are definitely more of a warmer look, as well as more suitable for that application.

As always and before beginning any new project, I recommend submitting a test area to confirm the results and the procedure, prior to starting a stone or hard surface restoration/



End result: a beautiful 100 grit honed look for these marble countertops.

maintenance project. Also, the best way to help ensure success is by partnering with a good distributor, like BB Industries, that knows the business. They can help with technical support, product purchase decisions, and other pertinent project information.

Bob Murrell has worked in the natural stone industry for over 40 years and is well known for his expertise in natural stone, tile, and decorative concrete restoration and maintenance. He helped develop some of the main products and processes which revolutionized the industry, and is currently the Director of Operations for M3 Technologies.

Send your comments and questions to Bob at attn: publisher@slipperyrockgazette.net.



This honed kitchen countertop looks better and will be much easier to maintain.

Try Something Different This Year

Continued from page 13

Disney – In 2022, Disney donated over \$230 million to various non-profits to help support the arts and STEM education.

Bombas – With every purchase, Bombas donates socks or t-shirts to homeless shelters. I have purchased socks from them and to me, they were good socks.

SeaWorld - They partner with charities across the country. These organizations include OCEARCH, The Humane Society of the United States, The Everglades Foundation, and the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation.

Dick's Sporting Goods - Since 2014, their Sports Matter Program has donated \$80 million to support youth athletes and sports programs. They invest in these programs to improve sports infrastructure, reduce registration fees, lower league costs, and distribute proper equipment to all.

Kroger - Kroger's Zero Hunger | Zero Waste program donates food to local food banks and donates money to help food banks broaden their services. Kroger partners with Feeding America, No Kid Hungry, the USO, and American Red Cross to ensure that American families don't go hungry.

All My Sons Moving and Storage – They partner with Toys for Tots and the American Red Cross.

The point to all this is: Giving to charity makes us feel good on a personal level. Helping others encourages a positive personal mood and has a positive effect on our brains. As funny as it sounds, helping others makes us healthier. (No kidding).

The holidays are stressful – no doubt about it, and hopefully in the past you have eased that stress, at least momentarily, by picking an Angel, helping the Christmas Mother, or helping some other charity.

However, this year is a different year. We all know it. If you can't personally contribute to a local or national charity during the holidays, support a company that makes those contributions a part of their company culture, not just at the holidays, but all year-round. I felt good when I ordered those Bombas socks because I knew they would send socks to a homeless shelter. One of the reasons I hired All My Sons Moving and Storage for my recent move was because while researching moving companies, they were front and center about the charities they help. I felt good helping them help others.

Don't worry. You can still help, do good, and feel good even though this was a "different year."

Please send your thoughts and comments on this article to Sharon Koehler at Sharonk.SRG@gmail.com.

Stuffing



Dressing



Cramming



Piling



Surrounding



Hiding



SLIPPERY ROCK GAZETTE
4100 APPALACHIAN WAY
KNOXVILLE, TN 37918

PRSR-TSTD
U.S. Postage Paid
Knoxville, Tn
Permit #255

WANT TO JOIN THE ARTISAN GROUP?

The Artisan Group is an elite North American partnership and network of independent countertop professionals, that are looking to grow their group. Each Artisan member is an owner of the group and enjoy the benefits of the group with protected territories allowing the exchange of best practices.

The Artisan Group members were among the first stone fabricators in the world to achieve full accreditation with the Natural Stone Institute, with each member rigorously tested on quality, safety, and service.

Currently we are looking for new companies to join the group's partnership in the following areas:

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Southern California | St. Louis, MO | Mississippi |
| Las Vegas, NV | Jackson, WY | |
| Indiana | Orlando, FL | |
| Louisville, KY | Oklahoma | |

To learn more about becoming a member contact Jon Lancto: jonl@Artisan-counters.com

The Artisan Group is facilitated by our member partner Architectural Surfaces.

YOUR COMPLETE SINK DISTRIBUTOR

Same-Day Shipping
Faster Service Guarantee

Envy[™]
DESIGNER SINKS



Shop Envy Sinks



BBIndustriesLLC.com

**Quality Stainless Steel, Porcelain
and NEW Composite Sinks**
Call NOW for the Industry's BEST Pricing!

BB INDUSTRIES
Better Service • Better Value

Call 1-800-575-4401

or Order Online www.BBIndustriesLLC.com

