



A special way to honor the best in the business: PaintSquare introduces the inaugural Prestige Awards. PAGE 36



Product Spotlight: See what's new in dehumidification, waterjetting and coatings for aggressive environments. PAGE 25



Meet the pair behind a podcast that makes coating chemistry education accessible on the go. PAGE 20

# PAINTSQUARE PRESS

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## The Right Specs

Project-Saving Tips from Coating Industry Engineers and Consultants



PHOTO: © ISTOCK.COM / DRAZEN

### SPECIFIERS' ROUNDTABLE

**PATRICK BROWN**  
Project Engineer, Tank Industry Consultants, an engineering firm working with potable water tanks

**TONY SERDENES**  
Vice President/Director of Coatings, Greenman-Pedersen Inc., a consultancy working with infrastructure and other structures

**RAY TOMBAUGH**  
A senior consultant with KTA-Tator Inc., who has worked with varied structures over a career of more than 35 years

**TIM BAUMAN**  
Project development manager with The Sherwin-Williams Company

**ERIC SHOYER**  
An engineer with consultant Elzly Technology

A good specification can be the key to a successful project in the protective coatings industry — and a spec with holes in it can lead to a breakdown in communication as well as in the coating itself. The specification writer must translate an asset owner's needs into an actionable plan for the contractor, and sometimes has to take care of other problems encountered along the way.

PaintSquare Press took time at SSPC 2018 to sit down with five professionals who deal with specifications regularly, and asked them to talk about what's important in a specification, what owners and contractors should think about as they approach a spec, and what factors play into coating selection on a given project.

**PAINTSQUARE PRESS:** A big-picture question to start you off today: When you're writing specifications, what do you see your job as being?

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## INDUSTRY TRENDS

# Casting Around for Paint Expertise

Carboline Tech Services Reps Start a Podcast for Protective Coatings

Customers of The Carboline Company who have made calls to the coatings firm's technical service line know that Paul Atzemis and Jack Walker know their stuff. Atzemis (director of technical service) and Walker (technical service engineer) have walked countless applicators and others through their coating-related quandaries.

But the pair share a passion beyond their company's wares: The paint nerds are also podcast nerds, fans of the serialized audio shows that have become an obsession for many in the iPhone age. So it made sense when, late last year, the colleagues who had long bonded over their favorite downloadable programs decided to blend their two areas of expertise.

"We were brainstorming how we could do more in our current roles, and I looked at Paul and was half joking; I said, 'What if we do a podcast?'" recalls Walker. "He immediately said: 'Yes.'" And thus was born the Carboline Tech Service Podcast, which released its first episode last November and had produced 12 shows — generally between 13 and 20 minutes apiece — by early February.

A podcast — like a radio show, but delivered online or onto a mobile device, and digested on the listener's own timeline rather than live — is a popular way to learn and pass time for digital natives and the relatively tech-savvy. But while programs about true crime, science news and sports are all around us, a podcast about protective

coatings is somewhat novel. (Carboline's program launched in November; coatings consultancy KTA-Tator launched a podcast of its own, part of its KTA University series, soon after, in January.)

Listeners can subscribe to a podcast via a service like Apple's Podcasts app or the Google Play store, or listen online via a service like player.fm, which is where CTSP is hosted.

Carboline's program began in part as a way for the experts in the technical service department to reach the company's own sales force while they're in the field.

"Really, the idea is that the good majority of the people in our industry, and our sales reps for sure, spend a lot of time in the car," Walker explains. "We thought [the podcast could be] just another way to deliver information to people when they might [otherwise] have been just listening to Howard Stern or something."

"And being that it's essentially a recorded radio show," Atzemis adds, listeners are able "to stop it, rewind it, pause it, or to go back to it later when they're near their computer and say 'What was that they were talking about? Let me look that up.'"

While early episodes focused on specific Carboline products, the show has expanded its scope as it has grown. Sometimes there's a guest — like Carboline's Mary Roley, who recently took home the Women in Coatings Impact Award at SSPC 2018. Episode 11 began a multi-part series on tank linings, delving into the science behind the coatings in general, without necessarily tying the conversation to specific products. ("We get



The self-proclaimed "podcast nerds" interview guests and talk chemistry on each 13- to 20-minute episode.

**“If you’re using a notch comb rake to measure your wet film thickness, you’ve already taken out your profile. If you calculate it and you’re not using the ‘glug method’ but you’re using the right amount of thinner, and you know what your wet film should be, your profile should not affect your dry film.”**

— Paul Kennington, CTSP guest, in episode 7, on surface profile and calculating film thickness

deep into the woods into science," Atzemis warns in one episode of the podcast. "Hang with us; we explain it pretty well, we like to think.")

That expanding scope plays into the audience Atzemis and Walker are working to cultivate beyond Carboline. "The second and bigger audience," Atzemis says, "is just paint applicators in general. Anybody who uses any paint — a lot of what we've done, the theory behind it is universal. We may talk about a Carboline product, but a lot of what we've talked about up to that point is: This is what the industry does, here's a solution for it."

A knowledge of coatings is crucial for the hosts of such a show, sure, but so is that certain something that makes a radio host sound, well, like a radio host. Atzemis and Walker? They've got it. On an episode of CTSP, expect to hear voices that would fit in as easily on the TED Radio Hour as they do on the phone giving paint advice. It all comes down to feeling comfortable in front of a mic.

"We think that that is part of what makes it possible," says Atzemis. "In our day jobs, both of us spend all day on the phone. So we're on the spot all day with customers: One call could be a grandmother asking about a bucket of paint she found in her basement, and the next could be the CEO of the world's largest paint company saying, 'We're getting ready to paint a project.' You have these conversations all day long, so the information starts to flow naturally." ■



Jack Walker (left) and Paul Atzemis, of The Carboline Company, combined two of their passions — paint and podcasts — to create an educational tool for colleagues and coating applicators alike. PHOTOS: COURTESY OF CARBOLINE

To listen, go to [player.fm/series/carboline-tech-service-podcast](http://player.fm/series/carboline-tech-service-podcast) or search "Carboline Tech Services Podcast" via Apple Podcasts or Google Play.