

Matrix System Automotive Finishes Adds Low VOC and Waterborne

Matrix System Automotive Finishes, a subsidiary of Quest Specialty Chemicals, not only provides painters with a wide array of primers, clearcoats and solvent-based paints, it now produces waterborne and other low-VOC paints.

Founded in 1983, Matrix System employs over 115 full-time associates in a 52,000 square foot modern production facility in Commerce Township, MI. The corporate headquarters, warehouse and training facility are located in Walled Lake, MI.



The Commerce Township, MI facility

Matrix System became the first aftermarket paint manufacturer to introduce a successful intermix system of toners, pearls and companion products shortly after the company's inception. All of Matrix System's aftermarket clearcoats, primers, hardeners and reducers are produced in the United States—making it one of the last American-made paint companies.

Aqualution™ is Matrix System's new high performance waterborne basecoat system. Matrix System provides 66 Aqualution toners and pearls to provide maximum color matching capabilities. Aqualution is designed to meet future and current VOC requirements. Aqualution™ also provides easy application, quick coverage in less coats, faster cycle times, a smooth satin appearance and over 25,000 color possibilities.

Aqualution™ does not require any new equipment since toners are simply shaken prior to use. Aqualution toners can be stored on common shelves at a constant temperature and minimal training is needed to work with Aqualution™ paints.

"In most cases we've had people up and running within a few hours," **Ken Papich**, Western Regional Manager for Matrix System, told *Autobody News*.

Matrix System's Aqualution™ waterborne paints are actually less expensive than their solvent-based counterparts, which is contrary to most other paint suppliers according to Papich. This is not only because Aqualution is provided as a shake and pour solution, but also because waterborne paints in general require less volume

than solvent equivalents to do the same quality job.

"It's actually an economical solution for many of our customers," said Papich. Because Aqualution takes advantage of existing technologies shops gain the benefits of utilizing time tested materials developed specifically to maximize coverage, reduce cycle times and decrease material requirements.

Since many car manufacturers are getting on board with waterborne paints and using them in the manufacturing process, cars are coming from the factory with waterborne as their original paint. A lot of body shops have also gotten on board with waterborne to synch up with these factory standards.

If a customer is not ready to make the complete switch to waterborne quite yet but would like to use lower VOC count products, Matrix System also provides solvent-based clearcoats and primers that have low VOC counts.

"AccuShade LV gives our customers a choice; an alternative to waterborne if they're not ready to completely convert," said Papich.

The AccuShade LV line is a low VOC solvent basecoat system, most of the paints in this system hit VOC levels below 2.1. AccuShade LV consists of a conversion binder and a low VOC reducer. With the AccuShade LV line customers don't have to use any new equipment or go through any training—customers can use the same technology and equipment used to mix and spray the regular solvent based systems for the low VOC option.



Aqualution shake and pour toners

Customers using Matrix System's AccuShade Intermix System have the ability to get the best quality match while still conserving time and left over paint without a reactive reducer. The AccuShade Intermix System makes finding the right formulas for the right colors quick and easy with the AccuShade Color Retrieval System. It uses 120 toners and pearls to ensure color matching capabilities from a database cataloging over 35 years of domestic, foreign and fleet formulas. The system is also capable of mixing the MPB, MSB, RSB, FX

Series Custom Colors, Single Stage and AccuShade LV paints in one system with the ability to produce over 98,000 colors with exact formulas.

From primers to their FX Series custom paints and from fisheye eliminator to their QuickFix Aerosols, Matrix System provides everything shops need to complete a paint job from start to finish with accurate results.

Along with its "greener" paint options, Matrix System has also been taking other steps in their offices and manufacturing centers to reduce their environmental impact. According to Papich, about a year ago Matrix System reduced the number of monthly paper mailings and faxes they sent out by switching over to electronic versions of the information and sending them via email.

Matrix System has also concentrated

efforts towards a leaner business strategy by consolidating some operations in their manufacturing centers. It has a separate wa-



terborne paint manufacturing section in their production facility; this way processes can run more efficiently because everything doesn't have to be completely cleaned and retooled between manufacturing solvent and manufacturing waterborne.



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