

COMMERCIAL PAINTING

2026 | VOL. 6

ISSUE NO. 3

ADVANCING OUR INDUSTRY

USING AI
TO HARNESS
**INSTITUTIONAL
KNOWLEDGE**
FOR BETTER
TRAINING P24

PAINTCARE
SIMPLIFIES
**COATINGS
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SCALING SMART

HOW INLINE PAINTING BUILT THE SYSTEMS,
TECHNOLOGY, AND PARTNERSHIPS
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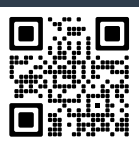
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Strengthen Your Business with CPIA Insights

Something exciting is happening at the CPIA, and it is difficult to ignore. Our association is growing—not only in membership, but also in the engagement and shared commitment of commercial painting professionals to connect, exchange ideas, and help one another succeed.

Over the past year, contractor membership has grown substantially. Most recently, we welcomed four new members from across the country:

- Rider Painting Inc., Highland, NY
- Grow Painting, LLC, West Jordan, UT
- Fitzpatrick Painting and Construction, Albany, OR
- Great Lakes 1-800 Painting LLC, Grand Blanc, MI



We are also growing on the partner side. **BuzzBID, Chatfield Global LLC, Nolan Consulting Group, Inc., Penguin Network, and SurfacePro, Inc.** recently joined CPIA as Industry Partners. Their participation reflects confidence in what CPIA represents and what we can accomplish together.

Learn more about these partners on page 8.

Even as we grow, we never lose sight of the fact that the CPIA was founded on a simple belief: **the commercial painting industry is stronger when its leaders share what they know.**

Our mission is to create opportunities for commercial painting professionals to connect, learn, collaborate, and grow. Peer groups provide a trusted setting for candid conversations about leadership, hiring, profitability, technology, sales, operations, succession planning, and other issues that shape successful companies.

Toward that end, **please mark your calendars for the 2027 CPIA Executive Retreat, March 7–9 in Charlotte, North Carolina.** This annual gathering brings together every peer group to exchange ideas, discuss what is working, identify opportunities, and strengthen the relationships that make the CPIA network valuable.

The CPIA began as a single peer group. Today, we have nine, with plans to form several more in the coming months. To get involved, contact fellow member and peer-group lead Leslie West at leslie@thecpia.com.

I am encouraged by our growth and member engagement. Growth creates momentum, but participation gives it meaning. Our members, Industry Partners, peer-group leaders, and volunteers are why CPIA continues moving forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Stanley". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mike Stanley
mstanley@thecpia.com

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2026/27 INDUSTRY CALENDAR

Plan for conferences, exhibitions, and other upcoming industry opportunities. Be sure to watch your email for updates on CPIA events and activities.

2026

CPIA Sixth Annual Leadership Conference

September 27–30

Nashville, Tennessee

thecpia.com

Healthcare Facilities Symposium and Expo

September 28–30

Charlotte, North Carolina

hcarefacilities.com

Healthcare Design Conference & Expo

October 17–20

New Orleans, Louisiana

hcdexpo.com

IFMA World Workplace

November 18–20

Anaheim, California

worldworkplace.ifma.org

NFM&T West

November 3–4

Las Vegas, Nevada

nfmt.com/west/2026

2027

World of Concrete

January 18–21

Las Vegas, Nevada

worldofconcrete.com

NAHB International Builders' Show

February 2–4

Las Vegas, Nevada

buildersshow.com

PCA Expo

February 15–19

New Orleans, Louisiana

pcapainted.org/expo

CPIA Fifth Annual Executive Retreat

March 7–9

Charlotte, North Carolina

thecpia.com

AMPP Annual Conference + Exhibition

April 11–15

Columbus, Ohio

ace.ampp.org/home

AIA Conference on Architecture & Design

May 19–22

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

conferenceonarchitecture.com

Are we missing an event that should be in this calendar? Send details to ehoward@thecpia.com.



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By Emily Howard

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As companies expand, leaders must strengthen talent, culture, systems, and change-management capabilities to support sustainable growth without added complexity.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF WOOSTER BRUSH COMPANY



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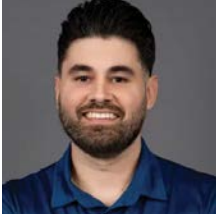
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PHOTO COURTESY OF PITTSBURGH PAINT COMPANY



Welcome to Our Newest Members

Introducing members who recently joined the CPIA. Information is obtained from members and/or member web and social media sites, edited for length.



MATTHEW MCDERMOTT

Owner, CEO, and President, Rider Painting Inc., Highland, NY 12528 riderpaintingny.com

Matt provides the vision and leadership that has helped build Rider Painting Inc. into a trusted name known for quality workmanship, dependable service, and strong client relationships. With a hands-on approach and a commitment to doing things the right way, Matthew leads the company with a focus on excellence, accountability, and long-term growth.

About the Company: Rider Painting provides professional solutions for commercial, industrial, government, and renovation projects with expertise that includes painting and protective coatings, drywall and framing, acoustical ceilings, and specialty finishes such as epoxy flooring and faux finishes.



DARIN MEMMOTT

CEO and Senior Estimator, Grow Painting, LLC, West Jordan, UT growpainting.com

Darin has been with the family-owned Grow Painting since 2002, when he started as an estimator and project manager. He now serves as the company's CEO and senior estimator.

About the Company: Family-owned for 40 years, Grow Painting serves the greater Utah, Idaho, Colorado, and Wyoming region, specializing in commercial work and specialty coatings for clients ranging from medical centers and corporate headquarters to warehouses and government projects.



SHANE RIDDLE

CEO, Fitzpatrick Painting and Construction, Albany, OR fitzpatrickpainting.com

Shane brings extensive experience in executive leadership, operations, finance, and strategic growth. Known for his hands-on leadership style and commitment to building trusting relationships, he is focused on supporting the team, delivering exceptional customer experiences, and driving the company's continued growth and success.

About the Company: Founded in 1994, Fitzpatrick Painting & Construction serves the Willamette Valley in Oregon, specializing in repaints, interior & exterior, commercial projects, new construction, historical buildings, and spray booth applications. They also have a full-service construction division with over 30 crews in the field.



ROBERT YOUNESS

President, Great Lakes 1-800 Painting LLC, Grand Blanc, MI glcmich.com

After working as a Coating Technical Manager at Anvil Paints & Coatings and Duro-Last Inc., Rob Youness opened the doors to Great Lakes 1-800 PAINTING in 2007 with a few hand tools and a vision. In 2012 he partnered with Mark Quinn and purchased Hilgendorf Painting Inc. of Davison, MI, expanding the company's scope and service area.

About the Company: Great Lakes 1-800 PAINTING is a full-service commercial painting contractor specializing in interior and exterior painting, cabinet painting, epoxy floor coatings, and commercial roof coatings.





CPIA Heads to the California Coast in 2027

NEWLY RENOVATED JW MARRIOTT PROPERTY IN DANA POINT WILL PROVIDE A SPECTACULAR SETTING FOR CPIA'S SEVENTH ANNUAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The Commercial Painting Industry Association is heading west in 2027, bringing its annual Leadership Conference to the Southern California coast September 19-22.

The conference will be held at a JW Marriott property in Dana Point, perched high on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean and Dana Point Harbor. The setting will provide a dramatic backdrop for four days of education, networking and industry collaboration.

The resort is undergoing an extensive renovation scheduled for completion in spring 2027, meaning CPIA attendees will be among the first groups to experience the newly reimagined property.

Featuring 378 guest rooms and suites, the resort will combine the elevated hospitality associated with the JW Marriott brand with the relaxed atmosphere of coastal Southern California. Renovated accommodations will feature a coastal-inspired design, while the property will offer the meeting and gathering spaces needed to accommodate CPIA's growing conference.

The location also provides plenty to experience beyond the conference.

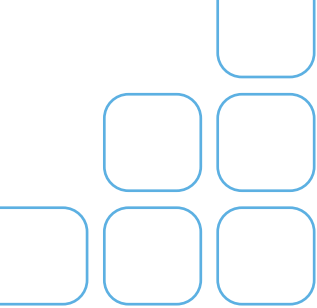
Dana Point Harbor is within walking distance, offering restaurants, shops, boating and other waterfront activities. Doheny State Beach, one of Southern California's best-known coastal destinations, is just a short drive away.

The California setting continues CPIA's tradition of selecting distinctive destinations that complement the conference experience and create opportunities for attendees to connect outside the meeting rooms.

The Leadership Conference will once again bring together commercial painting contractors, industry partners and other industry leaders for contractor-led education, peer-to-peer learning and networking. As the conference continues to grow, the focus remains the same: providing practical ideas, meaningful conversations and relationships that attendees can take back to their businesses.

And in 2027, those conversations will happen from one of the most impressive settings yet — overlooking the Pacific Ocean at a newly renovated JW Marriott property.

Mark your calendars: Sept. 19-22, 2027. CPIA is headed to California.



CPIA Welcomes New Industry Partners

The CPIA is pleased to welcome five new industry partners.

CPIA Welcomes Nolan Consulting Group as a Silver Sponsor

Nolan Consulting Group Inc. has joined CPIA as a Silver Sponsor, bringing valuable business-building expertise and an exclusive consulting opportunity to CPIA members.

A business coaching and consulting firm, Nolan Consulting Group helps contractors and other trade-based businesses create more consistent, predictable, and profitable operations. The firm works directly with company owners and their teams to put proven business systems into action through goal-based planning, organizational development, and hands-on implementation coaching. Its proprietary Cascading

Planning Cycle framework helps businesses connect long-term goals with practical, day-to-day priorities.

Programs offered range from foundational business and succession planning to ongoing membership coaching, peer groups, workshops, and leadership development. Through its sponsorship, Nolan Consulting Group will provide CPIA members with resources and guidance designed to help them assess their businesses, identify opportunities, and move forward with greater clarity.

As an exclusive CPIA member benefit, Nolan Consulting Group is offering 90 minutes of complimentary business consulting to CPIA member companies. This includes a 30-minute discovery call, followed by a 60-minute assessment with a coach using the company's Out of the Hourglass Scorecard.

Rather than a general conversation about business challenges, the consultation provides a meaningful, actionable look at a member's current operation. Participants can expect to gain a clearer understanding of their company's position, identify potential gaps and opportunities, and receive recommendations on priority areas for future growth and improvement.

CPIA and Nolan Consulting Group have structured this no-cost, no-obligation benefit to give members practical insight they can use right away: a professional assessment of their business, clearer priorities, and a stronger roadmap for what comes next.



Chatfield Global LLC Named CPIA Preferred HR Partner

The CPIA is pleased to announce Chatfield Global LLC as its Preferred HR Partner, giving CPIA member companies access to experienced, practical guidance on workforce strategy, HR operations, and organizational change.

A boutique human capital management and change management consulting firm, Chatfield Global brings more than 30 years of experience partnering with organizations to architect, advance and anchor the people processes that drive business. The second-generation, female-owned and operated company combines senior-level HR expertise with a firsthand understanding of the opportunities and complexities that come with building and sustaining a family business. For commercial painting contractors, workforce challenges remain a major business concern. Persistent labor shortages, an aging skilled-trades workforce, increasing compliance obligations, and the need to develop future leaders all place added pressure on companies that may not have a large in-house HR team.

Chatfield Global offers a robust range of HR services in areas including:

- Recruiting and retention strategy.
- HR compliance and risk mitigation.
- Leadership and succession planning.
- Talent development and bench building.
- Culture-building initiatives.
- Organizational change management.
- M&A due diligence and post-merger integration services.



Through this preferred partner relationship, CPIA members will have access to free and discounted services including:

- One (1) complimentary 30-minute HR support call with a Chatfield HR consultant.
- Additional consulting time billed at a discounted CPIA member rate of **\$190 per hour** (billed in 15-minute increments).
- A comprehensive HR Audit for \$3,000, a 50% discount. The audit includes stakeholder interviews, review of HR policies and practices, and an executive report with recommendations.
- A regular HR column covering important HR updates, strategies, and trends in Commercial Painting Magazine and the Commercial Painting Monthly newsletter.

"Talent is a strategic advantage and nowhere is that truer than in an industry built on skilled hands and hard-won trust," said Marcy Brajkovic, president and owner of Chatfield Global LLC. "We understand what it takes to build something that lasts—the people decisions, succession planning, and culture work that may not show up on a balance sheet but show up in every job done right. We're honored that CPIA has entrusted us to bring that same people-first approach to its members."

CPIA Industry Influencers Welcomes Three New Members



BuzzBID is a cloud-based takeoff and estimating platform built specifically for commercial interior finish and specialty trade contractors, including drywall, metal framing, acoustical ceilings, plaster/EIFS, fireproofing, insulation, and painting. Its proprietary ClickONCE computer vision technology automates much of the manual takeoff work by instantly recognizing and measuring walls, ceilings, doors, tiles, and other components directly from PDF plans, helping estimators complete bids up to five times faster than traditional methods.

Visit buzzbid.com to learn more or to book a demo.



Penguin Network is a digital marketing agency that helps businesses attract new clients and recruit new team members through targeted, data-driven campaigns. Using channels like social media, SEO, Google PPC, and YouTube—powered by the latest AI tools—Penguin Network delivers measurable growth with regular performance reports and hands-on support. Their systems are designed to create predictable customer acquisition and build a team that can operate without relying on you day to day, whether you're scaling, hiring, or preparing to sell.

Visit penguinnetwork.com to learn more.



SurfacePro designs and manufactures purpose-built painting robots engineered specifically for the demands of commercial and residential painting contractors. Its flagship system, the SurfacePro-1, is a mobile, AI-powered painting robot that enables a single operator to complete large interior wall and ceiling projects with minimal training and no site preparation. SurfacePro's solutions target growth-stage painting businesses that want to scale capacity without proportionally increasing headcount or relying on highly skilled spray operators.

Visit surfacepro.ai to learn more.

Save the Date: CPIA Executive Retreat

MARCH 7-9, 2027 | CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA



Join commercial painting industry leaders for the CPIA Executive Retreat, March 7-9, 2027, at The Ballantyne Hotel in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Designed exclusively for owners, executives, and senior leaders, this intimate retreat offers a valuable opportunity to step away from daily demands and focus on long-term vision, growth, and leadership.

Unlike traditional conferences, the CPIA Executive Retreat is intentionally small and highly curated to encourage candid conversations and meaningful connections. Attendees engage directly with accomplished contractors and industry leaders from across North America, gaining fresh perspectives, practical insights, and actionable ideas to bring back to their organizations.

This year's program will also feature an exclusive NASCAR Driving Experience at legendary Charlotte Motor Speedway, home of the Coca-Cola 600. Whether

you are a racing fan or simply ready for a memorable new experience, this high-energy activity will be a standout part of the retreat.

The true value, however, is in the people and conversations. High-performing contractors openly share best practices, lessons learned, operational improvements, growth strategies, and leadership insights. Participants consistently say the relationships they build and ideas they gain deliver value well beyond the cost of attendance.

The retreat also provides dedicated time to reconnect with your CPIA Peer Group and strengthen relationships with colleagues who understand the opportunities and challenges facing your business. Discover practical solutions that can improve profitability, build stronger teams, and position your company for future success.

Mark your calendar now and plan to join us in Charlotte for an exceptional CPIA Executive Retreat.

CPIA Binder

CURRENT EVENTS, UPDATES, AND MORE

Pittsburgh Paints Co. Colors for Courage Program Debuts with Pediatric Hospital Transformation

Members of the *Colors for Courage* team applied PITTSBURGH PAINTS ANTI-SCUFF™ Interior Zero VOC and PITT-TECH® PLUS to the high-traffic areas of Specialty Hospital's Green Unit.

The Pittsburgh Paints Company recently launched the *Colors for Courage* program, an employee- and volunteer-led community program that creates colorful spaces in the lives of deserving families when they need it most.

For their first effort, the program transformed the Specialty Hospital's Green Unit at the Children's Home of Pittsburgh's Pediatric Specialty Hospital. More than 40 employee volunteers, along with Abracadabra Painting, a full-service residential and commercial contractor based in Pittsburgh, applied PITTSBURGH PAINTS™ products and colors to create a calming and uplifting green and yellow environment.

According to Ashley McCollum, color marketing manager, Pittsburgh Paints Co., "The combination of Lettuce Alone (PPG1222-4) and Soleil (PPG1093-2) helps soften the clinical feel of a care environment. By creating a more comforting, engaging, and hopeful atmosphere, these colors can help children feel more at ease while supporting the compassion and connection that are so important during their care journey."

In addition to donating product, Pittsburgh Paints Co. contributed \$10,000 to The Children's Home, while Abracadabra generously provided a discounted rate and made a significant financial donation to support the organization.

Pittsburgh Paints Co. plans to expand the *Colors for Courage* program to additional communities where the company has a presence, with more projects slated for 2026 and beyond. For more information, visit the company's *Colors for Courage* page.



PHOTO: PITTSBURGH PAINTS CO.

Laborers' and Painters' Unions Unite to Strengthen the Working Class

In July, the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) and the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing an industry-wide collaboration aimed at organizing workers, strengthening union contractor competitiveness, and advancing pro-labor policies across the United States and Canada.

The agreement brings together LIUNA's substantial presence in infrastructure and energy construction with IUPAT's representation of finishing-trades workers, including commercial painters and allied craft professionals. Union leaders described the partnership as a response to persistent labor-market pressures, corporate consolidation, technological change, and legislative challenges affecting construction workers and organized labor.

For commercial painting contractors that employ union labor, the MOU places particular emphasis on maintaining a highly trained, safe, and productive workforce capable of completing projects on schedule and within budget. The organizations said they will collaborate to support training, workforce efficiency, and jobsite safety—factors they identified as essential to both worker advancement and the competitiveness of signatory contractors.

The organizations will also pursue joint organizing initiatives to bring unrepresented workers into union employment. The unions also committed to coordinating recruitment efforts to ensure their memberships better reflect the communities in which they work.

Additional priorities include aligning contract expiration dates and bargaining objectives, which the unions believe could strengthen workers' leverage in negotiations. The MOU also calls for unified communications efforts to broaden

LIUNA!

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outreach, amplify worker voices and counter messages perceived as anti-union.

For contractors, the practical implications may be most visible in labor availability, training pipelines and future bargaining coordination. By linking their organizing, workforce development, and political priorities, LIUNA and IUPAT aim to create a more coordinated labor presence across the construction supply chain.

For more information, visit iupat.org.

PaintCare Introduces AI Tool to Identify Recyclable Coatings

Managing leftover coatings is a routine—but often time-consuming—part of running a painting business. PaintCare's new artificial intelligence-powered product recognition tool is designed to help contractors quickly determine whether leftover paint and related products are accepted through the nonprofit's recycling program.

Developed with technology company Rubbish, the tool uses image recognition to analyze a photo of a product label and provide immediate guidance on whether that material may be accepted at a PaintCare drop-off site. It is intended to simplify decisions around leftover jobsite materials, helping contractors clear out shop storage, organize returned paint,

and avoid sending usable or recyclable coatings into the waste stream.

Available at paintcare.org/rubbish, the tool lets users photograph and upload product images for review. It then shares whether the item is eligible for recycling, reuse, or proper disposal through the PaintCare program.

Mike Johnson, president and CEO of the American Coatings Association, says, "PaintCare's new product recognition tool reflects the coatings industry's long tradition of forward-thinking innovation and responsible product stewardship. By pairing PaintCare's proven stewardship model with cutting-edge AI, we're giving paint users a simple, intuitive tool to understand what they can bring to PaintCare's drop-off sites."

The tool uses image recognition to analyze a photo of a product label and provide guidance on whether it may be accepted at a PaintCare drop-off site.



PAINTCARE AI PRODUCT RECOGNITION

**Snap it. Know if
it's accepted.**



A Practical Resource for Contractors

For commercial painting contractors, the tool can be particularly useful when sorting accumulated coatings from completed projects, warehouse inventory, or service vehicles. Rather than guessing whether an unfamiliar can, stain, or coating product is eligible, crews can use the photo-based tool as a quick first step before arranging delivery or pickup.

PaintCare encourages users to confirm eligibility requirements by reviewing its full list of accepted and non-accepted products. Product acceptance can depend on the type of coating and the capabilities of a particular collection site.

The organization's online drop-off site locator identifies nearby location options. Just enter a ZIP code to connect with more than 3,000 year-round drop-off locations in PaintCare program states, as well as known

drop-off opportunities in states without a PaintCare program.

Options for Larger Quantities

Contractors handling substantial volumes of leftover paint may be eligible for PaintCare's Large Volume Pickup service. The program provides free on-site pickup for qualifying amounts of 100 gallons or more, offering an alternative to transporting large quantities of material to a drop-off location.

Using the AI recognition tool alongside PaintCare's locator and pickup services can help contractors establish a more efficient process for managing surplus coatings—freeing up storage space, reducing disposal uncertainty, and supporting responsible material handling.

For more information about the AI product recognition tool, visit paintcare.org/rubbish.

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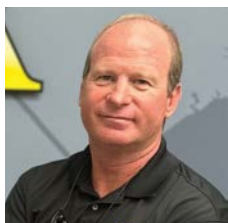
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A&K Painting Company Announces Leadership Changes



Gray Riley



Kevin Robbins

A&K Painting Company, a full-service commercial and industrial painting contractor headquartered in Charlotte, NC, recently announced key leadership appointments to support its continued growth across the East Coast.

Industry veteran Gray Riley has been named president, taking charge of total business execution. Riley, who recently celebrated 15 years with the company, has been instrumental in shaping A&K's operational foundation and customer partnerships. In his new role, he oversees sales, business development, client experience, marketing, operations, project management, and financial performance.



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Concurrently, Kevin Robbins will step into the role of chief executive officer. As CEO, Robbins will shift his focus toward long-term strategic vision, expansion into new regional markets, and establishing scalable systems to guide the contractor through its next decade of growth.

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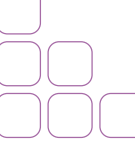


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PPD Painting Earns Seventh Inc. 5000 Recognition

PPD Painting has been named to the Inc. 5000 list of America's fastest-growing private companies for the seventh time, following 77% growth over the past three years.



strong growth becomes increasingly challenging. The company's seventh appearance on the list underscores more than a decade of perseverance, reinvention and disciplined leadership."

Earning a place on the Inc. 5000 even once is a significant achievement. Receiving the recognition seven times reflects the company's ability to sustain growth while navigating the increasing demands that come with a larger business.

Company owner—and co-founder of the CPIA—Aaron Moore says, "As revenue, scale and expectations rise, maintaining

He adds the recognition

also reflects the continued support of loyal customers, trusted industry partners and employees whose commitment to quality and service has helped drive the company forward. "We're proud of the company we were when this journey began. We're even prouder of the people who have helped us become the company we are today."

What can I do with my leftover paint?

Gather your leftover paint.



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Your paint is collected for recycling!



Learn more about the PaintCare program at www.paintcare.org



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New Podcast Episode

Looking to stay ahead of commercial painting trends and learn innovative business strategies? Hosted by Aaron Moore, Co-Founder of the CPIA and President of PPD Painting, and David Chism, owner of DC Marketing Group and Chism Brothers Painting, The Commercial Painting Podcast series explores strategies for overcoming the challenges standing in the way of your growth.



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BUILDING THE INDUSTRY'S MISSING ROOM: THE CPIA'S ORIGIN STORY WITH AARON MOORE

After over 50 episodes of Aaron Moore interviewing others, David Chism flips the script in this special episode.

From his multi-generational upbringing in Chicago to building a multi-city commercial painting business and co-founding the Commercial Painting Industry Association (CPIA), Aaron opens up about the decisions, planned and unplanned, that shaped his career and led to building the CPIA. He shares why he relocated his family out of Illinois, how he restructured the business to run it remotely over several years, and the frustration that led him and co-founder Steve Hester to start their own peer-group association (aka the CPIA), and how it differs from typical “guru-led” masterminds.

[Website: theccpia.com](http://theccpia.com)

WHAT YOUR PEERS ARE LISTENING TO

When commercial painting leaders look for field-tested advice, they turn to their peers' experiences. The following episodes earned the highest YTD stream counts by delivering practical playbooks for today's toughest operational, labor, and technology challenges:



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WHERE SMART COMMERCIAL PAINTERS ARE FOCUSING NEXT

Looking to land more contracting work and wondering where to look? Julie Zamski and Paul Trautmann from Sherwin-Williams discuss the pivotal role of Sherwin-Williams in the commercial painting industry, the current market trends, and sectors providing opportunities for contractors. They also delve into mastering products and techniques that are crucial to these sectors, as well as the importance of business development.

[Website: sherwin-williams.com](http://sherwin-williams.com)

A SPECIAL EPISODE WITH CO-HOST DAVID CHISM

Aaron Moore turns the mic on co-host David Chism for an informative interview about his journey from San Diego to Maryland, the influence of faith on his business practices, and the evolution of marketing strategies in the painting industry. As a fifth-generation painter and marketing expert, Chism shares success stories from his marketing firm, the impact of AI on marketing, and resources for contractors to enhance their marketing knowledge.

Website: dcmarketinggroup.co



THE BLACK BELT MINDSET: WHAT JIU-JITSU TEACHES ABOUT LEADERSHIP AND RESILIENCE

Luke Reinhart discusses the world of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, how it can empower individuals, and how the discipline learned on the mat translates into valuable skills in business. Luke shares insights on building a successful martial arts academy and the importance of faith in personal growth. He dives into how consistency, intentionality, and failure are parallels between martial arts and entrepreneurship.

Website: clinchacademy.com



HOW AI IS TRANSFORMING THE SEO WORLD

Aaron Cote from A Visual Glitch explains the intersection of AI and SEO. Cote encourages commercial painting contractors to lean in to best practices for leveraging AI while continuing to keep a laser-sharp focus on authentic content. From truly understanding the challenges of your customers to the importance of quality reviews (over quantity), he challenges listeners to avoid losing the human touch in the age of AI.

Website: avisualglitch.com



NO LAYOFFS SINCE 1954: THE EMPLOYEE-FIRST CULTURE OF THE WOOSTER BRUSH COMPANY

What does it take to stay strong for 175 years? In this episode, Wooster Brush leaders Ben Maibach and Michael Stephens talk about building a people-first company with zero layoffs since 1954, keeping jobs in the U.S., and designing products painters actually want. They also dive into automation, leadership, and where the industry is headed, and how staying rooted in your community can drive long-term success.

Website: woosterbrush.com



Growth Isn't the Same as **Scalability**



IS YOUR
ORGANIZATION
READY FOR ITS
NEXT LEAP?

MARCY BRAJKOVIC,
PRESIDENT & OWNER OF
CHATFIELD GLOBAL LLC

Growth is exciting. It can mean new customers, new opportunities, larger teams, expanded capabilities, and greater impact. But growth also changes an organization. The practices, structures, and leadership approaches that worked when a company was smaller may become increasingly difficult to sustain as the business expands. That is where the difference between growth and scalability becomes important.

Growth asks an organization to do more, whereas scalability asks whether the organization can do more without creating disproportionate complexity, dependence, or disruption along the way. As a company grows, its ability to scale depends on more than financial performance or market opportunity. Leadership, human capital, culture, technology, and change management must all evolve in tandem with the business.

When they don't align, organizations can find themselves in a constant state of churn. Instead of growth creating greater opportunity, it begins to create ambiguity, stagnation, scarcity, mistrust, instability, and unwanted departures. These symptoms can develop gradually, making them difficult to recognize until they begin to affect performance and the organization's ability to move forward.

Growth Changes the Way a Company Has to Operate

Early in a company's development, it's common for decisions to be concentrated around a founder or a small leadership group. The processes leaders use to run the business may be informal, responsibilities may overlap, and employees may rely heavily on institutional knowledge or individual relationships to get things done. That approach can work remarkably well for a smaller organization. In fact, flexibility and personal involvement can be significant advantages during the early stages of growth. The challenge comes when those same practices remain in place as the organization becomes more complex.

A leader who once knew every customer, employee, decision, and operational issue personally may no longer be able to maintain that level of involvement. A culture that was naturally understood by 20 employees may become much harder to communicate consistently to 200. A process that was easy to manage manually may become a bottleneck as more people are required to execute it. At that point, scaling requires an organization to become more intentional about how it operates.

Leadership Has to Evolve Alongside the Business

One of the most significant changes associated with organizational scalability is the evolution of leadership. In an earlier-stage organization, the CEO or owner may effectively be responsible for running the company. As the organization scales, that model becomes increasingly difficult to sustain. A scalable organization instead depends on a capable leadership team that collectively runs the business, while the CEO focuses on leading that team and maintaining a strategic view of the organization.

Instead of being the person who solves every problem, the leader's responsibility increasingly becomes building an organization capable of solving problems. Instead of remaining immersed in every operational decision, leaders need to raise their gaze toward strategy, vision, innovation, and organizational impact.

A leadership team must have clear ownership of key functions, shared commitment to the organization's objectives, and enough trust to operate as a unified team. When those conditions exist, decision-making can move closer to where the work happens. When they do not, growth can create more layers of dependency rather than greater organizational capacity. The goal is to ensure that leadership creates leverage rather than becoming a constraint.

Human Capital Becomes More Strategic

Scaling also changes the way organizations need to think about their people. As a company grows, adding employees is not necessarily the same thing as increasing organizational capacity. More people can create more complexity if roles are unclear, expectations are inconsistent, or the organization lacks the systems necessary to support them. Your people must be seen as a strategic asset.

That means organizations need to think intentionally about talent depth and



The question is not simply whether there are enough employees to handle today's workload. It is whether the organization has the right people, in the right roles, with the right capabilities to support where the business is going.

breadth, effectiveness, commitment, and development. The question is not simply whether there are enough employees to handle today's workload. It is whether the organization has the right people, in the right roles, with the right capabilities to support where the business is going. That requires clarity around roles and responsibilities, meaningful performance expectations, consistent evaluation, and opportunities for employees to develop as the organization changes.

Culture Cannot Remain Implicit

Culture is another area where growth can expose organizational limitations. In a smaller company, culture may be largely implicit. Employees learn how things are done by observing leaders, working alongside colleagues, and absorbing the organization's habits over time. The culture may feel obvious because everyone has relatively close access to the same people and experiences. As the company grows, that shared experience becomes harder to maintain.

A scalable culture needs to become more explicit. The organization's mission, vision, and values need to provide a common framework for decisions and behavior rather than relying primarily on an individual's personality or influence.

Change Management Becomes a Core Capability

The more an organization grows, the more frequently it may encounter change. New technology, new markets, new employees, new leadership structures, acquisitions, evolving customer expectations, and changing business models can all require employees to adapt. Change management is therefore not simply a project activity. It becomes an organizational capability.

This is important because change rarely happens in a straight line. Employees may understand what is changing without immediately understanding how the

change affects them. Leaders may have a clear strategic vision while employees are still trying to make sense of what that vision means in practice. Effective change management creates space for that process.

Communication needs to be consistent and repeated, and leaders need to be prepared to work through uncertainty rather than assuming that one announcement will create alignment. Conflict needs to be approached as something that can provide useful information rather than something that should automatically be avoided.

Organizations that develop these capabilities are better positioned to adapt as they grow because change becomes something they can navigate rather than something that continually disrupts them.

Preparing for the Organization You Are Becoming

The most important question for a growing company may not be "What do we need right now?" but rather, "What will we need to operate effectively at the next stage?"

That distinction encourages leaders to look beyond immediate problems and consider whether the organization's leadership structure, talent, culture, processes, and technology are preparing it for what comes next. Scalability means building enough organizational clarity, capability, and adaptability to manage the complexity that accompanies growth without letting it overwhelm the business. The transition requires leaders to evolve, human capital to become more intentional, culture to become more explicit, technology to become more strategic, and change management to become a core organizational skill.

When organizations make that transition intentionally, growth can create greater impact, stronger leadership, more capable teams, and greater organizational control, all without requiring the people at the center of the business to carry every piece of it themselves.



The most important question for a growing company may not be "What do we need right now?" but rather, "What will we need to operate effectively at the next stage?"

GENERATIONS OF INNOVATION

SINCE 1851, generations of employees at The Wooster Brush Company have built upon a proud tradition of quality, craftsmanship, and integrity. We celebrate this milestone by honoring our heritage and looking ahead, with the same passion for innovation that has defined us for 175 years.



1937
Inventor of
the Angle
Paintbrush



1999
Shortcut®



2020
Hook & Hold®



2022
GripTech®



2024
GripTech MAX®

Turning
Institutional
Knowledge into

Faster, Smarter Training with AI

AI GIVES PAINTING CONTRACTORS
AN ON-DEMAND WAY TO PRESERVE
EXPERTISE, REINFORCE PROCESSES,
AND ACCELERATE ONBOARDING

BY EMILY HOWARD





*To keep readers on the cutting edge of AI—without losing sight of real-world application—we're featuring AI use cases and member experiences in every 2026 issue of **Commercial Painting** magazine. Have a story to share? Email ehoward@thecpia.com.*

Training is an ongoing priority for painting business owners. It helps employees build on prior experience while developing the company-specific knowledge needed to serve customers consistently at a high level, a process that benefits from time, dedication, and continued reinforcement.

Painting contractors are also using AI to strengthen how they capture, organize, store, and access critical information. These capabilities create valuable teaching tools, support consistent training, and help new employees become familiar with company processes more quickly.

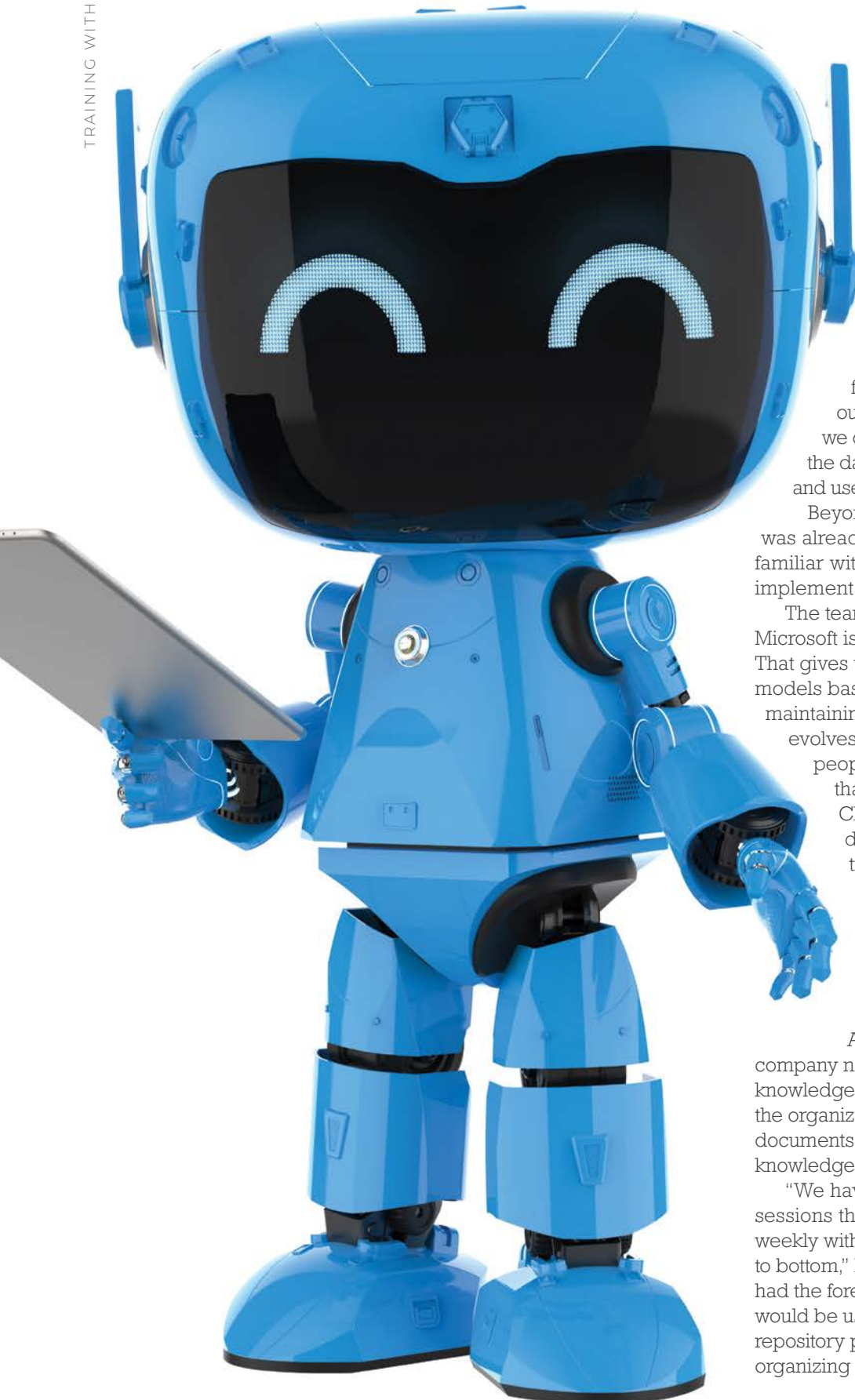
Cherry Coatings, a commercial painting contractor operating in 15 markets across the U.S., has identified knowledge management as one of its top priorities for AI adoption.

"We have so much institutional knowledge—folks who have been with the business for 30, 40 years," says John Ross, chief information officer for Cherry Coatings. AI presented an opportunity to capture that knowledge and make it available to new team members on demand.

“

AI will transform almost every aspect of our business.”

**- John Ross,
Cherry Coatings**



The Tool

Before selecting Microsoft Copilot, Cherry Coatings conducted an extensive review of emerging technologies. Deep integration, security, and governance were among the factors that set Copilot apart.

Ross says it was particularly important that Copilot did not use prompts, responses, or data accessed through Microsoft Graph to train foundation models. "That gave our team a lot of comfort because we didn't want to find out later that the data we feed it could be monetized and used in ways we didn't approve."

Beyond security, the company was already heavily invested in and familiar with Microsoft products, making implementation easier.

The team also appreciated that Microsoft is not tied to a single AI model. That gives the company the ability to select models based on specific needs while maintaining flexibility as the AI market evolves. "A lot of mistakes we see people making when they jump in is that they fall in love with one, say Claude," Ross says. "Then a new day dawns and another model trumps it, and they are stuck."

Capturing Knowledge

After selecting a tool, the company needed to capture the institutional knowledge that existed at every level of the organization. Recordings, transcripts, documents, and SOPs were incorporated as knowledge sources for Copilot.

"We have multiple years of training sessions that were done almost daily or weekly with the team on estimation from top to bottom," Ross says. "Thankfully, someone had the foresight to know that information would be useful." That established repository provided a strong foundation for organizing the knowledge for broader use.

The company did not stop with documented information. Employees also contributed experiences and processes built over their long tenures with Cherry Coatings. "Adoption was popular," Ross says. "We have a lot of folks who have been with us for 25-plus years, and they know they won't be around forever, so they're excited to help teach the next generation."

Of course, years of operational input also means some information is outdated. As with any long-standing knowledge base, guidance continues to evolve as processes, products, and standards change. Cherry Coatings uses clear governance to identify authoritative materials and ensure the AI prioritizes current, approved guidance.

Onboarding Faster Strengthening Onboarding

With this knowledge organized and accessible, the company can build tools that strengthen onboarding and reinforce customer-focused practices. "Developing the company-specific expertise needed to serve customers at a high level takes experience, coaching, and continued learning," Ross says.

Today, the company uses AI to supplement training. As a bonus, employees have access to a 24/7 coach whenever they need support. That is especially helpful for new hires absorbing a large amount of information quickly, but it also helps create and reinforce a standard across the company.

Recently, Cherry Coatings welcomed an established organization in Indiana. Its experienced team brought strong knowledge of commercial painting processes and products, while onboarding introduced employees to Cherry Coatings' operating practices and customer service standards.

By combining standard training with the new AI tools, Cherry Coatings could provide those team members with a strong supplemental resource. "When they have a question, or if they forget how to do something, they can get the next step," Ross explains.

Because so much company-specific information has been incorporated into the AI,

it can tell a team member not only what comes next, but also why it comes next. That allows the "Cherry way" to be taught, not simply told.

"I have to give Zack and Rocky Cherry, our chief executive officer and chief growth officer, a great deal of credit for their role in the process. They set the vision for Cherry Coatings and were very intentional about how we brought that vision to life," Ross says. "When a team member asks a question, the tool does more than provide an answer—it explains why the process matters. The purpose of the AI is not only to answer questions but also to teach."

Advice for Implementation

Before choosing or implementing AI, Ross says it is important to establish a clear vision and identify the problem the company is trying to solve.

Like many contractors implementing AI, he notes that dependable results require thoughtful governance, well-defined prompts, authoritative information sources, and appropriate human review. "Make sure you know which information is approved and how it should be used," Ross recommends.

Finally, he stresses the importance of not biting off more than you can chew. He recommends a crawl-walk-run approach. "You build on your learnings and the information from the feedback loop," he says. "That feedback loop has to exist for you to learn, improve, and grow."

The feedback loop also benefits from patience. "You want the flexibility to refine the approach as you learn," Ross says. "A measured rollout makes it easier to incorporate feedback and build on what works."

Ross and Cherry Coatings have been pleased with the implementation and are looking forward to integrating AI tools more deeply into the business. "AI will transform almost every aspect of our business," Ross says.

Still, he does not expect it to be as simple as replacing people with AI. "It will help us become more adept in areas, streamline in areas, but it will also require additional training, maybe additional team members to be specialized in certain areas—like an auditor of data," he says. "That wasn't a role before. Now it might be."



AI presented an opportunity to capture that institutional knowledge and make it available to new team members on demand."

**- John Ross,
Cherry Coatings**



Creating an Infrastructure

EMILY HOWARD
TALKS WITH
CHRIS NEESON,
OF INLINE PAINTING

Just four years after Chris Neeson joined Inline Painting—where Sean Armstrong was already part of the ownership team—the two have guided the company to fourfold growth. As an owner and general counsel, Neeson attributes that momentum to intentional investments in systems, technology, and strong partnerships—as well as an unwavering commitment to improvement.

As he recently told CPM's Emily Howard in an interview, "The key is being



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF INLINE PAINTING

tenacious enough to find solutions.” Read on to learn what else he shared about Inline’s impressive trajectory.

Emily Howard (EH): Tell me about Inline Painting.

Chris Neeson (CN): Inline Painting was founded in 2007 by father-and-son team Larry and Sean Armstrong. Larry had spent years in executive roles within the paint industry, while Sean

grew up around the business, working alongside his father on jobsites from a young age. Before launching Inline, Sean also worked as a marketing manager for Sherwin-Williams.

They started the company with the money in their pockets and built it steadily over 15 years through relationships, industry knowledge, and consistent execution. Over time, Inline became one of the larger commercial painting contractors in the Midwest.

Inline Painting’s VP and General Counsel Chris Neeson (left) and President Sean Armstrong (right) outside a recent hotel project in downtown Indianapolis.

Today, Inline Painting serves a broad range of commercial markets, including healthcare, multifamily, senior living, education, retail, and restaurants. That variety requires extensive expertise across coatings, wallcoverings, and project types.

We employ about 75 people and work with a trusted network of subcontractors. We procure materials in-house and maintain full responsibility for project management and execution.

Every subcontractor goes through a vetting and onboarding process. Once crews become part of our network, we can provide them with steady, year-round work. Because of our size and volume, subcontractors have an incentive to stay engaged with us—and we view those relationships as true partnerships. In many ways, they become an extension of our Inline family.

Moving From Counsel to Leadership

EH: How did you get involved with Inline Painting?

CN: Around 2022, Larry was preparing to retire. I had known Sean since our undergraduate years and had previously



worked with Inline as legal counsel, helping with succession planning and other business matters. Sean kept encouraging me to join the company and help lead it. Eventually, I thought it could be a compelling opportunity.

My background is in law, but much of my work involved advising small businesses on structure, transactions, litigation, budgeting, and growth. I was providing legal counsel, but



I was also often helping leaders think through how to build and scale their companies.

Still, there was a question in my mind: Could I step off the sidelines and do it myself? Inline gave me that opportunity. In 2022, I purchased a portion of Larry's equity, and Sean and I began our partnership.

I knew very little about painting specifically. The bigger question was whether we could help the company move

from the strong foundation Larry and Sean had built to its next stage of growth.

In my experience, many small businesses reach a point where the complexity of the organization outpaces the systems and knowledge that got them there. At that stage, companies often hire consultants or bring in new leadership to help restructure operations and create a path forward.

That was the moment Inline had reached.

The stairs (left) and lobby (above) of the InterContinental Hotel tapped into the Inline team's craftsmanship and attention to detail.



Investing in Systems and Technology

EH: Where did you see the biggest opportunities for the company when you started?

CN: When I joined, we began automating processes and replacing manual, paper-based workflows. We moved from individual paper files to project management software, integrated our financial system to improve job costing, and connected estimating and sales processes so projects could move more seamlessly from proposal to execution.

From there, we continually identified areas for improvement, built prioritized lists, and searched for practical solutions. That work began in 2022. In 2023, we nearly doubled the company's sales.

We continued building out the infrastructure in 2024, and by 2025, the company had grown to four times its 2022 size. It was an intense period of rebuilding systems from the ground up, but it was also exciting.

Now, we are approaching new ceilings. We are in the next phase of asking: What needs to change for us to break through again?

Expanding Beyond Indianapolis

EH: You have also expanded into new geographic markets. What did that process look like?

CN: Expansion was always part of the growth plan, but we first needed the right operating model. We considered two options: establishing fully independent locations that mirrored our Indianapolis operation or creating smaller satellite offices supported by the Indianapolis hub.

We chose the hub-and-spoke model. As we looked at larger markets, we realized we could establish targeted satellite operations without duplicating the full infrastructure of a standalone location.

We began in Columbus, Ohio, where we hired a project manager, and then opened

a location in Louisville, Kentucky, where we were already performing work. We continue to evaluate and pursue new markets.

Managing Growth Without Sacrificing Quality

EH: What are some of the biggest challenges you have faced so far?

CN: One of our biggest priorities is maintaining a consistent standard of quality across the entire client experience. At the end of the day, the client experience matters most.

We work closely with general contractors, so we look at every part of the process: drawdowns, submittals, responsiveness, staffing, deadlines, material accuracy, and final execution. Each of those touchpoints affect the customer's experience. We need systems that protect those workflows and hold everyone accountable.

Growth also creates complexity. We have had to improve our job-costing processes, confirm that we are pricing work appropriately, and ensure we have the people, systems, and workflows to take on greater volume.

Like every contractor, we also face labor challenges. We are highly protective of our culture and thoughtful about who we bring into the organization.

Our hiring philosophy goes beyond asking, "Do you know how to paint?" We look for people who fit a culture built on collaboration, support, and shared success. We hire from a range of backgrounds when people have the right attitude and potential, because we believe we can teach the technical side of painting.

Creating Meaningful Benefits

EH: Have benefits or bonus structures helped you attract and retain the right people?

CN: Inline has long offered a 401(k), paid time off, and a commission structure for estimators and project managers that

(Left) From floors to ceiling, Inline Painting tackled every aspect of the Indiana Convention Center's Jr. Ballroom.

“

Technology has been one of our biggest opportunities—and one of our biggest challenges.”



Larry and Sean originally developed. That structure has evolved into a form of profit-sharing, allowing team members to participate in a project's success. It has worked well for us.

Benefits can be challenging, particularly when participation is required. For years, we explored traditional group health plans, but many of our field painters preferred not to have payroll deductions and chose not to enroll. That made it difficult to meet the participation thresholds required for certain plans.

Instead of accepting that as a dead end, we kept looking for alternatives. We consulted with healthcare experts and developed a benefit that supplements employees' marketplace insurance premiums when they provide proof of payment. More recently, we brought in an expert to help establish individualized indemnity plans that meet Affordable Care Act requirements without requiring group participation. They are not traditional group health plans, but they provide another workable option for employees.

For us, the key is being tenacious enough to keep looking for solutions.

Introducing Technology Thoughtfully

EH: How has technology supported your growth?

CN: Technology has been one of our biggest opportunities—and one of our biggest challenges. When I joined, the company used Google Workspace to track projects. There was communication within the spreadsheets, but reporting required separate, manual calculations.

We implemented project management software and expanded it across the operation. We created new standard operating procedures and developed customized add-ons to capture the information we needed for decision-making and performance tracking.

The implementation was led by our internal executive team, and it had to be deliberate. Many employees had spent most of their careers working without

much technology, so we introduced changes in manageable stages.

Our approach was simple: Introduce one tool, help people become comfortable with it, then roll out the next. We continued that process until we were using most of the functionality we needed.

It requires patience, repetition, and clear accountability. But one of the most important lessons is not to underestimate people. With the right support and a thoughtful rollout, people can adapt.

(Left) Chris Neeson and Sean Armstrong on the job site of the Signia by Hilton Indianapolis.

(Below) A member of the Inline team working on the restoration of the Church of Immaculate Conception at St. Mary of the Woods in Terre Haute, IN.



A Landmark Indianapolis Project

EH: What are some of the more notable projects you have worked on?

CN: Our largest current project is the Signia by Hilton Indianapolis and Indiana Convention Center expansion. It is a major partnership involving the City of Indianapolis and AECOM Hunt, which manages large-scale construction projects nationwide.

Indianapolis is centrally located and serves as an important destination for

conventions and events. This project reflects that role.

We are working on a 37-story hotel tower and a four-story expansion that includes additional convention space, meeting rooms, boardrooms, and restaurants. Our scope includes some exterior work, but it is primarily interior painting and wallcovering.

At one point, we were applying final coats in guest rooms while concrete was still being poured near the top of the tower. The pace and coordination required were intense, but we are now nearly complete with the tower.

(Below and right)
Work-in-progress
on the elegant
lobby of the
Signia by Hilton
Indianapolis.



Our work has shifted to the large ballrooms and convention halls, where we are installing extensive wallcovering. It is a significant project in both scale and complexity.

Finding Value in Peer Connections

EH: How long have you been involved with the CPIA, and what has that experience been like?

CN: Sean joined the CPIA about three years ago after our Sherwin-Williams representative, Nate Wolff, recommended it. We did not become deeply involved until the Louisville Executive Retreat, where we saw the value of the peer-group model firsthand.

My peer group gives me a place to bring questions and challenges to people who understand the industry. You may not always leave with a perfect solution, but you quickly realize that others are dealing with many of the same issues. That creates a valuable sense of community.

Without CPIA, it would be difficult to have open conversations with nearby commercial painting contractors because many of them are direct competitors. Through the peer group, we can discuss challenges candidly, compare approaches, and learn from one another.

Sometimes someone shares an idea that you can implement directly. Other times, it sparks a solution you can adapt for your own business. Either way, it helps you address challenges from perspectives you may not have considered on your own.

There is also a genuine marketplace of ideas. One person shares a solution, someone else adapts it, and then another contractor improves on it further. That kind of collaboration makes everyone stronger—and it is one of the most rewarding parts of the experience.

“

Without CPIA, it would be difficult to have open conversations with nearby commercial painting contractors because many of them are direct competitors.”





175 Years of Innovation

THE WOOSTER BRUSH COMPANY'S
LEGACY IN THE HANDS OF PAINTERS

For 175 years, The Wooster Brush Company has held an important place in the painting industry: in the hands of the people doing the work.

Founded in 1851 in Wooster, Ohio, the company has grown from a small operation producing handmade brushes into one of the nation's longest-running manufacturers of paint applicators and tools. Its 175th anniversary in 2026 represents more than a long tenure in business. It reflects a sustained commitment to adapting to new coatings, materials, jobsite demands, and the day-to-day realities faced by professional painters.

Beginnings in Wooster

The company's story began when Adam Foss traveled to Wooster, Ohio, carrying a crate of hog bristles purchased at an unclaimed freight auction in Cincinnati. Foss and his brother, Samuel, attached the bristles to wooden handles and began selling their handmade brushes door-to-door throughout Ohio.

Established a decade before the Civil War, the business was built around a straightforward purpose: producing tools that helped painters do their work. That purpose has remained central as the company expanded its manufacturing capabilities, product portfolio, and role within the coatings industry.

In 1909, then known as Wooster Brushworks, the company moved from its original downtown location to a larger facility a few blocks south. That site remains its headquarters today. Over the decades, Wooster has expanded its manufacturing, warehousing, shipping and administrative operations while remaining in the community that gave the company its name.



An early Wooster employee handcrafts a brush at his workbench.

Solving Problems at the Brush Level

Many of Wooster's most lasting contributions began with practical jobsite challenges: brush durability, cutting-in control, coating pickup, productivity, and painter comfort.

In 1926, the company developed FOSS-SET cement, a process designed to permanently secure bristles in a brush. The durability of the bond became part of the company's lore through "Ted the Tester," who was suspended from a brush by its bristles. The demonstration was both memorable and meaningful as it revealed that Wooster truly understood what painters needed from their tools.

That focus on addressing real application issues became a defining characteristic of Wooster's product development.

The Angle Brush Changes Cutting In

In 1937, Wooster introduced what would become one of the industry's most familiar tools: the angle paintbrush.

Designed to provide greater control and improved ergonomics, the angled



brush made cutting in around trim, ceilings, windows and other areas easier and more precise. Its widespread use illustrates how a seemingly simple change in tool design can reshape how painters approach a common task. For professionals, the angle brush offered a more controlled path to cleaner lines and more efficient detail work—benefits that remain relevant on residential, commercial and industrial projects.

Advancing Synthetic Filaments

World War II created a major material challenge for brush manufacturers. In 1941, U.S. trade restrictions with China disrupted the supply of China bristle, a key material used in brush production.

Wooster responded by working with synthetic filament developed by DuPont and manufacturing nylon brushes for the U.S. military. After the war, that technology entered the broader market, helping establish the foundation for the synthetic paintbrushes now widely used across the trade.

The shift toward synthetic materials became increasingly important as

coatings evolved. Synthetic filaments gave manufacturers new opportunities to tailor brush performance for specific finishes and application demands, while offering the durability and consistency professional painters expect.

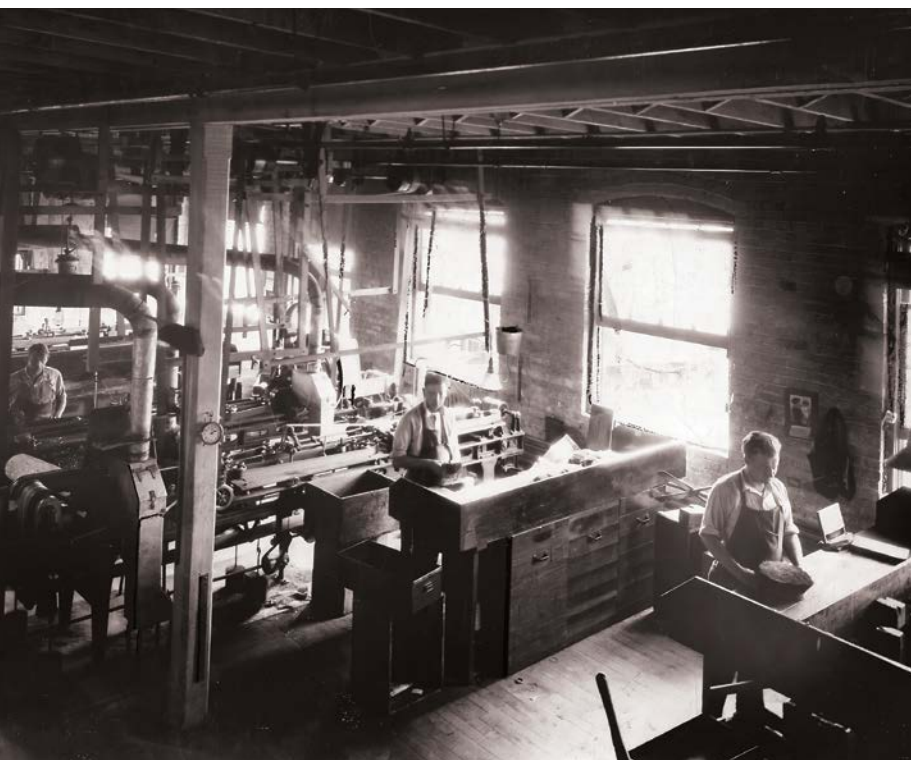
Roller Technology and Productivity

Wooster's innovation extended beyond brushes. In 1964, the company introduced synthetic fabrics for roller covers, providing increased paint capacity and faster coverage. Synthetic roller-cover fabrics would go on to become an industry standard.

For contractors and crews, roller technology directly affects production rates, finish quality and material control. A roller cover that loads efficiently, releases coating consistently and holds up over the course of a job can have a meaningful effect on labor and jobsite results.

As the industry has continued to prioritize productivity without compromising finish quality, roller-cover development has remained an important part of the professional tool category.

Wooster craftsmen mixing bristles.



Tools Built for the Working Painter

Beginning in the 1980s and continuing through today, Wooster's product development has increasingly emphasized ergonomics, speed and reliable performance.

The company introduced its flagship Ultra/Pro brush line in 1985, followed by Sherlock extension poles in 1988. In 1992, the company launched the Sherlock roller frame, incorporating a retaining spring to keep the roller cover securely in place, smooth-rolling bearings and a hands-free release mechanism.

The company continued to address comfort and control in 1999 with the Shortcut brush. Its short, flexible soft-grip handle was designed to give painters improved maneuverability in tight areas. More recent handle technologies, including GripTech and GripTech MAX, build on that ergonomic

focus with rubberized grip designs intended to improve comfort and reduce hand fatigue.

For painting professionals, these details are not incidental. Tools that improve control, reduce strain, or eliminate small interruptions in the workday can contribute to better consistency and greater efficiency across an entire project.

A Manufacturing Legacy That Continues

Today, Wooster offers more than 2,000 painting products, including professional and consumer brushes, roller covers, frames, extension poles, and surface-preparation tools. Its current catalog includes products that reflect 175 years of accumulated knowledge as well as newer technologies developed for today's coatings and applications.

The company's anniversary theme, "Generations of Innovation," speaks not only to product evolution, but also to the people behind it. Generations of employees have designed, manufactured, tested and supported the tools that ultimately make their way into painters' hands.

That connection to people and place is especially notable given the company's continued presence in Wooster, Ohio. After 175 years, Wooster Brush remains both a manufacturer serving the national painting industry and a longstanding employer within its home community.

"Reaching 175 years is quite an accomplishment, and we are very excited to celebrate this milestone," said Ben Maibach, President of The Wooster Brush Company. "It reflects the dedication of generations of employees, the loyalty of our customers, and the values of craftsmanship and integrity that have guided our company since 1851."

From Innovation to the Toolbox

For professional painters, a company's history matters most when it translates into better-performing tools on the job.

An angled brush that improves cutting in, a synthetic roller cover that increases coverage, a frame that releases with a tap or a handle designed to reduce fatigue can become so familiar that its original innovation is easy to overlook. Yet many of the tools painters consider standard today began as solutions to specific application challenges.

Wooster Brush's 175-year history isn't simply a record of how long the company has been making painting tools, but a record of its contribution to the evolution of painting tools.

From two brothers selling handmade brushes door-to-door in 1851 to today's broad range of professional applicators, the company's purpose has remained consistent: helping painters achieve better results, one tool at a time.

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More Than Paint. A True Partner.

For generations, our passion for producing products and colors made from premium-quality ingredients has been our highest priority, resulting in exceptional performance you can trust. Professionals who select Benjamin Moore products benefit from greater efficiency and stronger customer loyalty that drives referrals.

Here's what you can expect from Benjamin Moore:

Exceptional Spread Rate for Material Savings

Advanced formulas provide better coverage per gallon,¹ resulting in less material and greater efficiency that can help you save money.

Faster Dry Times for Lower Labor Costs

Quick recoat times allow you to apply multiple coats in a day,² so you can finish projects more quickly and move on to the next.

Flawless Application for Confident Results

Smooth, consistent application reduces touch-ups, callbacks, and jobsite disruptions, saving time and boosting productivity.

Durable Products for Lasting Results

Our proprietary Gennex® Color Technology delivers durable, long-lasting color, keeping properties looking fresh and protected for customer satisfaction.

Trusted Support for Long-Term Partnership

Our responsive sales team provides expert advice, while our retailers deliver quality service, product knowledge, and a commitment to supporting your business.

Tailored Programs for Business Success

Specialized programs and services, exclusive to Benjamin Moore, offer new ways to grow and improve your business.



Join the Benjamin Moore family today and access professional support. To find your local representative, call 1-866-708-9180, email info@benjaminmoore.com, or scan the QR code.



For product updates and expert advice, follow us on Instagram @BenjaminMoorePro 

¹Regal® Select Interior delivers 50 more square feet per gallon (approximate gallon coverage at recommended film thickness - sq. ft.) than a leading national competitor. ²Recoat with Regal Select Interior in as little as one hour (dry time at 77°F [25°C] at 50% RH) versus a leading national competitor's four-hour recoat time.

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