



INTERPLASTIC

CASE

history

Custom Retail

MarCraft® Inc.

MarCraft, Inc. has seen tremendous success in The Home Depot®, Lowes® and others - by bringing their custom-made product lines into the retail arena. This family-owned and run company manufactures cultured marble, onyx, and granite vanity tops, tubs, shower bases, wall panels, windowsills, and fireplace hearths.

In order to be more competitive in the retail markets, MarCraft's management scrapped old theories, built another plant and re-engineered the lines in the existing plants. The re-engineering has been thorough and expensive but the payoff was immediate and well worth it say company officials.

Reduce Manufacturing Time

To satisfy on-demand custom orders, MarCraft needed to reduce its cycle times. The footprints of the new lines are 50% smaller than their previous lines, which help MarCraft to minimize cycle times and maximize mold use.

In addition, Raymond Navarro, MarCraft Lead Technical Manager, began investigating resin/gel coat systems that would cure more quickly without compromising the finish quality MarCraft wanted. They chose the SIL-90BA-1247L Silmar® resin and Silmar SIL-08LH-70 gel coat system from Interplastic Corporation. Both are low HAP (Hazardous Air Pollutants) products.

reducing
cycle times

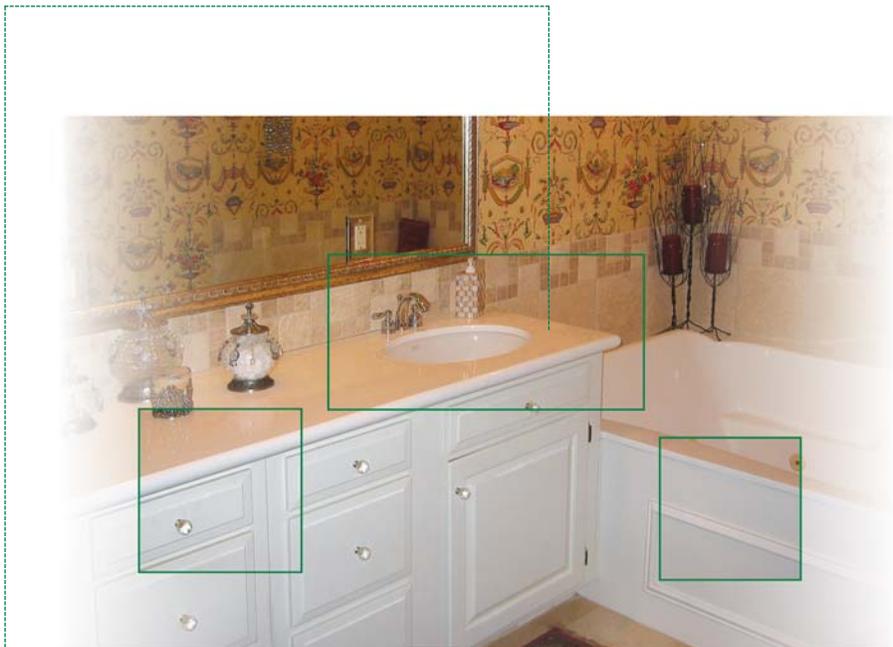


"The resin has excellent gel and cure properties," says Kevin Latham, Silmar Senior Resin Chemist. "Using the Silmar system improves MarCraft's ability to cure the resin and gel coat simultaneously, quickly and thoroughly at ambient temperatures. The system also performs consistently year round; it handles temperature and humidity changes well. This is important since MarCraft is located in Georgia."

In addition, Latham says the system resists cracking, tearing and other common problems associated with short manufacturing timelines.

Consistent Beauty

MarCraft continually changes colors and patterns, therefore the resin consistency must be absolute. "If the resin consistency isn't perfect, the viscosity of the mix and ultimately the finished color and pattern won't be consistent either," explains Navarro. "The Silmar system gives us the cure and color properties we need and the Silmar gel coat adds a beautiful, high-gloss finish. The Silmar system works superbly and enables us to standardize our resin/gel coat inventories," says Navarro. Consistent color from batch-to-batch is a Silmar hallmark.



Expediting Delivery

"A product stays on our manufacturing floor less than eight hours," states Gene Chambers, MarCraft Chairman of the Board. "We redesigned our manufacturing flow and also standardized our computerized design and ordering software at the stores to allow us to deliver one unit anywhere in the U.S. within five days from the day it is ordered." Chambers says the software leads the customer through the design of the product they want. When the customer is satisfied with their choices, the order is placed electronically at MarCraft and within minutes the order could be on the production floor of the appropriate MarCraft business unit.

Their new team management approach at MarCraft has been well received by employees, where turnover is now almost zero. "We have about 20-30 members on each team," concludes

Chambers. "The self-directed teams operate autonomously with their own profit targets and overhead expenses. They are each challenged to grow their business unit and each team member, from the top down, has equal profit incentives. There is tremendous peer pressure to be a successful team member. Our quality is higher than ever and we couldn't be more satisfied with everyone's efforts."

Interplastic Corporation is a specialty chemical company located in St. Paul, Minnesota. It is focused on the production and distribution of unsaturated polyester resins, vinyl ester resins and gel coats for the composites and cast polymer industries. Silmar is the leading formulator of solid surface and casting resins for cast polymer manufacturers. Visit www.interplastic.com to learn more about Silmar products.

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