

BY MICHAEL REGAN

Paint Trends:

What's **HOT**, What's **NOT**



HOT: *WHAT-A-SHOT™ EZ Blend automotive-grade paint ball pellets.* Match any car, any color while you're sittin' on the porch! Distance from the car determines brightness & color match. And we guaran-gosh-darn-tee that you've never seen blends like this! Available in 50,004 colors for domestic and imported for 1993-2003 models. Topcoat with our 12-gauge *BULLSEYE™ Clearcoat* shells. Under 18 must have parental consent.



NOT: *CAMPFIRE-Brand MARSHMALLOW Tack Cloths.* The big problem here is that these folks confined their market research to the Death Valley, Calif., area. At 108 degrees and 2% humidity, these little fellers did a dandy job – even better than ostrich feathers. But when we tried them on a July afternoon in Sulphur, La. ... I don't have to tell you what kind of a mess we got here, son.

HOT: *UV-MODIFIED Meals Ready to Eat (MREs).* You spent \$1,800 for a fancy lamp that you can't even read by – but now you can cook with it. 48 delicious flavors including Water Buffalo with sweet potatoes & bamboo gravy, and our No. 1 seller: Braised steak strips of African lion in Grand Marnier sauce. "Simply fabbolous," raves retired General and *BSB* food critic Brookstone Plutonipus



NOT: *PAINT-AID detoxification additive.* It renders hydrocarbon-based chemical products non-toxic and edible. That EAT ME™ ad campaign was disgusting. Watching those poor painters eating piles of allegedly detoxified paint by-products was enough to make me gag.

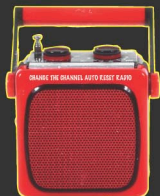
HOT: *ROBO FINGER™ hydraulic-assisted index finger implant.* This new medical breakthrough takes the pain out of squeezing the trigger. Studies show that painters can squeeze a gun trigger 5,000 to 7,000 times per day in a busy shop. Our industry is losing needed techs because their fingers are wearing out. *Bonus:* The entire \$50,000 operation is tax deductible.



NOT: *The WHACK-O Brush-On Paint Suit.* Whoever invented this needs to have his head examined. Sure, it brushes on easily. But they don't tell you to remove all body hair until the last page of the directions – and 96% of purchasers failed to read this small, but important, fact. Maybe we need to add "Hairless Painters" to the Want Ads.



NOT: *The TOY-LET SPRAY GUN FLUSHER™.* This thing should have a warning label that tells you to keep long hair away from the device input. 'Nuff said!



HOT: *CHANGE THE CHANNEL™ auto reset radio.* The boss can change the station all he wants. But as soon as he's back in the office, this radio will switch back to YOUR favorite station. No more lost productivity! Just attach the nearly invisible sensor to the boss' key ring, and the radio will know when it's safe to change the station.



HOT: *The automotive painter's I WALK ON WATER WORKBOOTS™.* Put these bad boys on, and there will be a smile on your face and a spring in your step. And if you ever get really thirsty, you can drink the tri-filtered, de-mineralized, came-from-the-glacier water that fills the insoles. These steel-toed, no bull, cowhide-only boots are available in 23 styles. Men's sizes 7-14, widths AAA to EEEEE.



NOT: Working title for product: *Steam-powered thinner recycler/gun cleaner/boot crubber/upholstery cleaner/egg poacher.* (The official name of this product has yet to be determined.) Leave it to those wild, wacky Canadians to bring the first steam-powered device to the North American market since the last Baldwin steam locomotive in 1955.



HOT: *SEEITMATCHES™ color-corrected designer sunglasses.* 94% of vehicle owners are color blind. Thanks to the folks at the *Fix the Humans Foundation* you no longer have to pay the price for your customers' shortcomings. The introductory kit includes 50 pairs of glasses, counter display materials & a video that teaches you how to get a pair of these on every customer before he sees his vehicle. Watch your CSI go through the roof!



NOT: *The SLEAZYBAKE™ coal/cowpie-powered automotive vehicle baking barn.* Ohio's new claim to fame comes from the unsuspecting Applechain Mountains in the Southeastern part of the state. With the *SLEAZYBAKE*, all you do is paint that puppy, slide it in through the partially insulated barn door & get the 'hell outa' there. It'll look far better than it smells. But hey, in this business, the end justifies the means. Or does it?



HOT OR NOT? YOU DECIDE:

The HOLD IT STEADY/GOT IT READY/HYDRAULIC, PNEUMATIC, DEFIBRILLATING AND ARTICULATING PAINT IONIZER™. New from 4M! Put down your guns guys and put up your hand – to grab a hold of this here newfangled deevce. You won't just atomize paint – you'll ionize it. Call your 4M rep, and you'll never have to pick up a gun again.

Writer Michael Regan worked on the paint side of the collision repair industry for 36 years and lives in Northeast Ohio. These days, he can be found teaching cooking classes, playing guitar and piano and baking some of the best cakes that money can buy. You can contact him at MRegan7346@aol.com.

Disclaimer: All products, descriptions, situations, institutions, companies and people appearing here are fictional, and any similarity to actual products, descriptions, situations, institutions, companies and people (living or dead) is strictly coincidental. Except for the 4M reference. That was me having some fun with 3M.