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AMERICAN PAINTING CONTRACTOR

MARCH 2012 ■ Vol. 89, No. 2

OUR 89th YEAR



OFFICIAL MAGAZINE PARTNER

TOP JOB

Awards!!

**Painting in Partnership, Inc.
Grand Prize Winner
Second Time in Five Years!**

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The Industry's Best Work...
The Industry's Highest Honor...

TOP JOB Awards!!



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Well, all I can say to this year's TOP JOB entrants is bravo! This year's TOP JOB competition was fierce, and the decisions that had to be made were more difficult than any year since I've been on the staff. We were forced to leave a lot of awesome projects on the cutting-room floor.

Perhaps you're wondering what lands a project in the top 10, and more importantly, what lands a project in the top four? I can't tell you exactly how to win a TOP JOB, because more often than not, it depends on the competition for that year. Every year we see a different project type surge. It's the strangest thing – one year we will receive a ton of residential repaints and the next not so much. I remember the first year I worked on TOP JOB; it was painted lady after painted lady, and the funny thing is, I haven't seen a painted lady since. 2011 was the year of the commercial entry, which was refreshing since that category doesn't always see a lot of entries.

In addition to our increase in commercial jobs, decorative was a very strong category. This is the only category that always seems to have a lot of entrants. We think that's awesome. The pictures are beautiful and the projects are entertaining. However, I do have one piece of advice for decorative painters who enter TOP JOBS. Tell us why this job is different. We want to hear how this project broke new ground for you.

Also, if you don't have a decorative job, that doesn't mean you don't have a TOP JOB. TOP JOB highlights all the different types of painting out there. So what if the finish isn't trompe l'oeil. If you figured out how to pull 30-year-old wallpaper off

unprimed drywall, we want to hear about it. If you had the most nightmarish customer known to man, and when you walked away they were pleased, we want to hear about it. If you are reaching new heights with your business, we want you to take us on your journey.

What I'm saying is that a TOP JOB is not only a great job, it's a job out of the ordinary and something that really illustrates what being a painting contractor is all about.

This year's TOP JOB grand-prize winner did all of those things. Painting in Partnership out of Palentine, Ill., illustrated the benefits of hiring (and being) a knowledgeable, respected and responsible painting contractor. PiP jumped through a ton of hoops before they could even begin prepping the surface. They worked within the parameters of city ordinances, EPA and OSHA in addition to adhering to PDCA Industry Standards and Craftsmanship Operating Procedures. I can't imagine this was an easy sell. The job wasn't cheap, and PiP was likely underbid by competitors. However, the clients were kept well informed as to each step that needed to be taken and why. This was truly a situation where quality outweighed price. Congratulations to Painting in Partnership on a TOP JOB!

Our first-prize winners are nothing short of fantastic either. Artistic Walls by Sandra out of Ventura, Iowa, wowed her way into a first-prize spot with her marketing and sales skill as well as her artistic ability. She won the hearts of her clients with a small job and ended up creating a ceiling scene that won ours. We figured it must have been intimidating to create a faux stained

glass window that would reside right next to a real stained glass light fixture, but she pulled it off with flying stained glass colors!

Next time you're riding AirTrain at Newark Liberty National Airport, you can thank Alpine Painting of Paterson, N.J. Their ingenuity and hard work kept that train on track and running smoothly. These fellas worked within strict guidelines and supervision to get this highly technical job done. And when the weather threw them a curveball they worked through the problem and kept going. This was a fascinating project that helped increase the quality and safety of AirTrain.

Painting Etc. LLC in New Jersey gave their client, a local auto shop owner, a completely new look. Auto shops suffer a tremendous amount of wear and tear as cars move in and out. A lot of prep work and determination ensured that the end result was no less than perfection. By the time they finished their work, the owner even received a visit from the mayor, who wanted to check out the new digs.

As always, I would like to give a big thank-you to our sponsors Modern Masters, Graco and Purdy. Most importantly, we owe enormous thanks to Zinsser, our founding TOP JOB sponsor, who presented the grand-prize winner with a knee-buckling check for \$10,000. Here's to another year of great projects, and don't forget to keep recording your TOP JOBS!

 **Painting in Partnership, Inc.**
"When trust, craftsmanship and professionalism matter most!"

www.paintpartner.com
847-934-8885

PREPARATION MAKES PERFECT

Painting in Partnership sells the client on quality and gives them craftsmanship



By Emily Howard

One of the most common complaints I hear from painting contractors concerns pricing. Customers often think the price is too high or do not appreciate the value in a project, or another contractor undercuts the bid. So many contractors ask us how to get over this obstacle. The key to selling the project and not the price is explaining what needs to be done, why and the consequences of hiring a cheaper contractor that might skip important steps. This year's TOP JOB grand-prize winner illustrates this beautifully.

Located on a busy street in the Old Town neighborhood of Chicago, this 1889 condo boasts two Victorian style two-story bay windows and a large cornice spanning the building, all in original tin cladding. The three-story brick building hadn't received a paint job in 15 to 20 years, meaning the surfaces were showing their age.



After many years the building started to rust in many areas.

Painting in Partnership (PiP) out of Palentine, Ill., is co-owned by Mario Guertin and has been in business for 26 years. PiP recruits only employees who share the values of craftsmen. Employees participate in a training program that nurtures the development of those employees. Quality and craftsmanship is their motto, and they showed what it means to be a top-quality contractor on this job.

It all starts with the prep, and prep often requires a lot more than sanding, scraping and priming. For this project, the prep began long before the sandpaper hit the building. The prep started with meeting various city and national regulations in place for a project like this. Since the building was pre-1978, it required that PiP meet all RRP regulations. Because most of the work was taking place above the sidewalk level, this was especially challenging. Second, the condo's location on a busy Chicago street required PiP to secure a number of permits for the job, including one to close the sidewalk for two days.



A containment system was put into place to collect and contain debris from the work area.



Safety first! Fall protection was used at all times.

They then had to set up a 50-foot canopy over the sidewalk with 24-hour lighting, have four layers of scaffolding erected over the canopy, and create a containment system that would reliably collect and contain any dust or debris from the work. PiP also had to contract the power company to move two power lines so that they were more than 10 feet from the scaffolding and have a communication wire wrapped. All in all, there was over \$10,000 in jobsite prep completed. Then the fun could really begin.

In addition to the jobsite prep, PiP had to work with the owners to come up with a color scheme that would bring back the condo's beauty. There were 10 owners of the building. A meeting was set with those who wanted to participate, and "they all did their homework," said Guertin. The group was very helpful in giving feedback and direction. To communicate the new color scheme to the owners, an illustration board was created. Based on owner feedback, one color was changed to the original proposal and they were ready to move forward with the contract.

Considering the cost and effort required just to get this jobsite ready for painting, PiP wanted to make sure that the paint job would last. Carbide scrapers and 60-grit sandpaper were used to remove old coatings. Rust converter was applied to surfaces, and epoxy filler to holes, gaps and cracks. One hole was so large that a metal fabricator was used to install a zinc patch. Once the metal surfaces were brought back up to par, they received a high solid, direct-to-metal, alkyd primer. The wood surfaces were patched and received a two-part epoxy sealer. Fifteen ornamental pieces were missing from the building. A firm was hired to create molds of the missing pieces and recreate them in exterior-grade plaster sealed with linseed oil. Forty percent of the nearly 350 man-hours used on this job were spent prepping the surface.

In addition to the city ordinances, OSHA and RRP, PiP also followed PDCA Industry Standards – P7-04 helped them with job sequencing. The color scheme was brand new, and they used this fine-tuned method to tag the



An illustration board was used to communicate the new color scheme to the owners.

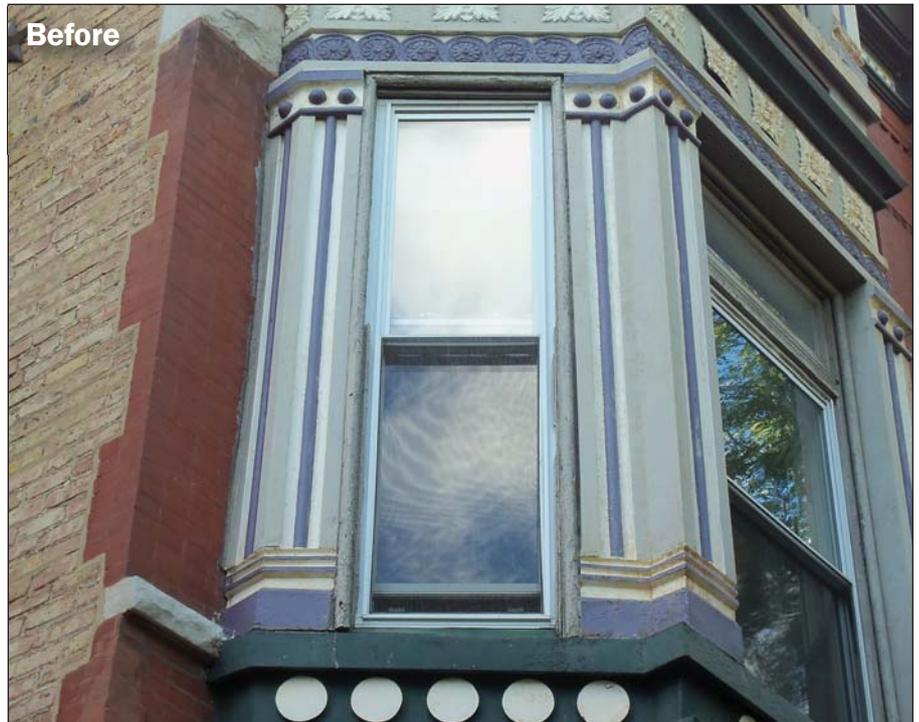


Sharp lines were an extra challenge on this job, but PiP pulled it off beautifully.

different surfaces through the scaffolding layers. Some colors required two coats, and this method helped maintain efficient flow. Despite thorough prep, 120 years of paint could not be completely removed. The crew had to take additional care in cutting perfect lines on a surface that was not perfectly smooth.

Despite the age of the building and the miles of red tape, PiP finished the job beautifully. Many of the owners sent in testimonials after the job was finished. Each of them took the time to compliment the team's attention to detail and the time they took to explain the process, color options and repairs that were required. "Meeting or exceeding our client's expectations for the precision beauty and harmony of the final result is why our company exists," said Guertin.

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A beautifully completed TOP JOB.