

Mainstream use of a full colour palette

As leading Veka fabricator **Modplan** launches a new range of coloured foils and invests in new manufacturing space, including an expanded spray painting facility to meet customer demand, Sales Manager **Chris Reeks** says it's time that colour entered the mainstream

Colour has been a big story in the industry for some time. In commercial circles, coloured profiles have been presented as a competitively priced alternative to aluminium and have enabled commercial fabricators and installers to grow their market share. In the domestic market, everyone has got excited about the end to the "any colour as long as it's white" mentality and seen that coloured profiles are a way for homeowners to add individuality and style to their replacement windows.

A perfect example of this comes from one of our customers, Window Solutions Wales. The company has just completed work on the windows in a stunning architect-designed new build house. The original specification was for aluminium, but Window Solutions won the contract using Modplan FS system windows with a spray finish over foil that simulated aluminium composite windows. The project is a perfect demonstration that both architects and homeowners still tend to think aluminium when it comes to colour but also proves that our industry now has the technology to produce something as good if not better.

Mass appeal

Given success stories like these, it's strange that coloured profiles remain a relatively niche product, especially in the domestic market. I suspect the difficulty has been around two things. Firstly, the lead time – when foiled products are a special order with a long lead time, they tend to be relegated to a

second tier of products in your portfolio, only brought out when a customer requests them. Secondly, the range of colours. With a limited palette of foiled colours, there is less to appeal to homeowners.

The good news is that with the launch of our new Veka Variations foiled profiles and the extension of our spray painting facility, things are about to change.

The Variations range of 18 foiled and woodgrain finishes has been inspired by nature and is designed to reflect the most popular and emerging finishes that the market is demanding. One example of this is Chartwell Green – the elegant pale green that has become so popular in high end developments and period residential properties recently. Similar attention has been paid to the requirements of the commercial sector too, with a wider palette of greys than ever before. In short, Variations offers an elegant and sophisticated range of colours that will appeal to today's design-conscious client.

Available ex-stock

The other good news is that five of the most popular shades in the Variations range – Dark Green, Beck Brown, Anthracite Grey, Chartwell Green and White Woodgrain – will be available ex stock on our FS profile, vertical slider and sliding patio door. It means that coloured profiles can be offered alongside – and equal to – traditional white for the first time. All the other

colours in the range will be available to order with a slightly extended lead time. And as with all orders placed with Modplan, you'll be kept advised of delivery dates and progress so keeping track of your schedule is easy.

But the Variations range isn't the only



colour news at Modplan. Earlier this year, we expanded our spray facility as part of an investment in additional manufacturing space at our Gwent headquarters. The expansion has helped us meet growing demand for our products, including an increased demand for a sprayed finish, and still meet our rapid turnaround times. We think the increasing interest in our spray painting offering is down to several things.

Firstly, the versatility – with any RAL colour available on any of our profiles, offering even further choice over and above the renewed foils range, the customer's imagination is the only limit. Secondly, the all-over colour. In high spec developments this is often the factor that clinches the decision to opt for a spray finish. There's also the "value-added" benefit: we can spray match any items that are not yet available in foil to complete a sophisticated aesthetic. But perhaps the most important for us is the quality we offer. We use Kolorbond, which forms a molecular cross bond with the plastic surface for a longer lasting finish, unlike most other paints for plastics which stick to the substrate. This quality has already led to an increase in demand and we think there are more opportunities out there for our customers to seize.

Increasingly popular

The industry has been talking about colour and the benefits it brings for many years now. It's an increasingly popular option in commercial developments because it allows specifiers to benefit from the energy efficiency of PVC-U without compromising on the perceived aesthetic benefits of aluminium. But there's still a long way to go in the domestic market before homeowners stop thinking that PVC-U automatically means white. The recent developments at Modplan mean that our customers can go into the marketplace and change that perception for good!

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