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## Improving Your Business with Conservation & Specialty Matting Digital Reproduction Magazine May 2007

Megawood recently held a series of educational seminars in both Melbourne & Sydney, to good sized audiences from the framing industry, on "Improving Your Business with Conservation & Specialty Matting."

The seminars were presented by Jared Davis, CPF, GCF, who is well known in the industry due to his frequent contributions to local industry magazines such as this one.

Starting with a powerful introduction – Jared described a story about a framer in the US who was sued by a customer for using 20 year old "out-dated" framing techniques & materials which irreparably damaged the artwork. Jared delivered a strong message emphasizing the continual need for framers and business owners to "keep learning" about current methods and techniques, especially in conservation framing.

The presentation was broken into two sections – The "educational" aspects of conservation matting and the "selling methods" for conservation & specialty matting.

The theme of the "education" part of the presentation was "Today's Technology is tomorrow's standard".

Conservation is all about protecting the artwork and knowing the problems that can be encountered. These problems arise from the materials and procedures used in the framing as well as the environment in which the artwork will be displayed.

This part of the presentation was well researched, and covered the basic causes (& prevention) of artwork damage, focusing on acid and air pollution. Both of these aspects can be prevented by using the Bainbridge "Artcare®" range of Alphamat® matboard. It was interesting to learn how acid damage was caused, and how the pH scale worked for measuring acidity.

Jared also spoke in depth about how high quality matboards were made, and covered the question of Alphamat® vs cotton rag matboard, the differences between the two products, and why recognised museums & galleries worldwide are now preferring Artcare® protection over standard cotton rag matboard.

The second part of the presentation on "selling" was the dynamic part of the night, and Jared's entertaining style made the information easier for everyone to relate to.

Jared broke down the "selling concepts" into a series of simple steps, from both a "visual" and a "verbal" aspect.

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The “visual” areas of merchandising and display were directed around the key theme of - “If they cannot see it, they won’t buy it”. Dedicating wall space to create permanent displays of up-scaled framed examples was clearly the best method illustrated to help increase customers expectations for better quality framing. Also creating comparative “visual” examples of conservation and non-conservation methods was also discussed.

Another concept demonstrated was how to use your matboard samples more effectively. For example - arranging your matboard corner samples by colour wheel, including the specialty and fabric mat samples, rather than segregating them by price. This simple method allows the “deluxe” samples to become a more frequently used option by the client. Jared also emphasized the benefit of using “wider” 4 inch matboard corner samples, rather than the traditional 2¾ inch samples which restrict the ability to consult wider, more appealing frames.

Jared then covered the verbal aspects, breaking down the psychology on the front counter, and providing useful lines framers could rehearse for simple explanations and handling common objections.

Unless the customer’s “desire” is established and maintained throughout the consulting process, the focus at the end will be only on “the price”. Methods for stimulating the emotional aspect of the purchase, and anticipating the objections were some of the concepts discussed in detail.

At the end of the day, it was about educating retail customers about the best way to present & protect their treasured memories.

Just as it is important to “personalised the experience” for the customer on the front counter, Jared certainly personalised his presentation for the audience, and it was pleasing to see such enthusiasm and motivation being generated by an evening such as this.



*With over 15 years experience in the framing & graphics industry, Jared Davis CPF, GCF has covered the wholesale, commercial and retail aspects of the business. His previous sales, marketing & training experience gives him an understanding of the changing opportunities for retail businesses, and he offers an up-to-date approach on new methods and techniques now required by today's business owners, to be able to successfully market, merchandise and sell their services to consumers. Jared is also a featured educator at major international industry tradeshow & conventions.*