

Changing the Concrete World

The Five Most Influential People in the Concrete Industry in 2013.

By William D. Palmer Jr.

Polishing Concrete's Image

Charles Griffasi

Chief Financial Officer, International Concrete Polishing & Staining Conference (ICPSC)
Buffalo N.Y.

Polished concrete has evolved from an industrial floor treatment into a true challenge to tile and vinyl flooring. Leading the charge have been Charlie Griffasi and Mike Sawick with the ICPSC held over four days for the past 4 years and growing to over 300 attendees in 2012.

Griffasi spent 30 years as a flatwork contractor, but for the last 10 he was yearning to release his creative side. This evolved into a business called Concrete Innovations making concrete countertops. "I was looking for a way to diversify," he says. "When a fire hall project I was working on called for polished concrete I researched it along with polished concrete countertops."



When he went to Atlanta to meet with a polished concrete equipment company, he took along his brother-in-law Mike Sawick. "This got Mike's attention and began his involvement in the industry" says Griffasi. "I attended a conference on concrete countertops that included seminars, exhibits, and demonstrations. Realizing that there was a need for a similar venue in the concrete floor polishing industry, I suggested that we start one. My son, Jason, and Mike took me to task on that and the ICPSC was born."

But they have bigger ideas than just a 4-day conference, trying to give the content an online life. "I handle the conference interworkings with manufacturers and exhibitors," says Griffasi. "Mike is the "dean" of the Concrete Polishing University (CPU). He selects and outlines the seminars at the ICPSC and those are offered online."

Polished concrete will continue to evolve over the coming years and Griffasi expects the ICPSC to be the leader. "Our goal is to be one big tent for the industry, to show innovations and to educate."

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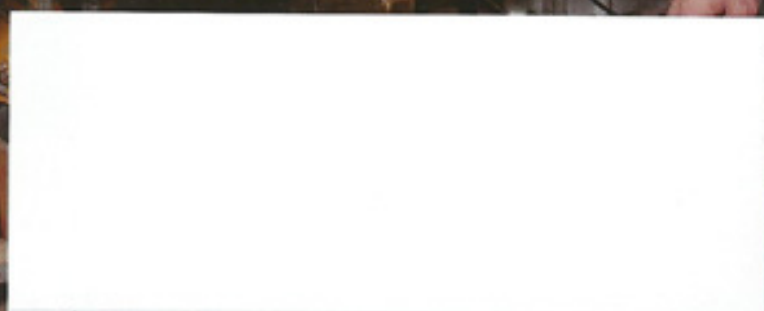
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