



**When global technology manufacturer Compac Sorting Equipment wanted to create a showroom floor to impress their international clients, they called upon leading NZ flooring applicators, Topcoat Specialist Coatings Limited.**

And the result showed what could be achieved with the right techniques - transforming a pitted, run-down concrete floor into a smooth and stylish new surface.

### **The challenge**

Compac Sorting Equipment is a world leader in the specialised market of high-performance sorting and packing solutions to the fruit and vegetable industry.

From their premises in Auckland's Onehunga, they deliver packing technology, machinery, software and electronic solutions for clients around the world.

A home-grown success story, Compac-branded equipment is now widely used in more than 20 countries. The company was recently recognized in the prestigious 2010 NZ Hi-Tech Awards.

To meet their growing business needs, Compac needed to expand their prototype capabilities from 250m sq to approx 1000 sq m. The decision was made to transform a former welding and metal fabrication shop into a prototype showroom and testing area.



**CLIENT:**  
Compac Sorting Equipment Ltd

**SCOPE:**  
1,000sqm showroom/prototype area

**LOCATION:**  
Onehunga, South Auckland

**FLOORING TEAM:**  
Topcoat Specialist Coatings Ltd

**CATEGORY:**  
Floor epoxy re-topping/coating

**PRODUCT:**  
PPG Amerlock 400 in Denaube





The challenge for Topcoat was to transform a pitted and delaminated concrete base into a glossy new floor of showroom standard.

### Dual purpose

Compac director Gavin Reeve says the new floor would fulfil two important functions. As well as creating a better working environment, it would also present a professional image to visiting clients. *"Having a professional-looking prototype area is good for our corporate image,"* he says.

*"A huge amount of what we do is R&D to support our offshore facilities around the world – so we wanted to raise the standard of the area where we show people through."*

As it's also a working area, there were also practical considerations.

*"It's still an environment where there is a lot of machinery moving around; so we needed a floor that was hardwearing and easy to keep clean."*

### The solution

The original floor had surface pitting, oil contamination, and uneven surfaces due to a mix of different leveling compounds.

*"The floor that was originally in the building was almost unusable,"* says Gavin Reeves.

*"It was so rotten that every time you swept the floor, you were sweeping up concrete debris."*

The project was divided into two areas. Stage One, an area of about 440m<sup>2</sup>, was mostly in very poor condition with a cementitious topping that was delaminating.

This process involved an initial grind, kango-ing off loose delaminated topping, laying an epoxy pre-fill to level uneven areas, and a re-grind. The final step was to apply three coats of PPG Amerlock 400 roll-on epoxy, in the chosen colour of Denaube.

Gavin Reeve says the bright blue colour not only looks superb, but also has practical advantages. *"From a visual point of view we wanted something that would contrast with the light grey of the machinery. When we're taking photos of machines on the floor, say for manuals or work instructions, it's good to have something that stands out."*

Stage Two covered the remaining part of the 1000m<sup>2</sup> floor area. As this was a production rather than showroom area, the floor requirement was to a slightly less standard; although a small area was skimmed where the concrete was badly pitted.

## Superior service

When initialing scoping the job, Gavin Reeve says Compac looked at five or six different companies - but Topcoat stood out for two reasons. The first reason was that they tailored the solution to the problem, rather than providing a one-size-fits-all solution.

*"Most of the other proposals ranged from either a very cheap painting job, through to thick recoating. Topcoat provided the best overall solution, because they tailored the solution to the different requirements of the floor."*

*"Some areas were very badly damaged, while other areas weren't too bad. They told us there was plenty of concrete that didn't need any more than a grind and paint, while other parts needed remedial work."*

This carefully-considered approach was appreciated by Compac, particularly as it resulted in cost savings overall. *"Topcoat looked at our needs and met them, instead of just doing what was easiest for them. By doing what was actually required, rather than an out-of-the-box solution, it ultimately meant we got better value for money,"* says Gavin Reeve.

The other impressive proposal from Topcoat was they were the only company to offer to provide a sample area to illustrate the finished look. Prior to starting work, Topcoat diamond ground a small area of the floor and skimmed all defect areas with an epoxy mortar.

## The outcome

Having impressed with their level of service, Topcoat were also asked by Compac to complete some additional work while on site. This included building a concrete ramp, and painting of internal office walls.

Gavin Reeve says the Topcoat team worked long hours to complete the flooring job with minimal disruption to Compac's operations.

*"The whole project was done in two halves - we moved all equipment and machinery to one half of the building while they were grinding and painting the other half. We gave them a deadline of a week to finish one side, and they were very flexible at working in with us. Topcoat's general manager Mark Ambridge was very good at communicating and keeping us informed of what was going on."*

Compac are very happy with the floor's finished result – offering both a smart new look, and a smooth clean surface to work on. Gavin Reeve says having a carefully-considered solution from Topcoat made all the difference.

*"They were very good at listening to what we needed and coming up with solutions for our specific needs; rather than just answers out of a catalogue."*

