

A Conversation with ...

Ross Scott *Maui Powder Works*

Back in 2004, Ross Scott was living in Hawaii and frustrated with painting liquid paint on metal air conditioning registers for a local resort. Then he discovered powder coating and built Maui Powder Works from the ground up along with his wife, Kim. They have a vibrant business and just started an online training course for coaters. We caught up with him as the sun settled on a lazy Hawaiian afternoon.



PF: How's business for a coating shop in Hawaii?

RS: It's good and growing fast. I believe we've actually expanded the market here with customer education, word-of-mouth and having a top blog in powder coating. Costs revolve around high rents, shipping and wages.

PF: Tell us about the online courses you offer.

RS: They will show seasoned powder coaters how to create artistic and architectural finishes without buying more equipment, so they can expand their offerings to include products that were once only available to the liquid and chemical coatings market. This all happened by chance when a local welder needed to produce a more durable, less caustic application than his chemically induced effect could create on a large-scale gate project. He challenged me to try and create it. The sample passed the architect's sniff test, then we proceeded to get to work on systemizing the process. It's aging without the waiting.

PF: How did you get your start in the industry?

RS: I was refinishing furniture for rental owners and resorts with my wife. We got a call from an owner to look at his patio set. We discussed painting, but he wanted powder coating. I was stunned because I thought I knew everything about painting, but had never heard of powder coating before. That night, I searched the internet and hung out in forums to learn more. When I realized you could put finished pieces into service the same day without waiting for the paint to dry, I was hooked.

PF: What's the best piece of advice you were given?

RS: You're only as good as your last job.

PF: What was your first job and what did you learn from it?

RS: Working as a busboy for a popular restaurant. Taxes suck.

PF: What leadership traits have helped you?

RS: Problem solution, as in reducing a problem to its lowest common denominator. Once you do, the solution can be revealed.

PF: What did you want to be when you grew up?

RS: Race car driver. My family lived in Alaska and my dad used to ice race every weekend. It's a thing there.

Get to know Ross



Family: Wife, Kim, and daughters, Jessica and Alexa.



Favorite hobby: Weekend riding and sailing.



Favorite movie: "The Matrix" series.



Favorite book: "Atlas Shrugged" by Ayn Rand.



What's playing in your car CD/radio: Testament, The Formation of Damnation album.

PF: Where would we find you on a typical Saturday?

RS: My garage getting ready for my Sunday ride on my new 2019 Kawasaki Ninja XR-10r.

PF: Best way to keep competitive edge?

RS: Late afternoon walks, thinking about the business and my next move.

PF: What's your secret talent that no one knows about?

RS: Extremely empathic.

PF: How do you motivate yourself?

RS: Meditate.

PF: Three greatest passions?

RS: Riding bikes on Sundays, skiing in the winter and finishing a job.

PF: Worst business decision?

RS: When I tried to match my competition's pricing, then realized his business model was not mine.

PF: What advice would you give to yourself 10 years ago?

RS: Go see an accountant.

PF: Word that best describes you?

RS: Reliable.

PF: Favorite place you've ever lived?

RS: Maui, duh. ■■

Read a lot more of Ross' answers at PFOonline.com.