

# interstandox 75

the world of vehicle refinishes GB



## Energy efficiency in the bodyshop

Discovering potential, cutting costs

## WorldSkills 2013

Up-and-coming Swiss refinisher wins Gold

## Fascinating paint

The new Standox Calendar 2014



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Energy is becoming increasingly expensive so bodyshops need to think about potential savings. Standox energy consultations have demonstrated that bodyshops can cut energy costs by up to 30 per cent even with small-scale investment and by taking simple steps.

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**Imprint**

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In this issue you will find QR codes alongside some articles. By scanning these with a QR code reader on your smartphone you will be taken directly to a website with lots of additional information on the subject.

22-year-old vehicle refinisher Pascal Lehmann won Gold in the Car Painting category at this year's WorldSkills in Leipzig. "An indescribable feeling – one of the most memorable experiences I've ever had," says the young man from Switzerland.  
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Dynamic, vibrant and varied. In the new 2014 Standox calendar, German photographer Ralph Richter showcases paint in its liquid form in a completely new light. A short video shows the calendar images in motion.  
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# Nothing is more permanent than change

... or so the saying goes. But there's one thing you can be certain of – that Standox will continue to be the quality brand it has been for almost 60 years. I can promise you that.

Allow me to introduce myself. I am the new Brand Manager for Standox for Europe, Middle East and Africa. I have been with the business for a number of years and have experience in a variety of fields. After graduating, I initially worked for various advertising agencies. However, over the last 15 years I've held numerous national and international marketing positions within the company – initially at Herberts, then as part of DuPont and now at Axalta Coating Systems, our new parent company. Standox is one of the pillars of Axalta and will continue to be so in the future.

While some parts of Europe have not yet emerged from the economic crisis and are only slowly getting back on their feet, other countries are already buoyant. But even in these countries, the markets are changing. Business costs and efficiency have to meet the rising expectations of customers, insurers, leasing companies and fleet operators. This is compounded by economic pressures and by flagging markets for new vehicles.

In this situation, Standox offers solutions that help bodyshops to achieve outstanding results. Our one-visit application system ensures we offer unrivalled efficiency. And we are already in the process of developing new product systems to allow us to maintain our leading position. Our services, colour tools and advice give our customers the ability to hold their own successfully in the marketplace.

We attach enormous importance to the on-going development of our products and services. One example is our new quarter-litre tins. On the one hand, they lead to lower storage costs and less waste while still ensuring the excellent colour accuracy of our basecoat system – a very simple way to reduce bodyshop costs. On the other hand, we are meeting the requirements of the automotive industry with its development of increasingly complex colours. Many of these colours can only be matched by using small quantities of mixing tints in the colour formulation. Standox realised this early on and is now offering bodyshops a cost-effective solution.

All this goes to show that, in a changing world, Standox continues to be the brand it always has been. And we're continuously improving.

Yours



Olaf Adamek



Olaf Adamek,  
Brand Manager EMEA Standox GmbH.

# Energy efficiency in the bodyshop

Compressed air, bright lighting and high temperatures in the spray booth – they all mean high energy consumption and therefore spiralling energy costs. So every bodyshop has good reason to think about energy savings. Simple measures and small-scale investment often have a big effect on the electricity bill.



Standex offers a consultation service to help its bodyshop customers address this challenge. On request, energy consultants specialising in bodyshop requirements will identify individual potential savings and recommend specific, tailor-made measures. Practical experience shows that, with targeted investment, bodyshops are capable of cutting their annual energy bills by up to 30 per cent. The three biggest areas for savings potential in the bodyshop are spray booths, air compressors and lighting.

## Energy guzzler No. 1: The spray booth

The energy consumption of spray booths can vary greatly depending on their age and model, so the potential for savings is often huge. With heat recovery systems, for example, it is possible to reuse the heat energy, which is otherwise extracted unused, to heat the booth. Additional energy economies can be achieved by expanding the electronic controls. If spray booths only have an on/off switch, the entire booth is often heated unnecessarily to very high temperatures. A more precise temperature control and targeted regulation of heating in selected booth zones can lead to reductions in energy consumption of up to 40 per cent.



## Energy guzzler No. 2: Compressed air

Compressors are true energy guzzlers. Only 10 to 15 per cent of the energy is actually converted into compressed air, while the rest is simply lost in the form of heat. Our energy-saving tip is to use this excess for heating. Unlike the exhaust air from the spray booth, this air is not contaminated. The warm air can therefore be diverted directly – unfiltered – into the workshop. This is not usually difficult to accomplish and saves a lot of money that would otherwise be spent on heating.

## Energy guzzler No. 3: Lighting

There are further savings waiting to be made in the large spaces in bodyshops – on lighting. The widely used 72-watt fluorescent tubes consume almost as much energy as a 40-inch LCD television. If they are replaced with economical LEDs, the same light yield can be achieved with only 24 watts.

## Raising awareness of potential for energy savings

Not every saving requires investment. An example of something that costs nothing but is very effective is raising your staff's awareness of energy efficiency. In a business with 10 employees, 1,500 euros can be saved each year through greater energy awareness. The Standox energy consultants will be happy to advise you on these and other suggestions.



*Kai vom Lehn has been working as an energy consultant since 1999. For the last year he has been working for Standox Germany and has already advised many of our bodyshops on saving energy.*

## Interview

# “We’re really talking about a lot of money”

**interstandox:** Mr vom Lehn, what exactly happens in a Standox energy consultation?

**Kai vom Lehn:** First, a consultant will visit the bodyshop and take a close look at all areas that consume energy – from heating to the spray booth. That usually takes between two and five hours and is the start of the consultation.

**interstandox:** And what happens next?

**Kai vom Lehn:** After analysing the status quo, we really get down to work. By looking at the bodyshop’s energy bills, we calculate the potential for savings, among other things. Our work culminates in a detailed report containing practical recommendations. In some cases, we also coordinate and supervise the implementation of the measures that the bodyshop decides to take.

**interstandox:** How much does a bodyshop have to invest to become more energy-efficient? Is it worth doing?

**Kai vom Lehn:** Our main reason for advising bodyshops is to enable them to operate more efficiently. In other words, what we advise is always worthwhile for them. We don’t propose measures that save energy but call for inordinately high investment. The investment has to pay for itself within one to four years. Overall, our tips can help bodyshops cut their

energy bills permanently by up to a third. If we calculate the accumulated savings over a period of five years, we’re really talking about a lot of money.

**interstandox:** Particularly when you consider that energy prices are more likely to rise than to fall in the foreseeable future ...

**Kai vom Lehn:** Exactly. Incidentally, most business owners are very surprised when they realise how many areas there are in which they can save money through energy efficiency. They typically turn a blind eye to a lot of shortcomings or simply get used to them. When an external person draws their attention to these things and translates the potential for savings into euros, they’re often astonished. And for me as a consultant, that is fantastic to see.



Interview with Bernd Giensch,  
Giensch bodyshop in Grabow,  
Germany.

## Energy efficiency in the bodyshop

# “I never thought we could save so much!”

**interstandox:** What prompted you to seek an energy consultation with Standox?

**Bernd Giensch:** We'd reached the point where we were paying so much for heating and electricity that we could no longer pass the cost increases on to our customers via our hourly rates. So we had to foot part of the energy bills ourselves. As I'd been a Repanet member and a Standox customer for a long time, seeking advice from Standox was the obvious next step.

**interstandox:** How did the consultation go?

**Bernd Giensch:** Mr vom Lehn, the Standox consultant, made a lot of his time available to us. He spent three or four hours inspecting my two bodyshops, making assessments, taking photos and writing notes. He even looked at parts of the business I hadn't been to for a long time.

**interstandox:** And the result?

**Bernd Giensch:** I received a detailed consultation report with pictures, a personal assessment and practical suggestions for improvements, including a cost estimate and probable period of amortisation. The bottom line was that we would be able to cut our heating bill by about 30 per cent and our electricity bill by about 50 per cent if we implemented all the proposed measures. In absolute figures this means saving 6,500 euros per year on heating and 11,450 euros on electricity.

**interstandox:** Were you surprised by these amounts?

**Bernd Giensch:** You bet! I never thought we could save so much. And particularly with the measures proposed. Yes, we all know that LEDs are more economical than fluorescent tubes, but some of the other suggestions really surprised me.

**interstandox:** Can you give us an example?

**Bernd Giensch:** Our compressors. They're in a room separate from the workshop. In his report, Mr vom Lehn suggested knocking a hole in the wall to use the heat from the compressors to heat the workshop area. The idea is so simple. Obviously, we all know the compressor room gets really hot, but I never even considered using that heat. Without Mr vom Lehn's consultation we wouldn't have come up with such simple and inexpensive ideas.

**interstandox:** And what are your plans now?

**Bernd Giensch:** I have to decide which of the suggestions I want to implement and when to tackle the various projects. One project under discussion is a heat recovery unit for the spray booth. I'm currently obtaining quotes from installers. I am keen to see if Mr vom Lehn's cost estimates are realistic.

**interstandox:** What's your conclusion after the consultation?

**Bernd Giensch:** So far, I'm completely satisfied. Mr vom Lehn is friendly and knowledgeable. He gave me objective advice and wasn't trying to sell me anything. I've received a very clear and detailed report with specific proposals and the potential for savings is pretty big. What the actual effects of the measures will be, only time will tell, of course.



# Driver assistance systems – a curse or a blessing?

Essentially, the first driver assistance system was the steering wheel. While the first vehicles were still being manoeuvred with curious configurations of levers and pulleys, the steering wheel was the first system that really lived up to its name, rather than merely nudging the vehicle in a certain direction.

If there had been accident repair shops at the time, they probably wouldn't have been particularly thrilled by this development. Steering systems until then had been imprecise and difficult to operate. Minor accidents that led to repair were probably regular occurrences. With the introduction of the steering wheel, accident rates must have dropped considerably.

Today, driver assistance systems automatically move our cars into parking spaces and, with the aid of warning signals, keep us in the right lane on the road when we're distracted. These systems will ensure the number of accidents, and therefore the damage in need of repair, decreases – with serious consequences for bodyshops. This, at least, has been a frequently aired assumption.

## But is it really true?

Let's take the example of Germany. Since the introduction of the anti-lock braking system (ABS) in 1966, accidents on German roads have become more frequent, and even the Electronic Stability Programme (ESP) has been unable to reverse this trend. Brake assistants that operate with warning signals have not

necessarily reduced the number of accidents either, though the accidents are now perhaps less serious; the number of fatal road accidents has been steadily declining in Germany.

## What does this mean for accident repair shops?

Driver assistance systems pose no threat to our business. On the contrary, they may open up new opportunities, because fewer serious accidents mean fewer write-offs. This in turn means more vehicles whose repair is economically viable and therefore, ultimately, even more work for repair professionals. Older vehicles that used to be quickly written off now benefit from ABS, ESP and other systems in the case of an accident.

Even the active brake assistants that work automatically in dangerous situations are not necessarily bad for business. While they may indeed result in a drop in accidents in the long run, they are still not effective enough now to have a noticeable effect. And it will undoubtedly be another ten years before they are put to widespread use. Even then, the question remains: will motorists actually have so much faith in these systems that they will rely on them entirely?

In addition, the legal status of such systems is still thoroughly uncertain. What happens in the event of a technical failure? Is the vehicle driver automatically responsible if an autonomous system does not work?

Parking assistants are no reason for refinishers to despair, either. They may reduce the number of scratches on

vehicles equipped with them by up to 30 per cent, but the number of minor collisions and parking incidents have still increased enormously, as statistics from the insurers show. The number of these minor repairs has risen due to larger cars manoeuvring in the existing limited space, more comprehensively-insured drivers, and the new smart repair methods. Minor dents and scratches that would have simply been tolerated 20 or 30 years ago now tend to be ranked as blemishes by motorists as they can be remedied at little cost.

In summary, it would be fair to say that the introduction of driver assistance systems only pose a threat to the accident repair trade in the long term, if at all. However, there will be a trend towards more easily repaired damage and fewer truly difficult cases.

## Respond by using efficient repair methods.

My advice to bodyshops: by offering the latest repair methods you can benefit from current trends.

Our technicians, marketing specialists, advisers and sales professionals are constantly working to develop ways of giving you optimum support, anticipating changes in the industry and positively influencing the market. Accident repairs of the future will undoubtedly involve new challenges – but we're here, ready to assist you.

**Olaf Adamek,**  
Brand Manager EMEA Standox GmbH

## A look back at Standex Camp

The Standex Camp training scheme got off to a hugely successful start last summer. A total of 30 young refinishers took part. The programme runs alongside the three years of training all apprentices undergo. In addition to teaching them the skills and techniques of paint application, it also coaches them in the so-called soft skills. The reality is that

in order to be successful in the refinish business today, trainees have to master more than technical ability. Confidence and excellent communication skills are just as important. The next part of the Standex Camp will take place in the apprentices' second year of training.



## Repanet now also in Switzerland

In early 2014, Repanet, our international network of independent bodyshops and paintshops, will launch in Switzerland. Once it does, the Swiss distributor for Standex, André Koch AG, will offer Repanet services. These include personalised business management advice, support with strategic market preparation, environmental and energy consultation, apprenticeships and further training, as well as the "Color for Life" paint warranty. The network also actively lobbies potential major customers such as insurers, fleet operators and lease companies and act as a door-opener for its members.



## workshop management



## From classic to digital Achieving the perfect match with Standex colour tools

Standex offers 60,000 different colours and alternates today. Each year these are joined by a further 1,000 new colours, including a growing number of complex special colours. All these colours represent a genuine challenge for refinishers. They cannot afford to make the slightest mistake when identifying formulas if they want to achieve a perfect refinish result. With its broad array of tools, Standex helps them to find their way through the colour jungle.







Our experience shows that refinishers are resorting increasingly to electronic colour tools. The Genius and Genius iQ measuring instruments provide precise results quickly and efficiently. They make it possible to measure the colour right on the vehicle – without manufacturer information or protracted searches. All the refinisher has to do is place the measuring instrument on the cleaned, polished surface of the car body. Thanks to Standowin, the Standox electronic colour search programme, the reading obtained is then compared with a database, possibly adjusted, and immediately displayed as a ready-to-use mixing formulation. In this way, colour changes due to weathering and environmental influences are no longer a problem. The new Genius iQ also measures the paint effect.

Standox invests a good deal of research and development work into its state-of-the-art digital colour tools in order to support refinishers in its dealing with the challenges of the future.

For all those who prefer to rely on their own eyes, the classic Standox Colour Boxes are the tried-and-tested alternative. They contain colour swatches of large chips coated with original paint material and show all OEM colours and their variants for each paint system. Standox is constantly refining its classic colour tools. We want to offer refinishers the choice between classic and electronic aids so they have the tool to suit both the situation and their preferred working methods. The Effect Navigator, which shows the various effects in different levels of brightness on large chips, is now available not only for the Standoblue paint system, but also for waterborne Standohyd.

## Repanet bodyshop brochure

### Professional publicity for bodyshops

Attractive promotional activities help bodyshops to attract and to win new customers. Repanet, our international network of independent bodyshops, has created brochure templates for its members to help them to present themselves and their services attractively and professionally. What makes these templates special is that bodyshops can choose from three ready-to-use layouts,

each with different visual themes and texts. Or they can even produce their own bespoke brochure.

Bodyshops have three designs from which to choose. The design options comprise a dynamic motor sports theme, a layout that highlights the artistic aspects of repair work, and a version that simply focuses on the particular expertise of the bodyshop. To personalise the brochure completely, bodyshops can

easily replace the texts and images, and the templates are available in different formats. Interested Repanet bodyshops can obtain further information from their usual Repanet contact.

*The new brochure templates are available in three different designs – sporty, artistic and expert – each with text that suits the theme.*



# High-tech for the mixing room



Standex is constantly supporting its partner bodyshops with innovations that simplify repair processes and reliably deliver perfect results. Standox has recently been working in conjunction with French equipment manufacturer Fillon Technologies in its development of a fully automated dosing system. This totally innovative unit, called the Daisy Wheel, performs many functions. It doses the paint completely automatically and mixes the given paint formula.

Using the Standwin colour software, the refinisher sets the desired paint quantity, and the system automatically doses the components and mixes the desired paint quantity. For certain colour formulas, it is possible to mix extra-small quantities, as low as 50 grams. However, the high-tech system not only optimises the mixing process, but also securely stores the mixing enamels in airtight cartridges. This stops the various paint components from evaporating. The constant rotation of the cartridges also prevents the pigments from settling. In addition, the use of the Daisy Wheel reduces waste.

The Standox professionals in the colour laboratory are currently conducting long-term tests with the Daisy Wheel and the

Standex paint system to ensure that it is up to scratch for everyday bodyshop use. Olaf Adamek, Brand Manager EMEA Standox GmbH, says: "There's no doubt that the new high-tech mixing system has the potential to revolutionise work processes in mixing rooms. But before we, at Standox, launch a product or system on the market, it has to meet our high standards. This principle applies as much to the Daisy Wheel as to our own paints. That is why we're currently putting the system through its paces in extensive tests. As soon as we're absolutely convinced that the Daisy Wheel meets our standards, we'll be offering it to customers."

## products



*Eleven Standoblu mixing tints are now available in quarter-litre tins.*

## Mixing tints in economical quarter-litre cans

The current automotive colours sported by new models launched on the market by car manufacturers often have complex compositions. Matching them in the repair process is a real challenge, even for the experts. Special mixing tints are often required if the colour is to be matched exactly. The quantity of mixing tints needed for these colours is usually very small – but for a perfect colour match, they are essential.

These mixing tints, while very important, are not needed on a daily basis. Storing them in large quantities is therefore generally uneconomical for most bodyshops. Standox is now responding to this situation by introducing smaller cans. Eleven Standoblu mixing tints, including Satin Gold, Satin Blue, Pearl Copper and Pearl Red Transparent, are now available in quarter-litre tins as well as in half-litre tins. Before use, the quarter-litre tins only have to be shaken gently and the paint is then ready for

immediate use. This is of real benefit to bodyshops, as smaller tins mean reduced inventories, smaller residual quantities and less waste – all of which translates into cash savings and is good news for the environment as well.

Your Standox adviser will be happy to supply you with further information on the new quarter-litre tins – just ask.

## 20 years of Standohyd: a success story

In the early 1970s, Standox employees in the research and development department set themselves a goal. They wanted to produce environmentally-responsible vehicle refinishes that would also meet the highest quality standards in application, hiding power and economy. This ambitious aim posed many challenges.

In 1994, after years of in-depth research, Standohyd Basecoat became the first waterborne basecoat from Standox. It was unveiled to great public acclaim at Automechanika that year. A few years later, it was followed by the first waterborne clearcoat, and a complete waterborne two-stage paint finish was born. Bodyshops achieved excellent results with the new waterborne paint system. This development marked the beginning of a very special success story.

Today, Standox professionals work constantly on extending the range of Standohyd products and making the necessary modifications, for example with the arrival of new pigments. With its great hiding power, good blending-in properties and high colour accuracy, eco-friendly Standohyd is still one of the

most widely used waterborne paint systems for vehicle refinishing worldwide, even 20 years after its market launch.

But the waterborne system is not the only highly successful Standox product. Many others have been thriving for over ten years including, Standocryl HS Clearcoat (since 1995), Standox VOC Nonstop Primer Filler (since 1984) and Standox VOC System Filler (since 1999).

A spirit of innovation and consistently high quality standards are key to the on-going success of the Standox brand. The paint manufacturer's continuing market success confirms that many bodyshops all over the world appreciate reliable Standox quality.



# “An indescribable feeling!”

“When the medal winners were called onto the stage, I couldn’t contain myself,” Pascal Lehmann recalls. “I knew that I had placed in the top three. And when the Danish and Norwegian guys were called up to collect Bronze and the Swedish girl won Silver, I really lost it for a moment. I have no idea what I was thinking for those few seconds – it was an indescribable feeling!”

In July 2013, at this year’s WorldSkills in Leipzig, Germany, the world championship in vocational training, Lehmann won Gold in the Car Painting category. The 22-year-old works as a refinisher for the Standox bodyshop, Carrosserie Spritzwerk Küng AG, in Gebenstorf, a small town northwest of Zurich, Switzerland.

During the car painting competition, which lasted four days, 24 contestants from Europe, East Asia and the USA were given a variety of tasks. Among other things, they had to apply a decorative design to a car door, paint a vehicle wing wet-on-wet, and mix colours on the basis of samples without using scales. “For each task we had a strict time limit,” Lehmann explains. “The precision with which each step in the process was carried out was also closely scrutinised. Had the paint been sanded down to the bare metal? Were there any signs of runs, solvent popping or anything else that shouldn’t be there?”

The competition not only demanded stamina and concentration from the participants, but also nerves of steel. “It was incredibly exciting,” says Lehmann, “because all the participants were real experts. I didn’t have any time to watch them at work and had no way of telling how I compared. My third day wasn’t so good, and that made me a little uncertain. At the end, I was absolutely shattered – I spent the whole day after the competition, before the announcement of the winners, sleeping in my hotel room.”

Lehmann had qualified for WorldSkills a year before, at the Swiss championships. “I heard about the competition for the first time at the start of my apprenticeship and always wanted to take part. Winning the regional heat egged me on. Becoming Swiss champion was incredible. After that I knew I wanted to go for the World Championship as well.”



PHOTOS: © WORLDSKILLS



*For four long days, over 1,000 young specialists from 53 countries competed at WorldSkills 2013 in Leipzig, Germany, in 46 different skills categories. In the Car Painting category, Pascal Lehmann from Switzerland won Gold. He works for a Standox bodyshop.*

2013

André Koch AG, Swiss distributor for Standox products, is committed to training young refinishers. This is one of the reasons why the distributor supports the national Swiss skills competitions at which Pascal Lehmann, among others, won his entry pass to the World Championship. Enzo Santarsiero, new Managing Director at André Koch AG, says, “this is a fantastic achievement and an incentive – and also proof that our training strategy for young people in the trade works. I’d like to warmly congratulate Pascal and wish him all the best for his future professional career. And I hope that we will have a similarly strong Swiss vehicle refinisher taking part in the next WorldSkills, which takes place in São Paulo in 2015.”



Lehmann can only endorse that. He says, “I had a terrific time at the WorldSkills competitions – it’s one of the most memorable experiences I’ve ever had. Anyone who gets an opportunity like this should take it. It’s definitely worth it.”

## Leading US Toyota bodyshop now uses Standoblue

The work processes at the Fred Haas Toyota World collision centre in Texas have to be coordinated to deliver optimum efficiency; 400 vehicles are repaired there each month, about half of them within 72 hours. The centre is committed to high standards of quality, offering its customers a life-time guarantee on workmanship and against material defects in the parts employed.

Jeff Debner has been successfully running the busy collision centre for 14 years. Numerous awards confirm the high customer satisfaction and the top-quality repair services provided. In order to reliably achieve outstanding paint finishes under pressure and work as efficiently as possible at the same time, Debner recently switched to the

Standoblue basecoat system. The paints used until then no longer satisfied the centre’s quality standards. The switch was a good decision. Debner says, “with Standoblue, we’ve reduced our material consumption, and we save a lot of time by applying paint in a single process as there is no flash-off time between coats; the paint can be applied in one and a half passes without having to wait. The

bottom line is that we’ve improved our profitability, efficiency and quality – the most important factors in our decision to switch.”

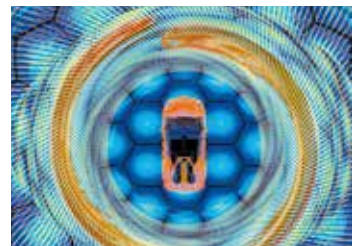


# The new Standox Calendar 2014: fascinating paint

Dynamic, vibrant and varied: in the new Standox Calendar 2014 titled Pure Colour, the German photographer Ralph Richter set out to create a new way to look at the paint by exploring its fluid properties.

Elaborate computer simulations produce unexpected perspectives and dimensions, surreal lighting and many different colours, making the images unusual and appealing. A wall of dazzlingly iridescent paint is caught mid-motion hitting a Range Rover like a force of nature. Another image shows the soft and tactile side of paint as it is captured wrapping itself around a Porsche 911, accentuating the car's unmistakable silhouette.

Richter's goal was to achieve results as realistic as possible while at the same time exploiting the benefits of simulation. To do so, the photographer made use of high-performance computers and the latest computer technologies that had already set new standards in such films as *The Avengers* and *Ice Age 4*. Richter and his international team of specialists developed a highly complex programme specifically for the cover image to make virtual paint balls explode as realistically as possible on impact with the PURE COLOUR letters. Colour strands first shoot in all directions, and then burst into fine droplets. The computers took more than three weeks to compute this animation sequence of roughly 30 seconds.



From the resultant short videos, Richter chose the images for the calendar. Immerse yourself in the world of paints and see the calendar images in motion at [www.standox.com/cal13pr](http://www.standox.com/cal13pr).



Many paint manufacturers claim to supply their customers with superlative quality products. But does quality end with the production of high-grade products? Julio Salcedas, Quality Manager EMEA at Axalta Coating Systems, Standox's parent company, explains his understanding of quality management.

*Julio Salcedas,  
Quality Manager EMEA,  
Axalta Coating Systems.*



## What does quality mean to Standox?

It is not that long ago that companies mainly defined themselves – how they saw themselves and how customers saw them – through their products. What came off the production line was ultimately the decisive benchmark of quality.

This has changed. In times of a global division of labour and closely intermeshed production chains, factors such as innovation capacity, speed, communication, proximity to the customer, reliability and service (to name but a few) are becoming increasingly important. The quality of a company as a whole is measured against these yardsticks. The key concept here is “process quality”. It is by no means new; the relevant quality management standards have long become everyday corporate practice in our industry.

The permanent integration of certified quality management (QM) in a company can only be welcomed. But there is still the risk that people regard the rules in QM manuals as static and definitive. That's a misconception. Quality, just like products, has to be adapted constantly to changes in the marketplace. So the certificate on the wall and the manual on

the shelf are not enough in themselves. It's like driving a car; passing the driving test is important, but learning to drive properly comes later.

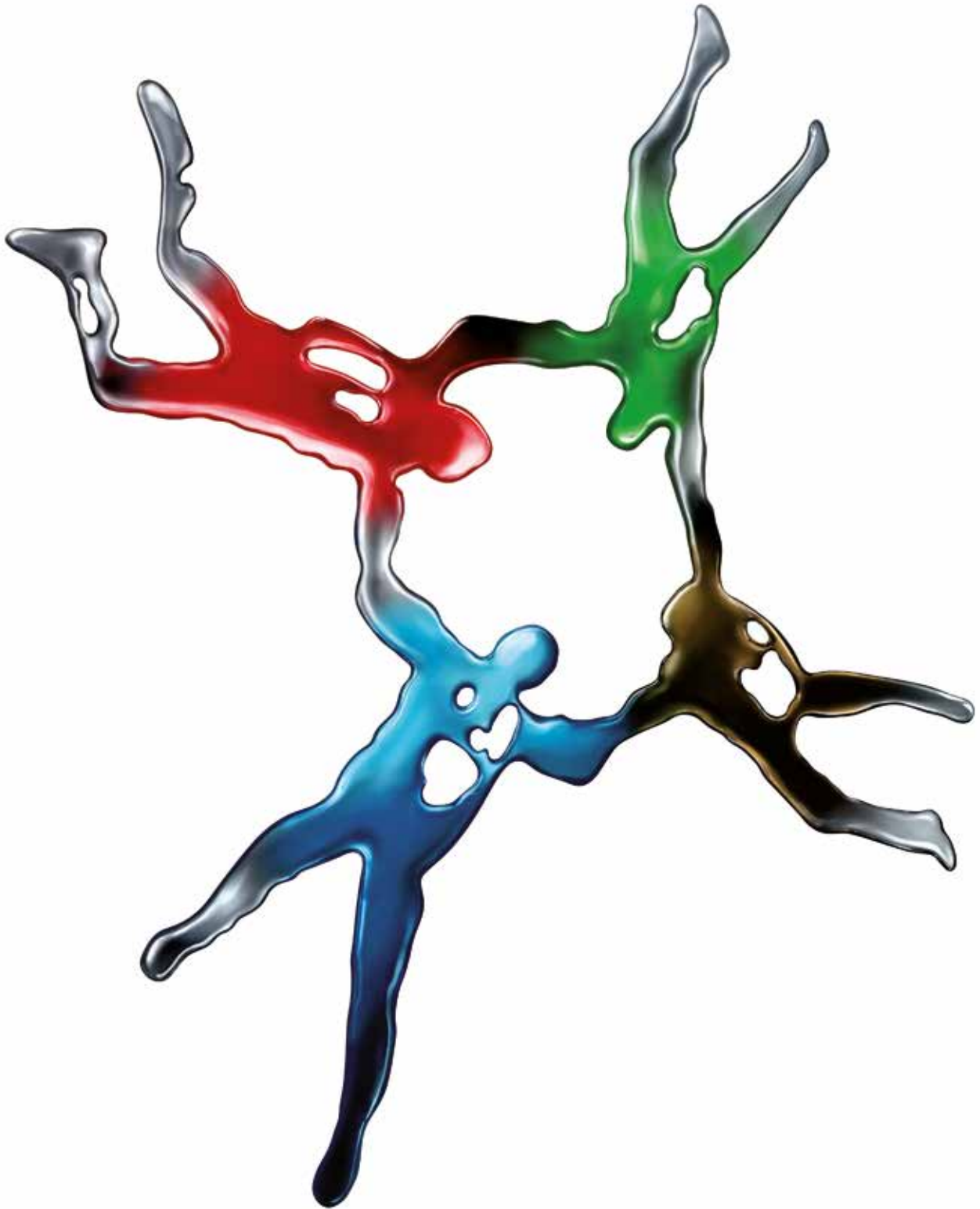
A company needs a genuine “quality culture” that is understood and lived by all employees. At Axalta, we have defined a series of principles that form the foundation of our understanding of quality. All of them are important, but the decisive points are: quality reveals itself in every single process, quality is every employee's business, and the key to quality is knowledge of what customers expect of us.

These points are closely interrelated. A company depends on the knowledge that each employee gathers from his or her contacts with customers, sales discussions, at trade fairs and conferences, in seminars or training sessions – this is market knowledge in its pure state. In order for a company to be able to tap this resource, it needs suitable structures – open dialogue and communication paths and avenues for feedback. Above all, however, employees must have a clear awareness that such knowledge – even if it affects their own technical field peripherally – must not be lost. Any information can help to improve the quality of a company. Of course, motivation is a key factor. Employees have to understand the importance of their commitment for a culture of quality and know that it is appreciated and rewarded.

Seen in this light, a quality culture effectively supports a company's ability to respond swiftly to the customer, and to identify new requirements and trends early on and react to them. And this ability is without doubt a yardstick for measuring a company's quality.



**WINNING WITH COLOUR.**



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