

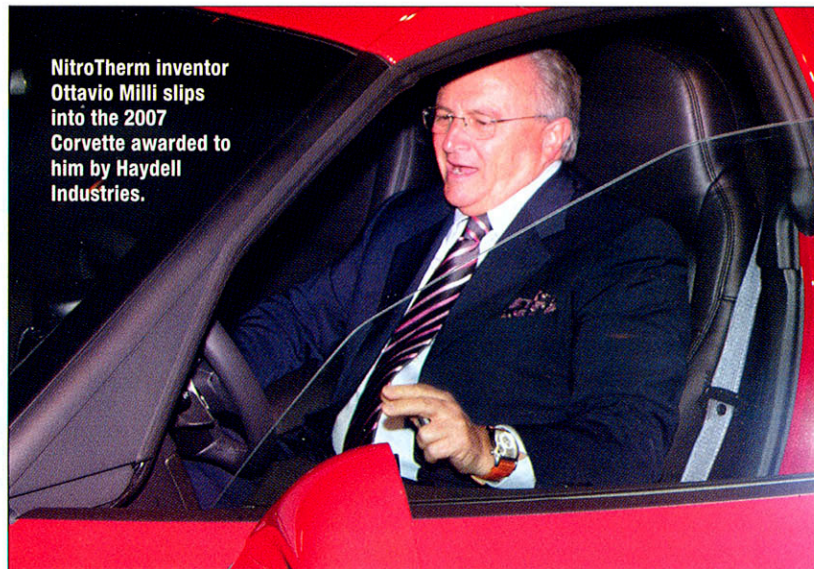
New spray technology addresses waterborne

By Bob Bissler
MANAGING EDITOR

How much is a new product worth when it promises to save repairers some major dollars and keep the environment clean? To Michael Haydell, owner of Haydell Industries, it was well worth the 2007 Chevrolet Corvette he awarded to Ottavio Milli, inventor of a method of spray painting called the NitroTherm Spray System.

NitroTherm employs heated nitrogen instead of oxygen and promises to address concerns posed with spraying waterborne paints. The system, which has been available in Europe for several years and was introduced in the U.S. on a limited basis, is being launched nationally at this year's NACE.

"The technology is arguably the most revolutionary thing that's happened to painting since atomization," states Haydell. "What we're doing is changing painting at the atomic level. We just got through documenting the results of the system and there is a 30-percent reduction in material. It's a higher quality job; it's a dirt-free job and it's a faster productivity cycle. It's all the key things that everybody's



NitroTherm inventor Ottavio Milli slips into the 2007 Corvette awarded to him by Haydell Industries.

Photo by Jim Szmecik

looking for and it's because of the staleness of the gas."

Haydell considers nitrogen to be the best solution for waterborne because it's anhydrous, meaning it contains no moisture.

"It negates any humidity issues," he says. "If the air is 70-, 80-, 90-percent humidity, it makes no difference. We're working with the owner of Capitol Body Shop in Jackson, Miss., and he wants to convert all of his stores to waterborne. That's probably one of the toughest environments in the U.S. to spray waterborne because of the humidity, and our system is working fine there."

Haydell says with traditional spray guns, the process of compressing the air and delivering it through the gun charges the air negatively. Plastic is also negatively charged. Sanding a plastic part such as a bumper intensifies the static charge. When paint is

sprayed, the two negative charges repel each other, causing mottling and overspray. Further aggravating the problem is the fact that oxygen can't be deionized without creating ozone, a pollutant that depletes breathable oxygen.

"Nitrogen has no oxygen associated with it so you can deionize it and you can manipulate the polarities with no bi-product," says Haydell. "We can spray on positive so it neutralizes the static electricity. It also makes the paint draw and attract to it and overspray that rebounds off is drawn back toward the object. It also makes the metallics in the pigments of the paint pull closer and lay down flatter."

To see the NitroTherm Spray System in action, visit NitroTherm's booth W1753 or Blowtherm's booth W1858. For more information, call (800) 877-4362. ■

Steel industry representatives

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