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Value-added pavement marking

Pavement marking can be broader – and more profitable – than just applying paint

By Allan Heydorn

Years ago, when many contractors started striping pavements, maybe the only value they could offer was clean bright lines. But today pavement marking contractors can offer more. And the more they can offer the more value they add to their service – and the more revenue they

can generate from each parking lot they stripe. So here are a few services you can add to your company. If you're already offering them, good for you. If you're not, it's time to consider broadening the scope of your business so you can become a more valued problem-solver for your customers while adding revenue to your business.

Install lightweight car stops

A combination of the drive to recycle and the need for lightweight parking stops has created an industry of plastic or rubberized car stops, speed bumps, and speed humps.

"These are a better solution for

property managers and for contractors," says Steve Engels, vice president of sales for GNR Technologies. "Contractors really have to look at it as selling 'value added'. These offer an opportunity for the contractor to break into accounts he hasn't been able to before and offer additional revenue-generating services to existing customers."

GNR's car stops weigh about 32 lbs., compared to 300 lbs. for a single concrete car stop. They are black and feature white and yellow reflective markings or blue reflective markings for use in handicap stalls. The stops can be installed using an adhesive, but Engels recommends installing them in asphalt



Installing car stops made of recycled rubber is a value-added service contractors should take advantage of, says Steve Engels, GNR Technologies. "By installing these contractors offer more of a complete service."

with two 14-in. rebar spikes or in concrete using two shorter lag bolts. In asphalt the holes can be drilled and the spikes driven in with a sledge hammer; a pneumatic jackhammer can install each spike in 7 seconds.

"It's a 10-minute process start-to-finish," Engels says.

He says the lightweight stops have advantages for the property owner over concrete stops, namely they last long, are easy to replace when damaged, and will remain in place.

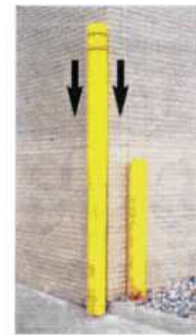
"Concrete stops aren't spiked, they're pinned only an inch or so into the pavement because people think the weight of the concrete will keep them in place," Engels says. "But you often see concrete stops sitting out of line or out of position and the parking lot doesn't look very good."

He says the recycled rubber stops take about the same amount of time to install as the concrete stops but require less equipment – no flatbed truck and no lift to move the stops off the truck or position them in place. Plus there's less risk to crews who won't have to lift and position the 300-lb. concrete stops.

Engels says contractors can generate a margin of 20% to 35% on each car stop, speed bump, or speed hump installed. He



Bollard sleeves (Ideal Shield in red, Post Guard in yellow) not only improve the finished look of a parking lot, they reduce the labor costs of painting bollards by hand,



eliminate paint splatter on surrounding pavement, and can generate a profit of 15% to 50% per bollard. As shown in yellow, sleeves slide over existing bollards.

estimates that depending on the market a contractor installing 200 of these car stops on a small parking lot could generate \$2,500 to \$5,000 on the job.

"For contractors in pavement maintenance who want to enhance their business this is a great opportunity," Engels says. "The market for these is very young and unpenetrated and we know from experience that contractors in the striping business are often asked to put these in."

Maintain those metal posts

Bollards are the steel posts positioned throughout most parking lots. They are

installed to protect buildings from cars and trucks, protect dumpsters from vehicles, prevent vehicles from driving up on sidewalks or into doors, protect outdoor utilities, and many other situations.

But bollards get nicked and dinged so they need to be maintained, mainly repainted, and usually about once a year. Some pavement marking contractors offer this service, and if you don't you should consider it. You have the paint, you're already bidding the job, just add an offer to paint the bollards. But painting bollards has its own problems. Paint can be sprayed on, but overspray on surrounding sidewalks and