

Memorandum

Memo To: David Bell, Bill Reichel, Bill Perdue, Heather Bolick, Terry Medlin
Tim Posey, Terry Medlin
From: Hugh Talley
Date: October 14, 2004
Subject: Color & Shade Control & **BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF SUCH**
Distribution: Not Any at Present

After over 28 years of listening to complaints, proposed solutions, non-proposed solutions, making surveys, and hundreds of hours of bitching, **I am tired!** We have listened to hours of explanations of what was possible and what was impossible. We have heard from the top color specialists in the industry. We have tried to write educational materials in our guidelines and standards—with very little success. I say this because *every time* we do a top-ten problem list in either the leather or fabric committees, *color/shade/dye-lot control tops the list. It is then very obvious that our efforts have not brought about much success!* It is further obvious we need to accomplish solutions of consequence as soon as possible.

I have several proposals, and I seek input suggestions from each of you. My first proposal is to get the color specialists from every mill possible together in meetings with the stated objective of developing a color/shade/dye-lot control syllabus which will become a part of our written standard. This syllabus should contain detailed, specific information on what is truly technologically possible with respect to color/shade/dye-lot control with today's technology.

The syllabus should also contain detailed explanations of problems and opportunities. For instance, why are piece dyed products likely to produce more control problems than yarn dyed products—AND WHY! Another example (of hopefully many) why is it difficult to buy a chair in January, 05 and a matching sofa in August, 05 and then expect the colors of the same fabric to match, exactly/acceptably. Is shade sorting really possible—or practical? Is there equipment which will make shade sorting possible and practical? There are many more questions. What are they, and what are the possible and practical answers?

The syllabus then could be distributed to the upholstery mills as well as the people who select and purchase fabrics in upholstery operations. I could be run-out on a rail for saying this, but I believe that people who select and buy fabrics are not well enough educated in the ramifications of color control, AND PEOPLE WHO SELL FABRICS ARE—IN MY OPINION—JUST AS LACKING IN SUCH EDUCATION. Developing such information is imperative to solving/minimizing the control problems.

The exact same thing is true in leather, except that there is no yarn dyeing (or equivalent) in leather. And I am asking that the leather committee address their problems in a similar manner.

As a beginning, I have taken the initiative to invite representatives of the two top manufacturers of computer-controlled, color-measuring equipment to our November meetings. I am not looking for comparative sales pitches, but I am looking for what these individuals might add—explaining what their equipment and soft-ware could possibly be expected to do to improve our control problems and understanding problems.

Nostalgically, I remember clearly what my boss in my first job out of college said on this subject: “Hugh, we will never control it until we understand it much better.” Let’s see if we can all develop a *mutual understanding of the color/shade/dye-lot control problems together*.

I look forward to your comments prior to our November meetings. Best Regards!

Sincerely,

Hugh Talley