



INTERNATIONAL MARKETING, INC. TECHNICAL BULLETIN

SUBJECT: New Wheels vs. Refinished Wheels

DATE: October 28, 2003

There are two major differences between a new wheel and a refinished wheel

- The condition of the surface to be painted
(New = virgin and smooth vs. Refinished = etched and possibly pitted)
- The pretreatment prior to the top coat
(New = 7 stage pretreatment vs. Refinished = bare steel blasting only) *comparison as follows:*

NEW

1. Virgin Steel
2. After the metal working process to produce the disk face and the rim, the steel is cleaned with an alkaline cleaner
3. After welding, the steel is wire brushed
4. Double Alkaline cleaning
5. Rinse
6. Zinc Phosphate Conversion Coating
7. Water Rinse
8. Non-Chrome Sealer
9. Rinse
10. De-ionized Rinse
11. Plate Tank – Primer
12. Post rinse
13. Top coat

REFINISHED

1. Filthy Corroded surface
2. Scrape
3. Bare Steel Blast.
4. Compressed air blow off
5. Top Coat

After briefly considering this comparison we can easily surmise that the only similarity at the present time is that the topcoat on both types of wheels may be “powder”. Although powder coating is probably the best choice for the life span of a wheel, to even remotely think we are providing a “like new” wheel back to an end user is erroneous.

When wheel refinishing was first introduced to the industry in an automated format, water base liquid coatings were used to re-coat a bare blasted steel wheel. Old rusty, paint flaking wheels were put back into service with a fresh coat of paint to provide OSHA and TMC compliance and a much improved appearance of the wheel – but NOT NEW. Liquid water base coatings will rarely compare in appearance to a new wheel and so inconsistencies in the coating were generally accepted, but with the introduction of powder into the refinishing market with its more consistent appearance, the bar has been raised for the expectations of the performance of the refinished wheel (yet the main difference is the type of top coating).

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