

AQUA BLUE ANNOUNCES SHELL LAMINATES

BY KATHLEEN BUCKNER—CARLSBAD

Aqua Blue Maui brings the richness of the pristine waters of the South Pacific to the skies with its exclusive Thin Lam use of colorful abalone and oyster shells.

Aqua Blue Maui's South Pacific factory captures rich natural seashell colors and presents them in a paper-thin wafer. The shell laminate then receive a specially formulated urethane coating to seal in the brilliance. When color tints are utilized, it can become an interior designer's custom dream material.

Developing this process took years of experimentation, according to Scott Ventura, co-owner, Aqua Blue Maui. The results are a

"Thin Lam shell laminates can stand the test of time."

—Scott Ventura, Aqua Blue Maui

strong, lightweight and easy-to-work-with material known as Thin Lam. Thin Lam can be custom cut and directly applied to any substrate or inlaid in any design or pattern.

Product inquiries come in from all over the world, which keeps co-owners Ventura and John Yannell busy coordinating delivery with manufacturing. "Our customers keep us on our toes," said Ventura. "When a custom tint or unique application is requested, the process begins. We check with our production team

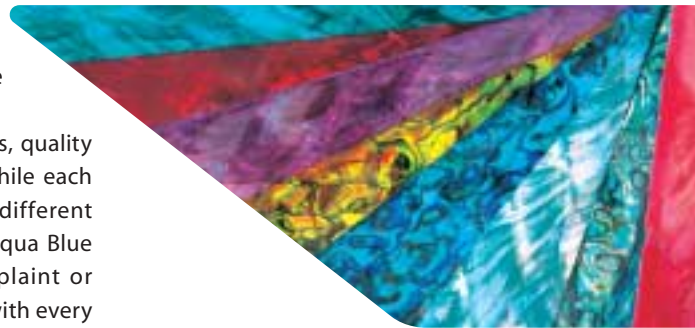
to see if something new needs to be developed or we draw on previous applications and analyze the practicality of the end use."

Like many successful companies, quality control is crucial to Aqua Blue. While each shell is unique and hundreds of different applications have been utilized, Aqua Blue Maui has never received a complaint or replacement request. They strive with every order to keep up their reputation. "Thin Lam shell laminates can stand the test of time," said Ventura. "Naturally produced Abalone and Oyster shell is one of the strongest most resilient materials used for this type of application. It beats out marble, stone, finished hardwood, and many other laminates in abrasion tests."

The Thin Lam shell laminates have been used in flooring and maintains its shine after years of use. In the unlikely event the product ever does become scratched, replacement costs are substantially reduced as it can be polished and renewed unlike other materials that might have to be torn out and replaced.

"This is a one-of-a-kind material unlike synthetics as each natural shell is unique," said Ventura. "Aqua Blue Maui can create a virtually seamless panel from one foot wide up to 20 feet in length."

Currently a custom builder in Florida is entertaining a bid for a 12' x 30' wall of natural



abalone Thin Lam to be used as a wall panel in the foyer of a custom home. When completed, this will be the largest application of abalone shell laminate known to date.

The product has been popular in custom automotive interiors, limos and yachts, making aircraft cabins the next logical progression. Thin Lam can be used for inlay, trim, panels and flooring designs. Its versatility and light weight allows designers to use it anywhere.

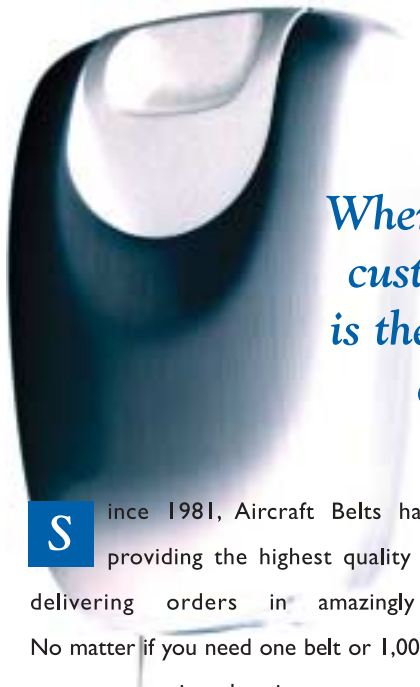
Aqua Blue Maui is the only company in the world that can deliver a 1-foot square panel. Previously 9.5 inches by 5.5 inches was the largest, and that was only for brittle raw shell, still requiring intricate and delicate finishing work unique to Aqua Blue Maui.

"The beauty of each individual shell makes working with this product rewarding," said Ventura. "This is not a typical production laminate; it is a uniquely created art form from a totally natural source, environmentally controlled and harvested through a quota system to insure availability of the species." Until recently, the shells were only a wasted by-product of the pearl production or restaurant delicacy industry.

CUSTOM COLORS

Ventura applies 24 years of custom finishing knowledge to create the vibrant hues. Available from inventory in a half dozen colors, Thin Lam can be tailored to blend with any





Where quality and customer service is the rule, not the exception

Since 1981, Aircraft Belts has been committed to providing the highest quality restraints available and delivering orders in amazingly short turn times. No matter if you need one belt or 1,000, you'll receive a level of customer service that is unsurpassed in the aircraft industry. Our team will work with you to ensure your order of crew, passenger and medical stretcher restraints is exactly what you need for your aircraft.

Leading the way in the design and manufacture of aircraft safety restraints

ABI is the only restraint manufacturer that lets customers design and order restraints online using the *Build-A-Belt* program at www.aircraftbelts.com. In addition, our average standard order is computed in just for working days. Trust your next new or rewbedded restraint order to a company that knows the meaning of customer service!

800.847.5651 ■ 281.538.1284 ■ fax 281.538.2225
www.aircraftbelts.com ■ FAA Repair Station YBIR632K

color palette. A sample pack of "swatches" is available for \$20. "Once we send out a sample pack, the ideas run wild," he said. "That is when we get a call from a designer or architect. They want to know if Thin Lam can be used in the application they have in mind. Usually we tell them yes and the process begins."

Based on the request, average shipping time is one to two weeks, including custom colors. Some requests take as long as four to six weeks due to supply and final application, or if an exotic shell is requested.

One such shell is the Okinawan Green Sea Snail, which is off white with hints of green and pink. "This rare Sea Snail's graceful swirl resembles a rainbow conveying an absolute sense of wonderment when displayed," said Ventura.

LIGHT WEIGHT

Thin Lam is only .12 of an inch thick, which makes this product ideal for the aircraft cabin. The weight savings could be substantial. It can be directly applied to any substrate or is also available in a fiberglass-backed application called Paua Panel. Both applications are as strong as the substrate it is applied to. It can even be applied to Plexiglas, rather than wood or stone, which can add to the weight savings. ☺

SCOTT GROUP LAUNCHES EXPRESS!

In response to the growing demand for quick turn around times on aircraft interior refurbishments, Scott Group Custom Carpets has developed a carpet of the highest quality with delivery in as little as three to four weeks.

Express! offers a selection of 21 multi color, 100 percent New Zealand wool, loop carpet specifically developed for the aviation industry.

"Our goal is to create a tool that will enable aviation interior designers to specify the highest quality carpet deliverable in the shortest time frame," said Richard Ruggeri, VP of sales.

Founded in 1969, Scott Group Custom Carpets manufactures 100 percent wool and wool/silk custom rugs and carpet. The corporate headquarters and manufacturing facility are located in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The Grand Assembly of Cabin Equipment Buyers & Suppliers

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

APRIL 13-15

FT. LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

Held as part of TVI Expo
www.tviexpo.com