



Cre8ing Buildings that Rock

One company in Texas is redefining how stone is used in construction

Everyone loves the look and feel of stone. On the outside of a building or on an interior wall it adds a touch of class, and you can't beat the beauty and durability. But there are reasons it's not used more often, including cost of materials and installation, and it's even worse on retrofits, when demolition adds to the hassle and price.

But what if there were a way to apply real stone over nearly any surface, without demolition? Cre8stone, a company out of Dallas, TX, says it has the answer.

"Yep, it's real limestone," says Cre8stone's owner Garrison Pilant, "and it looks, wears, and feels exactly like limestone bricks or rocks." But there are a few differences worthy of note.

"For one thing, we can make the limestone any color you want, and I do mean any color, and the 'grout' can be any color too. And we can make it look like stones, with varying shapes and sizes, or limestone brick—pretty much anything the customer wants."

The idea behind spray-on limestone came from France, and it's been around for about 30 years. But there, and all over Europe, the technology is used differently. "It was invented as a way to fix structural problems. There, a cracked wall or foundation on a 150-year-old house or building isn't just a cosmetic issue, it can be a structural issue that threatens the building beside it."

What caught Pilant's attention because they were able to repair these buildings relatively inexpensively, with no tear-down, and with something as hard as stone. Because it is stone.

"That tear-down issue is a big one, and it's a pretty big part of the cost of any existing-building project. And that's completely eliminated [with Cre8stone]. We can completely re-do the outside of a building without taking anything down."

How's business? Pilant is clearly excited to have just won a bid to repair and resurface 14 miles of retaining wall in Richardson, a suburb of Dallas. "The wall is getting old and cracked, but for a fraction of the cost of replacing it, we can



Cre8stone uses iSqFt to get new distributors access to jobs. "As soon as they sign up, we just plug them into iSqFt and they have invitations to bid waiting for them."

repair the wall and make it look like the city put up a new stone wall.”

Many of the company’s customers were so pleased with the results that they began asking for Cre8stone flooring, countertops, and even shower stalls. “It’s a great problem to have, but no business owner wants to tell any customer no,” says Pilant. “But limestone just isn’t a good material for horizontal applications. It’s too porous, too rough.”



So they got a team of chemists to work on the problem. A year later, they came up with Cre8rock, which is used for countertops, shower stalls, and backsplashes, and Cre8overlay, which is their flooring material.

“These products and processes are unique to [Cre8stone]; no one else has them, which is one of the reasons I think there’s been so much interest in our dealership program.”

Pilant says the key advantage to their countertop and flooring systems is, here again, that they can be applied over the existing structure. “Our flooring product, Cre8overlay, when applied over concrete, actually makes the floor stronger, doubling the PSI performance.”

And looking at pictures of their countertop installations, you’d be hard-pressed to tell the difference between Cre8rock and marble or granite. “We can apply Cre8rock right over any tile or even Formica counter, and there’s absolutely no maintenance.”

When asked what he feels his products bring to the marketplace, he pauses. “The great thing about technologies, new processes, like this is it makes things more affordable for more people. Stonework, granite, marble--these are high-end building materials that are out of reach for a lot of people and companies. We’re changing that.”

Cre8stone may once have been a well-guarded secret, but these days they have 11 crews working six days a week. Pilant says they’re plenty busy these days, and if you can’t expand up, it’s time to expand out.

Today, Cre8stone is using iSqFt in an interesting and innovative way: “We’ve gotten a lot of work by finding buildings that call for traditional stonework or even stucco, and then talking to the GCs and architects about the benefits and cost savings [of our product]. iSqFt has been invaluable in helping us get those leads.”

Over the past five months, Cre8stone says it has added 14 distributorships, and it’s adding more all the time. “As soon as they sign up,” says Pilant, “we recommend that they sign up for iSqFt. I can’t think of a better way to welcome a new business than with job opportunities.”

