

When Only a Cadillac Will Do!

MAPEI Products Deliver a Luxury Look for Cadillac Showroom

Weil Cadillac recently built a new automobile showroom to display its signature luxury cars as well as the rugged performance-oriented Hummers sold at the Libertyville, Illinois, dealership. Weil's general contractor, Vacala Construction, chose DTI of Illinois to install the tile on the showroom floor, and DTI in turn chose to work with MAPEI adhesives, the "Cadillac" of tile and stone installation systems.

"We're a single-supplier tile contractor," said Gary Knutson, project manager for DTI. "And our single supplier is MAPEI. We depend on their products and service to help us deliver great results for our customers."

Knutson started the job by consulting with his MAPEI sales representative to determine which products would provide DTI with a complete installation system. The concrete substrate had been saw-cut in numerous places to supply needed movement joints that would allow more room for expansion and contraction, as well as accommodate the heavy weight of the automobiles.

After patching and leveling the slabs with *Planipatch*[®] and *Ultraplan*[®] 1, Knutson's team covered the floor with a layer of *Mapelastic*[™] SM sheet membrane and *Mapelastic SM Primer* for added crack-isolation benefits.

Weil had selected a highly polished 18" x 18" black granite tile that would mirror the luxury of its cars across the 4,700 square feet of showroom floor. To ensure a solid installation of the large-format tiles with complete adhesive coverage, DTI installers used *Ultracontact*[™] ultra premium, full-contact mortar. "Though all concrete slabs are supposed to be structurally sound and flat, that isn't always the case," said Knutson. "We were able to vary the build on the *Ultracontact* to overcome any problems with the substrate that might otherwise have resulted in uneven tile edges. A completely smooth surface was of paramount importance to Weil. When people come

into this Cadillac dealership, they don't even have to bend their head to look at the undercarriage of the cars; they can see the reflection in the granite!"

Upstairs, DTI installed two luxurious bathrooms, complete with 12" x 12" black, clip-edged marble tile and limestone insets. For these bathroom floors, the installers used the *Kerabond/Keralastic™* System to install the tiles over waterproofing. "We wanted the best possible bond here," said Knutson.

When they set the wall tiles in the bathrooms, DTI installers used MAPEI's *Ultralite Mortar™* for the first time. They had had a bad experience with another brand of lightweight mortar, and the installers flatly refused to work with that product. To make sure the installers had a better experience with *Ultralite Mortar*, the MAPEI sales representative conducted an on-site workshop for the tile setters' helpers, showing them the correct proportions to use when mixing the mortar with water and the proper mixing procedure. "By offering our own 'Cadillac service' and taking the time to give our customers – the installers – the extra knowledge they needed, we provided them with a new product for setting wall tiles that they fell in love with!" said MAPEI sales representative Heather Yario.

When the DTI installers finished the showroom installation and the upstairs bathroom tiling for Vacala Construction, they began work on the service bays at Weil Cadillac. Working for Mirico Builders on this part of the project, DTI installed Crossville ceramic porcelain tiles on the floors and walls of the service bays. "At Weil Cadillac, customers coming in for service do not step out of their cars onto concrete," said Knutson. "They drive their cars right onto a luxurious – but serviceable – tile surface." The original service floors had been painted concrete, so DTI had to do a lot of surface preparation work. For all their patching needs in this area, the installers used fast-setting *Planipatch*, MAPEI's polymer-modified, cement-based patching compound.

For the floors in the service bays, Knutson's team used the *Kerabond/Keralastic* System, their reliable standby for all rugged work. They used *Ultracolor*[®] grout to provide a color-consistent fill for the tile joints. To apply the wall tiles, the installers called on *Ultralite Mortar* again. "We really love *Ultralite* now," said Knutson. "The installers don't want to use mastic anymore. They would much rather use *Ultralite*, because it goes on so easy and doesn't sag."

When the job was done, the luxury cars looked right at home on the showroom floor. The DTI team had done a fantastic job and finished right on schedule, earning them kudos and future jobs from Vacala Construction. Knutson smiled, "When only a Cadillac will do, you can depend on DTI and MAPEI!"