

# Serene Scene

December 2022

## **A Year in Review**

*Overcoming the challenges of 2022 to achieve successful results*

## **Vendor Spotlight**

*Mont Surfaces provides exceptional customer service while sourcing amazing products*



**PSW: A Year in Review**

**Coming in 2023**

**Vendor Profile: Mont Surfaces**

# PSW: a Year in Review

## 2022, a Year of *Challenges and Successes*



This past year has, at times, been a struggle for the team at PSW. Factors such as economic uncertainty, global supply chain issues, and the request from clients for new interior living spaces, have all presented their own challenges. Perhaps Vera Wang said it best when she stated, "success isn't about the end result, it's about what you learn along the way."

While most firms may see struggle as a negative, Jeff Blunkosky, CEO, sees struggle as a positive. "Everyone experiences struggle as they leave their comfort zone", states Blunkosky. "There is no real growth without struggle. Once you realize that each

struggle teaches us something new, only then will you will start to embrace those struggles rather than trying to avoid them."

Here are some of the challenges that PSW faced in 2022 and how they have learned from them.

### **Continued Supply Chain Issues and Delays**

Supply chain was deeply affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with disruptions and shortages continuing to cause issues in 2022. Some of the hardest hit were the construction and pool industries. In an already

disorganized and reactive culture, companies were unable to predictively manage their inventories or manage their costs.

As a leader in the industry, PSW realized the need for better planning and management, not only internally, but with educating vendors and trade partners on how to be more efficient with their materials and production schedules. As Ian Miller of Unilock stated in the October issue of *Serene Scene*, "accurate forecasting and greater lead time allows our production schedule to align with the materials that are needed for our customers. This ultimately would

lessen the chance for back orders which could delay our customers"

For this reason, PSW hired supply chain expert, Jennifer McDonald. Moving forward, McDonald will provide a competitive advantage for PSW by managing the various factors and variables within a project for better long-term project management and client satisfaction.

### **Economic Uncertainty**

Over the past year, the U.S. has dealt with a variety of economic conditions. Inflation has risen, markets have fluctuated, and families are being more deliberate on where they invest their money.

In a time of uncertainty, PSW clients need the reassurance that the money they are spending will provide a certain level of return for them and their family. In 2022, PSW partnered with David Beltz of Beltz Financial Group, to provide expert insight and guidance.

"Investing in your home can create a more pleasurable experience for the homeowner, whether outdoor living spaces, improved bathrooms, or kitchens. It increases the enjoyment, satisfaction, and pride in the home," says Beltz.

While money is an important factor when investing, the value of return is not always in-kind. "The satisfaction I feel when a project is completed is not based how much financial return a family gets from remodeling their living area", states Jeff Kennedy, Director of Marketing, "it is the smiles on the faces of their children and the family memories that are created from living in their new spaces."

### **Design is Behind the Times in Pittsburgh**

Pittsburgh is built on tradition. It is a culture of history, nostalgia, and cultural institutions. While this is often regarded as a positive, when it comes to design, it can be a massive hindrance.

When you look at other markets such as California and Florida, you will see a lot of modern design. Clean lines, large pavers, open concepts, and a clean transition from indoors to outdoors dominate the landscape. But Pittsburgh is often behind the times.

TJ Varghese and his design team are facing this challenge head on by educating clients about popular design trends. They are taking this education one step further by incorporating the

latest in technology and BIM software to not only describe what they are talking about, but to show it in a beautifully detailed 3D rendering so that each client can literally fly through their property and see what it will look like from every different angle.

### **New Demand for Interior Living Spaces**

After working with PSW and going through the PSW EGDE, the detailed process of creating their outdoor living space, multiple clients then asked, can you also remodel my basement, or kitchen, or other interior living space? The answer in the past was that was not what we do. However, as one inciteful client said, "with your process, you can design and build ANYTHING."

He was right! Utilizing the PSW EDGE, and using industry experts such as master carpenter Scott Daum, PSW has quickly become one of Pittsburgh's leading home remodelers while continuing to maintain the high level of quality and expertise that it has been known for in other areas.

As Daum stated in the September edition of *Serene Scene*, "it all starts with a good plan."

There is no real growth without struggle.



# Coming in 2023

We Build Better Lives



Here is a look at renderings from some of the projects that we are working on for 2023 completion. There are still spots available, but time is a factor!



# Mont Surfaces:

*providing* exceptional customer service and sourcing amazing products

With the ideas and the education that our employees provide the design team at PSW, we know the products they select will work well within the design and last long after installation.



## The History of Mont Surfaces

Mont Surfaces by Mont Granite, Inc. is a family-owned company that was founded over 32 years ago. In those early days the owner traveled in his van around the Cleveland, Ohio, area with the goal of bringing beautiful granite to residential homes, as at that time granite was generally only installed in commercial projects.

Today, with the widespread use of natural stone, engineered quartz and porcelain in residential homes, that goal has broadened to include providing exceptional customer service and sourcing amazing products that customers cannot find from other wholesale suppliers. Mont currently serves eight markets throughout the Midwest, which includes the Pittsburgh Division.

## The Value of Mont Surfaces

The Pittsburgh location includes a Design Center and a slab selection warehouse that is indoors, well-lit, and heated. Mont offers an exceptional selection of over 400 surface varieties and differs from other wholesale suppliers in that Mont employees, not independent agents, travel the world to select and buy the finest materials from which companies like PSW can choose for their clients.

The customer service specialists in our Design Center are very knowledgeable about the products available, the environments in which those products work best and how to provide industry professional's clients with an exceptional selection experience. With the ideas and the education that our employees provide to the design team at PSW, we know the products they select will work well within the design and last long after installation.

## Trend Setting

It is Mont staff, not independent agents, that travel the world (including Asia, South America, and Europe) to source the most exotic and trending surface materials. Our staff also works with our network of partners to discuss current and upcoming trends.

## The Rewards of Assisting the PSW Design Team

We are proud to offer high-quality unique one-of-a-kind inventory not typically found at other wholesale stone suppliers. Helping the PSW and their clients find the perfect material for their projects is the most rewarding.

Through our partnership, PSW is able to send their clients to Mont after the presentation of the design for professional one-on-one assistance with material verification or selection. Our job is to support their team while they work with their clients.

## A Large Selection of Quality

Mont carries over 400 varieties of natural stone, engineered quartz, porcelain, and precious stone. There are so many ways to use natural stone, engineered quartz or porcelain to add interest and beauty to any décor. From countertops and bar tops to backsplashes and fireplace surrounds.

Some of the most unique projects we have done in the past include the backlighting of a natural quartz. On its own, this material is beautiful, and backlighting makes it absolutely stunning!!

## Final Thoughts

Mont Design Centers are open six days a week, making it convenient for PSW clients to visit within their schedule. We want the entire experience of incorporating the perfect stone to be seamless and enjoyable. We recognize this is an important process that takes patience, time, and consideration.





## **PSW**

1000 Old Pond Road  
Bridgeville, PA 15017

(412) 319-7524  
[pghsw.com](http://pghsw.com)