

Certificate II in Airbrushing

Pathways to
Industry and
Employment



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Summary of Pathways to Industry - Universal Skill Set

In the following pages, we go into detail about how the airbrush can lead people into all sorts of diverse industries. ***Almost every industry that incorporates ink or paint being applied by hand, includes the airbrush.***

The most profound point that must be made in this document, is that the skill set required for each of these different pathways is almost identical; ***one skill set does it all.***

This means that once you have learnt to control an airbrush properly, you can literally jump from industry to industry with little if any difficulties. For example, once a person knows how to airbrush properly, they can easily be airbrushing on cars one day with automotive paint and then be airbrushing on interior walls with acrylics the next day, then on clothing with cross-linking inks the next, with food dyes on the cakes the day after . . . and so on.

The skill of controlling the airbrush remains almost identical regardless what subject matter is being airbrushed and what surface is being painted on. All that changes is the paint that is put in the airbrush to match the surface, to ensure correct adhesion.

Although there are minor skills required to work with different paints, this is usually very quick and easy to learn.

The universal nature of the skill of airbrushing should be clear; but we want to take the issue a step further, ***a big step further.***

The Venturi Method is a world first system of “rendering” with the airbrush, and is the basis of the ***Certificate II in Airbrushing.*** It does not seek to teach people to be “creative” or “arty” it only seeks to teach people a measured, structured system of airbrush rendering.

This structure is the first semiotics based system of rendering that we know of in commercial art practices. Students of the ***Certificate II in Airbrushing*** learn a written language, much like written music, that enables industry to employ people to airbrush

with clear measured instructions. This is a world first, and is at the heart of why the ***Venturi Method - Certificate II in Airbrushing*** is the system used by the majority of commercial airbrush users Australia wide.

Airbrush Venturi, like universities, is not just an education organisation. We are a research organisation. It is no accident that we are the leaders in the teaching of airbrushing . . . our research led to re-inventing the airbrush over the past 25.

It is common knowledge that there was a nationwide hiatus in the teaching of airbrushing. Between 1980 and 1990 the teaching of airbrushing was removed from almost every tafe and tertiary course in Australia. The reasons are twofold. First the arrival of the computer led to huge changes in many industries such as signwriting, visual merchandising, etc. Secondly the airbrush techniques being taught, ***Cut Stencilling,*** were very slow, complex and prone to problems. Industry was not interested in using these old fashioned techniques.

Airbrush Venturi is the acknowledged developers of the modern high speed technique of ***Freehand Airbrushing,*** and as the developer of the language system that means that these techniques could be structured universally for industry.

These modern techniques have given new life to the use of the airbrush commercially across Australia. Commercial airbrushing is bigger now than in its “hey days” of the 1970’s and the renewed growth is only just beginning.

The future of airbrushing in Australia is very exciting. For the first time there is a ***system*** of rendering with the airbrush. For the first time there is a ***national standard*** for the teaching and commercial use of the airbrush. For the first time industry can employ people to airbrush with measured instructions. The next 20 years is going to bring a new “hey day”.

Pathways to Industry - Signwriting

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In the last 25 years, the signwriting industry has been transformed by the computer. The introduction of the computer brought the vinyl lettering cutter called a “plotter” and now digital printers. The old days of hand painting every letter on a sign by hand are long gone.

What has been a real surprise for many in the sign industry has been the growth in the use of the airbrush, alongside the introduction of the computer. No one predicted this.

The answer lies in the effect that digital printing has had on the design of signs. Modern signs incorporate the use of photos much more than ever before. The rise in the use of realist images, makes the airbrush very attractive to signwriters, because the airbrush is the only hand tool that can create realist images quickly and financially viably. Paint brushes cannot, only the airbrush can.

The airbrush enables a signwriter to create realist images on ANY surface. What happens when a signwriter is asked to create a sign on brick, or corrugated iron? These surfaces are perfect for the airbrush because it does not touch the surface unlike a brush.

Another major issue for signwriters is “longevity”. Digital printing can only last for two years outside. An airbrushed sign created with Basecoat 2K will last outside for 10 years or more. Signwriters that can airbrush quickly and to a high standard have a very real commercial advantage over their competitors that cannot airbrush.

Another commercial advantage with the use of the airbrush is that signs can be created using metallics, pearls, candies and a wide range of other special effect paints that cannot be put through a digital printer. Airbrushing enables signwriters to create reflective signs. Digital printing cannot.

Another commercial advantage is the creation of “distorted signs”, such as what you see on football grounds. Signwriters that can airbrush can create realist signs that distort over the contours of cars, and trucks, etc. Digital printing cannot.

Another direct connection between the airbrush and with the use of computers in signwriting is how to repair digital prints.

The airbrush is the only hand tool that can repair digital prints in taut-liner trucks and other digital printing.

All of these factors and more, have directly led to the use of the airbrush in signwriting being greater now than at any time previously.

Despite the very real opportunities to use the airbrush in signwriting, the teaching of the airbrush has been put in the too-hard-basket by the tafe signwriting colleges.

The development of the **Certificate II in Airbrushing** will lead to students gaining advanced airbrush skills before beginning an apprenticeship in signwriting.

Signwriters generally have very limited skills with an airbrush, and as a result do not offer the service to their clients. If they can hire young people with advanced skills with an airbrush then they will happily offer airbrushing and expand their business.

Advanced airbrush skills in young people is going to create a real win-win for both young people and the sign industry.



Pathways to Industry - Painting & Decorating

The Painting & Decorating industry includes the painting of domestic and commercial buildings, both inside and out, and in turn includes the painting of special effect textures, such as marbling and woodgraining and interior and exterior murralling.

The airbrush is a vital part of all aspects of the specialist textures and murals that are offered . . . and represents one of the single largest growth areas of airbrushing in the coming decades.

Any Painter & Decorator operating their own small business, has a built in process of marketing prestige services doing interior murralling of childrens bedroom walls, retail walls, interior theming of gaming centres, pubs, cinemas, and so on.

Below are three photos showing two interiors of childrens bedroom and of a feature wall at a major hospital.

These murals are a great example of the enormous commercial opportunities that come with the skill of airbrushing within this industry.

At present there is a real shortage of Painters & Decorators that can do high quality airbrushing and it is hoped that the creation of the **Certificate II in Airbrushing** will go along way to filling this shortage.

The reason for the shortage has been that the teaching of specialist effects and murralling and the teaching of airbrushing within the tafe Painting & Decorating courses has been largely abandoned, consigned to the too-hard-basket. By students being able to develop these skills even before they get to trade school will mean that they are able to offer a skill set to existing painting businesses, even before they begin an apprenticeship, making their skills very appealing to those businesses.



Pathways to Industry - Visual Merchandising

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The Visual Merchandising industry while overlapping the Painting & Decorating and Signwriting industries in surfaces, paints, skills, etc, have very different clients and job descriptions.

For example, Myer or David Jones do not hire Painters and Decorators, or Signwriters to create their window displays, interior store displays, or even the shop fitting they display their stock in. They hire Visual Merchandisers.

The use of the airbrush is already quite common. All mannequins have the faces airbrushed on to them and is one of the few examples of production based airbrushing in Australia (where companies hire people to pre-make products that can be bought off-the-shelf).

Another good example of the use of the airbrush in visual merchandising are the fibreglass trees that Myer have produced. These, the Christmas window displays, the floats for the parades, they all use the airbrush extensively.

The director of the company that produces many of the displays for Myer in Victoria, Chris Lambert of Animation & Display PL only employs trained airbrushers that have completed the ***Certificate II in Airbrushing***.

Chris says that he needs artists that can not only do high quality airbrushing but they must be very very fast. He is a big supporter of the new ***Certificate II in Airbrushing*** because it has enabled his company to offer products that he has not previously been able to offer. For his company, the new high speed and advanced methods of airbrushing ***have*** created new commercial opportunities.

Once again, we believe that the accreditation of the ***Certificate II in Airbrushing*** is going to be a real, win-win for both young people and the industries that employ them, such as the Visual Merchandising industry.



Pathways to Industry - Automotive Refinishing

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The use of the airbrush in automotive refinishing is better known as Custom Painting. This is the single largest use of the airbrush commercially in Australia.

The use of the airbrush to custom paint cars, motorcycles, helmets, boats, aircraft, trucks, surfboards, water and snow skis, jet skis . . . the list goes on . . . is very very popular across the world and across Australia.

There are over 240 registered companies with ASIC that specialise in airbrushing and more than half of them specialise in airbrush custom painting.

Of all the industries that have passed through the “computer revolution” custom painting has come out the other side passionately anti digital printing.

It is not possible to win a car show award for custom paint with a digital sticker slapped on the side of the car. Only airbrushing and pinstriping can win awards.

The use of the airbrush is so culturally entrenched within the hot rod, street machine, motorcycle and ski racing boating cultures that to not have airbrushing incorporated means that it can't win paint awards at the various competitions

In a recent survey of custom painting in Victoria, in 2008, it was roughly estimated that between \$4.5 million and \$5 million was being spent on airbrush custom paint each year; from a single state. Although the income will have declined during the recent recession it will quickly bounce back to previous levels and will continue to grow.

Growth will come from the increasing number of woman that are passionate about their cars, and bikes, etc . . . from the increasing number of mechanical toys that people are buying and other issues such as the sophistication of people passions for all things with an engine.

This is one industry that has been hurt by the proliferation of “self appointed experts” operating out of their backyard.

The development of a national standard for airbrushing, the **Certificate II in Airbrushing** will go a long way to creating a qualification in airbrushing to protect the consumer.

The other big opportunity is for the established custom painters to be able to hire people to airbrush for them and give them measured instructions. This new VET Cert II will create genuine employment opportunities.



Pathways to Industry - Animation

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The use of the airbrush has declined a lot in traditional animation, with the advent of the computer. Like all the hand skills associated with cartoon animation, the airbrush is too slow, in comparison to the digital versions.



The traditional process of creating background artworks by airbrush was last used in a major animation project in Australia in the Lil' Elvis cartoon series created by Peter Viska. When interviewed for this page, Peter said that the use of the airbrush had been largely replaced by Photoshop and Flash. But, he had one very interesting comment, and that was ***“people that were skilled at the real airbrush were much better at the use of digital art software”***.

Today the airbrush is still widely used for claymation, animatronic, and for the total diversity of puppetry, from working on latex to textiles, metal, wood, clay, etc. In fact the role of the airbrush in puppetry will remain very strong in the long term future.



Pathways to Industry - Illustration

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The airbrush has been a big part of illustration since the turn of the 20th century, but like animation the use of traditional art tools like pencils, pens and airbrushes have been significantly replaced by the digital versions.

Having said that, and to use an old adage, when one door closes another one always opens. Modern airbrush illustration has morphed into something new, with an increasing number of illustrators using the airbrush to do large scale freehand artworks that are then scanned for reproduction.

The biggest use of airbrushing in illustration would have to be within cartooning. You only have to look at the Australian Cartoonists Ass. web site <http://www.abwac.org.au/> to see that it is alive and flourishing.

Despite the obvious decline there is still a specialist role to play with the airbrush and with so few people that have the advanced skills to airbrush effectively in this field, there are still good opportunities for the dedicated.

Visit the Australian Illustrators Association web site to see that there are still dozens of illustrators using the airbrush commercially; <http://www.illustratorsaustralia.com/>

One of the best known airbrush illustrators in the world is HR Geiger and is Alien creation, that was used in the Alien series of movies.



Pathways to Industry - Fine Art

The surge in the use of the airbrush in Fine Art in Australia has to be one of the most unexpected turns in the history of airbrushing in this country.

The use of the airbrush is suddenly acceptable, in fact more than acceptable, it is being taken very seriously.

Howard Arkley started the explosion of airbrush use in Fine Art with his iconic suburban house scenes and powerful portraits such as that of Nick Cave. Howard was chosen to represent Australia at the most important art exhibition in the world, the Venice Biennale in 1999.

The next major event was the work of Patricia Piccini, who represented Australia at the Fiftieth Venice Biennale in 2003. Her work includes the use of airbrushing on her 3D scultures, as shown right.

One of the latest and most exciting chapters in the use of airbrushing in Fine Art in Australia is the emergence of Fiona Lowry. Fiona won the 2008 Doug Moran Prize, the wealthiest art prize in Australia, with a style of airbrushing that is as powerful as Howard Arkley's.

Beyond this we have a group of rising stars such as Marcel Cousins and Erin Smith, just to name two. Marcel's work exhibited at the Melbourne Art Fair (the biggest art exhibition in the Southern Hemisphere) in 2009 is shown at the bottom.

It appears that the old fashioned notions of Fine Art having do be done with a brush and oils is fading fast and that the possibilities of the airbrush are starting to be seriously explored by this new generation of Fine Artist.

The future of airbrush Fine Art looks very exciting!



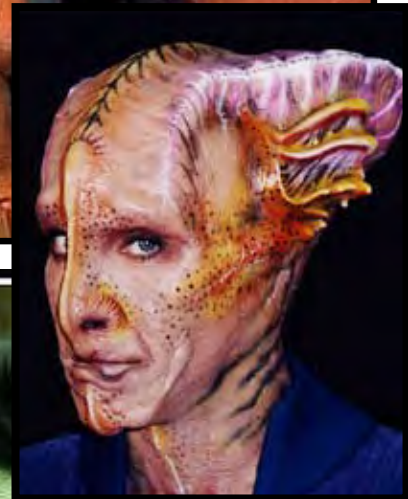
Pathways to Industry - Beauty & Film Makeup

The use of the airbrush has grown in the Beauty industry in recent years and show no sign of slowing down. This includes nail art, makeup for weddings, television, theatre, film makeup, including special effect makeup and even make up for burn victims . . . and finally body painting for fashion photography, and temporary tattooing.

Each one of these areas is a career path in its own right with people throughout Australia that specialise in nail art, or television makeup, or movie makeup / body painting.

This industry can take young people all over the world with the top artists earning very high incomes for fashion and movie work.

There are nail art services offered in every shopping centre in Australia and paid work in this area is almost as common now as hairdressing and makeup.



Pathways to Industry - Manufacturing

The airbrush is used in all sorts of specialist ways for manufacturing. The most common would be the airbrushing of fishing lures and mannequins, although people are making decorative mobiles, chimes, pottery, candles, and a wide range of homewares such as lamps, curtains, blinds, bedding, chairs, the list goes on and on.

This area of airbrushing can be very repetitive but represents one of the most important in creating a training ground for young people that wish to move up to having their own business.

How simple would be for a young person to create a small business that manufactures airbrushed light bulbs and light shades. The effect of airbrushed light bulbs can be very interesting and can be changed regularly for only a couple of dollars and could be sold all over Australia. This is just one opportunity that still goes begging.

There would be hundreds of manufacturing businesses that could be offering hand airbrushed versions of their products as a new stock line.

The measurable systems of the **Certificate II in Australia** will make a real difference in being able to turn the manufacturing processes in clear step by step processes.



Pathways to Industry - Textiles

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The popularity of airbrushing on clothing, such as t-shirts, caps, shoes, bags and even leather jackets has always been very muted in Australia, but this is starting to change.

Airbrushing on clothing at markets is a great opportunity for young people. Across Australia there are dozens of people airbrushing clothing at markets, but now it is starting to be taken to a much more serious level with permanent stores being opened in shopping centres such as Eastland in Melbourne.

For secondary students, the school that they attend represents a great commercial opportunity and as part of the **Certificate II in Airbrushing** we will be helping students to offer airbrushed clothing as part of their training to earn an income from the skills taught in the course.

Airbrushing realism like the Kurt Cobain and 2Pac is actually easier than the cartoons that are shown, which require sudden death techniques.

One good example of the opportunities with clothing is the fact that there are over 700 x 10 Pin Bowling Clubs in Victoria alone and there are four people in each team, but there is not one person offering airbrush services to them. With a possible market of nearly 10,000 people Australia wide in these bowling teams, airbrush clothing could be worth \$300,000.00 a year from a single demographic.

The founder of Airbrush Venturi began his airbrush career airbrushing clothing for a living back in the early 1980's and serves to show that low cost, high volume airbrush products such as airbrush t-shirts and caps is one of the best training grounds for young airbrush enthusiasts.

Again the systems of the **Certificate II in Airbrushing** will strengthen the methods that are used nationally.



Pathways to Industry - Pottery to Porcelain Restoration

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The use of the airbrush within the wider pottery industry includes, greenware, earthenware, stoneware, and porcelain. Each area requires the use of different materials and processes.

Greenware, or more commonly known as “Hobby Ceramics” was hugely popular across Australia in the 1990’s as a hobby for people to create decorated homewares. Although interest has declined there are still dozens of business across the country in this field. The use of the airbrush in this application is a major part of the industry.

The use of the airbrush within Stoneware and Earthenware has always been lower because the technical difficulties of the use of ball-milled low temp glazes and the dramatic differences between what an unfired pot and the finished pot looks like. Once again a lack of research and support for this area has led to this area being largely untapped.

The use of the airbrush for porcelain painting is well established and has worldwide interest. In Australia there is a small but dedicated community of porcelain artists that incorporate the airbrush in their art.

A by product of this is the porcelain restoration industry. Porcelain is one of the most important collectables worldwide and they are easily broken. The airbrush allows broken porcelain pieces to be invisibly repaired. There are over 20 people across Australia that restore broken porcelain as a full time business.

The use of the airbrush in the production of porcelain products overlaps the manufacturing sector, as a repetition based task, but is yet another area that anyone that learns to airbrush well, could do commercially, as either an employee or self employed.

This area also overlaps the Fine Art industry with a number of very well known ceramic artists using the airbrush as part of their creative processes.

Underglazes, stains, ball milled glazes, all of these will pass through an airbrush and enormous opportunities exist for people to find new ways of incorporating the airbrush into the diversity of ceramics. The **Certificate II in Airbrushing** will only add to the depth of knowledge

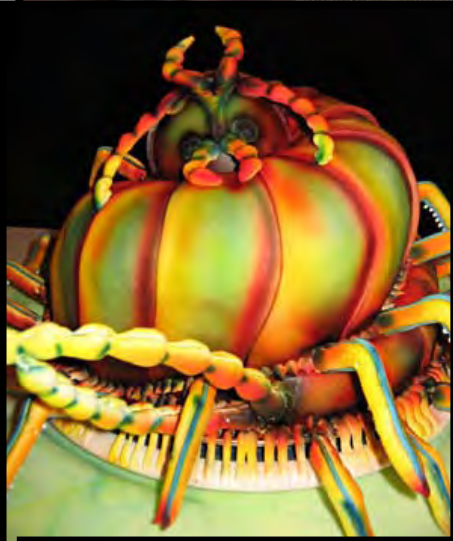




The use of the airbrush for cake decorating ranges from fun cakes for children's birthdays right through to extremely intricate wedding cakes complete with hand made icing flower arrangements, individually airbrushed, as shown at the bottom.

There are over a hundred businesses across Australia that specialise in making cakes such as shown and everyone of them incorporates the use of the airbrush in the services they offer.

For anyone looking to incorporate an interest in catering and airbrushing they do not need to look any further than cake decorating. Every cake and day is different and interesting.



The small scale of the designs and the transparent nature of the food dyes means that the airbrushing in this field requires a high degree of developed skills.

Unfortunately, there has been very limited training in this field developed. The **Certificate II in Airbrushing** will hopefully lead to changing this. The universal nature of the rendering system of

the course means that students completing the certificate course can apply their training to this area just as easily as any other application.

Airbrush Venturi has taught professional desert chefs, "chef pâtissier-confiseur's". The use of the airbrush in the top kitchens of the world best hotels is only just starting to be explored at the competition level internationally, but we hope to see the airbrush used a lot more for gourmet deserts.

We have had one such student compete very successfully at the international level using the skills taught to him in the **Certificate II in Airbrushing**.



Pathways to Industry - Crafts (Quilting, Model Making, etc)



There are numerous specialist commercial applications of the airbrush, such as quilt making, taxidermy, model making, teddy bear making (yes), the list goes on and on.

But central to every one of these airbrush applications is the same set of skills. No matter what paint, surface or subject matter the artists are working with . . . the same airbrush skill set applies.

Airbrush Venturi often teaches people who are coming to learn specialist applications like these and they all work side by side in the classroom learning the same set of skills. At the end they are all able to then apply those skills in their own specific way.

The most exciting aspect of the **Certificate II in Airbrushing** is the truly universal structures that the course is based on, enabling people to approach every single application of the airbrush in a systematic, structured and measured way.

The universal nature of this course has been a recurring theme of this document but the hope is that people will realise that we can teach people to be able to airbrush anything.

We hope this information has been useful and gives you confidence that the **Certificate II in Airbrushing** provides skills that have a long list of pathways to industry and employment.

