



TRAINING AT A DISTANCE

The pandemic forces new education approaches

GLASS CANADA

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CONDENSATION • SAFER HELMETS • IG SHOWCASE



by RICH PORAYKO

Rich Porayko is a professional writer and founding partner of Construction Creative, a marketing and communications company in Metro Vancouver. richp@constructioncreative.com

Not all doom and gloom

I saw a plane last week! Maybe it was the week before. I'm not sure but it made me think of traveling which I absolutely used to love. I've visited over 30 countries, many for extended periods of time. After my family and career, travel is my proudest accomplishment.

Just over a year ago we had to cancel a very much anticipated trip to Costa Rica due to COVID. It's still a touchy subject. However, now, I'm actually on the fence about traveling anytime soon. Even after the vaccination. I love to fly but the thought of going to an airport makes my skin crawl. I'll mask up and deal with it but the bigger question, in my opinion, is where are we going to fly to?

The pandemic has devastated countless lives and ravaged industries. Travel, fitness, leisure, beauty, and entertainment have been decimated. Several more are on life support.

The commercial industry has slowed down. How much and for how long is anybody's guess. The jury is still out on the future of office buildings and retail stores are in trouble with consumers overwhelmingly shopping online this past Christmas season.

My wife doesn't call me Doomsday for no reason. So that's the bad news. The good news, is that there is a crap-ton of stimulus money sloshing around out there – \$240 billion. Probably more. A mind-boggling amount. I'd get political here, however I like this gig so I won't. But rather than complaining about it, this is an opportunity to get some.

At the time of writing, residential home sales are still seeing record sales and prices amid tight overall supply. All of this means is that some industries are still bopping along. In fact, while

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THAT'S RICH

many people haven't worked since March and probably won't for the foreseeable future, others have been busy. Unable to spend their savings on vacations, entertainment and leisure, there are a significant portion of the population that have increased their financial position in 2020.

And many of them are investing in home improvements. Homeowners understand that renovations will improve the value and comfort of their property while keeping themselves occupied at home. As luck would have it, many of those people are choosing to update their bathroom which translates to an uptick in shower enclosures.

The best part about showers is that there is a learning curve. Measuring is complicated at the best of times. So showers, in particular custom showers, are safe from the DIY crowd. There isn't an option but to call in an expert. Even experienced commercial glaziers are hesitant about tackling a complicated shower. But once you know what you are doing, there are more than a few talented installers out there than can knock off three or more in a day.

When most people look at a shower, they see glass and hardware. I see shape/CADD charge plus 10 or 12 millimeter tempered plus edgework plus hinge cutouts plus notches plus towel bars plus pulls plus hinges plus surface treatment. And the add-ons don't stop there. There are barn doors, simulated divided lite grids, digital printing, sandblasting and more.

Showers are the definition of value-add. Heavy glass and fabrication cost more. Therefore, it typically commands a premium price resulting in a higher margin. If this doesn't ring true, stop now because you are doing something wrong. Need some inspiration? Head to Facebook's Shower Door Professionals group administrated by Chris Phillips from Showcase Shower Door. The group has 1,200 members and is a great resource for networking, ideas, new products and more.

One of the beautiful things about glass is its versatility. It is used in so many applications that when things are slow in one area, they are often busy in another. Residential showers are one of those hot areas at the moment and I recommend to get while the getting is good.

"Even on the darkest day, the sun shines on some dog's ass." – Bill Hodges in Stephen King's Mr. Mercedes. •