

# THE KANSAS CITY STAR

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## The name can determine the success of a paint

CINDY HOEDEL, The Kansas City Star

For paint companies, choosing the colors to include in a collection is just the beginning. The next step is coming up with enticing names.

If you think it sounds like fun, it is - sometimes. Especially if you need only 20 names, as was the case for the Mary Carol line of paints by Mary Carol Garrity, owner of Nell Hill's home boutique in Atchison.

"We had a blast picking out paint names," said Ann Willoughby, founder and president of Willoughby Design Group. Willoughby and Garrity decided to give the paints Missouri names to reflect Garrity's heritage.

The line includes colors such as Heirloom Tomato, Missouri Bluffs, Picnic Basket and Gooseberry.

But it's a whole different deal if you have to name some 3,000 colors, says Aimee Desrosiers of California Paints.

"Here's an exercise," Desrosiers said. "Start with yellow, and try to come up with as many names as possible: sunshine, daisy and so on. When you're on the 42nd yellow, it starts to get hard."

Oh, and you can't use any name from the previous two systems. Heaven forbid a customer who painted her living room Meadow 20 years ago buys a can of the new Meadow and it doesn't match.

"You have to get very creative on the 63rd off-white," she said. That explains What Inheritance?, an off-white in the company's new Empty Nest palette. Other names in that collection include Breakfast in Bed (rosy beige) and It's My Party (dusty clay).

Because a bad name can torpedo sales, sometimes a name intervention is required. Shortly before the 2002 launch of its current paint system, Sherwin-Williams changed the name of a medium gray from City Pigeon to Pebble Path.

"Pebble Path has much nicer associations," said Jackie Jordan, director of designer marketing for the company. "Color is very emotional."

Which leaves us wondering what Benjamin Moore was thinking when the company came up with Dog's Ear (pinkish lilac).

**TELL US:** E-mail paint names you love or hate to [home@kcstar.com](mailto:home@kcstar.com). Include the manufacturer along with the name and whether you have ever used the paint. We'll run the best responses June 11.

