

PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS: EASE OF DECORATIVE TRIVALENT PLATING

medeco®

ASSA ABLOY

In business since 1968, [Medeco](#) is a market leader in locks and locking systems for security, safety, and control. Their customer base includes wholesale and retail security providers, original equipment manufacturers, institutional, commercial, industrial, and residential end-users. Medeco® is an ASSA ABLOY Group company. The [ASSA ABLOY](#) Group is the world's leading manufacturer and supplier of locks and associated products, dedicated to satisfying end-user needs for security, safety and convenience.

At their Virginia based plating facility, Finishing and Plating Manager Leslie Samuel oversees the operation of Utilite round return rack line and a barrel line. Focused on quality and operational efficiency, the team produces approximately 27,000 parts per day in a single shift. For years they were running a standard hexavalent chromium plating process. Rejects with the hexavalent process were averaging 20% due to yellowing (nickel show), burning and whitewash. This drove up costs, slowed production and impacted inventory management. In addition, expenses for waste treatment were excessive, and employees had to deal with fumes each day and clean the hazardous sludge from the tank each year.

As a global company aware of EU REACH regulations and interested in doing what was best for their employees, their operations and the environment, ASSA Abloy and its network of operations made the switch from hexavalent chromium plating to trivalent plating in 2010.

The switch from plating with hexavalent chrome to plating with Columbia Chemical's TriCOL Trivalent Chromium Plating process was a complete game changer for Medeco. Thanks to the ease and speed of the process, they substantially increased their throughput, dropped their rejects down from 20% to nearly zero and greatly improved their environmental impact while reducing their wastewater treatment costs and management. The consistency of production allowed them to consolidate to one shift and manage with a "just in time" inventory control model which reduces additional costs while still meeting and exceeding company standards and customer expectations.

With many companies out there still on the fence about making the change while they continue to fight the battle with rejects from whitewash and burning, slower production and high costs, Medeco's Finishing and Plating Manager Leslie Samuel comments "our production with Columbia Chemical's TriCOL Décor process is reliable, fast, produces bright white parts and is easy to operate and keep on track. I highly recommend making the change. Switching from hex to tri is a no brainer. Give it a chance and you will never go back. It is so easy to run, we cut our rejects by 20% in addition to the major savings in time and labor."

Columbia's TriCOL Décor Plating Process is well known for its brilliant white deposits and faster plating speeds as well as its ability to solve the burning issue so commonly associated with hexavalent chrome plating. Faster production and improved waste treatment make the switch to trivalent chromium plating even easier. For an in-depth look at [converting from hexavalent to trivalent chromium plating, view our free webinar](#) featuring in-house expert Mark Schario and hosted by Products Finishing Editor Tim Pennington.