Rocket Powder Coating Explores AI-Assisted Production Forecasting

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CENTURIA, WI - November 18, 2026 -
Rocket Powder Coating is exploring how artificial intelligence could support earlier production planning between manufacturers and outside finishing vendors, considering whether AI-assisted reporting could give the company advance visibility into work expected for powder coating. The concept remains in an early exploratory stage and is focused on improving the information exchanged before parts arrive, rather than announcing a completed system or a new customer service.

The idea centers on a common coordination challenge in manufacturing. A company arranging outside finishing may have production schedules and order forecasts within its own systems, while its coating vendor receives details about specific work as orders move closer to shipment. Earlier visibility into projected volume, product mix, colors, timing, and capacity needs could give both parties more time to assess upcoming workloads and plan resources.

For a powder coating operation, those details can influence how incoming work is organized. Different parts may require different colors, finishes, preparation steps, masking, racking arrangements, or production methods. A forecast that identifies likely work before shipment could help a finishing vendor begin evaluating

how those requirements may fit alongside existing production commitments. The information would be preliminary, however, and would need to be updated as manufacturers revise schedules and orders.

Curt Carlson, President and Owner of Rocket Powder Coating, said the company is considering how information already maintained by manufacturers might be shared in a more useful format. "The concept is to give the finishing operation an earlier picture of what may be coming, rather than waiting until each order is ready to ship," Carlson said. "That kind of visibility could help both sides prepare for changes in volume, colors and timing, while recognizing that forecasts can change as production moves forward."

The proposed approach would use AI-assisted reporting to interpret or organize information from a manufacturer's internal production data. Depending on how such a process is developed, the resulting report could summarize anticipated quantities, product categories, finish requirements, and expected arrival windows. The objective would be to turn information that already exists within a manufacturer's planning process into a forward-looking view that an outside processor could use for preliminary scheduling.

Rocket Powder Coating's existing operations provide context for why advance planning is relevant. The company's capabilities include both batch and conveyorized powder coating systems, which serve different production needs. Batch processing can accommodate oversized parts and lower-quantity runs, while conveyorized systems are suited to higher-volume, consistent part flows. Forecast information that distinguishes between these types of work could help a finishing vendor assess the likely mix of jobs before receiving them.

The company also describes quality-control procedures that document measurable aspects of the finishing process, including film thickness, gloss consistency, adhesion, part temperature during curing, and visual inspection. Its capabilities information notes that documentation can include batch traceability, inspection photographs, and material certifications. These records address work that has entered production. The AI concept under consideration would address an earlier point in the relationship: the planning information exchanged before the work reaches the finishing facility.

Carlson said any useful system would depend on the quality and consistency of the information supplied by the manufacturer, as well as clear communication about changes. "A forecast would not replace confirmed orders or direct coordination between production teams," he said. "It would be a planning reference that could help identify expected demand sooner, so questions about capacity, scheduling or finish requirements can be addressed with more lead time."

The concept also raises practical considerations that would need to be addressed before implementation. Manufacturers and outside processors would need to determine which production data is relevant, how frequently forecasts should be updated, and how confidential business information would be handled. The

parties would also need a way to distinguish estimates from confirmed orders and to communicate revisions when production schedules shift. Any reporting process would have to fit the systems and working practices already used by the businesses involved.

Rocket Powder Coating is examining the concept as part of a broader consideration of how communication and production planning may evolve between manufacturers and their outside service providers. No AI-based forecasting platform or customer-facing reporting service is being announced at this stage. The company's current focus is evaluating whether this type of information exchange could be practical and useful within the realities of custom finishing work.

Rocket Powder Coating provides custom powder coating for industrial, commercial, and manufacturing customers across Minnesota, Wisconsin, and the broader Midwest. Its operations include batch and conveyorized coating, primer and topcoat production, large-format part handling, custom colors and specialty finishes, and documented quality-control procedures. The company works with manufacturers in sectors including agriculture, architectural and building materials, automotive and transportation, energy and utilities, and original equipment manufacturing.

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Rocket Powder Coating

Our Rocket Approach guides us as the leaders in powder coating contractors. We believe in tough standards, efficient performance, and powder coating solutions in Wisconsin and Minnesota that surpass expectations across industries.

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