



# THE TROWEL

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## CONSTRUCTION OUTLOOK

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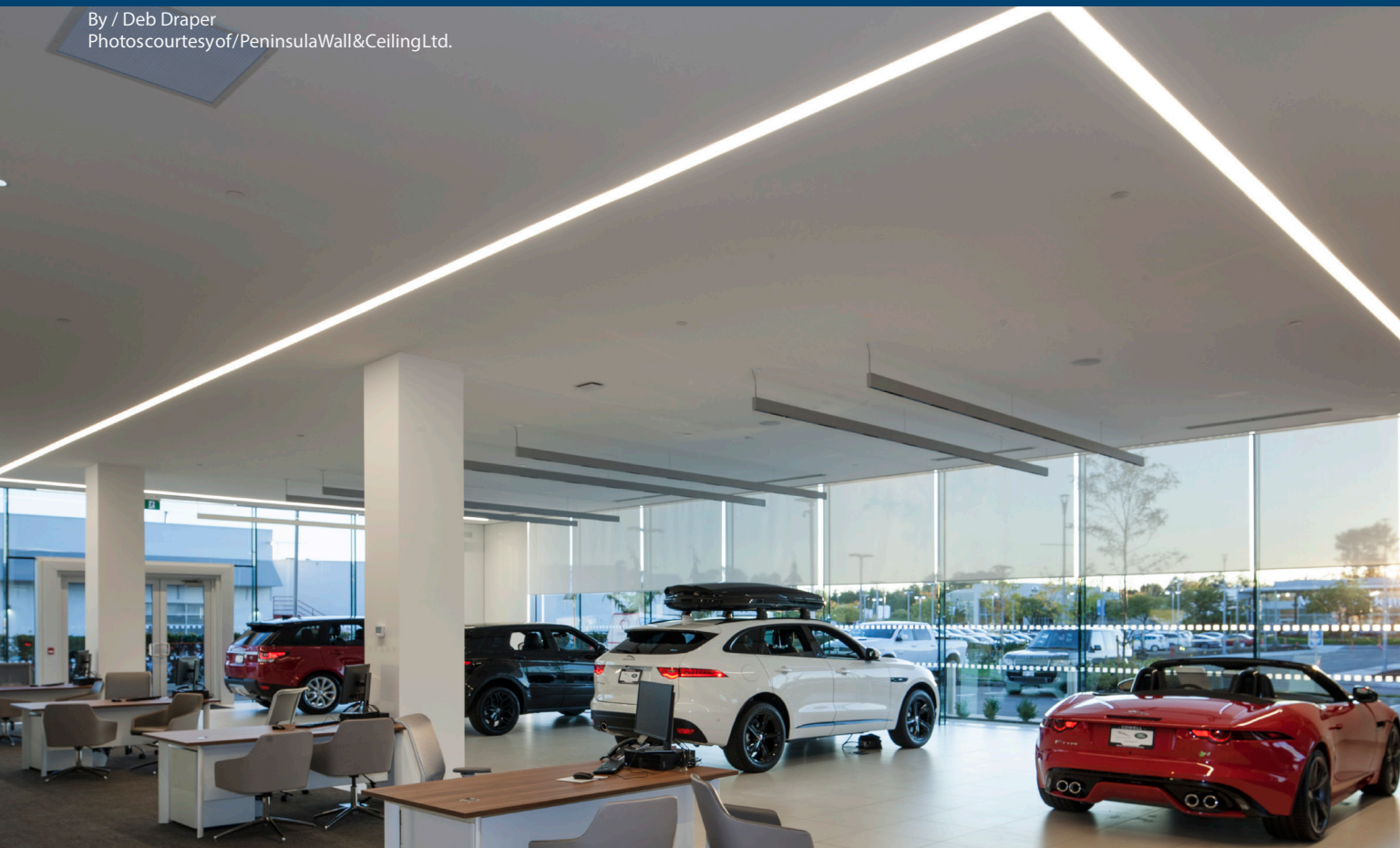




# *Excellence* in Workmanship

## Peninsula Wall & Ceiling Meeting the Challenge

By / Deb Draper  
Photos courtesy of / Peninsula Wall & Ceiling Ltd.





Peninsula Wall & Ceiling of Surrey, BC received the 2018 Best LMWCA Project Award for its work on two new state-of-the-art luxury vehicle showrooms at 13460 Smallwood Place in the expansive Richmond Auto Mall.

It all started three years ago in September 2015 when family-owned and -operated Cowell Auto Group, in the business of selling cars since 1967, broke ground at the future location of its vision of side-by-side Audi and Jaguar Land Rover showrooms. Next, the three buildings already on site were demolished with 90 percent recycled into the new construction.

"It was a very unique project from the start," says Jim Paulsen, president and owner of Peninsula Wall & Ceiling, the BC Wall and Ceiling Association (BCWCA) member contracted to deliver the ceilings and walls of both showrooms. The two independent stand-alone buildings, more than 100,000 square feet each, had to reflect the materials and designs specific to the very different brands while conforming to local and provincial standards and regulations.

The ceilings throughout consist of high-end Celebration™ acoustical metal ceiling panels manufactured by CGC, featuring the strength and corrosion-resistance of aluminum while fulfilling the design aesthetic of both vehicle manufacturers. The Audi brand specifications particularly made for a lot of time at the drawing board before the first panel could be installed.

As Paulsen explains, "The most challenging part of this project was in constructing Audi's imaginative designs while finding ways to combine North American building materials and methods with German-engineered lights and fixture expectations."

His experienced tradespeople would have to frame and finish each panel independently in order to accommodate all the many challenging light fixtures. But then the lighting specs were changed before the job could even get started, and Peninsula's team had to go back and redesign all the premanufactured panels to build the ceilings.

"As it turned out, the lighting package was changed many times, but CGC did a great job helping us design the layout for those acoustical metal panel ceilings," notes Paulsen. "In the end, the ceiling package alone came to about half a million dollars out of the total \$40 million contract."

But the challenges didn't end at the ceiling. The Audi showroom would feature extensive radius-slope curved walls, bulkheads, and ceilings that had to be precisely framed before the gypsum product was applied. Steel-studded drywall



was built on a slope, designed to create a racing wall curving along the top perimeter of the long showroom wall. The application of a special finish over the gypsum created the illusion of skimming along the famous German Autobahn Superhighway.

Both showrooms have two floor levels, but the Audi design extends even further up to a third floor "New Car Ownership" room where the customer's vehicle is elevated up, then driven into a very classy lounge-setting where it is introduced to its new owner in style.

The Jaguar Land Rover British design called for a catwalk to span the entire length of the building on a mezzanine level for looking down upon the showroom from above.

Both buildings feature covered entrance parking with extensive metal ceiling panels keeping customers dry and comfortable when they arrive. Paulsen sourced all the materials for the project from WSB Titan, Canada's largest independent



building supplies dealer and BC Ceiling Systems, carrying one of the largest selections of ceilings in Western Canada.

The Audi showroom was completed in June 2017, followed by Jaguar Land Rover in December 2017. Looking back, Paulsen recalls, "On paper this project looked amazing, but the reality was an incredible amount of pre-planning and pre-designing by Dan McDonald, our construction manager, with the manufacturers and weekly meetings with the architects and the contractor to make it all come together."

Starting out as a wall and ceiling installer before making his way to becoming a journeyman, a superintendent, and then project manager, Paulsen eventually decided to start his own company in 2004. In 2007 McDonald was brought on board

as a co-principal as well as taking on the title of construction manager. Through the years since, they have built a successful business while coming to specialize in high-end retail commercial projects such as the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino renovation (another award-winning project from 2014) with its intense wall and ceiling designs.

"We prefer these types of projects," says Paulsen. "We find them more interesting, and they give the tradespeople who work for us an opportunity to experience working on much more complex projects."

It was a challenge, this project; it was difficult and at times frustrating, but in the end has added yet another layer to the Peninsula Wall & Ceiling portfolio of accomplishments. ■



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