

Best use of Press & Public Relations

BRICKS, BLOCKS & HARD LANDSCAPING

Helping hand



Builders' merchants know the importance of bricks to customers' projects. What they may be less aware of is the growing demand for handmade bricks in both the new build sector and refurbishment projects in period, heritage or listed properties. It's a fast developing market that is opening up new selling opportunities for merchants at higher margins.

Handmade bricks are ideal for replicating the authentic look and texture of traditional brickwork, whether it's a period or historic building that requires renovation or a new build for instant character and curb appeal. Increasingly, property developers are building contemporary 'loft-style' properties with exposed handmade bricks as feature walls.

A challenge for developers, specifiers and self-builders is deciding between reclaimed or newly handmade bricks. We often hear reports from builders that genuine reclaimed result in around 20% wastage, and there's no standardised testing for their strength or durability — which can be a problem when they are specified for listed properties or conservation areas. They're difficult to source, and prohibitively expensive, making

Jason Hughes, Managing Director at Imperial Bricks, says both modern and traditional architecture can help merchants sell more specialised products — such as handmade bricks — at higher margins.

new handmade bricks a more viable alternative. Vincent Kelly, Brick Specialist at Jewson North-West says, "We've built up our range of handmade bricks quite significantly in the last couple of years in the Cheshire and Manchester area but also generally across Jewson. There is a growing trend from customers who are interested in conservation and want a bespoke brick that's regionally-matched and weathered, but there's also more demand for handmade bricks from the new build sector. Imperial Bricks' product

range covers a wide range of colours specific to the North-West, and off-the-shelf weathered options, from stock, which makes matching existing bricks easy?"

Bricks make a big impact internally too. Brick-slip, in a wide variety of textures and shades have been used to boost property value for some time. Noticing this growing trend, Imperial's merchant team worked with our internal R&D team to develop a bespoke brick slip system, making it easier for the bricklayer, self-builder or even keen DIYers.

The new brick slip system is part of

www.professionalbuildersmerchant.co.uk

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Build a new market with Imperial Bricks

The finest traditional handmade, wirecut & pressed bricks for restoration, renovation & new build

Looking for a new market? Handmade bricks is a fast developing market that is opening up new selling opportunities for builders' merchants at higher margins.

Imperial Bricks is the only UK supplier to offer:

- Standard and reclamation finishes
- Imperial and metric sizes
- Regional variations with matching lime mortar
- Bespoke weathering
- Brick tints
- Custom blends
- Fully frost-resistant
- Tested to BS EN 771-1
- FREE brick matching service for merchants

Call our dedicated Merchant Team on 0800 610 2244 or visit www.imperialbricks.co.uk

Have you seen our new brick app? Search **Brick Matcher** on the App Store.

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BUILDERS' MERCHANTS JOURNAL

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WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN CHOOSING BRICKS

Jason Hughes, Managing Director of Imperial Bricks

The look, feel and quality of any brickwork can make a significant difference to the value of a building. Bricks offer flexibility, weather resistance and enhanced sustainability, but what's also more important is the depth of a product in the market. Key to this is how, how often and how well it's used, and for manufacturing purposes.

Locations, locations, locations

The regional differences between Council areas, which are defined by local authority boundaries, mean that bricks made from locally-sourced clay will have different characteristics to those made from clay sourced elsewhere. This is why it's important to choose bricks that are locally-sourced to the area where they will be used. This is particularly true for listed buildings, where the bricks used must match the original bricks as closely as possible.

Traditional vs. handmade

Handmade bricks are made from clay and fired in a kiln. They have a unique texture and colour, and are often used in traditional buildings. Handmade bricks are also more durable than machine-made bricks, and they have a longer lifespan. Handmade bricks are also more expensive than machine-made bricks, but they are worth the extra cost for the quality and durability they offer.

Wirecut vs. pressed

Wirecut bricks are made from clay and fired in a kiln. They have a smooth surface and are often used in modern buildings. Wirecut bricks are also more durable than pressed bricks, and they have a longer lifespan. Wirecut bricks are also more expensive than pressed bricks, but they are worth the extra cost for the quality and durability they offer.

Imperial Bricks

Imperial Bricks is a leading supplier of handmade bricks in the UK. We offer a wide range of products, including traditional, wirecut and pressed bricks. We also offer a bespoke weathering service, which allows us to create bricks that match the original bricks of any building. We are proud to be a leading supplier of handmade bricks in the UK, and we are committed to providing the highest quality products to our customers.

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Brick is beautiful: TRENDS FOR 2017

Government plans for housing should mean better prospects for construction, particularly for the brick sector. BMJ asks what this could mean for merchants.

Recent news that the UK's housing market is set to see a significant increase in new builds, particularly in the brick sector, has led to a surge in interest in handmade bricks. This is a positive sign for the brick sector, which has been struggling for some time. The government's plans for housing, which include a target of 300,000 new homes by 2020, could lead to a significant increase in the demand for bricks. This is particularly true for the brick sector, which is a key component of the housing market. The government's plans for housing, which include a target of 300,000 new homes by 2020, could lead to a significant increase in the demand for bricks. This is particularly true for the brick sector, which is a key component of the housing market.

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