



## CASE STUDY

A Virginia hair salon owner finds that the Highland precision balance can be just as much at home in a salon as a lab



# The Highland Balance is “Dying” to Improve the Hair Color Process

When most people think of a precision balance, they typically imagine it in a lab setting. Fortunately, Chris Keilitz of Xanadu Salon & Color Bar wasn't colored by this perception.

Keilitz, who co-owns the two Xanadu salons with his wife Danise, needed a software solution that would capture data not only for inventory management but also hair color formulation. He wanted something that would increase the accuracy and efficiency of portioning different dye colors for mixing (“*What if I weighed it?*” he wondered.) and eliminate transcription errors in keeping track of customers' color formulations.

In addition to the salon, Keilitz works as an IT executive and saw an opportunity to combine his experience in both arenas. “I love writing code and I missed it,” Keilitz said. “It's something that I don't usually get a chance to do and it was a way to get more deeply involved in the business with my wife.”

He wrote his own software, ColorBuddy, and paired it with Adam Equipment's Highland portable precision balance.

Since ColorBuddy's release in January 2014, the automated system has run seven days a week and has captured more than 150,000 color formulas and metrics on associated client, service, stylist and color usage. Keilitz initially purchased one HCB 3001 for use during software development, then bought three more when he rolled out ColorBuddy so each Xanadu location would have two balances in their color bars.

### The ColorBuddy Process

In usage, ColorBuddy provides a straightforward process for the stylist, who first selects a customer in the database to find their personal color formulation history.

A personalized formula with multiple color or dye products results in a truer color match. While mass market dyes from a box are meant to deliver the exact color pictured on the box to everyone, they can't account for variables like temperature, tones, hair types and degree of color resistance.

The stylist then scans the barcode on each box of color or dye, then dispenses each product into a bowl on the Highland balance to determine the weight.

The next step is to click a button in the software to select the type of service (i.e., touch-up, highlights, roots-to-ends, etc.).

After adding the specific color formula to the customer's history file, ColorBuddy updates the salon's inventory (typically, hundreds of boxes of color) by removing the amount of each product used for the formulation.

The system allows for real-time accounting of color usage and inventory, as well as automated product ordering and restocking. ColorBuddy can generate reports like Formula History, Daily Color Usage Costs, Color Used (by Stylist, by Service, by Day) and Inventory Details. Thanks to ColorBuddy's metrics, Keilitz can even determine what type of hair styling uses the most product.

### The Highlights of Using Highland

Highland offers a variety of weighing applications relevant to the ColorBuddy system: in addition to general weighing tasks, percentage weighing would be beneficial in staying true to the correct proportion of ingredients in the color formula.

After researching a variety of options, Keilitz selected Highland for two key reasons: it offered both a USB interface to work with the all-in-one desktop computers at the two salons, and its API was based on a standard that Keilitz knew well from his 22+ years in IT, so he knew he could integrate it into ColorBuddy's program design. The HCB 3001 also provided a readability of 0.1g, which easily met his needs.

The balance's sturdy ABS housing, which was designed to stand up to demanding lab use, performs equally well when working with hair dye chemicals.

To ensure consistent measurements, Highland comes equipped with HandiCal® for internal calibration without the need for external weights. In a busy salon, the staff would be hard pressed to find the time to calibrate their balances with external weights.

Looking toward the future, Keilitz plans to remain using Highland in both salons. "I've tried other, cheaper scales, but they just didn't have the accuracy we needed. These are used by 35 stylists a day and probably get more use than they would in a lab." ■



For more information on Highland precision balances, visit [adamequipment.com/highland-portable-precision-balances](http://adamequipment.com/highland-portable-precision-balances).

Adam Equipment has designed and manufactured precision balances and scales for professionals worldwide since 1972.