A black and blue logo

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**2025 Concrete Language Alert: The Phrase *“Finishing Aid”***

The term *“finishing aid”* is widely used in product sheets, labels, specs, and sales conversations. **But it does not mean one specific product.** Instead, it refers to several very different materials. This confusion is causing real-world misapplications, bans, and disputes.

**The Problem:**

* “Finishing aid” is **not a product category** **or a specific product.**
* Different stakeholders use the term for different materials.
* Results: miscommunication, improper restrictions, finger-pointing when defects appear.

**The Reality: 5 Different Products Labeled as “Finishing Aid”**

| **Product Type** | **Application** | **Purpose** | **Risk of Confusion** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaporation Retarder** (Surface spray) | Sprayed uniformly on surface, 90% water (**NOT** worked in) | Slows moisture loss in hot/windy weather | Misused if finished into surface → weak surface, scaling, flaking |
| **Surface Treatments** (Newer category) | Sprayed on surface (chemicals: silanes, siloxanes, colloidal silicas, etc.) | Improves surface workability, some claim improves durability | Marketed as “finishing aid”, confused as an evaporation retarder, completely different products |
| **Colloidal Silica (Surface Spray)** | Sprayed on surface | Marketed as “finishing aid” or curing aid | Confused with evaporation retarders, not the same |
| **Colloidal Silica (Admixture)** | Added at ready-mix plant | Marketed as internal curing, strength/durability aid | Confused with other admixtures, not the same |
| **Viscosity Modifiers (Admixture)** | Added at ready-mix plant | Improves finishability, extends working time | Confused with evaporation retarders, and other admixtures. |

**Real-World Examples:**

* **Specifier Ban:** Viscosity modifying admixture rejected because specifier thought it was an another (completely different) admixture, both used “finishing aid” as descriptor.
* **Municipal Restriction:** Colloidal silica surface treatments banned due to confusion with evaporation retarders, both used “finishing aid” on their label.

**What To Do Now:**

* **Do NOT** use the blanket term *“finishing aid.”*
* **DO** name the exact product type (evaporation retarder, viscosity modifier, colloidal silica, etc.).
* **Clarify intent** in specs, submittals, and conversations to avoid miscommunication.

**Bottom line:**   
***“Finishing aid”* is not one thing. Be precise. Say what product you mean.**