

The Retail Observer

February, 2013

AN EYE ON THE INDUSTRY SINCE 1970

Vol. 24, Issue 2

2013 INTERNATIONAL CES IN ONE WORD: INNOVATION



**WHIRLPOOL SHOWCASES KITCHEN
OF THE FUTURE CONCEPTS**
2013 INTERNATIONAL CES

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION WEEK 2014
INTERNATIONAL BUILDERS' SHOW AND KITCHEN & BATH
INDUSTRY SHOW TO CO-LOCATE IN LAS VEGAS



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Another BIG SHOW in Las Vegas

What an Announcement!

Starting next year, the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) and the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) will hold their tradeshow at the same location in February branded under the new name—Design and Construction Week. As a Las Vegas based business and avid supporter of both associations, *The Retail Observer* looks forward to supporting the new event.

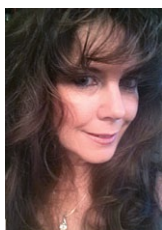
It's no secret that many independent dealers feel torn when deciding on which tradeshow to attend. On the IBS 2013 website, held last month in Las Vegas, the announcement reads, "You will get more bang for the buck during Design and Construction Week 2014." This is exactly what independents are looking for!

The convergence of the two powerhouse associations whose members represent the majority of companies in the building and construction industries will no doubt increase participation. But it will also open the door to a number of new offerings and opportunities that none of us will want to miss. And with the uptick in the housing market, the decision to merge the shows will only continue to help speed up its recovery.

Are you as excited about Design and Construction Week as we are? Let us know what you think!

Talking about shows, remember that registration is open for KBIS 2013 to be held in New Orleans next month. In this issue, you will find a recap of the 2013 International CES show and get a preview of the upcoming Digital Signage Expo to be held later this month in Las Vegas. All upcoming tradeshow and industry events are highlighted every month in our calendar.

The Retail Observer would like to take a moment to applaud The National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) whose members in the Northeastern region stepped in to help rebuild areas hit by Hurricane Sandy over the holidays. Let's all remember to continue our charitable work throughout 2013!



Here's to the next big thing,

Eliana Barriga
letters@retailobserver.com

The **RetailObserver** FEBRUARY 2013

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CELEBRATING OUR 24TH YEAR
AS *THE RETAIL OBSERVER*

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INSPIRE



Gary Vaynerchuk

"Success doesn't just happen, but when you love what you do and accept no excuses, success is always a possibility."

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN AT KBIS.COM

EVOLVE Be inspired at KBIS 2013 with a Keynote Address delivered by self-made businessman and dynamo, Gary Vaynerchuk. The address is just one component of KBIS 2013, which will provide everything you need to thrive in the kitchen and bath industry today.

Register now at KBIS.com and enter the code AD242.

A Change of Tide

As some of you have heard by now the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show (KBIS) and the International Builders Show (IBS) have decided to co-locate in Las Vegas starting in 2014. All I have to say is: it's BRILLIANT!!!

Ok, that's not all I have to say. I attend approximately 20+ conventions a year and hear the same things over and over—like "Where are all the big manufacturers?" "Why are there so many shows and why can't we just have them all at one time?" So, you have asked for this and now you have it. Let's be happy and get on with it!

What does this co-branding mean and how is it going to affect the Industry? I expect the big manufacturers will come back, which of course will bring the medium-sized manufacturers back, giving the smaller manufacturers more attendees to talk to. Why do I say this? Well, because so many people have complained that if the big guys aren't there, why go? The big, medium and small guys complained that not enough people were going, as well as the high cost factor. I see the combination of these shows as the answer to many objections. Two shows, one ticket and zero complaints. Wow, I can't wait to see the exhibitor list, the attendee numbers and and the diversity of education and networking that this opportunity will bring.

Designers, Retailers, Contractors and Architects will surely flock to this collaboration. Design build firms will find something for everyone in their company, as well as the media from all facets of the Design/Build communities will have things to talk about for months.

Lets face it—what better place than Vegas? Airfares are actually fair, rooms rates aren't thru the roof, food and entertainment abound. This is huge for the Industry. Ok, so no more excuses from anyone, please. It's time to back up what you have been saying and put your money where your mouth is. 2014 is the start of something special, and as an Industry we all need to support it. One last thing, these associations spend lots of money to make this happen, so if you're going to show your product, please do it at the show and not at a unofficial offsite location. All you're doing is showing your lack of support to the people that are supporting you and riding on some else's hard work. Really, would you want another manufacturer to roll a truck up in front of your showroom or factory and start peddling their wares in your parking lot?

See you Las Vegas in 2014 and don't forget we still have an exciting show, KBIS in April in New Orleans.



Happy Retailing

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The RetailObserver FEBRUARY 2013

VOLUME 24, ISSUE 2

CELEBRATING OUR 24TH YEAR
AS THE RETAIL OBSERVER

We proudly support the following trade associations and buying groups throughout North America whose news and information greatly contribute to the quality of The Retail Observer and the education of our readers.



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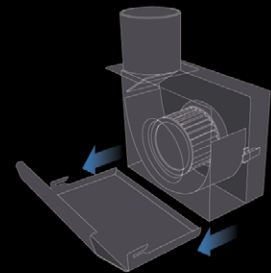


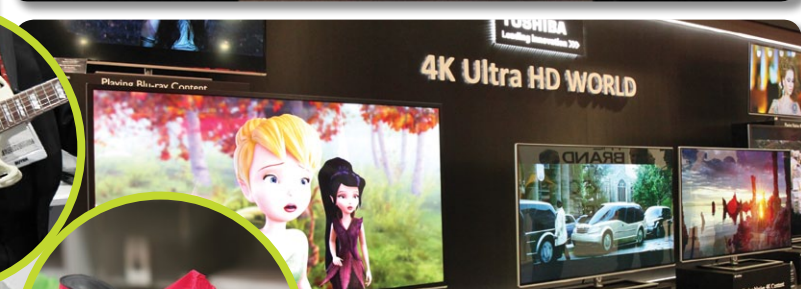
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VentAhood





2013 INTERNATIONAL CES



IN ONE WORD: INNOVATION

Largest Show in History with 37 Football Fields of Exhibit Space

2013 INTERNATIONAL CES
SHOWCASED THE EXCITING
INNOVATIONS & INDUSTRY
GROWTH COMING
FROM STARTUP AND
TECH-HEALTH PRODUCTS.

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA)[®] announced that the 2013 International CES[®] was the largest in the show's 45+ year history, with 1.92 million net square feet of exhibit space. The previous record was 1.86 million net square feet of space at the 2012 International CES. More than 3,250 exhibitors unveiled some 20,000 new products at the 2013 CES, drawing more than 150,000 attendees, including more than 35,000 from more than 170 countries outside the United States. Owned and produced by CEA, the 2013 International CES is the world's largest annual innovation event.

"Innovation abounded at the 2013 CES and executives from every major industry that touches technology were here this week," said Gary Shapiro, president and CEO of the Consumer Electronics Association. "From amazing new products, to CEA's new book *Ninja Innovation*, to our new publication – *It Is Innovation (i3)*, innovation prevailed across 37 football fields of technology at the 2013 International CES. Our event is the biggest mobile show to kick-off the year and showcase our new mobile future."

Major product launches occurred across all 15 product categories at the 2013 CES. In wireless/smartphones, highlights include the launch of | *continued on page 10* |

Sony's Xperia Z, the Huawei Ascend Mate and ZTE Grand S. In video displays, LG featured its touchscreen Ultra HD, Sony launched the first Ultra HD OLED display, Samsung featured its bendable OLED and Hisense launched its transparent 3DTV. Digital Health and fitness launches included new products from Fitbit, Withings and BodyMedia. Audi and Lexus featured driverless vehicle technologies. For gamers, the 2013 CES saw the launch of Nvidia's Project Shield, the Oculus Rift, the Sifteo and Razer Edge. Other noteworthy products launched at the 2013 CES included: the Valve SteamBox, Tobii eye recognition technology, the Kickstarter-funded Pebble smart watch, Qualcomm's Vuforia augmented reality, multi-device connectivity from Ultraviolet, NFC technology from LG and Sony, tabletop applications from Lenovo, MakerBot's Replicator 2x and Samsung's Smart TVs with voice recognition.

The 2013 CES showcased the exciting innovations and industry growth coming from startups and tech-health products. The Eureka Park exhibits—presented in partnership with the National Science Foundation and Startup America—grew 50 percent, showcasing innovative new companies looking to gain footing in the consumer electronics (CE) industry. HealthSpot's breakthrough telehealth kiosk exemplified how products sitting at the intersection of health and technology are being introduced at CES.

Industry leaders and visionaries from Qualcomm, Panasonic, Verizon, Samsung, Andreesen Horowitz, Bump Technologies, ZocDoc, RockMelt, i.am.plus, llc., Media Link, Salesforce.com, AT&T, American Express, Coca Cola and Unilever presented keynote addresses. Executive delegations from thousands of global companies attended the 2013 CES to meet with current and future customers.

"If you are a player in technology, you were at the 2013 CES," said Karen Chupka, senior vice president of the International CES and corporate business strategy. "Every major company, from Amazon, Google, Groupon Goods, Facebook, Foursquare, Twitter, Tumblr and YouTube, was here this week participating in the 'Super Bowl of technology,' demonstrating the relevance and impact of the 2013 International CES."

2013 INTERNATIONAL CES EXHIBITOR QUOTES

"It is the greatest show on Earth!" — *Jay McLellan, President, CEO & Co-Founder, HAI*

"This has been an amazing show. The turnout from international and government guests is impressive as is the press coverage. CES is truly the mother of all trade shows!" — *John Taylor, LG Electronics USA Inc.*

"There is no better place to meet and get business done. The number of representatives here from the financial community was very impressive" — *Robert Struble, Ibiqity Digital Corp.*

"Every major deal we have ever done has occurred at CES. And the trend continues!" — *David Inns, GreatCall Inc.*

"There is a pervasive sense of opportunity at CES. The opportunities available here for a small company are amazing." — *Gary Yacoubian, Specialty Technologies LLC, dba SVSound*

"CES is a terrific way to inspire action and we got to meet with top government leaders." — *Peter Fannon, Panasonic Corp. of North America*

CEA released its second book, *Ninja Innovation: the Ten Killer Strategies of the World's Most Successful Businesses*, at the 2013 CES. Authored by CEA President and CEO, Gary Shapiro, *Ninja Innovation* follows CEA's 2011 New York Times bestseller *The Comeback: How Innovation Will Restore the American Dream*. With more than 30 years at CEA, Shapiro has worked with some of the most innovative companies in history and knows what it takes to build a successful business. Shapiro was on hand throughout the show for various book signings. All proceeds from sales of both books are funneled back into industry initiatives.

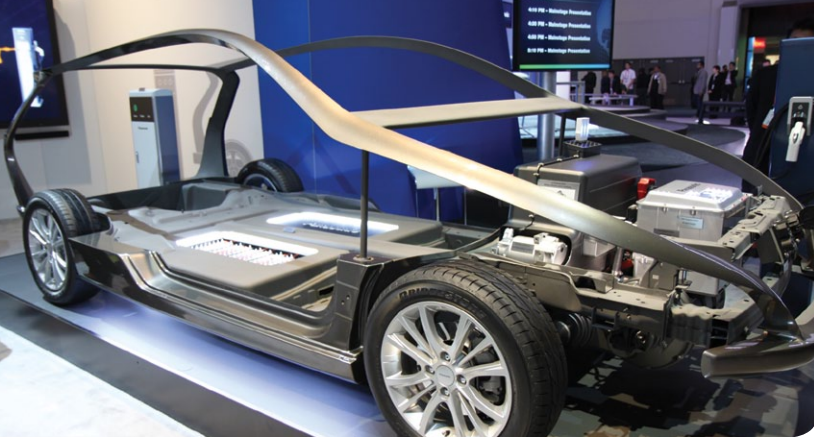
CEA also launched *It Is Innovation (i3)* magazine at the 2013 CES, a magazine dedicated to showcasing all aspects of innovation in technology, policy, business and engineering in the consumer technology industry. The magazine celebrates the entrepreneurial spirit in inventions and startups, the ideas, strategies and leadership skills that exemplify the industry.

The 2013 CES was a star-studded event with celebrity guests from musical icons, Hollywood stars and TV personalities promoting the latest technologies. Actress Felicia Day served as the Ambassador for the Entertainment Matters Program. In its third year, Entertainment Matters at CES is designed by and for Hollywood film, television and digital communities. Musical performances by Adam Levine and two members of multi-platinum, three-time Grammy Award winning band, Maroon 5, during Qualcomm's preshow keynote and the Alicia Keys concert at the Monster Awards were two highlights amongst dozens of celebrity appearances.

The 2013 International CES also featured government officials from the U.S. and around the world, including 12 members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, six state elected officials and five members of the Federal Communications Commission, including Chairman Julius Genachowski. Other representatives from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Energy were also in attendance.

CEA conducts an independent audit of attendance at the International CES and verified figures will be available in the spring. For more news on the 2013 International CES, visit CESweb.org. The International CES will return to Las Vegas Tuesday, January 7-Friday, January 10, 2014.

All profits from CES are reinvested into CEA's industry services. Find CEA online at www.CE.org and ww.DeclareInnovation.com. **RO**





Ninja Innovation

The Ten Killer Strategies of the World's Most Successful

What leads to success? Why do some companies thrive while others fail? For 30 years, Gary Shapiro, president and CEO of the Consumer Electronics Association®, has worked with the world's most innovative and successful businesses – companies like Amazon, Apple, Google, Intel and Microsoft. For the first time, Shapiro shares the strategies that made these businesses and smaller companies successful by incorporating lessons learned from his study of martial arts. “Ninja” is a metaphor Shapiro uses to draw parallels between business and ancient warriors, to demonstrate how to create a “killer strategy” that’s defined by clear goals, flexibility and a focus on competition and innovative thinking.

“To be successful, one has to move beyond what has come before,” writes Shapiro, author of the 2011 New York Times best-seller *The Comeback: How Innovation Will Restore the American Dream*. “One must take the lessons learned through study, experience and failure, and apply them in ways that change the game, so to speak. You must innovate or die.”

When a ninja undertakes a dangerous assignment, he must have a strategy that will guide him through to

completion. He must have firm goals, and he must consider all possible obstacles and be open to any unforeseen crisis. For ninjas, survival is just the first step; success is the ultimate objective. The same is true for businesses.

Ninja Innovation offers readers a proven plan for success. From defining one’s initial goals to building an army of “ninja” collaborators, *Ninja Innovation* shows readers how people and companies get on top, stay on top and change the world.

For example, Shapiro analyzes:

- eBay’s rise from a small start-up to a billion-dollar business;
- IBM’s uncanny ability to beat the competition consistently for decades on end;
- Jeff Bezos’s use of “ninja skills” to make Amazon one of the most innovative and dynamic companies in the world; and
- Alan Mulally’s leadership in saving the struggling Ford Motor Company and turning it into an innovative machine – without taking a government bailout.

Ninja Innovation is more than a study of particular companies or executives; it is a how-to manual that will teach

readers to work like a ninja: how to define goals, achieve flexibility and build successful enterprises. *Ninja Innovation* shows how anyone can bring innovative thinking into his or her professional and personal life.

International editions of *Ninja Innovation* will be available in Portuguese, Russian and Czech under agreements with foreign publishers Saraiva, Azbooka and Zoner. Foreign-language editions are expected to be available within 18 months.

PRAISE FOR NINJA INNOVATION

“Shapiro’s chapter on strategy formation, which he considers an art, not science, is top-notch. ... [T]hose eager for a more stealthy and versatile approach will appreciate Shapiro’s treatise on discipline, shared goals, and mental toughness.”

– PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

“[E]vents have brought Shapiro into close contact with innovators like Bill Gates and Steve Jobs, among others, and provided him with additional insight into business and its leaders.”

– KIRKUS REVIEWS

“Gary Shapiro’s ‘ninja’ approach to business success is exactly what the

n: Successful Companies

American spirit is all about – impatient, bold and agile. It's what propels the most innovative companies, keeping us around for the long haul, as we continue to transform and make meaningful progress in the world.”
– URSULA BURNS, Chairman and CEO of Xerox Corp.

“Ninja Innovation is a must read for anyone who wants to understand the secrets to successful entrepreneurship in a world of rapid innovation. Pandora is popular because we are agile, and have always remained intensely focused on what's best for listeners and artists.”
– TIM WESTERGREN, Co-founder of Pandora Radio

“With Ninja Innovation, Gary Shapiro has boiled down the mystery of business success to its foundational precepts: Risk, passion, failure, and, above all, innovation. Having spent 30 years at the Consumer Electronics Association, Gary knows what it takes to create a successful business and change the world.”
– NOEL LEE, Head Monster of Monster **RO**

Author: Gary Shapiro is the president and CEO of CEA the U.S. trade association that represents more than 2,000 consumer electronics companies, and owns and produces the annual International CES®, the world's largest annual innovation event. As head of the CEA for more than two decades, he has effectively ushered the consumer electronics industry through major periods of technological upheaval and transformation. Shapiro is the New York Times best-selling author of The Comeback: How Innovation Will Restore the American Dream. A regular columnist for the Huffington Post, Forbes, and the Daily Caller, he has been featured in the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post and other national publications. He also appears regularly on CNBC, CNN, C-SPAN and Fox News. He is a graduate of Georgetown University Law Center. He splits his time between Detroit and Washington, and is married to Dr. Susan Malinowski.
Publisher: Harper Collins, 2013



CALL TO ACTION



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We are looking for retailers, distributors and manufacturers engaged in their element while at trade shows, special events, showroom openings or just plain group get-togethers.

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International Builders' Show and Kitchen & Bath Industry Show

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) have announced an agreement to co-locate the International Builders' Show (IBS) and the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show (KBIS) in Las Vegas beginning in February 2014. This new mega-event will create the nation's largest gathering focused on all aspects of home design and construction.

The two events will remain separate and distinct shows held simultaneously at the Las Vegas Convention Center through 2016, creating Design and Construction Week, one of the world's largest gatherings focused on new ideas, products and technologies to design, build and remodel homes. "This new format allows exhibitors to reach a full range of design and construction professionals who buy, specify and influence the products that go into American homes," said NAHB Chairman Barry Rutenberg, a home builder from Gainesville, Fla. "For attendees, it means access to two expansive trade show floors and hundreds of additional suppliers to meet."

"Two shows, two associations and one place to see and connect with every aspect of residential construction and remodeling," said John Morgan, NKBA 2013 president and president of Morgan Pinnacle, a manufacturer's representative for cabinetry and technology brands. "We couldn't be more excited to deliver this special event for the industry."

The new mega-event will be held Feb. 4-6, 2014 in Las Vegas, with each show occupying a separate hall. Kitchen and bath brands that have participated in both shows can choose to exhibit in the KBIS or IBS hall. One pass will provide access to both exhibits. NKBA and NAHB will continue to produce separate educational programming and special events. Future show dates are Jan 20-22, 2015 and Jan 19-21, 2016 at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

Design and Construction Week 2014 is expected to draw more than 75,000 specifiers, builders, dealers and suppliers and 2,000 exhibiting brands, based on recent trends for both shows.

IBS is the largest annual light construction show in the world with 50,000 attendees expected at the 2013 show. Builders, remodelers, developers, architects and other industry professionals from more than 100 countries attend to see the latest products and services from nearly 1,000 exhibitors in more than 200 construction categories, attend dozens of cutting-edge education sessions, visit show homes featuring the latest trends and innovations and network with peers. Now in its 69th year, IBS is organized, produced and managed exclusively by NAHB.

Held annually for the last 49 years, KBIS is the largest event in North America focused on the kitchen and bath segment, attracting more than 700 exhibitors. The 2013 show, to be held in New Orleans, April 19-21, is

DESIGN AND
CONSTRUCTION
WEEK
2014

KBIS

NKBA 50
National Kitchen
& Bath Association®

Country Show to Co-Locate in Las Vegas Beginning in 2014

expected to attract more than 20,000 buyers and specifiers from more than 50 countries, as well as 300 members of the media. Attendees include dealers, designers, architects, remodelers, wholesalers and custom builders. KBIS is owned by NKBA, sponsored by K+BB magazine and produced by Nielsen Expositions.

"Co-locating IBS and KBIS will enable kitchen and bath professionals to benefit through a greater understanding and familiarity with related products, such as windows, doors, flooring, and mechanical systems, all of which are critical to overall consumer satisfaction with project outcomes," Morgan said.

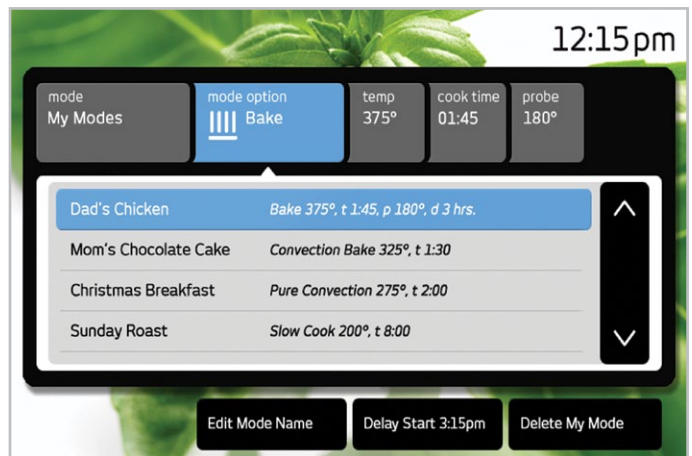
"Consumers are, indeed, the common ground between NAHB and NKBA," Rutenberg said. "Co-locating our shows and educational conferences brings together every segment of the industry to advance our collective professionalism and expertise in serving home owners."

In 2015, Design and Construction Week will expand further with the addition of SURFACES and StonExpo/Marmomacc Americas, Jan. 21-23 at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center in Las Vegas. SURFACES is sponsored by the World Floor Covering Association and is the largest floor-covering industry event in North America for retailers, distributors, installers, designers and home builders. StonExpo/Marmomacc Americas is the only show in North America solely focused on the natural stone industry and is sponsored by the Marble Institute of America and the Natural Stone Council. Both

events are produced by Hanley Wood. Shuttle buses will run between the convention centers to allow approximately 25,000 additional attendees to tour all three exhibits.

The National Association of Home Builders is a Washington-based trade association representing more than 140,000 members involved in remodeling, home building, multifamily construction, property management, subcontracting, design, housing finance, building product manufacturing and other aspects of residential and light commercial construction. NAHB is affiliated with 800 state and local home builders associations around the country. NAHB's builder members will construct about 80 percent of the new housing units projected for this year. For more information, visit www.nahb.org.

The National Kitchen & Bath Association is a nonprofit trade association that owns the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show With nearly 60,000 members, the NKBA has educated and led the kitchen and bath industry since its founding in 1963. The mission of the NKBA is to enhance member success and excellence, promote professionalism and ethical business practices, and provide leadership and direction for the kitchen and bath industry worldwide. For more information, visit www.nkba.org or call 800-THE-NKBA (843-6522). For more information about KBIS, including exhibitor opportunities and attendee registration for 2013, visit www.kbis.com. **RO**



DACOR® REVEALS THE NEXT STEP IN KITCHEN EVOLUTION EXCLUSIVELY AT TWO PREMIER MEDIA EVENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL CES 2013

AN INDUSTRY LEADER OF INNOVATIVE DESIGN AND CONCEPTS FOR THE KITCHEN SHOWCASED THE WORLD'S FIRST BUILT-IN ANDROID™ OVEN AT PREMIER MEDIA EVENTS.



Dacor®, a market leader in the design, manufacture and distribution of luxury kitchen appliances since 1965, participated in two premier media events surrounding the world's largest and most important technology tradeshow of 2013— International CES. Dacor stunned the media by revolutionizing the appliance industry with the world's first wall oven featuring the integrated Discovery IQ™ Controller for Android™. It was presented for the first time at CES Unveiled: The Official Press Event of the International CES held on Sunday, Jan. 6 at the Mandalay Bay

Hotel, in Las Vegas and at Showstoppers, the global leader in technology showcases held on Tuesday, Jan. 8 at Wynn Hotel, in Las Vegas.

Dacor is responsible for many industry firsts including the 30" Self-Cleaning Pure Convection™ Wall Oven, which set the standard for this built-in appliance category. The Discovery™ 30" Wall Oven represents Dacor's 9th generation of 30" built-in wall ovens. The company's dedication to continuously manufacturing innovative luxury appliances is evident here. Specifically, the Discovery Wall Oven connects the kitchen to the home via a new industry exclusive – the Discovery IQ Controller, which is the first Dacor oven to feature Wi-Fi connectivity.

With the Discovery IQ Controller, home chefs can expect the latest technological advances for the kitchen running on the Android OS platform. Powered by a Samsung 1GHZ Processor and 512MB DDR2 RAM, the built-in controller is exclusive to Discovery™ Series Wall Ovens. The controller rounds out with complete Wi-Fi connection capability and is equipped with stereo sound and a

PowerVR SGX 540 graphics processing unit delivering an exciting multimedia experience through a 7" LCD glass touch screen panel.

The graphic user interface (GUI) is easy to use and is the most recent collaboration from Dacor and BMW Group DesignworksUSA, an international leader in design strategy, premium design development, and brand communication. With the built-in Discovery IQ Controller home chefs can access the Dacor Discovery IQ Cooking Application and Guide while simultaneously downloading other popular applications through the Google® Play Store, researching new recipes or viewing cooking video demonstrations wirelessly through a home Wi-Fi network.

The Discovery IQ Controller with interactive cooking application and guide can also be accessed remotely by the home chef throughout the home with their own Wi-Fi enabled tablet or smart phone. The IQ eliminates the guesswork associated with preparing popular dishes and family recipes by way of a pre-programmed guide. It enables users to prepare a wide range of dishes to perfection with the touch of a finger. Simply select the desired recipe from the display menu, insert the dish, initiate the program and relax as the oven takes care of the rest. Additionally, when the desired cook time has been reached, the oven will place the dish on warming mode, keeping food warm until ready to serve.

With Dacor's proprietary IQ application, the kitchen takes on a life of its own. Once a dish is ready to serve, the IQ will notify the chef via text message or push notification. Should the wall oven encounter a problem or require maintenance, IQ will notify the owner with an error message and an automated report will be sent to Dacor for troubleshooting. To ensure optimal IQ and oven performance levels, automatic system updates and self-diagnostics will be downloaded directly to the IQ Controller via Wi-Fi from the Dacor server.

"The Discovery IQ is truly a revolutionary wall oven controller that has raised the bar for cooking convenience and performance. It has set the standard for the connected kitchen of the future as the first wall oven with an integrated Android controller and Wi-Fi connectivity," said Steve Joseph, president of DACOR.

By combining oven technology with the insight of the IQ Controller and cooking application, Dacor is empowering the novice cook to perform at expert levels with a simple swipe of a finger. With control features such as Guided Cooking, Quick Start Guide, My Recipe Box, and Slow Cook Mode, home chefs are almost guaranteed to cook all their favorite dishes to perfection.

In addition to the exclusive IQ Controller, the new Discovery 30" Wall Oven is built with core features signature to Dacor such as a 4.8 cubic foot oven cell capacity to prepare large poultry or for multi-rack cooking; exclusive Four-Part Pure Convection™ System

which reduces cooking time, provides superior heat distribution and eliminates flavor transfer; GreenClean™ Steam Technology which cleans light build-up in 30 minutes without the use of high heat or harsh chemicals; and GlideRacks™ equipped with a convenient easy-pull handle which allow the home chef to move heavier dishes in and out of the oven more easily. And to top it all off, personalize your Discovery Wall Oven by selecting one of two handle options, the professional Epicure® stainless steel handle, or the proprietary Dacor integrated stainless steel handle, for a flush contemporary look.

The new Discovery 30" Wall Ovens with exclusive IQ Controller are targeted for production during the Summer of 2013 - \$7499 UMRP for a 30" Double Wall Oven and \$4499 UMRP for a 30" Single Wall Oven. For more information visit www.Dacor.com.

PERLICK CORPORATION REVEALS INDUSTRY EXCLUSIVE 24-INCH DUAL FREEZER DRAWERS THAT COMPLEMENT TRENDS IN HEALTHY EATING AND MODERN KITCHEN DESIGN



Perlick Corporation, a leader in total package bar equipment, beverage dispensing systems, and luxury residential undercounter refrigeration, today announced its industry exclusive Signature Series 24-inch Dual Freezer Drawers as the point-of-use solution for storing and easily accessing frozen, healthy food.

Frozen fruits and vegetables are nothing new, but the idea that they (in most cases) contain more nutrients than fresh produce is. In an article by Dr. Mehmet Oz, recently published in Time Magazine, the famous doctor states: "Nutritionally speaking, there is little difference between the farmer's-market bounty and the humble brick from the freezer case." This news coupled with a push from the Frozen Food Foundation to educate the public about the benefits of frozen food with their four frozen food facts (visit www.frozenfoodfacts.org) – 1. Frozen foods are nutritious. 2. Frozen foods are a real value. 3. Frozen foods are convenient. 4. Freezing is a natural form of preservation. – illustrate the growing trend of purchasing frozen food as a part of a healthy lifestyle.

"It is no secret that the majority of us are consciously trying to make smarter choices about what we eat," states Jeff Wimberly, vice president of sales for Perlick's Residential and Hospitality Products. "What's fascinating is how those choices impact the appliances used in, and the design of, kitchens. The compact size, yet ample storage provided by Perlick's | *continued on page 18* |

exclusive 24-inch Freezer Drawers complement both current eating habits and kitchen design.”

Along with being a stylish addition to the kitchen, and a convenient, easily accessible storage solution for frozen foods; Perlick’s industry exclusive 24-inch drawers are ENERGY STAR® Qualified, UL Certified for outdoor use, and feature:

- Fully-integrated depth to allow a flush fit with surrounding cabinetry
- Convertible drawers (from stainless steel to wood overlay)
- Maintenance-free automatic defrost cycle
- Stainless-steel interior (odor-free and prevents the growth of bacteria)
- Freezer temperature -10 to 10 degrees F
- Interior digital display
- Alarm system should the temperature of the unit go out of specified range
- Ample storage space: 5.3 cubic feet
- Each freezer draw can hold up to 200 pounds

Perlick’s 24-inch Freezer Drawers start at \$3499—For more information visit www.perlick.com.



STREAMLINE HOODS OFFER NEW RANGE HOOD LINE TO U.S. INCLUDING INNOVATIVE SILKSCREENS ON COLORED GLASS.

streamlineHOODS

Streamline Hoods, LLC has announced the

introduction of a new innovative line of designer range hoods to satisfy the industry designers architects, showrooms remodelers and their clientele.

Streamline Hoods offer custom modern design range hoods in a variety of shapes and sizes with many choices of stainless steel finishes. Streamline Hoods feature a large filter area for superior smoke entrapment, LED lighting, and super quiet yet powerful blower motors. In addition to a full line of modern range hoods Streamline also offers a line of decorative hoods available customized with silkscreened glass designs in your design or Streamline’s on colored glass fronts available in standard colors of red, orange, green, white and black in a large variety of finishes. Glass | *continued on page 22* |



[Distinctive 30" Dual-Fuel Range]



[Distinctive 36" Gas Cooktop]



[Distinctive 30" Wall Oven]

Are your customers ready
for Dacor?

Give them this simple test:
Find the peach.



Your customers don't need to be master chefs to enjoy our new Distinctive™ Series of appliances. But they do need an appreciation of high performance, high style and the ability to identify a peach of a value.

American-made and family-owned since 1965. The Distinctive Series, at home in more homes.

[Visit dacor.com/ro for details]

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Miele Turns To Esri To Drive Growth Dealers Experience Significant Increase in Sales Using Location Analytics

Miele, Inc., one of the world's most innovative premium appliance manufacturer has streamlined its distribution network in the United States using Esri technology. Esri's software and data are being utilized to better target which markets are best for the company's high-quality products. By focusing on specific segments of the marketplace, Miele is able to pinpoint customers and help its dealers be more successful.

"GIS has been an important tool to help us navigate the American economy in the last few years," said Matt Kueny, senior business analyst for Miele. "Just because someone might have the income to spend on one of our products doesn't necessarily mean they are a realistic target for our brand based on other lifestyle variables. Using Esri technology, we have been able to better analyze patterns and share this information with our dealer network so we can get the needed item to the customer."

Using the ArcGIS platform, Miele is able to better gauge the health of its dealer network and ensure that products are available in the most appropriate market segments. Esri Business Analyst Online helps Miele communicate key marketing activities to its dealers and work in a collaborative environment. By being able to visualize and analyze sales information and business data through maps, one Orange County, California, Miele dealer achieved a 70 percent growth in sales.

"Miele has done an astounding job of responding to a changing and highly competitive marketplace by applying technology and expertise in an innovative manner," said Simon Thompson, director of commercial solutions at Esri. "Miele really is inspirational in that it has helped its dealers grow their businesses in an environment where many businesses are failing."

Miele continues to adapt to its customers' evolving retail sophistication and help its dealers keep up their revenue by applying location analysis to online shopping. "By tracking search engine hits in our gap markets, we are able to geo-target the nearest dealer to that Internet shopper," said Kueny. "We are

making the shopping experience more convenient by helping the customer find the nearest product. It's all about customer service."

Founded in Germany in 1899 with a single promise of Immer Besser, a phrase meaning Forever Better, Miele has dynamically grown to become the world's largest family-owned and operated appliance company with more than 16,600 employees, 12 production facilities and representation in nearly 100 countries. As a premium appliance brand represented on all continents, Miele is steadfastly committed to the highest quality, performance and environmental standards. Miele's range of exceptional consumer appliances includes: vacuum cleaners; laundry systems; rotary irons; dishwashers; built-in convection, speed and steam ovens; cooktops; ventilation hoods; refrigeration; wine storage and espresso/coffee systems.

Additionally, Miele Professional (the commercial product division) offers dishwashers, washing machines, tumble dryers and rotary irons for commercial use as well as washer-disinfectors for medical, dental and laboratory applications. To enhance your experience and learn more about Miele, visit www.mieleusa.com. For more information on how retailers use GIS to help their business, visit esri.com/business.

Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/mieleus, watch us on www.youtube.com/mieleus and follow us on Twitter @MieleUSA.

Since 1969, Esri has been giving customers around the world the power to think and plan geographically. The market leader in GIS technology, Esri software is used in more than 300,000 organizations worldwide including each of the 200 largest cities in the United States, most national governments, more than two-thirds of Fortune 500 companies, and more than 7,000 colleges and universities. Esri applications, running on more than one million desktops and thousands of web and enterprise servers, provide the backbone for the world's mapping and spatial analysis. Esri is the only vendor that provides complete technical solutions for desktop, mobile, server, and Internet platforms. Visit us at esri.com/news. **RO**

Moving air in style.

Miele's ventilation hoods, vented or recirculating, provide quiet, effective removal of particles and odors while adding a unique design element to the kitchen. With more than two hundred color options and styles, Miele's ventilation collection offers flexibility that parallels no other.



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Miele
IMMER BESSER

color matching is available per the RAL color chart. This customization also allows you to match and integrate the hood with the same finishes you have on your cabinetry or other appliances.

“Over the past several years, trends show that homeowners are looking for unique products that show their taste in style. To respond to the demand for practical and innovative range hoods Streamline offers a new concept based on State-of-the-Art designed range hoods that offer the highest quality and performance in your kitchen” states Ramona Panus, President of Streamline Hoods, “in addition to the beauty of our hoods we provide the highest levels of energy efficiency with LED lighting savings, consumption savings and noise reduction. Our decorative hoods offer so many color choice, we have customers refer to our colored glass as Wall Art”.

Streamline Hoods is the national distributor of this new line of range hoods manufactured and imported from Spain. An inventory of the range hoods is maintained and special orders are also available for designers and architects planning their client’s homes and kitchens.

Design excellence, customization and superior craftsmanship separate Streamline Hoods from the competition. Streamline Hoods is committed to providing design and innovation along with the highest quality products for the kitchen, builder, remodeling, architectural and designer industries.

For more information contact: David H. Ryan Streamline Hoods 973-464-3077.

INDESIT COMPANY REACHES AGREEMENT WITH GENERAL ELECTRIC APPLIANCES TO EXPAND OWNERSHIP OF HOTPOINT BRAND

i **INDESIT** Indesit Company and General Electric Appliances entered an agreement under which the Fabriano Group will expand its ownership of the Hotpoint brand outside of Europe. GE Appliances retains ownership of the brand in North and South America.

Indesit Company has owned the Hotpoint brand in Europe since its acquisition of UK-based GDA in 2002.

Expanded ownership of the Hotpoint brand strengthens Indesit Company’s brand portfolio and will enable it to upgrade planning of its business outside Europe, as it can count on two brands (Indesit and Hotpoint) already consolidated worldwide.

The cost of the operation is 4 million US dollars, to be paid over a number of years. In the deal, Indesit Company was assisted by the New York-based law firm Reinhardt LLP.

Currently the No. 3 brand in Europe by market share, Hotpoint accounts for 50% of current Group sales.

Indesit Company is one of Europe’s leading manufacturers and

distributors of large home appliances (washing machines, washer-dryers, dishwashers, fridges, freezers, cookers, hoods, ovens and hobs). It is the undisputed leader in major markets such as Italy, the UK and Russia. Founded in 1975 and listed on the Milan stock exchange since 1987, the Group posted sales of €2.8 billion in 2011. Indesit Company has eight production centers (in Italy, Poland, the UK, Russia and Turkey) and 16,000 employees. The Group’s main brands are Indesit, Hotpoint and Scholtès. www.indesit.com.



ELMIRA STOVE WORKS INTRODUCES NEW FRENCH-DOOR REFRIGERATOR TO NORTH-STAR COLLECTION

IT DOESN'T GET ANY COOLER; IT DOESN'T GET ANY BIGGER!



Elmira Stove Works, a leading manufacturer of “circa-1850” and retro 1950s appliances, is proud to introduce the newest | *continued on page 24* |



CLEAN SIMPLE

With GE's most advanced wash system and largest capacities, the new Top Load washers and dryers are bringing innovation to the laundry room and simplicity to clothes care. geappliances.com



member of its Northstar Collection, the French-Door refrigerator. Elmira continues its commitment to innovative classics, combining the iconic look of '50s-style appliances with the modern amenities of contemporary appliances.

The new Northstar French-Door Refrigerator was designed to complement the established Northstar Collection, adding an option for consumers who desire extra capacity for larger families, gatherings and events.

Available in two versions, full-depth Model 1958 and a cabinet-depth Model 1959, both feature frost-free operation, interior filtered water dispenser and ice maker, glide-out freezer baskets and pantry drawer, electronic controls, Energy Star efficiency and more. The 1958 is a 24.8 cubic foot full-depth model, retailing at \$5495. The cabinet-depth 1959 offers 19.8 cubic feet of capacity and retails at \$5595. Northstar French-Door refrigerators are available in nine "standard" colors or can be custom-colored to the request of the customer.

"We are very excited to be introducing the new French-Door fridge to the Northstar Collection. We are committed to creating new, innovative products based on past eras, and we are confident that this new product will further enhance the consumer experience," stated Brian Hendrick, vice-president of Elmira Stove Works.

Stunning lines and outstanding colors make Northstar appliances the perfect fit for retro, contemporary or modern kitchens. All Northstar appliances are loaded with 21st century features, upgrades and conveniences needed for any cooking style.

For more information on Elmira Stove Works' Northstar collection, visit www.elmirastoveworks.com. For daily, up-to-date industry and company news, design tips and advice, visit Elmira Stove Works on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.



EQUATOR OFFERS FULL-SIZE HYBRID COMBO WASHER-DRYER



A revolutionary new product by Equator Advanced Appliances, the *Cobra-Hybrid*, surpasses all imagination. It is a full

size Combo Washer-Dryer designed for household use. The unique feature of the Must-Have *Cobra-Hybrid*, is that it has advantages of both a top-loading and a front-loading machine – i.e. it is a top-loading machine using a Horizontal Axis technology. Equator has introduced the unique hybrid machine, merging the user friendly features of regular top-loading machines, which require no bending, with energy-saving features of front loading machines, features that have also proven to save water, sewage and detergent.

Besides its sleek stainless and black design, the *Cobra-Hybrid* is packed with many other customer friendly features like One-touch start, Load-Sensing Adaptive Fill, Delay start, and Wi-Fi connectivity for remote diagnostics. In addition, it uses Intellifill™, an intelligent automatic detergent dispensing system, where liquid detergent can be loaded in the beginning and the correct amount dispensed during each load.

The *Cobra-Hybrid* offers the finest and the most advanced features. It is operated with an LCD touch display which includes a full owner's manual and a help feature. Later editions will have language modules which will be suitable for specific domestic and overseas markets. The *Cobra-Hybrid* is a 220 Volt Venting unit perfect for single family homes.

The *Cobra-Hybrid* is unusually simple to operate. Press a single button at the front of the machine and the lid of the *Cobra-Hybrid* pops open. A light comes on inside the 3.5 cubic foot drum. Load your clothes (up to 22 lbs.), close the lid and press the Start button. The machine will fill with the right amount of water to be used, fill detergent automatically and carry out the wash functions. After the Wash gets cycle is done, the Dryer will start automatically. Sensors will dry clothes for the right amount of time based on whether the user selects bone-dry, damp-dry or somewhere in between. Wi-Fi connectivity is provided to notify the user for end-of-cycle, remote diagnostics and detergent ordering. The unit is also available in additional colors of blue, green, red, pink and black.

Atul Vir, President of Equator Advanced Appliances stated that "a world class design team has been instrumental in building this unique machine – it is beautiful looking, eco-friendly and precision engineered. We can confidently state that this is the most Advanced Laundry Appliance in the world, Designed and Made in America".

The Equator *Cobra-Hybrid* (40" x 27" x 28") will retail for \$2,200. It comes with a standard warranty of one year parts and labor. Equator is the pioneer of the Combo Washer-Dryer product category, having launched their first model the EZ 1000 in 1991.

For more information visit: www.EquatorAppliances.com.

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WindCrest™
Elegant Cooking Solutions

WIND CREST™ CULINARY™ BURNERS FEATURED IN NEW GAS COOKTOPS

Originating from commercial restaurants, high output gas burners have been preferred by professional chefs for years, with the only flame control being provided by the fast arm movements of the Chef. Homeowners are now privy to a variety of high output gas cooktops for residential use, but if they're not careful, they may be disappointed in the lack of burner range and control. Rose Dickson, vice president of sales and marketing at Wind Crest™ agrees. "Many consumers feel overwhelmed and unformed when they walk into an appliance showroom. There are a wide variety of choices. Our goal is to educate and help simplify this process for homeowners, as well as offer them a product designed in America for American chefs."

Wind Crest™ has refined the commercial cooktop, in their new line of gas cooktops featuring Culinary™ burners. "Our second generation gas cooktops have incorporated the power of a professional cooktop with the precision and control required by professional chefs," says Rose Dickson of Wind Crest™. "Our new dual port Culinary™ Burners provides a range of output and heat performance from a delicate UltraLo™ of a 140 degree simmer up to a quick-searing 20,000 BTUs. Unlike a true, professional-style unit, the dual orifices control the output, with a slight adjustment of the control knob." Other benefits include:

- **Better Heat Distribution:** Full sized dual port burners distribute heat across the entire surface of the pan, at all temperature settings. Better than a dual ring design, where only the smallest diameter burner provides the lowest heat output.
- **Continuous One-Piece Grates:** Our unique great design is configured so that small and large pans will be supported anywhere on the grate surface.
- **Maximum Burner Spacing:** Maximum center-to-center spacing of our burners allows flexibility in pan size and placement.
- **Ergonomically Designed Control Knobs:** Oversized knobs are made from high-quality, die-cast metal, then brushed and coated with a protective clear coat. Easy to grip, as well as easy to maintain.

| continued on page 30 |

WindCrest[™]
Culinary Precision[™]

A Reflection of Your Good Taste.



NKBA
National Kitchen & Bath Association

NFIB
The Voice of Small Business[®]
www.nfib.com

MADE IN CA
A dedication to manufacturing

Eurochef USA Introduces The ILVE “9 Ways To Cook” Video Highlighting Their Wide Range of Accessories

EuroChef USA, the US Distributor of ILVE® Cooking Appliances is proud to introduce ILVE’s “9 Ways to Cook” video showcasing the many unique accessories exclusive to an ILVE range.

The video can be viewed on the EuroChef website or on YouTube at www.ilveappliances.com/video.php. The ILVE brand features the finest in exquisite Italian craftsmanship and technology and is a preferred appliance brand worldwide for enthusiastic cooks with a penchant for outstanding design with innovative features.

“Beauty is not the only thing the ILVE Range has going for it! It also offers tremendous cook top functionality. One of a kind accessories enable you to cook just like the pros,” states Melissa

Haber, EuroChef’s Director of Sales and Marketing. “The ILVE brand is well known for its quality and innovation. The ILVE accessory collection adds another level to your in-home cooking experience. Customization makes it suitable to any style, any kitchen and any level of cooking ability.” The “9 Ways to Cook” video features 9 Smart Choices for Cooking on an ILVE range. These accessories include: The Coup de Feu (French Top), Barbeque Grill, Steam Basin, Fish Burner & Grate, Flat Griddle, Wok Ring, Steam Basin, Stainless Steel Bain Marie Basin, Steak Pan and Rotisserie. Warming Drawers come standard on all ILVE range ovens.

Multiple Burners are also a significant feature of an ILVE range, offering energy efficiency with both high and low BTU output. A unique “tri-flame” burner offers center, outer and inner flame distribution allowing heat to be distributed via stabilized flames for more even and efficient temperatures. The ILVE range also offers the largest oblong fish style burner in the market today. It is ideal for a larger skillet, stockpot, or fish pan used along with the grate insert or for a flat top griddle insert that works with a barbeque grill top or steamer top that is perfect for steaming your veggies, poultry and shellfish. Additionally, there is also a fry top cover that is placed over food to keep greases from splattering and retains heat and juices, creating the perfect cooking environment. There is also a custom-fit cutting board that inserts on the fry top for ease in cutting, chopping or trimming right on top of the cooking surface.

Another unique and functional feature is The Coup de Feu or the French Top. Traditionally found in luxury commercial kitchens, a French Top provides a wide range of heat with the highest heat in the center and decreasing temperatures toward the outer perimeters. Perfect for simmering sauces and heating many dishes at once, the Coup de Feu option is truly a professional cooking tool.

Since 2001, EuroChef USA has been the national distributor of Italian-made professional style major appliances. They market and sell the ILVE, Verona and VeronaPro brands offering a full line of ranges, ovens, hoods and cooktops through a network of regional distributors and dealers nationally. For more information call (866) 844-6566 or visit www.eurochefusa.com. **RO**





ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST HOME DESIGN SHOW **MARCH 21-24, 2013**
VISIT US IN ILVE BOOTH #177 & VERONA BOOTH #176

Cook in Italian

The ILVE®, Verona® and Verona Pro™ brands of cooking appliances are exquisitely designed and assembled in Italy with great attention to detail and utilize the latest innovative cooking technology. Luxury features combined with functional accessories create a professional cooking experience. The choice of brilliant colors and a variety of sizes offers a range of options to customize a distinct appliance perfect for any kitchen.

Beauty, Style and Performance ~ Made in Italy

Offered Exclusively by EuroChef USA



Nine Ways to Cook on an ILVE Range.

Visit EuroChefUSA.com to learn more about the ILVE, Verona and Verona Pro brands.

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- **Safety First:** Single point electronic ignition and re-ignition, coupled with our FlameGuard™ igniter placement, ensures instant ignition. “ON” indicator lights provide a visual reminder when the burner is turned on even at UltraLo™ simmer settings.
- **Overall Styling:** The sleek profile of our gas cooktop projects only 1-inch above the countertop for a nearly flush appearance and has an industry-leading rough-in box depth of only 3-inches.

So if you're ready to take your passion and cooking to another level, don't just shop for a brand. Shop for quality, craftsmanship, better engineering and exceptional performance. That's Wind Crest Culinary Precision™.

For more information, please visit www.windcrestcnp.com.

VIKING RANGE CORPORATION ACQUIRED BY MIDDLEBY CORPORATION



Fred Carl, Jr., founder, president and CEO of Viking Range Corporation, has announced that Viking has been acquired by Middleby

Corporation of Elgin, Illinois.

Viking, based in Greenwood, Mississippi, is an industry's leading manufacturer of professional category appliances, a segment of the residential major appliance industry it created in 1987 when it introduced the first Viking range. Middleby is a leading producer of commercial cooking and food processing and packaging equipment for the foodservice industry. With more than 30 brands, Middleby manufacturers, sells, distributes and services its products worldwide.

“I am excited about the future of Viking as it becomes a part of the Middleby Corporation. I have always had a great deal of respect for Middleby, a company I've known well over the years, and very much look forward to becoming affiliated with an organization that has such a strong and impressive track record,” said Carl. “We are looking forward to launching a new product line in 2013 and excited about the great R&D and innovation Middleby brings to the Viking brand, including their truevection, induction and speed cooking technologies.”

“We are delighted to add Viking Range Corporation to our portfolio of highly respected companies,” said Selim A. Bassoul, Chairman and CEO of The Middleby Corporation. “As our entry into the residential appliance industry, we see many synergies and growth opportunities between Viking and our existing business units. We hope to aggressively grow and expand the Viking brand and add to their product offerings for the residential market.”

Mr. Bassoul emphasized that Viking will remain headquartered in Greenwood and will maintain its current operations there. “It is our intent to help Fred and his team to continue to grow Viking right there in Mississippi where it's been since he started the company,” he added.

VINTAGE LUXURY GRILLS ANNOUNCES DISTRIBUTION THROUGHOUT U.S. & CANADA

VINTAGE LUXURY GRILLS ANNOUNCES DISTRIBUTION THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Vintage After being purchased from BKE Supply in 2011 by Signature Marketing Group Ltd., Vintage Luxury Grills is proud to announce its distributor partners throughout all 50 states in addition to distribution in Western Canada.

UNITED STATES:

Signature Marketing Group EAST – Pine Brook, NJ
DE, NJ, NY, CT, PA, RI, VT, NH, ME, DC, OH, IN, KY, MI, WV,
Northern IL, Eastern TN, South and Central VA, MD, MA

Signature Marketing Group WEST – Indio, CA
Southern California

Louis W. Howat & Son – Harahan, LA
LA, MS, AL, Western TN, AR, FL (Central Time Zone)

Texas Sales & Marketing – Houston, TX
TX, OK

Southwest BBQ & Appliances – Phoenix, AZ
NM, AZ, UT, CO, Southern Nevada

Echelon Home Products – Tukwila, WA
WA, OR, WY, ID, MT, AK

Servco Home & Appliance Distribution – Honolulu, HI
Hawaii, Guam, Island Territories

Excel Distributing – Petaluma, CA
Northern CA, Northern NV

Halex Marketing – Coconut Creek, FL
Florida

American Casual Inc. – Gainesville, FL
FL (Eastern Time Zone), NC, SC, GA, TN (Eastern Time Zone)

C. Bennett Supply – O'Fallon, MO
IL, MO, KS, NE, IA, ND, SD, MN, Northwest AR, WI

CANADA:

Echelon Home Products – Richmond, BC
British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba,
Northwest Territories

Vintage Luxury Grills was established in 2001 in Indio, CA. After being purchased by Signature Marketing Group, their main headquarters is now located in Pine Brook, NJ. The Indio, CA location is now called Signature Marketing Group West and acts as the Southern California distributor for the Vintage Luxury Grills brand. The Vintage Luxury Grills brand includes outdoor cooking grills, sideburners, and a full complement of outdoor kitchen accessories as well as refrigeration and beer tappers for outdoor use. For more information visit: www.vintageluxurygrills.com. **RO**

IT'S TIME TO FOCUS ON YOUR BUSINESS.



Learning that builds your business.

Your business is about design and so much more. Experience the NKBA's new learning paths in subject areas such as sales, communications and career development. Convenient online programs are created to fit into your schedule, and offer practical techniques to make you more successful. Join us for the NKBA conference at KBIS in New Orleans April 19 – 21 where we will celebrate 50 years. We'll also be launching the new flavor of our learning paths; be sure to drop by for a taste.



To register for courses at KBIS, visit kbis.com.

Find all courses at nkba.org.

NKBA Elects 2013 President and Executive Committee

John K. Morgan Takes Helm as Association Marks Its 50th Anniversary



John K. Morgan



John A. Petrie, CMKBD



Carolyn Cheetham, CMKBD



Debra Robinson, CMKBD



Denise Dick, CMKBD

The National Kitchen & Bath Association, the premiere association for kitchen and bath professionals, with more than 50,000 members, announced the election of its 2013 Executive Board. This board will preside over a milestone year, as the NKBA celebrates its 50th Anniversary.

The member-elected NKBA Executive Committee will be led by President John K. Morgan of Glyndon, Md.-based Morgan Pinnacle LLC. John A. Petrie, CMKBD, of Mechanicsburg, Pa., will serve as 2013 President-Elect, while Canadian Carolyn Cheetham, CMKBD, of Red Deer, Alberta, will assume the Vice President position. Debra Robinson, CMKBD, of Sheffield, Ala. was elected 2013 Treasurer and Denise Dick, CMKBD, of Carrollton, Texas, was voted Secretary. Alan Zielinski, CKD of Niles, Ill., will serve as Immediate Past President.

Following is additional information on each of the 2013 NKBA Executive Committee members:

President – John K. Morgan
Morgan Pinnacle LLC, Glyndon, MD

John Morgan is a 20-year kitchen and bath veteran. A manufacturer's representative, consultant, trainer and speaker, he has served on advisory councils of industry manufacturers, as well as Virginia Tech. He authored the popular "Rep's View" column in *Kitchen & Bath Design News* for nearly a decade, and currently represents nationally-known cabinet and technology companies through his Baltimore/Washington-based agency, Morgan Pinnacle. For the NKBA, he has chaired the Certification Task Force, Council of Manufacturers' Representatives, Nominating Committee, and Development Task Force. He also served on the Ad Hoc CAD Design Committee, Ad Hoc Governance Committee, and Board of Directors.

President-Elect – John A. Petrie, CMKBD
MH Custom Cabinetry, Mechanicsburg, PA

John A. Petrie, CMKBD, has been working in the kitchen and bath industry since 1987, designing custom kitchens, bathrooms, home offices, wine cellars and home theaters. His early education was in architectural design, but his defining specialty and advanced training have been in kitchens and baths. Petrie is the owner of MH Custom Cabinetry in Mechanicsburg, Pa., and has served the Susquehanna Valley Chapter of the NKBA as Treasurer, Vice President of Communications, and President. Petrie has also served the NKBA as a member of the Certification Task Force, Nominating Committee, and Board of Directors, as well as a judge for the 2010 NKBA Design Competition.

Vice President – Carolyn Cheetham, CMKBD
Design Works by Cheetham, Red Deer, Alberta, Canada

Carolyn Cheetham, CMKBD became a Certified Kitchen Designer in 1995, a Certified Bathroom Designer in 1996, and a Certified Master Kitchen & Bath Designer in 2006. Through her business, Design Works by Cheetham, she uses her skills as an architectural technologist and CMKBD to design complete house plans and renovation projects. Her experience as an NKBA volunteer leader began in 1993 as a chapter officer. Since then, Cheetham has served as a national leader on the Advisory Council of Designers, Board of Chapter Representatives, Board of Directors, Canadian Ad Hoc Membership Parity Committee, International Task Force, and Sustainability Task Force, as well as a judge for two NKBA Design Competitions.

Treasurer – Debra Robinson, CMKBD
Kitchen Expressions, Sheffield, AL

Debra Hensley Robinson, CMKBD, is the principal of Kitchen Expressions Inc. located in North Alabama, and brings more than 25 years of national and international kitchen and bathroom design expertise. In addition to serving as an independent kitchen and bath designer in Houston, Robinson has worked as a design director for Expo Design Center in that city and as an adjunct faculty member at the University of North Alabama. She earned her Certified Kitchen Designer designation in 1995, her Certified Bathroom Designer accreditation in 2006, and her Certified Master Kitchen & Bath Designer in 2009. She has helped lead the NKBA Ohio and Alabama chapters, in such roles as V.P. of Endorsed Programs, V.P. of Professional Development, and Chapter Representative. At the national level, Robinson served on the Board of Directors, Board of Chapter Representatives, Membership Task Force, and the CEO Search Committee, as well as several other committees.

Secretary – Denise Dick, CMKBD
Signature Kitchens by Design, Carrollton, TX

Denise Dick, CMKBD, has been active in the kitchen and bath industry since 1984 as a designer, trainer, training development writer and consultant. In 2002, she opened Signature Kitchens by Design, a full-service conceptual

design agency that offers design, planning up and comprehensive management of remodeling projects. She has been active in her NKBA chapter from the beginning, serving as President, V.P. of Technology and Communications, V.P. of Membership, Secretary and Chapter Representative. Denise was also a judge for the local NARI Contractor of the Year Awards. She has served on the national NKBA level as a member of the Board of Directors, Education Task Force, CKBP Certification Committee, CKBP Exam Blueprint Specification Committee, and as a test writer for the CKBP exam.

Immediate Past President – Alan W. Zielinski, CKD
Better Kitchens, Inc., Niles, IL

Selected as one of the industry's Top Leaders by *Interior Design* magazine, Alan W. Zielinski, CKD, is the president and CEO of Better Kitchens, Inc., a 50-year-old design firm located in north-suburban Chicago. With 25 years of kitchen and bath experience, Zielinski is a talented and creative designer with great technical knowledge. Very active within the NKBA, he has served as a chapter president and as a member of the Board of Directors. Zielinski has been a judge for both the NARI Contractor of the Year Award and the NKBA Design Visions Award. He presents the "Edmund L. Zielinski, CKD Memorial Award" each year for excellence in design to the top kitchen and bath designer. **RO**

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NEW CONNECTED APPLIANCES AND EXCITING CONCEPTS FOR THE FUTURE TAKE CENTER STAGE

When Whirlpool brand looks at the kitchen of the future, it keeps consumers' needs at the forefront of product development. One might call it innovation with purpose and it is the backbone of Whirlpool brand's products; the marriage of functional technology with stylish aesthetics. At this year's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, Whirlpool brand showcased how these elements come together in both new products and innovative concepts for the future as part of Whirlpool 20/20: a look ahead.

"We innovate to bring simplicity to the lives of those using our products," said Tanu Grewal, senior brand manager, Whirlpool brand. "Whether that's appliances that connect to the grid and keep consumers alerted to the appliance's status or energy usage, or concepts that explore future living trends and pioneering evolutions in design, food and sustainability, we're committed to advancing our technology in ways consumers want and need."

INNOVATION FOR TODAY

6th Sense Live™: Whirlpool brand continues its leadership

in sustainability with the launch of 6th Sense Live technology, the company's line of smart appliances. On sale in March, 6th Sense Live technology allows users to always be connected. And with that peace of mind, they're free to focus on whatever else they want or need to do. Features like Smart Assistant, Smart Stats, Smart Nudges and Smart Alerts enable remote functionality and provide status updates, so users can be confident appliances are running smoothly at home. And by connecting to the Smart Grid used by select utility companies, these appliances optimize energy usage and track how much energy is being used.

INNOVATION FOR THE FUTURE

The Fireplace: With the Fireplace concept, the kitchen and living room merge into one with components that are fully adaptable to be the perfect solution to a family gathering, lively social event or a relaxed, intimate evening for two. Using food and fire as the two key elements, it re-centers people in a new heart of the home. By combining a multifunctional cooking table and an air treatment/mood lighting hood, the fireplace is | *continued on page 36* |

height adjustable and customizable to adapt to different atmospheres through the diffusion of light and scents. In the center of the table, there is a cooking reservoir that emits different frequencies of light to either create a warm atmosphere or cook food at the perfect temperature without burning it. The interaction between the table and the hood makes it possible to detect food and create an ideal cooking setting for each kind of food and the intelligent surface works in combination with the smart accessories to detect temperatures through sensors.

CoolVox™: Bring entertainment into the kitchen with the

CoolVox™ refrigerator concept. Enabled by Bluetooth® wireless technology, the CoolVox™ refrigerator lets users play music through the refrigerator directly from an app on smart- or Bluetooth®- enabled devices. Now consumers can listen to instructional “How to Cook” podcasts directly through the refrigerator, play fun/entertaining music while cooking with the kids and even throw a dinner party and assign specific playlists to each course.

FreshConnect: In step with the trends of fluid living and social responsibility, Whirlpool presents the FreshConnect



concept – a true fresh food experience. A series of specialized accessories connected by a central cooling system housed in the lobby of an apartment complex or within a home could provide the right temperature and humidity level to connected bread and fruit baskets, wine chillers, herbariums and specialized cooling boxes to easily keep meat and dairy fresh and concealed. The accessories and cooling boxes are plugged into a docking station that is connected to a central cooling system that regulates temperature and humidity inside the containers and the cooling system can be utilized by several

apartments in the same building.

Art Gallery Collection Hoods: Kitchen design customization has never been so easy. This concept offers a range of hood panels with original graphic themes to fit the modern style, for a one-of-a-kind atmosphere every day. The collection is easily installed and adds an affordable sense of style to any kitchen. For more information on Whirlpool brand, please visit www.whirlpool.com or find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/whirlpool.

Additional information about the company can be found at www.whirlpoolcorp.com. **RO**



NARI Kept Holiday Spirit

East Coast Remodelers Focus on Recovery

It has been more than three difficult months since Hurricane Sandy struck the Northeast, bringing devastation to areas along the coastline. The National Association of the Remodeling Industry's (NARI) 12 chapters that represent the Northeastern region stepped up in big ways this past holiday season—lending a hand and expertise to those who need it most.

"Those affected by the storm are now trying to piece lives back together," says NARI National Chairman Michael Hydeck, MCR, CKBR, president of Hydeck Design Build Inc., in Telford, PA. Hydeck himself assisted a fellow officer in the Long Island, NY area when he loaded his car with gasoline, a generator and food and drove several hours to make the delivery.

Many of the projects out there require skilled remodeling professionals, and NARI members are doing their part to assist in rebuilding efforts in their local communities. "The NARI community is proud to come together and support each other in what will be a long and difficult rebuilding process," Hydeck says.

Here is a look at some of NARI's Sandy recovery efforts so far:

- **New York City/Long Island NARI chapter** took action after seeing a news report about the Heckman family's struggle to treat one child's recent leukemia diagnosis with a home destroyed by the

storm. The chapter immediately organized a rebuild of the home, gathering supplies and labor, for what will eventually be a new home for the family.

- **NARI-Staten Island Home Improvement Contractors Association** is focused on education and safety for homeowners during the rebuild. They have joined forces with other groups and business leaders to form the Rebuild SI coalition, with the goal of disseminating information to more than 20,000 victims on issues like avoiding unscrupulous and/or unlicensed contractors, health risks associated with flood waters and hazardous materials left behind, and proper care and removal during clean up to lessen risk.

In addition, Steven Coppola, NARI-HIC of Staten Island Liaison and president of APB Security Systems Inc., in Staten Island, NY, says that many members are giving back in additional ways. "Remodelers are giving free estimates to help victims apply for assistance, and some are performing work without any assurance of payment," Coppola says.

- **NARI of Bucks-Mont chapter** based in Spring House, PA, raised funds and organized multiple supply drop-off trips to New York City. On one trip to Queens, chapter board members joined Bill Clinton, and volunteers from the Clinton Global Initiative in rebuild efforts.

Chapter Membership Chair Laura Hawley,

principal of Ambiance Design based in Pipersville, PA, continues to look for help and donations and plans to return to the same neighborhood. "There is just so much to do and still great need," Hawley says.

- **NARI Eastern Massachusetts chapter** based in Newton Centre, Mass., organized a supply drop-off at Breezy Point, home to many New York City police and firefighters who are themselves in need of assistance from flooding and fires. Everything from light construction equipment, clothing, food and water were collected in the effort.

- **Building Industries Exchange of Pottstown and Vicinity Inc.**, member Steven Oehlert, of Oehlert Brothers Inc., a heating and cooling company in Royersford, PA, made 20 emergency fuel deliveries to New Jersey residents and municipalities in need of gasoline and diesel to power generators and more directly following the storm. Additionally, Potty Queen, a portable restroom rental company based in Pottstown, PA, donated portable restrooms and comfort stations in to areas in New York and New Jersey.

- **Remodeling Contractors Association of Connecticut chapter** member Carl Loschiavo, president of Timberline Carpentry in Stratford, CN, and property owner in the Milford Shore area, lost two homes in the storm. Nevertheless, Loschiavo and his crew started pumping

Merits High for Sandy Victims

Focused on Rebuilding Communities

water from basements during first three days following the storm and set up a grill and passed out hot dogs and hamburgers to workers and victims. "It was great to bring neighbors and workers together to talk and laugh over hot food, if even only a minute—it gave people a little break from the smell and disaster around them," Loschiavo says.

- **North Jersey NARI chapter** members, based in Hawthorne, NJ, are doing their part to help as well, providing free delivery of materials and donating a portion of jobs sold from November to the end of January to the American Red Cross Sandy Relief fund.

"A great source of pride for remodelers comes from driving through a neighborhood and pointing out all homes and buildings that they remodeled in their communities," Hydeck says. "So when something like Sandy comes along and destroys their community, rebuilding and restoring the community becomes a labor of love. It's not over until our communities are rebuilt."

NARI is the source for homeowners seeking to hire a professional remodeling contractor because members are full-time, dedicated remodelers who follow a strict code of ethics that observes high standards of honesty, integrity and responsibility.

Visit the NARI.org site to get tips on how to hire a remodeling professional and to search for NARI members in your area. **RO**



Flying Solo or Finding Help

As an Independent, You Don't Have to Go it Alone

Despite dealing with tons of team members, a variety of vendors and countless customers, owning and managing a small business can be a lonely job. Most independents are just that—totally independent.

As such, you have very few people with whom you can bounce new ideas, or who you can count on to give you honest advice or who can help you navigate tough decisions. It's a sink or swim world.

Uncertainty adds additional personal stress. Is the economy going to recover this year? Should I consider adding another category like bedding to my product mix? Remodel? Open a new store?

Add to this already solo endeavor the additional challenges many dealers are now facing in trying to find and train a successor or buyer for their business. The outlook can be bleak.

But you don't have to go it alone. Consider some of these alternatives:

- **Empower your Team.** Share key financial information with your staff. Teach them how to compute and analyze key metrics. Armed with more data, let them help you determine where to go next. With their help in developing a strategic plan, they'll buy in and help you reach your goals.
- **Create an Outside Board of Advisors.** Go to others in your business community and ask them to sit on your "board." Again, you'll have to be willing to open up and share some information but if you select savvy advisors who have had similar opportunities and challenges, you'll all gain

from the honest exchange of ideas.

- **Find a Mentor.** No matter how long you've been in business, you'll never know it all. Besides, you're too close to your own company to be the best one to weigh your choices. Ask another associate to meet with you regularly and to listen carefully as you lay out the details of the challenges you're facing. Just preparing for these meetings to insure that they are not simply social will help you sort out a lot. Learn to stop and think before responding to the advice you get. Use your mentor's feedback to hone your plan so you execute it more successfully.
- **Hire a Coach.** A good professional business coach will help you work out what is happening now and where you want to go; help you write your strategy for how to get there and help you implement that strategy. Most business coaches are experienced business professionals with access to lots of resources and a proven set of systems and tools who will facilitate a process that will help you improve your business. More important though, they will hold you accountable so you get the things done that you need to do in order to move your business forward.
- **Start a Peer Group.** Find others in the industry with similar businesses and use your combined experience to move you all to the next level. For years, my family's store was a member of a critique group—eight dealers in different markets—that rotated its twice-a-year meetings among our members' stores. We shared financial statements, interviewed employees, polled

the community, and analyzed the marketing of each dealer as we visited them. We reported to each other monthly. We became confidants and consultants to each other as our businesses all grew and changed.

- **Use your Professionals.** Your accountant, attorney and banker each have access to valuable market information. Pick their brains. Find out what they've learned from their other clients. Ask them to introduce you to others who might have similar situations. What are they doing to prepare their businesses and their successors for a smooth transition to the next generation? How do they negotiate with their suppliers? What benefits do they offer their employees?
- **Use the Community.** Your buying group may have people on staff to help guide you in making decisions. Groups like the Chamber of Commerce, SBA and National Federation of Independent Business can provide a wealth of information.

Small business has always been the back-bone of the American economy. It's never been easy. Independent retailing doesn't mean you have to fly solo. There is an endless array of resources available to you. Ask for help. Reach out to those around you. You'll be glad you did. **RO**

Elly Valas is the Marketing Services Director for Nationwide Marketing Group. She can be reached at elly@ellyvalas.com or at 303-316-7569. Visit her website at www.ellyvalas.com.



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Customer Aren't Always Right

Sometimes You Have to Risk Letting Them Go

The customer is always right. That is the mantra of businesses throughout the world and has been for many years. But we all know it isn't true. There are some customers out there who will try to get something for nothing, who will take advantage of your attempts to satisfy them, and who will always demand more than you are able to give. Given that, you have to be realistic and realize that all you can do is your best. And, in some cases, you might even have to let that customer go.

Let me give you an example: A customer books a flight to Cancun with his family. They arrive at the airport 30 minutes before the flight is scheduled to depart—and one of the family members has a passport that has expired. Now, not only have they missed their flight, the family member with the expired passport would not have been allowed to fly, even if they had arrived on time. How would you handle this situation?

I know what I would be thinking; Why didn't you set your alarm and get here in time to make your flight? Why didn't you check your passports to make sure they were valid? And why are you now swearing at me and throwing a fit in public, blaming me for what I couldn't control?

But, of course, in the name of customer service, I can't share those thoughts. All I can do is work with what I have. That would involve directing the passengers to the nearest passport office that offers same-day service, and rebooking them—at no extra charge—for the next available flight.

A friend, who works for an airline, tells me that more often than not those passengers still would not be satisfied. They would ask who was going to pay for the night they would be not be staying at the hotel in Cancun. They would, in fact, act like victims rather than taking responsibility for the

situation. And that, unfortunately, is how many customers respond when faced with a product or service that, in their opinion, does not meet their expectations, whether they have purchased tickets or tires, printing or paint.

So, what should you do? How should you react? Even if you know the customer is wrong, you must treat him as if he were right. And that means taking these steps:

- **Don't get defensive.** Often, the customer is so frustrated and upset that she wants to blame anyone but herself for the problem and will do whatever she can to ensure that you become equally frustrated and upset. Resist the urge to get defensive. Instead, focus on explaining the situation and the best options to deal with it.
- **Empathize.** Show sincere concern. Nothing will diffuse a volatile situation better than empathy. You're probably thinking this is easier said than done but, when you realize that a complaint is a request for help and not a reflection on you personally, it will make empathy a more attainable goal. You might say, "I know how frustrated you are, and I will do whatever it takes to solve your problem."
- **Apologize and empathize.** There is power in the words "I'm sorry." Don't let your ego get in the way by blaming the customer, or other employees, for the problem. Accept responsibility for it on behalf of the company and become the customer's advocate in rectifying the situation. And show sincere concern. Nothing will diffuse a volatile situation better than empathy.
- **Ask questions.** Asking questions not only clarifies the problem, it pulls the customer

out of the irate stage and gives them time to cool down.

- **Stay calm.** Don't get pulled into a shouting match. If you feel yourself losing control step away for a minute.
- **Don't let the customer intimidate you.** Some customers will continue to insist that you give them something, even though you and your company are not at fault for the problem. Politely, but firmly, inform the customer that you are sorry, but you cannot give him what he is asking for, and don't be surprised when he says he will never do business with you again.

Going back to my friend the airline employee, she tells me it is not uncommon for a passenger to say he will never again fly that airline and then, lo and behold, here he comes two months later—on time and ready to board his flight. What drew him back? Chances are that, once he calmed down, he realized it was his fault for missing his earlier flight and, because this particular airline has very competitive prices and attractive destinations, he couldn't resist doing business with it.

The reality is that there are people out there who will do everything they can to take advantage of you. Those are not the customers that will help you grow your business; you might have to let them go. **RO**

John Tschohl — described by Time and Entrepreneur magazines as a customer service guru, is also an International strategist and speaker. He can be contacted at John@servicequality.com





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Are You Overbought? Do You Think Most Stores are Overbought?

The Results May Surprise You...

Although I started my actual retailing career in 1972, I grew up in a retailing family where my parents ran the classic Mom & Pop women's clothing shop. As I recall growing up, I can only remember my parents arguing about one thing, and that was my mother's buying habits in the store. My Dad would say, "You buy too much...you keep on buying too much." My Mom would agree but sort of ignored his advice because she would respond with, "I know I can sell that".

After I came into the business I began to see the challenges surrounding the issues of how much merchandise was too much and how much was not enough. As an active retailer, I spent hours with system after system, approach after approach and finally developed my own system that worked so well for me I finally started to share this simple test with others. I converted into a system but it is really just a simple test. It is better known as Open To Thrive or the 40-55 Rule.

I am proud to say this system is currently being used by over 1000 retailers and that has given me the opportunity to talk to hundreds of retailers around the world and listen to their issues of over buying. So you might say the issues of being "overbought" has been a life long passion. I say all of this because what I am about to reveal might come as a shock to many of you.

After reviewing hundreds of stores and

reviewing their numbers, there is one overwhelming and almost mysterious finding. The vast majority of store ARE NOT OVERBOUGHT. They don't have a buying problem—they have an expense problem. Yet most storeowners don't see it. When you say that a store's expenses can't be more than 40 percent of its sales, retailers get that. When you say purchases can't be more than 55 percent of your sales, retailers get that too.

WHY IS IT SO CONFUSING THEN?

Actually there are a few reasons why we don't easily recognize the real problem. First, our accountants and banks will tell us it's OK. How dare we disagree with our banker or accountant? WHY? Because inventory is considered an asset and therefore your accountant can actually have you show a profit when you are cash strapped and are worrying to death about paying your bills.

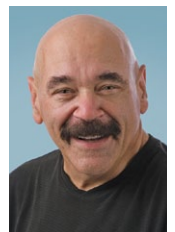
That is why the term "Cost of Goods Sold" has a tendency of confusing us and clouding up the real problem. Next time your accountant does a financial report for you, look in the Profit and Loss Statement. You will see a section called Cost of Goods Sold. Just eliminate cost of goods sold in your own mind (this is not for accounting or tax purposes). Just look at your purchases. This means you will eliminate the Beginning Inventory and The Ending Inventory calcu-

lations. Those calculations are never really accurate because our physical inventories are never accurate.

By doing this it is almost like treating our inventory as an expense, which it really isn't but for a buying test it works. If you feel that 55 percent is too much or too little and 40 percent is also too much or too little, it's OK. 40 and 55 percent are only a generalization for most retailers. For example, jewelry stores work on 52 percent for purchases and 43 percent for expenses because their payrolls can be higher and their inventories generally have better margins. Develop your own Open To Thrive but trust me that 40 percent and 55 percent work for the majority most of the time.

The other reason that it's hard to recognize the problem is because you really only have very few expenses you can control. Actually, there are really only two expenses that can have a meaningful difference. Of course every expense is important, but being able to control your payroll and your advertising are the keys to your success. **RO**

Rick Segel, author of The Retail Kit for Dummies, helps retailers and vendors partner so everyone sells more! Visit Rick's website at www.ricksegel.com



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Go for the Green

Four Reminders for Leading in Uncertain Times

In Seattle, we have about 300 days of gray per year. It's not always raining, but in mid-winter, it's hard to remember that. Supposedly, we have more instances of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), winter blues and lost sunglasses, but I always say we Seattleites are the ultimate optimists — we know the sun will return. We know the Cascade mountains and especially Mt. Rainier are out there, just beyond the fuzzy skyline in winter (and other months, too), and we have faith.

So, too, the role of leaders as we face uncertainty and some gray skies — we must know that whatever ails our organizations, communities or countries will get better; things will change for sure and be different, and we will not stay where we are now.

Heraclitus (475 B.C.) noted that you cannot step into the same river twice — the water's movement makes sure of it — and thus we can approach the grassy bank with both anticipation and uncertainty — neither of which, frankly, will kill us.

WHAT TO DO AS A LEADER WHEN FACED WITH GRAY SKIES?

- **Maintain Perspective.** There are a lot of doomslayers and naysayers out there. Sometimes they mask themselves in the dark cloaks of cynicism and "I'm just being real" behaviors. Don't buy into it. Choose carefully those you spend time with, listen to and take to heart. Try to remember that underneath the dark cloak is fear of disappointment—cynicism is sure paralysis for organizations and people. If this applies to you, consider carefully: perhaps

for now you might give up your addiction to information? I know this sounds counter to what I usually preach— learn, grow, develop, improve— but incessant media madness (including print, television and Internet) will dampen your spirits at best and make you paranoid at worst. Focus on what's inside your circle of influence and remember that you always have the ability to choose how to respond to what happens to you and around you.

- **Be Inspiring.** If you're leading others, they're always watching you anyway, but they're really watching you now. Talk about scrutiny. Talk about pressure! The interesting thing about inspiring others is that often it happens because we are inspiring ourselves. What creates positive, life-affirming joy for you? Or if that's just too much for a gray, rainy perspective, what gives you and those around you some sense of relief? Spend time on those topics, activities and projects that mean something to you and to your organization or team.
- **Believe in Your Own Resilience.** You will prevail. What's the alternative? If you always have the ability to choose, you can choose something different. Think about times in the past when you made it through a tough or difficult situation? What did you do well? What did you learn? You don't have to know how this will all play out, you just need to stay in the game, and though many have shared with me recently that they just want to "keep their heads down" or be "happy I just have a job," resist that

urge and be willing to be strong and stand out in the crowd. It's the best time to do it—it will differentiate you among your competitors.

- **Celebrate Successes, Regardless How Small.** One of my clients is going through a second lay-off in twelve months. It's painful. It's heart-wrenching and stressful, but this time, they're better at it. This time, they know what to expect and how to make decisions and treat people well. Along the way, they've improved productivity, communication, and inched along the red/black lines of profitability. Practice Appreciative Inquiry and the gentle, yet powerful shift this process can create in an organization and among individuals. Ask on a regular basis: What's the good news? What can we celebrate? How are we succeeding?

If we're honest, we know that all times are "uncertain" times — it's those gray skies obscuring the mountains or that different river time and again. Our ability to be flexible, resilient and full-of-faith allows us to lead with inspiration and clarity, and perhaps just as importantly, to notice the brilliant, quick flashes of color. We still buy a lot of sunglasses out here in Seattle, you know? **RO**

Libby Wagner, author of The Influencing Option: The Art of Building a Profit Culture in Business, works with clients to help them create and sustain Profit Cultures. www.libbywagner.com



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Five Behaviors That Undermine The Performance of Your Teams

While some roles build team strength and performance, leaders should also understand that other roles are assumed that subvert and undermine overall team strength. These destructive behaviors not only produce a negative team environment, but can also produce a negative work environment that leaders should be aware of.

It is important for leaders to acknowledge the existence of subversive goals, roles and individuals within the organizational environment, and to intervene when teams and team members do not possess the strength to monitor and police individual behaviors. In other instances, leaders might need to intervene when disruptive individuals refuse to acknowledge the authority and power of a team over their behavior.

- **Cutting or Shutting Off Discussion**—Individuals that assume this role minimize individual contributions or ignore them altogether. They do not allow the individual team member to provide his or her feedback by interrupting or remaining completely silent when they do. They change the topic or the direction of the conversation with the purpose of cutting or shutting off discussions, undermining the individual member's contributions to the team and, ultimately, making them feel useless—resulting in anger, resentment, arguments, withdrawal of the team member being minimized, and a creation of personal barriers.
- **Analyzing & Labeling**—Team members that analyze and label will object to the contributions of individual team members by pigeonholing them in a way they believe

describes their attitudes and motives. This immediately threatens any forward progress and can ultimately destroy the cohesiveness of the group. Rather than focus on the business at hand, these individuals sidetrack any and all discussion as the individual that has been attacked argues whether how they have been categorized is justified. Labeling is a popular technique with individuals who have nothing of substance to contribute.

- **Dominating**—Dominant team members take over all discussion under the rationale that they alone have something to contribute and that all others have nothing of value to offer. These individuals want to sway the group through their heavy-handed behavior. They are less interested in the overall group's goals and interests and are completely focused upon their own agendas. When individual team members are allowed to dominate a team environment, it cuts overall participation and reduces the value of the team as a resource for achieving goals.
- **'Yes, Butting'**—Individual team members who assume the "Yes, but" role within the team environment say one thing and mean another. Rather than directly stating their point of view or how they feel, they use the "Yes, but" technique to soften the blow of disagreement. Communicating mixed, ambiguous messages in its worst form displays hypocrisy and personal discounting of individual contributions. Leaders should understand that discussions are most effective when interaction is based on clear and unambiguous communication.

- **Nay Saying**—Naysayers disagree with virtually everything said, and, when people tire of their contrariness, attempt to mask their negativity and underlying bitterness by claiming, "I'm just playing devil's advocate." This allows them to continue in their cynical behavior and ongoing campaign to get the team to see the futility of their efforts. Naysayers ensure that what is right about the team's work gets completely buried.
- **The Leader's Responsibility When Observing Subverting Roles and Behaviors**—The presence of any of the preceding subverting behaviors requires swift and immediate intervention on the part of the team leader. If allowed to continue, these behaviors will quickly get out of hand and destroy the team's strengths, effectiveness and overall cohesiveness.

In cases where destructive behaviors continue, leaders may need to personally meet with the offending members outside of the group to discuss the impact of their problem and a corrective course of action. If the obstructive behaviors continue, leaders will need to take actions to eliminate these individuals from the team environment and perhaps, ultimately, from the organization. **RO**

Contact Timothy Bednarz at timothy.bednarz@majorium.com, or 715.342.1018

Excerpt from: A Team's Purpose, Function & Use: Pinpoint Leadership Skill Development Training Series



2013 •

UPCOMING EVENTS

• 2013

FEBRUARY 14—VALENTINES'S DAY

FEBRUARY

10-12

VDTA/SDTA CONVENTION & SHOW

Las Vegas Convention Center
LAS VEGAS, NV
www.vdta.com

17-20

BRANDSOURCE NATIONAL CONVENTION & EXPO

Marriot World Congress
ORLANDO, FL
www.brandsourceconvention.com

26-28

DIGITAL SIGNAGE EXPO 2013

Las Vegas Convention Center
LAS VEGAS, NV
www.digitalsignageexpo.net

MARCH

2-5

INTERNATIONAL HOME + HOUSEWARES SHOW

McCormick Place
CHICAGO, IL
www.housewares.org

3-6

PRIMETIME! BY NATIONWIDE

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6-9

APPLIANCE SERVICE TRAINING INSTITUTE "ASTI"

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www.asti.us

9-12

MEGA SPRING NATIONAL CONVENTION

Gaylord Texan
DALLAS, TX
www.megagroupusa.com

13-16

HEARTH, PATIO & BARBEQUE EXPO(HPBE)

Orange County Convention Center
ORLANDO, FL
www.hpbexpr.com

21-24

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST HOME DESIGN SHOW

Pier 94
NEW YORK CITY, NY
www.archdigesthomeshow.com

APRIL

EARTH DAY APRIL 22

19-21

KBIS – KITCHEN & BATH INDUSTRY SHOW

New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
NEW ORLEANS, LA
www.kbis.com

20-25

HIGHPOINT MARKET

HIGH POINT, NC
www.highpointmarket.org

23-25

LIGHTFAIR

Pennsylvania Convention Center
PHILADELPHIA, PA
www.lightfair.com

MAY

NATIONAL HOME IMPROVEMENT MONTH

18-21

NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION SHOW

McCormick Place
CHICAGO, IL
show.restaurant.org

6-8

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The CE Business Cycle: Where Are We Now?

Industry veterans have monitored the Consumer Electronics business cycle for years in order to understand the reasons for volume and grasp profit fluctuation. I'm referring to the six-to-eight year cycle from low volume and high profit to product abundance and low profit after new technology breaks. For retailers, it is important to understand how the model works and what patterns to expect. What I want to provide is an update on how we, the independent retailers, are tracking within the current cycle. It is important to reflect and learn from these patterns in order to set the expectation for what's ahead.

In 2012, overall, consumer electronics came out relatively flat to last year. We have seen positive trends, in particular, the fourth quarter rendered signs of improving trends. Margin was more stabilized with the help of manufacturer UPP programs. Further, we saw a continuing shift to the independent retailer led by more conservative promotions from the big box stores. These trends were then reinforced through political mention that the housing market is finally coming back to life—a first in years.

The most recent drivers of the CE cycle are HDTV and flat panel TVs. Let's just say they have had their run, and it was a good one. Once must-have, high end products are now available everywhere at very little costs. Closing out 2012 also shows a conclusion of the

business cycle. Now consumers and retailers are looking for the next big thing.

As we head into the second half of the first quarter of 2013, what can we anticipate ahead? As announced at CES, the breakthrough technology of 4K and OLED TVs are expected to rejuvenate TV interest. With these new technologies, there will be higher ASP's, enabling you to leverage more opportunities to increase your benefit from the upcoming trends.

These technologies are slated to launch in March, which means independent retailers will soon have the opportunity to dive into the early adoption period of the latest 4K and OLED technology. Nationwide will arm independent retailers with these products to give independent retail shoppers an upper hand in getting these new features into their home first. Nationwide's members' have a different customer base. The shoppers on the hunt for the latest and greatest historically purchase higher ticket items; therefore our members are getting the profit by being involved in the early adoption period. Nationwide offers a combination of the latest and more innovative technology with price benefits to take advantage of the beginning stages within the cycle. For independent retailers, this is our time. This is our window.

What about the gap we're in between

Christmas and the unveiling of 4K technology in March? With the Super Bowl just days away, it is important for retailers to understand the opportunity to use electronics as key drivers during this time frame. The average ticket historically has been higher with increased sales of bigger TVs—50" and 60" flat panel screens and ASP's. It is important to utilize these drivers when it comes time for the biggest football game of the year. These larger screen customers are more likely to buy, so selling the full basket of products and accessories will only increase your business' chance at the higher ticket.

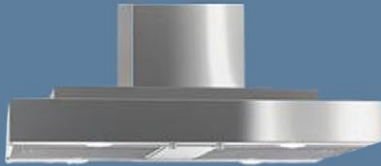
The CE industry is predicting another flat year in 2013, but our independent retail members are showing signs that 2013 will be a year full of new technology, shifting consumer trends, and success for their businesses. We are pleased with the numbers we've seen at not only the end of the year, but of the business cycle for HDTV and flat panel models. There are many opportunities ahead as OLED and 4K make their debuts and we restart the climb to the most successful window of the cycle. **RO**

Tom Hickman is Senior Vice President of Electronics for Nationwide Marketing Group, a leading buying and marketing organization for independent retailers.
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The Retail Observer

AN EYE ON THE INDUSTRY SINCE 1970

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Shop Yourself! Do Customers See When

SO OFTEN WE GET SO WRAPPED UP IN THE EVERYDAY OPERATION OF A RETAIL BUSINESS AND ALL THE "HATS" WE ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR THAT WE FAIL TO RECOGNIZE MANY AREAS OF OUR OWN BUSINESSES THAT FALL SHORT OF OUR COMPETITORS'

Most furniture retailers shop the competition. Whether reviewing their local ads, website specials, or in-store "reconnaissance," it is smart to keep up on what your competitors are advertising, what lines they carry, and price-points of similar merchandise. *But what about "shopping" your own store?*

So often we get so wrapped up in the everyday operation of a retail business and all the "hats" we are required to wear that we fail to recognize many areas of our own businesses that fall short of our competitors' and ultimately cost us lost sales and customers!

Here are some areas, as retail owners, we should put under the microscope several times each year:

- **Exterior Store Appearance**

What does your store look like when you drive into the parking lot? Is there litter strewn about? Are there lights out? Does the awning need cleaning? Could the store need a fresh coat of paint? When was the last time you updated the color?

These are things that can make a subtle impact on a customer's perception of your business *before they even get out of the car*. If the store looks old, tired, or unkempt from the outside, what are the products like on the inside?

- **Showroom**

Always remember... furniture is a "fashion" business and we need to project a certain image. What does your interior store look like? Are the doors clean or covered with fingerprints? Are the traffic isles in need of cleaning or replacing? As with the exterior, when was the last time your interior walls were painted? Are your carpets worn out?

Next, take a look at what you are actually selling or not selling and how it is impacting perception. If you walk your showroom, do you have "holes" in your floor? Remember, your floor space is your number-one asset, why would you not maximize this asset 100%? Take a long look at your merchandise. Every store has its "dogs"; merchandise that looked awesome in the market showroom, but has now grown moss it has been on the floor so long. Get rid of it! Again your floor space is too valuable to have slow-moving products not producing any revenue.

On that same note, when was the last time you "re-merchandised" your floor? Moving vignettes, rearranging displays, perhaps moving a department can give the entire store a fresh new feel. Customers (and your sales people) will develop a whole new perspective. Some

You Know What Your They Walk in Your Door?

will even think you've remodeled. In fact, it's amazing how some of those aforementioned "dogs" suddenly get new life just by moving to a new home.

Pay special attention to your bedding department. Buying a mattress is an "intimate" sales process. You are asking a customer to lie down in a very exposed position that can make them feel vulnerable to the salesperson. The last thing you want is a bedding department that makes them uncomfortable to test-rest a mattress. The bedding department should be vacuumed daily, pillows in place, and floor models kept as clean as possible. Also pay attention to the overall appearance of your ceiling! Customers lying prone to test a mattress will be exposed to any flaws. Are their water stains, cobwebs, and/or missing or broken ceiling tiles? You might not notice the condition of the ceiling, but they will.

- **Delivery**

Unfortunately our delivery crews are often the lowest-paid employees in the business, but the last impression made with our customers. Owners/managers need to get out on the trucks every so often and ride with their delivery people. Pay attention to the condition of the trucks, they should be washed

weekly and interiors cleaned daily. Your customer is very excited to be getting their beautiful new sofa, don't let a dirty, cluttered truck (or delivery person) dampen his or her excitement.

Do you know where your drivers are? There are numerous inexpensive GPS tracking devices that can be installed on trucks with real-time or downloadable route-tracking. Your drivers should be informed these are being installed to assist them with route-planning and last-minute delivery changes. Now no one wants "Big Brother" looking over their shoulder. However, in this economy and with the high price of fuel, the last thing you need is a delivery crew running personal errands on company time with company equipment. Don't assume they are not. Check.

- **Front Office**

We often work most closely with our front office personnel; they might even be family members. But as with all the previously discussed areas... what image do they project to the customer? Can they be "sharp" with a difficult customer or when interrupted? Are desks a cluttered mess? Do you allow people to eat at their desks? (A big no-no!)

Likewise, what is the impression the

receptionist is leaving on customers. Take the time to observe how phone calls are being handled. How is your store's telephone etiquette? How many times does the phone ring before it is answered, and is it answered with a professional and courteous tone? How long are customers left on hold? Is your staff trained to deal with difficult customers?

There is no one single aspect of a retail business that is not without its challenges. Buying, advertising, merchandising, managing, and employees all can impact the success (or lack of) selling furniture. However, there is truth to the expression "first impressions are everything." If you don't look good, invite customers in, have a professional and well-kempt staff, none of the rest will matter. Taking the time to shop your own store can help to get people in the door, make them feel comfortable, and ultimately increase your bottom line. **RO**

E. Michael Allen, Brand-Source VP of home furnishings, has been with the organization for 15 years and overseen the growth of the category to one of the largest in the country.



BrandSource Helps Deliver a New Ford Fiesta to NHRA Race Fan as Part of “Win With Force” Sweepstakes

Thousands of fans registered for the “Win With Force” sweepstakes in 2012, but only one lucky person, Kevin Long of Conroe, Texas, drove away with a Ford Fiesta on January 3. Long, the Grand Prize winner, and his family are big fans of John Force and NHRA drag racing and welcomed 2013 with a brand new car.

“I have never won anything in my life,” said Long. “I’ve had season tickets since the NHRA track in Baytown, Texas first opened. All of the race fans in our seating section are a pretty tight-knit group and we were just saying that none of us ever wins anything. Well, that’s changed!”

The popular Win With Force sweepstakes was originally developed by John Force Racing sponsor BrandSource and also includes Castrol and Ford Racing. Fans were able to enter the sweepstakes on the NHRA midway, at John Force Racing Road Show appearances and online at BrandSource.com and CastrolForce.com.

“The Win With Force sweepstakes has been a great way for

Ford Racing to interact with thousands of John Force Racing fans and followers of their sponsors,” said Tim Duerr, Ford Racing Motorsports Marketing Manager. “We’re excited to see Kevin pick up his new Ford Fiesta and wish him many years of enjoyment driving his family to the NHRA races.”

More than 150,000 fans entered the 2012 Win With Force sweepstakes. Bob Lawrence, CEO of key sponsor BrandSource, is making sure that Kevin receives full recognition for his exciting prize win.

“Our BrandSource dealer closest to Kevin’s hometown, A-1 Maytag in Spring, Texas, welcomed him to their store for pictures and media exposure, and we are looking forward to having him up on stage during pre-race ceremonies with John Force and other VIP’s at the NHRA race in Houston this spring,” Lawrence said.

The 2013 Win With Force sweepstakes is right around the corner. Fans can start entering on February 14th at the NHRA Winternationals and online at: www.BrandSource.com and www.CastrolForce.com. **RO**





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How Nationwide Marketing Group's Web Services Team is Making a Difference

As the digital age continues to evolve within the independent retail channel, so do the needs for retailers' to implement web marketing in their business. Nationwide Marketing Group has formed an entire department with an expanded focus on web initiatives led by Frank Sandtner, vice president of member services operations. "We are not here to provide our members with a list of vendor phone numbers, rather we have a team of experts in-house that know the ins and outs of every single product we offer," says Sandtner. "This allows our member's to have a much easier adoption of the latest tools— an attribute that sets us apart in this industry". Nationwide's dedicated team not only tests each program to ensure the functionality and capabilities fulfill the needs of each member's plan, but serve as the primary contacts across all twelve web service platforms to see the integration process through.

Doug Marsh, who is in charge of web services development, assesses and tests the latest products, constantly seeking out the best practices that go beyond the use of metadata to create enhanced tagging of content, a vital factor in search engine optimization. Doug has been working with a new service that enables a non-programmer to create a limited functionality mobile website that serves as an immediate redirection when consumers visit the site on their device. The interface is user-friendly and contains only the necessary information so consumers are just a button away from turn by turn directions and a phone call to the store, which provides more opportunity for retailers to increase foot traffic and interest in their business.

The Web Services team is also in the beta testing period of a program designed to accelerate the alert speed of webpages, a critical factor in search results ranking. In fact, the initial results show that this new program can accelerate many of Nationwide members' websites by 60 percent.



Frank Sandtner



Doug Marsh



Maria Ballas

Maria Ballas, manager of web services, is the go-to for members to better understand how to implement the latest tools into their businesses. Maria works with over twenty-five different vendors across twelve web services to build unique plans for retailers to ensure the highest success.

"Along with a strong digital background, our team of experts also has a clear understanding of the independent retail industry, which is why members are attributing increased profit to the most current and cutting-edge web services provided by Nationwide. We are excited about what's coming down the pipeline and are looking forward to unveiling the latest, most innovative web service tools at the upcoming PrimeTime show in March", says Frank Sandtner.

Nationwide Marketing Group, headquartered in Winston-Salem, NC, is North America's largest group of independent appliance, electronics, furniture, bedding, flooring and photography dealers. With a combined \$14 billion in annual sales, more than all competing groups combined, Nationwide provides its 3,500+ Members the most buying power in the industry plus the most comprehensive array of merchandising, advertising, educational, online marketing and financial programs and services.

Visit us online at www.nationwidemarketinggroup.org. **RO**



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AN ASTI PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

"This was my second year at the convention and my husband's first, as I was so impressed and empowered and inspired after my first convention that I made sure my husband was in attendance the next year.

We have run our own appliance repair business, Cody's Appliance Repair, for over 20 years. When we came from California, we had solid ideas about pricing, hiring, customer service skills, etc., but since that time our company has grown from a mom-and-pop shop to a larger company. We also live in a much less dense demographic

now with a definite difference in shopping, spending, and repairing habits, as compared to California. But as we had been successful from day one in Idaho, we were content to do the same things year after year after year because it had always worked for us in the past. Well, the business has changed and I realized that we too had to make some radical changes to our company to survive this new world we live in.

The drastic change in our economy two years ago is what had initially driven me to attend my first convention in Florida. I felt that I really needed to network with other service providers, find out what they were charging, how they were faring in a depressed economy, etc. That said, it was a shock to me to find out how much we had gotten out of touch with our industry. I realized that simply caring about the customer and doing a great job was just not enough anymore. We had been in our little corner of Idaho completely unaware while such exciting things were happening in our industry all around the country.

When I came back from the convention two years ago, I was full to bursting with ideas and pretty much turned our company on its head. Not an easy time for our technicians, but when they started to see their income rise even though our call volume was off due to the depressed economy in our area, they started to see the benefits of change. I am proud to report that we had our best year ever in the worst economy in recent history!

So this year I brought my lead tech and husband, Cody, and I believe that he was as bowled over as I was the year before. He renewed many old friendships, made many new ones, and learned more from his peers and in seminars than he had in years!

At the ASTI we learned new innovations and techniques in our industry, purchased software to make our job more efficient, met up with some of our industry representatives, and overall, just had a blast. The classes were all well run, informative, and relevant to the needs of our industry. We were taught things that I never would have learned on my own or from a book or magazine. You just have to be there to fully understand the power of surrounding yourself with others who do what you do; have the same concerns, frustrations, and troubles as you do. In a nutshell, they just get it!"

-Patty and Cody Husk
Cody's Appliance Repair, Inc.

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Having Trouble Finding New Technicians?



According to research conducted by the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM), over 52,000 new technicians could be needed in the next five years to service America's major home appliances. That number is staggering!

If you've recently attended a convention or training class and looked around the room, you probably saw the same familiar faces that you have seen for many years. These are the faces of the industry's best and most seasoned technicians. And it won't be too long before those technicians will be enjoying retirement. We all wish them the best. However, one question about their retirement really haunts us. Who is going to replace them when they are gone?

For years we have relied on these technicians to take care of our customers. We have simply taken for granted that they will always be a part of our lives and our businesses. Service company owners, and the industry in general, are struggling with how to replace these retirees. As retirement is fast approaching, the time to take action is now. The service company owners who don't act soon will be left with major losses in their businesses.

I have been in the appliance repair industry as a factory representative since 1979. After 33 years with a major appliance

manufacturer, I have made the decision to leave that post and help with this serious problem. To give back to the industry that has given so much to me, I have instituted a new technician training center, "Sun City Appliance Academy." Our new training center is located in the heart of Texas, just a short drive north of Austin. The mission of Sun City is to "Train tomorrow's service professionals."

As service company owners, most of you have been technicians. And some of you are still repairing appliances every day. You have gained years of knowledge and are willing to pass it on to those entering our profession. However, most company owners have neither the time nor the adequate facilities dedicated to properly train the new technicians entering our ranks. At Sun City Appliance Academy, I have taken the knowledge I have gained over my 33 years in the industry and strategically compiled it into the training center the industry so badly needs.

To prepare the new professionals entering our industry, I have created training classes to assure their success. The classes are structured to take them through the basics and fundamentals of customer satisfaction, electricity, and all major appliance categories. Each module contains classroom instruction and hands on training in the shop areas. The atmosphere offered in the classes is relaxed, organized, and fun. As the owner and instructor of the academy, my time is focused solely on the development of every

student placed in my care.

Too many times, traditional technician training consists only of a trainee riding on a route with a seasoned technician. Ride-along training is juggled with the demands of the day's route. It gives the trainee interrupted, incomplete, and ineffective training. The trainee will only obtain a partial understanding of appliance repair, and will never reach his or her full potential. Ride along training may appear to be the quickest and cheapest way to put technicians on the road, but it is costly and inefficient in the long run. The only way to maximize a new technician's job performance and profitability is to provide a firm foundation of formal training before ride-along training. After receiving formal training, ride-along training will be more beneficial. From there, your new technician can start his own route. He will be more confident, and better equipped to handle new problems. He will learn at a faster pace, and will ultimately make more money for himself and your service company.

A healthy service company simply cannot afford to neglect the importance of formal training. The sole source of income for any service company is its technicians! **RO**

*Author: Tommy Lott
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The Certified Service Center

Quality and Value

Keeping your company lean and profitable is something every business strives for and especially during these economic hard times we are currently facing. No matter how small or how large the company the management has a responsibility to its shareholders, its employees and its customers to insure that the company turns a profit and remains in business. In some organizations being lean is a culture while in others being lean is a reactive measure stemming from rising cost and unrealized sales goals. Too often reactive companies begin to sacrifice the quality and customer satisfaction that took many years to build in order to meet profit projections. But before we continue let's take a look at the terms Quality and Value and make sure we are using them correctly.

The American Society for Quality (www.asq.org) defines quality as a "subjective term for which each person has his or her own definition. In technical usage, quality can have two meanings, (1) the characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs, and (2) a product or service free from deficiencies." Of course, there are more definitions out there, but for the purposes of this article we are using the ASQ definition.

Value also has many definitions and Webster notes it as "(1) an amount, as of goods, services, or money, considered to be a fair and suitable equivalent for something else; a fair price or return, (2) monetary or material worth, and (3) worth in usefulness or importance to the possessor."

When an organization goes lean, their focus should remain on increasing the customers' perception of value for the product or service received but unfortunately as we have seen in this past 2 years, the customer has become the

victim not the focus. I believe that the 3rd part of the definition of the word value ("worth in usefulness or importance to the possessor") is what our customers would use to define their perception of value. If a customer perceives that they are getting value for their money they will be happy and loyal, when they feel cheated in anyway they will start to look hard somewhere else for the best value for their time and money.

There is no question that lean companies build value by improving the quality of their service network. The cost of quality isn't the amount spent to offer quality service, it's the cost of NOT creating a quality service network that will damage the bottom line and lose the loyalty of the customer. Each time work is redone, the cost of quality increases. Obvious examples include: Misdiagnosis, unnecessary parts changing instead of trouble shooting, added administrative time, escalations, unnecessary exchanges and lost customer loyalty. In short, any cost that would not have been expended if quality were perfect contributes to the cost of quality.

So how does a consumer know that you are a quality company? Well in the past it has been because you told them that you are a professional, customer satisfaction driven business. The problem is, and I know it's hard to believe, all companies tell their customers that they are a quality company. Many of the companies that boast of quality in fact use the first definition of the word quality as their maxim. Subjective and loosely defined terms such as the 1st definition of quality have no place in our industry. The standard for our industry should be the 2nd definition of quality which is "a product or service free from

defects." That is what a Certified Service Center shop strives to deliver, service free from defects at a value price and backed by a strong warranty.

One thing that you can do for your business in 2013 is to prove your company's real value to your customers by taking the steps necessary to have your company certified by an independent non-profit organization that takes a look at many aspects of your business including the technician's and service manager's skill levels, your warranties, your facility and several other key factors that will help your customers receive the quality sales and service they are looking for.

By becoming a Certified Service Center your company will receive the recognition that you can promote to your current and future customers by displaying the CSC Symbol telling everyone that your company has met or exceeded a set of quality standards established by an independent industry wide organization that emphasized both quality and customer care. This type of independent certification and recognition will grow your business by helping your quality-oriented customers make the right choice when it comes to sales and service and all at a value price.

For more information on becoming a Certified Service Center please go to their web site at www.c-csc.org. **RO**

*Ralph E. Wolff
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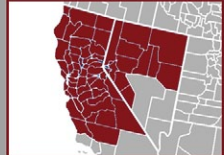
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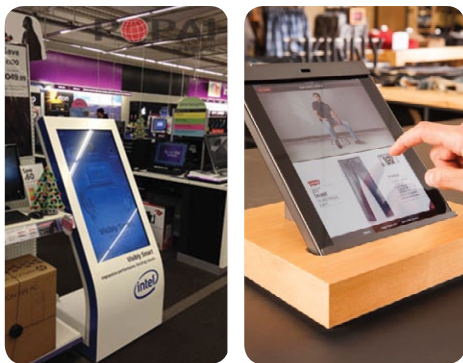
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Showrooming Drives Sho

It's Up to the Re



Showrooming has become a reality for retailers. Those who choose to embrace it gain an opportunity to increase sales and distance themselves from competition.

A wide range of recent studies suggest that at least 50% of all shoppers have used their mobile devices to check prices while shopping in store. As the adoption rate of smartphones increases amongst consumers, we can be confident that this trend will also increase. Research also suggests that if a retailer can be within 5% of the price offered either online, or at a competitor, they can keep the majority of sales. So what strategies should retailers develop to keep shoppers in their stores?

Today's consumer expects that they will receive the same information regardless of the media. This means retailers need to provide a true omnichannel experience both online and in the store. When a shopper comes in store to see a product, the retailer must provide inspiration and information; essential tools to make the consumer feel they are in control. The reality is retailers can't win on price alone. It comes down to the in-store experience.

"So it's not (department) stores' size or location or physical capabilities that are their problem. It's their lack of imagination—about the products they carry, their store environments, the way they engage customers, and how they embrace the digital future."

—Ron Johnson, J.C. Penney CEO and former senior VP of retail at Apple

What we see often overlooked is the use of visual display technology that augments the in-store experience. Imagine yourself shopping in an environment where you have access to the best online tools, but you can also touch the product and then purchase it on your terms — it becomes the best of both worlds.

"Retailers who have the foresight to combine the sensory experience provided by a brick-and-mortar store with the extensive information and accessibility offered by virtual stores are likely to lead the way in attracting the loyalty and wallet of tomorrow's consumer."

—Deloitte's 2012 retail study, "The Rise of the Connected Consumer"

This is a relatively new way of thinking and as such there is no set formula or universally accepted best practices. We do feel that there are a number of retailers that are providing noteworthy retail experiences with the aid of technology. As this is such a visual media, we suggest you use your favorite search engine to find videos of what we have described below.

LEGO PLAYS WITH AUGMENTED REALITY

Marketers at Lego partnered with Intel to bring sealed packages of Lego to life. The concept behind these in-store kiosks is to inspire their customers by showing an animated version of what the finished toy will look like once all the Lego pieces are assembled.

ppers to the Brick and Mortar tailer to Keep Them There

It is incredibly simple to use. You just have to hold up the package in front of the kiosk. This results in a live action video starring the customer and a 3D animated rendition of the finished product floating over the Lego box. The system uses sophisticated image recognition software, so no scanning of a code is required. When you move the box around, the system mimics your movements on screen in real time.

Currently this experience is only available in-store. We encourage you to find one and give it a try.

Search: Lego Augmented Reality

PERFECT FITTING JEANS AT BLOOMINGDALE'S

Bloomingdale's has partnered with Bodymetrics to provide women visiting their Palo Alto store with the opportunity to find the perfect fitting pair of jeans.

A Bloomingdale's associate, using a hand-held tablet opens an account and guides the shopper through the process. When ready, the shopper steps into a beautifully designed, private body scanner. Think of it as a much nicer version of an airport-screening device. The shopper then follows the on-screen prompts, undergoes a 5-second body scan and then steps out of the device to receive her results.

The Bloomingdale's associate then guides the customer through a set of customized recommendations for the perfect fitting pair of jeans based on her unique body shape and measurements. Bloomingdale's also makes the results accessible for their customers to view online.

It is well worth your time to search for the video and watch how pleasantly surprised these women are by just how easy the process is.

Search: Bodymetrics Body Scanner at Bloomingdale's

DIXON GETS INTERACTIVE WITH AN INTEL DIGITAL KIOSK

Dixon's is a UK electronics retailer that partnered with Intel and HH Global. Together they developed an interactive kiosk designed to educate and assist the consumer in selecting the appropriate Intel Core processor that suits their needs.

The consumer experience had significant inspiration on the development of both the style of the kiosk and the interactive experience. As this was Intel's first direct opportunity to reach its customers in a retail environment, they needed to deliver an experience that was inviting and functional. After a four-month test run the results provided 22,000 interactions, which equated to an estimated 40% uplift in sales.

Integrating these technologies within the path-to-purchase resonates with the consumer, encouraging brand loyalty.

Search: Dixons Intel Kiosk

The digitally empowered consumer expects to have an opportunity to use everyday tools in-store to make better-informed decisions. According to a recent survey, 48% of showrooming shoppers said they feel better about their purchase after doing some in-store research and shopping around on their phones. The realization is that showrooming forces

retailers to educate their customers in order to facilitate a purchase.

Retailers who try to prevent showrooming will quickly join the growing list of defunct retailers who refused to meet consumer expectations. The threat isn't an educated consumer. The threat is a consumer who is educated by way of apps designed to take them out of the store. The examples referenced earlier represent innovative approaches that help educate without the consumer needing or wanting to leave the store.

Showrooming will continue to immerse itself in today's digital shopping culture and retailers who embrace the concept stand a chance to be successful. However their success will depend on how well they integrate the technology into the store experience and position it to genuinely assist the consumer in making a well informed purchasing decision. **RO**

Authors Bryan Meszaros and Mark Zwicker are members of Digital Signage Expo's Advisory Board Content Council. DSE will present "Embracing Showrooming Through Interactive Retail" in Las Vegas on Thursday, Feb. 28, 4-5 pm. For more information about DSE or to register to join this or any other seminar and learn about digital signage, go to www.DSEnow.com



Bryan Meszaros



Mark Zwicker

From Prep to Clean KitchenAid Has the Tools to Help Cooks Do What They Love

Few brands have a heritage, and breadth of product line, like KitchenAid. They continue to create innovations that delight generation after generation. "We know we have loyal customers," says Gail Bruce, senior brand manager. "We constantly push ourselves to keep up with design and performance trends so we can reward them with a premium ownership experience."

BUY IT FRESH – KEEP IT FRESH



Preserva®
Food Care System

KitchenAid® refrigerators feature the Preserva® Food Care System. "Our customers have a passion for fresh ingredients," says Bruce. "The Preserva System helps extend their fresh taste and texture." The Preserva Food Care System is comprised of three distinct features. Sequential dual evaporators maintain a high humidity level inside the refrigerator, where you need it, to help slow down the natural process that causes food to spoil. And the freezer stays cold and dry to minimize freezer burn. The FreshFlow™ Produce Preserver includes an ethylene-absorption cartridge that helps delay over-ripening by up to 25%.* And the FreshFlow™ Air Filter is 15 times more powerful than baking soda at reducing common food odors.

In addition to four side-by-side refrigerators, KitchenAid features the Preserva Food Care System on two French door refrigerators.

INTRODUCING EVEN-HEAT™ TECHNOLOGY



Even-Heat™ Technology is available on select wall ovens, cooktops, and freestanding ranges. Innovative features allow cooks to get the perfect results they crave without the need for traditional secrets such as rotating pans or using a double boiler for melting.

"Our new line of wall ovens, cooktops, and freestanding ranges are designed for our consumers," says Bruce. "They are passionate about cooking and expect more from their appliances. Even-Heat™ Technology meets their high standards by delivering exceptionally consistent heat."

BETTER RESULTS VS. THE COMPETITION**



"A KitchenAid dishwasher lets cooks get their dishes clean and dry the first time, so they can get back to doing more of what they love to do," says Bruce. KitchenAid offers two distinct wash systems, both of which help deliver better results vs. the competition.** One way they achieve this is with a Heat Dry option. With this option selected, a dedicated heating element pulses on and off at regular intervals to ensure dry dishes at the end of the cycle.

Additionally, many KitchenAid dishwashers add specialty features that enhance performance and ease of use. The ProScrub® Option features thirty-six spray jets positioned behind the lower rack which provides concentrated cleaning of casserole dishes and other large platters. Select dishwashers offer two additional features, the ProWash™ Cycle and ProDry™ Option. Both offer intuitive, one-touch control that takes the guesswork out of getting exceptional washing and drying performance.



DESIGNED FOR EVERY KITCHEN

KitchenAid appliances feature coordinated Architect® Series II styling. The rounded, contoured handles and stainless steel finish help bring together every area of your kitchen. **RO**

**Based on commonly purchased produce.*

***Based on combined wash and dry results of leading premium brands' highest MSRP models; dry testing conducted without rinse aid.*

RAISE YOUR EXPECTATIONS.



KitchenAid®

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Sharing our passion for inspiration

We are a company of cooks. So we make the culinary process enjoyable, and help bring out the flavor of fresh ingredients. From wall ovens that deliver the most even baking* to dishwashers that get dishes clean and dry without pre-rinsing, there's a KitchenAid® appliance that will deliver performance and design that exceeds expectations.

*Among leading premium brand 30-inch wall ovens.

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