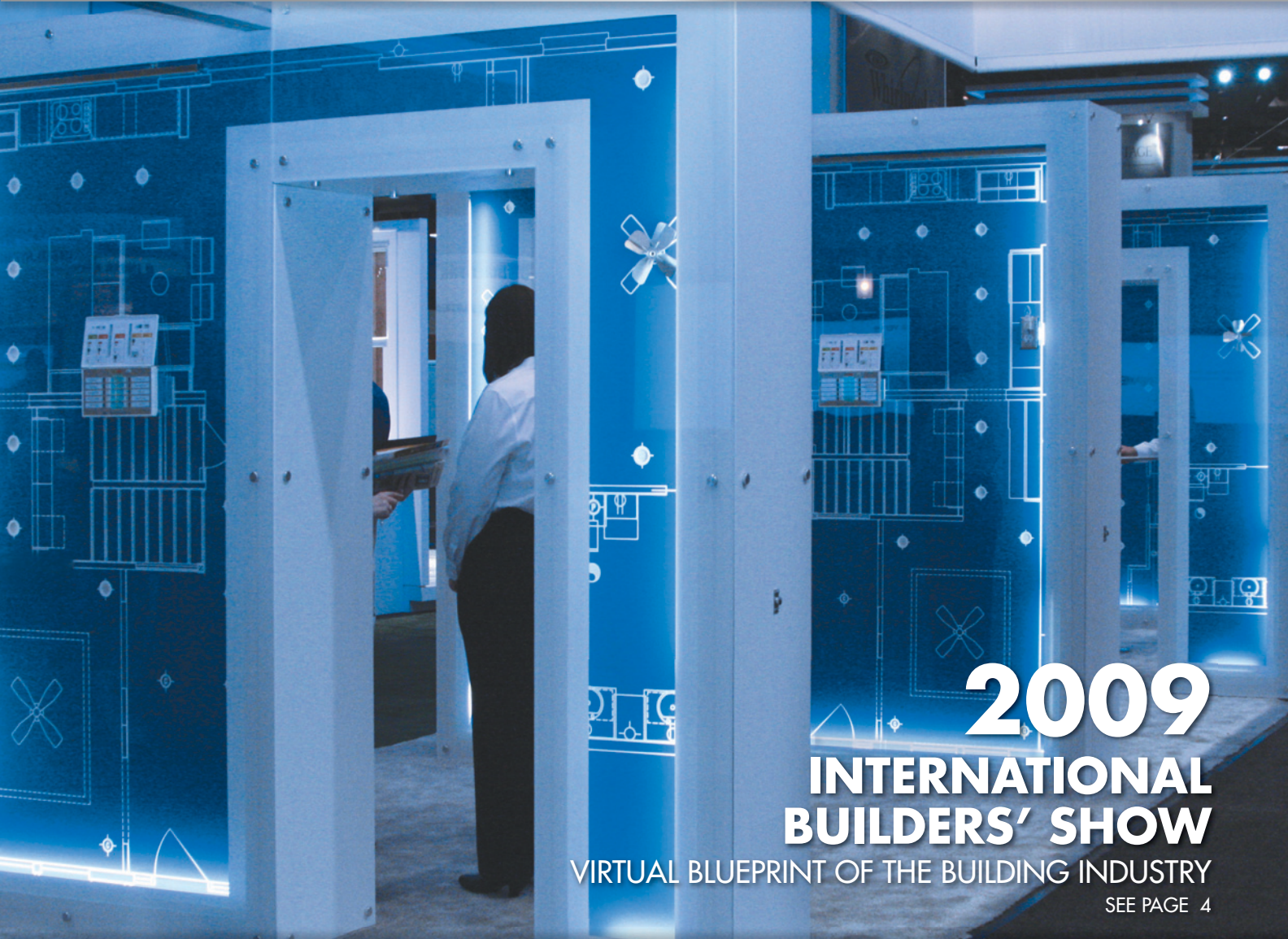


The RetailObserver

March, 2009

The Monthly News Magazine with Personality

Vol. 20, Issue 3



2009 INTERNATIONAL BUILDERS' SHOW

VIRTUAL BLUEPRINT OF THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

SEE PAGE 4

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DEADLINE FOR
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ARE YOU RIDING THE TIDAL WAVE OR CHOOSING TO BURY YOUR HEAD IN THE SAND?



Today's economy is in such a flux, many of us don't know if we are coming or going. Are we going the way of the automakers and still flying in a private jet or are we looking for the commuter specials? What is wrong with renting a Corolla for a week instead of a Limo pickup at the airport? We are all at a crossroads for making choices—crash and burn or take the road less traveled, high road or the low road. Are you making changes to you and your employees' direction, for the good of all and not just for a few? These are the hard questions we all need to answer and we need it today, NOT tomorrow.

What got you to where you are? What decisions did you make two, five, ten, even 25 years ago that set your course? Ok, some of you were riding big wheels 25 years ago, but even then you made life changing choices. If we are to go the way of Lemmings we would just run to the closest cliff, and hope nothing bad would happen to us (of course, most lemmings don't think of that before they leap).

What actions should we be taking in order to get ahead of the economic tidal wave that is being talked about? I myself will be buying a surfboard and jumping in front of this Tsunami and have a great ride. Why not? In every economic down turn, fortunes are made. Indeed, it's easier to make a fortune in a downturn than it is at any other time in the economic cycle. When there is a downturn, that's when opportunity knocks. Are you going to answer the door when it does? Better yet, why don't you open the door and go find the opportunities? Scratch that—make the opportunities happen. We are the riders of our own waves. Do I turn right and just miss the ride of a life time or turn into the "Tube" and come out a hero? But remember it's not just your ride, there are others on the board with you. Make it count.

Surfs up, let's go.



Moe Lastfogel

THE MERRY-GO-ROUND OR THE ROLLER COASTER?

How have things in your world been over the last few months? A bit like a rollercoaster ride maybe? It reminds me of an old Steve Martin movie "Parenthood" that suggested that there are two different types of people in life; those who like to ride the merry-go-round and those who prefer the rollercoaster. Even though the rollercoaster can be extremely stressful and there may be a second that even makes you wonder if you'll survive, the exhilaration and adrenaline rush let you know that you have a pulse, you're still alive and capable of surviving change and the wild ride it may bring. I'll take the roller coaster over the merry-go-round any day!

How could that be so, you say? With so much doom and gloom on the news every day projecting so much fear, be careful not to become paralyzed in times like these. Fear not only affects the judgments and decisions you make, but it affects your mental and physical well being, as well as your relationships both personally and in business. The life or death of your company can be determined by whether or not you choose fear (inability to act) or courage (ability to adapt). Whether you are out on the sales floor or guiding the future of your company, as owner, president or CEO, it takes a positive outlook followed by strategic planning and action to chart the course for the future of your business. Your positive attitude and courage to carry on will become infectious and will influence others to do the same.

Now, more than ever, we are looking at our world differently than ever before. In the past, we may have told ourselves that we wanted to get our priorities straight, but were too busy to make that wishful thinking a reality. Now, due to layoffs and other changes that have come our way, we may be forced to take that time. As for myself, I am going through many personal changes and am experiencing the upside of this economic downturn. Our family is becoming closer. Our college-aged kids are experiencing unemployment, challenging their ability to remain self sufficient. My son has taken on the videotaping and editing here at the magazine during his

down time and has learned a new skill that he is quite talented at, and I am learning more about who my son is... They are home more often now, doing laundry and eating with the family, as well as joining us for Friday night pizza, games and movie night, an old family tradition that's back! This shows that cocooning is alive and well – 'Staying in is the new going out'. It's cheaper to watch movies at home and splurge on home theatre equipment and accessories as an investment in the family. "Board games are making a comeback" too, reports the news. Did you know that MONOPOLY™ was introduced at the height of the great depression? It was a way for people to feel like they were acquiring property when

they couldn't afford to do so in real life. It kept them entertained when cooped up at home with no money to go out on the town. Sound familiar? We're gaining valuable bonding time with our loved ones and the board games are providing education for the young, through numerous opportunities to learn decision making and planning skills that adults often take for granted and seldom have time to teach their children. All this has come from the BAD economy. Imagine that... what a gift.

So as you can see, there is a feeling of contentment welling up from deep within me, despite all the

negative news reports and personal challenges that are being faced at the moment. Springtime is on its way, bringing with it an opportunity for change and rebirth. As we change our priorities to make life count, as we look for the silver lining in all situations, we allow ourselves to get on with life and do what matters most.

Which ride will you be getting on, the merry-go-round or the rollercoaster? **RO**

“ I AM EXPERIENCING
THE UPSIDE OF
THIS ECONOMIC
DOWNTURN...
DESPITE ALL
THE NEGATIVE
NEWS REPORTS. ”

Eliana Barriga

Eliana Barriga
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20 Intern Builder

SHOWCASES THE INDUSTRY'S



Housing professionals from across the country and abroad convened at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, January 20-23 for the 2009 International Builders' Show (IBS), the housing industry's largest annual trade show and exhibition. The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) event, held in one of the largest convention centers in the country, featured the most cutting-edge designs, technologies, products and services in the industry.

Builders, remodelers and other members of the home building industry made up the more than 60,000 who attended. In the midst of the most severe housing downturn in recent memory, attendees took advantage of more than 250 educational sessions and exhibits showcasing products and services from more than 1,600 companies to arm themselves with information about the latest industry trends, research and new products—the better to respond to demand when the market returns.

“This attendance speaks to the optimism of our members and the nature of home builders to always anticipate the ‘next big thing,’” said newly elected NAHB Chairman Joe Robson, a home builder in Tulsa, OK, “We continue to advocate for an economic stimulus package that recognizes how important the home building industry is to helping the nation get back on track - and when it does, we will be ready.”

Exhibitors noted the drop in attendance from more than 90,000 at the 2008 International Builders' Show, but said they were not surprised, given the economy - and underscored the importance of maintaining their presence on the show floor. An industry downturn brings out more serious inquiries and fewer “tire kickers,” they said.

“People are spending more time talking,” said Shawn Buckland of Adrian Steel in Adrian, Mich., a company that customizes the interiors

1. Vegas Views — The Night Skyline 2. ATLANTIS OUTDOOR CABINERY — Pat Byrne & Jan Ledgard
3. GE PROFILE — Colossal Capacity Washer & Dryer 4. The Gang at IRON-A-WAY — Rob Nelson,

09 ational 's Show



LARGEST PRODUCT DISPLAY

of work vans and trailers for home builders.

Twice as many exhibitors showcased green product lines this year, including Progress Lighting of Greenville, SC, which manufactures high-efficiency and LED light products. “Green is definitely the hot topic. People are very interested in understanding new lighting technology,” said Vice President of Sales, Bob Sale.

International Builders’ Show exhibitors sprawled over 850,000 square feet of space at the Las Vegas Convention Center, including outdoor displays of homes built on site for the Show. Industry professionals also attended educational events and training sessions on a variety of subjects ranging from land development techniques and building science to marketing tools and green product certification.

“We’re in the midst of an industry crisis, yet our members are still busy gaining knowledge about new products and techniques, and networking and learning from each other,” Robson observed. “I’m proud of the resilience of our members even as we work together to improve the market.”

Members of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) also elected the four Senior Officers to top leadership positions within the federation during the Show.

With more than 800 affiliated state and local home builders associations (HBAs) and more than 200,000 members across the country, NAHB is the “voice of the housing industry,” representing the interests of the nation’s housing professionals through advocacy, education and research.

Taking the helm as previously mentioned was NAHB’s Chairman of the Board Joe Robson. A leader in the Tulsa area home building and development industries for more than 25 years, he is the



Peggy McDonald & Kathy Smidt 5. Moe Lasfogel of the RETAIL OBSERVER—long-running racing fan of Jeff Gordon, #24



founder and president of The Robson Companies, Inc., developers of residential communities and commercial properties.

Also moving up on the association's leadership ladder during NAHB's Las Vegas board meeting was Bloomfield Hills, MI based home builder Bob Jones, who was elected to be NAHB's First Vice Chairman of the Board. As president of Robert R. Jones Homes, he specializes in land development and the design and construction of single-family luxury homes throughout metropolitan Detroit. During Jones's 35-year career, he has earned a reputation for excellence and established a continuing commitment to the home building industry across the local, state and national levels.

Reno, NV based builder Bob Nielsen was elected to the post of 2009 Second Vice Chairman. Nielsen has over 25 years of experience in the industry and has overseen the development of more than 45 new home communities housing more than 4,500 families. He is president of Shelter Properties, a building and development company headquartered in northern Nevada that has constructed communities across the state and in California.

Barry Rutenberg, a Gainesville, FL based home builder, joined the NAHB leadership ladder with his election to the post of Third Vice Chairman. Rutenberg is president of Barry Rutenberg and Associates, Inc. in Gainesville. He has more than 30 years of experience in the housing industry and has overseen the development of more than a dozen communities and 1,000 homes in the Gainesville area.

2008 NAHB Chairman of the Board Sandy Dunn, from Point Pleasant, WV, remains on the leadership ladder as Immediate Past Chairman. Dunn is a second-generation West Virginia home builder who has provided affordable housing to Mountain State residents for more than three decades. She is president of Point Pleasant, WV based B.J. Builders, Inc., a company founded by her father in 1953 that specializes in single-family, entry-level homes.

Rounding out the association's leadership is NAHB Executive Vice President and CEO Jerry Howard, from Washington, D.C. Howard heads up a professional staff of more than 300 working out of the National Housing Center in Washington. After previously serving as the association's chief tax counsel, Howard was promoted to EVP/CEO in February of 2001.

PRODUCT REVIEW

Here are just some of the many exciting innovations

1. KITCHEN AID—You've come a long way baby! 2. VIKING BOOTH 3. TONUSA—Dan Tseng, David LaFollette-President Cheng Enterprises, Mary Jo Camp-Standards of Excellence and Fu Tung Cheng 4. CREATIVE COPPER display by Beach Sheet Metal Co. 5. Delicious

that builders saw at the event of the year for the home building and remodeling industry:

APPLIANCES AND PLUMBING:

Amana® brand continues to demonstrate innovation in refrigeration as it introduced a new refrigerator with a beverage reservoir that conveniently holds and dispenses up to 2.5 liters of cold beverages. It's a must-have feature for partygoers and hosts alike.

American Standard® unveiled its new line of walk-in baths that combine safety features that promote independence, pampering amenities and an innovative design that suits any décor. Therapeutic massage systems, deep soaking dimensions and the exclusive Quick Drain™ are just a few of the features of the American Standard walk-in baths.

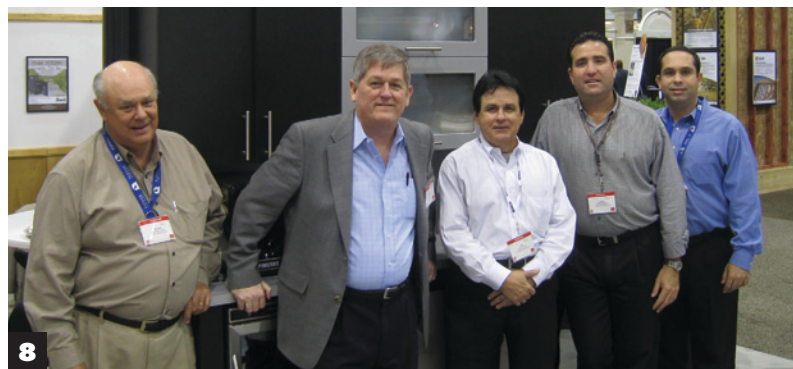
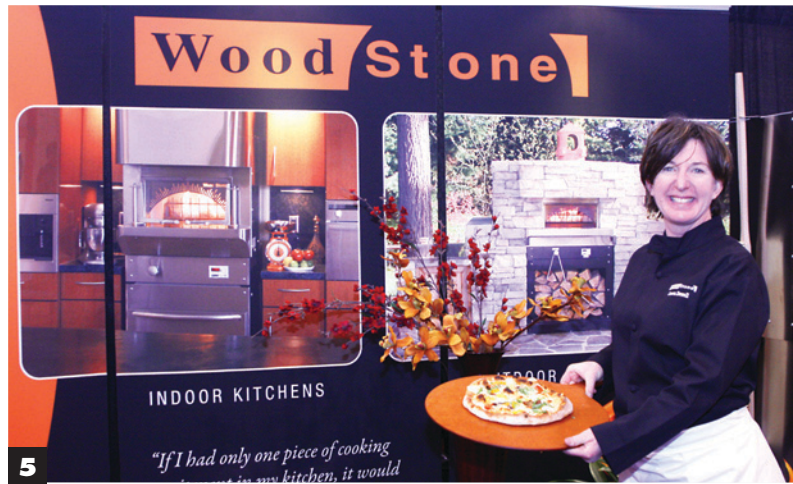
Jenn-Air® introduced an entirely new collection of high-end appliances, including high-performance wall ovens with advanced LCD touchpad controls and the most powerful convection elements on the market. New downdraft cooktops are available in a unique ductless configuration. Also new is the built-in integrated refrigeration with an industry-first 42" French door configuration with the widest refrigerator space available in any flush refrigerator.

KitchenAid®, the iconic brand that traces its roots to the first stand mixer in 1919 and first dishwasher in 1949, celebrates its 90th anniversary. Latest introductions to its broad line of cooking and cleaning essentials include a new dishwasher that cleans dishes 25 percent better than the competition and is the industry's quietest (41db) among highest MSRP models of leading premium brand dishwashers, along with a new Commercial-Style Series cooking line.

Maytag® Jetclean® dishwashers now offer an exclusive Silverware Blast feature that ensures silverware and utensils come out clean the first time, every time. The Silverware Blast feature has four spray jets targeted specifically at the silverware basket to evenly distribute focused water pressure and remove caked-on food particles.

Panasonic is proud to debut its newest ventilation fan. WhisperGreen-Lite FV-08VKML1 features a motion sensor, dual-speed controls, ENERGY STAR® light fixtures and our patented, revolutionary, energy-efficient DC motor. It improves indoor air quality and complies with residential ventilation standards.

Totally Bamboo debuted its | *continued on page 8* |



pizza samples from the wood-fired ovens at WOODSTONE 6. KITCHEN AID's cooking demos with Ed Lindner and Kevin Headley 7. AIR KING booth 8. AVANTI products booth—Michael Flynn, Richard Ladd, Juan Aroix, Mario Rosen & Elias Hernandez



1



2



3



4

newest product, the Solid Bamboo Vessel Sink. With its organic good looks and eco-friendly pedigree, this solid bamboo vessel sink adds unexpected elegance and natural warmth to any bath design.

Travis Industries introduced the new Illuminations Electric Fireplaces™ by Fireplace Xtrordinair™. Unlike traditional electric fireplaces featuring a simulated wood-burning fire, the Illuminations Electric Fireplace features unique candlescapes with realistic flickering candle flame effects. The product is available in Horizontal and Portrait Style Designs.

Whirlpool®, knows that 80 percent of consumers say it's important to save energy. Whirlpool brand leads the way again with a refrigerator that does not sacrifice function as it exceeds federal efficiency standards by more than 30 percent: the Resource Saver™, the most energy-efficient side-by-side refrigerator ever.

DESIGN DETAILS:

ACP has introduced a new decorative metal tile that provides the look of custom metal backsplash and wall paneling at a fraction of the cost of custom metal installations. Whether you are remodeling an entire room or simply accenting a small area, Aspect™ architectural metal tiles create an instant designer flair. The 3" x 6" peel-and-stick tiles are available in brushed stainless, brushed bronze and brushed copper.

Quick Drain™ introduced its new models at IBS 2009, including an award-winning, revolutionary new design for showers. Quick Drain completely changes the design and look of showers. It is the only product of its kind in the U.S. market and 100 percent made in the USA.

ClosetMaid® introduces custom-designed, professionally-installed ExecutiveSuite™, an office storage system that's perfect for everyone looking to streamline their workspaces. In trend upgrades, ClosetMaid welcomes Satin Chrome Wire Shelving, new Candlelight finish to the MasterSuite® line and stylish Oil Rubbed Bronze hardware, both available exclusively to builders.

Tonusa introduced a new line of kitchen cabinetry by world-renowned designer Fu Tung Cheng. Tonusa and Cheng Design have partnered to create a kitchen that is decidedly modern, yet surprisingly timeless with a series that features flexible component layouts, innovative accessories, and environmentally responsible raw materials all at hard-to-believe price points to builders, remodelers, and resellers. **RO**

1. Coffee samples at the BREW EXPRESS Booth with Marcie and Bill Spencer 2. GE PROFILE's outdoor cooking competition — Rob Posthauer, Tomoko Villarin, Stephen Fetterman, Rebecca Larocque and Paul Riley 3. SUMMIT/DANVER — Alan Cohen, Stephen Ross and Mitch Slater 4. Kevin Brown showing off VIKING Intelli-Wash™ dishwasher line-up

LOOK WHO'S READING...

The Retail Observer



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FU-TUNG CHENG AND ELKAY INTRODUCE NEW RIPPLE SINK

NATURE'S SIMPLICITY SHOWCASED IN IMAGINATIVE NEW ELKAY® DESIGNER SINK



Fu-Tung Cheng—hot California green luxury designer—and Elkay are launching the new Ripple sink design as part of the Design Inspirations '08 Collection™. Cheng's Ripple sink (DSG NR72199C) echoes the essence of two pebbles dropped into a still pool, creating a shape as efficient as it is elegant. Combining sleek, fluid lines with versatile function, this innovative sink design serves as an eye-catching and striking addition to any kitchen.

"What's practical should merge with what's poetic; I wanted the sink transformed into a culinary art center. The six-foot sink and drainboard are practical and useful for all food prep tasks including cutting, washing, cleaning and rinsing, making it possible to have something grand in a very small space," notes Cheng.

The double bowl Ripple is 20 inches from front to back, with one bowl stretching over 34 inches long, and the second 17 ½ inches in diameter. The larger bowl is nine inches deep, while the shallower hand and vegetable washing basin is designed at an ergonomically friendly depth of less than two inches. Cheng chose to finish the stainless steel sink in Elkay's Lustrous Satin. Ripple is formed from professional-grade 18 gauge stainless steel and features Elkay's patented Sound Guard® system, ensuring a peaceful experience at the sink.

"While the fused circle design of the sliding custom cutting board and the intersecting rings of the stainless steel bottom grid reinforce the patterns found in nature, they can also be used on the countertop as a practical cutting board and drain rack accessory," Cheng adds. He continues, "While the scale of Ripple is indeed expansive at 72 inches in overall width, the functionality of this

food prep and cleanup station is not too large for any kitchen setting because it provides so much usability and ease, almost negating the need for countertop space."

"Cheng has truly innovated and expanded the kitchen design paradigm with his cutting-edge use of concrete, and he brought that same ingenuity and intelligent design sensibility into his creation and design of the Elkay Ripple sink," states Ann Rottinghaus, Elkay's marketing communications manager for the Plumbing Products Division.

Cheng began at UCLA in the 60's. After a year in Japan as a Regents Scholar studying Buddhism, Japanese culture and the martial arts, Cheng transferred to UC Berkeley, where he graduated with a degree in Fine Arts in 1971 and began a thirty five-year practice of Tai Chi Chuan. From design to construction, Cheng's hands-on approach to sustainable, timeless, custom homes has earned his firm, Cheng Design, (www.chengdesign.com) numerous architectural and interior design awards over the years. He was inducted into the National Kitchen and Bath Association's Hall of Fame in 2006 and won a Bay Area AIA award for exceptional residential design in 2008.

For more than 88 years, Elkay has been an innovative manufacturer of stainless steel sinks, water coolers, drinking fountains and faucets for residential and commercial use. Headquartered in Oak Brook, Illinois, Elkay has more than 5,000 employees in facilities across the United States and select international markets. Elkay is also a member of key industry associations including the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA), and the Plumbing Manufacturers' Institute (PMI). For more information visit Elkay at www.elkayusa.com.

AIRPORT APPLIANCE BRINGS IN ERIC OGREY AS NEW BUYER

Eric Ogrey was with Electrolux as a Northern California District Manager/Key Account Manager and joined Airport Appliance in Hayward, where his title is Buyer, with responsibilities for all appliance buying and inventory control.

Prior to Electrolux, he was Northern California District Manager with LG, and prior to that, was an Appliance Buyer for Fry's Electronics. Welcome on board.

TRI STATE TERRITORY MANAGER CHANGES



Jeff Sloan



Mitch Dickson

Tri State Distributors has made some recent changes in their sales staff. In Western Washington Jeff Sloan has been appointed Territory Manager of luxury products. Dallas Cowan will continue as the other luxury products Territory Manager. Larry Anderson has assumed responsibility for Crosley for all of Western Washington and will also handle all Tri State appliance lines for Alaska.

In Oregon, Mitch Dickson is now Territory Manager for all appliance lines. Mitch has moved to Vancouver, Washington from Spokane where he was a Territory Manager for Hearth Products.

“We feel these personnel adjustments will serve us well going forward” said Don Dickson Jr. Tri State Distributors’ Co-President. “We’ve got a good blend of experience and youth. Dallas and Larry are well known

and respected veterans in the industry. Jeff and Mitch, while relative youngsters, have performed very well in different roles at Tri State and are eager to tackle increased responsibilities.”

METALLO ARTS TRIPLES BUSINESS DURING ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN; CITES CREATIVITY AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

Metallo Arts

Despite an economic downturn which has drastically affected the real estate market and new construction, some companies are managing to not only survive, but grow. Metallo Arts, a manufacturer of custom kitchen hoods, cabinetry, and counters, is an example of this trend. Despite falling home prices and a slowdown which has hurt much of the industry, Metallo Arts has tripled its business over the past six months, increasing its workforce by 75% and expanding its product offerings exponentially.

From the company’s beginnings two years ago selling ornamental metal range hoods based on a prototype exhibited at the 2007 Kitchen and Bath Industry Show, Metallo Arts has grown rapidly, releasing new product lines roughly every six months. Some of these are a natural progression for the company – moving from metal range hoods to cabinetry and

surfaces, for example. Some are more surprising: the company recently inked a deal with Delaubrac, a manufacturer of professional stoves built in France, to be the exclusive North American distributor of Delaubrac’s residential ranges. The unifying thread, according to founder and CEO Christopher Lee Plummer, is finding products which can create a focal point in a kitchen and accentuating those. “Some people might balk at the prices on our range hoods or pewter countertops, but the creative designers see that by specifying a gorgeous countertop or hood, they can create a stunning effect without going all out on the cabinet budget. It’s actually cost effective when you consider the overall kitchen.”

The company’s product offerings have grown in two primary ways: this winter, Metallo Arts released a line of “production hoods” which include a few of their most popular styles at half the price of a custom hood, bringing the company’s design philosophy within reach for more homeowners. At the same time, the company has taken on high-profile, big-budget projects for restaurants in Washington DC and Manhattan and for several celebrities. Plummer declines to discuss specifics, saying “I think the fact that we respect our clients’ privacy is one of our selling points.”

Metallo Arts is unique in many ways: the company operates more like an artist’s workshop than a production line, with staff regularly working late into the night in search of new ideas and techniques. But the secret to its success is unique in a different way. Chris Plummer describes his business model as “social outreach entrepreneurship”. He actively encourages the staff to maintain blogs, comment in forum discussions, and use social networking tools like Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace to connect with potential and past clients, as well as share ideas with designers in the field.

Kitchen design is an exceptionally fertile field for this approach. Many important players in the purchasing process, from designers and architects looking to put a personal stamp on their projects to homeowners who are passionate about the design and construction of every element of their houses, tend to be younger, creative by nature, and actively engaged in the social media of the web—exchanging photos, sources, and showing off pictures of finished work. Meanwhile, the appliance and cabinet industries are heavily dominated by an “old boy network” of sorts, more oriented toward salesmanship than networking. By bridging this disconnect between buyers and sellers, Metallo Arts benefits both from closer relationships with specifying designers and architects, and from more direct feedback from consumers.

A recently survey by the Research Institute for Cooking and Kitchen Intelligence (RICKI) found that 30% of homeowners who recently remodeled their kitchens would spend more money on their kitchen if they were to do it over. Despite a faltering economy, kitchen purchases remain important to consumers for psychological reasons | *continued on page 12* |

as well as economic – a remodeled kitchen is one of the best ways of boosting the resale value of a house. By identifying key areas where homeowners and commercial builders are looking for innovation and developing new products to fill those gaps, Metallo Arts is one of a handful of companies in a position to take advantage of this opportunity.

NEW LEADERSHIP IN NKBA MEMBER SERVICES AND EDUCATION



Claudette Hoffmann

The NKBA has promoted Claudette Hoffmann to the role of Director of Member Services. Claudette had been serving as Acting Director since June 2008. As Director of Member Services, Claudette will continue to be responsible for the planning, development, and implementation of the NKBA's member services strategies and support materials for regions and chapters. Claudette has been with the NKBA since January 1996, previously serving as Manager of Member Services.



Laura Domanico

Laura Domanico, former Manager of Professional Development, has been promoted to Senior Manager of Education, where she will oversee all aspects of the NKBA's educational and professional development programs. This includes leading the development and implementation of NKBA educational courses, certification programs, and corresponding materials. Prior

to joining the NKBA in February 2006, Laura was Dean of Business Development and Community Outreach at Warren County Community College in New Jersey.

MIELE RECOGNIZED WITH 2008 GOOD DESIGN AWARDS FOR THREE DISTINCT PRODUCTS



MIELE'S DISHWASHER, COFFEE SYSTEM AND INDUCTION COOKTOP AWARDED

Miele, the world's most innovative appliance company, has won three GOOD DESIGN™ Awards for its state-of-the-art G 2002 La Perla dishwasher, along with the Miele built-in CVA 4061/4066 coffee system and KM 5700 induction cooktop.

The GOOD DESIGN Award is presented each year by the Chicago Athenaeum, Museum of Architecture and Design. Recipients are recognized for the most innovative and cutting-edge industrial, product and graphic designs produced around the world.

A jury of notable designers selected Miele's dishwasher, coffee system and induction cooktop as examples of distinct design, attesting to the energy, vitality and innovation current in global design today. "The GOOD DESIGN award is truly an emblem of technological advancement and we are thrilled to receive this recognition," states George Tjounakaris, Communications Specialist for Miele's Domestic Product Group. "We proudly accept this award on behalf of our colleagues in Germany."

G 2002 LA PERLA DISHWASHER

Miele's La Perla series represents a giant leap forward in dishwashing innovation – engineered to be the quietest Miele dishwasher yet, it is designed with a Turbo feature that speeds up wash programs by up to 15%. The dishwasher is also equipped with SensorDry; the most advanced drying system on the market that analyzes room temperature to calculate the optimal water heat, rinse aid distribution and drying time. The CleanAir™ drying system circulates room air around the exterior cavity in the machine, pulling moisture from the dishware to the walls of the dishwasher where it drains away. Drying Plus opens the door automatically at the end of the cycle to let out moisture and provide superb results, especially for plastics. "By far, this new series signifies improvements yet to be found even in the upper echelon of the industry," states Tjounakaris. The La Perla dishwasher will be available in February 2009, retailing for an estimated \$2,500.

CVA 4062/4066 COFFEE SYSTEMS

Inventor of the world's first built-in coffee system, Miele's newest design offers advanced touch controls that take the guesswork out of making the perfect coffee, latté, cappuccino, espresso and more. "Push a button to select your coffee or espresso preference, push another to steam the milk and it's that easy to make complex layered drinks like latté and macchiato," states Oliver Schmidt in Miele's Product Development group. The central dispenser is height-adjustable to fit espresso cups, tall mugs or decorative glasses for specialty drinks. An insulated tank made of double-walled stainless steel can hold up to 24 oz. of milk keeping it cool up to 12 hours and allows one-touch preparation of steamed milk and froth drinks. Miele's coffee system will be available to consumers in March 2009.

KM 5700 INDUCTION COOKTOPS

Miele's sophisticated culinary cooking surfaces boast

several unique features including innovative, timing functions, multiple power boosters, cookware recognition and auto heat programs. The power boosters reduce cooking times by raising the temperature setting to its maximum for ten-minute intervals. This performance feature is so fast that cool tap water instantly begins to heat when the booster function is selected. Miele's induction cooktops are currently available and priced between \$2,299 to \$2,799.

Founded in 1988, the Museum is dedicated to the Art of Design in all areas of the discipline: architectural, industrial and product design, graphics and urban planning. The emphasis of the GOOD DESIGN program (chi-athenaeum.org) is on quality of the highest form, function and aesthetic, a standard beyond ordinary consumer products and graphics. The program forwards the ideals of a design process that embodies product excellence and endurance and strong public identity.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY—JOINT CENTER FOR HOUSING STUDIES

HARVARD RELEASES BIENNIAL REPORT ON REMODELING INDUSTRY

EMERGING HOME IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES WILL BOOST SPENDING ONCE MARKET RECOVERS



The US home improvement industry, much like the broader housing market, is experiencing a severe downturn, but prospects for growth are already developing, finds a new report released by

the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. The Remodeling Market in Transition, the latest report in the Improving America's Housing series, finds that in today's uncertain economic environment, owners are likely to focus remodeling spending on projects that improve the energy efficiency of homes, generate cost savings, and maintain structural integrity. While signs suggest the industry is far from reaching bottom, the outlook anticipates the correction to be less severe than that of the home building industry. Key sources of future growth include the increasing demand for green improvements, upgrades to the nation's aging rental stock, and the growing population of immigrant homeowners.

In most parts of the country, home prices are falling, discouraging discretionary home improvement spending and diminishing the amount of equity owners have in their homes. "Earlier this decade, the ability to borrow against equity created by rising home prices fueled remodeling activity, as well as broader consumer spending," says Nicolas P. Retsinas, director of the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies. "Now that

prices have softened, owners cannot finance home improvement projects as easily. Even those with equity find credit harder to obtain due to tighter standards."

The rising number of properties in or at risk of foreclosure is also driving down remodeling activity. Expenditures on owner-occupied units accounted for 84 percent of spending in 2007. Owners at risk of defaulting on their mortgages have less incentive to invest in their homes, and those displaced by foreclosure will reduce the national homeownership rate and, in turn, lower remodeling demand. When housing markets recover, however, foreclosed properties will provide opportunities for home improvements, as banks and new owners renovate and repair these properties and state and local governments make use of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, which allocated \$4 billion for the redevelopment of abandoned and foreclosed properties.

The report also examines areas that will provide opportunities for increased remodeling demand. For example, the consumer shift toward energy-efficient products and systems will pave the way for green remodeling. "If we are going to meet the nation's energy goals, we have to continuously search for ways to improve the residential built environment. The report demonstrates that maximizing energy-efficiency in existing housing may be one of our greatest challenges, but also one of our greatest opportunities given that homes account for almost a quarter of energy consumption in our economy," says Mohsen Mostafavi, dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Design, where attention to green design is a growing focus in the classrooms and studios. "Consumer demand for sustainable design is on the rise. Architects and planners can lead the way in devising appropriate solutions."

Existing rental housing and the growing number of immigrant homeowners will also help reverse this downturn in the remodeling industry. "Years of underinvestment has left the nation's rental stock, at an average age of 36 years, in desperate need of improvement and repair," says Kermit Baker, director of the Remodeling Futures Program, "And foreign-born homeowners, who currently account for more than 10 percent of home improvement spending, are heavily concentrated in their 30s and 40s, ages when families are growing and changing the use of their home." Remodeling still rests on a solid foundation with 130 million homes—and one to two million added yearly—in continuous need of maintenance, upgrades, repairs, and adjustments to meet the nation's changing preferences and lifestyles.

The Remodeling Futures Program, launched by the Joint Center for Housing Studies in 1995, is a comprehensive study of the factors influencing the growth and changing characteristics of housing renovation and repair activity in the United States. The Program seeks to produce a better | *continued on page 14* |

understanding of the home improvement industry and its relationship to the broader residential construction industry.

The Joint Center for Housing Studies is Harvard University's center for information and research on housing in the United States. Established in 1959, the Joint Center is a collaborative unit affiliated with the Graduate School of Design and the Harvard Kennedy School. For more information, visit www.jchs.harvard.edu. **RO**

In Memoriam



ALLAN GRAMLICH, VP OF SALES & MARKETING OF PEERLESS PREMIER APPLIANCE COMPANY

Allan "Al" Gramlich, 83, of Belleville, Ill., born Dec. 20, 1925, in Belleville, Ill., died Tuesday, Jan. 6, 2009, at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Belleville, Ill.

Mr. Gramlich was the Vice-President of Marketing at Peerless-Premier Appliance Company. He had been with the company for 53 years.

He graduated from St. Louis University in 1949 and was a U.S. Army veteran.

He is survived by his wife, Gladys Gramlich; a daughter, Sandy (Mickey) Freed; three sons, Dean (Tammy) Gramlich, Dale Gramlich, and Glen (Julie) Gramlich; a son-in-law, Richard Bertrand; eight grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society, Hospice of Southern Illinois, or to St. Paul's United Church of Christ, Belleville, Ill.

Condolences may be expressed to the family online at www.rennerfh.com. **RO**

Allan Gramlich

born Dec. 20, 1925 - died Jan. 6, 2009

Although words cannot begin to ease the sorrow, please know that Allan and all those who were blessed to know him are in the prayers of so many who care.

...With heartfelt sympathy,
Peerless-Premier Appliance Co.
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LIEBHERR TAKES ADVANTAGE OF NICHE OPPORTUNITIES TO POST SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH IN 2008

Liebherr's worldwide domestic appliance sales experienced growth this past year, and success in the North American market played a significant role in the rising numbers. "Key features of our products allow us to offer something different to the consumer, especially with our freestanding product line," states Marc Perez, Vice President of Liebherr North America. "Our independent dealers have a real opportunity to provide their customers high-end professional performance and style at a mass premium price point. In this economy, discriminating consumers simply want more for less," added Perez.

Liebherr's freestanding line is the only premium dual refrigeration, cabinet-depth product line on the market offering an excellent alternative to built-in at a better value. "Slide them in and enjoy," says Perez. "These units are literally plug and play." And from a dealer's perspective, these units can also be an affordable upgrade to take a step up in performance and still stay within budget.

Other important distinctions about Liebherr's freestanding refrigerators include:

- Dual refrigeration—separate silent cooling systems ensure accurate temperature and humidity control. Ice-cold dry air circulates in the Freezer section, while the Refrigerator maintains cool moist air to seal in vitamins and safeguard food; there is no transfer of unwanted air; moisture or food aroma between the two compartments
- When the units are not fitting in to an existing space, all stainless steel sides give the design flexibility to have the refrigerators anywhere in the kitchen.
- Availability in 24", 30", 36", 48" and 60" widths.
- Achieving 100% ENERGY STAR® rating in all refrigeration products sold in North America and being one of the greenest choices on the market due to Liebherr's ActiveGreen responsible manufacturing initiatives.

Visit liebherr-appliances.com to view Liebherr's full product line of freestanding, built-in and fully integrated refrigeration and wine storage products. **RO**



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Freestanding freedom

Liebherr offers design flexibility with its freestanding product line in 24", 30", 36", 48" and 60" widths. With cabinet-depth dimensions and stainless steel sides, the refrigerator can go anywhere in the kitchen. Experience the look of a built-in, without the price of building in.

The 36" CS 2062 has unique LED light columns and LED drawer lights illuminate almost 20 cubic feet of storage capacity. The dual refrigeration system, with two separate variable speed compressors, provides superior and consistent cooling in the most energy efficient manner possible. And the elegant French doors coupled with double freezer drawers make it a kitchen showpiece.



CS 2062 freestanding model shown.



PCBC AT 50
the new age of invention

PCBC® 2009 / JUNE 17-19 / MOSCONE CENTER / SAN FRANCISCO

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY OF HOMEBUILDING SHOW PROMPTS SPECIAL PRICING OFFERS

Online registration is now under way for the 50th PCBC® homebuilder conference and trade show, which will take place June 17-19 at San Francisco's Moscone Center. Homebuilding industry professionals can register or learn more about the Show by visiting www.pcbc.com.

This year, PCBC has retooled itself to be an essential resource for builders, architects, trade contractors and other industry leaders, said Linda Baysari, the Show's Senior Vice President for Conventions and Meetings.

"PCBC has a well-deserved reputation for innovation and providing new perspectives, but this year in particular we wanted to really hone in on the big questions the leaders of our industry are struggling with," Baysari said. "To that end, we will have some of the industry's brightest thinkers on hand to give builders and developers strategic insights to help them navigate their companies through these challenging times."

For 2009, PCBC has reinvented itself in numerous ways. To begin with, the Show is no longer PCBC The Premier Building Show, but is now called PCBC—Advancing the Art + Science of Community Building, reflecting the Show's growing emphasis on building community. In addition, conference programs have been retooled and streamlined into the new PCBC Executive Conference, which Baysari called a two-day idea marketplace where the best and brightest in the business meet.

"This year, we are focusing almost exclusively on the needs of senior executives in terms of educational content," Baysari said. "In conjunction with our renowned Leader to Leader Forum, PCBC will more than ever give top homebuilding leaders a wide range of views on the top issues they face—plus the invaluable personal connections that PCBC is known for."

Also refocused are the two other conferences presented by PCBC during the week of the Show—the Builder to Builder Green Forum and the Multifamily Trends Conference, which this year for the first time will be produced in conjunction with Marcus and Millichap, the nation's largest brokerage firm specializing in real estate investments.

But some things remain the same. As always, the Show floor will feature the products and services of hundreds of the industry's leading suppliers.

And because this is PCBC's golden anniversary, the Show has prepared a couple of anniversary presents to both conference and exhibits attendees. Topping the list is 50/50 pricing, in which each person who purchases an Executive Conference registration also receives a second conference pass as a gift. And for exhibits-only attendees, the price of a three-day pass has been rolled back from \$95 last year to \$50. **RO**



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SLUGGISH ECONOMY SPURS HOMEOWNERS TO INVEST IN ENERGY EFFICIENCY

PROPANE
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Times may be tough, but spending constraints have sharpened homeowners' interest in investing to make their homes more energy efficient. This was one of the key findings of a recent survey sponsored by the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC) and conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation. Energy efficiency was a top priority for homeowners surveyed, with 80 percent reporting they are "concerned" about the energy efficiency of their homes. Their concern is as pragmatic as it is altruistic, with 70 percent of those concerned citing equal consideration for saving money and helping or protecting the environment. In fact, fewer than two in ten homeowners (17 percent) said the energy efficiency of their homes has become less important in today's economy because they can't afford to make changes. Almost four in ten (39 percent) said that the energy efficiency of their homes has become more important due to long-term opportunities to save energy costs.

IMPACT OF THE ECONOMY ON ENERGY DECISIONS

While construction professionals and appliance dealers might assume that homeowners with tighter belts are less interested in home improvement and new appliances, the reverse is true, according to this survey; more than half the homeowners surveyed (57 percent) said they are likely to invest in new home appliances or home improvements in the next year or two. Among those planning upgrades, most (61 percent) said they are likely to do so to save on monthly energy bills, while only 17 percent said they are likely to do so because it is the right thing to do for the environment. Just 13 percent cited improving the resale value of the home. Among the energy-efficient updates survey respondents said they would like to make to their homes in the next five years, tankless water heaters garnered the greatest interest. Tankless water heaters became more appealing on January 1, 2009, when they qualified for the ENERGY STAR rating. ENERGY STAR is a government-backed program

that helps builders and consumers identify the most energy-efficient products. After tankless water heaters, homeowners reported interest in appliances that simultaneously use and generate energy get the most interest from homeowners, according to the study. The freewatt system, which was featured in the PERC booth during the International Builders Show, is the first system available that heats the home while it generates electricity.

WHAT "LIVING GREEN" MEANS TO HOMEOWNERS

The idea of living green is ubiquitous in the home industry today, but homeowners surveyed said green means many things in home energy use. Using energy from renewable resources was a definition cited by 83 percent of homeowners surveyed, with 77 percent defining green as reduced carbon dioxide emissions, and 69 percent citing reduced total energy usage or using appliances that simultaneously use and generate energy. Homeowners also placed high priority on green home expertise. Eight in ten respondents said that if they were to build a new home or make improvements to their current home, they would



work with professionals who have expertise in green building or green appliances.

PROPANE OFFERS ALTERNATIVES FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

"Homeowners who want to help save energy and protect the environment are choosing propane, a highly energy-efficient, clean fuel that's available right now," stated Tracy Bursleson, PERC director of residential trade outreach and partnerships. When construction professionals build with propane, she added, they can earn up to 199 points toward green building certification from the National Association of Home Builders — putting the project halfway to Gold certification simply by choosing propane as the energy source. For more information about building with propane and the latest energy-efficient appliances, visit www.buildwithpropane.com. **RO**

ATLANTIS OUTDOOR KITCHENS—IT'S ALL NEW!

ISLAND KITCHENS, PERMA-PANEL DOORS, NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION



Whatever the occasion, outdoor celebrations are certain to revolve around food. The outdoor kitchen is a hot renovation trend for new and existing homes as consumers seek to make their backyard a welcome escape (or staycation) from the stress of everyday life. Atlantis Outdoor Kitchens is the leader in this category with its weatherproof Perma-Panel engineering and beautiful custom wood designs in Teak and Cypress.

“For over 40 years at CWP (Custom Wood Products), we’ve made quality custom cabinets,” states Jack Hans, President & CEO of CWP, Rich Maid and Atlantis Outdoor Kitchens. “Designers, architects and consumers trust

Atlantis to deliver the same quality and innovation in their custom weatherproof cabinetry. And we deliver. Our Perma-Panel designs are unmatched for their durability and resistance to even the most extreme weather conditions. Now homeowners have a choice in outdoor kitchen design—beyond traditional stone or brick—they can have a luxurious custom wood panel design that withstands the test of time.”

Atlantis has a network of authorized dealers throughout the country who also design and sell their quality outdoor kitchens.

ENGINEERED TOUGH. EASY TO CLEAN. PERMA-PANEL.

This tough material defies weather and climate changes. Its unique polymer construction can withstand well over 100 degree heat or temperatures below freezing. Perma-Panel will not warp, crack or deteriorate over time and is specifically engineered to be used outdoors. Everything in the cabinet is weather resistant and is easily cleaned with a garden hose and a scrub brush.

REAL WOOD. WEATHERPROOF LUXURY

Now, the elegance of real wood is possible on a custom outdoor kitchen. Atlantis offers Teak and Cypress doors over their weatherproof Perma-Panel cabinets. Boat builders prefer Teak and Cypress woods for their renowned durability and resistance to moisture. Their luxurious warm tones elevate the look of and feel of an outdoor kitchen environment.

ESCAPE TO THE ISLANDS...

Like its indoor counterpart, the outdoor island serves as a work surface and eating area. Custom cabinetry features combine to create a unique design suited to individual cooking styles. Atlantis features nine colors and nine different door styles. Its full access cabinetry stores and organizes backyard barbecuing essentials with style, utility, durability and sophistication.

For more information or a dealer near them, consumers can call 800.366.2971 or visit www.atlantiscabinetry.com. Outdoor kitchens start around \$5,500.



ABOUT ATLANTIS OUTDOOR KITCHENS

Atlantis Outdoor Kitchens leads the outdoor kitchen category with its weatherproof Perma-Panel engineering and beautiful custom wood designs in Teak and Cypress. Atlantis Outdoor Kitchens is a division of Custom Wood Products, LLC, of Roanoke, VA. For over 40 years Custom Wood Products (CWP) has been producing high-quality custom cabinetry for the kitchen, bath, and other rooms of the house. Consumers can visit an authorized dealer/showroom in their area to learn more. In addition to outdoor cabinets, Atlantis also offers built-in grills and grill accessories from trusted names in outdoor appliances such as Lynx, Vermont Castings, Summit and Marvel. **RO**

SPEED QUEEN INTRODUCES IMPERIAL SERIES

A TRUE STAINLESS STEEL PAIR

Speed Queen begins its next century in the laundry business with the introduction of the new Imperial Series. These products take all the strengths of the brand's rugged frontload washer and dryer pair and incorporate a classy, modern, stainless steel makeover.

"The new Imperial Series pairs true stainless steel cabinets and cylinders, the same high grade stainless steel you'll find on our commercial equipment, with our already heavy-duty internal components," said Chuck Melton, national sales manager of the Speed Queen consumer line. "But the true beauty of our Imperial Series resides in the fantastic results the pair delivers for your wash loads," he added.

In addition, this pair comes with four, colored inserts enabling you to customize your washer and dryer controls to match your laundry. For greater style, comfort and a matching look, customers can purchase 8-inch pedestals in the four colors of the control inserts.

With a 3.3-cubic-foot capacity, the frontload washer easily washes loads as big as 13 bath towels or eight king-size sheets in just 44 minutes. Best of all, the washer helps cut your laundry costs by using just 13.9 gallons of water per cycle. The washer's 300 G-force final spin also assists in conserving utilities by removing more water from loads, greatly reducing drying time.

Speed Queen's Imperial Series dryer has an extra-large 7.0-cubic-foot cylinder. When combined with our efficient drying process and a large 2.06-square-foot door opening, this machine helps you make short work of your laundry task.

But as most in the industry know, Speed Queen's reputation goes deeper than the products' exteriors. Their true strength lies within, with true commercial quality components and steel frame designs. Highlights include:

IMPERIAL SERIES WASHER

- Stainless steel washtub with fully integrated stainless steel baffles and 5,499 perforations
- Stainless steel outer draitub
- 1-horsepower commercial motor
- Heavy duty shock absorbers
- 10-inch stainless steel hinge

IMPERIAL SERIES DRYER

- Quiet, efficient blower system
- Stainless steel cylinder

This high quality design is bolstered by an industry-leading three-year parts and labor warranty and a five-year limited warranty on all parts, plus a lifetime bond on the stainless steel cylinder and outer drain tub. Speed Queen's heavy duty designs and superior warranty have made the brand's products the preferred choice of coin and apartment laundries around the world.

For more information about the new Imperial Series from Speed Queen visit www.speedqueen.com/home/stainless. **RO**



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Speed Queen® PRESENTS

THE IMPERIAL SERIES



Speed Queen begins its second century in business with another crowning achievement. The Imperial Series combines true stainless steel construction, inside and out, with the peerless performance the brand is known for. The results are a regal look for your laundry room and royal treatment of your laundry loads. Visit us at www.speedqueen.com/imperial



Laundry — it's all we do.

THE NKBA ANNOUNCES 2009 KITCHEN & BATH INDUSTRY HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Three professionals recognized for their outstanding service to the kitchen and bath industry. The National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) is proud to announce the 2009 inductees into the Kitchen & Bath Industry Hall of Fame, which honors individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to the industry. These following leaders have contributed to the excellence of the industry.

KENNETH E. ANDERSON, CKD, founded TASK Lighting Corporation in 1985. This was based on his own frustration over the lack of incandescent under-cabinet lighting in the kitchen and bath industry. Luche was the trade name for the company's first lighting system, and it remains one of the mainstays for the firm today. Over the years, other concepts have evolved, earning Anderson three patents. Today, TASK remains a groundbreaking force in incandescent, LED, and fluorescent lighting concepts. Nationally-conducted seminars are hosted by TASK to instruct designers on how to integrate lighting into their total design. Mr. Anderson has taught more than 100 TASK seminars, in addition to speaking at the NKBA's Kitchen/Bath Industry Show (K/BIS) educational courses. He has won multiple national design awards and held various NKBA leadership positions. Mr. Anderson has also served on the NKBA's Board of Governors of Manufacturers and the K/BIS Ad Hoc Committee.

JAMES J. BAKKE is President and CEO of Sub-Zero, Inc. and Wolf Appliance, Inc. He is the third-generation in Bakke-family leadership of the refrigeration innovator, Sub-Zero, which was founded in 1945. Spending ten years in various positions in the business, he was named President in 1990 and CEO in 1992. He was instrumental in introducing the new built-in refrigeration line, the integrated 700 Series, and the new line of beautiful and functional wine storage. With the acquisition of Wolf Gourmet in 2000, Mr. Bakke brought the Wolf cooking line into the corporate family, expanding the line of ranges, cooktops, and ovens, while raising recognition to equal Sub-Zero. He was recently honored by Builder magazine for his 30 years of innovation in the industry.

MARY JO PETERSON, CKD, CBD, CAPS, CAASH is an author, speaker and instructor for the NKBA. Ms. Peterson is the owner of Connecticut-based design practice, Mary Jo Peterson, Inc.; where her focus is residential and commercial building projects in the New England region. She has worked with national builders and product manufacturers on staff training and design of spaces and products, incorporating universal concepts. Her design work has won national recognition from the NKBA, the NAHB 50+ Housing Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Building Sciences Museum, AIA, Easter Seals, and Century 21 in the Easy Access Housing Awards for excellence in universal design. Ms. Peterson actively promotes change and education toward the integration of access, sustainability, and beautiful design. **RO**



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Call today to schedule your appointment with a consultant.



SHOWROOM



Moving Toward Responsible Appliance Disposal: How Retailers Can Partner with EPA

Background

Refrigerators/freezers manufactured prior to 1995 contain ozone-depleting refrigerants and/or foam blowing agents. In addition to depleting the stratospheric ozone layer, these substances are also potent greenhouse gases (GHGs) that contribute to climate change when emitted to the atmosphere. While the refrigerants used in newly manufactured units are still potent GHGs, these appliances do not contain ozone depleting substances (ODS) and are significantly more energy efficient than older models. Similarly, window air-conditioners and dehumidifiers contain environmentally harmful refrigerants, and the older units consume significantly more energy than newer ones.

To reduce ozone depletion, global climate impacts, and energy demand, it is critical that older units be permanently removed from the energy grid and properly disposed of so that environmentally-harmful refrigerants and foam blowing agents are captured and recycled or destroyed.

Impacts of Destroying the Ozone Layer

Depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer results in increased levels of ultraviolet (UV) radiation at the earth's surface. This, in turn, causes a number of adverse health effects in both humans and the environment:

Human Health Effects:

- Melanoma skin cancer
- Non-melanoma skin cancer
- Cataracts
- Lowering of immunological defenses

Environmental Health Effects:

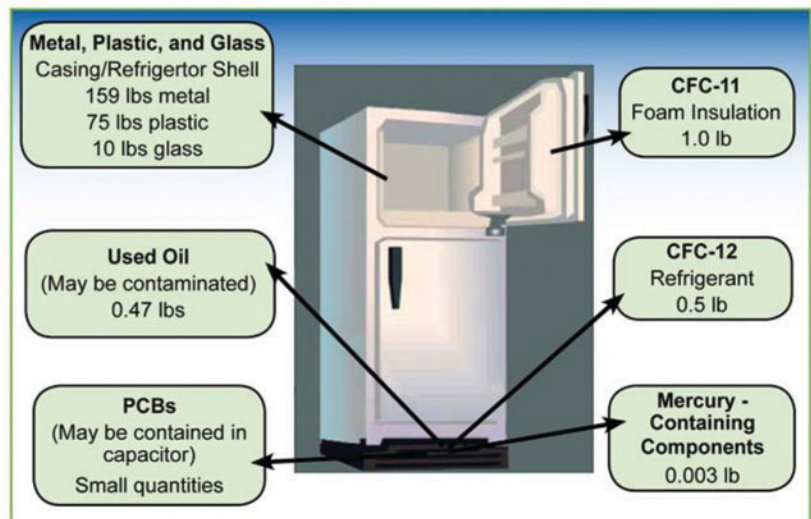
- Crop damage (i.e., reduction in yield/quality, decline in photosynthetic activity, and susceptibility to disease)
- Decline in health of aquatic ecosystems, including the reproduction, growth, and survival of fish and amphibians

In 2008, RAD Partners disposed of more than 1 million refrigerant-containing appliances; resulted in ozone depleting substance emissions reductions of over 550 ODP-weighted tons.

Scope of the Problem

Currently in the U.S., roughly *8 million* refrigerators/freezers are disposed each year, typically without recovery of foam. Moreover, an estimated 40% of used appliances collected by retailers are placed on the secondary market each year—meaning that they may be put back on the domestic electricity grid, where they continue to operate inefficiently, consuming excessive amounts of electricity. Alternately, some of the operational units are exported to developing countries, where they are less likely to be handled responsibly at end-of-life.

The typical refrigerator manufactured prior to 1995 (and thus most likely to be disposed) contains CFCs, mercury, used oil, and possibly, PCBs—in addition to recyclable metals, plastics, and glass (see graphic, right).



Why is the proper disposal of old appliances important?

- Prevent emissions of ODS and GHGs by not allowing the release of refrigerants and foam blowing agents
- Prevent the release of toxic substances by recovering and properly treating/disposing of PCBs, mercury, and used oil
- Save landfill space and energy by recycling durable materials instead of landfilling them (eliminating the need to produce virgin materials)

RAD partners disposed of more than 1 million refrigerant-containing appliances in 2008; this resulted in 4 million MtCO₂eq greenhouse gas emissions reductions, equivalent to:



What is required by law?

When refrigerators and freezers are taken out of service, Federal law requires that:

- All refrigerant be recovered prior to dismantling or disposing appliances (40 CFR Part 82 Subpart F); and
- Universal waste (e.g., mercury), used oil, and PCBs be properly managed and stored (40 CFR Parts 273, 279, 761).

State laws may have additional requirements concerning the handling of appliances.

What can retailers do?

Appliance retailers can ensure that old appliances they collect from customers at the time new units are delivered are responsibly disposed of using the best environmental practices available. To realize additional environmental benefits in the form of reduced energy consumption, retailers can also ensure that old units are permanently removed from the electricity grid—i.e., by not reselling them in the U.S. or abroad.

To this end, retailers can establish policies requiring their third-party contractors responsible for appliance pick-up/delivery to reclaim or destroy foam blowing agents, comply with all federal and state regulations, and report on the amounts of waste streams recycled, reclaimed, and destroyed. Retailers committed to ensuring contractor compliance with environmental laws may already have similar reporting and/or auditing programs in place.

EPA's Responsible Appliance Disposal (RAD) Program

The U.S. EPA's Responsible Appliance Disposal (RAD) Program for retailers is a voluntary program that helps protect the ozone layer and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Through the Program, retailers provide for the disposal of these units using the best environmental practices available.

Through the voluntary RAD Program, EPA aims to partner with retailers as well as manufacturers, utilities, universities, and municipalities to reap environmental benefits through responsible appliance disposal. In an ideal appliance disposal program, partners would ensure that:

- Refrigerant is recovered and reclaimed/destroyed
- Foam is recovered and destroyed, or the blowing agent is recovered/ reclaimed
- Metals, plastics, and glass are recycled
- PCBs, mercury, and used oil are properly disposed
- Energy consumption is reduced by limiting the resale of old appliances collected at the time of new appliance delivery

As part of the Program, EPA serves as a technical clearinghouse on responsible appliance disposal program development and implementation; calculates annual

and cumulative program benefits in terms of ODS and GHG emission savings and equivalents and, as available, potential cost savings; and provides partner recognition for achievement through press releases, brochures, articles, and awards.

The Partner (e.g., the retailer) implements best practices for the recycling/disposal of refrigerators, freezers, room air-conditioning units, and/or dehumidifiers, and reports available program information annually. Information to be provided in the annual report includes: the number of appliances collected; the type and quantity of refrigerant reclaimed/ destroyed; the type and quantity of foam blowing agent destroyed; the weight of metals, plastics, and glass recycled; and the quantity of hazardous waste products recovered/destroyed.

For more information, please contact: **Evelyn Swain, (202) 343-9956, swain.evelyn@epa.gov**

BOSCH PRODUCTS AWARDED 2008 GOOD DESIGN AWARD

BOSCH GAS COOKTOPS, AXXIS LAUNDRY AND TASSIMO RECOGNIZED FOR DISTINCTION IN DESIGN



BOSCH

Bosch, the appliance manufacturer known worldwide for efficiency, superior performance and excellent quality, announced today that its 800 Series gas cooktops, Axxis® laundry and TASSIMO hot beverage system are recipients of 2008 GOOD DESIGN™ Awards. Presented by the Chicago Athenaeum, Museum of Architecture and Design, the annual award recognizes products and graphics worldwide for their distinctive design. "Bosch products have been recognized three years in a row for their innovative design by the GOOD DESIGN Awards," said Michael Traub, President and CEO of BSH Home Appliances Corporation. "This award reflects our commitment as a manufacturer to exceed efficiency and design standards to meet the needs of today's consumer."

BOSCH 800 SERIES GAS COOKTOP

Bosch delivers premium quality, flexibility and design with its newly engineered lineup of gas cooktops. Both the 800 Series 30" and 36" models provide versatility in any kitchen setting with their low profile design, exclusive PowerSim™ and OptiSim™ burners, and easy-to-access front-center control panel featuring sleek metal knobs. The lineup is led by a space-efficient 30" five burner model that allows customers to fully maximize their kitchen space.

BOSCH AXXIS LAUNDRY

The highly versatile 24" Axxis makes high quality laundry a reality for homeowners and builders of every type of property, no matter the size. The front-loading, stackable Axxis washer boasts the largest capacity in its class at 3.4 cubic feet, which can accommodate up to 14 pairs of jeans. Furthermore, the companion Condensation Dryer can be installed anywhere since it does not require any ducting or venting, making it ideal for interior rooms, closets and apartments.

TASSIMO BY BOSCH

Offering over 40 hot beverage varieties through patented T DISC technology, the TASSIMO single-serve hot beverage system brews premium coffeehouse quality beverages, including four distinct coffee blends from Starbucks®. TASSIMO utilizes T DISCs, which guarantee first-cup freshness every time. This technology enables the machine to read the barcode on each T DISC, ensuring that the brew temperature and amount of water are automatically adjusted for the perfect cup. **RO**



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DACOR EXPANDS PRESENCE IN BUILDER CATEGORY

NEW RELATIONSHIP ENHANCES DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS TO REACH BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS



Dacor, market leader in luxury kitchen appliance design, manufacturing and distribution, announced at the 2009 International Builders' Show the launch of a comprehensive builder program, which included a selection of basic and custom packages for builders. The announcement also included details of a new relationship with Sears Commercial, a complete appliance resource designed to meet the many needs of today's commercial customers that will enhance the existing dealer network, which has successfully reached out to builders and contractors over the years and continues to thrive.

Through the new program, builders will have even greater access to the brand's suite of premium performance appliances, so they can continue to take their clients' projects to the next level. And as a luxury brand, through Sears Commercial, Dacor will have access to unparalleled services and specialized Account Manager attention for their trade customers, with complete support from start to finish and the help of a knowledgeable professional builder specialist team.

"We are excited about the opportunities our new relationship and comprehensive builder program will present for Dacor within the commercial category," said Steve Lippmann, V.P. of Builder Sales at Dacor. "We know that penetrating this market during these challenging times will not be easy, however, with the continued support of our healthy dealer network and the assistance of Sears Commercial and, we are confident that we will gain a strong foothold within the category."

Dacor offers a complete line of luxury appliances that are as stylish as they are functional for the home chef with a genuine passion for cooking and the homeowner who believes their kitchen is a showplace for entertaining. In 2008, the company introduced appliances that were designed specifically with the builder in mind; the Epicure® 30" Gas Range and Renaissance Wall Ovens. Both offer precision cooking for the optimum ownership experience as well as reliable performance and trouble-free installation, so the builders' and contractors' reputations remain intact.

Basic appliance packages feature everything the home chef needs: a Preference® Over the Range Microwave, Epicure Dishwasher, Refrigerator and 30" Gas or Dual-Fuel Range or the Millennia® 30" Renaissance Wall Oven/Preference Cooktop combination. These sleek stainless steel appliances have the perfect blend of innovation, style and function and will invite cooks to unleash their inner gourmet.

Builders can upgrade any one of the basic packages with an Epicure 36" Renaissance Wall Oven, Preference 36" Renaissance Cooktop, Epicure 36" Ventilation Hood and the Preference 24" Microwave, which can be built into the cabinetry or displayed on a countertop. Custom packages featuring the Epicure 48" Dual-Fuel Range and the popular Microwave In-A-Drawer are also available.

In addition to the luxury packages, with the launch of builder program, Dacor is also releasing a comprehensive brochure that outlines all of the products, as well as updating the website with new information and easy access to tools that will assist builders with selling Dacor products.

Builders, contractors and other trade professionals can find out more about the new builder program and request information by visiting dacor.com/builder. **RO**



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AHAM APPLAUDS APPLIANCE STIMULUS

\$300 MILLION CONSUMER REBATE PROGRAM WILL SPUR CONSUMER SPENDING, INCREASE ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM) applauds the House Appropriations Committee for the economic stimulus provision released yesterday which includes \$300 million to provide consumers with rebates for buying ENERGY STAR® products to replace old appliances. This provision provides the funding necessary to implement this consumer rebate program which was authorized under the Energy Policy Act of 2005. AHAM fully supports this program, which is to be administered by the states.

A consumer rebate program will result in dramatic savings for consumers. If every household in California alone upgraded to ENERGY STAR appliances, residents would save more than \$1.2 billion in utility costs per year. The consumer rebate would offset the cost differential between ENERGY STAR and non-ENERGY STAR appliances such as refrigerator-freezers, dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers. These savings, coupled with the lifetime energy savings, would more than pay for the total investment in the new appliances.

This rebate also provides an important benefit to the environment. By replacing appliances with ENERGY STAR appliances, California alone would save more than 10 billion kWh per year. "Funding this federal-state appliance rebate program will benefit consumers by reducing the cost of ENERGY STAR appliances and provide them with additional discretionary income by way of reduced utility bills. The energy savings and climate benefits are also significant. It's a practical, effective public policy measure at this time. Retiring older, less efficient appliances with ENERGY STAR products is the single, most cost effective step a consumer can take to save money and energy," stated Joseph M. McGuire, AHAM President. "The home appliance industry urges

Congress and the President to enact this measure."

The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM) is a not-for-profit trade association representing manufacturers of major, portable and floor care home appliances, and suppliers to the industry and is headquartered in Washington, DC.

Visit the AHAM web site at <http://www.aham.org>

FIVE APPLIANCES THAT CAN HELP YOU SAVE MONEY

Many Americans are finding themselves looking for ways to save money. The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM) has come up with a list of five appliances that may already be in your home, which can help you save money.

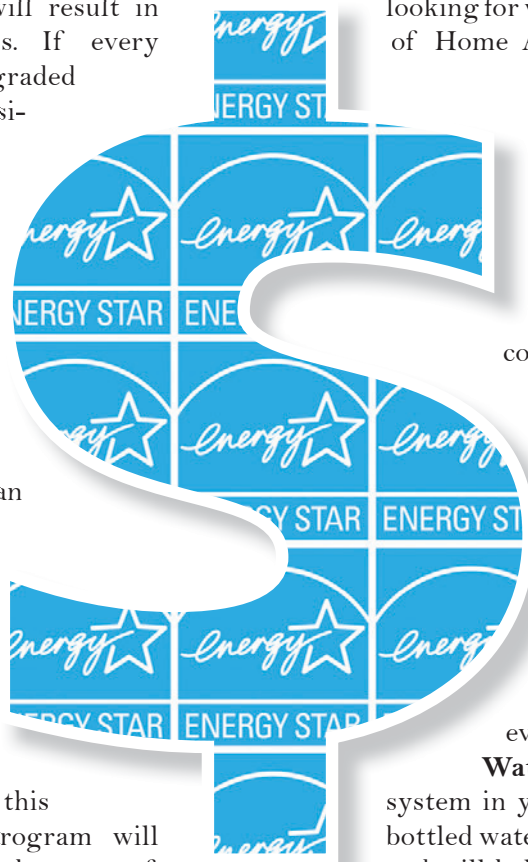
Coffemakers—Save on pricy coffeehouse blends by brewing your morning cup at home. Resisting a three dollar cup of coffee will save you nearly \$1,000 per year!

Freezers—Stock up on frozen foods when they are on sale. In 2008, shipments of home freezers were up five percent as consumers started to realize the savings in stocking up on frozen sale items. Also, remember to shop for an ENERGY STAR freezer to save even more on energy costs.

Water filters—Use a water filtration system in your refrigerator instead of buying bottled water. This practice will save you money, and will help the environment by reducing the number of plastic bottles that clog landfills.

Portable electric heaters—Turn down the heat and use portable heaters in rooms that are used frequently. Keeping the thermostat down will save money while portable heaters provide direct and quick warmth.

Cook at home—An electric oven turned on for one hour on 350°F only uses 2kWh of electricity, costing just 24 cents. The cost of dining out can add up quickly. Try cooking at home for a low-cost meal. **RO**



MAJOR HOME APPLIANCE INDUSTRY DOMESTIC SHIPMENTS*

DECEMBER 31, 2008—THOUSANDS OF UNITS

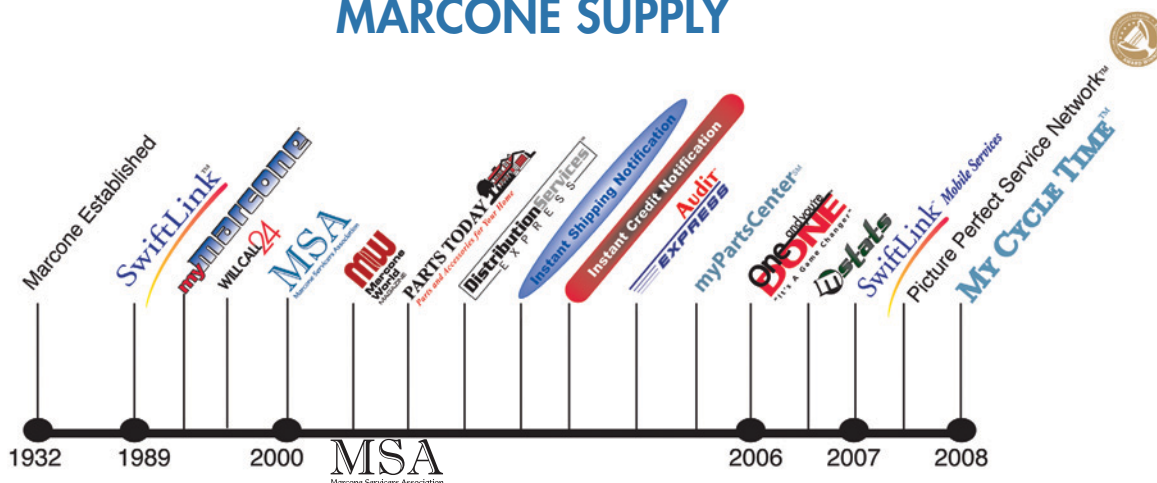
PRODUCT	CURRENT MONTH			YEAR TO DATE		
	2008	2007	%CHG	2008	2007	%CHG
All Major Appliances	5,337.3	6,046.1	(11.7)%	68,187.2	74,876.0	(8.9)%
Cooking-Total	1,740.0	1,935.4	(10.1)%	19,290.6	21,175.6	(8.9)%
Electric Cooking - Total	465.8	574.9	(19.0)%	5,106.6	5,990.8	(14.8)%
Electric Ranges	362.6	441.5	(17.9)%	3,972.8	4,612.4	(13.9)%
Electric Ovens	65.3	84.8	(22.9)%	700.4	866.6	(19.2)%
Surface Cooking Units	37.9	48.7	(22.2)%	433.4	511.7	(15.3)%
Gas Cooking - Total	280.3	326.9	(14.3)%	2,842.7	3,333.5	(14.7)%
Gas Ranges	243.3	275.9	(11.8)%	2,408.4	2,780.6	(13.4)%
Gas Ovens	5.5	7.2	(23.4)%	47.0	55.9	(15.8)%
Surface Cooking Units	31.5	43.9	(28.3)%	387.3	497.1	(22.1)%
Microwave Ovens	994.0	1,033.5	(3.8)%	11,341.3	11,851.3	(4.3)%
Home Laundry - Total	1,444.2	1,621.7	(10.9)%	15,265.8	16,379.1	(6.8)%
Automatic Washers	778.4	868.0	(10.3)%	8,291.7	8,825.0	(6.0)%
Dryers - total	665.8	753.6	(11.7)%	6,974.1	7,554.1	(7.7)%
Electric	533.2	609.2	(12.5)%	5,619.7	6,036.1	(6.9)%
Gas	132.6	144.4	(8.2)%	1,354.4	1,518.0	(10.8)%
Kitchen Clean Up - Total	1,035.6	1,224.0	(15.4)%	11,579.2	13,463.8	(14.0)%
Disposers	482.4	578.0	(16.5)%	5,509.6	6,385.1	(13.7)%
Dishwashers - Total	546.5	635.8	(14.0)%	5,995.1	6,976.8	(14.1)%
Built-In	537.2	623.0	(13.8)%	5,903.4	6,866.6	(14.0)%
Portable	9.3	12.8	(27.3)%	91.7	110.2	(16.8)%
Compactors	6.7	10.2	(34.5)%	74.5	101.8	(26.9)%
Food Preservation - Total	900.0	1,073.9	(16.2)%	11,409.8	12,394.3	(7.9)%
Refrigerators	718.5	891.3	(19.4)%	9,314.8	10,402.3	(10.5)%
Freezers - Total	181.5	182.6	(.6)%	2,095.1	1,992.1	5.2%
Chest	109.1	107.5	1.5%	1,243.6	1,190.5	4.5%
Upright	72.4	75.1	(3.6)%	851.5	801.6	6.2%
Home Comfort - Total	217.6	191.0	13.9%	10,641.8	11,463.2	(7.2)%
Room Air Conditioners	188.0	104.9	79.3%	9,085.5	9,459.7	(4.0)%
Dehumidifiers	29.6	86.2	(65.7)%	1,556.3	2,003.6	(22.3)%
AHAM 6***	3,567.4	4,140.7	(13.8)%	39,799.4	44,065.8	(9.7)%

* Includes shipments for the U.S. market whether imported or domestically produced. Export shipments are NOT included

** For period of four weeks between Nov. 23, 2008-Dec. 31, 2008 vs Nov 25, 2007-Dec 31, 2007

*** AHAM 6 includes: Washers, Dryers, Dishwashers, Refrigerators, Freezers, Ranges and Ovens.
Includes revisions posted through 1/10/2009

MARCONE SUPPLY



For more than 70 years Marcone Supply has been a world class distribution company winning over customers through steadfast quality standards, extensive inventory, cutting-edge technology and a strong commitment to customer service. With 40 branches, 9 regional distribution centers, 3 national call centers, and next day service to over 92% of the U.S., “Marcone Supply” has long been a household name in the appliance parts industry. But, for those of you who think we are simply an appliance parts distributor...you’re in for a surprise. Marcone Supply is also your one-stop shop for property maintenance supplies, home essentials and cooling & heating supplies.

For decades our customers have trusted us to provide them with the appliance parts they need to run their businesses effectively and satisfy their customers’ needs. We apply that same dedication, reliability and level of service to our *Property Maintenance* division. We are an all inclusive resource for maintenance professionals; offering the industry’s most extensive selection of over 100,000 standard specialty plumbing, cooling & heating, electrical, service essentials and, of course, appliance parts. We have everything you need to properly maintain multi-family housing. Not to mention we’re a member of the *National Apartment Association* and *National Supplier Council* as well as *Compliance Depot Certified*.

Marcone Supply also provides initiatives to help you expand revenue opportunities with your customers. You can offer home essentials such as tools, water filters, cleaners and thousands of other retail products through our *Essentials for your Home* website (www.e4yh.com) or our state-of-the-art call center. In both cases we take care of the ordering, shipping and any follow up customer service issues while you receive 17.5% of net sales. Simple, innovative, and profitable...

programs we refer to as *Game Changers* to enhance your profitability and strengthen our partnership with you!

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Here at Marcone Supply, we are not only dedicated to providing you with the products you need—whether they be property maintenance or cooling & heating supplies, home essentials or appliance parts—we are also committed to helping you grow your business.

Over the years we have developed multiple game changing programs with your business in mind. Some provide you with the information your employees need to stay on top of their game, like ‘Marcone World Magazine’. Some, like ‘myMarcone’ (our customized website), empower you to run your business more efficiently and profitably. Others are simply designed to help you take advantage of new revenue opportunities.

Our success is predicated on our customers’ success, which is why we continually reinvest in the industry. This philosophy has worked for us since 1932, but we know our future success demands that we continue to earn your business every day. **RO**

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FAMILY LEAVE

The newly inaugurated President, Barack Obama, has said he wants a federal sick-day mandate and expansion of family leave. With Democrats also now in control of more than half of the countries state legislatures, change is likely on the way.

However historic obstacles stand in the way in the form of a deeply troubled economy and out of control state deficits. As a result new entitlements such as these are likely to progress at an uneven pace if they advance at all.

The Healthy Families Act, sponsored by Sen. Ted Kennedy (D., Mass.) and Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D., Conn.) and backed by the new president, would require employers with 15 or more workers to provide seven paid days for their own or a family member's illness. Several locales around the country already have mandated paid sick days, and others are sure to follow. Although some states are opposing statewide standards claiming the desire to protect small businesses they are pushing for federal regulations to get the job done.

Employers and business organizations oppose the rigidity of the proposal because of its lack of flexibility and one-size-fits-all application. Over 70% of employers already provide some type of paid sick days. The mandate would be most devastating to businesses that are on the edge of bankruptcy, especially small one to ten person operations.

The 1993 family-leave law is also under consideration for expansion. Currently, employees of companies with 50 or more workers can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to tend to babies, sick family members or the employees' own medical conditions. But about half the work force isn't eligible. President Obama would extend the mandate to employers with 25 workers and cover more purposes, including children's school needs and the care of a wider range of family members.

The president would pass the paid family leave issue off on to the states by proposing to give states \$1.5 billion in incentives to start paid family-leave programs similar to California's, which uses the state's temporary-disability-insurance fund to provide up to six weeks' paid family leave. New Jersey is set to pass a similar

program which will take full effect next July. New York may consider similar measures.

Since only five states, Hawaii, California, Rhode Island, New Jersey and New York currently have a temporary disability insurance plan; it will be very difficult for other states to enact similar plans. This information highlights the reason why small businesses need to keep themselves informed about current and potential laws. Check with your own state government and contact your chamber of commerce to see what action you can take to protect your bottom line.

Most of this information was taken from an article in the Wall Street Journal written by Sue Shellenbarger.

FROM THE "GREEN" LAUNDRY FRONT!

Have you ever heard of the Staber washing machine (Staber System 2000)? I've seen their ad's periodically in Appliance Service News and on various "Green" web sites.

The washer has a top-loading horizontal axis design which allows you to load your clothes as you normally do from the top, however it tumbles like all the new front load high efficiency models flooding the market today.

Just like the new front loaders, the Staber uses far less water and also causes much less wear and tear on your clothes.

The washer performs differently from the major manufacturers machines because it uses a hexagonal (six sided) shaped clothes basket which is placed in an octagonal (eight sided) shaped water tub. As the wash basket tumbles it creates a passive pump between the two containers which pulses the wash water through the clothes load.

The manufacturer claims that his Staber System 2000 horizontal axis washer is much easier on the clothes, can use up to 66% less water and 75% less detergent, when compared to current model agitator washers. The Staber is more expensive. I have no personal repair experience with the machine and would like to get some input from anyone who has worked on the washer. Info for this article was taken from <http://www.mrsolar.com/faq/faq19.php> **RO**



Dean Landers is the President of Service USA



ASKO NEWS

ASKO Academy Training – Service Technicians

ASKO Appliances, Inc. conducts ASKO Academy Training for Distributor Service Technicians.

Service technicians from across North America are spending the week at the ASKO Appliances, Inc. North American headquarters participating in ASKO Academy training.

Attendees will participate in three full days of technical training on all ASKO appliances. Topics covered will include in depth classroom training,

diagnostics, product cycles and programs, and product installation. This hands on experience takes place on current, as well as past models of ASKO dishwashers, washers, and dryers.

Participants will be also challenged to determine prearranged faults on appliances. Final testing and certification will be awarded upon successful completion of these tasks.

“The secret for our Preeminent Customer Service is no secret at all. It is all about the quality of the service organization” stated Gary Plowman, Vice President of Customer Service. “It is having service partners that are willing to go the extra mile in satisfying the customer. We believe that ASKO USA has service partners who are willing to invest in the future of ASKO Appliances.”

The ASKO Academy Training is part of an ongoing monthly training program.

ASKO appliances have been marketed throughout North America by ASKO Appliances, Inc. for over 20 years. As an Energy Star® Partner, ASKO is a leader in developing innovative appliances that save water and energy, while providing superior performance.



POWERMAT LAUNCHES LINE OF WIRELESS CHARGING PRODUCTS AT CES 2009

(Online version: Click on Logo to see CES Interview)

Powermat unveiled a much anticipated line of revolutionary wireless-energy products at this year's Consumer Electronics Show. Capable of delivering real time, wireless charging for portable electronic devices including iPods, iPhones, Blackberry and mobile phones, GPS, handheld games and even laptop computers, the new product line will be available for purchase in retail stores in 2009.

With the introduction of over 15 groundbreaking wireless charging products, Powermat showcases an impressive array of simple to use charging solutions that enhance consumers' lives by providing an unsurpassed level of freedom, convenience and simplicity.

While numerous attempts have been made over the years to bring a viable consumer-friendly product to the market, only Powermat has succeeded in making a full range of products that will radically change the way consumers view and utilize the charging of their devices.

Based on principles of magnetic induction, Powermat technology renders traditional conductive charging technology obsolete, in favor of an entirely new energy distribution process. Designed for use at home, at the office and on the road, Powermat technology facilitates fast and energy efficient power delivery.

Consumers simply plug in their Powermat and place up to (depending on model) six different Powermat-enabled devices on the mat to charge. Incredibly, charging occurs at the same rate as if each device were charging with its own charger.

"Our first line of products takes wireless charging to its next evolutionary level," said Ron Ferber, President. "Not only do we eliminate the unmanageable tangle of 'wire spaghetti' that accumulates behind and around work stations and home offices, we also eliminate the need to use multiple bulky chargers to power numerous electronic devices. Above all, we provide the consumer with a better, easier, and totally simplified one-stop method for powering multiple electronics in virtually any environment.

The breadth of our initial assortment is tremendous,

making wireless solutions for all ages and demographics; from the iPod playing Gameboy toting student to the PC-carrying, Blackberry-communicating adult".

A SCIENTIFIC BREAKTHROUGH

Powermat utilizes magnetic induction as a power delivery method, combined with significant IP developed in Israel by Powermat; eliminating the traditional cluster of wires and line cords. Powermat gives owners a 'complete' solution with a unique capability to deliver electrical power in either low or high capacity for products as varied as cell phones or laptops. There is no product in the market that can charge both types of devices simultaneously, on the same mat and using a single plug. Powermat's inductive technology pairs an ultra-thin mat (5 models to choose from) with a variety of receivers, which connect to your favorite electronic devices. That's just the beginning of the freedom for

Powermat users. Future applications can be embedded directly into walls, ceilings, tabletops or other surfaces, enhancing virtually any surface to become an

invisible connectivity point for wire-free energy. Incredibly, the Powermat system even allows for the wireless transmission of data—audio & video—allowing users to sync their iPods or transmit video to their TVs at very efficient transfer rates.

ABOUT POWERMAT

Powermat is a complete solution for simultaneously delivering real time, wireless charging to multiple electronics including iPods, iPhones, Blackberry, other mobile phones, GPS, handheld games and laptops. Its innovative technology is fast, efficient and safe and will revolutionize the way consumers charge and power. Powermat is a collaborative effort produced by HoMedics Powermat North America; (HPNA) led by partners Ron Ferber, Alon Kaufman and Ran Poliakine.

HPNA is based in Commerce Township, Michigan.



BRAND-NEW SHARPER IMAGE PRODUCTS ENHANCE CONSUMERS' LIVES, TAP INTO TECHNOLOGY, DESIGN AND CONVENIENCE

THE SHARPER IMAGE'S LICENSEE SI PRODUCTS LAUNCHES
24 NEW PRODUCTS AT THE 2009 CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW

(Online version: Click on Logo to see CES Interview)

The Sharper Image's licensee SI Products, well known for cutting-edge technology and design excellence, unveiled a highly anticipated array of innovative new home audio products at the upcoming CES Show in Las Vegas. From its advanced technologies and sleek industrial design to the use of high-quality materials, The Sharper Image produces pioneering products that transcend the ordinary and transform the functional to memorable, altering the way consumers think, feel and live.

The assortment of products, which range from iPod®—compatible bedside stereo systems to design-savvy wireless audio components and stress-relieving sound soothers™, are designed, manufactured and sold by Sharper Image Products (SI PRODUCTS), The Sharper Image licensee for Home Audio. The Sharper Image Home Audio product line also officially debuted January 8th at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas and will begin shipping in Q3 2009.

“Modern consumers want products that provide cutting-edge technology while reflecting their own personal style. Our mission at Sharper Image Products is to create products that offer style and innovation while enhancing and simplifying our customer's busy lifestyles,” said Lynda Rose, VP of Product Development and Marketing, SI Products. “The Sharper Image brand is synonymous with creative technology and timeless design. We're confident that these new offerings will not only meet, but exceed consumers' expectations.”

“The Sharper Image is an iconic brand with a tremendous amount of positive consumer awareness, and we're extremely excited about remaining true to brand legacy,” said Ron Ferber, President of SI PRODUCTS.

“We look forward to launching the other categories that we've licensed, including Home Environment, Health and Wellness, Men's Gifts, Concierge and Men's Grooming.” Some of noteworthy Sharper Image consumer electronic categories and products that debuted at CES include:

HOME AUDIO

The audiophile in all of us will cherish the wide range

of offerings The Sharper Image is unveiling this year. Using wireless and proprietary SRS WOW® technologies as well as Sharper Image design finishing touches such as hardwood cabinets, every home is destined to look and sound better.

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- Hardwood Speaker System (Model#EC-A130)
- Wireless Speakers and Dock for iPod® (Model#EC-W145)
- 7" Digital Alarm Clock Photo Frame (Model#EC-B175)
- Bedside iPhone® + iPod® alarm clock (Model#EC-B145)
- Internet Radio w/iPod® dock (Model#EC-S115)
- Travel Speaker Case with FM radio (Model#EC-P100)



ABOUT THE SHARPER IMAGE

The Sharper Image is a licensing company based in New York and owned by a joint venture between Hilco Consumer Capital, Gordon Brothers, and Bluestar Alliance. The company was acquired in May 2008 after a rich legacy of developing and offering innovative products through entertaining stores, e-commerce and award-winning catalogs.

ABOUT SHARPER IMAGE PRODUCTS (SI PRODUCTS)

SI Products is a newly formed company, which was started by HoMedics, upon it signing a licensing contract with The Sharper Image. Founded in 1987 by Ron Ferber and Alon Kaufman, HoMedics (www.homedics.com) began as a manufacturer of at-home massagers. Today, the family-owned business manufactures and markets more than 250 personal healthcare and wellness products, which are available to consumers at 50,000 retail outlets in over 60 countries.

For more information, please visit <http://www.siproducts.com>.

Based in Commerce Township, Michigan, HoMedics is an industry leader across all divisional categories, including massage, diagnostic healthcare, weight management, sensory and relaxation, domestics, and home environment. **RO**



EHX SPRING 2009 OFFERS FREE TRAINING AND ADVICE ON BUSINESS SURVIVAL AND COMMERCIAL GROWTH

CE PRO HEADQUARTERS TO DEBUT AT SPRING SHOW

The Electronic House Expo (EHX), the long-standing CE Pro event, now in its 10th year of serving the custom electronics community, today announced the debut of the CE Pro Headquarters at the EHX Spring 2009. Produced by EH Events and sponsored by the Consumer Electronics Association's (CEA)[®] TechHome Division, EHX Spring will run March 11-14, at the Long Beach Convention Center.

The CE Pro Headquarters, powered by the leading content provider for the custom electronics industry, will provide EHX attendees with the opportunity to visit with top editors, writers and industry leaders, to find fresh ideas and guidance for succeeding in the realities of the market.

CE PRO HEADQUARTERS FEATURES INCLUDE:

INDUSTRY TRAINING:

Industry experts will be on hand to discuss the most important topics from the readers of CE Pro. Sessions will take place throughout each day of the expo directly on the show floor and are offered FREE to all attendees.

- **Answering Your HDMI Questions:** Jeff Boccaccio, DPL Labs and author of the *HDMI Corner*, will answer questions about HDMI. Attendees are encouraged to ask specific questions pertaining to problems they have encountered on a job; Boccaccio promises to answer any and all troubleshooting questions.
- **Business Survivability Guide:** Steve Hayes, SnapAV and former CEDIA President, will offer instructive advice on how to survive and thrive during the recession. He will present tried and true examples of how to boost cash flow, increase productivity, how to find new business and more. Hayes is a former dealer who ran a CE Pro 100 company for many years.
- **Migrating Into Commercial:** Jason Knott, Editor, CE Pro, will open up with tangible steps to move into commercial markets such as bars and restaurants, offices, houses of worship, retail and more. What are the equipment needs? How do you win competitive bids? How are the customers different from residential clients? What do you need to know to enter or diversify into the commercial market? Knott will present sure fire tips, guidance, and examples of dealers changing

their business to follow the money.

CE PRO SURVIVAL GUIDE:

CE Pro has collected and prepared a series of articles, analysis and perspectives exclusively for EHX attendees, totaling more than 50 pages of valuable information on topics ranging from Sample Business Contracts to Marketing Tips. The Survival Guide is available on a FREE thumbdrive (quantity may be limited), sponsored by SnapAV. Attendees may stop by CE Pro HQ anytime during the show to register and receive their copy.

FUN AND PRIZES

CE Pro Headquarters facilitates networking among custom electronic professionals in a fun and relaxing environment directly on the Expo Floor, including: Bracket Buster Shoot Outs and an EHX Treasure Hunt in answering trivia from selected exhibit booths.

Access to the CE Pro Headquarters is included in all EHX registration packages. Registration for EHX is available online at www.ehxweb.com/register or by calling 800-315-1581. CEA members are eligible for discounted rates.

ABOUT EHX AND CE PRO

Electronic House Expo, a Tradeshow Week magazine Fastest 50 event for five years running, is the fastest growing trade event of the \$13 billion custom electronics industry. Produced by CE Pro Magazine, EHX is held twice annually and sponsored by CEA's TechHome Division. CE Pro is the leading content provider for the custom electronics industry, and EHX brings together this same dynamic audience of custom electronics integrators, retailers and allied trades to interact with leading suppliers of audio/video entertainment, digital convergence, networking and communications, comfort and control, and security and electrical products. For more information, visit www.ehxweb.com and www.cepro.com.

ABOUT CEA

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) is the preeminent trade association promoting growth in the \$172 billion U.S. consumer electronics industry. More than 2,200 companies enjoy the benefits of CEA membership, including legislative advocacy, market research, technical training and education, industry promotion and the fostering of business and strategic relationships. CEA also sponsors and manages the International CES—Where Entertainment, Technology and Business Converge. All profits from CES are reinvested into CEA's industry services. Find CEA online at www.CE.org. **RO**

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CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

MOBILE ELECTRONICS

MAJOR APPLIANCES

MOTIVATING IN TURBULENT TIMES

In today's uncertain economy, the most important job of a manager is to lead, inspire and motivate his or her team. It's no small task to create energy in a chaotic environment. At the same time, though, the greatest leaders in history were created in times of adversity.

The best coaches know how to pull their teams together when they're down a touchdown at the two-minute warning. Battles are won by officers at the front of their units leading the charge. I don't want to take anything away from those who were successful during the most recent boom, but compared to today, that was a walk in the park.

In the next few years, great managers will be those who instill confidence in their associates and partner with them to grow their businesses.

- **Get your head in the game.** Don't expect those around you to be battle-ready if they think you've given up. Find some way to start your day positively. Exercise, prayer or inspirational reading can help invigorate your attitude. Eat a healthy breakfast so that you're fueled for the day ahead. Don't spend your time watching the ticker. Make a to-do list and check off things you've completed so that you feel like you've accomplished something each day. Make your health a priority. Don't fall victim to stress, depression and burn-out.
- **Set reasonable goals.** Develop your game plan. You may be able to grow your business by taking market share lost by Circuit City or other competitors who've gone out of business. You may be able to move some of the business you've lost in new home construction to retrofitting older homes. Kitchen remodeling and replacement products will help spiff up homes that owners would have sold in better times. New accessories may help old furnishings look fresh. Establish a sales goal that might be a stretch but that for the most part is attainable. Budget your expenses based on your best projections. You may have to slash expenses to remain profitable.
- **Communicate your plan.** Ask your team members to help finalize your sales and expense plan. They may find additional opportunities that you've overlooked. The more input they have, the more easily they'll buy into it. Share financial results and tell your associates how you're doing. Don't spread doom and gloom, but tell it like it is. Remind them that the profits you made in previous years give you a cushion for these leaner ones. Listen to their concerns and ask for their ideas.
- **Show staff members you really care.** The associates you depend on for your success hear the news. The value of their investments and 401(k) plans has dropped. They're concerned

about their jobs, their homes and their families.

- **Know each team member's hot button.** Find out how to best reward each associate. Some team members may be motivated by money, while others may be motivated by extra time off to coach a little league team. Those with young children may appreciate movie tickets and a little money to pay the sitter. Coffee drinkers would like a Starbucks card while music lovers might prefer an iTunes gift card. Smaller personalized rewards go further than one-size-fits no one prizes.
- **Reward small victories.** Keep things fun by handing out a prize for the first sale of the day or for the sale with the most items on the ticket. Give a prize to the associate who sells the product that's been in inventory the longest or who sells that one lonely red recliner.
- **Make employees feel important.** Acknowledge each team member you see in the showroom. Ask about their families or how their favorite team will do this weekend. Give them your time and your attention. Recognize extra effort by sending a hand written thank you note home. Remember birthdays, anniversaries and other special occasions. Post testimonials associates receive from customers where everyone can see them.
- **Create competition.** Have contests to help move aging inventory, sell more installations, add more audio gear or include more extended warranties. Divide your associates into teams and have steak and beans contests where the winners are served great meals by the losing team. Include your support and clerical staff members on the team.
- **Be a leader.** Get out of your office and into the trenches. Be part of the action. Talk to your customers and coach your team members. As General George S. Patton said, "No good decision was ever made in a swivel chair."

The current business climate will separate the best from the rest, the winners from the whiners. Fierce determination will help, but even the toughest general, the best coach, the greatest quarterback can't win alone. Those with the most optimistic, opportunistic teams will be those most able to calm the storm, get to the finish line and win. **RO**

*Elly Valas is an author, retail consultant and speaker. She is the co-author of *Guerrilla Retailing*. She can be contacted at elly@ellyvalas.com or visit her website www.ellyvalas.com.*



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What would you say if I were to hand you a check for \$25,000? \$250,000?

Before you get too excited, I'm not going to do that, but I am going to tell you how you can find that kind of money and add it to your bottom line. No, it's not by terminating employees or instituting pay cuts, two methods companies throughout the world are using in an effort to survive the drastic downturn in the economy.

If you want to cut costs and save thousands, if not millions, of dollars each year, the most effective method—and one that will have long-term benefits—is to do so by eliminating waste, not people. How do you do that? Ask your employees.

There is waste in every organization. The challenge is to identify that waste and then eliminate it. Your employees are the experts. They see where the waste is—in time, procedures, and materials—throughout the organization. You need to ask them to identify that waste and to make suggestions on how to eliminate it. When you do, you will build morale by making those employees feel like you value their ideas.

Many employee suggestion programs fail for one major reason: Executives are only interested in ideas that will save the company \$10,000 to \$100,000. They fail to identify the low-hanging fruit, the small savings that quickly add up to big money. Let me give you an example. My company, the Service Quality Institute, offers a program called BAD—Buck a Day—that asks each employee to identify a way to save just \$1 a day. It has been used successfully during the past 30 years by 3,000 companies throughout the world.

Consider this: There are 250 working days in a year. If you have 1,000 employees and they each identify a way to save \$1 a day, you are looking at a yearly savings of \$250,000. If your company has 100 employees, your annual savings would be a respectable \$25,000.

When it comes to instituting an employee suggestion program that will be successful, I have some suggestions of my own that I'd like to share with you: Keep it short. Our BAD program, for example, runs for just 30 days. A short campaign keeps enthusiasm high.

Make it fun. Dry, dull campaigns get little attention, which means they get few results. On the other hand, when you incorporate fun and humor, employees become more involved.

Build it on recognition. You don't have to offer monetary rewards or trips to Las Vegas to get employees to participate. Recognition is a much stronger motivator than money. Recognize employees in a timely manner through public praise. That might include an article and photograph in the company magazine or a simple pizza party.

Involve everyone. The backbone of a successful employee suggestion program is to get all employees involved. That means everyone from frontline employees to executives. The idea is to get everyone to consider his or her job and ask, "Is there a better, less-expensive way to do this?"

Implement ideas quickly. Nothing will kill a suggestion program faster than a long lag time in implementing employees' suggestions. If you don't implement ideas quickly, employees will lose interest—and faith—in what you are trying to accomplish.

An effective cost-reduction campaign is based on the assumption that employees have worthwhile ideas. And those ideas can mean the difference between your company's failure and survival. If you head a publicly held company, you can dramatically improve the value of your stock by reducing costs and eliminating waste. On the other hand, if you miss your earnings projection by just one cent, the value of your stock could plummet by 20 to 25 percent.

In today's dismal economy, if you want to survive and grow, you must look for ways to dramatically eliminate waste and reduce costs. Ask your employees to help you and you will be amazed at the results. **RO**

An international service strategist and speaker, John Tschohl also is the founder and president of the Service Quality Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Described by USA Today, Time and Entrepreneur magazines as a customer service guru, he has written several books on customer service, including Achieving Excellence Through Customer Service, e-Service, Loyal for Life, The Customer is Boss, and Ca\$hing In: Make More Money, Get a Promotion, Love Your Job. John's bimonthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge. www.customer-service.com Email: John@servicequality.com Phone: 800-548-0538





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TRISTAGE
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BUILD

DO YOU LOOK GOOD IN GREEN?

These days, it's fashionable to be Green. As consumers have a greater awareness of the environmental impact of the products they buy and the companies they patronize, they are factoring it more into their purchase decisions.

This is undeniably a good thing. By demanding environmentally sustainable products and services, consumers are forcing companies to be smarter with resources, and they are helping preserve a cleaner, healthier planet for future generations.

But the Green Revolution also contains a trap for marketers. Some companies have draped their brands in green clothing, claiming to be sustainable and environmentally conscious, when these claims are dubious at best. This is a phenomenon called Greenwashing, and it diminishes the credibility of all companies making a claim of sustainability.

It's tempting to make grand claims of environmental responsibility, even if the company isn't green at all. Marketers can't resist jumping on a big movement, and they sure don't want to be left behind. And greenwashing works, for a little while. But eventually, the posers will be discovered, here are some tips to avoid being labeled a greenwasher.

Remember your true colors. Just because environmental awareness and action is the right thing to do, it doesn't mean it should be a big part of your marketing. If sustainability is the cornerstone of your business, then wave your green flag freely. But if you're selling luxury kitchens or high-end electronics, be careful about claiming you're saving the world. It might not be believable.

Remember what truly sets you apart from your competition, whether it's the service you provide, the brands you carry, the people you sell to, or anything else, that is the reason customers come to you. That should take center stage in your marketing messages.

You can promote your environmental consciousness, but don't overdo it unless it's a true differentiating factor between you and your competition.

Do, then promote. In your haste to market your company's green-ness, make sure you don't get ahead of yourself.

Make sure you have an established set of policies and procedures regarding your environmental action. Once you have your program in place and it's followed by all your employees, then you can promote it.

You might even think about not promoting your environmental consciousness at all, at least not overtly. People may

think you're just doing it for the publicity. Just quietly do your part for a greener planet. Walk the walk. If you start marketing your company as green or sustainable before you really achieved it, people will find out. You could harm your green image more than help it.

Be honest. Some companies are models of sustainability. Others might just have a simple recycling program. Know where you fit on this continuum and be up front about it. Be honest about the steps you're taking to reduce your environmental impact. More importantly, be honest about what you're not doing.

People understand that there are shades of green, and they will give you credit for doing what you can, even if every single decision isn't governed by environmental impact. On the other hand, if you make broad, sweeping statements that aren't backed up by facts, your credibility will become extinct in a hurry.

Lead. Noble a cause as it is, being green has become a bit of a bandwagon. As environmental issues continue to dominate the news, companies are jumping on, painting their logos green and shouting, "Me too!"

If you sell electronics, run a promotion in which people can bring in their old TVs to be recycled or properly disposed of. If you sell cabinets or appliances, go out of your way to work with contractors who minimize waste and use green building practices.

You could even institute a cell phone recycling program by offering to collect customers' old phones and shipping to a recycling service like gazelle.com.

Take some initiative. Do some research and find new ways to be green, and to make it easy for customers to be green. That will demonstrate your commitment to green as a lifestyle, not just a marketing pitch. It will set you apart and make customers want to work with you and feel good about it.

Just be sure you are careful in how you do it. Almost every company is claiming to be green somehow, and that can get you lost in a sea of, well, green. **RO**

Christopher Thiede owns BUILD Communications, a branding and PR firm. Read Christopher's blog at www.ideas2cheer.com.





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THE ART OF DISPLAY

Just what is the art of display? In simple terms it is the art of presenting product so as to engage, inform and provide a visual stimulus to your prospective customers. All of us at one time or another has found ourselves immersed in a museum exhibit or display. I remember years back when I was younger how exciting it was when my parents took the family to the museum of natural history. At the turn of every corner was something new that would engage, inform and stimulate my senses. Be it a realistic version of a cave complete with bats, artificial rocks and underground caverns full of stalactites or a life size version of a T Rex, the masters of display brought me into their world.

In my last article I spoke about the importance of the environment. Yes, it is extremely important to have a pleasant space that your customers feel comfortable in. However, if you display your products in ways that engage and inform your customers closing the deal becomes much simpler and much more fun. Several years ago I was working with a client that sold Geo Thermal systems. Now as a consumer I was a bit intimidated as to just how these systems worked. So after an educational introduction by my client we set out to design a display that would inform and engage prospective customers. From the copper coils buried deep in the earth to the Air handler in the home customers got a firsthand look as to how these systems work and the energy savings they provide. This all was accomplished using actual products and lifestyle graphics.

The displays in your store can be as simple as displaying a microwave oven over a range or cook top using actual cabinets to give the customer a realistic feel or as complex as setting up a home theater media room or actual in store mini home that demonstrates the latest technologies in home security and automation.

As a retailer it is so important that you find ways to immerse your customer into your world. By creating displays that allow a person to interact with the product you

are also creating a silent sales person. For years retailers locked up cameras and other small electronics behind glass. If a customer wanted to physically hold and look at something they had to find someone with a key. I am sure all of us at one time or another had this happen to us and the wait sometimes could be frustrating. Today smart retailers display these products using new security devices that allow people to explore the products freely; a much more customer friendly and engaging approach.

Don't be bashful about having a little fun with how you display the products you sell. If you are located in a town that has a major league team why not set an up a typical sports fan ultimate entertainment area. Pull out the big screen TV, throw in the under counter fridge add a couple of recliners and maybe a popcorn machine and let the games begin. Giving a little thought in how you display product can not only be fun but can also be a great sales tool.

When people walk through your doors give them something to gravitate to. Create feature displays and focal points that create interest and engage your customer. Create an experience center in which people can see firsthand how that dishwasher works or how that new induction cook top performs. Being a little creative with how you present your products will make you stand out in your market. **RO**



With over fifteen years of experience in store planning and design. Mark Schaffeld has been providing quality design to the Appliance, electronics and furniture industry. He has partnered with major appliance manufacturers working with their independent dealers and helping them achieve increased sales through well designed stores. Mark has not only helped dealers within the fifty contiguous states but has also worked with retailers in Honduras and Guatemala. Mark and his company the retail strata G group can be reached at: Mark@retail-strata-g.com or visit his web site at www.retail-strata-g.com

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YOUR MONEY DOCTOR

Is anyone else so tired of hearing the word “economy” that you want to pull your hair out! Lucky for me I don’t have any. I don’t want to be left out so I will start this article as every other article, news story or person on the street would. In these troubled times...Blah Blah. Times are tough and they will get tougher. That is why it is essential to keep your head. Even with the Madoffs of the world out to get your money the Internet and malls are rife with get-rich-quick “opportunities” as well. There is one in particular I feel it is necessary to mention because I have had a number of clients ask about them. HYIP (High Yield Investment Program), usually pronounced “hype”. There are many types of HYIPs out there. One generally has something to do with offshore banking, secret financial rules approved of by the Fed, or Department of the Treasury, while others usually involve small investments and trading shares, gold, futures or currencies. If you’re approached to take part in the first kind, usually involving incredible rates of return – don’t walk, RUN! Grab your cell phone and inform someone.

This type of scheme most often involves an offshore bank or investment consortium. The individual wanting to get you to purchase usually makes some assertion that they’ve discovered a completely legal loop-hole in income taxes or in lending. You’re asked to give them money to “buy in”, with claims that you will get enormous payouts in 30 to 90 days. When the 90 days are up, your contact will create some justification and will promise you that the money is on its way. They will then try to persuade you to sign up people you know, making up some outlandish claim that by signing up other people, it will enable him to pay you. Frequently they will claim that the system is entirely legal, and utilizes top secret banking regulations that have been created or approved by government officials. *These secret rules do not exist.* This “high yield investment program” is really just a pyramid or Ponzi scheme. Know this, if you make any attempt to sign up other people, you can and most likely will be charged with attempted fraud. STAY AWAY! The newest type of high yield investment program involves smaller amounts of money. The majority of these plans claim to pay out 1-10% a day, and some even up to 100% per month. Many of these plans are scams, but some may in fact be legitimate.

The original Internet HYIP programs usually included day trading on the stock market, on futures, or in the foreign

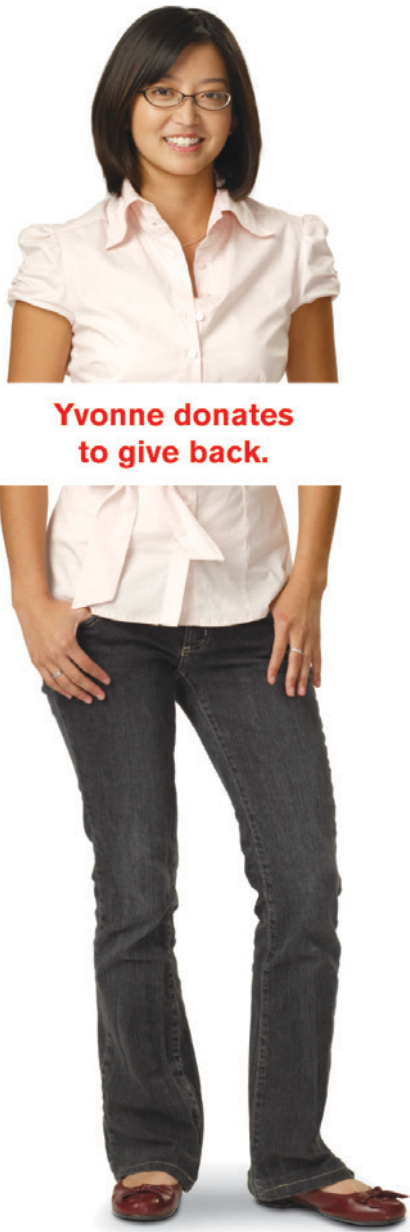
exchange markets. An investor could offer as little as \$20 to the plan, and would start earning a little each day. You could withdraw your gains at any time, but, by leaving the money in, compounding would help your investment grow, thus increasing your returns.

In summary, any HYIP program that consists of offshore banks or investment groups, secret regulations, unusually high interest rates, tax shelters, and the like should be avoided. Do not get involved with them. Online HYIPs *could* be legitimate, but probably are not. Remember these 2 rules: If it appears too good to be true, it is, and never invest money than you can’t afford to lose. EVER. If you want to try an internet HYIP, look into it first. Put the minimum amount in and when you get your first interest payment pull out the principle. That way you are playing with their money. If the returns are consistent and on time, it may be that you have found a legit HYIP. Scammers usually run within 6 months or so, when the money coming in start to drop off and the hassle for late returns increase. **RO**

With 17 years of management experience, Gregory Hedges has developed a sharp eye for identifying inefficiencies, cross-purposes and miscommunication—and for how quickly they can affect an individual’s personal wealth. Utilizing the tools of the Four Pillars of Financial Stability and project management, he emphatically helps individuals and families set priorities and create the balance they need for their financial health. Greg holds certifications in credit counseling and project management. He is an active member of the Project Management Institute®, National Association of Credit Counselors and an Affiliate Member of the American Psychological Association.

He has spoken to many organizations including the New Mexico Mortgage Lenders Association, New Mexico Association of Mortgage Brokers, community workshops, and seminars. He is highly skilled in organization methodologies, developing a wide range of custom databases, websites and internal controls to increase effectiveness and profitability. For more information, visit www.thefourpillars.org





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COMING EVENTS

CALENDAR 2009

MARCH-2009

- 8-11Nationwide Primetime—Hilton Riverside, New Orleans, LA
11-14EHX Spring 2009—Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL
19-21Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association Expo—Reno-Sparks Convention Center, Reno, NV
22-24International Home and Housewares Show—McCormick Place, Chicago, IL
22-25The Summit-Brand Source Convention—Hotel Anatole, Dallas TX
-

APRIL-2009

- 4-714th NARMS Spring Conference & Exposition—The Broadmoor, Colorado Springs, CO
22Digital Patriots Dinner—Washington DC
22-23CEA Washington Forum—Washington DC
25-30High Point Furniture Market—High Point, NC
30 -May 3.....K/BIS 2009—Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, GA
-

JUNE-2009

- 2-4CONNECTIONS™: The Digital Living Conference and Showcase—
Santa Clara Convention Center, Santa Clara, CA
10-12Digital Downtown—World Financial Center, New York, NY
17-19PCBC—Moscone Center, San Francisco, CA
-

AUGUST-2009

- 16-19Nationwide Primetime—Walt Disney World Dolphin, Orlando, FL
30-Sept.3.....Brand Source Convention —Paris Hotel, Las Vegas, NV
-

SEPTEMBER-2009

- 1-4Mega Group USA/Best Brands Plus Convention— San Antonio, TX
14-17Las Vegas World Market Fall—Las Vegas, NV
-

OCTOBER-2009

- 17-20High Point Furniture Market— High Point NC
18-212009 CEA Industry Forum—Phoenix, AZ

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NOTE: Attention Buying Groups, NKBA and NARI Chapters, Distributors and Manufacturers: Please submit your meeting schedules to info@retailobserver.com ASAP so they may be included in our Coming Events Column. If you would like to receive the Retail Observer please go to www.retailobserver.com to subscribe.

"My NKBA certification gives me the edge to design kitchens that 'wow' my clients."

X *Cait Lanza, AKBD*

Mitchell Construction Group, Inc., Medfield, MA

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- CKD**® – Certified Kitchen Designer
- CBD**® – Certified Bath Designer
- CMKBD**® – Certified Master Kitchen & Bath Designer

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2009 KITCHEN/BATH INDUSTRY SHOW — MISCONCEPTIONS ADDRESSED —

THE NATIONAL KITCHEN & BATH ASSOCIATION AND NIELSEN BUSINESS MEDIA

In response to a growing number of misconceptions concerning the upcoming 2009 Kitchen/Bath Industry Show & Conference (K/BIS), the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) and Nielsen Business Media have decided to clear any confusion regarding attendance and exhibitors at the show. As nearly all other industry shows have experienced a decline in exhibitors and attendees in recent years, false impressions have begun to spread about an equally steep reduction in numbers for K/BIS 2009. This is simply untrue.

“Are there some exhibitors that have pulled out of K/BIS 2009? Yes,” said NKBA CEO Don Sciolaro, “but contrary to recent misconceptions, the vast majority of the large exhibitors will be exhibiting at K/BIS again this year.” To name just a few, this list includes Whirlpool, Kohler, LG, Moen, TOTO, MasterBrand, Armstrong, GE, Delta, Gerber, TurboChef, Merillat, Viking, Panasonic, Vent-a-Hood, Sears, Dacor, and Rohl, in addition to many, many others. The NKBA invites potential attendees to view the complete exhibitor list at KBIS.com/show/exhibitor-list.

“This year, K/BIS will once again be the premier event for the entire kitchen and bath industry,” said Brian Pagel, Vice President of the Kitchen and Bath Group for Nielsen Business Media, producer of K/BIS. “With 700 exhibitors and co-exhibitors showing their products across 400,000 square feet of exhibit space in the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, K/BIS 2009 is a must-attend event for any serious kitchen and bath professional.”

K/BIS will be as vibrant as ever in 2009, complete with the most celebrity speakers ever seen at the show, including Extreme Makeover: Home Edition’s Paul DiMeo, This Old House’s Richard Tretheway and Carole Fruehauf, John Gidding of HGTV’s Designed to Sell, Aida Mollenkamp of Food Network’s Ask Aida, The Young & the Restless’ Steve Ford (son of President Gerald Ford), and presidential candidate Mike Huckabee. These are in addition to a great lineup of business speakers, including economist Terry Savage and Green to Gold author Andrew Winston, as well as Harry Gianetti, former Vice President of Thermador, BSH, Mills Pride, and Elica.

“K/BIS 2009 is very much alive and well—the show will once again bring together hundreds of exhibitors with tens

of thousands of attendees,” said 2009 NKBA President Suzie Williford. “Between the show floor and the conference’s wide range of business and celebrity speakers, K/BIS 2009 is going to be one of the most valuable and exciting shows ever.”

THE NEW PRESIDENTS 2009 GOALS

The newly-elected president of the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA), Suzie Williford has stated four goals for the NKBA in 2009.

Ms Williford’s first goal is for the NKBA to provide the most targeted professional development courses in the industry for members to learn how to strengthen their businesses in this challenging economy. The NKBA’s educational offerings will also be diversified in order to benefit NKBA members across all industry segments.

Second, the 2009 Kitchen/Bath Industry Show (K/BIS), already the premier trade show in the kitchen and bath industry, will become even more vital to industry professionals. Economist Terry Savage will explain everything kitchen and bath professionals need to know about the current markets, while Andrew Winston will discuss how to use ‘green’ to increase profits in a down economy and Ken Jones, MBA will show how to develop a competitive edge. In addition, there will be presentations on acquiring consumer leads and discovering the products that consumers want in this market.

Ms. Williford’s third goal is to enable our members to reduce their expenses and increase revenues through third-party affinity programs. Whether cutting costs on transaction processing, or increasing sales through consumer financing or lead generation, members of the National Kitchen & Bath Association will benefit from NKBA affinity programs in 2009.

The fourth and final goal that Ms. Williford has set forth for the NKBA in 2009 is to place a renewed focus on leadership opportunities for our members. In this economy, it’s more important than ever for industry professionals to stand out. The influence and prestige that comes with serving as a leader in the National Kitchen & Bath Association, in a role such as a chapter officer on a local level or as an Industry Segment Advisory Council member on the national level, shows commitment and dedication to the industry. **RO**



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Heart of the Home

Kitchen/Bath Industry Show & Conference

Show: May 1 - May 3, 2009 • Conference: April 30 - May 3, 2009

Georgia World Congress Center • Atlanta, Georgia

www.kbis.com

Registration Code: KBRTL

SHERMAN'S SEES GROWTH BY STICKING TO THE BASICS

BUYING GROUP BENEFITS HELP BUILD BUSINESS

Paul Sherman, owner of Sherman's stores, found the secret recipe to thriving in a downturn economy by *sticking to the basics*. Sounds simple, well according to Sherman it is. While most retailers struggled in 2008, Sherman's stores were up 10% for the calendar year. "Many dealers are not sticking to the basics," said Sherman. "Everyone in business is having the same reservations but the worst thing you can do right now is pull back." In fact, Sherman has carried this business philosophy into 2009. In March, construction will be completed on a brand new 30,000 sq.ft. distribution center. Sherman's will also celebrate a grand opening in May, for their new 29,000 sq.ft. store in Peru, Illinois. "We are grateful that we are growing," said Sherman. "Central Illinois has been a stronger economy than most however; our growth is largely due to the way we do business."

BENEFITS OF NATIONWIDE MARKETING GROUP

Sherman believes his membership with Nationwide Marketing Group (NMG), the nation's largest buying organization with over \$11 billion in buying power, has attributed to his success. "Nationwide affords us the opportunity to build camaraderie with other dealers, learn best business practices, and take advantage of group negotiated pricing and services." Some of those services can be seen in several storefronts. Sherman has utilized MemberNet TV, high definition content for TV walls and video kiosks to greet customers with customized brand messaging. Sherman explains, "Most independents don't have the time or resources to put together the financing programs and promotional offers that Nationwide offers members throughout the year. These are key elements in running a successful business. Nationwide also provides services tailored to smaller stores so we are able to keep the personal connection and personality that independents are known for with the same quality that matches what national chains are doing."

SALES TRAINING PROGRAMS

Sherman boasts the value of sales associate training programs offered through NMG, "Our sales staff is among the most knowledgeable in Central Illinois and that makes a big difference." According to Sherman, if there was one thing every independent retailer should be doing right it would be training their sales team. Nationwide provides training for management to sales associates through its powerful learning series. "You may think you have good sales people but there is always room for improvement. We closed all of our stores for a day to implement the *OpTEAMization* program and have had great success incorporating the system into our daily sales strategy."

PRIMETIME!

In March, Nationwide Marketing Group will host PrimeTime!, a bi-annual member exclusive vendor exhibition and conference, in New Orleans. "I never miss Primetime!, it's the only time I am able to network with other dealers and meet face to face with my top vendors," said Sherman. "All the vendors exhibiting at the show have a purpose for the independent dealer. I always make sure I visit the booths of secondary vendors and service providers and try to pick up one or two extra things every show. The savings alone from merchandise purchased through the *CashBack Now* program more than pay for the trip." As a long time member of Nationwide Marketing Group, Sherman's can compete with

even the biggest national chains. The reason for its success is incredibly simple, nothing exceptional... just sticking to the basics.

For more information on Sherman's go to www.shermansinc.com. To find out more about the benefits of Nationwide Marketing Group membership go to www.nationwidemarketinggroup.org or call (336) 722-4681. **RO**



NATIONWIDE WEST WELCOMES NEW FIELD SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

Nationwide West, associated group of Nationwide Marketing Group, officially announced Tim Wistl as their new Field Service Representative.

“We believe the members of Nationwide West will benefit from Wistl’s expertise in retail,” said Jim Feeney Vice-President of Nationwide West. “He will focus on assisting group members utilize every advantage provided by our organization in order to help them grow sales and profits.”

Wistl has a wide range of retail and wholesale experience in the electronics and appliances industries. For several years, he was a regional branch manager for DSI and has held managerial positions with Direct TV and Best Buy. Wistl will be located in Maplewood, Minnesota and provide member services to Nationwide West group member dealers in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota & South Dakota.

“I am excited about my new position with Nationwide

West and am looking forward to working with member dealers and assisting them in taking advantage of all the opportunities available through Nationwide West,” said Tim Wistl.

ABOUT NATIONWIDE WEST

Nationwide West is an associate group of Nationwide Marketing Group (NMG). NMG is the nation’s largest buying and marketing group for appliance, electronics and furniture independent retailers. With over \$12 billion in annual sales and 8,000 storefronts across the country, NMG uses its power in numbers to provide a host of specialized services that help members cut costs and thrive in today’s marketplace. To find out more about the benefits of Nationwide Marketing Group membership go to www.nationwidegroup.org or call (336) 722-4681. **RO**

CERC UPDATES CONSUMER GUIDE AS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES VOTES TO DELAY DTV TRANSITION DATE

The Consumer Electronics Retailers Coalition released an update to its Consumers’ Guide to the DTV Transition, in light of final Congressional action on the DTV Delay Bill.

The Consumer Electronics Retailers Coalition (CERC) is a public policy organization consisting of the major retailers of consumer electronics products including Amazon.com, Best Buy, Circuit City, K-Mart, RadioShack, Sears, Target, Wal-Mart, and the leading industry trade associations—National Retail Federation (NRF) and Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA).

Today, CERC Executive Director Chris McLean described the environment for training retail associates and educating consumers as “challenging in light of the uncertainty about when particular local broadcasters will actually be able to cease analog broadcasting.”

He pledged that CERC members will attempt to provide their customers with correct information. In this respect, he said, the most conservative approach, which is least likely to mislead consumers, is to continue to emphasize the February 17 date, and the need for consumers to Take Action Now.

The revised Guide is available at www.ceretailers.org. The Guide emphasizes:

- Although the final shutoff date for full-power analog broadcasts has been moved to June 12, hundreds of broadcasters nationally appear likely to turn off analog stations on February 17, or at some time before June 12. Therefore, consumers are advised to prepare for the analog shutoff as expeditiously as they can, and still by February 17 if possible.
- There are several means of preparing for the analog shutoff, including buying a new television or subscribing to a cable or satellite service. All CERC members remain core participants in the NTIA Coupon-Eligible Converter program.
- Whenever a local station converts to digital-only broadcasting, consumers will need to do a channel “re-scan” for any device hooked to a TV antenna—whether it is an existing TV with a DTV tuner, or a Converter.
- While consumers should start by assuming that their existing antenna will suit their needs, they may find that newer antenna designs may work more effectively or reliably. **RO**

CotY²⁰⁰⁹
Awards

2009 NARI COTY WINNERS

Evening
of Excellence
honoring the remodeling industry's best

Congratulations to all the CotY Regional Winners!

The competition was tough this year. Fifteen industry professionals traveled from several cities across the country to judge the 2009 CotY Awards in Des Plaines.

All Regional Winners will be honored and the National Winners will be announced at the Evening of Excellence, Saturday March 28, at the Sheraton Atlanta downtown. Hosted by NARI Atlanta, you won't want to miss this event.

RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN UNDER \$30,000

Region 2 Southeast
Home Spaces Remodeling

RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN \$30,000 TO \$60,000

Region 1 Northeast
K and A Carosella, Inc.

Region 2 Southeast
Warth Construction

Region 3 North Central
Keystone Building and Design, LLC

Region 4 East Central
Kessler Construction Services, LLC

Region 5 South Central
CG & S Design-Build

Region 6 Northwest
Powell Construction

Region 7 Southwest
Dream Design Builders, Inc.

RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN \$60,001 TO \$100,000

Region 1 Northeast
Adams Kitchens
Tied with

- Regal Home Improvements, LLC

Region 2 Southeast
Mueller Remodeling, Inc.

Region 3 North Central
Wallner Builders

Region 4 East Central
Custom Design & Build, Inc.

Region 5 South Central
CB Construction Company

Region 6 Northwest
Neil Kelly Design/Build Remodeling

Region 7 Southwest
Eberle Remodeling

RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN OVER \$100,000

Region 1 Northeast
Sage Builders, LLP

Region 2 Southeast
T Square Remodeling, Inc.

Region 3 North Central
Paul Davis Restoration & Remodeling of SE WI

Region 4 East Central
Neal's Design & Remodel

Region 5 South Central
Traver Construction, Inc.

Region 6 Northwest
Neil Kelly Design/Build Remodeling

Region 7 Southwest
Marrokal Construction Company

RESIDENTIAL BATH UNDER \$30,000

Region 1 Northeast
Wilkinson Design & Construction, Inc.

Region 2 Southeast
Custom Home Repair

Region 3 North Central
Orfield Design & Construction, Inc.

Region 4 East Central
Artistic Renovations, LLC

Region 5 South Central
CG & S Design-Build

Region 6 Northwest
DreamMaker Bath and Kitchen Associated with The Remodeler

Region 7 Southwest
Magleby Companies, Inc.

RESIDENTIAL BATH \$30,000 TO \$60,000

Region 1 Northeast
L.I. Remodel.com

Region 2 Southeast
Strock Enterprises, Inc.

Region 3 North Central
Lori Jolin Design

With team members

- Monona Plumbing and Fire

Protection, Inc.

- Nonn's Flooring, Inc.
- Academy Electric, Inc.

Region 4 East Central
Dover Home Remodelers, Inc.
Tied with

- Neal's Design & Remodel

Region 5 South Central
NY Design Build, Inc.

Region 6 Northwest
Metke Remodeling & Woodworking, Inc.

Region 7 Southwest
DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen by Worldwide of Bakersfield

RESIDENTIAL BATH OVER \$60,000

Region 1 Northeast
Stephen Cohen Builders

Region 2 Southeast
Mueller Remodeling, Inc.

Region 3 North Central
Silent Rivers, Inc.

Region 4 East Central
Remodeling Designs, Inc.

Region 5 South Central
Capital Improvements

Region 6 Northwest
Neil Kelly Design/Build Remodeling
Tied with another entry from
Neil Kelly Design/Build Remodeling

Region 7 Southwest
Harrell Remodeling, Inc.
Tied with another entry from
Harrell Remodeling, Inc.

RESIDENTIAL INTERIOR UNDER \$100,000

Region 1 Northeast
Superior Woodcraft, Inc.

Region 2 Southeast
Little River Carpentry, LLC
With team members

- Cedar Electrical Services, LLC
- Nova Spray Foam Insulation, LLC

Region 3 North Central

T. Hurt Construction, Inc.
With team member

- Creative Interiors by Libby

Region 5 South Central
Euro Builders & Remodelers, Inc.

Region 7 Southwest
Morse Remodeling, Inc.

RESIDENTIAL INTERIOR \$100,000 AND OVER

Region 1 Northeast
Cregg Sweeney, LLC

Region 2 Southwest
Wentworth, Inc.

Region 3 North Central
Bartelt-The-Remodeling Resource

Region 4 East Central
Urbietta Construction, Inc.

Region 5 South Central
AFS Building Group

Region 6 Northwest
Kirk Design and Construction

Region 7 Southwest
Jackson Design & Remodeling

RESIDENTIAL INTERIOR SPECIALTY

Region 2 Southeast
Little River Carpentry, LLC

Region 3 North Central
Mike Otto Construction, Inc.

Region 4 East Central
Paulson's Construction, Inc.

Region 5 South Central
CG & S Design-Build

Region 7 Southwest
Alward Construction Co., Inc.

RESIDENTIAL ADDITION UNDER \$100,000

Region 1 Northeast
Del-Shore Design & Build, LLC

Region 2 Southeast
S. D. Lohr, Inc.

Region 3 North Central
Gonyea Homes & Remodeling

Region 4 East Central
Dover Home Remodelers, Inc.

RESIDENTIAL ADDITION \$100,000 TO \$250,000

Region 1 Northeast

Barry Goggin Construction Corp.

Region 2 Southeast

Michael Nash Custom Kitchen & Homes, Inc.

Region 3 North Central

B & E General Contractors, Inc.

Region 4 East Central

Dover Home Remodelers, Inc.

Region 5 South Central

CG & S Design-Build

Region 7 Southwest

Bagwell Construction Services, Inc.

RESIDENTIAL ADDITION OVER \$250,000

Region 1 Northeast

Baskam-Sotera Company

Region 2 Southeast

Anthony Wilder Design/Build, Inc.

Region 3 North Central

Orfield Remodeling, Inc.

Region 5 South Central

Straight and Level Construction Company, Inc.

Region 6 Northwest

Henderer Design+Build, Inc.

Region 7 Southwest

Bagwell Construction Services, Inc.

RESIDENTIAL EXTERIOR UNDER \$100,000

Region 1 Northeast

Master's Craft Construction

Region 2 Southeast

Wentworth, Inc.

Region 3 North Central

DiGiacomo Home & Renovation, Inc.

Region 5 South Central

CG & S Design-Build

Region 6 Northwest

Henderer Design+Build, Inc.

Region 7 Southwest

Marrokal Construction Company

RESIDENTIAL EXTERIOR \$100,000 AND OVER

Region 1 Northeast

QMA Design+Build, LLC

Region 2 Southeast

Anthony Wilder Design/Build, Inc.

Region 4 East Central

Neal's Design & Remodel

Region 7 Southwest

Bagwell Construction Services, Inc.

RESIDENTIAL EXTERIOR SPECIALTY

Region 2 Southeast

VB Contractors, Inc.

Region 3 North Central

B & E General Contractors, Inc.

Region 4 East Central

Neal's Design & Remodel
Tied with

- Hurst Total Home, Inc.

Region 5 South Central

Straight and Level Construction Company, Inc.

Region 7 Southwest

HDR Remodeling, Inc. aka
Honey Do Repair Co.

ENTIRE HOUSE UNDER \$250,000

Region 1 Northeast

L.I.Remodel.com

Region 2 Southeast

Michael Nash Custom Kitchen & Homes, Inc.

Region 3 North Central

JG Development, Inc.

Region 4 East Central

A E Fickert & Sons, Inc.

Region 6 Northwest

Mac-Bo, LLC

Region 7 Southwest

Dream Design Builders, Inc.

ENTIRE HOUSE \$250,000 TO \$500,000

Region 1 Northeast

Double D Contractors, Inc.

Region 2 Southeast

TriplePoint Construction, LLC

Region 3 North Central

Normandy Builders

Region 4 East Central

Renovations Unlimited

Region 5 South Central

Straight and Level Construction Company, Inc.

Region 6 Northwest

Neil Kelly Design/Build
Remodeling

Region 7 Southwest

Talmadge Construction, Inc.
Tied with

- Artisan Remodeling, Inc.

ENTIRE HOUSE \$500,001 TO \$1,000,000

Region 1 Northeast

J. Schwartz Fine Home Building

Region 2 Southeast

Home Rebuilders, Inc.

Region 3 North Central

Architectural Building Arts, Inc.

With team members

- Hellenbrand Brothers
Excavating, Inc.

- Sergenian's Floor Coverings
- D. L. Painting Plus, LLC
- Brunsell Lumber & Millwork
- Benjamin Plumbing, Inc.
- California Closets, Inc.
- Ver Halen, Inc. A Pella
- Window Store
- Light Haus Glass, Inc.
- Top Hat Fireplace & Chimney Specialists
- Zeier Siding & Insulation

Region 5 South Central

Provenance Properties

Region 6 Northwest

Olsen Homes & Renovation, LLC

Region 7 Southwest

Bagwell Construction Services, Inc.

ENTIRE HOUSE OVER \$1,000,000

Region 1 Northeast

Baskam-Sotera Company

Region 2 Southeast

Warth Construction

Region 3 North Central

New Spaces

Region 6 Northwest

Sun Forest Construction, LLC

Region 7 Southwest

Dawson & Clinton General
Contractors

Tied with

- Rogers Remodeling
With team member
- Reynolds Gualco Architecture
& Interior Design

RESIDENTIAL HISTORICAL RENOVATION/RESTORATION

Region 1 Northeast

R. Faucett Construction

Region 2 Southeast

Greaves Construction, Inc.

Region 3 North Central

Bartelt-The-Remodeling
Resource

Region 4 East Central

Nicholson Builders, Inc.

Region 6 Northwest

Neil Kelly Design/Build
Remodeling

Region 7 Southwest

Marrokal Construction Company

RESIDENTIAL UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Region 3 North Central

mackmiller design+build

Tied with

- TZ of Madison, Inc.
With team member
- Bella Domicile, Inc.

Region 7 Southwest

Harrell Remodeling, Inc.
With team members

- Segale Bros. Wood Products, Inc.
- Fox Marble and Granite

COMMERCIAL INTERIOR

Region 1 Northeast

K and A Carosella, Inc.

Region 2 Southeast

The Gallick Corporation

Region 3 North Central

Inner View

With team members

- Ganser Exteriors
- Academy Electric, Inc.
- Top Hat Fireplace & Chimney Specialists
- Fass Masonry, LLC
- Bella Domicile, Inc.
- Brunsell Lumber & Millwork

Region 5 South Central

R. M. Thompson Co.

Region 7 Southwest

C. R. Whitney & Son, Inc.

COMMERCIAL EXTERIOR

Region 2 Southeast

TriplePoint Construction, LLC

Region 4 East Central

Franklin & Associates

Region 7 Southwest

Marrokal Construction Company

COMMERCIAL SPECIALTY

Region 4 East Central

Greater Dayton Building
& Remodeling, An Oberer
Thompson Company

Region 5 South Central

Key Renovations, Ltd.

HOME THEATER & MEDIA ROOMS UNDER \$150,000

Region 1 Northeast

Media Rooms, Inc.

Region 4 East Central

Kessler Construction
Services, LLC

Region 5 South Central

Graf Developments

HOME THEATER & MEDIA ROOMS \$150,000 AND OVER

Region 3 North Central

CHC Creative Remodeling

Region 5 South Central

CB Construction Company

Region 7 Southwest

Magleby Companies, Inc.

RO

ANOTHER BRANDSOURCE FIRST

\$25 GIFT CARD AND 0% INTEREST FOR CIRCUIT CITY CREDIT CARD HOLDERS

Among the many BrandSource 'firsts' that have helped with member profitability in the past year has been the First to offer FREE Gas to consumers who purchased GE dishwashers, the FIRST to offer Circuit City customers the ability to use their gift cards at any BrandSource store across the nation, and now, BrandSource is offering Circuit City credit card holders a \$25 gift certificate, good at any BrandSource, Sleep Source, Gourmet Source, Home Entertainment Source and BrandSource Flooring galleries.

This offer allows consumers who have purchased from Circuit City in the past to purchase any type of product offered by BrandSource member stores, including furniture, major appliances, mattresses, consumer electronics, custom home installation and an assortment of floor coverings.

In addition to the \$25 gift card, Circuit City credit card holders will receive a FREE 0% no interest for 12 months on their BrandSource store purchase. BrandSource members have been provided direct access to an ROP ad touting the consumer benefits of the FREE \$25 Gift Card and 0% Interest offer. The new program was rolled out during a BrandSource board meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, where the

boards of directors from each BrandSource Region and Division were invited to review the group's 2009 promotion plans and to work through several areas where BrandSource can assist members to point out successful business strategies and programs that will add to the members bottom lines during the current economic downturn.

Round table topics included unique and easy-to-implement promotional ideas, store image improvement, where to cut costs without cutting customer service, the importance of the Brand, and how to improve a store's image on a limited budget. The ideas were discussed and shared with the entire BrandSource membership via the group's weekly update and new backroom communications center. BrandSource member Jeff Tracy, of Lima, Ohio, summed up the two day session by reminding all of the attendees that "These are difficult times for all types of businesses. But keep in mind on your flight home and your drive home, that every one of those houses you fly over or drive past have a refrigerator, a dishwasher, range, washer, dryer, DVD player, and TV. Consumers may be cutting back, but they will continue to replace these products when they fail. Our goal is to have them shop at a BrandSource store." **RO**

The RetailObserver



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UNITED SERVICERS ASSOCIATION-SRC 2009 AND BRAND SOURCE SUMMIT

HOLDING CONFERENCE AND TRAINING CONCURRENTLY

Industry leadership comes in various forms and in difficult economic times the leaders at United Servicers and Brand Source have blended their two annual events, the Service and Retail Convention 2009 and Brand Source Summit, so participants can attend one convention. This decision will enable the attendees and exhibitors to get the most value for their training and marketing dollars. The conference will be held in Dallas this year from March 22-24.

“This is the first time that we’ve brought these two organizations together and we believe that it will be a big win for our members,” explains Dean Landers, President of the United Servicers Association. The attendees will benefit from attending the largest hands-on training provided at the SRC and the latest industry information provided at the trade show and summit.

At the SRC 2009 training sessions will be offered by many manufacturers including: Bosh, Electrolux, Fisher & Paykel, GE, LG, Lokring, Samsung, Sub Zero, Whirlpool and Wolf.

In addition to training classes there will be business classes offered in how to manage a one or two-person service business, how to attract and retain technicians, growing the bottom-line and technician compensation.

More information about the conferences can be found at: <http://www.src09.org> or <http://www.brandsourceconvention.com>.

The United Servicers Association (USA) and Brand Source Service (BSS) invite and encourage anyone that has never attended a Service and Retail Convention (SRC) to enjoy a free USA and BSS one-year trial membership*. Enjoy all the benefits of both associations just by attending the largest Technical & Business management

March 22nd-24th, 2009
Dallas, Hilton Anatole



convention that will be held anywhere in 2009.

“This is an excellent time for new members to experience two exciting service organizations and to learn from our group of industry-leading experts”, explained Dean Landers, president of the United Servicers Association.

** This offer is for new USA and Brand Source Service members only. Current or past members of these associations are not eligible.*

ABOUT USA

United Servicers Association is a trade association formed by servicers for servicers. Its mission and purpose is to develop and

provide services and programs intended to assist members in building strong businesses for the purpose of competing successfully in the current competitive environment. To achieve these goals, USA provides educational programs, financial services, government relations, and other management and marketing programs.

For more information about United Servicers Association, please contact Paul Mac Donald at (800) 683-2558 or paul.m.macdonald@unitedservicers.com

ABOUT BSS

Brand Source Service (BSS) is the appliance service division of Brand Source. Brand Source Service provides members many benefits including training, education, and new profit centers. In addition, Brand Source Service is developing a national service network and, by capitalizing on Brand Source’s brand recognition, marketing this network to consumers, manufacturers and other entities.

For more information about Brand Source or Brand Source Service, please contact J.R. Zirkelbach, Director of Brand Source Service at (800) 430-0282 or jr.zirkelbach@brandsource.com **RO**

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