

# The RetailObserver

May, 2011

AN EYE ON THE INDUSTRY SINCE 1970

Vol. 22, Issue 5

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Ralph Moretti  
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SOUTHERN  
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Dave Hoffman  
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Mike Motes  
(269) 923-1758

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(269) 923-1090

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# Bend... But Don't Break

RESILIENCE HELPS US THROUGH TOUGH TIMES

During the past couple of years, we have weathered many storms, and in the aftermath of distressing times, much creative energy has sprung forth, like a phoenix rising – bringing hope and inspired ideas, captured in improved products which are now hitting the market aimed at a clientele ready to move on with life as they want it this spring.

I must say, moving to Las Vegas last summer had its challenges, from learning the melting points of steering wheels, plastics and electronic gadgets left locked inside the car at 120 plus degree heat, to fully understanding the ability of tents and other inanimate objects to take flight from ones own backyard into the neighbors' in unexpected high desert wind storm, has been quite an entertaining, yet humbling experience. It is especially intriguing to watch the palm trees bend and dance under the pressure of the strong spontaneous winds we get in the spring and fall, as trees appear to reach their breaking point and then gracefully return to their original position after the wind dies down.

In reading an excerpt from a newsletter a friend sent me, it sums up many of my own recent life experiences. *“As I've gotten older, I now realize that there are many types of “winds” that can make us feel like we are about to snap or reach our breaking point. Whether we experience bad luck, make poor decisions, or encounter unfair circumstances, it is resilience that helps us through tough times and bounce back. Here's the way I see it - Life is a mixture of good times and bad times. The next time the going gets tough and you are close to your breaking point, bend but don't break. Show resilience and try your best not to let the situation get the best of you.”*

Some pretty good advice as we battle our own winds of change that we deal with on a daily basis in the current economic environment we live in. So, now that spring winds have become soft breezes and May flowers are in their full glory – it's time for us to get the backyard ready for summer entertaining and spend time with family and friends. This current issue features the Hearth, Patio & Barbeque Expo 2011, highlighting many exciting new products to add to your showroom floor. Maybe it's time for you to consider expanding into the outdoor living department of fine outdoor furnishings, cooking & grilling equipment, bringing with it a fresh new wave of customers into your showroom and a whole new profit center for your bottom line.

So, when your winds of change begin to blow, just remember grace under pressure—like a tree in the wind, bend... but don't break.



*To our continued resiliency,*

Eliana Barriga

letters@retailobserver.com

The  
**RetailObserver**

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CELEBRATING OUR 22<sup>ND</sup> YEAR

*Publisher/Managing Editor*

ELIANA BARRIGA

*Director of Sales and Marketing*

MOE LASTFOGEL

*Art Director*

TERRY PRICE

*Contributing Writers*

KEVIN M. HENRY

RICK SEGEL

ROBERT SPECTOR

CHRISTOPHER THIEDE

JOHN TSCHOHL

ELLY VALAS

RALPH E. WOLFF

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THE RETAIL OBSERVER

2764 N. Green Valley Pkwy.

Suite 508

Henderson, NV 89014-2121

800.393.0509 • 702.208.9500

Fax 702.570.5664

production@retailobserver.com

info@retailobserver.com

www.retailobserver.com

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## FaceTwit-In

### MY THOUGHTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

I was doing some research on this subject for a future article, but decided it would be a good Musings this month since I get asked the question so often. Personally, I do more with LinkedIn than anything else. I have been able to connect with many clients, past colleges and future prospects that are in my marketing plans. I have been introduced to heads of corporations and leaders in the industry. It is my most valuable tool. Facebook is much more consumer based.

I find the information about people's children, vacations and daily doings not to be helpful in my world (not that I don't care). Not to mention information like: 7,265,560 people like Pizza on Facebook, 6,344,287 people like cooking, and 59,249 like Interior Design.

How many people follow you on Facebook and Twitter? I think the hardest part about FB and TW is that you really have to look at how you can get followers. What do they want and how do you find your client base thru all the throngs of people. With LinkedIn my searches don't require a PhD.

The cyber-world is a wonderful thing, but so much of it now controls our life. Who is your client and what do they want from you and how can the Internet get you together? Trade Shows, Expos and Events have always allowed the user experience but the key to the Social Media is still out there, it just has to be found.

I discovered this article a few weeks ago and found it informative:

#### **Facebook Growth Continues, While LinkedIn Hits 100 Million Users**

*Facebook's membership growth rate is reaching a saturation point. The company estimated that 132.5 million people in the U.S. will be users of Facebook this year, with that number rising to 152.1 million by 2012. (Facebook claims about 600 million users globally.)*

*Meanwhile, professional social networking site LinkedIn announced that it has reached 100 million users worldwide, and is continuing to add 1 million users per week. LinkedIn filed for an initial public offering in January.*

*Jeff Weiner CEO of LinkedIn stated, "So, what does all this growth really mean? We're making great progress toward our ultimate goal: to connect all of the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful." This isn't just a big milestone for us — it's also an important one for all of you, our members, who've helped build the LinkedIn network. We're most inspired that by connecting talent with opportunity at massive scale, we're changing people's lives in meaningful and sustainable ways. Each of our 100 million members has a unique story—from finding a job, to recruiting talent, to sourcing new deals, and even starting a business.*



*I hope this helps. Happy Retailing*

Moe Lastfogel  
moe@retailobserver.com

## The Retail Observer

MAY 2011

VOLUME 22, NUMBER 5

CELEBRATING OUR 22<sup>ND</sup> YEAR

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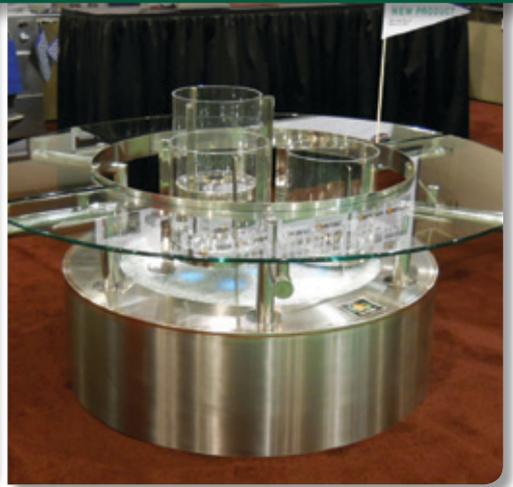
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# HPBExpo 2011

## SPARKS INDUSTRY OPTIMISM & RECOVERY

**T**he HPBExpo in Salt Lake City celebrated the growing economic recovery and provided a forum for growth in the hearth, patio and barbecue industries. The participating retailers brought renewed confidence and a greater sense of optimism to Expo compared to a year ago in Orlando. HPBA hosted 6,000 industry professionals for four days of new product demonstrations, dealer and manufacturer meetings, educational seminars and, for the first time in 15 years, an all-industry party that rocked the Salt Palace Convention Center.

The 295 exhibitors filled the indoor exhibit hall and outdoor burn area with outstanding new products for dealer showrooms. New fireplaces and stoves, for indoors and outdoors, came in outstanding new styles for a traditional or contemporary décor. Grill manufacturers brought new conveniences and innovation for the backyard chef. The industries' manufacturers were not idle during the recession and the excitement for renewed consumer buying was infectious.

The popular New Product Pavilion on the show floor highlighted 37 new products – a one-stop look at the Expo's newest products. Hearth & Home's Vesta Awards judges examined 87 new products in seventeen different categories to select winners. Travis Industries' R & D was busy this past year and took home five awards including Best in Show for Hearth Products.

M&G DuraVent and the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Education Foundation sponsored over 40 education sessions for retailers. The six education tracks covered a plethora of

topics, and dealers filled the classrooms eager to learn how to do business in this new economy and to gain insight in consumer spending. Over 100 dealers attended the Tools & Tips for Service Calls – Gas Appliances with instructor Bob Wise of C & R Hearth and Closets. Sessions for wood-burning and pellet appliance service calls were also well attended. NFI certification exams attracted over 100 candidates hoping to renew or obtain NFI-certified credentials.

For the first time, the Pellet Fuels Institute, HPBA and the HPB Education Foundation sponsored an all-day symposium on biomass central heating. This new emerging technology attracted approximately 150 people to learn how biomass is heating homes, as well as schools and poultry houses. Central Boiler, LEI Products, Napoleon Fireplaces, and Viessmann Manufacturing set up displays of biomass equipment and literature and during the breaks they had the opportunity to speak one-on-one with the attendees. Attendees were also encouraged to visit the other Expo furnace and boiler manufacturers in the indoor and outdoor exhibit areas. Twin Ports Testing was also on hand to educate people on the new pellet fuel standards.

On Friday night, the Salt Palace Convention Center turned into a 1970s disco party, and company-logo attire was replaced with bell-bottom pants, gold chains, wigs, platform shoes and, yes, even a bathrobe! The band played all night, the lighted dance floors were full and everyone left their business talk and inhibitions at the door. It was an outstanding party and HPBA thanks the sponsors, DuraVent, Hearth & Home Technologies, Kozy Heat, Lennox Hearth Products, Napoleon Fireplaces, Regency, SBI, Travis and Weber, for their | *continued on page 10* |



financial backing. Knowing it will be tough to top the 2011 “Fever,” the Expo Committee is already at work on a party in Atlanta at Expo 2012.

The last couple of years have been tough for everyone, but the people that traveled to Salt Lake City are resilient, hard-working and looking to the future. Their enthusiasm for the wonderful

products, the challenging industry and, most importantly, each other is equal to none. Everyone there received a shot of adrenalin. If you missed the show, we’re already planning the next one, and Atlanta will be “where we all come together.” See you there, February 29 – March 3, 2012. For more info visit [www.HPBEXPO.com](http://www.HPBEXPO.com). **RO**





## CALL TO ACTION



### SEND US YOUR SHOTS

LOOKING FOR RETAILERS, DISTRIBUTORS AND MANUFACTURERS engaged in their element while at trade shows, special events, showroom openings or just plain group get-togethers. *The Retail Observer* is interested in featuring you in our new snap-shot page, "Retailers Observed", where you can see what your industry buddies are up to. Please e-mail us your hi-res photos in .jpg format. Include the captions with the photos you send for consideration and be sure to put "Retailers Observed" in the subject line. Send to: [production@retailobserver.com](mailto:production@retailobserver.com)

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## Book Review

### Nuts & Bolts of Sales Management:

HOW TO BUILD A HIGH-VELOCITY SALES ORGANIZATION

John Treace knows exactly why some businesses stumble and fail. He spent years as a sales and marketing hired gun whose sole job was to restructure sales departments of companies that were either bankrupt or on the verge of collapsing. His new book, *Nuts & Bolts of Sales Management: How to Build a High-Velocity Sales Organization*, isn't filled with theories, it zeroes in on the fundamental problems he's seen time and time again, and provides clear, implementable solutions.

Floundering sales teams, Treace discovered, weren't struggling just because of poor sales techniques or inefficient forecasting, but because their companies didn't focus on establishing core values. Treace's experience in bringing failing companies to a point at which they could go public showed that sales operations not centered and guided by firm principles and values were sabotaging their success. Sales policies that changed at the whim of management or sales teams, companies with no established culture, and inconsistent communication are sample ingredients of the recipe for failure Treace has identified.

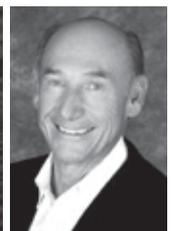
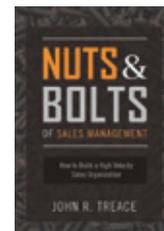
*Nuts & Bolts of Sales Management* addresses topics such as:

- How core values and carefully crafted mission statements literally predict the success or failure of a company
- The 5 most common mistakes sales organizations make
- Why a 'Forward-Looking Living Document' for sales departments that identifies potential traps and pitfalls can keep a company out of trouble
- How a little success can create a lot of overhead
- Why managers should never keep a very high performing salesperson with a bad attitude
- Why poor morale, even when executing well, can ruin a sales organization
- Why throwing money at problems never works
- Operational strategies ranging from effective metrics and productive sales meetings to award programs, consultants, and compensation

This practical handbook was written for current sales VPs or managers, salespeople who desire to move into management, and CEOs, COOs, CFOs and others wishing to have a better understanding of the principles and systems that drive high-velocity sales organizations. **RO**

*Author: John R. Treace specializes in restructuring sales departments of bankrupt or failing companies, is a member of the National Speakers Association and earned a BS in Psychology from the University of Memphis. Visit JR Treace & Associates, sales management consulting: [www.treaceconsulting.com](http://www.treaceconsulting.com).*

*Publisher: Emerald Book Company*





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# RETAILERS

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RETAILERS • DISTRIBUTORS • MANUFACTURERS

TRADE SHOWS, SHOWROOM OPENINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS



## HPBEXPO 2011

*HPBExpo in Salt Lake City held for the first time in 15 years, an all-industry party that rocked the Salt Palace Convention Center. The Center turned into a 1970s disco party, and company-logo attire was replaced with bell-bottom pants, gold chains, wigs, platform shoes and, yes, even a bathrobe! Knowing it will be tough to top the 2011 "Fever," the Expo Committee is already at work on a party in Atlanta at Expo 2012.*



# Manufacturer {NOTES}



WWW.LIEBHERR-APPLIANCES.COM

## Liebherr Mobile Product Catalog

Liebherr Refrigeration North America's 2011 Mobile Catalog, launched March 1, 2011, allows users to view and compare Liebherr's entire product inventory of smart, sleek cooling refrigerators and freezers, wine cabinets and cigar humidors, directly on their mobile device. Users access the mobile catalog through a specially designed Liebherr QR code or they may also access the site using a unique URL at <http://m.refrigeration.liebherr.us>.



Special features of Liebherr's mobile catalog include:

- **Fridge Finder**, a search functionality which allows users to search for a refrigerator unit that matches their specified design elements from size and finish to model features
- **Dealer Locator**, a feature that provides users with nearby dealers in Canada and the United States who sell Liebherr products
- Users also have the option of comparing models by their key features including, the unit size, style and any special features including Liebherr's patented BioFresh storage compartments

Liebherr's mobile catalog allows designers, architects and everyday consumers to choose from the many customizable units to find the right fit for one's kitchen and in line with their lifestyle. Scan the QR code to access Liebherr's Mobile Product Catalog:

### LIEBHERR PRODUCT LAUNCH OF 36" SINGLE DOOR MODELS

Liebherr Refrigeration North America showcased two exciting new products during the New York Architectural Digest Home Design Show 2011 - The freestanding CS 2060 and fully integrated HC 2060 36" Single Door Refrigerators.

Adding another option to Liebherr's larger capacity product line, the new single door 36" 2060 series offers almost 20 cubic feet of capacity to hold a significant amount of groceries while meeting all food storage demands. Expansive and uninterrupted shelving easily accommodates oversized platters and containers. One drawer, the width of the unit is perfect for meats, cheeses and dairy, while two other deep drawers provide the best treatment for fruit and vegetables. Gallon holders and additional storage racks allow space for all sizes of beverages and sauces. The double freezer drawers are well appointed with easy-grasp aluminum handles, handy self-closing mechanisms and maximized use of space.

Additional high performance key features of the line include: dual refrigeration system with separate super efficient variable speed compressors for the refrigerator and the freezer; LED light columns, and ceiling lighting; Vegetable and freezer drawer illumination and an icemaker that features the most technically advanced water filter available for household appliances are also included. **RO**

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# LIEBHERR

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## REGENCY EXHIBITS AT THE 2011 HEARTH, PATIO, AND BARBECUE EXPO

Regency Fireplace Products exhibited at the 2011 Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Expo in Salt Lake City. Regency has been successfully exhibiting their hearth products at the HPBExpo for more than 20 years and this year the new product revolution continues at Regency.

Following the tremendous success of their first outdoor fireplace in 2010, Regency has expanded the outdoor offering by introducing the Plateau Series. Whether used in outdoor living rooms, restaurants or hotels; the Plateau is the most versatile outdoor fireplace system in the market today. The Regency exhibit also featured the Regency Horizon HZ40E indoor gas fireplace. The HZ40E is a larger version of last year's popular HZ30E. It offers the choice of three faceplate styles including the clean edge finish, as well as, the optional blower making this fireplace the perfect fit to any med-size



modern living space. In addition, Regency has added to their contemporary Alterra™ Wood Collection; A larger version of the CS1200, the CS2400 offers a larger firebox, perfect for those who want more heat, but the same sleek look offered by the stylish CS1200. The Alterra CS2400 comes with the choice of black or stainless steel side panels to complete this contemporary wood stove.

They recognize that customers want the “whole package” including fireplace, mantel and surround. That why this year they are introducing their new mantel collection. Check out the new durable designer mantels that resemble slate, concrete and other natural contemporary finishes. Made of quality steel with hand crafted finishes, these mantels are a new way to offer a complete package. For more information about Regency go to [www.regency-fire.com](http://www.regency-fire.com) or call (604) 946-5155



## THE OUTDOOR GREATROOM® COMPANY INTRODUCES THE INSPIRATION FIREPLACE

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The spinning flame burns above reflective glass fire crystals creating ambiance and a perfect centerpiece for any space. The Venturi Flame technology takes a small, non-descript gel flame and instantly turns it into an active piece of art. The fireplace even installs like a work of art, simply hanging on a secure wall mount. The Inspiration does not require venting and the ease of installation allows anyone to have the beauty and warmth of a fireplace in any room of the home - indoors or out - in just minutes. There are no gas lines to run or special construction required. Making it a great option for a first fireplace, or the perfect way to add a second fireplace to the home to complement to an existing wood or gas fireplace.

The product is extremely versatile and portable and perfect for indoor and outdoor living. From bathrooms to bedrooms and backyard patios to tiny alcoves - the opportunities for use are endless.

This product is also one of the most economical fireplaces on the market today. Dan Shimek, president of The Outdoor Greatroom Company recognizes the opportunity for this unique product. Dan states, “The Inspiration is a great fireplace that is highly efficient, affordable and easy to install. With this product a consumer can have a fireplace set up in their home within minutes - inside or outside. The total cost when installed is only a fraction of the cost of a traditional fireplace.”

The Inspiration comes in 4 unique finishes - Silver Vein, Brown, Black and Stainless Steel. Fireplace dimensions: 31.5” (height) x 31.5” (width) x 9” (depth), and weighs only 31 lbs.

For more information, call 866-303-4028 or visit [www.outdoorrooms.com](http://www.outdoorrooms.com).

## FUEGO NORTH AMERICA® LAUNCHES NEW LINE: ELEMENT BY FUEGO™

NEW GAS GRILL BRINGS SMART AND ATTAINABLE DESIGN TO MASS MARKET



Fuego North America®, the award-winning design company that has revolutionized outdoor entertaining, introduces a family of smart, outdoor products for the mass market. The new line, Element by Fuego™, combines an affordable, friendly design with patent-pending features and innovative technology for a new way to grill.

| continued on page 18 |



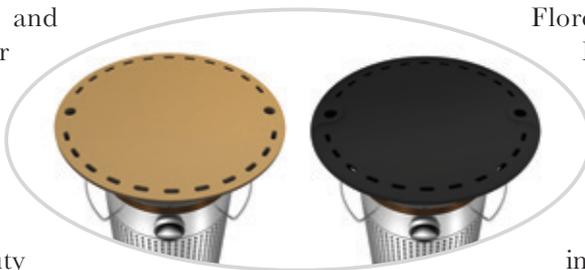


The Element grill, designed by Fuego Chief Designer and partner at Ammunition Group, Robert Brunner, features four customizable cooking options: traditional gas grilling, pizza stone, griddle plate and roasting. A 24,000-BTU Dual-Zone Burner with two cooking elements powers the 21-inch gas grill: Zone 1 is for indirect grilling and Zone 2 is for traditional, direct grilling. The Roasting Lid transforms the grill into a convection-like oven, allowing users to roast, slow-cook and even bake.

Whether you're grilling steaks and cheeseburgers for an outdoor party or slow cooking pork for a memorable family dinner, the Element gas grill offers multiple cooking options in one innovative package. Its smart design, sleek looks, and heavy-duty cast alloy controls make the Element a welcome alternative to traditional kettle grills.

The Element grill includes an electronic ignition with a single control knob that ensures the griller has complete control over the temperature and both burners at all times. The Element grill also features a swing-out wood prep tray tucked under the cast-iron grill top for setting a glass of red wine; stainless-steel handles for hanging tools and towels; and propane storage with a removable front panel to keep the tank out of sight, but within easy reach.

For modernists that appreciate clean lines and a minimal design aesthetic, the Element 01 is available in stainless steel with a goldenleaf chestnut wood swing-out prep tray. Those who want to add a little color to their backyard will appreciate the Element 02 and 03 grills in dark gray, red, white and copper.



Other product highlights include stainless steel burners, a grate made of cast iron for maximum heat conduction, a temperature gauge on the lid, a powder-coated steel burner bowl and body, and smooth-rolling ABS casters with rubber tread and locks.

To expand your selling options, the Element is compatible with different accessories, including a pizza stone, for making bubbly pies that rival those of your favorite pizza joint, a cast-iron griddle plate for searing and grilling peppers and onions, Steak Florentine, or shell-on shrimp and a Natural Gas Conversion Kit. The Element measures 21.0 x 36.0 x 21.0 inches (WxHxD).

“When we launched the original Fuego line, we revolutionized the outdoor entertaining industry with modern features and innovative

technology that traditionally weren't associated with grilling,” says Alex Siow, Fuego CEO. “Now, with the introduction of Element by Fuego, we're responding to the mass market, hungry for products that possess similar design features, yet are fun, friendly and have an affordable price tag.”

For more information about Element by Fuego contact 888.883.8346 or visit [www.elementbyfuego.com](http://www.elementbyfuego.com).

| *continued on page 20* |





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DRAMATIC OUTDOOR TORCH UNLIKE ANY OTHER AVAILABLE



Breaking the barriers of standard torch design, Travis Industries proudly unveils the Tempest Gas Torch – a dramatic outdoor gas torch unlike anything available.

Designed to display and reflect a unique, intriguing flame presentation, the Tempest from Travis Industries features a spinning, spiral-like flame within an open-aired, rectangular tempered glass housing.

Created as an outdoor furnishing/accessory for a wide-array of exterior settings and applications, the display possibilities are nearly endless: outdoor living spaces, front walkway pillars, mounted onto moveable stainless-steel columns, atop stone pillars or deck posts, or attached to any building's exterior.

"The Tempest is designed to enhance practically any outdoor area – outdoor living spaces, grand entryways, retail & business storefronts – you name it," explains Kurt Rumens, president of Travis Industries – House of Fire. "It is so unique and has such a mesmerizing flame the Tempest literally 'Boldly Goes Where No Torch Has Gone Before.'"

Continuing Travis Industries' long history of inventive product design, the Tempest's "bold" innovation comes from its patent-pending torch technology that requires no mechanical or electrical means. Its no-power draft system

simply utilizes the Venturi Effect for its unique flame appearance. The Venturi Effect, named after Italian physicist Giovanni Battista Venturi, states an increase in air velocity occurs simultaneously with a decrease in pressure. The Tempest's tempered glass housing design constricts inward oxygen needed for combustion thus reducing the pressure – at the same time increasing the flame velocity for a dramatic, spiral-like presentation of fire.

Beyond its groundbreaking design, the Tempest's practicality and usability are just as impressive. Available to run off attached gas lines or a five-gallon propane tank, the variable flame reaches a height of 17", puts out up to 20,000 BTUs and can be manually-ignited with a simple wand lighter. And the four-sided, 18" tall open-air tempered glass housing is designed to prevent the flame from going out during high winds or rainfall, but includes an automatic gas safety shutoff switch should the flame ever dissipate.

And as most Travis Industries' products, the Tempest Torch offers numerous display options for a personalized look: short or tall post versions, wall mounted, without base for those wanting to construct something unique or utilize an existing feature, and even an easy-to-move-around deck version utilizing a five-gallon propane tank. Each option is designed to incorporate the alluring, spiral-like flame into exterior spaces.

"Everyone who sees it asks: 'What is this?'" adds Rumens. "In fact, my neighbors want some installed within their outdoor living space as soon as possible, and even our dealers are installing them on their storefronts because they look so unique and draw customer interest."

The Tempest from Travis Industries – House of Fire comes with a seven-year "real world" warranty and operates on either natural gas or propane. It is recommended all Travis Industries products be installed and maintained on an annual basis by an authorized, specialty hearth retailer. For more information on the Tempest or to become a dealer, visit: [www.tempesttorch.com](http://www.tempesttorch.com) or call 1-800-654-1177.

| continued on page 22 |





## THE LATEST INDOOR COLLECTION DELIVERS THE INGREDIENTS OF COMMERCIAL REFINEMENT.



### MODERN SOPHISTICATION

A substantial product that maintains a level of refinement and elegance – DCS Indoor offers bold details that combine to give the product substance & mass and exude functionality & simplicity.



### CULINARY PERFORMANCE

Attributes including an enhanced and patented Grease Management System & Commercial Grade Griddle provide professional benefits for the home chef.



### PROFESSIONAL DESIGN

Ergonomic controls with visual communication and easy to clean surfaces ensure that every detail is catered for.



## AIR KING INTRODUCES OUTDOOR RANGE HOODS TO PROPERLY VENTILATE COVERED OUTDOOR KITCHENS



The addition of Air King's Professional Outdoor Series range hoods provide an excellent way to ventilate smoke and odors that can accumulate in covered outdoor kitchens. Proper outdoor kitchen ventilation can be accomplished by using an Air King Professional Outdoor Kitchen range hood. These range hoods are ETL listed for damp location and can be customized to the ventilation needs of the grill with HVI certified motor options from 300 up to 1200 CFM. Air King offers widths of 36", 42" and 48" to cover typical residential outdoor kitchen needs. To give the installation a finished look, matching soffits and backsplashes are also available.

"We are seeing an increase in homeowners adding outdoor living spaces. An item such as an outdoor kitchen is a great upgrade, but still needs to be ventilated. That's where the Air King Professional Outdoor Series range hoods come in as a great way to keep the area free of smoke," said Jeff Kenkelen, president, Air King.

The Professional Outdoor Series range hoods are constructed of 304-gauge stainless steel that will not discolor over time. The included dishwasher safe baffles capture grease and debris and are easy to remove and clean. 45-watt maximum Halogen lights illuminate the cooking surface and have multiple brightness settings. An internal thermostat detects when the heat level rises to an excessive amount and will automatically turn the hood on. The control panel is located at the front of the hood and the included metal control knobs can withstand the higher temperatures of outdoor cooking. For more information go to [www.airkinglimited.com](http://www.airkinglimited.com)

## SEA GULL LIGHTING OFFERS ENERGY EFFICIENT LIGHTING AND FAN OPTIONS FOR KITCHEN AND BATH TO OUTDOOR LIVING SPACES



HELPS CONSUMERS BE GREEN WITH SUSTAINABLE AND COST-SAVING LIGHTING

Sea Gull Lighting, the leading manufacturer of more than 3,000 decorative and functional lighting and ceiling fan products, reminds consumers that it's never too late to achieve sustainability and save money. Lighting accounts for 15 percent of the average consumer's energy bill, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. That's a lot of money. By using energy efficient lighting in most used areas in the home like the kitchen or bathroom, consumers can use up to 75 percent less energy lighting their home adding up to some big savings.

Sea Gull Lighting has been a long-time ENERGY STAR partner, grabbing the distinctive honor of the Sustained Excellence Award. The company offers a wide range of energy efficient products for kitchen and bath to outdoor living spaces and ceiling fans. Some of the company's leading energy-efficient products include:

- **For the Kitchen and Bathroom:** Ambiance® Lx LED festoon—This new LED bulb is perfect for under cabinet and toe kick lighting for the kitchen and bathroom. It delivers long life (35,000 hours+) and added energy efficiency (4x more efficient than conventional light sources). And, it simply snaps into

| continued on page 24 |



# The engineering says Munich. The taste says Paris.

Bosch crafts stylish, brilliantly conceived kitchen appliances that speak the language of the home cook and home designer.



**Engineered to meet the needs of the most discerning chefs.** Bosch's kitchen appliances offer unrivaled precision, technology and performance. That means a refrigerator that preserves produce up to twice as long. And wall ovens with the fastest pre-heat on the market.\* All designed to beautifully enhance your kitchen—and your meals. [www.bosch-home.com/us](http://www.bosch-home.com/us)



**BOSCH**  
Invented for life



existing compatible under-cabinet lighting systems in homes today. Savings and convenience in one bulb—that's nice.

- **For the foyer:** Acadia Hall / Foyer Light -- This ENERGY STAR rated lighting received the prestigious Lighting For Tomorrow award for its style and energy efficiency. The Acadia Collection represents how there is no sacrificing style when selecting energy efficiency.
- **For the Bathroom:** Three-Light Sussex Fluorescent Wall/Bath—This ENERGY STAR bathroom fixture provides generous output of light and style. There is no need to trade beautiful lighting for sustainability.
- **For the Dining Room:** Five-Light Brandywine Chandelier—This is one of Sea Gull Lighting's most popular collections. Brandywine is an ENERGY STAR qualified collection that's gorgeous, while saving money and the environment! It's the perfect complement to any dining décor.

For more information on the Sea Gull Lighting, or to receive the company's catalog, call 1-800-347-5483 or visit [www.seagulllighting.com](http://www.seagulllighting.com).

## NATIVE TRAILS DEBUTS HAND-HAMMERED RANGE HOOD IN BRUSHED NICKEL FINISH

EYE-CATCHING TEXTURE BRINGS DISTINCTION TO THE HEARTH OF THE HOME



A pioneer in the use of copper in kitchen and bath design and known for their artisan hand-hammered sinks, Native Trails reveals their stunning copper Range Hood available in a brushed nickel finish, a popular pairing to the company's large kitchen basins like the Farmhouse and Zuma.

The brushed nickel Range Hood's distinctive texture of the hand worked copper with its innumerable hammer marks adds warmth, richness and eye-catching character to the heart of the home, the kitchen space. "We are very excited to introduce this finish to the range hood collection as it makes for a stunning pair with the brushed nickel finish on our kitchen sinks," says Naomi Neilson Howard, CEO and founder of Native Trails. "Open kitchen designs continually seek to blur the lines of utility versus living spaces and this is a show stopping piece that brings personality and casual class to the hub of family life, of gathering and entertaining." The exceptional,



professional grade baffle filter ventilation system is UL-approved and incorporates a 600 CFM or 1200 CFM motor, with a double blower for larger models. It includes highly desirable variable speed motor controls and dimmer controlled halogen lighting. It is proof that the range hood is not only a work of art for the kitchen, but also a workhorse.

Offered in four sizes (36", 42", 48" and 54"), the range hoods are available in the Native Trails Antique and Brushed Nickel finishes. Custom sizes are also available.

Native Trails leads the industry in artisan crafted, eco-conscious furnishing and fixtures for high-end kitchen and bath design. Rooted in the traditions of centuries-old artisan craftsmanship, Native Trails uses every opportunity to use recycled, reclaimed, or green certified materials to bring eclectic sophistication to luxury living. Native Trails is featured in over 1300 show rooms in the United States and Canada. To learn more please visit [www.nativetrails.net](http://www.nativetrails.net).

| continued on page 26 |



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## DANVER INTRODUCES PERIMETER INSECT CONTROL SYSTEM



**DANVER** DANVER Stainless Steel Cabinetry, the nation's premier outdoor kitchen manufacturer, announces the introduction of a perimeter insect control system that effectively eliminates mosquitoes and other biting insects from homeowner's backyards and outdoor living areas.

"We are very excited to be offering this unique insect control system to DANVER customers," said Mitch Slater, president and founder of DANVER. "Along with the beauty and relaxation of the outdoors come insects. By offering a suitable solution to the pesky problem, consumers have yet another reason to spend more time outdoors enjoying their outdoor kitchens and living areas."

The insect control system automatically sprays a fine mist of botanical insecticide through nozzles installed around the perimeter of the backyard and/or the kitchen, living and entertainment center. Two to three short mists

per day, usually scheduled around dawn and dusk, is all it takes to achieve control.

DANVER's automatic misting system offers the most effective, convenient method for preventing bites by eliminating annoying insects. Family members will never have to spray messy repellents or apply greasy ointments again. The insecticide is derived from the chrysanthemum flower and is quickly degraded by sunlight or rain. There is no residue and insects do not develop resistance to the ingredients.

DANVER is the leading manufacturer of outdoor kitchens and living areas. For more information on DANVER's insect control system, visit the DANVER online or call 888.441.0537.

## SURVEY REVEALS MOST CONSUMERS HAVE ONLY MODERATE UNDERSTANDING OF SMART GRID TECHNOLOGY



A survey from Whirlpool Corporation and Habitat for Humanity International suggests that increased education on

Smart Grid technology is needed.

Appliances that use Smart Grid technology are considered by experts to be the future of environmentally sustainable homes and green building. However, a recent survey found that most consumers (70%) that are aware of Smart Grid technology feel they only somewhat understand how it works. In addition, only 43 percent of all consumer respondents indicated they know what Smart Grid technology is, although the number was greater for respondents in the upper middle (63%) and high-income (57%) segments. The survey was conducted on behalf of Whirlpool Corporation and Habitat for Humanity International by the NAHB Research Center\*, which reported opinions from consumers and builders on topics related to green home building.

In an interesting look at the group's perception of their peers, the consumer portion of the survey also showed that of all Smart Grid-aware respondents, only 35 percent believe their community somewhat understands Smart Grid technology. A total of 46 percent of the same segment said they feel their community does not understand the technology at all.

"These survey findings suggest that there needs to be greater emphasis on Smart Grid | continued on page 30 |



## Wood Burning Pizza Oven/Smoker.

Solé wood-fired double oven. Freestanding, or build it in for that Tuscan kitchen look.



## Solé Gourmet Portable Grills

**Stop your customers in their tracks** when they walk past the new Solé portable gas grill and see right through the glass window in its sleek Euro-style hood. A great feature at a great price!



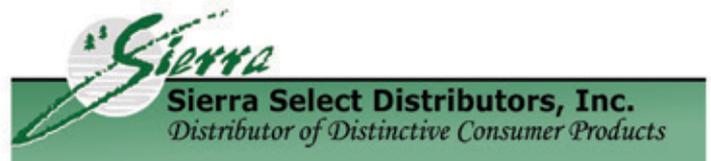
- From 42,000 to 80,000 BTU
- Stainless or black powder coat
- Euro-style hood with window
- Jet Flame Ignition
- 3, 4 or 5 burners
- IR Rear Burner
- Warming Rack

## New Solé Gourmet Built-In Stainless Steel Grills.

With twin interior lights and Amber LED Control Panel Lights



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### CARL SCHAEDEL & CO., INC.

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www.deliainc.com

### DISTINCTIVE APPLIANCES DISTRIBUTING

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www.distinctiveappliances.net

# Manufacturer {NOTES}

## LG Electronics Redefines Ultimate Kitchen Experience With New Studio Series™ Line

LG Electronics is reinventing style at home and helping consumers elevate their culinary skills with the chic design and professional-grade features of new LG Studio Series™ suite of built-in cooking and counter-depth refrigeration kitchen appliances. Ideal for independent retailers catering to discerning consumers, LG's new suite of premium appliances brings together ranges, wall ovens, warming drawers, cooktops, hoods, microwave ovens, refrigerators and dishwashers in a kitchen package with impressive new award-winning style and design that will make a bold statement in any home.

All LG Studio Series appliances come with a premium stainless steel finish, including distinct door handles that add a unique, sophisticated look. LG's Studio Series counter-depth refrigerators are available in 4-Door, 3-Door, and Side-by-Side configurations in order to meet consumers' space and organization needs. ENERGY STAR® qualified, these models combine energy efficiency with stylish design and advanced technology. Select Studio Series refrigerators feature the company's innovative Slim SpacePlus™ ice system that provides more usable shelf space and makes way for additional door bin space, as well as LG's extra tall ice and water dispensing center. To achieve maximum efficiency in its ENERGY STAR-rated Studio Series models, LG redesigned the refrigerator's compressor, which is the element that uses the most energy. This Linear Compressor can vary output depending on need leading to fewer temperature swings that will save consumers 8 to 17 percent in energy usage versus previous models with conventional compressors.

Every LG Studio Series oven boasts an elegant brilliant blue interior cavity for an added touch of sophistication, and features some of the largest oven space capacities available. LG's built-in wall ovens feature LG's exclusive four-mode Convection System that delivers the ideal temperature and airflow for faster preheating and uniform cooking, as well as a 6.3" intuitive LCD control system that delivers added cooking convenience and greater ease of use including access to a pre-loaded Gourmet Recipe.

LG's unique InfraGrill™ system utilizes infrared heating elements keeping food juicier than traditional thermal cooking. These sophisticated heating elements enable the oven to reach broil temperature more quickly, cutting cooking time by 30 percent.

Culinary enthusiasts will also benefit from UltraHeat™ - one of the most powerful burners available in a freestanding range. At 19K BTUs, this burner enables users to have faster cooking time. Home chefs will enjoy the flexibility of heat settings that range from 5,000 BTUs for a slight simmer to a 19,000 BTU UltraHeat center burner.

The LG Studio Series also includes an advanced line of washers and dryers that offers superior high-efficiency performance and energy efficiency through LG technology. All Studio Series appliances are backed with a two-year warranty. **RO**

## STUDIO SERIES

# SEAMLESS STYLE FOR THE ULTIMATE BUILT-IN KITCHEN

### INTRODUCING THE STUDIO SERIES FROM LG

For the ultimate in luxury, look no further than the LG Studio Series. With premium features and impressive new styling, the LG Studio Series provides sophisticated design for a beautiful statement in any home. With seamless counter depth refrigerators, sleek built-in cooktops, ventilation hoods and warming drawers, the Studio Series offers the very finest appliances from LG.



CONTACT YOUR LOCAL DISTRIBUTOR FOR MORE  
INFORMATION ON THE LG STUDIO SERIES





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education among all of us, which would encourage more green building,” said Warwick Stirling, global director of energy and sustainability, Whirlpool Corporation. “Whirlpool has committed to make all of its appliances Smart Grid-compatible by the end of 2015, so it understands how important it is to have everyone working together to promote knowledge on the topic of Smart Grid.”

The builder portion of the survey showed a similar perception of consumer knowledge on the subject. Of all Smart Grid-aware respondents, 62 percent said that they believe homeowners do not understand Smart Grid technology at all. Smart Grid-aware builder respondents generally felt more confident with their own knowledge of the technology, with 79 percent answering that they at least somewhat understand how it works. A total of 51 percent of Smart Grid-aware builder respondents noted that they believe the home building industry as a whole understands how the technology works.

An encouraging find in the consumer survey was that 48 percent of Smart Grid-aware respondents indicated that Smart Grid-compatible appliances will be very important to green homes. In the builder survey, 64 percent of Smart Grid-aware respondents said these appliances will be at least somewhat important to green homes in the future.

The primary information sources from which Smart Grid-aware consumer respondents learned about Smart Grid technology were: the internet (51%), television/radio (46%) and magazines/periodicals (28%).

This is the third in a series of findings on the Whirlpool Corporation and Habitat for Humanity survey on green homes that was conducted among consumers and builders. The first was issued on November 16, 2010 and the second on January 20, 2011:

<http://investors.whirlpoolcorp.com/releasedetail.cfm?ReleaseID=533505>  
<http://investors.whirlpoolcorp.com/releasedetail.cfm?ReleaseID=544789>

Further results from the survey will be discussed in subsequent reports. For more information on the partnership between Whirlpool and Habitat, visit [www.whirlpoolcorp.com/habitat](http://www.whirlpoolcorp.com/habitat).

For more information on Whirlpool Corporation and its offerings for building professionals, please visit [www.insideadvantage.com](http://www.insideadvantage.com) or call 1-800-952-2537.

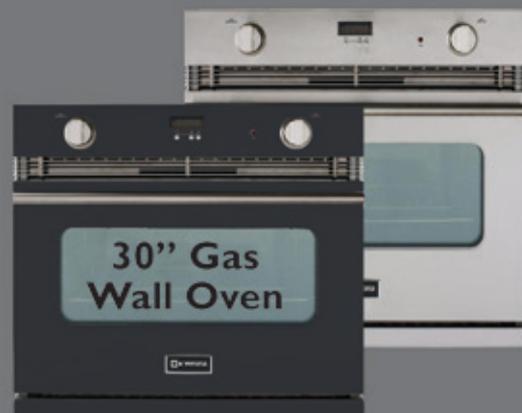
**METHODOLOGY**

The builder portion of the study surveyed 304 respondents and was conducted from July 23 – Aug. 4, 2010, using an online format. Members of the NAHB Research Center Online Builder Panel were invited to take the survey and respondents were required to be an active homebuilder or general contractor. The consumer portion surveyed 1,092 homeowners from Aug. 23-25, 2010, using an online format. Consumers nationwide were invited to take the survey through email invitations. **RO**

*\*The NAHB Research Center is an independent subsidiary of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).*

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# CEA Announces 2011 Mark of Excellence Awards Honor Innovators

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA)<sup>®</sup> announced the winners of the 2011 Mark of Excellence Awards, presented by CEA's TechHome Division. Winners were honored at an awards reception at the Electronic House Expo (EHX) 2011 in Orlando, Florida. CEA is the nation's largest trade association representing the consumer electronics industry and CEA member companies include more

<b>SUPPLIER</b>			
<b>AUDIO PRODUCT OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	Paradigm Electronics Inc.	Paradigm Reference Millenia Sub with PF-2 Wireless Transmitter ZAudio MRM Distribution Pack	www.paradigm.com www.smarthomeuae.com
Gold	SmartHome UAE		
<b>CONTROL SYSTEM PRODUCT OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum (tie)	Universal Remote Control, Inc.	URC Network Keypad Solution Elan gl System	www.universalsremote.com www.elanhomesystems.com
Platinum (tie)	ELAN Home Systems, LLC		
<b>GREEN PRODUCT OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	Home Automation, Inc.	Omnistar2 with ZigBee Wireless and IHD Control Diva C.I Dimmer	www.homeauto.com www.lutron.com
Gold	Lutron Electronics Co., Inc.		
<b>HUMAN INTERFACE PRODUCT OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	Crestron Electronics, Inc.	Crestron Mobile Pro G	www.crestron.com
<b>INSTALLATION PRODUCT OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	Crestron Electronics, Inc.	Sonnex Tools vIRsa Mouse	www.crestron.com www.rticorp.com
Gold	Remote Technologies, Inc.		
<b>MEDIA SERVER OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	Autonomic Controls, Inc	Autonomic Mirage Media Server MMS-2 Kaleidescape Blu-ray Movie Server	www.autonomic-controls.com www.kaleidescape.com
Gold	Kaleidescape, Inc.		
<b>MULTI-ROOM AUDIO/VIDEO PRODUCT OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	NuVo Technologies, LLC	Freestanding Renovia Sonnex™ Multiroom Audio System	www.nuvotechnologies.com www.crestron.com
Gold	Crestron Electronics, Inc.		
<b>SECURITY PRODUCT OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	Home Automation, Inc.	Wireless Driveway Sensor Go!Control Panel	www.homeauto.com www.2gig.com
Gold	2Gig Technologies, Inc.		
<b>SOFTWARE APPLICATION OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	Crestron Electronics, Inc.	Crestron Mobile Pro G Virtual Panel	www.crestron.com www.rticorp.com
Gold	Remote Technologies, Inc.		
<b>SPEAKER OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	Niles Audio Corporation	ICS Ceiling Mount Loudspeakers T Series	www.nilesaudio.com www.kef.com
Gold	KEF Audio Ltd.		
<b>STRUCTURED WIRING PRODUCT OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	Home Automation, Inc.	Hi-Fi 2 by HAI MultiRoom Audio System Motorola SBG6580	www.homeauto.com www.motorola.com
Gold	Motorola-Broadband Communications Sector		
<b>VIDEO PRODUCT OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	Crestron Electronics, Inc.	32X32 DigitalMedia™ Switcher Runco 3Dimension Series D-73d	www.crestron.com www.runco.com
Gold	Runco		
<b>WIRELESS PRODUCT OF THE YEAR</b>			
Platinum	Crestron Electronics, Inc.	PTX3 Prodigy® Handheld Touchpanel ZuniConnect Travel	www.crestron.com www.zunidigital.com
Gold	ZuniDigital, Inc.		

# of Excellence Award Winners

## IN CUSTOM HOME ELECTRONICS

than 500 installers and integrators of home technology. CEA's Mark of Excellence Awards recognizes outstanding achievement and innovation in custom home electronics products, services and installation.

Award entries were reviewed and judged by an independent panel of industry experts in Supplier, Systems Integrator and Training and Support categories. The winners are as follows:

<b>SYSTEM INTEGRATOR</b>		
<b>CUSTOM HOME OF THE YEAR (installed price \$50,000 - \$150,000)</b>		
Platinum	SmartHouse Integration LLC	San Remo
Gold	Digital Interiors, Inc.	Tampa Beach House
		<a href="http://www.smarthouseintegration.com">www.smarthouseintegration.com</a> <a href="http://www.diiatl.com">www.diiatl.com</a>
<b>HOME OF THE YEAR (installed price up to \$50,000)</b>		
Platinum	Custom Home Theater Systems & Automation	Historic 1840 Colonial Salt Box
		<a href="http://www.customhometheater.biz">www.customhometheater.biz</a>
<b>HOME THEATER/MEDIA ROOM PROJECT OF THE YEAR</b>		
Platinum	DSI Entertainment Systems	Hidden Hills Home Theater
Gold	Electronics Design Group	Velvet Dream
		<a href="http://www.dsientertainment.com">www.dsientertainment.com</a> <a href="http://www.edgonline.com">www.edgonline.com</a>
<b>INNOVATION AWARD</b>		
Platinum	Futuristic Home, Inc.	Zinberg Project
Gold	Link Your House, Inc.	High Tech Project Room
		<a href="http://www.fthhome.com">www.fthhome.com</a> <a href="http://www.linkyourhouse.com">www.linkyourhouse.com</a>
<b>INTEGRATED SECURITY PROJECT OF THE YEAR</b>		
Platinum	Link Your House, Inc.	Dixon Estate
		<a href="http://www.linkyourhouse.com">www.linkyourhouse.com</a>
<b>LUXURY HOME OF THE YEAR (installed price \$150,000- \$300,000)</b>		
Gold	Audio Video Interiors, Inc.	Norman Luxury Home
		<a href="http://www.audiovideointeriors.net">www.audiovideointeriors.net</a>
<b>MULTI-ROOM AUDIO VIDEO PROJECT OF THE YEAR</b>		
Platinum	Audio Video Interiors, Inc.	Norman Residence
Gold	SmartHouse Integration LLC	San Remo
		<a href="http://www.audiovideointeriors.net">www.audiovideointeriors.net</a> <a href="http://www.smarthouseintegration.com">www.smarthouseintegration.com</a>
<b>RETROFIT PROJECT OF THE YEAR OVER \$100,000</b>		
Platinum	DSI Entertainment Systems	Beverly Hills Home of the Year Project
		<a href="http://www.dsientertainment.com">www.dsientertainment.com</a>
<b>RETROFIT PROJECT OF THE YEAR UNDER \$100,000</b>		
Platinum	Custom Home Theater Systems & Automation	Historic 1840 Colonial Salt Box
		<a href="http://www.customhometheater.biz">www.customhometheater.biz</a>
<b>SPECIALTY PROJECT OF THE YEAR</b>		
Platinum	Home Entertainment, Inc.	Vegas Style Sports Bar/Game
Room	<a href="http://www.homeentertainmentinc.com">www.homeentertainmentinc.com</a>	
<b>ULTIMATE HOME OF THE YEAR (installed price above \$300,000)</b>		
Platinum	DSI Entertainment Systems	Beverly Hills Home of the Year Project
Gold	DSI Entertainment Systems	Malibu Beach House Private Residence
		<a href="http://www.dsientertainment.com">www.dsientertainment.com</a> <a href="http://www.dsientertainment.com">www.dsientertainment.com</a>
<b>UNIVERSAL DESIGN PROJECT OF THE YEAR</b>		
Platinum	Futuristic Home, Inc.	Zinberg Project
		<a href="http://www.fthhome.com">www.fthhome.com</a>
<b>TECHHOME INTEGRATOR</b>		
<b>TECHHOME INTEGRATOR OF THE YEAR</b>		
Platinum	FulTech Solutions, Inc.	FulTech Solutions, Inc.
		<a href="http://www.fultechsolutions.com">www.fultechsolutions.com</a>
<b>TRAINING AND SUPPORT</b>		
<b>TRAINING AND SUPPORT PROGRAM OF THE YEAR</b>		
Platinum	Audio Video Interiors, Inc.	Staff Professional Development and Industry Partner CEU Programs
Gold	Universal Remote Control, Inc.	URC University
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# Digital Signage Expo 2011

**D**igital Signage Expo® the only International Conference Summit & Trade Show exclusively dedicated to digital signage, interactive technologies and out-of-home media networks completed its 8th year, and announced that its 2011 Conference and Trade Show set four new records!

- **Most Exhibitors To-Date**—195 exhibiting companies
- **Largest Net Square Footage in DSE's History**—60,260 sf of exhibit space
- **Highest Conference Registration**—An increase of 25% in conference registration
- **Largest Educational Conference in History**—166 educational opportunities including the Live Installation Tour, 55 Conference seminars, 66 Lunch & Learn Roundtable sessions, 30 on-floor workshops and 14 Content Theater Presentations

The conference and trade show, which took place February 21-25, drew more than 3,600 attendees, a 6 percent increase over 2010. Chris Gibbs, president of Exponation, LLC, which produces Digital Signage Expo said, “We believe

that 2011 was a milestone both for DSE and our industry. The growth DSE is experiencing not only reflects the vitality of our industry, but also represents another important step in its maturation and broad acceptance.” Gibbs added, “This evolution is also evident on the trade show floor as exhibitors raise the bar with larger booths, more complex displays and a greater variety of technology.”

Exhibitors reported that attendees were high quality decision-makers from a broad variety of end-user business categories, a profile that has become a hallmark of this leading international event since its inception in 2004.

**COMMENTS INCLUDED:**

*“Digital Signage Expo is the premier venue for serious industry players to be seen and heard. This year’s show provided a great platform for us to discuss our SuperSign digital signage solutions with our target audience. Valuable relationships are built at DSE that not only provide LG with critical insights into the industry, but also ensure that we are providing our customers with the best products and technologies available.”*

Jeff Dowell, Vice President, Digital Signage, LG Electronics, USA

| continued on page 36 |



*“Digital Signage Expo 2011 provided the right platform to showcase our digital signage solutions and engage with key decision makers. We definitely look forward to next year’s show.”*

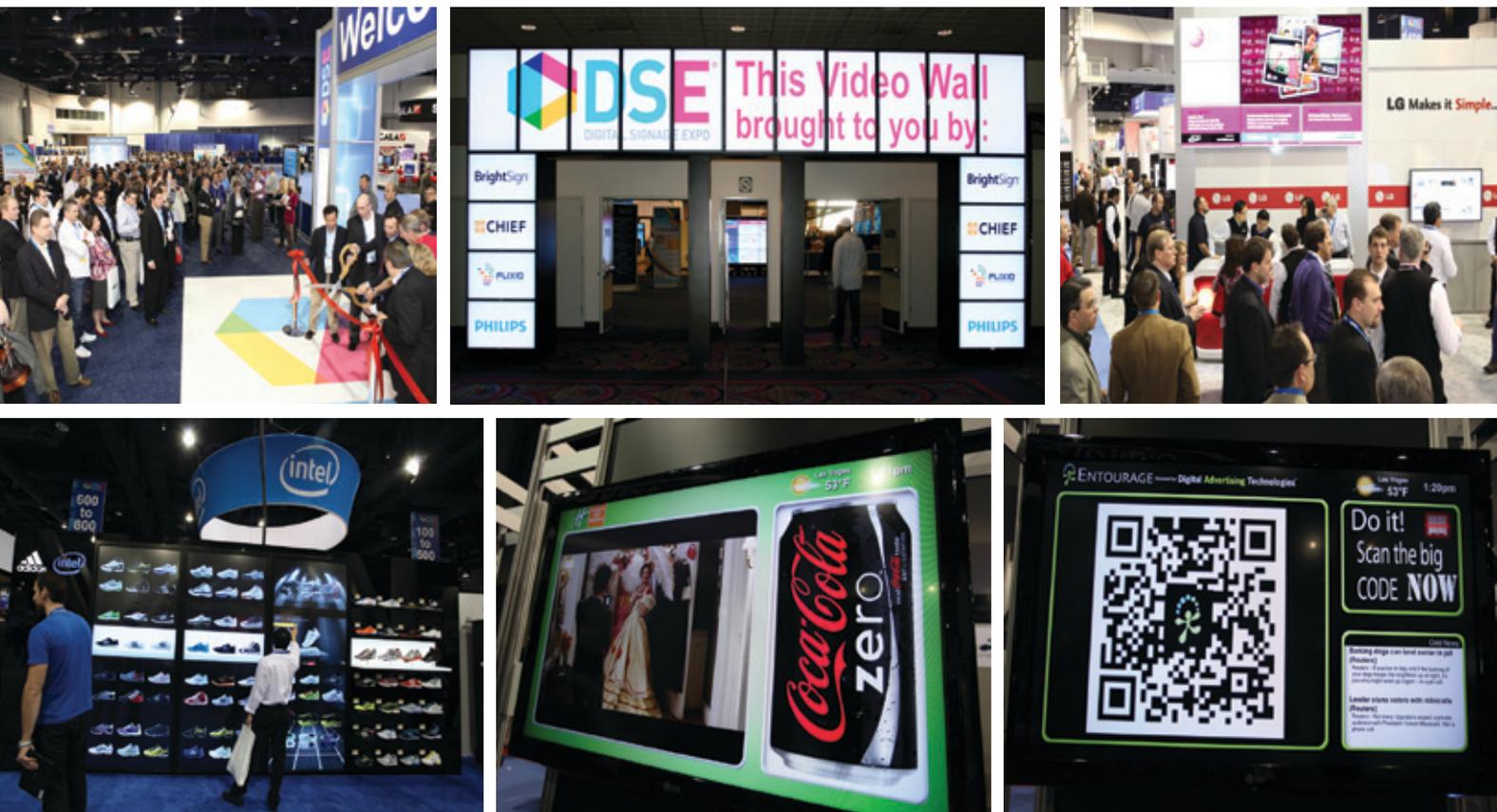
Kris Konrath, Manager, Sony Electronics

*“DSE 2011 provided us with great hands on experience in the newest and greatest in the world of digital signage. The attendees at this year’s event brought a whole new level of opportunity for Saddle Ranch Productions.”*

Kim Sarubbi, CEO, Saddle Ranch Productions

history – up 37.5 percent!”, Gibbs commented

Mark your calendars now: Digital Signage Expo® 2012, co-located with the Interactive Technology Expo, Out-of-Home Network Show, and Digital Content Show, is scheduled for March 6-9, 2012, at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas. To reserve exhibit space on sale now or to attend, contact Chris Gibbs, (770) 649-0300, Ex 17. Or, for more information, visit [www.digitalsignageexpo.net](http://www.digitalsignageexpo.net).



That and the fact that many reported doing business at the show resulted in an unprecedented onsite renewal of booth space for 2012 – more than 70 percent of the 2011 floor already committed.

“DSE has always placed a strong emphasis on education as the most effective catalyst for industry growth,” said Chris Gibbs, president of Atlanta-based ExpoNation LLC, which produces DSE. “2011 saw an aggressive expansion of our educational offerings and the industry responded with the largest growth in conference registration in our

Digital Signage Expo is the world’s largest and longest running conference and trade show exclusively dedicated to the digital signage, interactive technology and digital-out-of-home (DOOH) industries. Launched in 2004, DSE was the first event dedicated to the digital signage market and has been a significant contributor to the growth of this fast-paced industry. Professional (end user) attendance represents decision-makers from key industry categories such as: retail, hospitality, transportation, financial, advertising, brand marketing, systems integration, public spaces and exhibitor personnel. **RO**



# NKBA Announces New Executive Leadership

BILL DARCY PROMOTED TO EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT  
OF THE NATIONAL KITCHEN & BATH ASSOCIATION



**T**he National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) announced the promotion of Bill Darcy to executive vice president. Darcy's expanded duties will include oversight of the Marketing, Membership and Education departments of the association.

"Since joining the NKBA in 2006, Bill has introduced a number of innovative programs that have contributed to the association's growth and success, despite the economic downturn," according to NKBA President David Alderman, CMKBD. "We are proud to recognize Bill with this expanded role, and look forward to his future contributions."

The NKBA also announced the departure of CEO Don Sciolaro. Alderman stated, "We thank Don for his service and wish him well in his future endeavors."

Darcy joined the NKBA as the

Manager of Marketing Partnerships, and quickly earned promotions to Manager of Business Development, Senior Manager of Marketing, and Director of Marketing. As Director of Marketing for the NKBA, Darcy led projects such as the complete redesign and launch of NKBA.org, KBIS Mobile Apps for the NKBA's Kitchen & Bath Industry Show, and the development of a program with HGTVPro.com that has driven millions of dollars in exposure for the NKBA. As Senior Manager of Marketing, he cut expenses significantly, and as manager of Business Development, he generated over \$1 million in non-dues revenue for the association.

Darcy previously served as General Manager of a Penske Motorsports race track hosting NASCAR and IndyCar events. There he supervised 20 staff members, and oversaw the day-to-day

operation of the 153-acre facility.

Prior to that role, Darcy was Senior Director of Corporate Accounts at NASCAR's sister company, ISC. While there, his team managed sponsorship contracts totaling \$200 million from such sponsors as The Home Depot, AT&T, Motorola, Pfizer, UPS and Pepsi. Darcy holds a bachelor's degree in management from Moravian College.

The NKBA has launched a formal search for a new CEO. Alderman added, "Bill's appointment to Executive Vice President allows NKBA leadership the flexibility to review the criteria for the CEO position and to consider all qualified candidates." The association continues to focus on increasing membership benefits and growth as it maintains its position as the leader in representing the kitchen and bath industry. **RO**

2011 •

# UPCOMING EVENTS

• 2011

Mother's Day — May 8

## MAY

10-14

**AIA 2011 NATIONAL CONVENTION  
AND DESIGN EXPOSITION**

Ernest N. Morial Convention  
Center  
NEW ORLEANS, LA  
[www.aiaconvention.com](http://www.aiaconvention.com)

17-19

**LIGHTFAIR**

Pennsylvania Convention Center  
PHILADELPHIA PA  
[www.lightfair.com](http://www.lightfair.com)

18-20

**HOSPITALITY DESIGN EXPOSITION  
& CONFERENCE**

Sands Expo & Convention Center  
LAS VEGAS, NV  
[www.hdexpo.com](http://www.hdexpo.com)

21-24

**NATIONAL RESTAURANT  
ASSOCIATION SHOW**

McCormick Place  
CHICAGO, IL  
[show.restaurant.org](http://show.restaurant.org)

## JUNE

14-16

**NEOCON WORLD'S TRADE FAIR**

NeoCon - Merchandise Mart  
CHICAGO, IL  
[www.neocon.com](http://www.neocon.com)

## AUGUST

1-5

**LAS VEGAS SUMMER MARKET**

Las Vegas World Market Center  
LAS VEGAS, NV  
[www.lasvegasmarket.com](http://www.lasvegasmarket.com)

21-24

**NATIONWIDE MARKETING  
GROUP—PRIME TIME!**

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GRAPEVINE, TX  
[www.nationwideprimetime.com](http://www.nationwideprimetime.com)

28-31

**BRANDSOURCE CONVENTION**

Caesars Palace  
LAS VEGAS, NV  
[www.brandsourceconvention.com](http://www.brandsourceconvention.com)

## SEPTEMBER

2-7

**IFA 2011**

Messe Berlin  
BERLIN, GERMANY  
[www.ifa-berlin.com](http://www.ifa-berlin.com)

8-10

**CEDIA**

Indiana Convention Center  
INDIANAPOLIS, IN  
[www.cedia.net](http://www.cedia.net)

28-OCT 2

**CERSAIE**

Bologna Exhibition Center  
BOLOGNA, ITALY  
[www.cersaie.it](http://www.cersaie.it)

## OCTOBER

22-27

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# Reputation Management

**W**e all know how important it is to take care of customers—cranky customers tell their friends about what they feel is a poor experience they had doing business in your store. Today, however, managing your company's reputation is more important—and more difficult—than ever. Social networking encourages prospects to see what others have experienced before going into a store. Testimonials are powerful influencers.

The best way to avoid negative publicity is to run a great business. Get to know your customers. Help them make buying decisions. Offer best in class products and service to match. Do what you say you are going to do. Head off problems before they get out of hand. Be honest and ethical.

But even if you do everything right, there may come a time when you face negative publicity. Harmful feedback can happen for many reasons — a misunderstanding, a wrong doing on your part, varying points of view, or any number of other reasons that you may not understand fully.

All dealers, especially those who have a website or conduct business online, can be subject to bad publicity. All it takes is one negative comment on a blog or website to drive your reputation into the ditch. Right or wrong, one or two negative comments about your company on Yahoo, Google, Twitter or Yelp can persuade consumers to look for other places to buy. Some suggest that one negative review can cost a business a hundred potential customers.

Here's what you need to do to ensure that your online reputation reflects the way you manage your business and the kind of customer experience you offer.

**1. Monitor**—Maintain an ongoing system for researching and keeping track of comments made about your company. Sign up for Google Alerts and then enter keywords to track including your company name, key personnel, products and brands sold.

**2. Evaluate**—Look at each negative review at arm's length. We're human, so our initial reaction to a negative comment is usually anger, or defensiveness. Since you may not have seen the comment coming, you may be hurt and surprised. The worst thing you can do is react quickly without thinking the situation through because you may only make the situation worse. Put yourself in the other person's position, and be honest with yourself.

- Is the comment true?
- Can I see how this person could view my actions this way?
- Did I do something that was misunderstood or misconstrued?
- Am I in the wrong?

**3. Act**—Comment, rebut, draft a formal response or simply ignore what has been said, based on your evaluation. In many cases, you know who the customer is. If you haven't already done so, contact the customer and try to resolve the complaint. If they are satisfied, ask them if they'll consider posting another review stating that the problem has been settled.

**4. Solicit positive reviews**—Although websites will know if you're posting phony reviews—like if there's a sudden barrage of positive comments or if a number come from the same computer or IP address—legitimately soliciting positive comments is good business.

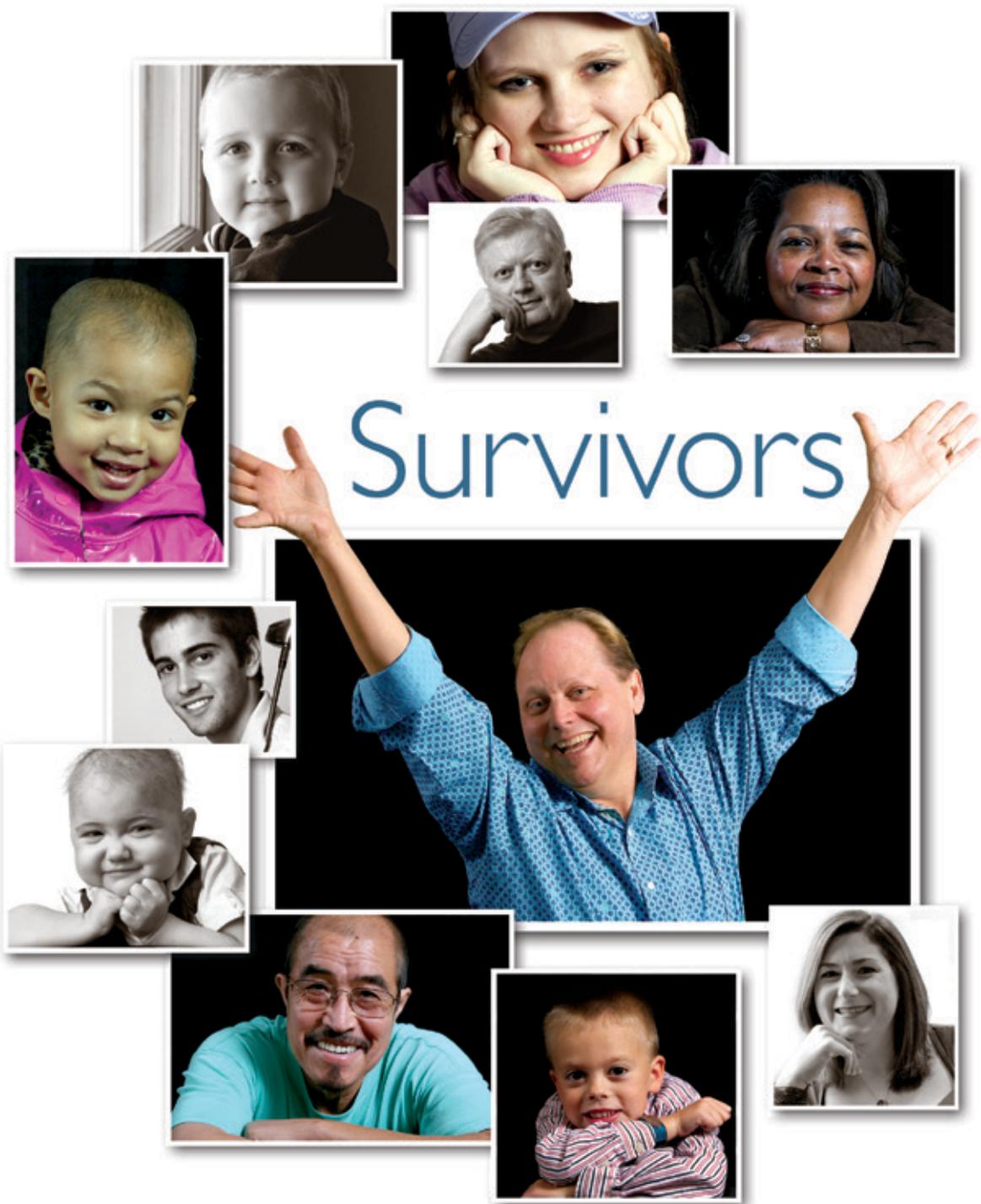
Give your delivery team cards asking for customer testimonials and giving them the URLs of the sites where they can post their feedback. Have sales associates contact all customers after the sale to ensure that the customer is happy—and then suggest that they consider reviewing the service and product they received.

Before the Internet became a form for public opinion, Bain & Company detailed how important customer satisfaction is. Their studies found that US companies lose 50% of their existing customers every 5 years. More than two-thirds of them defect because of poor service they received. More important, though, is that 95% of dissatisfied customers would continue to do business with a company if their problem was solved quickly and satisfactorily. Because the service ultimately exceeded their expectations, customers who had poor service but whose complaints are resolved are more loyal and more profitable than those who never experienced a service issue.

The speed and breadth of online communication has only increased the need for improving service levels. That, in combination with a consistent plan to monitor your online reputation will help ensure continued growth and profitability. **RO**

*Elly Valas is the Marketing Services Director for Nationwide Marketing Group. She can be reached at [elly@ellyvalas.com](mailto:elly@ellyvalas.com) or at 303-316-7569. Visit her website at [www.ellyvalas.com](http://www.ellyvalas.com).*





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# Technology and the Human Touch

There is no denying the impact technology has had on business. It has allowed companies to market and sell their products and services to customers in every corner of the world, and to do so 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

That technology has a downside, however. In far too many cases, it has replaced real people and become a barrier to customer service. When, for example, was the last time you called a company and a live person answered the telephone? And how many times, after making a purchase via the Internet, have you been unable to locate a telephone number for the company when you have a problem?

The popularity of the Internet clearly shows that consumers appreciate the ability to comparison shop—and make their purchases—at any time of day or night and to do so without having to leave home. When they have a problem, however, they want to talk to a live person. All too often, the opportunity to do so is either non-existent or frustrating.

Here are three technologies companies are using today, along with their pitfalls and how to deal with them:

### INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE SYSTEMS

I estimate that 95 percent of customers prefer to dial in and talk to a human, but 98 percent of companies prefer to use Interactive Voice Response Systems (IVRs). Callers to those companies have to deal with a variety of options, which is frustrating and time-consuming: Press 1 for English, press 2 if you have a question about your account, and on and on and on. IVRs send a message to customers: We do not want to talk to you.

If your company has more than 100 employees, you should have a real person answering the phones 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This might cost you a little more than an IVR, but it will allow you to grow your company. Go Daddy, an Internet domain registrar and Web hosting company, is a high-tech company, but it has real people answering its phones and available to help its customers with whatever questions and problems they might have.

Amazon also has perfected the combination of technology and the human touch. You can go to its web site, select “contact us,” ask to have someone call you, and your phone will ring within a couple of seconds. The success of that quick response time and Amazon’s dedication to serving its customers is apparent in the company’s sales, which reached \$34.2 billion in 2010, a 40 percent increase over the previous year.

### E-MAIL

Many customers find it faster and more efficient to contact companies by e-mail rather than by phone, especially if those companies use IVRs. This technology, too, needs the human touch. If a customer contacts you via e-mail, it is critical that you respond quickly, preferably within five or 10 minutes. Even when not responding to a request, several companies use e-mail to communicate with their customers. Redbox is one of them. Within minutes of renting a DVD or video from the company, it sends you an e-mail confirming the transaction and does the same when you return the item. Redbox customers also can call the company 24 hours a day, seven days a week and talk to a real person.

### THE INTERNET

The Internet has changed the way companies connect with customers and potential customers. In order to use this technology successfully and to grow your business, you must understand how consumers use it. They use it to learn about products and services and to compare prices.

If a potential customer visits your web site, is interested in one of your products, but has a question about it before making a purchase, you better be sure you provide her a way to contact you and get the information she needs. If you don’t, she will quickly turn to one of your competitors.

It’s critical that you remember this: You are just one click away from oblivion. The company that responds to a consumer’s question first is the one most likely to make the sale. You absolutely must back up your technology with people. You must offer consumers a way to contact you—either by phone or by e-mail.

The bottom line is this: Technology has provided companies with the ability to sell their products and services to millions of people throughout the world, but it is the human touch that improves the customer experience. And it is that experience that will build loyalty and drive your business. **RO**

*John Tschohl - described by Time and Entrepreneur magazines as a customer service guru, is also an International strategist and speaker. He can be contacted at [John@servicequality.com](mailto:John@servicequality.com)*



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# Be a Winner!

## USE AWARDS WISELY IN YOUR MARKETING

If there's one thing businesses love to tell their customers about, it's awards, and why not? If your company is recognized by a third party for excellence in design, customer service, sustainability, community service, or anything else, it's a great opportunity to toot your own horn to your customers.

On the other hand, entering award competitions can be a major pain in the neck. They can be very time-consuming and expensive, and if you don't approach them strategically, you can end up spending a great deal of effort for nothing.

So here are some tips to get the most out of any award competitions and to use them to enhance your brand:

### • *Plan*

The worst thing about entering award competitions is the entry process. Quite often, it involves a lot of filling out forms, gathering photographs or other materials, and of course, writing out checks. So it's best not to wait until the last minute to decide to enter.

Treat entering awards like any other part of your marketing and plan ahead. Create a document that lists all the awards you plan to enter, including the entry fee, deadline, sponsor, and a short description of requirements and criteria. This will help you see well in advance when you need to start preparing for the awards.

Designate a person whose job it is

to shepherd the award entries through the process of review and approval. Many times, you will want several people within your company to have input into the award entries. Having a single point person responsible for gathering the information and writing the entries makes it much easier to get them done.

### • *Choose Wisely*

There are a lot of awards out there. Not every one is for you. Unless you have a huge staff and budget, it's best not to enter every award you come across.

Instead, be selective. Look at awards that are likely to resonate with your customer base, or cause them to take notice of your company. Look at previous years' winners and ask yourself how you might fit in that group.

Be honest with yourself of your chances of winning. Look at the judging criteria and evaluate whether you have a real shot. If you feel you exhibit genuine excellence in an area the award covers, go for it. But if you're not there yet, then it might be best to pass.

Look for specialty awards. If you created a kitchen for a disabled person, for example, and you did a great job, you might think about entering an award competition that recognizes those efforts. Awards like this have the potential to set you apart from your competition and

get you noticed.

Finally, be suspicious of award competitions that give awards to everyone who pays an entry fee. Eventually customers will catch on and see that the award holds no value.

### • *Merchandise*

There's no point in winning an award if you don't tell people about it. So be prepared (i.e. budget for) to make the most of winning.

Very often, entities will give winners the opportunity to use their logo in their marketing, for a fee of course. This is usually not a scam. Sure, they're trying to make money, but we all are. If the award program has integrity and a good reputation, do not be afraid of this pitch. Embrace it. Slap the logo on your ads, your storefront, on your point-of-purchase materials. Issue a press release to the local media announcing your victory. Put a blurb on your Web site or your employee newsletter.

Patting yourself on the back is great, but it's even better when your customers do it. **RO**

**BUILD** Christopher Thiede is a marketing and public relations professional, specializing in home building, remodeling and interiors. Read his blog at [christhiede.com](http://christhiede.com).



Designed by  
Tim Scott, NKBA member

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# Is it Time to Re-focus, Re-position and Re-grow Your Business?

If your business is strong, is your customer base expanding, and are your margins and cash flow healthy? Is your website generating additional leads, bringing new people into the store and are you starting to develop a small but lucrative online business?

OR:

Are you having larger numbers of customers than in the past leaving the store without buying? Are some of your best customers coming in but not as frequently? Are you hearing about other stores from your customers that you have never heard about before? When you read your web reports, are you seeing more and more people only visiting your home page and then leaving? Are you answering people that ask you about social media that “you don’t do it or believe in it” and think it’s just a fad? Lastly, do you think that texting is just for kids?

If you answered yes to the second group of questions, it’s time you consider ways to get your business back on track or even consider getting on another track. Please, I am NOT telling anyone to adopt the “concept of the day”. Ideas come and go but we need to explore the ways or methods of doing business that are succeeding in this crowded marketplace.

Everyone would agree that this last recession was one of the worst ever. It was as close to a depression as you can get and anyone owning a home saw their equity disappear right in front of their eyes. Yet, there have been many businesses that have used this recession to catapult their businesses

to new levels by Re-Focusing, Re-Positioning and Re-Growing their businesses.

So, what does all that mean? What are the steps a store/management must take in order to bring a business to a new level, or just look at their business a whole new way.

I am not telling anyone to blindly adopt anything, but what I am saying is every business needs to re-examine what they are doing and look for ways to do what they do better— doing it differently—or doing what they do for a new group of customers.

We have to because of all the changes that are constantly in motion, such as:

- Marketing Areas Change
- Neighborhoods Change (Both Ways)
- Customers’ Preferences Change
- Values Change
- Economic Conditions Change
- Innovation Creates New Products
- New Products Create New Products
- Buying Habits Change
- Increases in Competition
- New Retailing Concepts and Competition
- New Delivery Methods
- Staying Relevant
- Embracing and Reinforcing Old-Fashioned Values

WHAT DOES RE-FOCUS –RE-POSITION AND RE-GROW MEAN?

Re-focus is looking at our business objectively. Look at it as our customers would. Look at your business as a business consultant would. Look at it the way an investor would. Focus on the things it takes to not only make money today but to make money or make even more money over a

longer period of time. In other words, focus on a model that can sustain long-term profitability.

What re-focusing does is to force us to look at areas of our business we might not have looked at for years. Many times we make certain assumptions when we go into business and some of these assumptions that become our standard operating procedure are wrong or should be readjusted.

Re-focusing is just analyzing where you are at. Re-Positioning is making the changes to position your business to best carry out the new focus.

It was once asked of the great Wayne Gretsky, “How do you score so many goals?” He said, “I don’t go where the puck is. I try to anticipate where the puck will be.” That’s what our Re-focusing does and our re-positioning accomplishes. We want to be where the customer will be coming from, not where they have been.

Before we can start to re-grow our businesses, we need to reposition our business in a way that the new customer and old customer will understand.

If you say that you just want to maintain the status quo, forget that concept. Businesses never just maintain the status-quo. A business is either going forward or falling behind. **RO**

*Rick Segel, author of The Retail Kit for Dummies, helps retailers and vendors partner so everyone sells more! Visit Rick’s website at [www.ricksegel.com](http://www.ricksegel.com)*



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# The Brotherhood of Brand

There was a time when I would joke that the only thing that a consumer knew they wanted when they walked in the door was a Sub Zero refrigerator--they didn't know why they wanted it; they just knew they wanted it. Today, the average consumer is very brand aware, not just Sub Zero, but names like Viking, Wolf and Miele as well as their perceived virtues roll off the tongue as if by divine inspiration. Over the years I have come to realize that people are very brand loyal. To the affluent or aspirational consumer, brand defines who they are and how others see them as well as where they see themselves in the social food-chain.

For the first time in the history of mankind, there has been a fundamental change in our core nature. We are no longer driven by basic survival needs such as food, shelter, and sex, but in the last few decades there has been a change from need to desire. I don't just need a car, I want a Mercedes. My children don't just need an education; they need to go to Hillsdale Academy. I don't need a house, I want the right zip code. This collective evolution affects everything from tennis shoes to kitchen appliances.

So what is this Cultural Revolution that makes us want to get up and out of bed in the morning to topple governments and overturn centuries of tradition? The need to 'survive' has been replaced by the need to 'have'. The survival of the 'fittest' has been replaced by "I want that!" As Tiffany has shown us, we live in a time where the package can be more important than the content.

In the not too distant past, we were categorized by our accents, education,

class, pigmentation, nationality, religion or heritage, which is now being replaced by our choice in products. Aspirational or affluent, we are now judged by the companies we keep. Brand allegiance has become almost tribal, letting others around us know who we are and where we fit in the food chain; in other words we have become a "brotherhood of brands".

## BRAND FACTS:

ACCORDING TO A 3-YEAR CONSUMER STUDY, BRAND OUTWEIGHS PRICE IN A HIGH-END PURCHASE DECISION FOR THREE REASONS:

- 1. Confidence:** The ability to buy something without risk.
- 2. Convenience:** The ability to buy without thinking.
- 3. Image:** The brand makes a personal statement about the consumer.

## WHAT IS A BRAND?

A good brand is made up of the consumers' perception of value, service, substance and history as well as the promise of a personal relationship with the consumer.

A brand is made up of many parts and sometimes many products. It can have local recognition or be spread-out over six continents. It is the brand that binds it all together. A good brand is perceived and recognized in Berlin as well as in Los Angeles. It is as readily accepted in

London as it is in Hong Kong or Mexico City. The brand supersedes the product.

The value of the brand is that it provides credibility, history, continuity and trust in an ever-changing world.

- A brand pre-qualifies your client as to the position and value of the products you sale.

- A brand protects the sale. Products can be copied, but never the brand.

But branding is more than just putting a logo on a product. The brand is more than a badge or emblem; it is our promise to the consumer of quality and value. Branding must be constantly managed, maintained and cultivated. Just like a garden it must be watered, weeded, pruned and fed. Add just the right amount of exposure to keep it fresh and vibrant. Too much or too little, and it will lose its bloom, wilt and die. A brand must be maintained internally as well as promoted and embraced externally.

To attest to the power of brand, I received a call from a hysterical client yelling and cursing at me over the phone. It turned out that she was upset that when we cleaned up after the installation of her kitchen, we had taken away the packing material of her new Sub Zero from the front curb where she had strategically placed it so all her neighbors could see it. That, my friends, is the power of brand! **RO**

*Kevin M. Henry is an international speaker on market trends and sustainable kitchen design in the kitchen industry for more than 30 years. Contact: [Kmhenry@group42.net](mailto:Kmhenry@group42.net)*



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## The Wisdom of Mom & Pop

### LOYAL CUSTOMERS

In the Spring of 1969, I'm about to graduate Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, PA. On this particular Saturday, I'm back home in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, working behind the counter in my parents' butcher shop, helping out for the big rush before Easter.

A long-time customer, Mr. Sadowski, is chatting with my dad, and then he turns to me and says, "Congratulations on your upcoming graduation."

"Thank you," I replied, still amazed at the fact that I made it through in four years with what we used to call at my then-all-male college, "a gentleman's C." (I continue to be amazed to this day.)

"You should thank me," Mr. Sadowski said with a smile.

I didn't say anything. But the look on my 21-year-old face betrayed with I was thinking: "Why in the world would I thank you?"

To which the perceptive Mr. Sadowski said, "I've been a customer of your parents' for 25 years. I helped to pay for your college education."

That stopped me cold. He was so right. Without Sadowski and Jablonski and Mariolis and Cruz, where would we have been? My father didn't pay for college; they did.

Our loyal clientele would stand outside in the sub-freezing Jersey winters, their teeth chattering, waiting patiently, because they knew they could get specialty ethnic foods—fatback, salt pork, Genoa salami, black headcheese—and that my father and uncle knew enough Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, and

Hungarian to converse (and joke) with them in their native tongues.

And, oh yeah, we were honest.

If a customer didn't believe that the meat the steak they bought was two pounds, my dad would have the customer come around and look at the scale. If a customer wasn't happy about something, we would take salami or a loaf of bread, throw it in a bag, give it to the customer and say, "This will make up for it."

One time, the Middlesex County inspector of weights and measurements paid a surprise call on Spector's Meat Market to make sure we were on the up-and-up. I was in the middle of taking care of a regular customer, Mrs. Nemeth. I had already put the items that she had purchased on the counter. Then the inspector started grabbing the packages to see if they were weighed correctly.

"What are you doing?" asked Mrs. Nemeth.

"I'm going to reweigh them," said the inspector.

"No you're not," Mrs. Nemeth responded.

"I have to," said the inspector

"I don't give a goddamn what you have to do," roared Mrs. Nemeth. "It's my meat. I'm going to buy it. You leave it alone."

"I've got see if you got a right count." To which Mrs. Nemeth replied: I know that I got a right count."

Now, that's a loyal customer.

Customer loyalty is a big buzzword these days. Loyalty means faithfulness.

That faithfulness is based on past performance and the customer's belief that past performance will be replicated today, tomorrow, and well into the future.

Think of the companies that you are loyal to. Why are you loyal to them? Because you like what they are selling? Because they are the cheapest? Because they give you good service? Because they have a loyalty program?

Why are your loyal customers loyal to you? Are you asking them? You may get some surprising answers. Perhaps it was a kind word, or the courteousness of your delivery guy. Perhaps it's your sponsorship in a charity fun run or a little league baseball team. Wouldn't it be valuable to find out what your loyal customers think about you?

Every one of your employees should learn the lesson that I did more than 40 years ago: The customers are the ones who help us buy our homes, our cars, the food we eat, and the clothes on our back.

At Nordstrom, a company I have written a book about, their employees are reminded every pay period how important customer loyalty is. Each paycheck is signed "Blake Nordstrom [company president] on behalf of all Nordstrom customers." **RO**

*Robert Spector is the author of The Nordstrom Way to Customer Service Excellence and The Mom & Pop Store. Robert can be contacted at [robert@robertspector.com](mailto:robert@robertspector.com).*



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- 2+ years experience in Product development position in the Large Appliances Home sector
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# Background Checks/Drug Screening

This is the latest major issue to hit the independent service professional. Everyone I have spoken to has an opinion and is more than a little anxious about the issue. At our recent ASTI convention the topic was discussed at some length during the industry roundtable session. Everyone understands the need because most manufacturers are self insured and therefore are trying to stem the tide of lawsuits, especially those involving their authorized service network potentially hiring convicted felons to service their appliances under warranty.

Based on the feedback USA received we have put together a list of the most egregious issues involved and sent them to Whirlpool at Buck Renteria's request. Here is an edited version of what we sent:

Thanks for your invitation to present the United Servicers Association (USA) position on the current background screening requirements set forth by Whirlpool. Here is a short summary of our position at this time. The following was a summary of discussions during the Service Industry Council meeting held during the Appliance Service Training Institute (ASTI) Feb 21, In San Diego, CA.

USA supports the need for technician background screening with the following caveats:

1. Industry wide standards for screening requirements.
2. ISP should be able to shop screening services for competitive pricing without penalty of administration fees.
3. ISP should only need to complete one screen per tech valid for a two year

period and acceptable by all industry.  
4. Details regarding the technician contact information must remain confidential and never used for recruitment.

We have the following concerns regarding Plus One Solutions:

- High priced at \$49.95 when RTI ScanScreener, 603 Lakebridge Drive, Lake Dallas, TX 75065, can offer the same service for \$14.95.
- Plus One Solutions is in the National Service Procurement Business there-by putting ISP technicians at risk of being recruited.

#### DEAN'S COMMENTS:

I have been doing background and drug tests for years. Not because anyone told me I had to but because I recognized the protection it offered both me as an employer and my customers. A new employee can look and act as honest as the day is long and maybe they have turned a new leaf in life which I am totally supportive of. We, however, have a responsibility to protect our customers from potential harm as best we can. Doing drug tests and back ground checks is smart! Everyone in business should be requiring it of all their employees. Certainly this has the potential to lift the lowest common denominator in our industry to a much higher number which ostensibly will help everyone.

So what's the rub? Some appliance service vendors are requiring VERY private and specific personal information to be included when we are complying with their requirements. I for one am not going to give anyone ANY personal

information about ANY of my employees. Period! I'm not going to do it! Why am I so radical in my position? Because I don't trust anyone with this information!

A few years ago an outside firm was hired to develop a national service division for a manufacturer and they aggressively pursued hiring away as many technician's as they could find, even to the point of staking out all the parts distributor parking lots trying to talk to our technicians who were picking up parts in our service trucks. They also were paying high dollar finder's fees. What would stop any of these companies from gaining access to our technician's information through their own internal files and simply send out letters to OUR employees asking if they want a fresh start with "ABC Appliance Company"? No thank you! And remember, whoever pays for the information is the one who has total access to the information.

Don't give away permission for someone else to do a background check on your employees, even if they agree to pay for it. Have them reimburse you for the costs but you should be the one facilitating the checks and tests. This should be done through the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM) and everyone else should accept whatever standards they establish. **RO**

*Dean Landers—president at Landers Appliance, past president USA, conference speaker, and author of The Original Blue Book—Major Appliance Job Rate Guide*



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## The Outdoor Kitchen: Design for Profit

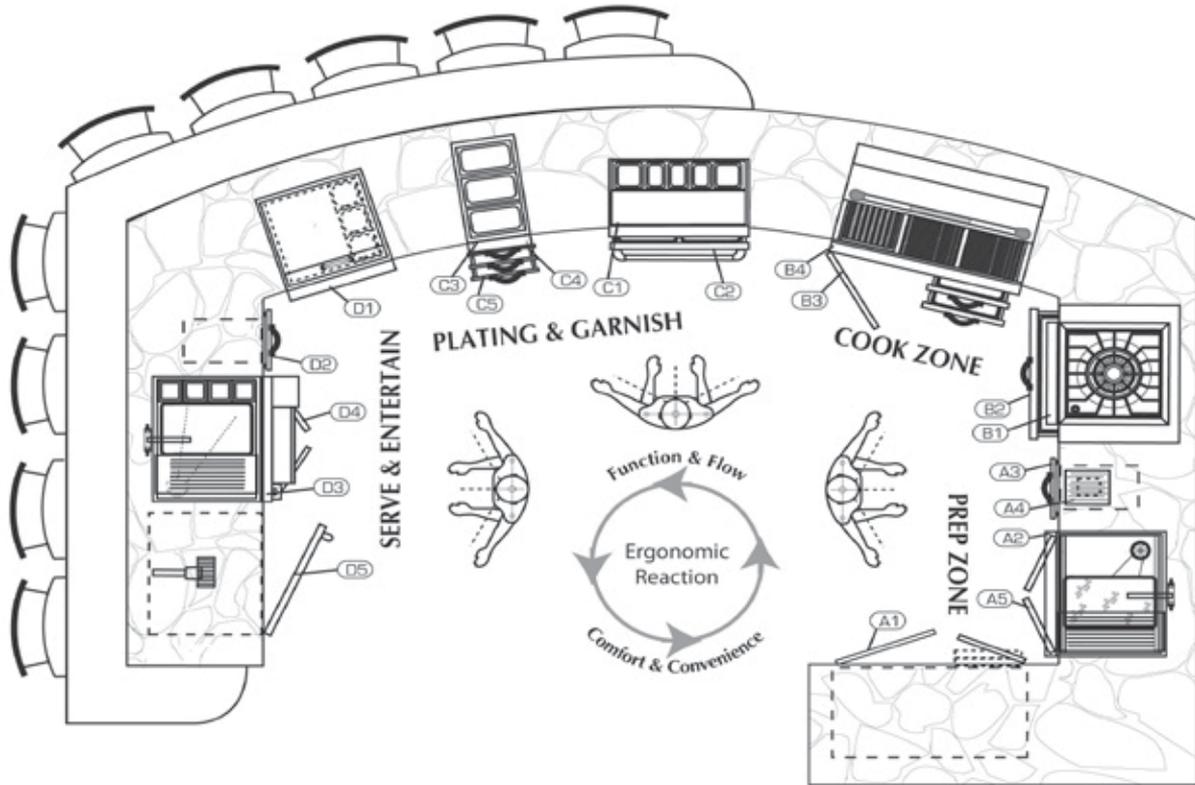
BY DALE SEIDEN

**T**he term “outdoor kitchen” is a fairly new concept. As the popularity of the outdoor kitchen and outdoor living soars, so does the revenue opportunity for retailers who have jumped on board to experience the ride. Along with its increased popularity, comes the increased number of pieces sold to the client, translated to increased revenue per outdoor kitchen sale. It’s no longer just about selling a grill with a few accessories, it’s becoming big business and today appliance dealers are finally beginning to see the light.

Some innovative companies like Southern California

based Alfresco Open Air Culinary Systems offers a one hundred percent American-made, restaurant inspired line of outdoor appliances and accessories for creating fully functional kitchens. With its refrigerators, sealed dry storage pantries, prep, waste and sink systems, grills, side and power burners, food warmers, plating & garnish centers, keggerators, libation stations and more -- the breath of this line offers endless possibilities for creating an outdoor culinary space that would rival some of the finest restaurant kitchens.





## THE OUTDOOR KITCHEN: DESIGNING THE OUTDOOR PROFIT CENTER

### ZONE A - PREPARATION

- A1 42" Dry Storage Pantry
- A2 30" Sink System w/ Prep Package
- A3 Trash Center
- A4 Prep & Waste Chute w/ Cutting Board
- A5 30" Access Doors

### ZONE B - COOKING

- B1 Power Burner
- B2 30" Storage Drawer
- B3 42" Under Grill Refrigerator.
- B4 42" Sear Grill

### ZONE C - PLATING & GARNISH

- C1 Plating Center w/ Pizza Prep
- C2 30" Warming Drawer
- C3 Sterno-fired food warmer
- C4 Paper Towel Holder
- C5 2 Tier Storage Drawers

### ZONE D - SERVING & ENTERTAINING

- D1 Top Access Countertop Refrigerator
- D2 Trash Center
- D3 30" Sink system w/ bar package
- D4 30" Access Doors
- D5 One Door Refrigerator w/ Keg Kit

- **Plan First** - Decide what your client wants to be able to do, how many guests you need to entertain, and how much space you can allocate before you start choosing pieces of equipment and materials.
- **Think It Through** - Enclosures can be nearly impossible to modify once built, so consider all of the pieces you need to

create the kitchen you desire. Storage and refrigeration can save your client countless trips back and forth to the indoor kitchen.

- **Remember The Utilities** - A modern outdoor kitchen may need 40+ amps of electrical service and over 100,000 BTUs of gas capacity, not to mention water, drains, etc. All are products that can be sold to your client. | continued on page 56 |



Designing outdoor kitchens in regard to proper placement of the appliances, is one area of outdoor kitchens that is often overlooked. When I design outdoor kitchens, I like to employ the same philosophy I use when designing commercial kitchens. I break them into “zones,” with the location of each zone being strategically placed to create harmony in the operation, maximizing efficiency and flow. Regardless of the zone’s purpose, it’s key that the zone is ergonomically intuitive, and has all the essentials within a half a step and arms reach from point of stance. Like indoor kitchens, outdoor kitchens are the social center and a place in which to entertain family and friends. The caramelizing sizzle, the aromas, the flavors, libations, friends and fun is all combined to bring a whole new lifestyle of enjoyment that’s here to stay. **RO**

*Dale Seiden had a vision before the now popular term “outdoor kitchen” even existed. In 1999, Seiden helped launch Alfresco Open Air Culinary Systems. As one of the pioneer’s in the early days of the outdoor kitchen concept, Seiden developed a new and totally unique marketing approach to outdoor kitchens that created a huge distinction for Alfresco in the marketplace. Today, as Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Seiden continues to be a visionary for the company. He remains a hands-on part of Alfresco, responsible for all sales and marketing functions such as new product incubating and development, branding, product training and distribution management. Dale has more than 30 years experience in kitchen design.*

*For more information on Alfresco or to become a dealer visit [www.alfrescogrills.com](http://www.alfrescogrills.com) or call 888-383-8800.*





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# Setting Yourself Apart From the Competition

FORMER HARLEY-DAVIDSON EXEC SPEAKS TO INDEPENDENTS AT PRIMETIME! BUYING SHOW, RECORD BREAKING SAVINGS EVENT

Nationwide Marketing Group officially announced an expected record breaking PrimeTime! buying show and conference in Las Vegas. Nearly 4,000 people were in attendance, representing over 900 independent dealer companies and almost 200 appliance, electronics and furniture companies.

At the PrimeTime! Kickoff event, Ken Schmidt, former Communications Director for Harley-Davidson, spoke about the importance of setting yourself apart from the competition. According to Schmidt, "it's not about the product but rather if 'people' like you."

Nationwide Marketing Group has a long tradition of setting themselves apart. For the past 40 years, they have built lasting relationships with independent dealers, vendors and service providers. According to Robert Weisner, CEO of Nationwide Marketing Group, "despite the state of the economy, Nationwide has continued to grow with the addition of several hundred new stores, new dealers and new vendor partners over the past year alone."

Member dealers celebrated those successes with huge savings at PrimeTime! even before the



Ken Schmidt, former Harley Davidson Exec, was the keynote at the PrimeTime! Kickoff in Las Vegas.



PrimeTime! Buying Show and Vendor Exhibit doors open welcoming 4,000 people in Vegas.

show floor opened at the popular Millions in Minutes furniture auction. The room was filled to capacity and thousands of items were sold in 45 minutes with savings up to 80% off.

On the show floor, member dealers walked away with over \$7million through the group's exclusive CashBack Now instant rebate program. The program gives dealers money back on appliances, electronics and furniture purchases made at the show.

"Last year, we sent dealers home with \$14million between both shows," said Weisner. "This is our first show of the year and we are already on track to providing more value to our members at PrimeTime!"

The next PrimeTime! buying show and conference will be held in Dallas, Texas on August 21-24, 2011. Nationwide Marketing Group plans to kickoff the event with a 40 years in business celebration at the famous Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center.

To learn more about the many benefits of membership with Nationwide Marketing Group including an invitation to the next PrimeTime! visit [www.nationwidemarketinggroup.org](http://www.nationwidemarketinggroup.org). **RO**

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# BrandSource Provides the Comforts of Home to Families Staying at Ronald McDonald Houses Across North America

**B**randSource members offer support by donating appliances, electronics and more to Ronald McDonald Houses in local communities

For millions of Americans, doing laundry or washing dishes are mundane, daily chores. But for families staying in a Ronald McDonald House®, these simple tasks can serve as comforting reminders of a more normal life that awaits them back home. BrandSource, through its nationwide dealer network of more than 3,000 branded stores and through a partnership with Maytag/Whirlpool, is providing thousands of large home appliances and audio/video equipment, as well as cash donations, to Ronald McDonald House Charities nationwide.

As part of this program, local BrandSource stores are delivering and installing newly donated washing machines, dryers, dishwashers, refrigerators, televisions and stereo equipment for families to use during their stay. The organization has also offered to replace donated items every three to five years, as needed.

“We do our best to make the Ronald McDonald House look and feel like a home-away-from-home for families during their time of greatest need, and we have a wonderful partner in

BrandSource,” said Tim Kennedy, senior director, Development of Ronald McDonald House Charities. “Our guest families greatly appreciate having state-of-the-art appliances and electronics on hand to make their stay a little easier during what can often be a very challenging time.”

Each individual Ronald McDonald



House, in turn, is encouraged to include information about their local BrandSource stores in newsletters, donation mailings, on websites and through social media channels.

“BrandSource is proud to be an official sponsor of Ronald McDonald House Charities® (RMHC®); our member network is very involved on a local level to help create an

environment that feels very much like a real home,” said Bob Lawrence, CEO of BrandSource. “We see this as a perfect fit and a great way for our members to stay connected with their local communities in a positive and helpful way.”

Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC), a non-profit, 501 (c) (3) corporation, creates, finds and supports programs that directly improve the health and well being of children. Through its global network of local Chapters in 52 countries and regions, its three core programs, the Ronald McDonald House, Ronald McDonald Family Room® and Ronald McDonald Care Mobile®, and millions of dollars in grants to support children’s programs worldwide, RMHC provides stability and resources to families so they can get and keep their children healthy and happy. All RMHC-supported programs provide a bridge to quality health care and give children and families the time they need together to heal faster and cope better.

For more information:

- Visit [www.rmhc.org](http://www.rmhc.org),
- Follow on Twitter (@RMHC),
- Like us on Facebook at [Facebook.com/RMHC Global](https://www.facebook.com/RMHCGlobal). **RO**



**Research shows children heal better and faster with their family nearby.** So, while Ronald McDonald House Charities® (RMHC®) can't make medicine taste better or take away painful treatments, we can help ensure children have the most important weapon close by during their fight—their family. Without steadfast supporters, like BrandSource® who donate thousands of home appliances to our U.S. Ronald McDonald House® programs every year, and people like you, RMHC and our network of local Chapters couldn't serve over four million families and children a year.

This holiday season consider giving the gift of RMHC. **Go to [rmhc.org](http://rmhc.org) to donate.**

# Overcoming Emotions When Selling Your Business

BY MARK HUBER, BUSINESS



BUY LOW, SELL HIGH—  
WE ALL KNOW THAT  
MAXIM AS IT PERTAINS  
TO THE STOCK  
MARKET, BUT HOW  
DOES IT PERTAIN TO  
THE MOST PRECIOUS  
STOCK YOU OWN—  
YOUR BUSINESS?

Everyone who owns a company thinks about selling it at times. Maybe these thoughts visit you on a bad Monday morning, or when you hear of a peer who just sold his/her business or just when lying in bed at night. Unfortunately, these thoughts often bring up more questions than answers and as a result the entire subject is abandoned. And, when it comes to your own company, emotions can impede the ability to think objectively on the subject of cashing out.

It is a sad truth that emotions cause too many owners to hold on to their company and miss the opportunity to maximize the return on all they have invested in it. When I talk to business owners about selling their business there are three recurring comments; “business is booming, I don’t want to sell now”, “business is really down, I can’t sell now”, and “nobody would buy my business”. On the surface these may sound like fact based answers but in reality, they are more about emotion than fact.

In this article I’ll address some common emotional issues that come up when business owners go through the sales process, and how to overcome them to get the greatest return.

### FEAR

Fear is one of the biggest motivators for human beings. Fear that the business is worth less than they think, fear that nobody would be interested in buying the business, or fear that they’d be gouged in the transaction. Fear of the unknown is one of the largest contributors to procrastination and inaction and is the reason too many business owners miss the boat on selling their company.

When I began investing in the stock market, I was great at picking the stocks that would shoot up 25%, 50%, or 100% but invariably held on to these too long and watched them come right back down. I can still name them today: Tempur-Pedic, Jones Soda, and Lucent, just to name a few. It wasn’t until I learned to develop an exit strategy for each stock I purchased that I began seeing some serious growth in my portfolio.

Business owners start their companies and run them every day never giving serious thought to when they should cash out. This is a serious mistake. As we’ve all learned from the past five years, things change quickly and there are many factors that are outside of our control. Key employees leave, economic trends fluctuate, and competition can come out of nowhere. Just like with stocks, each small business has an optimal time to sell it.

### PROCRASTINATION

Procrastinating when it comes to thinking about selling a company can cost business owners dearly. Educating themselves on the selling of their business should be included in the top priorities of every business owner. It should rank up there with increasing revenues, reducing costs and

# emotions When ur Business

BROKER, CHICAGOLAND SUNBELT

managing cash flow. Entrepreneurs usually possess a personality that thrives on pressure and standards that lend themselves toward perfectionism. Combine that with the aspect of not having a boss other than yourself and you have a perfect recipe for putting unpleasant thoughts and activities off until the last minute.

Procrastination is a gamble that the consequences of waiting will be less painful than the immediate unpleasantness of addressing a certain issue in the present. When they think about selling their company, business owners must confront the most uncomfortable and personal issue of all – their success or failure relative to their perfectionist expectations.

As a result, a personality comfortable with risk taking, who is accountable to no boss and who constantly overcomes the consequences of waiting until the last minute will invariably not address the issues which forces them to objectively quantify their life's work and most valued possession.

## LACK OF AWARENESS ABOUT BUSINESS VALUE

Most owners do not know what their business is worth and many are afraid to find out. There are many factors that contribute to the value of a business, both internal and external. These are called Value Drivers. By knowing and understanding the top value drivers of their business an owner can continuously work to enhance them and ultimately maximize the value of their company. It can take years to fully maximize these so the sooner they can be identified and quantified the better.

A proper, realistic and verifiable valuation is the first step to setting the right price, which will do two things for your sale. First, the right valuation and price will attract quality buyers to the sale. Secondly, the right valuation will ensure that the deal survives the due diligence process once a buyer is interested. A mistake in the valuation process can result in too low a price, leaving money on the table, or too high a price, preventing the business from selling. The emotional attachment an owner has to their company often causes a business to be overpriced. Buyers of companies are very savvy, and an over

inflated price will eventually be discovered and kill the deal mid-stream, or worse, cause the business to be ignored altogether.

## LACK OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality, if not properly maintained, can not only kill a potential deal but kill (or significantly damage) a company's ongoing operations. An owner should consider what would happen if their customers, suppliers and employees discovered the business was for sale. There is a very delicate balance between marketing a company to as many buyers as possible and ensuring nobody knows it is for sale.

In order to increase the odds of a successful transaction, maintain confidentiality and not waste the time of the participants', buyers must be screened. All too often a buyer shows interest that has neither the means nor the required motivation to purchase the company. Uncovering these "tire kickers" and eliminating them from the process enhances the probability that an offer results in a sale and the deal is closed in a timely fashion.

Selling a business is a process filled with emotions. Educating yourself on the process, learning the present value of your business, identifying the right advisors and working with them will go a long way toward not only overcoming some of these emotions, but also maximizing the price you will receive for it. Don't wait, start now. **RO**

---

*Mark Huber is a business broker for Chicagoland Sunbelt, a business brokerage firm that focuses on helping people buy, grow and sell businesses in Chicago and the surrounding Midwest area. Mark is a licensed Illinois Real Estate Broker and an expert in the marketplace for residential rental properties in Downtown Chicago.*

*With over 20 years in the world of small business, Mark Huber understands the needs, concerns and goals of those who have started and grown their own companies; and those who wish to purchase them. His degree in Interdepartmental Communications from Elmhurst College provides a solid foundation to facilitate the communication between buyer and seller at all levels of a deal.*

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## DACOR ANNOUNCES THE PROMOTION OF THREE MEMBERS OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM AND ADDS EIGHT NEW DISTRICT SALES REPRESENTATIVES

NEW POSITIONS WILL FOCUS ON CONTINUED COMPANY GROWTH AND INNOVATION

Dacor®, a market leader in the design and manufacture of luxury kitchen appliances, today announced that Mr. Bill Ferrante has been promoted to Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Mike Laiman has been promoted to Senior Vice President and General Manager, and Ms. Karol Becker has been promoted to Senior Vice President of Sales. The company has also added eight district sales representatives to its sales force to meet growing needs across the country.



Ferrante

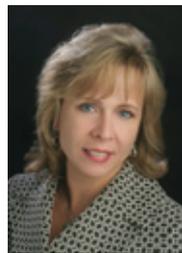
In his new role, Ferrante will be responsible for overseeing all of the financial operations of Dacor and navigating the financial and accounting aspects of high level decision making in all facets of the company, including manufacturing, marketing and sales, IT and legal. Since 2007, Ferrante has served in the Finance and Accounting group at Dacor with his most recent position as Corporate Controller. Prior to Dacor, Ferrante worked in the aerospace industry for Eaton Aerospace, and served as the financial planner for three Orange County divisions of the company. Ferrante holds a B.S. in Applied Mathematics and Statistics from State University of New York (SUNY), Stony Brook and a MBA in Finance from California State University, Long Beach.



Laiman

As Senior Vice President and General Manager, Laiman has been overseeing the Engineering, Operations and Purchasing departments. Now, with his promotion Laiman is taking on even more responsibility, leading all of Dacor's operations and adding inside sales and Service and Warranty to the departments he oversees. During his past five years at Dacor, Laiman has streamlined manufacturing and operations while continuing to introduce new, successful products. Prior to Dacor, Laiman served at General Motors in the company's manufacturing, engineering and program management departments for ten years. Laiman holds a B.S. in Manufacturing from

Boston University, a M.S. in Materials and a MBA from University of Dayton.



Becker

In the role of Senior Vice President of Sales, Becker will lead Dacor's entire sales team, including East and West zones in the United States; Canada; Mexico; and the company's international distribution. Prior to her promotion, Becker's tenure at Dacor began in 1999 as District Manager in the Oregon and Southwestern Washington territory, with her progressing to her most recent position as Zone Vice President for the West and Midwestern United States and Canada.

"It has been vital for Dacor to have a corporate management team that possesses the ultimate in industry knowledge, experience and business acumen as we continue to navigate today's economic landscape," says Mike Joseph, CEO of Dacor. "Bill, Mike and Karol have each had an invaluable impact on Dacor's accomplishments and growth during their time here, and I'm confident that they will continue to be major contributors in Dacor's future success."

Additionally, Dacor has added eight new district sales representatives (DSR) to its sales team to fulfill growing sales demands and has plans to add three more DSR positions across the country in the near future.

By growing its sales force and offering Ferrante, Laiman and Becker new positions focused on Dacor's continued growth and innovation, the company has demonstrated its staying power in a difficult economy. Expanded distribution channels and business partnerships have allowed Dacor to bring the premium cooking experience to a wider range of consumers and build growth among new audiences. Dacor's latest initiatives, including the new Distinctive Series and a partnership with BMW Group DesignworksUSA, will propel the company into the future with cutting edge designs and the latest technology to continue Dacor's current momentum.

## MEGA GROUP USA APPOINTS LONG-TIME INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL TO MANAGE APPLIANCE DIVISION

MISSY HODGES—APPLIANCE MANAGER



Hodges

MEGA Group USA, a leading national home furnishings buying group for appliance, furniture, mattress, lawn and garden and electronic retailers, recently announced the appointment of Missy Hodges as appliance manager. Hodges, brings 15 plus years of experience in the appliance industry working in sales, merchandising, warehousing, and logistics.

She also served 10 years with Maytag Corporation.

“We are thrilled to have someone with Missy’s experience and knowledge join our team,” stated Rick Bellows, president of MEGA Group USA. “She is widely respected within the appliance industry and her relationships will be a great asset to both our members and vendors.”

Hodges will work closely with Bellows to continue to develop existing and new vendor partnerships and expand the buying groups’ merchandising programs for the benefit of MEGA Group USA’s members. She will also help manage the appliance circular and advertising programs.

“As we gain new appliance members and develop innovative programs that benefit all our dealers, it is vital to have talented professionals in our key roles,” continued Bellows. “The addition of Missy to our staff gives us additional depth and strength as MEGA continues to grow and be one of the leading buying groups in the country.”

MEGA Group USA is the fastest growing national home furnishings buying organization in the Country focused on delivering excellence in products and services to its retail members in the appliance, furniture, electronic, and mattress industries. These business services include group vendor programs, custom advertising and marketing services, consulting, store merchandising, and information technology support aimed at driving floor traffic, improving sales and profits and enhancing operating efficiencies. MEGA Group

USA has 1500 retail members in 2500 store fronts throughout the United States. For more information on MEGA Group USA, visit [www.megagroupusa.com](http://www.megagroupusa.com).

## MCDERMOTT PROMOTED TO LEAD SALES FOR GE APPLIANCES



McDermott

Michael McDermott has been promoted to lead GE Appliance Sales, reporting to James P. Campbell, President & CEO, GE Appliances & Lighting. Melanie Cook will replace McDermott as Product General Manager for Cooking.

McDermott succeeds Dave Bilas who has led the Sales organization since 2007 and has been instrumental in helping the business reposition in response to the housing collapse and economic downturn. Bilas will be leaving to pursue opportunities outside the company.

McDermott brings 17 years of experience to his new role. After joining GE in 1993 as an Area Sales Manager for Retail Sales in Horsham, PA, he subsequently progressed through a variety of roles of increasing responsibility including: Marketing Manager for Cooking Products; Regional Sales Manager in Los Angeles, California; Regional Sales Manager in Detroit, Michigan; General Manager of Merchandising; and, General Manager of Sales for the Contract Channel. He assumed his current role leading the cooking business in 2009.

“Mike’s breadth of experience across the commercial operation has made him well equipped to understand our customers’ needs from a variety of angles. That, coupled with his demonstrated leadership skills and strong process orientation, make him a great fit for this role and the ideal person to build upon the outstanding relationships built under Dave’s leadership,” said Campbell.

“Dave has been a great GE ambassador and has assembled an outstanding team that will help GE continue to win with customers, particularly as our more than \$1 billion in new product investment is made through 2014. I want to thank him for his many contributions and service to GE,” said Campbell.

McDermott’s promotion is effective immediately.

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(269) 923-1758

SOUTHWEST  
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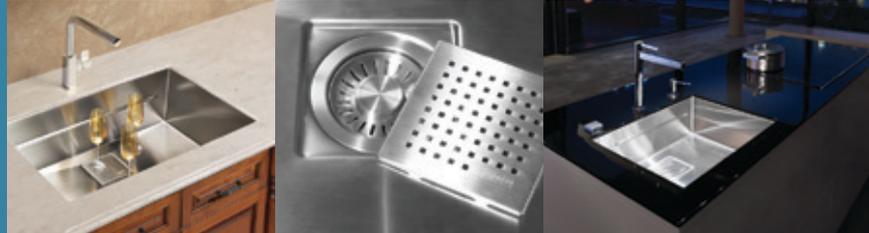
# Introducing the Franke Peak Sink Collection.

The sink is the anchor of any kitchen, crucial in both form and function. Franke gets this, and their commitment to gorgeous, high-quality kitchen sinks is the foundation for their latest line, the Peak collection.

Complete design symmetry makes these sinks the picture of design harmony, while professional features and accessories ensure maximum performance. Handcrafted details, rock-solid construction, and a range of accessories make the Peak collection a perfect choice for your kitchen.



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- 5mm corner radius perfectly balances minimalist design with optimum cleanability
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