

# The Retail Observer

May 2012

AN EYE ON THE INDUSTRY SINCE 1970

Vol. 23, Issue 5



## BERTAZZONI CELEBRATES 130 YEARS OF PRODUCTION

PAGE 8



## DSE: DIGITAL SIGNAGE EXPO

PAGE 34

## REMEMBERING LEE BOUCHER 1923-2012

PAGE 64



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## The Jewels of *The Retail Observer*

**T**his month, I wanted to make sure I took time to remind you of the treasure trove of information our contributing writers offer our readers every month. These professionals play many roles in the industry representing retail executives, service organizations; some are dealers themselves or highly noted trainers and authors. But one thing all of our writers have in common; they are all dedicated to the success of the independent dealer.

Here are highlights from this issue; I promise you will find a jewel on every page! Two of our writers this month, Rick Segel and Jeanette Howe, talk about the ever increasing number of customers who are opting to make their retail purchases online. Rick offers simple Rules to Combat Customer Migration that you can start using today to counteract this new trend in shopping. Jeannette talks about the new phenomena of Showrooming and reminds independent dealers how you have the competitive edge over the big boxes to capture these shoppers when they are in your stores and thwart online purchases.

You may have seen it or heard about it in passing but exactly what is the Declaration of Innovation that hundreds of thousands of people have signed? Elly Valas will explain what it is, why you should care and how to join the movement in RETAIL VIEWS.

Our CUSTOMER SERVICE guru, John Tschohl, explains the importance of hiring good people. Take a look at this article to reexamine your existing team and interview process before hiring your next employee and reap the financial rewards a solid candidate can bring.

In CULTURE COACH, Libby Wagner talks about how internal communications plays a significant role in productivity and profitability, especially when you are assessing the sale or purchase of a business.

E. Michael Allen shows CE dealers how to increase their bottom line by adding higher margin products like furniture to their stores in FURNITURE TRENDS. We know every dealer can benefit from hearing more about the advantages of increasing their product mix.

Remember, every issue of *The Retail Observer* will offer you fresh insights. While some of these writers are featured monthly, others will contribute at different times throughout the year. To make sure we are offering you what you need, please take the time to tell us whose tips, trends or strategies you use the most to stay working in and on your business.



*Happy treasure hunting!*

*Eliana Barriga*

*letters@retailobserver.com*

## The **RetailObserver**

MAY 2012

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CELEBRATING OUR 23<sup>RD</sup> YEAR  
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## Doing Good and Getting Green

Last month we celebrated Earth Day but the momentum of “doing good” for the environment and your community can carry on through the entire year. For instance, do you have old electronics and appliances stored in your warehouse? When you do discard them, are they being recycled in an environmentally responsible way?

There are trade-in and trade-up programs popping up everywhere that will allow you and your customers to exchange old products for a gift card or credit to shop in your store. Many manufacturers are also supporting these types of programs with additional incentives for retailers who participate. These recycling companies then make sure the products are disposed of responsibly. A win-win for everyone.

If you want to earn a little green, think about selling your used, damaged or out of date appliances and electronics. Amazon, Craigslist and eBay are a great place to find potential buyers. Or consider donating products that are in good working condition to a charity so that someone less fortunate will benefit from them.

Not sure where to start? Here are a few organizations to choose from.

- *Habitat for Humanity*, [www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org) — Through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat builds and rehabilitates simple, decent houses alongside their homeowner partner families.
- *Appliance Recycling Centers of America, Inc. (ARCA)*, [www.arcainc.com](http://www.arcainc.com) — An innovative company dedicated to preserving the environment through energy efficiency and proper appliance disposal.
- *The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* is a great resource to get information on local donation and recycling programs for consumer electronics. [www.epa.gov/osw/conserves/materials/ecycling/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/osw/conserves/materials/ecycling/index.htm)
- *West Coast's The ReUse People of America* [www.thereusepeople.org](http://www.thereusepeople.org) — Reduces the solid waste stream and changes the way the built environment is renewed by salvaging building materials and distributing them for reuse.
- *East Coast's Green Demolitions* [www.greendemolitions.com](http://www.greendemolitions.com) — Sells luxury commercial surplus and donated kitchens, appliances, bathroom fixtures, home decor, etc. from houses being demolished and renovated. Donation proceeds benefit Recovery Unlimited.

No matter how you do it, you can do a good deed or do your part for the environment while keeping your inventory clean of clutter and making some cash. If you have other programs that you would like to let us know about, please feel free to email me at [moe@retailobserver.com](mailto:moe@retailobserver.com) and we will share it in our upcoming issues.



Happy “Do Good” Retailing!

Moe Lastfogel

[moe@retailobserver.com](mailto:moe@retailobserver.com)

## The Retail Observer

MAY 2012

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CELEBRATING OUR 23<sup>RD</sup> YEAR  
AS THE RETAIL OBSERVER

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



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## THE LINES OF PERFECTION

### THE S3 SERIES FROM SCHOLTÈS

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**PREMIO EXPORT**

per i successi conseguiti sul mercato internazionale ed il contributo recato all'affermazione del prodotto italiano nel mondo.

IL SEGRETARIO GENERALE  
Reggio Emilia MARZO 1979

IL PRESIDENTE  
Franco Bonferoni



BERTAZZONI CELEBRATES 130 YEARS OF CREATING

*Beautifully* &  
DESIGNED



*Innovative*

COOKING APPLIANCES

ITALIAN COOKING PRODUCTS MANUFACTURER  
CONTINUES TO EXPAND AND DIVERSIFY PRODUCT LINE

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY YEARS  
AGO, BERTAZZONI, THE FAMILY-OWNED  
COMPANY THAT MANUFACTURES  
RANGES, OVENS, COOKTOPS AND  
VENTILATION SYSTEMS, LAID THE  
FOUNDATION FOR CAPTURING THE  
HEARTS OF PASSIONATE HOME CHEFS  
ALL OVER ITALY.

**T**oday, Bertazzoni is the oldest family owned appliance manufacturing company in the world that continues to bring the rich food culture of the Emilia Romagna region to kitchens on all five continents. Staying true to one guiding vision, Bertazzoni aims to create innovative, high-performing, and elegantly designed appliances that meet the needs and lifestyles of today's cooks. Bertazzoni will celebrate the company's 130 year milestone with an exclusive anniversary celebration for family, friends, and distributors of the brand in the Bertazzoni family's hometown of Guastalla, Italy.

"Over the past 13 decades, we have focused on understanding what is happening in homes around the world in an effort to translate those lifestyle demands into precisely engineered and beautifully crafted products," said Paolo Bertazzoni, president and fifth generation chief executive officer of Bertazzoni. "It's also very important to our brand that culinary Italian identity, which is based so heavily on tradition, remains an | *continued on page 10* |



anchor in the rapidly evolving product development process. I'm enormously proud of what we've accomplished and even more excited about what's to come for the Bertazzoni brand."

#### THE EVOLUTION OF BERTAZZONI

A pioneer of the industrial age, Francesco Bertazzoni began laying the foundation of his family's entrepreneurial engineering spirit in 1882. He crafted innovative wood burning stoves taking inspiration from the stoves he saw being delivered to his hometown of Guastalla, Italy on the new railroad that connected Italy to the industrial centers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

As time went on, Bertazzoni stayed true to its focus on engineering, design, and the epicurean roots of the region, building the first factory in 1909, embracing the discovery of oil and gas in the Po River Basin in the 1950s, and distributing its products to home owners in Europe and Asia in the 1970s. In 2005, Bertazzoni began selling in the North American market with the introduction of the Bertazzoni Professional Series, available in a rainbow of eight colors of Italy and specifically developed to meet needs and aspirations of the American home. Since debuting in the North American market seven years ago, the company has launched a total of four product lines: Professional Series, Master Series, Heritage Series, and most recently, the Built-In Line.

"We had been watching Bertazzoni in Europe and were thrilled when the products became available to us in the U.S.," said Tim Murray of Purcell Murray, Bertazzoni's distributor in California, Nevada and Arizona. "We have seen the brand widely embraced by homeowners, architects, interior designers and other industry influencers. Beyond the company's impressive commercial success, we have a very special relationship with the Bertazzoni family members, which makes this brand so unique and authentic to us."

#### BERTAZZONI'S INDUSTRY RECOGNITION AND AWARD-WINNING BUILT-IN LINE

Shortly after entering the U.S. market, Bertazzoni earned one of the highest industry accolades being named to the Luxury Institute's Luxury Brand Status Index (LBSI) as one of the top two premium brands in the kitchen appliance market.

In 2011, Bertazzoni unveiled a complete Built-In Line featuring a series of wall ovens, range tops, cooktops and ventilation that combine metropolitan flair and technical virtuosity to offer unparalleled style and precise performance.

The new line marked several important industry firsts:

- Exclusive high-resolution LCD display with an Apple-inspired user friendly approach

- Dual diagonal convection technology for optimal heat distribution on seven levels
- The Assistant—a bank of cooking sequences programmed with an algorithm spanning nine food categories and equipped with sensors to provide the cook with the desired cooking results
- Segmented cooktops combining the power of gas, electric griddle, and induction cooking in one flexible product platform

The Built-In suite was also recognized for its design and innovation by several industry organizations:

- CES Innovations 2012 Design and Engineering Awards Honoree: Bertazzoni Design Series 30 inch Double Oven
- Interior Design Best of Year Award Finalist: Bertazzoni Design Series 36 inch Segmented Cooktop
- GOOD Design 2011 Finalist: Bertazzoni Design Series Built-in Oven

#### LOYAL BERTAZZONI CUSTOMERS AND DISTRIBUTORS

Bertazzoni has many important constituencies to thank for its success, including:

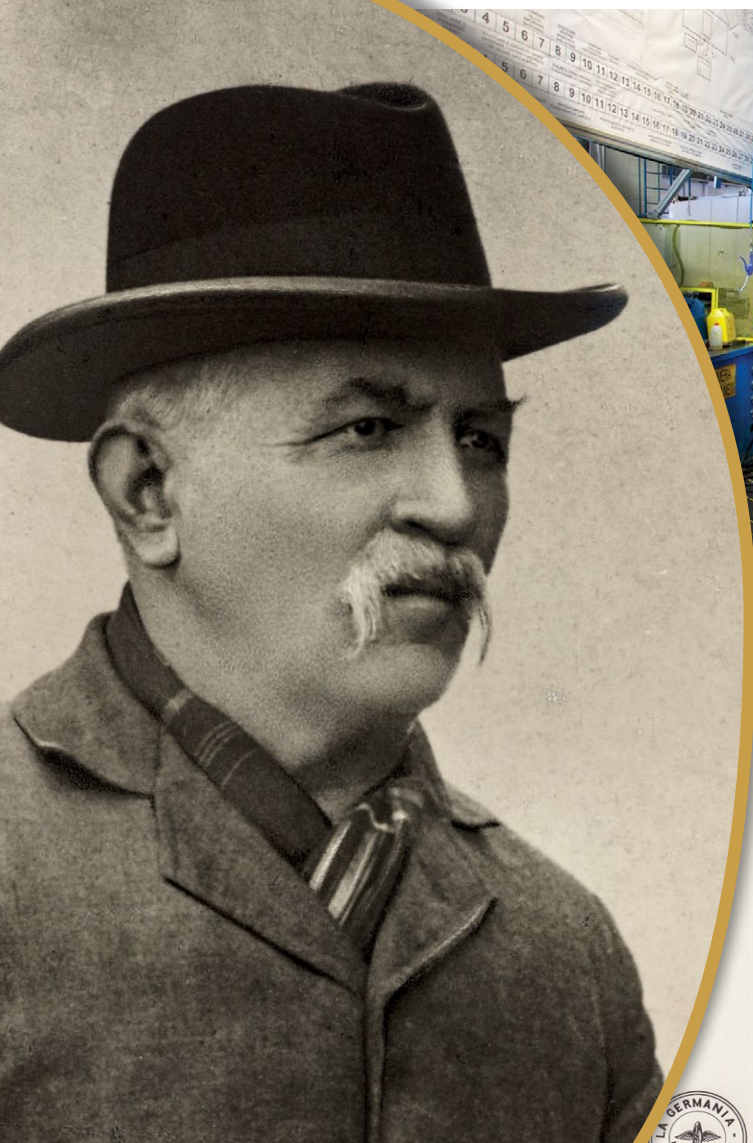
- Customers around the world who have embraced Bertazzoni products in their homes over the past 130 years
- Retail partners, builders, and distributors in over 60 countries who have sold Bertazzoni, including original partners such as General Heat Corporation based in Manila, Philippines who have supported the brand for half a century
- Bertazzoni employees who have worked passionately to deliver on the company's vision

#### BUSINESS SUCCESS AND EXPANSION PLANS

For six generations, the Bertazzoni family has created a growing and prosperous business through real product innovation. This credo has remained consistent over time, continues to resonate with the market today, and will serve as a catalyst for the brand's future. Bertazzoni's growth plans include a significant expansion and remodeling of the factory in Guastalla, Italy and working with an increased number of distributors and retailers in Asian and South American markets.

"We feel fortunate to currently find ourselves in the 'sweet spot' of the kitchen appliance market and we are encouraged by this success," said Nicola Bertazzoni, vice president of sales for Bertazzoni. "Despite the prevailing challenging market conditions in some regions, our current position as a market leader and our road map for the future are corner stones of our business strategy."

For more information visit [www.bertazzoni.com](http://www.bertazzoni.com) and like the company on Facebook: [facebook.com/Bertazzoni-Italia](https://www.facebook.com/Bertazzoni-Italia). **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)

**FEATURED THIS MONTH:**  
MEGA GROUP USA 2012 CONVENTION



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## Book Review

# High-Tech, High-Touch Customer Service

INSPIRE TIMELESS LOYALTY IN THE DEMANDING NEW WORLD OF SOCIAL COMMERCE

In an age of social media, smartphones, self-service, and six-second attention spans, today's customers are a hard bunch to crack. Time-strapped, screen-addicted, value-savvy, and socially engaged, their expectations are tougher than ever for a business to keep up with. They are empowered like never before and expect businesses to respect that sense of empowerment—lashing out at those that don't.

This past year, Micah co-authored of *Exceptional Service, Exceptional Profit: The Secrets of Building a Five-Star Customer Service Organization*. It has become a #1 customer service bestseller in the U.S., has been translated into Japanese and Korean, and has been chosen for the prestigious Jack Covert Selection.

*High-Tech, High-Touch Customer Service* is the new release from Micah Solomon, a well-known business leader, top keynote speaker and consultant on customer service, sales, marketing issues, the customer experience, and company culture for our digitally connected times. His expertise has been featured in *Fast Company*, *Bloomberg BusinessWeek*, *Inc. Magazine*, *Forbes.com*, *NBC* and *ABC* television programming, and elsewhere.

Take heart: Old-fashioned customer service, fully retooled for today's blistering pace and digitally connected reality, is what you need to build the kind loyal customer base that allows you to survive—and thrive. And *High-Tech, High-Touch Customer Service* spells out surefire strategies for success in a clear, entertaining, and practical way. In *High-Tech, High Touch Customer Service* customers will discover:

- Six major customer trends and what they mean for your business
- Eight unbreakable rules for social media customer service
- How to effectively address online complainers and saboteurs on Yelp, Twitter, TripAdvisor, and other forums for user generated content
- The rising power of self-service—and how to design it properly
- How to build a company culture that breeds stellar customer service

*"In a world of mind-numbing choice and little loyalty, Micah reminds us why caring about your customers (and treating them that way) is not just something that feels good, it's good business."*

- Seth Godin

*"Micah Solomon conveys an up-to-the minute and deeply practical take on customer service, business success, and the twin importance of people and technology."*

- Steve Wozniak, Apple co-founder **RO**

*Author: Micah Solomon, a successful entrepreneur and business leader, is also a top keynote speaker and consultant on customer service, sales, and marketing issues. [www.micahsolomon.com](http://www.micahsolomon.com)*

*Publisher: American Management Association/AMCOM*





THE BERTAZZONI DESIGN SERIES BUILT-IN OVEN



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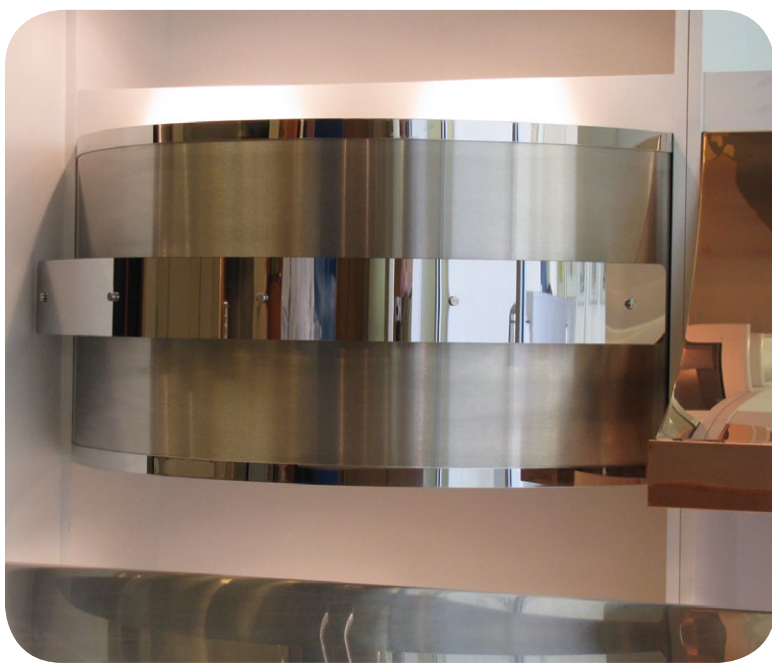
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## Vent-A-Hood Introduces JCWR Designer Series Hood



Vent-A-Hood, the company that created the modern residential range hood, has unveiled the JCWR Designer Series hood, available in a 9” under cabinet and 18” wall mount model. The newest Vent-A-Hood design offers a stylish modern look with superior performance that is available for purchase now across the U.S. and Canada.

“The latest Vent-A-Hood design shows off sleek and contemporary lines, making it the perfect addition to a modern kitchen,” said Mark Klein, director of sales for Vent-A-Hood. “With our industry best 5-year warranty and signature Magic Lung blower, the JCWR Designer Series hood offers quality, excellence and functionality with incredible style.”

The JCWR Designer Series features a stainless steel hood with a baffle filter/blower system that offers high air flow volume in 300 – 1200 CFM options.

The JCWR9 under cabinet model canopy is 9-inches high, 24 inches deep and comes in standard widths of 30, 36, 42 and 48 inches. The JCWR18 wall mount model canopy is 18-inches high, 24 inches deep and comes in standard widths of 30, 36, 42, 48, 54, 60 and 66 inches.

### ABOUT VENT-A-HOOD

Founded in 1933, Vent-A-Hood, based in Richardson, Texas, is the oldest manufacturer of residential range hoods in America. Each product manufactured by Vent-A-Hood is individually engineered for performance in addition to style. Vent-A-Hood products are sold in all 50 states as well as Canada. For more information, please visit [www.ventahood.com](http://www.ventahood.com). You can also follow Vent-A-Hood on Facebook and Twitter. **RO**

IF YOU CAN  
CLEAN A DISH.  
YOU CAN  
CLEAN A  
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SCAN HERE TO SEE  
HOW EASY IT IS  
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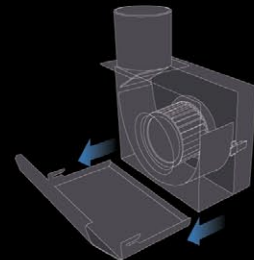


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[www.ventahood.com](http://www.ventahood.com)



# Industry [ News ]



## FISHER & PAYKEL APPLIANCES NEXT GENERATION OF THE DISHDRAWER™

DISHWASHER CHANGING THE FACE OF DESIGN



Fisher & Paykel Appliances unveils the next phase of the world renowned DishDrawer™ dishwasher line. The new DishDrawer is now available in the United States and Canada and will be released under both the Fisher & Paykel and DCS by Fisher & Paykel brands.

### NEW KEY ENHANCEMENTS INCLUDE:

- Single integrated models feature seamless cabinetry integration achieved by rear venting and a fully adjustable door option
- All integrated models now include wireless remote creating clean lines and eliminating the need for an external interface
- 24" models have an increase in place setting accommodation from six to seven per drawer

- Improved wash, energy and water performance
- Enhanced racking including an adjustable bowl rack for large pasta dishes

The drawer dishwasher concept was conceived in 1986 as a result of Fisher & Paykel's leading design engineers focus on how the category could be drastically improved. Approved by the Board of Directors in 1987, the world unveiling of this revolutionary platform occurred at Domotechnica in Germany and changed the face of appliance innovation. Since its release in North America in 1998, Fisher & Paykel has enjoyed renowned success and accolades for this ground breaking product.

"The latest chapter in DishDrawer refines the platform to an even higher level with focus on integration and designer elements," says Fisher & Paykel's Marketing Manager, Scott Davies. "DishDrawer offers options perfect for any application, from the convenience of its seamless integration with wireless remote, to the European and American styling that each brand offers."

To find out more about each brand please contact [www.fisherpaykel.com](http://www.fisherpaykel.com) and [www.dcsappliances.com](http://www.dcsappliances.com) or call us toll free at 888 936-7872.

## HAIER BUILT-IN REFRIGERATION LINE

UNDER COUNTER REFRIGERATOR, BEVERAGE AND WINE CELLAR OFFER COMPLETE LINE

**Haier** Haier now offers an attractive and convenient, built-in refrigeration options including under counter refrigerators, wine cellars and beverage centers.

The stainless steel DD400RS built-in under counter refrigerator features 4.31 cu. ft. capacity, two refrigeration drawers and electronic temperature controls. The easy to clean touch control panel allows for simple temperature adjustment while the top-drawer divider system easily adjusts with one hand to securely hold items of different sizes such as fruits and vegetables, cheeses and liquids. Also available in Smooth Black DD350RB and Smooth White DD300RW.

"Haier understands the customer's needs and we provide premium features and benefits which empower consumers to live a modern and affordable lifestyle," said Chuck Bryant, VP of refrigeration for Haier America.

The built-in under counter beverage center BC100GS,





holds up to 150 cans and features a double paned glass door for easy viewing and a stainless steel doorframe with three glass shelves and one basket. Electronic temperature controls make adjustments a snap.

The WC200GS is the perfect companion for any wine lover. This built-in under counter 48-bottle capacity wine cellar has a see-thru anti-UV glass door with a stainless steel doorframe and five glide-out wine racks. Dual temperature zones make it flexible for both red and white wine storage.

Slide-out wine racks provide easy access to stored wine. The unfinished wood trim allows for custom staining to match the rest of the kitchen cabinetry. A specially designed bottom rack allows for large magnum wine bottle or champagne bottle storage.

For more information: [www.haieramerica.com](http://www.haieramerica.com).

## HOUZER® ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH GRANITE SINK INNOVATOR SCHOCK GMBH®

**HOUZER.** Houzer Inc, renowned stainless steel sink manufacturer, has partnered with the leading German granite sink manufacturer Schock GmbH® to launch a new chapter in luxury sink offerings. This strategic partnership will add a new dimension of opulence and timelessness to the Houzer® line of sinks, already famous for their classic style and durability.

“The core values of both Houzer and Schock have fueled this opportunity, with each company holding a top-tier global position in our respective material categories in sinks,” said

Ken Fey, VP and COO of Houzer. “Schock is known as the best-in-class leader in the granite sink category, and their people and ethics are impeccable.”

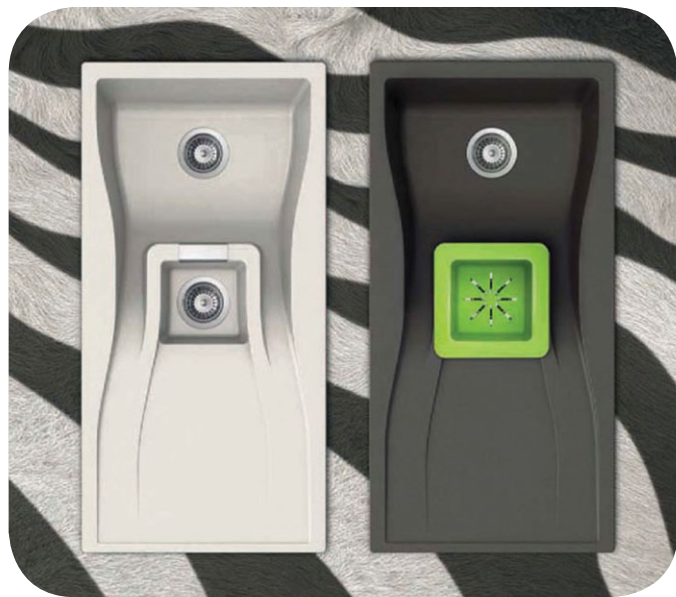
The partnership of the two sink manufacturers combines their shared commitment to enduring quality, value and timeless style. The recently unveiled line of Schock-Houzer granite sinks combines durability and exquisite design with patented breakthrough materials that redefine the entire category. Schock was the original innovator of the granite sink more than 30 years ago, and today 75% of the nearly 2 million granite sinks produced annually are manufactured using the Schock proprietary method.

The new generation of “Color Your Life” Schock-Houzer granite sinks will spark the imagination of designers and homeowners everywhere. The attention to detail and discriminating style offer a unique take on refined taste and durability—offering strength 3 times harder than natural granite.

“Houzer is looking forward to collaborating on new designs and materials for the U.S. markets with Schock, and we are extremely proud to have them become part of the Houzer family,” commented Fey. Schock-Houzer granite sinks deliver all the benefits of the Houzer tradition and the leading technology of Schock, for lasting beauty and value.

To learn more about Houzer and view the new Schock-Houzer line, visit [www.HouzerSink.com](http://www.HouzerSink.com).

For over three decades, Houzer has been recognized as a leading manufacturer of premium-quality, stainless steel sinks that have infused new life into millions | *continued on page 18* |



of kitchens around the world. Their elegantly styled and durable stainless steel and luxury granite sinks and sink accessories, offer outstanding value and are available through decorative plumbing showrooms and distributors throughout the U.S. The Houzer brand embodies a deep commitment to state-of-the-art technology, exclusive innovations and elegant designs that offer a unique combination of durability and style.

## GE UNVEILS FRENCH DOOR REFRIGERATOR FACTORY IN LOUISVILLE

FACTORY TO SUPPORT 600 NEW LOCAL JOBS

- GE CEO Jeff Immelt and Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear join business leaders and employees to celebrate grand opening
- Market-leading refrigeration technology a result of GE's \$800 million investment to upgrade Appliance Park, \$250 million investment in bottom freezer technology alone
- Since 2009, GE Appliances & Lighting has committed to investing a total of \$1 billion in U.S. appliance manufacturing
- Study shows GE presence in Ky. puts \$1.6 billion into the state's economy; directly and indirectly supports 12,000 Ky. jobs
- GE and GOOD/Corps select Kentuckiana Works as What Works Project Non-Profit of the Week, eligible for up to a \$10,000 donation

GE previewed today its new refrigerator product line, the soon-to-be-launched French door bottom freezer refrigerator series, at the grand opening of a new factory at GE's Appliance Park, the second manufacturing facility to open within six weeks here. The new refrigeration line—which features the most advanced ice and water technology on the market today—will support 600 new local jobs and improve the competitive position of the 130-year-old brand.

GE Chairman and CEO Jeff Immelt will be joined by Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear and more than 1,000 GE employees to celebrate the facility opening as another milestone in the revitalization of GE's Appliances business. Efforts to revitalize the business began in 2009 when GE committed to invest a total of \$1 billion (\$800 million in Louisville) and create more than 1,300 new jobs in the U.S. by 2014. Today's announcement comes on the heels of the February opening of the GeoSpring™ Hybrid Water Heater manufacturing facility, the first new factory to open at Appliance Park since 1957.



The new refrigeration factory at GE's Appliance Park headquarters will create 600 new jobs and is part of the company's \$1 billion investment in new product lines that will bring more than 1,300 jobs to the U.S. by 2014.

"Today's Appliance Park milestone is proof that when businesses, unions and employees work together, we can deliver innovative solutions to the marketplace and demonstrate that U.S.-based manufacturing can be competitive," said GE Appliances President and CEO Charles "Chip" Blankenship. | continued on page 20 |



## Global industry just picked up a Kentucky accent.

We are proud to announce that, right here in Louisville, our GeoSpring™ Hybrid Water Heater has rolled off the assembly line and our new French Door Refrigerators will soon follow. And that's just the beginning. We're also hiring over 1,000 new employees and adding six new products to Appliance Park's portfolio by 2014. Each one is clear proof that American industry is on the rise and the people of Louisville, Kentucky are making it happen.

GE works.

[ge.com/whatworks](http://ge.com/whatworks)



imagination at work



“GE Appliances is a shining example of what is working in U.S. manufacturing, and we’re excited about what this new production line means for the future of our business. We know we could not have reached this milestone without our partners, such as the local union, government leaders at all levels and our 4,000 incredibly hard working Louisville employees.”

“GE’s continued investment in the Louisville manufacturing facility will help create jobs and drive economic growth for the surrounding community,” said Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear. “They have been a great partner in helping to showcase to the rest of the world that Kentucky is a great place to do business.”

The new refrigeration line is one of 11 new products that will be launched by GE Appliances by 2014. The renewal of manufacturing in Louisville is a result of several factors, including the adoption of Lean manufacturing techniques and a more competitive wage structure for new employees, all intended to help GE better compete in a global marketplace. The Lean process, which uses a cross-functional team of employees—including hourly manufacturing workers—helps increase the competitiveness of the operation by identifying and removing waste in materials and work effort often found in traditional manufacturing.

#### GE FRENCH DOOR BOTTOM FREEZER REFRIGERATORS

The new GE French door refrigerator line has been designed with intelligent home technology and is built to make the consumer’s world work better.

The products offer the most advanced ice and water technology on the market today. GE Profile™ models will feature a Hands-free Autofill system that uses sound waves from ultrasonic sensors and proximity detectors to fill a glass, water bottle, coffee pot or pitcher - an industry first.

The GE Café™ model is also the first refrigerator in the industry to feature a hot water dispenser, which can heat up to 12 ounces of water in two minutes.

In keeping with GE’s ecomaginationSM vision of the world, the new refrigerator models boast the first bottom-freezer manufactured in the U.S. to use cyclopentane foam, which reduces the greenhouse gas emissions during manufacturing and at the end of the product’s life cycle, ultimately making this line better for the environment.

More information on the new products’ technology and features can be found online.

#### GE ECONOMIC IMPACT IN KENTUCKY

A new study, commissioned by GE and conducted by independent consulting firm Tripp Umbach using 2010 data, quantifies GE’s presence in Kentucky, showing that the company directly and indirectly contributes \$1.6 billion to the state. This means \$1 out of every \$103 in the Kentucky economy is supported, in part, by GE’s presence. In addition, the study found that GE helps support over 12,000 jobs in Kentucky, with nearly 5,000 direct employees, and for every GE job an additional 1.5 jobs are supported through a combination of employee spending and the company’s vendor purchases. GE has several Kentucky facilities in addition to Appliance Park, including GE Aviation engine manufacturing, testing and distribution centers, a GE Energy repair services center and a medical equipment manufacturing facility under GE Healthcare.

#### GE HIGHLIGHTS WHAT WORKS IN AMERICA

GE, in partnership with GOOD/Corps, has launched the What Works Project, a digital social innovation campaign that gives the public a simple, yet meaningful way to celebrate the innovations that work to advance our nation.

Each week, the public is invited to visit the website—[www.celebratewhatworks.com](http://www.celebratewhatworks.com)—and submit their ideas and images for the inventions and technologies that drive human progress. Each submission or “heart” for submissions will generate \$1 for Kentuckiana Works. In addition, the Project will reward public participation with a \$2,500 cash prize to be divided equally among five winners each week (\$500/winner). The What Works Project will run through November 1, 2012. | continued on page 22 |

Featuring

# Daewoo Electronics' New and Exciting Products for 2012



Daewoo French Door  
Refrigerator



Daewoo Multi Oven with  
Voice Command



Daewoo Steam Laundry



Daewoo Top Mount  
Refrigerator

For more information, visit [www.e-daewoo.com](http://www.e-daewoo.com)  
about this or any other Daewoo Electronic product

*Designing Excellence*  
**DAEWOO**   
ELECTRONICS

## LA CORNUE LAUNCHES THE NEW 1908 RANGE FOR PASSIONATE HOME COOKS

MADE IN FRANCE, THE GAS 1908 IS PRICED 25% LESS THAN THE LEGENDARY LA CORNUE CHÂTEAU RANGE, WITH THE SAME SIGNATURE STYLING & VAULTED OVEN



La Cornue, the century-old artisanal producer of French ranges and rotisseries, is introducing the all new 1908 gas range to appeal to the increasing numbers of enthusiastic and perfectionist home cooks.

“Many dream of one day owning a renowned custom La Cornue Château range when their budgets permit. In the meantime, they now have a more affordable La Cornue, with the 1908,” noted Anne Puricelli, director La Cornue North America. Priced at \$14,500, about 25% less than the Château, the 1908 is made in France with the same legendary La Cornue style, quality and vaulted natural convection oven. It also offers consumers the ability to custom select their color and trim material.

Named for the year that Albert Dupuy first invented the La Cornue vaulted oven, the 1908 features the signature natural convection vaulted gas oven, along with five high-performance gas burners, one a powerful 17,500 BTU central burner. The

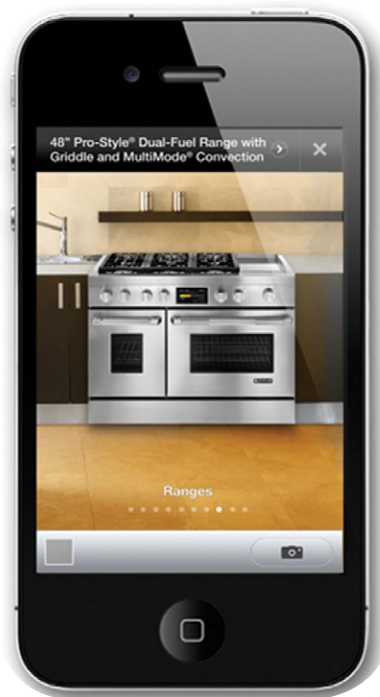
vaulted gas oven creates natural convection that cooks without drying out food, as a fan convection oven can.

Conveniently sized for American kitchens, the 1908 is 36 inches wide. The electric salamander-style broiler has been engineered to hold a steady temperature, rather than cycling on and off as other electric broilers can.

The 1908 comes in a choice of Gloss Black, Matte Black, Stainless, Provence Blue, Dark Navy Blue, Ivory White and Pure White. Trims include three choices: Satin Chrome, Satin Chrome with Polished Brass Accents, and Satin Chrome with Polished Copper Accents.

The new range will be available in stock, without the waiting times associated with La Cornue custom Château ranges. All La Cornue products including the 1908 range are available through Purcell Murray, the exclusive North American distributor.

## JENN-AIR APP OFFERS A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND APPLIANCE VISUALIZATION TOOL



With mobile devices playing an ever-increasing role for those planning home design projects, Jenn-Air has created a first-of-its-kind iPhone application that gives homeowners and building and design professionals the ability to instantly visualize a kitchen equipped with the brand's luxury appliances.

With DesignVision, users can select a Jenn-Air appliance, position it over their current appliance and snap a photo. The finished image shows the selected appliance in place of the existing one. They can also choose from different finishes, share the photos, get product specifications and find showrooms. DesignVision can be downloaded for free at the Apple App Store.

| continued on page 24 |



# INDUSTRY FIRST AQUALIFT™ SELF-CLEAN TECHNOLOGY

The low temperature odor-free way to get your oven clean in less than one hour.



**The space to get it all done. The power to get it done fast.**

Built to cook everything from everyday meals to large family feasts, Maytag brand's new lineup of freestanding ranges is engineered with flexible, high-heat Power Center cooktops, industry-leading capacity\* and a 10-year limited parts warranty.\*\*

**WHAT'S INSIDE MATTERS™**



\*Among leading brand single cavity gas or electric 30" freestanding ranges. \*\*Visit [maytag.com](http://maytag.com) for warranty details. ®Registered trademark/™Trademark of Maytag Properties, LLC or its related companies. ©2012. All rights reserved. MYA12849

**Atlantic Central**

Michael Goldsmith  
(269-923-5723)

**Atlantic Upper**

Ralph Moretti  
(269-923-1722)

**Southern States (East)**

Dave Hoffman  
(269-923-1720)

**Mid-Atlantic**

Mike Druschel  
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**Midwest & Southwest**

Jim Webb  
(269-923-1068)

**Florida**

Tomas Diaz  
(269-923-0080)

**Northern & Southern Pacific**

Mark Collier  
(269-923-1775)


**Great Lakes**

Sherry Clem  
(269-923-1880)

“Jenn-Air is committed to providing designers and consumers with inspiration as they’re planning their kitchens,” notes Juliet Johnson, senior manager of brand experience for Jenn-Air. “With the DesignVision app, we’re using technology in a unique way to help bring a new kitchen to life, right on the user’s phone.”

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

## POWERLINE NETWORKING ENABLES DLNA CERTIFIED® PRODUCTS TO BE CONNECTED ANYWHERE IN THE HOME

 The Digital Living Network Alliance (DLNA®), HomePlug® Powerline Alliance and HD-PLC Alliance has approved the HomePlug AV and HD-PLC powerline networking standards to be incorporated into the next version of its Networked Device Interoperability Guidelines.

Powerline networking products are certified by HomePlug Alliance and HD-PLC Alliance for HomePlug AV or HD-PLC technology. By adopting powerline networking into its Interoperability Guidelines, DLNA will enable DLNA Certified® products to be connected anywhere in the home where there is an electrical outlet. These technologies are ideal for connecting DLNA Certified® game consoles, network storage devices, TVs and other DLNA Certified® products far from a home router or modem for a high quality entertainment experience.

“Providing users the ability to use wired speeds without running new wires is a logical next step as more and more consumers add second and third TVs, game consoles and other DLNA Certified® products further away from their wireless router,” said Nidhish Parikh, chairman and president of DLNA. “DLNA continues to advance the connected home by allowing consumers to connect and enjoy their favorite content throughout their homes. Adding powerline networking as a DLNA approved solution for connectivity gives consumers expanded flexibility when setting up their home network and confidence they can enjoy their photos, music and videos on DLNA Certified® products whether connected using electrical wiring, Wi-Fi, Ethernet or MoCA.”

“Consumers’ desire for high speed device connectivity throughout their home is growing,” said Kurt Scherf, vice president, principal analyst, Parks Associates. “With an already strong deployed base of interoperable HomePlug AV

products in the US and Europe and growing demand for connected services in China, including this technology in the DLNA Interoperability Guidelines is a great tool for delivering the Connected Home to consumers.”

“DLNA is carrying high expectations for leading digital media resources sharing in the home network. We are convinced HD-PLC certified products including IEEE 1901 Standard technology contribute a variety of applications and robust network solutions for DLNA,” said Michimasa Aramaki, president and chairman of HD-PLC Alliance.

“HomePlug has experienced exciting growth in 2011, and we are looking forward to a great 2012 as more people realize the benefits of using electrical wiring for device connectivity,” said Rob Ranck, President of HomePlug Alliance. “HomePlug’s inclusion in the DLNA Interoperability Guidelines is a big win for consumers looking for higher speeds in more locations with no new wiring.”

Additional information about the Alliance, its participating companies and membership benefits is available at [www.dlna.org](http://www.dlna.org) or find the Alliance on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/dlnacertified](http://www.facebook.com/dlnacertified) or on Twitter at @DLNA. HomePlug AV is certified by HomePlug Powerline Alliance, Inc. ([www.homeplug.org](http://www.homeplug.org)). HD-PLC Alliance is the certification body for HD-PLC technology and its related products ([www.hd-plc.org](http://www.hd-plc.org)).

## LUWA DISTRIBUTING TO BEGIN DISTRIBUTION OF SCOTSMAN RESIDENTIAL PRODUCTS, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

**LUWA** The Pacific Northwest leader in luxury appliance distribution is proud to add a new exclusive brand to its already stunning line up of home appliances. Scotsman is the premier clear ice machine manufacturer, producing clear ice machines for over 60 years, including the popular recently introduced “Nugget Ice”. The Scotsman partnership will allow Luwa to expand and continue to offer high quality residential appliance to its dealers in the following territories:

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

Washington  
Oregon  
Alaska  
Hawaii

### CANADA:

British Columbia  
Alberta  
Saskatchewan  
Manitoba

| continued on page 26 |



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By **Scotsman<sup>®</sup>**  
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original chewable ice at home.**



THE ORIGINAL CHEWABLE ICE.™

Scotsman's new Brilliance Ice Machines make the perfect chewable ice for the perfect drink, ice coffee, soda's, cocktails, or plain old water! To experience for yourself, contact the nearest Scotsman Dealer for a demonstration, or visit:



Ice for the Purist.  
**Scotsman<sup>®</sup>**  
Ice Systems



680 EIGHTH ST. SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94103 415.431.8682



Luwa's goal is to provide clients with the tools to make an educated appliance buying decision through private consultations, cooking demonstrations, and product testing. The Scotsman product will be featured live and on display shortly, in the stunning Luwa Gallery. [www.luwaluxury.com](http://www.luwaluxury.com).

## MIELE WINE STORAGE: EXCEPTIONAL STORAGE, EXQUISITE PRESENTATION

NOW AVAILABLE IN A SMALLER SIZE

**Miele** Miele has perfected the art of wine storage and is now offering its full-size wine storage unit in an under counter configuration. Combating frustrations felt by traditional refrigeration, which put wine under stress and interrupt the maturing process, Miele has developed an undercounter solution providing consistent temperatures, consistent humidity and an odor-free environment—creating the best possible storage conditions for your wine.

With conventional refrigeration, humidity levels are too low for storing wines. High humidity levels are very important so the corks remain moist. Under low humidity, the corks will dry out from the outside and will no longer seal the bottles properly. Miele's DynaCool setting, with its two separate zones, ensures the relative humidity inside the wine cooler and the temperature is evenly distributed around the interior so all of the wine is stored under exactly the same optimal conditions – keeping the most valuable corks intact.

Integrating seamlessly into any size kitchen, butler's pantry, urban loft or bar area—Miele's Under Counter Wine Storage features two unique cooling zones bottles and LED lighting ensuring the protection of the most valuable wine. In-home style is perfectly complemented with a black fitted door with special tinted UV filtering glass—protecting the unit's contents. With its compact size and sleek design, the Miele Under Wine Counter Storage can be easily integrated into any space.

Regardless of the cooling zone, each bottle is gently cradled on one of 5 shelves and can accommodate up to 38 bottles. For added protection, an alarm will sound in the event of a power failure, rise in temperature or if the door is left ajar, ensuring your wine is protected at all times. Miele's Under Counter Wine Storage—offering exceptional storage in an exquisite presentation.

To enhance your experience and learn more about Miele, visit [www.mieleusa.com](http://www.mieleusa.com), find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/mieleus](http://www.facebook.com/mieleus), watch us on [www.youtube.com/mieleus](http://www.youtube.com/mieleus) and follow us on Twitter @MieleUSA.



Model: KWT 4154 UG-1

| *continued on page 28* |

ADVERTISEMENT

### VENTED

Vented hoods offer you the option of removing steam, grease and odors through ducting that is directed to the outside. With this type of ventilation you are always sure that all grease, steam and odors will be vented from your home environment into the outdoors and will never return.

### RECIRCULATION

With recirculating hoods, no outside ducting is necessary, eliminating the cost to duct your home or to install a make-up air system, as well as giving the flexibility of putting your hood exactly where you like! Air is drawn in through filters, cleaned and then blown back out into your environment free of the particles it's designed to remove.

Miele makes the most of their recirculation hoods, excelling with the filters they use for particle removal. Standard charcoal filters store odor molecules, but release them back into the air when the hood is switched on

again. Miele's unique Odor Free charcoal filter kick starts a chemical reaction that neutralizes the odors stored, so the air that recirculates back into your home is odor free.

Concerned about the environment? Through recirculating hoods, air remains in the home, so cool and warm air you are paying for and using energy to create for a comfortable home environment are not inadvertently taken out through the venting process.

With all factors combined, Miele offers complete design flexibility that parallels no other, leaving you with a ventilation hood that moves air in style.

To explore ventilation hoods further, visit [mieleusa.com](http://mieleusa.com)



## Let's clear the air about ventilation hoods.

Naturally, cooking creates a mixture of grease, moisture, solid matter and odors. If the air in the kitchen is not replaced or filtered, vapors remain in the room, burdening the ambient environment, which can lead to health problems. To properly clean the air and re-establish a particle-free environment, a ventilation hood is essential. But the question of which ventilation hood to choose has plagued home owners for years.





**ZEPHYR® INTRODUCES MONSOON DCBL — AN INNOVATIVE ONE-PIECE LINER WITH DCBL SUPPRESSION SYSTEM™ TECHNOLOGY TO EXISTING INSERT HOOD LINE-UP**

NEW LINER INCLUDES MANY FIRSTS INCLUDING WIRELESS REMOTE CONTROL, LED LIGHTS AND ZEPHYR'S PIONEERING DIRECT CURRENT (DC), BRUSHLESS MOTOR

**ZEPHYR** Zephyr®, the innovators of design-forward ventilation hoods and the revolutionary DCBL Suppression System™, announces Monsoon DCBL as the newest addition to their existing line-up of liner insert hoods. A part of the Zephyr Essentials Collection, this new feature-rich one-piece liner joins the Vortex, Monsoon I and II as the latest one-piece liner from Zephyr and it brings with it Zephyr's

proprietary and industry-changing DCBL Suppression System technology.

Monsoon DCBL includes the most advanced electronics in any one-piece liner on the market today; upgraded Bloom™ LED lights operating at 6-watts each and 5-speed + Burst electronic LCD controls with a mirror finish. Other features include:

- Pro-style stainless steel baffle filters and removable grease tray for easy cleaning
- 0.8 sones @ 250 CFM on working speed
- 5.8 sones @ 715 CFM on max speed
- ADA compliant wireless RF remote control with a 15' radius operation range
- DCBL technology making Monsoon DCBL the world's quietest and most energy efficient insert range hood

Monsoon DCBL is also the industry's first and only full-size one-piece liner with the ability to duct horizontally as well as vertically. Monsoon DCBL is available for 36" and 42" wide vent hood configurations. Most important to note is that any designer, contractor or cabinet manufacturer will be familiar with the conventional rough-in dimension standards of 34-3/8" (for the 36" model), and 40-3/8" (for the 42" model), because these liners fit the exact specifications of other recognized manufacturers in this category.

In addition, the Monsoon DCBL has a depth of 22-1/2" for increased capture and performance as well as removable stainless steel baffle filters – allowing the homeowner the ease and simplicity for cleaning, with no tools required. Manufacturing these inserts using the standard foot-print dimensions was a critically important part of the design process for Zephyr.

"Zephyr constantly strives to bring innovation to a category that is often overlooked – and we have once again staked our flag in the ground as leaders of residential range hood ventilation," said Arcadio Lainez, director of marketing for Zephyr. "With Monsoon DCBL, we've pushed the technological boundaries of the one-piece liner and insert market with our design philosophy of innovation by incorporating our newest and most advanced technology into a product that many manufacturers might not ever think of updating to this extent. Builders and kitchen designers will be glad to know that they can use a technologically superior liner or insert product in an existing space or as the perfect component for their own custom enclosure or matching cabinetry."

Pricing for Monsoon DCBL starts at \$1499. To learn more, visit [www.zephyronline.com](http://www.zephyronline.com). | *continued on page 30* |



## Let New Discoveries Transform Your Kitchen

**Nothing refreshes the kitchen like a Zephyr range hood.**

Built as much for beauty and style as for the powerful ventilation, a Zephyr range hood instantly creates new drama at the very heart of the home. We offer dozens of striking designs, including Padova, the world's first customizable range hood, ready for the materials and colors of your choice. Venetian plaster. Glass and mosaic tile.

Stainless steel and copper. Wherever your creative dreams may take you...

**Expand your imagination at [zephyronline.com](http://zephyronline.com)**

**ZEPHYR**

## VINOTEMP LAUNCHES CAVA 36-BOTTLE WINE CREDENZA

THE NEWEST ADDITION TO VINOTEMP'S WINE STORAGE REPERTOIRE IS THE DEFINITION OF FUNCTIONAL FURNITURE



Vinotemp, a recognized leader in the wine storage and refrigeration industry for 25 years, has added the Cava 36-Bottle Wine Credenza to its repertoire of stylish wine storage cabinets. Designed with the ability to store and cool wine in two independently controlled compartments, while featuring storage for wine glass and other accessories, Vinotemp's newest wine cooler is the definition of functional furniture.

"At Vinotemp we enjoy being able to bring consumers wine storage solutions that are smart, functional and attractive," states India Hynes, president of Vinotemp International. "The new Cava 36-Bottle Credenza is a

stunning piece of furniture that adds character to any room while properly storing 36 bottles of wine."

Although it is important to properly store wine, it can be difficult to find the room necessary to do so. Vinotemp's Cava 36-Bottle Wine Credenza easily solves this issue by functioning not only as a classically beautiful piece of furniture but as a wine cooler as well. Complete with eco-friendly thermoelectric cooling technology, the Cava can efficiently store up to 36 bottles of wine in two temperature zones (48-53°F and 53-68°F) with little to no vibration.

Featuring a refined wood exterior with the option of Light Walnut or Rich Maple finish, the credenza's sophisticated appearance is complemented by three storage drawers, three pull-out serving shelves, and two stemware rack compartments to store up to 18 wine glasses. Dual-paned glass doors, soft interior lighting, sliding metal shelves, and independent temperature control knobs add to the Cava's impressive list of features making it the ultimate wine storage and entertainment solution.

The Cava 36-Bottle Wine Credenza (VT-CAVA2D) is freestanding, measures 54" W x 22" D x 40" H and is available for purchase through [www.vinotemp.com](http://www.vinotemp.com) for \$1695. For more information about Vinotemp contact 800.777.VINO (8466) or visit [www.Vinotemp.com](http://www.Vinotemp.com).



## THERMADOR SETS NEW STANDARD FOR EASE OF INSTALLATION WITH ITS 2012 FREEDOM® REFRIGERATION COLLECTION

THE LUXURY APPLIANCE BRAND INTRODUCES TECHNICAL IMPROVEMENTS TO SPEED INSTALLATION OF ITS FREEDOM LINE

**Thermador**® Thermador, the luxury appliance brand that first introduced the built-in modular refrigeration concept, introduced more than 100 innovations and technical improvements to its 2012 Freedom® Collection of fresh food and freezer columns, wine columns and bottom-freezer refrigerators.

"For Thermador, it's all about the details. We've listened to designers, builders and dealers about the challenges of installing true-flush appliances, especially refrigerators, and addressed each one with an engineering solution in the 2012 Freedom Collection," said Zach Elkin, director of brand marketing for Thermador. "We've introduced the best designed | continued on page 32 |

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and the highest performance refrigeration line yet, and we've made sure our promise is delivered when our products are installed in the home. Our product development team has thought of every detail beginning with unique 3-D panel adjustability to perfectly fit our built-in Freedom Columns into any cabinet layout to new packaging designed to stand up to the toughest shipping scenario imaginable."

The Freedom Collection has been rethought, reengineered and refined. Technical improvements include 3-D panel adjustability for ultra-flush installation; reinforced mounting tabs for toe-kick panels; upgraded front and rear leveling gear drives; plus a streamlined installation process for the appliance and custom panels. The product line refinements also include superior packaging to deliver factory-condition products and accessories.

"The new 3-D panel adjustability feature offers the most flexibility in the market. It allows the panel to be adjusted horizontally, vertically, forward and backward to ensure an ultra-flush installation," said Thomas Staebler, senior product manager for Thermador. "Every step of the installation process was analyzed in the new Freedom Collection to meet and exceed our customer expectations."

With more than 20 customizable models, the Thermador Freedom Collection offers a wide array of kitchen design options. The collection includes multiple options available with counter-depth 24-inch and 30-inch fresh food columns; 18-inch, 24-inch and 30-inch freezer columns; and 18-inch and 24-inch wine columns.

The new line also includes the Freedom "Framed and Pre-assembled" Collection that includes all installation components as well as factory-installed stainless steel panel and professional handle in one box with one SKU. This collection is comprised of six, 36-inch or 30-inch two-door and three-door bottom-freezer refrigerators that are simple to specify, order and install built-in modular refrigeration, and cuts installation time by up to half. The entire Thermador Freedom Collection is ENERGY STAR® qualified. **RO**





# MAGNITUDE

## Capacity & Performance



**LG**  
Super Capacity French Door  
36" Wide 31 cu. ft. French Door Refrigerator  
Model #LFX31935ST



**SHARP INSIGHT**  
The Next Generation of Microwaves  
24" 1.2 cu. ft. Microwave Drawer  
Model #KB6524PS



**FRIGIDAIRE**  
Fits-more Double Oven Range  
Gallery Series Double Oven Electric Range  
Model #FGEF304DKF

**LG**  
Save Time by Doing More  
4.0 cu. ft. Ultra-large Steam Washer  
Model #WM3470HWA



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9 Locations Nationwide	•	Rapid Ship Delivery	•	Drop-ship Services	•	Legendary Customer Service
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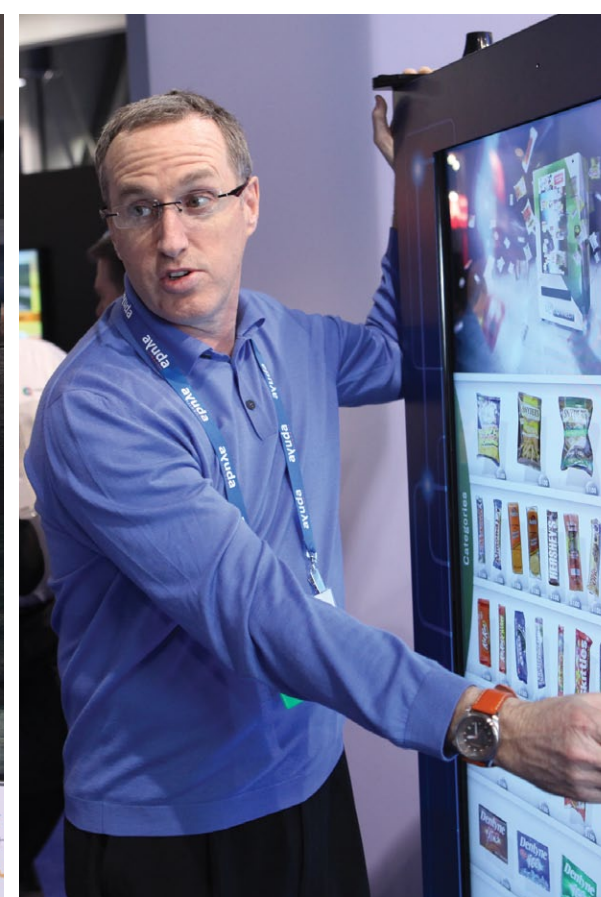
Distribution on a Personal Level

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# Digital Signage Expo 2012

CONFIRMED AS LARGEST, BEST SHOW EVER



**E**xponation, LLC, which produces Digital Signage Expo® (DSE), the International Tradeshow and Conference dedicated exclusively to digital signage, interactive technology and digital out-of-home networks (DOOH), has just confirmed that their ninth event presented in Las Vegas was in fact the largest and most successful show staged to date.

The Conference and Trade Show, which ran March 6-9, drew 4,024 qualified attendees plus a total of 1,576 exhibitor attendees, an increase of 9% over 2011. Qualified attendees included end users, systems integrators, advertising and marketing professionals, with end users as the largest attendee category.

The show floor offered 62,440 net square feet of exhibit space, representing a 4% increase vs. last year's show. International attendance was 21.4% of total attendance, with professionals from 69 different countries on the show floor. Total

international attendance increased 25% vs. 2011 as the international digital signage community recognized DSE as a "must see" event.

Retail operators reported that they encountered others who were also 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.

"Again, DSE is the premiere event for retailers playing in the digital signage space in any and all capacities. No matter if you've got a thriving global digital signage platform or are just taking the first steps in building one... The information, education, and technology innovations available for participants to take in will be invaluable as they go back home and continue building and evolving their networks."

—Andy Johnson, senior creative director, advertising & production, Wal-Mart | continued on page 36 |

Chris Gibbs, president of Exponation, LLC said, “We are strongly encouraged by last month’s strong attendance, the business activity that has resulted and the bright future that it represents for our industry. We are already planning DSE 2013 which will be our tenth anniversary show and look forward to making it even more effective for all our attendees and exhibitors.”

Digital Signage Expo, held at the Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV, USA, is the world’s largest and longest

Close to 180 exhibitors feature technology and services including hardware, software, network, delivery and content from around the globe. DSE also offers the largest and most diversified digital signage and digital out-of-home educational program anywhere in the world, with more than 100 educators and the largest variety of educational opportunities, including a live installation tour and structured curriculum leading to professional re-certification in eight educational tracks. The 2012 program was comprised of 13 pre- and



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, restaurant, healthcare, education, hospitality and transportation, as well as other key stakeholders, including advertising executives, brand marketers and systems integrators.

post-show educational events, 32 seminars, 40 targeted Industry Vertical Discussion Groups and over 42 free presentations staged in three on-floor theaters.

Mark your calendar now: Digital Signage Expo 2013, co-located with the Interactive Technology Expo and Digital Content Show, is scheduled for February 25-March 1, 2013, at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas. To reserve exhibit space contact Jeanne Phillips, (770) 649-0300, Ext 16. Or, for more information, visit [www.digitalsignageexpo.net](http://www.digitalsignageexpo.net). **RO**



# Consumer Electronics Industry Increases Recycling 53 Percent in 2011

CEA, ECYCLING LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE REPORTS 460 MILLION POUNDS OF CE PRODUCTS RESPONSIBLY RECYCLED

**T**he Consumer Electronics Association (CEA)<sup>®</sup> reported that the consumer electronics (CE) industry dramatically increased its recycling in 2011, advancing the goals set by the eCycling Leadership Initiative.

The First Annual Report of the eCycling Leadership Initiative, revealed the following achievements:

- Participants of the eCycling Leadership Initiative arranged for the responsible recycling of 460 million pounds of consumer electronics, a 53 percent increase over the 300 million pounds recycled in 2010
- Electronics manufacturers and retailers increased the number of recycling drop-off locations for consumers nationwide to nearly 7,500 from just over 5,000 a year ago
- By the end of 2011, 96 percent of the recycling done by eCycling Leadership Initiative participants was conducted in third-party certified recycling facilities
- CEA launched GreenerGadgets.org to educate consumers about eCycling and energy consumption. By entering a ZIP code, anyone can locate the closest responsible recycling opportunity sponsored by the CE industry and/or third-party certified recycler

“In the first year of the eCycling Leadership Initiative, our industry has made significant progress toward its goals due to the hard work of our member companies,” said Gary Shapiro, president and CEO of CEA. “We continue to push for a national solution to eCycling that will eliminate the costly and confusing patchwork of state regulations.”

Spearheaded by CEA, the eCycling Leadership Initiative, which is also known as the Billion Pound Challenge, represents a collaboration among consumer electronics manufacturers, retailers, collectors, recyclers, non-governmental organizations and governments at all levels.

The initiative has set the goals of increasing the amount of electronics recycled responsibly to a billion pounds annually by 2016, growing the number of collection opportunities available to consumers, improving consumer awareness of available eCycling collection sites and providing transparent metrics on eCycling efforts.

Recycling one billion pounds of electronics by 2016 would be a more than threefold increase over 2010. One billion pounds of electronics not properly recycled would fill about 88.9 million cubic feet, equivalent to an entire 71,000-seat NFL stadium.

“According to CEA research, the average U.S. household owns 25 different CE products,” said Walter Alcorn, CEA’s vice president of environmental affairs and industry sustainability. “We want to make recycling electronics just as easy as purchasing electronics.”

For the more details on the eCycling Leadership Initiative, including a full list of participating companies, please see the First Annual Report of the eCycling Leadership Initiative and video.

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) is the preeminent trade association promoting growth in the \$195 billion U.S. consumer electronics industry. More than 2,000 companies enjoy the benefits of CEA membership, including legislative advocacy, market research, technical training and education, industry promotion, standards development and the fostering of business and strategic relationships. CEA also owns and produces the International CES – The Global Stage for Innovation. All profits from CES are reinvested into CEA’s industry services. Find CEA online at [www.CE.org](http://www.CE.org), [www.DeclareInnovation.com](http://www.DeclareInnovation.com) and through social media: facebook, twitter and RSS feed. **RO**



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## Innovate or Die

If I think of one word that describes America it would be innovative. We found our way here to seek religious freedom and a new, better life. We travelled across the plains and over the mountains in search of gold and silver. We conquered space and put a man on the moon. We have a history of tossing out the old to welcome the new. We now use the internet for information, shopping and connecting with our friends.

There's a lot of chatter today about innovation—about America as an innovation leader or about how we've lost our innovative edge. In order to rekindle our role as a world leader in creativity the Consumer Electronics Association is championing the Innovation Movement.

To date, 135,000 people have signed the Declaration of Innovation at [www.declareinnovation.com](http://www.declareinnovation.com). Much like the rest of the country, brick and mortar retailers may need to regain their edge. Consider these opportunities:

Online merchants have a big advantage because they don't need to collect local sales taxes. Do something about it. Join the Main Street Alliance for Fairness [www.standwithmainstreet.com](http://www.standwithmainstreet.com) and work to close the sales tax loopholes. Contact your local and national representatives and tell them to support legislation that enforces collection of taxes already on the books.

Sure, the big box stores have bigger selection than you do, so be innovative. Use your website to display the entire product catalogues of the companies you represent. You can always order merchandise not on display. Advertise "we have the largest selection" because you do.

Your competition has better locations than you. Well, maybe it's time to pick up

and move. Dealers tell me all the time that they can't move because they own their stores and don't want to pay rent in another place. In truth, you can't afford to stay.

You have high turnover because you don't pay your associates a living wage. Who said retail is a job for kids working their way through school? That's how box stores operate, not innovative

### INNOVATION MOVEMENT MISSION STATEMENT

“ WE, THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT - THAT GREAT INNOVATORS DRIVE AMERICA'S UNSURPASSED ECONOMIC SUCCESS; THAT INNOVATION CREATES JOBS, MARKETS AND INDUSTRIES WHERE NONE EXISTED BEFORE; AND THAT INNOVATION MOVES US FORWARD AS A NATION, PUSHING US TO SUCCEED AND STRIVE FOR A BETTER TOMORROW. ”

independents. Working for you can and should be a high paying career with benefits. To do that, you'll have to raise margins—no, I'm not hiding under a rock, I know how competitive the landscape is. Too few retailers focus on accessories, installation and extended warranties, with fewer still having well-trained associates who know what to say when a customer

asks "is that your best price?"

Still selling what you've always sold? When was the last time you considered a new category? Despite the number of bedding stores around, appliance and electronics dealers are doing amazing well selling mattresses. Plumbing is a huge category. Why not be a one-stop shop for customers remodeling their kitchens?

You hate it when customers come in, check prices with their smart phones and leave. If you know that's happening, meet it head-on. Sharpen your prices on the floor to match those in the market and use QR codes on your price tags to engage tech-savvy shoppers with short videos about the product benefits so that price becomes less of a criterion to them.

Doing what you've always done is easy, but you'll keep getting exactly what you're getting now. Change is hard but it's the only way to grow and succeed. Dick Schulze, founder of Best Buy and one of the retail industry's greatest innovators rolled his one Sound of Music store into the large store format we see today. He had the courage to learn about the public markets, find funding for his new ideas even when at times he was close to losing it all, but he kept innovating until he found a winning formula.

Are you innovative enough to make it in today's rapidly-changing world? I'll put my money on independent retailers any day. **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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# Want To Be A Service Leader?

### IT STARTS WITH THE HIRING PROCESS

Steve Jobs was a master at many things. He built Apple into a multi-billion giant, and he did it in large part because of the people he hired. His goal, he said, was to hire people who were creative, wickedly smart, and slightly rebellious to help him build “the company that would invent the future.”

To say that he met his goal would be a gross understatement. In Steve Jobs, Walter Isaacson quotes his subject as saying, “I’ve learned over the years that, when you have really good people, you don’t have to baby them. By expecting them to do great things, you can get them to do great things. The original Mac team taught me that A-plus players like to work together, and they don’t like it if you tolerate B work.”

Bradford D. Smart, Ph.D., echoes that view in his book, *Top Grading*. He defines “top grading” as packing an organization with A players. That, he adds, usually involves removing chronic B and C players, those employees who don’t put forth an effort to become A players. “Companies packed with A players mercilessly annihilate companies burdened with B/C players,” he writes. “It’s inevitable, and it’s happening at an accelerated pace.”

Take a minute and look at the people around you. Are they A players? Or are they B and C players? A players are motivated, creative, and have high expectations for themselves and for others. B and C players, on the other hand, often do just enough to get by and to be paid for it.

The question now becomes, how do

you find and hire A players? Service leaders typically hire one out of 50 people they interview; they are very selective. Too many organizations are in a hurry and don’t want to spend any more time than necessary interviewing and hiring employees. They conduct one interview with a candidate before making a job offer.

I recommend that you involve other people in the interview process, especially if they’re going to be working with the new hire. This is critical for two reasons.

“ I’VE LEARNED OVER THE YEARS THAT, WHEN YOU HAVE REALLY GOOD PEOPLE, YOU DON’T HAVE TO BABY THEM. BY EXPECTING THEM TO DO GREAT THINGS, YOU CAN GET THEM TO DO GREAT THINGS. ”

—STEVE JOBS

It gives you their input, and it gets their commitment to the success of the person you hire.

Ron Johnson, former senior vice president of Retail Operations for Apple, Inc. and recently named CEO of J. C. Penney Company, says that, in order to find mission-driven employees, you should conduct as many as eight interviews. I wholeheartedly agree. Vernon Hill, former CEO of Commerce Bank and co-founder of Metro Bank London, says he never moves to a second interview if the applicant didn’t smile

during the first one. “The strategy,” he says, is to hire outgoing people pleasers; then we train, train, and train.”

So, what should you look for during an interview? Look for people who smile, are enthusiastic, and have a good attitude and a neat appearance. Develop a list of questions to use during each interview, so you get answers that are easy to compare and evaluate among applicants.

Ask questions that require more than “yes” or “no” answers, ones that will require applicants to share real experiences. What are your strongest points—and your weakest points? What was your biggest failure, and what would you have done differently? What do you think you can bring to this position? Describe a situation, and then ask the candidate to explain how he or she would handle it.

If you want to be a service leader and reap the financial rewards that designation brings with it, pack your organization with A players. They will drive your organization to new heights. **RO**

*John Tschohl, the internationally recognized service strategist, is founder and president of the Service Quality Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Described by USA Today, Time, and Entrepreneur as a “customer service guru,” he has written several books on customer service and has developed more than 26 customer-service training programs that have been distributed throughout the world. John’s monthly strategic newsletter is available online.*



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# Customer Migration

When was the last time you saw Bill or Sue or old Charlie in the store? They LOVED YOU! They loved your merchandise and they were such great customers—so what happened? Where have they been? Maybe you should call them up and see where they have been or what about having a Customer Appreciation Sale and invite them back with a really great incentive?

I know you could send them a letter and tell them that if they bought something the second item would be half off. That would do it. So you send out an email, make a post on Facebook, and the promotion is OK... but you never did see Sue or Charlie.

Now you say to yourself, "It's time to go back to some of the tried and true forms of advertising that built your business to begin with. Maybe a radio campaign? Nah, too many people are listening to the commercial free stations. Maybe a half page ad in the newspaper? The rates are less than before, but who is really reading newspapers today?"

Why not offer a better price incentive? You could but doesn't that go against everything you have ever believed? You would always say, "First we sell ourselves, then the store experience, the store itself (reputation and what your brand represents in the mind of the buyer), and then the merchandise (which of course price would be a part of). So that is what you believe, but business is off you have got to do something!"

It must be price, you say to yourself. But in your heart of hearts you know that is wrong. So what do you do? You decide to pick up the phone and call old Charlie and Sue and you get similar reactions on the calls. You will say something like, "We have missed you in the store. We haven't seen you in the longest time." They will be just as shocked as you that so much time had slipped by. Then they might say that they were travelling and picked this or that up. Then they hit you with the real issue, when they say, "I needed a certain type of thing—a ma-jig that I know you could get for me, but I went online and there was a store that specialized in that so I bought it. I saved you the hassle of tracking it down. By the way you should check out this site they have some really cool stuff. I just bought another thing-a-ma-jang and they don't even charge for shipping."

Your heart sinks to the floor. You have that feeling of helplessness and hopelessness. What are you going to do? The one go thing was you were right. It wasn't just price. Customers rarely say, their price was cheaper. What you just experienced is what I call, "Customer Migration".

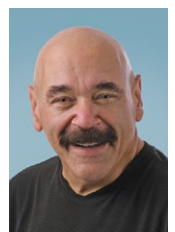
Customers are migrating from one habit (buying from you) to another habit of turning to the web to fulfill their everyday and beyond needs.

So what do you do? The answer is so simple, and yet as complex as global economics itself. Here are my Rules to Combat Customer Migration:

- If you want word of mouth advertising, give people something to talk about. Be outrageous--Dare to Be Really Different.
- Create a promotional calendar of something happening in the store every other week.
- Include a variety of activities from price promotions, to wacky contests, serious contests, to awards programs to whatever activity that creates buzz.
- Be the authority. Become the expert in your area. Be the resource by collecting information about the products and company you do business with.
- If you can't write articles about your area of expertise then collect everything that is ever written about it. (There are lots of free and paid services today that can collect articles from every source possible).
- Devote 1 hour of learning every week and another hour shopping various businesses online. Make it a habit.
- Keep in touch with your customers in a vehicle they prefer not you.

I can add to this list, but start by following those simple rules and customers will be seeking you out and customers will start migrating to you. **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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## Thinking About Buying or Selling?

MAKE SURE YOU PRACTICE PEOPLE DUE DILIGENCE

**H**ave you been considering buying or selling a business? Are you either daydreaming of your retirement or ready for the new adventure of buying a business? Sometimes, business buyers make the mistake of looking only at the P & L or Balance Sheet when making a decision to buy a retail business. Certainly, looking at the financial picture, the business history, and the potential market are all important in the process of making the best decision for you. What buyers often overlook, however, is whether or not the organization can sustain a big change like a buy-out or owner transfer to keep things moving along toward profitability and growth, two characteristics that we most want for business performance.

You need to practice People Due Diligence by investigating and assessing the current culture of the business you want to either sell or buy. Organizational culture exists, and the question all business leaders should consider is whether this culture is accidental or intentional. Sometimes, especially with small to medium sized businesses, leaders or owners have created initial success with an entrepreneurial spirit and they haven't really taken time to articulate the important elements that they desire in their company culture.

Sometimes they haven't created the systems and processes to support that positive, profit-building culture. If you are buying a business, you may want to make changes and create new ways of doing things, but make no mistake, there is a culture currently operating in this business and you will need to determine whether or not it is resilient enough to stay on track through the changes that will naturally occur

with a business buy-out. If you are selling a business, being able to articulate to your potential buyers that your business has not only a healthy balance sheet but also a healthy work environment will differentiate you among other businesses for sale.

Here are four areas to examine and some questions to investigate before you buy or sell any business:

### 1. *What is the relationship like between the employees and the managers?*

Especially ask about the following:

- What's the level of trust—low, medium or high?
- How do employees receive feedback about work performance?
- Can the employees clearly articulate the business mission and vision?
- What happens when things go wrong?

### 2. *Look for indicators of "organizational drag,"* or those things that are the silent costs that erode profit margins and the bottom line. These may include:

- Lowered performance
- Interpersonal strife and conflict
- Unresolved "history" or issues
- Increased costs
- Turnover in employees
- Absenteeism or misuse of leave time (medical/personal)
- Frequent miscommunication
- Lower team function
- Missed goals and deadlines
- Missed opportunities for innovation and creativity

### 3. *How are people recognized and rewarded* for the following:

- Consistent performance?
- Above-and-beyond performance?
- Long-term performance?

### 4. *What is the current communication infrastructure?*

- Do supervisors and employees meet regularly for one-on-ones to discuss performance? (not resolve day-to-day issues, but specifically for performance)
- Do the leaders have regular, systematic ways of updating the company, interacting with the workers and getting to know them?
- What systems are in place for encouraging transparency, i.e. "speaking the truth to the top?"
- How transparent are the decision-making processes?

Shifting in ownership or leadership is a significant change for any sized company and successful ones make sure that they manage the cultural elements in that change. Often business brokers who help potential buyers look for good businesses to buy overlook the cultural elements. You can really stand out in a crowd if your business is "turn-key ready" in terms of a work culture that will support success.

In general, you cannot communicate too much, and investigating the items above will give you some indication of where you might want to focus your efforts to make sure you are supporting the best culture for profitable success! **RO**

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

There's a new word in town: Showrooming. Showrooming is the prospective consumer's practice of visiting a brick and mortar store for research purposes only and then returning home (or sometimes even while standing in the store) to purchase the product online. Obviously, this is a very discouraging consumer trend that, unfortunately, will likely increase in 2012. Last December, Amazon reached a new predatory plateau by offering consumers up to a \$15 discount to price compare traditional brick and mortar pricing with theirs. The fine print on the Amazon offer read: Use Amazon's PriceCheck Mobile App to scan a product on a retail shelf and get 5% off your purchase from Amazon, up to \$5 at a time, as many as 3 times. Which is to say, the consumer had to make at least 3-\$100 purchases from Amazon to get their \$15 discount. Not only was Amazon actively promoting and encouraging Showrooming, they were also gathering valuable pricing data without having to deploy a single employee or service for a competitive shopping report.

In January 2012, Target sent a letter to all of their suppliers asking for help in their Showrooming struggle. The letter suggested that vendors create new products that would be sold exclusively at Target. CE Industry experts claim that many of Best Buy's current woes are a result of Amazon.com's use of their brick and mortar showrooms to see, touch and feel products. Of course, the independent retailer is caught in the cross fire as these Internet and Big Box merchants battle their way to find share of the customer's wallet.

### WHAT'S AN INDEPENDENT TO DO?

So I say, ask yourself, what business are you in? Does your business include a showroom? So rather than bemoaning Showrooming, put on a show! The art of the demonstration is the retailer's most valuable line of defense when competing with online and big box merchants. The demo differentiates the independent retailer and showcases the performance we can deliver.

### APPLIANCE SUGGESTIONS

A great store experience should appeal to as many of the five senses as possible. Do you have live cooking displays? What does a customer smell when they enter your showroom? Do you have tasting stations set up through the store? Do you invite in local chefs for cooking demos? Can you schedule cooking classes for your customers? After all, you aspire to orchestrate an emotional connection. Appeal to the enthusiast and build repeat traffic. Think about how engaging your showroom could be if Apple ran your appliance business.

### AUDIO AND VIDEO

Big Box stores are noisy, with few if any low light areas making controlled demonstrations difficult, if not impossible. The independent channel is the only channel that can deliver an amazing, knock your socks off, A/V demo. Are your SmartTVs connected to the Internet? Are your 3D TVs hooked up with compelling content and functioning glasses? Do you have demonstrable gaming environments set up in your showroom? (You don't need to be in the

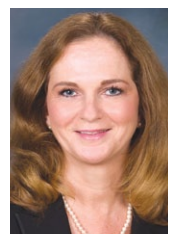
business of selling the games, but gaming environments are very profitable and exciting). Do you have a 5.1 sound system hooked up to each panel? Year after year flat panel TVs have become, well, flatter. One inch of "ultra thin" flat panel depth is a terrible environment for a speaker. Remind all customers that today's televisions just don't sound very good and give them a demonstration.

### BE DEMO-READY

Nothing is more embarrassing than fumbling through your first impression with a customer. Everything in your showroom should always be left demo-ready with everything hooked up and functioning. If we as industry veterans can't sail through the demo process, the consumer is going to surmise they will not be able to manage the products in their homes. Everyone should practice demos as well.

The more you engage the customer, the more likely they are to buy from you. Our best strategic weapon in our fight for the customer is the demo, and appealing to your customer's five senses will make the demo an emotional experience. A colleague of mine suggested that we start calling our Sales Associates or Sales Consultants "Consumer Experience Experts." Imagine having that title on your business card? **RO**

*Jeanette Howe, Specialty Electronics Nationwide (SEN), brings programs and resources for the consumer electronics marketplace. For more info: 949-369-6402.*







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# The Bottom Line

## ADD FURNITURE TO YOUR CONSUMER ELECTRONICS STORE

I have talked to many CE retailers about adding furniture to their sales mix. The conversation usually begins when a retailer remodels their warehouse or adds retail space. With the required floor space, the draw of furniture's high-grossing margins—typically 40-45%—can be very attractive compared with the brown goods retail segment, with margins in the teens to mid 20s. Furniture can be successfully added to your showroom, but you need to understand the categories and provide the right selection in your store.

### THE ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

Entertainment centers house equipment so that it remains out of sight, while providing adequate shelving space, ventilation, and wire-management features imperative to the longevity of your gear. Even with wall-mounted displays, there is still a need and desire for an attractive, functional piece of furniture that will become the focal point of the room and hide accompanying electronics.

While TVs are becoming thinner, they are also becoming larger in terms of surface area. Likewise, entertainment center sizes have mirrored this trend. Focus on the “console” category in a variety of styles, finishes and price-points to compliment your most popular TV sizes. Just remember that if your target customer is spending less than \$1,000 for electronics, chances are they won't spend more than 30-40% of the purchase price on the furniture. As you increase the sophistication (and price) of the system, the customer will spend more on the furnishings, but rarely will they surpass the 50% threshold.

### BEST SEATS IN THE HOUSE

Comfortable and attractive Home Theater Seating completes the experience and can even provide the right body position and lumbar/neck support for extended viewing. Theater seating can include anything from motion sofas to sectionals to recliners to residential theater chairs, and can often double or triple gross profit dollars.

Again, retailers need to be aware of their target customer. For the value-oriented/credit customer, a comfortable recliner can be an easy impulse add-on. Rule of thumb: 75% of recliners are sold between \$399-\$599—the bigger and beefier, the better it sells! Your showroom should carry every shade of brown offered by your supplier, including leather. Also remember that this is a “cash-carry” customer, so you will need to have stock on hand. Recliners are shipped in nice square boxes for easy warehousing and delivery. Power-reclining chairs, sofas with built-in storage consoles and component sectionals that can fill an entire room are other good seating options to showcase.

At the other end of the scale, movie-style theater seating is often what high-end (custom installation) customers envision. They have seen these Hollywood-type screening rooms on design shows and in shelter magazines and want that true home-theater experience. This customer does a lot of entertaining and is willing to pay a premium price for furniture, often as much as or even more than the electronics. Retailers in this category will need better-end manufacturers that offer special-order capabilities. Theater chairs can be custom ordered with features such as cup holders or motorized recline mechanisms, in addition to colors/fabrics.

### ON DISPLAY

It is important to understand that the proper display on the show floor is critical to sell home entertainment furniture. Oftentimes, I will see five or six entertainment centers or one reclining sofa in a CE store and the owner will believe he is in the home theater furniture category. He may be, but surely he is not capitalizing on it!

It's about selection, presentation, and sales knowledge. If you are catering towards the value shopper, have 12 to 18 chairs on your show floor, which should take up less than 150 square feet. Shoot for the same with consoles and entertainment centers. If you have the selection, you can steal that furniture sale from the big-box guys.

Higher-end stores typically don't need such a variety on display, because their shoppers will be customizing their selections to fit their décor and lifestyle. However, you still need to make a statement, something that will attract attention (think red leather) and let this customer know you are their one-stop shop to fulfill their dream of the ultimate dedicated home theater.

While adding furniture to your mix might be a challenge, with some research, you can align yourself with suppliers that will meet your customers' needs and add real bottom-line profits! **RO**

*E. Michael Allen, Brand-Source EVP of Home Furnishings, has been with the organization for 15 years and overseen the growth of the category to one of the largest in the country.*



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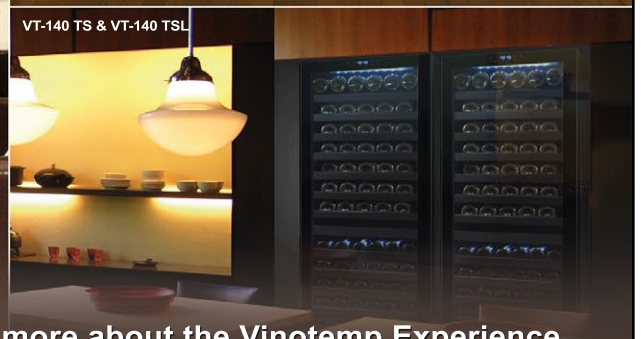
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# BrandSource Helps Members Drive Sales with Exclusive, Easy-to-Manage, Automated Consumer Rebate Program

FAST, AUTOMATED PROCESS SAVES TIME & RESOURCES FOR MEMBERS

**B**randSource members have a highly efficient tool at their disposal to help manage mail-in and instant customer rebate programs. Available exclusively to BrandSource members, Arris Rebates manages everything from a one-store, one-day program to multiple items over a period of months on a national scale. Rebates can be conducted through mail-in or instant internet-based redemptions.

Arris Rebates staff is available to assist BrandSource members with program set-up, rebate form design, claims processing and overall management, including detailed, up-to-date reporting. Every claim is checked for errors and duplication based on vendor requirements. BrandSource members and their

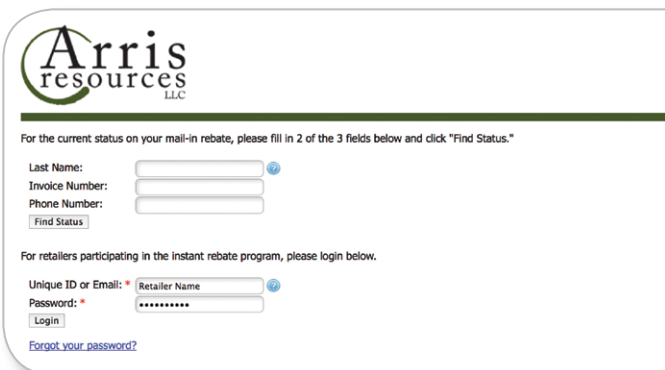
customers can instantly check progress with online rebate tracking, and members can quickly and easily obtain reports and billing details instantly and in Excel formats to submit to their accounting department.

“Consumers respond to rebates,” said Bob Lawrence, CEO of BrandSource. “Whether it’s a high-profile promotion that drives a customer to a product or a more discreet program that differentiates a product at close-of-sale, rebates are highly influential on customer decision-making and can help drive sales.”

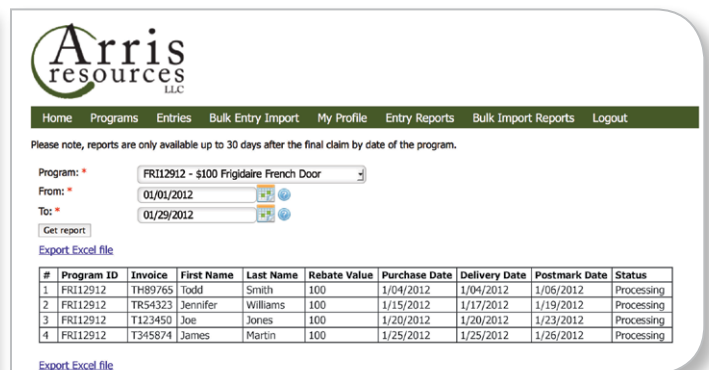
Arris Rebates is used by major corporations including Electrolux, GE, Whirlpool and leading retailers like Howard’s Superstores in California and Appliance Factory Outlet in Colorado. For

more information, contact Delcie Ledyard at Arris Resources, 800-241-2113 x335.

BrandSource is a 100 percent member-owned merchandising group with nearly 4,500 independent dealer members in North America and close to 3,000 “branded” stores in the United States. Based in Anaheim, Calif. and founded in 1969, BrandSource retailers are known for offering local consumers an unparalleled customer service experience, along with a “neighborhood expert” source when they’re in the market for appliances, consumer electronics, flooring and home furnishings. For more information, please visit [www.brandsource.com](http://www.brandsource.com). To learn more about becoming a retail supplier or partner, please call 1-800-920-6984 x1. **RO**



BrandSource members can work with Arris representatives to set up a Unique ID and password for 24/7 access to all rebate programs in progress.



BrandSource members and their customers can get instant updates on rebate progress.

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# Nationwide Marketing Group Partners with Milo, an eBay Company & FurnitureDealer.net

INDEPENDENTS GROW THEIR ONLINE REACH USING NATIONWIDE WEB SERVICES

In March, at the PrimeTime! buying show and strategic member conference held at the Gaylord Palms Resort in Orlando, Florida, Nationwide Marketing Group welcomed new Nationwide Web Services vendors including Milo, an eBay company, and furnituredealer.net., a full service internet marketing solutions company for the home furnishings industry.

“46 percent of all appliance purchases involved online research,” said Frank Sandtner, vice president of member services—operations at Nationwide. “We are assisting independent dealers in capturing more of this ever-growing segment of the market through strategic partnerships and exclusive group programming with experts in the industry.”

Milo, an eBay company, puts local retailers’ product information including location, price and availability in front of millions of online and mobile shoppers searching on high-traffic search sites like eBay and RedLaser.

“Research has found that shoppers like spending money at local stores,” said Michael Blais, senior marketing manager at Milo. “The partnership we have formed with Nationwide will make it easier for the independent

retailer to be discovered by those shoppers and increase their online presence.”

According to Blais, all local retailers need to do is sync their compatible point of sale system using free downloadable software and their inventory will be uploaded in real-time so online shoppers can access it anytime.



Over the past few years, Nationwide Marketing Group has forged partnerships with some of the leading website development companies in the country including ayr1.com, Tailbase and Site on Time and now, FurnitureDealer.net.

“We are closely aligned with the Furniture Marketing Group (FMG). FurnitureDealer.net currently services many FMG dealers and Nationwide dealers alike. So, it was a natural fit to

welcome them to PrimeTime! as an official Nationwide Web Services vendor,” said Sandtner.

“FurnitureDealer.net provides premium web solutions to brick and mortar home furnishings retailers,” said Josh Hollenhorst, Business Consultant at FurnitureDealer.net. “We have a staff of dedicated experts who continuously work with our partners to grow their businesses and enhance their overall web strategy.”

At PrimeTime!, FurnitureDealer.net offered an exclusive group program to Nationwide dealers that included discounts on setup fees and monthly charges.

Hollenhorst continued, “We don’t just build websites, we offer a personal and professional partnership to build web solutions. Including a group of talented writers who understand the business and work closely with furniture, appliance and electronics manufacturers to ensure our content library, of over 94,000 SKUS, remains one of the industry’s best.”

To learn more about the many benefits of Nationwide Marketing Group membership including web development and online search and marketing services tailored to the independent dealer.

Visit [www.nationwidegroup.org](http://www.nationwidegroup.org) **RO**

2012 •

# UPCOMING EVENTS

• 2012

## MOTHER'S DAY—MAY 13

### MAY

National Home Improvement Month

5-8

#### NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION SHOW

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

6-8

#### HOME FURNISHINGS INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

Westin Mission Hills  
PALM SPRINGS, CA  
[www.homefurnishingsconference.com](http://www.homefurnishingsconference.com)

9-11

#### LIGHTFAIR

Las Vegas Convention Center  
LAS VEGAS, NV  
[www.lighfair.com](http://www.lighfair.com)

15-17

#### HOSPITALITY DESIGN EXPOSITION & CONFERENCE

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

17-19

#### AIA 2011 NATIONAL CONVENTION AND DESIGN EXPOSITION

Walter E. Washington Convention Center  
WASHINGTON, DC  
[www.aiaconvention.com](http://www.aiaconvention.com)

### JUNE

11-13

#### NEOCON WORLD'S TRADE FAIR

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

27-28

#### PCBC 2012 HOMEBUILDING TRADESHOW

Moscone Center  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA  
[www.pcbc.com](http://www.pcbc.com)

### JULY

National Picnic Month

30-AUG 3

#### LAS VEGAS SUMMER MARKET

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

### AUGUST

19-22

#### PRIMETIME! BY NATIONWIDE

Gaylord National  
NATIONAL HARBOR, MD  
[www.nationwideprimetime.com](http://www.nationwideprimetime.com)

20 -23

#### MEGA FALL NATIONAL CONVENTION

Downtown Marriott  
LOUISVILLE, KY  
[www.megagroupusa.com](http://www.megagroupusa.com)

28-29

#### BRANDSOURCE CONVENTION

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

31 – SEPT 5

#### IFA 2012

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

### SEPTEMBER

5-7

#### BATH & KITCHEN BUYING GROUP (BKBG) ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Hyatt Regency O'Hare  
ROSEMONT, ILLINOIS  
[www.BKBG.com](http://www.BKBG.com)

5-8

#### CEDIA

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

6-9

#### MEGA FALL NATIONAL CONVENTION

Downtown Marriott  
LOUISVILLE, KY  
[www.megagroupusa.com](http://www.megagroupusa.com)

TO VIEW THE RETAIL OBSERVER ONLINE, GO TO [WWW.RETAILOBSERVER.COM/SUBSCRIBE](http://WWW.RETAILOBSERVER.COM/SUBSCRIBE)

NOTE: Attention Buying Groups, Associations, Distributors & Manufacturers—Please submit your event schedules to production [retailobserver.com](http://retailobserver.com) at least two months prior to the date so that it may be included in our Upcoming Events Calendar. To receive *The Retail Observer* in print version, please go to [www.retailobserver.com](http://www.retailobserver.com) to subscribe.

In Review

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# MEGA Group U Exclusive Social at Orlando Conve





# MEGA Group USA Launches Social Media Program at Convention

**M**EGA Group USA, a leading national buying group for furniture, mattress, appliance and electronics retailers and the leader in web marketing, launched Social Extend at their Convention March 17-20 in Orlando, Florida.

Social Extend, exclusive for MEGA Group USA members, is a turnkey social media program that allows members to have automatic content feeds from manufacturers' Facebook and Twitter accounts posted directly to the social media presence for their store. Members who sign up for the program simply choose which vendors they would like to receive content and how often. Feeds from these sites are then automatically sent to the dealers' Facebook and Twitter pages providing ongoing informational and relative content to their customers.

Social media continues to grow and become a vital component in the way businesses connect with customers. A recent study conducted by the Consumer Electronics Association sites 25% of consumers look to social media to learn about promotions and deals. Other research also shows that there are now more than 800 million active Facebook users, with over 200 million added in 2011; 80% of all Americans use a social network, spend more time on Facebook than any other U.S. website and nearly 23% of online time is spent on social networks.

In today's market, retailers are busier than ever and many times struggle to consistently be active on their social media sites. Social Extend now provides MEGA Group USA

members a turnkey social media strategy. For a monthly cost of \$99, Netsertive will deliver selected content to their Facebook and Twitter accounts. Netsertive will work directly with dealers to help them build their social media following, determine how much or how little to post, how to highlight holiday promotions and key selling periods and provide guidance on periodic personal posts as needed. Acceptance of the program by members was extremely high with many members signing up for the service at the Convention.

"We are excited to bring our members Social Extend," stated Scott McFarland, director of information technology for MEGA Group USA. "While social media is extremely important to a retailer's business, we realize that they may not have the time to implement. That's why we launched this exclusive program that will help turn our dealers' followers into loyal and repeat customers."

Social Extend is another example of MEGA Group USA continuing to be the leader in web marketing. The Convention focused on online strategies including having dedicated workshops on Web Advertising, Search Engine Marketing strategies, and the importance of having a website featuring MEGA's WebFronts Premium program. WebFronts Premium provides members a robust website featuring unlimited product catalog capabilities, advanced merchandising, price tools, unlimited shopping cart, advanced SEO techniques, automated rebate center and product comparison capabilities. MEGA already has hundreds of members signed up on the WebFronts Premium program who were eager to share their success and experiences with other members at the show.

| continued on page 58 |

**M**EGA Group USA's Orlando Convention opened Saturday, March 17 with a user's session for current WebFront Premium dealers and golf tournament for participating members. The day closed with a Welcome Reception for all vendors, guests and members.

Sunday opened with keynote speaker Don Hutson encouraging members to determine their point of differentiation in the market and communicate that to their current and potential customers. Hutson also discussed the importance of leadership and influencing associates in positive ways in order to achieve the most from them. The advertising and online workshops then followed Hutson. Each workshop was packed with the more than 350 businesses in attendance at the show. Hutson addressed the members again at lunch focusing on the importance of motivating and training associates and what are the steps needed to take a potential customer all the way to an advocate for the product.

The afternoon featured panel discussions where members were able to network and discuss best practices, tips, trends and industry happenings. The consumer and appliance members were moderated by Rick Bellows, president of MEGA Group USA and the furniture members by Jerry Honea, COO and furniture division manager. The panels and discussion groups strategized on such topics as retail financing, price tagging methods, floor space allocation, cash flow ideas, computer systems and delivery.

#### ORLANDO CONVENTION BRINGS 8 NEW VENDOR PARTNERS TO BI-ANNUAL SHOW

The actual Show opened Monday morning with more than 85 furniture, appliance, electronics, bedding, lawn and garden, and business service vendors in attendance. This year's show featured 8 new vendor programs including EnGenX, Fairway One, Human Touch, Life of the South, Mat Tech, Perdue Woodworks, Samsung and Service Lamp. Many of the vendors recorded an increase in sales over the last show including Latex Bliss, Why Not Lease It, Whirlpool and Simmons.

MEGA Group USA also officially debuted their Whirlpool Appliance Gallery at the Convention. MEGA first introduced the Gallery at the Las Vegas Furniture Market to visiting dealers but unveiled the full Whirlpool Gallery to the entire dealer base at the convention. In working with Whirlpool, MEGA Group USA is offering this 1,000 square foot appliance gallery featuring all product categories exclusive to their dealer members helping position them as a complete Home Furnishings resource to their customers.

The Orlando Convention was the first show for recent member Randy Dolen of Appliance and Mattress Gallery in Whitley, KY. "I am so thrilled to be a MEGA Group USA member," stated Dolen. "The workshops and speakers were extremely helpful, and I was able to take advantage of some great deals at the show. What I was most impressed with was the warmth of the MEGA Group USA staff and how much they truly cared about helping me run my business more successfully."

Tim Canada of Bond Furniture in Loveland, OH has been a member for 4 years. "I never miss a show," stated Canada. "I was excited to learn about the Social Extend program and look forward to implementing a social media strategy. MEGA does a great job every convention bringing new services and programs to help retailers grow their business." For more information on MEGA Group USA and their leadership in Web Marketing, visit [www.megagroupusa.com](http://www.megagroupusa.com). **RO**

**1** - Current member Katrina Lynch-Allen signs up for MEGA Group USA's product protection plan with MEGA staff member Mallory Parker  
**2** - MEGA Group USA Members visiting with vendors and taking advantage of great show deals at the recent Orlando Convention  
**3, 4, & 5** - MEGA Group USA Members enjoy live entertainment and fun at the recent MEGA Group USA Orlando Show





RETAILERS • DISTRIBUTORS • MANUFACTURERS

TRADE SHOWS, SHOWROOM OPENINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

## MEGA GROUP USA 2012 CONVENTION

MEGA Group USA, national buying group for furniture, mattress, appliance and electronics retailers, held their Convention March 17-20 in Orlando, Florida. The Show opened with more than 85 furniture, appliance, electronics, bedding, lawn & garden, and business service vendors in attendance.

1. New member Randy Dolen, Appliance and Mattress from Whitley, KY and MEGA Field Marketing Manager Wally Richter at the recent MEGA Group USA Orlando Convention
2. MEGA Field Marketing Manager Gary Johnson and potential member Peggy Anderson from Washington Home Furnishings in Washington, GA at the MEGA Group USA Orlando Convention
3. First time vendor Human Touch at the MEGA Group USA Orlando Convention
4. Brian Dick with Netsertive explains MEGA's new exclusive Social Extend program to members Al and Laurie Greiner of Randolph Home Furnishings
5. MEGA Field Marketing Manager Leo Grossman with Whirlpool representative Jordan Harris and MEGA member CJ Royal at the recent MEGA Group USA Orlando show





# United Servicers Association is a Community

A mistake we often make when thinking about business is seeing the other players in our industry only as competition. While it is true that business is competitive, and at times we work against each other to win customers, it is also valuable to consider the industry as a community.

Communities are formed based on respect for the shared value of their members. Once any group of people have come together, they have an opportunity to collaborate on new ideas, share the experience of successful practices, and look to each other for creative solutions for problems. It's the capacity for sharing that gives us the ability to achieve greatness.

The United Servicers Association is committed to the idea that sharing knowledge strengthens our members and makes the appliance service industry better and stronger as a whole. We have two very important tactics for delivering on that idea: Peer Groups, and the Appliance Service Training Institute (ASTI).

## USA PEER GROUPS

We've made it a big part of our mission to connect and form 'Peer Groups'—small communities of servicers from non-competing markets who work together on improving their respective businesses. Each group has its own rules and personality. We connect them, but the end result comes from the collaboration of the members.

"Two years ago I was a 1-2 technician

business and made the decision to grow my company. I turned to USA and their convention for the business and technical help and training that I needed. It was at that convention that I joined my peer group.

I was intrigued with the concept however somewhat skeptical at the time, as I am sharing my best practices and ideas with other service companies. I soon realized the concept was a great one as other companies in non-competing areas are also sharing their great ideas with me!

Thanks to the help from USA and my peer group, in two years time our company has more than doubled in gross sales. We opened a parts store and a new office last year and now have 9 employees, and we are currently looking for two more technicians."

*David Smith,*

*Owner of Dave Smith Appliance Services LLC*

## THE ASTI CONVENTION

Where Peer Groups allow us to connect in smaller groups, our annual ASTI Convention is a chance to bring together all of our members for an event full of opportunities to network, form business partnerships, and educate our members.

"I thought a trade show/conference for the appliance repair industry would be a waste of my time...I have to admit that I couldn't have been more wrong.

I took a bunch of business classes and a couple technical classes. While I learned quite a bit in the classes, and

got a lot of new ideas to try in my business, I was surprised to discover that the most valuable thing I took away was the support and friendships I formed with some of my peers.

There were people from all aspects of this industry attending. At first, I felt a little insignificant compared to some of these folks who are running 5-10 techs, but there were also quite a few one and two men shops, as well as technicians employed by other people. By the end, I felt very warmly received, even by the most prestigious members of the USA. It seemed like the board members in the white shirts were never too busy to talk to me and encourage me.

Unexpectedly, the biggest thing I took away from this convention was the inspiration that I received from these people to make my business more successful and professional."

*Bob Wennerstrom,*

*Owner of Blue Streak Inc.*

*(New 2012 Member of USA)*

## YOU CAN BE A PART OF IT TOO

The appliance service industry is a community full of small businesses that benefit from greater communication and sharing. Every year we're surprised and delighted to hear of the success our members find when they commit to being a part of our trade association, and realize that they're stronger when they don't stand alone.

Annual membership in United Servicers Association is \$199. Join online at [www.unitedservicers.com](http://www.unitedservicers.com). **RO**



October 15 -20, 2012

The Inn at DePauw & Event Center, Greencastle, Indiana

[www.educationforum.info](http://www.educationforum.info)

## Don't Miss the 2012 Education Forum Register Today!

- Date:** Monday, October 15, 2012 - Saturday, October 20, 2012
- Location:** The Inn at DePauw & Event Center, 2 West Seminary Street, Greencastle, IN 46135
- Time:** Begins at 8:00am on October 15, 2012  
Concludes October 20, 2012
- Hotel Accommodations:** The Inn at DePauw & Event Center, 2 West Seminary Street, Greencastle, IN 46135  
Rate: \$90/night - includes taxes/fees  
*Please use code ETAEDFORUM for discounted rate*  
Reserve by: September 18, 2012
- Event Description:** The ETA International Education Forum is a world class technical education conference. It offers hands-on workshops and presentations by industry professionals covering a wide spectrum of technologies. The Education Forum is the focal point for educational and technical professionals to discover emerging technologies. While you attend you'll be able to discuss classroom implementation strategies, network and collaborate with fellow technicians and educators, and have access to training and speaking sessions with industry experts. In addition to the general sessions and training workshops, attendees will enjoy the Networking Reception, Texas Hold 'em Tournament, and Annual Awards Banquet.
- Audience:** Faculty in technology programs, college representatives, program development specialist, industry trainers and managers, workforce development personnel, manufacturers, and other industry professionals.
- Registration Fees:** Early: \$175 ETA member/\$200 non-members (ends April 30, 2012)  
Regular: \$200 ETA members/\$225 non-members (ends October 01, 2012)  
Spouse: \$75  
Technical Workshops: \$279 - \$1795 (varies depending on course and membership status)  
Lunch, Networking Reception, and Annual Awards Banquet are included with registration fee.
- Keynote Presentation:** Cyber World: Discover the Role of Electronics Systems Technicians in the U.S. Workforce Competitiveness, Security, and Innovation *Presented by: Jim Brazell*
- Presentation Topics:**
- Renewable Energy Integrators and the Reality Show: Part I - Freedom Field Renewable Energy as a Catalyst for Education and Economic Development, Part II - Renewable Energy Integrator Internships
  - Test and Measurement 101: ETA Technology Series 2012
  - Cellular Wireless - How We Got Where We Are
  - Lightning Protection Installation Training
  - Helping Educators Get Things Done: Tech Tools to Get More out of Work and Life
  - Electronic Technician Careers in the Intelligent Grid of Tomorrow - Preparing Today
  - What is the Secret to Getting your Customers to Come Back? Provide Customer Service
  - Antenna Testing and the Importance of PIM Testing in Wireless Networks
  - RF Safety
  - Wind/solar training
  - How to Become a Certified Service Center
- Technical Workshops:** Motorola Site Installation Practices (R56)  
Corning Cable Systems TS-LAN-500 (Fiber Optic Installer)

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# Certified Service Center Sell Peace of Mind

When the product in your customers' home or business fails to function, it creates disorder in their lives. The first question they ask is, "How long will it take until someone restores order to my life?" The next question that your customer asks is "Who will restore that order and who will restore my peace of mind that the repair was done professionally?"

It is important to understand what you as a service company have to offer your customers. Why should you be called instead of another service company? What is your customer actually buying? In short, the commodity that you offer is SERVICE; the product you offer is peace of mind and order.

Since your customers can buy a commodity anywhere, they don't necessarily need you for that. But what they can't buy just anywhere is peace of mind and order. Unconsciously this is what they are shopping for and if you can convince them that order and peace of mind are the products you promise to deliver, and then you deliver on that promise, you will have a customer for life.

So, how would you describe your company to a prospective customer in terms of what they are looking for? If you manufactured a product you could describe it in terms of specific features, options and benefits that can actually be viewed and touched. The big question in any service business is how to sell your

company over the competition. How do you appeal to your customer?

In a service business the product is only realized when the work is done. Order and peace of mind are your products. Before any service is provided you might be classified as being the same as all the rest because every company out there brags about providing a high quality commodity at a fair price using very professional people. If you are competing against another company for a service job how do you prove that your company is, in fact, the best choice for the customer? Convincing a customer that you are the right company is difficult. Especially when the customer has a pre-conceived idea of what they need, but in reality are looking for something intangible. Even if the customer does not know it, they are shopping for a feeling, not a commodity.

So how do you set up your service company so that your customers can actually differentiate you from all the competitors? The answer is simple: become a Certified Service Center (CSC). The words Certified Service Center just scream order and peace of mind. Validate your customer's need to feel good about choosing your company by becoming a Certified Service Center.

A quality company has many tangible features that are often not pointed out to customers. Based on the feedback received from current Certified Service Centers, here are some tips that might help:

- Become a Certified Service Center. This shows that you have taken the time to be evaluated by an independent third party and have been found to exhibit specific, solid business practices. Once you have been certified post this information wherever your customers can see it—in your lobby, on your vehicles, letterhead, business cards, advertisements and on your website.
- The Certified Service Center criteria speak to several tangible indicators that you should promote to your prospective customers because they will appeal to their sensibilities. Some specific examples that you should promote every chance you get are your professional facility, warranty and customer service policies, and proper insurance coverage.
- Brag about your nationally certified management and technician team.

Your customers' need to feel like they have made the right choice will be influenced by whether or not your company really walks the quality talk. Some ways to show this are through a professional facility, proper insurance, certified management and technicians and recognitions given to your company like being named a Certified Service Center. Promote this every chance you get and differentiate your service commodity from your service product by appealing to your customers' need to buy the peace of mind feeling. **RO**

## CLASSIFIED AD

Capital Cooking, known for power and performance in their cooking products, is looking for Distributors in the following states:

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or call 562-903-1168 and ask for Surjit.

## CLASSIFIED AD

### OUTSIDE SALES MANAGERS

BrandSource, the premier appliance, furniture, and electronics merchandising organization in North America is expanding. As a leader in innovative and profitable solutions to its members/dealers, BrandSource is expanding its outside sales force with the following territorial positions:

**District Manager:** New York / New Jersey Metropolitan  
**District Manager:** Charlotte, NC

Seeking self directed professionals with excellent organizational, communication and follow up skills. Positions require team attitude, the ability to build strong relationships and manage a sales territory. Must be able to travel 4-5 days per week. Experience in appliance and/or consumer electronics preferred. Positions offer a competitive compensation and benefits package.



Please email confidential resume to [hr.resume@brandsource.com](mailto:hr.resume@brandsource.com)

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# The RetailObserver

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# In Memorium

Lee was born in 1923 in Calexico, California, growing up with his brother and two sisters in La Habra. His family weathered the depression years and he fondly remembered the way his family and their friends sacrificed together to get through those tough times. During WWII he was a conscientious objector and performed alternative service at various camps across the country. After the war he graduated from Redlands University in 1948 with a music degree. Soon after that he was married to Barbara Evans and together they raised three boys. In 1963, he and Barbara divorced and Lee was remarried to Jeanelle Peterson. Lee adopted Jeanelle's son, Mark, and they moved to Portola Valley. Jeanelle passed away in 2008. Lee moved to Oregon a year ago to be closer to his family.

Lee began his appliance career with General Electric in 1955. In 1960, he left GE and moved from Oregon to Menlo Park, California to open his first appliance store on Santa Cruz Avenue. He ran that store by himself for two years and then formed a partnership with Bud Anderson that lasted for 25 years. Together they operated stores in Menlo Park, Mountain View, Redwood City and Palo Alto. During that time, they built a following of loyal customers who helped spread the word that you would always get a good deal and great service from Boucher's Appliances. Many employees who started at Boucher's went on to successful careers elsewhere in the appliance industry and look back thankfully to the mentoring they received from Lee and Bud. In 1980, Lee began to organize California

retailers into a buying group (AVB) which enabled them to compete more successfully with the big box stores. This endeavor gave him the opportunity to build strong relationships with businessmen and women throughout the state.

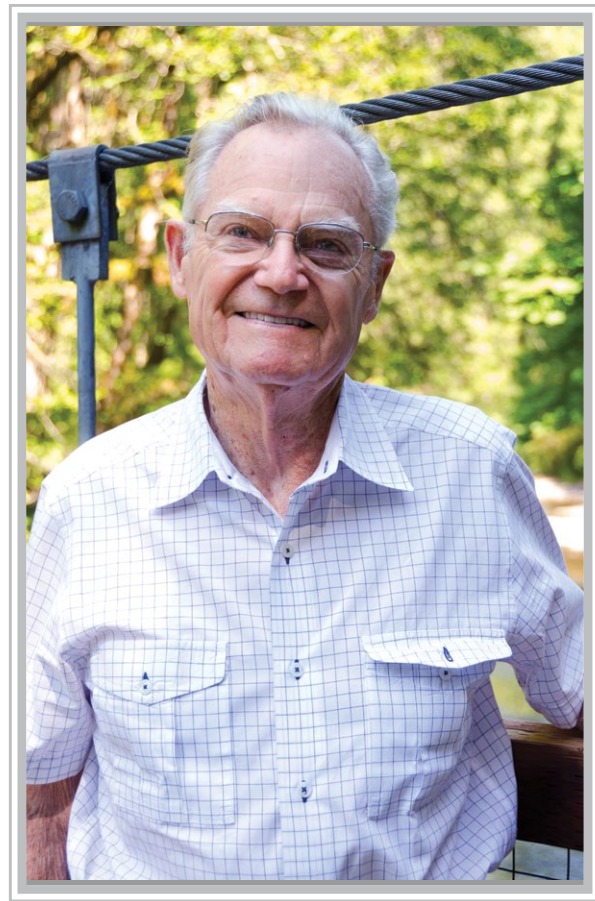
Lee always had time to help others. He served the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce faithfully and filled almost every position including president. He was famous for putting together events that would strengthen relationships within the business world. When he and Bud threw a party to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Boucher's, most of their competitors came to celebrate with them. Lee was a passionate supporter of social justice and served as a local organizer for Amnesty International, a group who works for the release of political prisoners around the world. During this past year, he traveled extensively to visit his friends and family and to see places he had missed over the years. The kayak photo was taken in the Sea of Cortez this past January. Lee is survived by his former wife, Barbara; his sons, Brian, David, Jim and Mark; his sisters Lois and Kathleen and his eight grand-children. He will be missed.

Donations, in his memory, may be made to: Amnesty International.

—Brian Boucher

## THE PASSING OF AN ICON

I first met Lee Boucher a few days after I began publishing *The Retail Observer* in April of 1990. I took his picture for the magazine because he got a nice big rebate check from GE.



Terry Campbell, zone manager at that time for GE presented him with the check at an AVB meeting.

Over a period of years we became good friends and spent a lot of time having fun, traveling, and playing golf together. One day, while we were having lunch, he remarked how



absolutely lousy some of the editorials were in my news magazine. I asked “Can you do better?”, but he didn’t answer – he just looked at me very thoughtfully and changed the subject. Lo and behold on deadline day there arrived in the mail a neatly typewritten manuscript with a by-line from Lee Boucher. I called him immediately and thanked him for writing the

for a response! I said, “A lot of our readers liked what you wrote and they would love to see some more feature editorials written by someone who knows what he is talking about – someone who has been in the business for many years, knows the industry well, but most important, someone who has a great reputation for sincerity and truthfulness. He said

and enthusiasm, joy and energy.

–Chuck Edmonds, retired,  
*The Retail Observer*

QUOTES FROM FRIENDS

I must have met Lee a hundred times or more at different distributor open houses over the course of many years. When Chuck Edmonds started *The Retail Observer*, Lee decided to get out of the retail business and went to work for Chuck. Now I had a competitor on the same turf; Chuck was bad enough to beat but Lee was even tougher. I don’t believe he ever found someone he didn’t like - as this was his rare gift. Those one-of-a-kind souls are hard to find. I believe Lee was the kind of person everyone should try to be and I was so sorry to hear of his passing.

– Don Martin - *Kasmar Publications Inc.*

I met Lee Boucher in 1960 when he was in the process of opening his store in Menlo Park. In 1962 he said “Why don’t you quit what you’re doing and be my partner in this fabulous business? We’ll be rich in no time.” Starting with that store we eventually opened in three locations. We struggled at times but always had good times together. If we had anything that we disagreed on we would meet at the end of the day and discuss it over a martini or two. It always ended amiably.

The period of time from 1962 until 1987—when I retired—was the heyday of wonderful trips, which were supplied by many manufacturers and distributors. After working together for 25 years and owning a commercial building together for about 50 years we remained friends. A friendship I’ll cherish forever.

–Bud Anderson, retired **RO**

editorial. He said, “I got tired of reading stupid stuff that people who don’t know anything about the appliance industry are writing for your magazine.”

The next month I called him up and challenged him to write another editorial receiving an emphatic “no”

sold his business and fully retired. Most importantly, he loved to write about the independent retailer because he felt the business was endangered by the ‘big box stores.’ At national meetings of appliance retailers he was honored for his writings and beliefs. He lived his life with love

# Lee Boucher

## (1923-2012)



## Elevating Design and Style: Whirlpool Brand Introduces New Exclusive Ice Collection Kitchen Suites

**W**hirlpool brand is elevating the way homeowners and designers visualize kitchen appliances with the introduction of the ice collection

“Whirlpool brand’s new exclusive Ice Collection redefines how homeowners and design professionals alike look at classic black and white appliances,” said Eric DeJong, Whirlpool brand manager at Whirlpool Corporation. “These new products balance the modern cues of metal against sparkling white and black surfaces. The result is a simple, yet leading-edge design that brings appliances to a new level of refinement.”

White Ice is a transformation of the classic white style to a striking, more contemporary signature design. Black Ice is a sleek, sophisticated black finish with contemporary metallic details that energize the kitchen. Both finishes are accented with stainless steel, including new elegantly designed, user-friendly handles. Other new design elements include subtle, intuitive graphics and larger oven windows to meet homeowners’ needs for increased visibility.

Beyond the new style, the White Ice and Black Ice Collections balance simple innovation with the latest technology and effortless features, with appliance packages for a full range of homes. Some of the new product offerings include:

ENERGY STAR® qualified refrigerators that feature sleek hidden hinges, LED lighting, and a tall water and ice dispenser – flush with the front of the refrigerator – for an easy-to-clean, streamlined look. The 25 cu. ft. counter depth model is the industry’s largest capacity among counter depth side-by-side refrigerators.\*The new French door bottom-mount refrigerator touts the industry’s fresh-food usable capacity available at 29 cu. ft.\*\*

Wall ovens feature the FIT system, which ensures the unit will fit most existing cutouts, solves a major remodeling issue. Other wall-oven features include integrated rack handles, an EasyView™ extra-large window, and the SteamClean option

for fast, easy cleaning of everyday light spills. These ovens are the first line of products to be built in Whirlpool Corporation’s new factory in Cleveland, Tenn.

Ranges feature the AccuBake® temperature management system, TimeSavor™ Plus true convection cooking system, and Rapid Preheat. Available with a 5.8 cu. ft. model capacity in gas and 6.2 cu. ft. model capacity in electric – the industry’s largest single-cavity oven capacity available in both configurations.\*\*\* The range selection also includes Whirlpool brand’s first ever 30-inch induction technology freestanding model.

The dishwashers are industry’s most energy efficient, using nearly half the water and energy\*\*\*\* without compromising performance.\*\*\*\*\* These dishwashers automatically select the right wash and dry setting, using two separate sensors to measure temperature, soil level and load size. The PowerScour™ feature uses 40 targeted spray jets to scour large pots and pans without pre-rinsing.

Most appliances in the Ice Collection will be available as of May 1, with the full suite available late-June. In addition to new White Ice and Black Ice color introductions, the new Whirlpool brand kitchen collection will include an inspirational Stainless Collection, featuring a stainless steel finish. For more information on Whirlpool Corporation and its offerings for building professionals, please visit [insideadvantage.com](http://insideadvantage.com) or call 1-800-952-2537.

*\*Among 69-inch height counter depth models.*

*\*\*Based on fresh-food volume among leading-brand French door refrigerators.*

*\*\*\*Among leading brand single-cavity 30-inch freestanding gas ranges and electric ranges respectively.*

*\*\*\*\*Based on [EnergyStar.gov](http://EnergyStar.gov) published annual energy usage of Whirlpool Resource Efficient models versus competitive dishwashers MSRP \$749 and below.*

*\*\*\*\*\*Compared to a conventional dishwasher manufactured before 2006. **RO***



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The Preserva® Food Care System is an innovative approach to food preservation. Sequential dual evaporators independently set temperature and humidity at optimum levels. This helps to preserve the taste and texture of produce and minimize freezer burn. The bottom line? Food that's purchased fresh stays fresher longer. Plus you get two additional features that are specifically designed to reduce common food odors and absorb ethylene gas.

The Preserva® Food Care System is available on 69- and 72-inch counter-depth and 69-inch standard-depth side-by-side refrigerators. It's another way we keep your kitchen – and your food – fresh.

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Exclusive OrbitClean™ Wash Arm provides 4X better water coverage and a clean no other dishwasher can beat.

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With SaharaDry™ there's no need to towel dry before putting dishes away.

## The Best Quiet<sup>3</sup>

Quietest dishwasher, so it won't interrupt your time at home.

<sup>1</sup> Based on ANSI-AHAM-DW-1-2010 for plastic interior dishwashers.

<sup>2</sup> In Its Class. Based on industry drying tests using Sahara Dry™ March 2012.

<sup>3</sup> In Its Class. Based on published manufacturer specifications for similar MSRP models. March 2012.

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