

The Retail Observer

July, 2013

AN EYE ON THE INDUSTRY SINCE 1970

Vol. 24, Issue 7

FALMEC PREMIUM ITALIAN HOODS PUSHING THE LIMITS OF INNOVATION & DESIGN

KBIS MARKS A NEW DIRECTION LOOKING AHEAD TO DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION WEEK 2014

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The Land of the Free

I'm noticing more American flags, signs for fireworks and everything you could ever imagine or need for a perfect summer barbeque. I am reminded that July 4th is quickly approaching and I began to think about what my plans will be for that day. As I realize that I haven't made any, my mind runs through a list of family and friends that I need to connect with. I then start wondering, why weren't my first thoughts of July 4th about freedom?

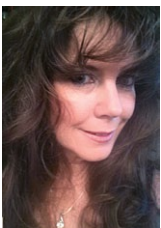
4th of July, or Independence Day, was declared a holiday to memorialize the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. This public statement announced that the thirteen American colonies regarded themselves as independent states, and were no longer a part of the British Empire. Instead they now formed a new nation called the United States of America.

As I write this, the original words of *The Star Spangled Banner* play in my mind, "And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave; O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!" Most people don't realize that this song is only the first part of a poem called *Defense of Fort McHenry* written by Francis Scott Key. The poem was later set to music and renamed *The Star Spangled Banner*. In 1931, Congress proclaimed it the National Anthem of the United States of America.

Yes, on July 4th, I will probably still have the people that I love close by, but for me the day will not be all about the weather, the food and drinks or the fun we will have. It will be dedicated to Freedom. As the day comes to an end and I watch fireworks light up the Vegas sky, I will make sure that I say a silent prayer of gratitude for my freedom and will recite the last part of Key's poem...

*O, thus be it ever when freemen shall stand,
Between their lov'd homes and the war's desolation;
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
Praise the Pow'r that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause is just,
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust"
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!*

Happy Independence Day!



Eliana Barriga

Eliana Barriga
letters@retailobserver.com

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CELEBRATING OUR 24TH YEAR
AS *THE RETAIL OBSERVER*

Publisher/Managing Editor

ELIANA BARRIGA

Director of Sales and Marketing

MOE LASTFOGEL

Art Director

TERRY PRICE

Contributing Writers

BILL BAZEMORE

TIMOTHY BEDNARZ

JOHN TSCHOHL

ELLY VALAS

LIBBY WAGNER

JOHN WHITE

RALPH E. WOLFF

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THE RETAIL OBSERVER

2764 N. Green Valley Pkwy, Suite 508
Henderson, NV 89014-2121

800.393.0509 • 702.208.9500

Fax 702.570.5664

production@retailobserver.com

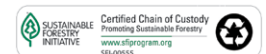
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The Shows

Ok, we're half way through the year and half way through the trade shows of 2013. What shows have you gone to or are yet to attend? So far this year we've highlighted the Consumer Electronics Show (CES), Digital Signage Expo (DSE), Living Kitchen, Las Vegas Market, International Builders Show (IBS), Brandsource Summit and Nationwide Primetime. In this issue we are covering the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show (KBIS) and the Architectural Digest Show.

KBIS was held this year in one of my favorite cities, New Orleans. The numbers of attendees may not have been as high as other years, yet the buzz in the "Big Easy" was over the top! With the 50th Anniversary Party held at the Metropolitan Nightclub, and the NKBA Gala at Mardi Gras World, this town showed us its true colors. Both events were packed with upbeat attendees and Industry partners alike. As for the show floor, every vendor I spoke with had a great show, and as some put it, "some of the best leads we've had at KBIS in years." By the end of the show KBIS was almost 85% sold out for next year's Design and Construction week. That's awesome!

As for the Architectural Digest Show, it was an amazing event for the Appliance and Design Industry. The buzz at this show was truly upbeat. With the gathering of Industry attendees and the general public, you can see a real turn around in the economy happening. These regional shows have had great attendance and are showing a lot of potential for what is yet to come.

Opportunities at regional shows for manufacturers and attendees have grown rapidly over the past few years. As I write this editorial, I am getting ready for the Dwell on Design Show in Los Angeles. In just a few short months come October, the new Westedge Design Show will be taking place in California. I recently attended the Pacific Coast Builders Show, held in San Diego, California and like IBS, the builder community had a great turnout. It seems to have had new life breathed back into its lungs. It was especially upbeat and positive after a few rough years.

Realize that these shows aren't just about viewing a product or seeing a new design aspect, they are also about education, networking and growing your business. I look forward to attending the remaining shows of 2013 and am anticipating the new wave of partnership and collaboration in the upcoming year, beginning with Design and Construction Week 2014, February 4-6 in Las Vegas. I'll see you there!



Happy Retailing,

Moe Lastfogel

moe@retailobserver.com

The Retail Observer

JULY 2013

VOLUME 24, ISSUE 7

CELEBRATING OUR 24TH YEAR
AS THE RETAIL OBSERVER

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



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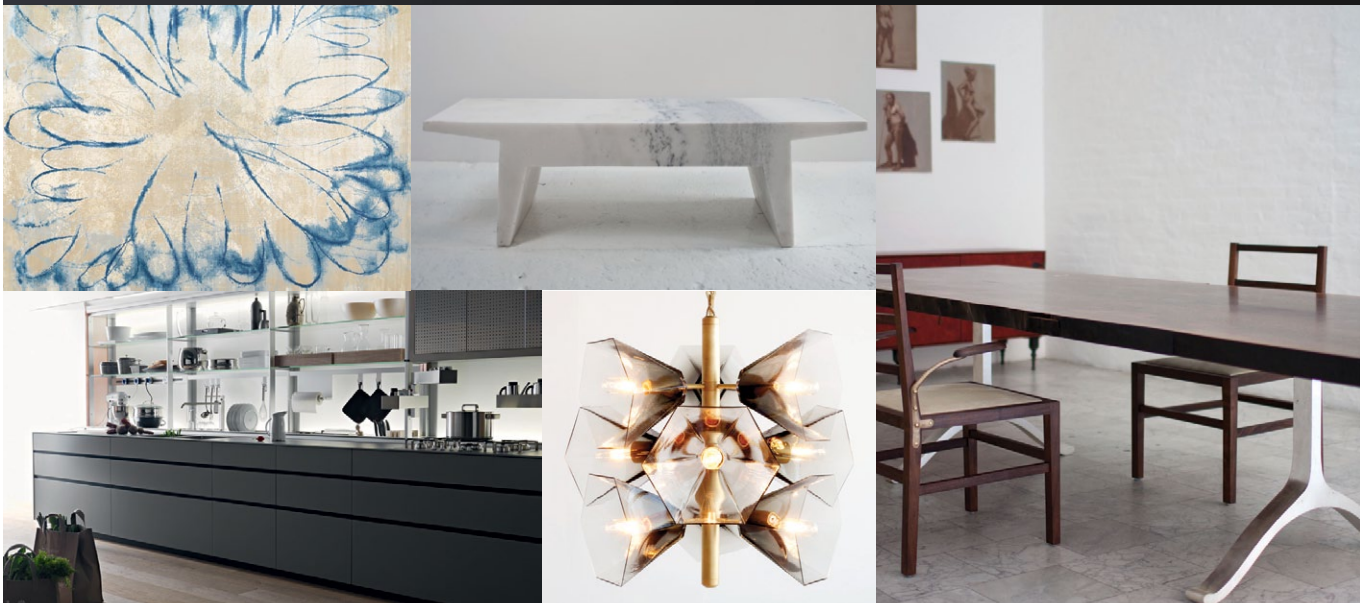


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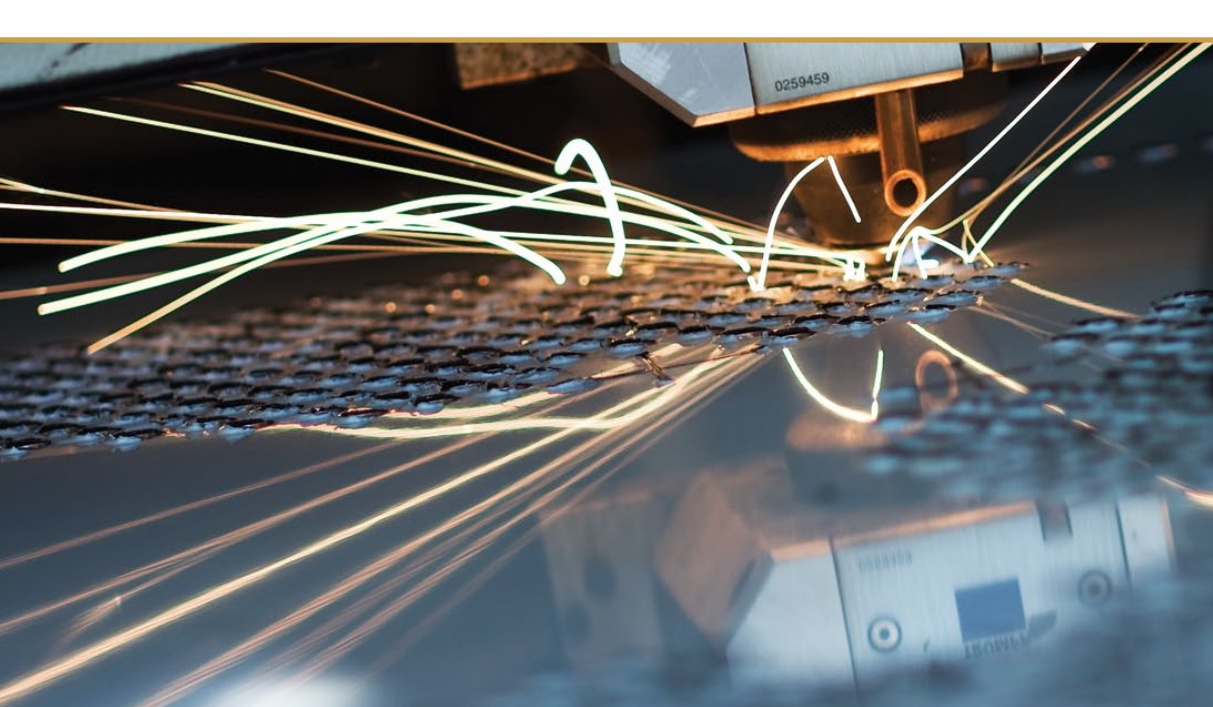
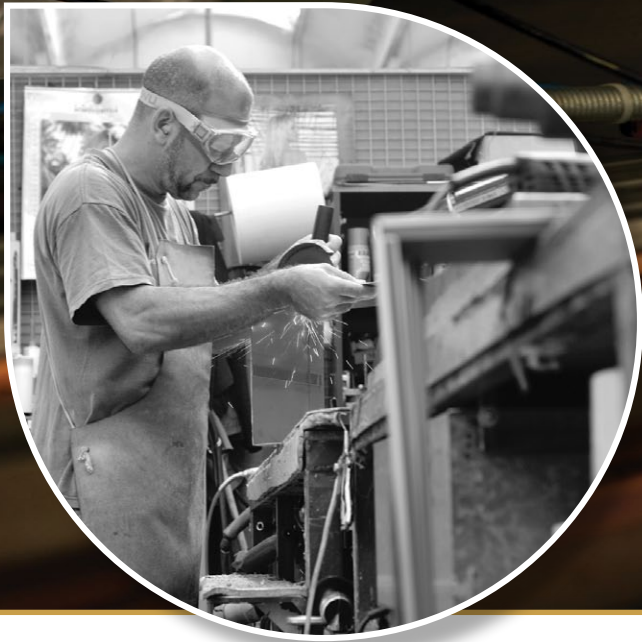
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falmec

PREMIUM ITALIAN HOODS



PUSHING THE
LIMITS OF
INNOVATION
AND DESIGN

Surrounded by the splendid vistas of the Dolomites and nestled in North East Italy, lies Veneto, a region renowned for exceptional cuisine, sparkling prosecco wine, its romantic Venetian language and innovative manufacturing industry. It is in this region where Falmec, a manufacturer that is exclusively dedicated to the design and production of cooker hoods and extraction systems, concentrates its technical expertise in a single area to achieve excellence among a field of many. This dedication to design is part of the Falmec corporate culture and is readily apparent even in the architecture of the factory.

Founded in 1981 by Danilo and Maurizio Poser, Falmec is still a family owned and operated business with many members of the Poser family directly involved, a quality that President Danilo Poser is very proud of as he explains to us on our recent visit to Italy. "One must feel a passion within them in anything they do; I still design most of the hoods we manufacture today. Seeing the creations transformed from paper to CAD and then to production is very exciting to me. Being in control of our destiny means that no one can tell us what can or cannot be done

because of costs or manufacturing complexity, in fact we cherish the challenge. This is what has made Falmec so unique in our sector, we never stop pushing the limits of innovation and design." Whenever a client, new or old, visits the factory, Danilo still makes himself available for factory tours and meetings followed by lunch or dinner at one of the dozens of local restaurants which this region is famous for. The passion that drove him to create his first copper hood over 30 years ago is still very evident today as he explains what the future holds for Falmec.

Falmec boasts a 300,000 square foot production facility located in Vittorio Veneto which is populated by craftsmen (men and women alike) assisted by state-of-the-art robotics and laser cutting tools resulting in superior craftsmanship and ensuring high quality finishing and state of the art designs. Using automation for the mundane functions and heavy or repetitive tasks frees up the artisans to focus on their craft. It is this dual approach to manufacturing that also allows all work processes to be performed in-house which ensures that Falmec cooker hoods are 100% made in Italy, an achievement that has | *continued on page 10* |



increasingly become unfeasible among other manufacturers who rely on globalized production practices to complete their work processes. As a result of this commitment, Falmec is able to create cooker hoods with unique designs, top quality and advanced technologies since their employees are involved from concept to crate sustaining their passion for the work they do.

Falmec is also committed to creating innovative, high quality products that make a significant difference in the lives of end-users. Being innovative with functionality, Falmec creates consistency among its various product collections by using efficient motors, charcoal filters and high quality metals and materials. When manufacturing its premium line of hoods, Falmec uses AISI 304 stainless steel, which is known in the industry for being hygienic, extremely resistant to corrosion and easy to clean. Falmec also uses Fasteel stainless steel for select models, an exclusive and innovative "no fingerprint technology" which maintains a stunning shine on the surface of the cooker hood and will remain free of blemishes. Achieving excellence in innovation means Falmec continually invests in research and technology, collaborating with specialized laboratories to develop new technology. The most recent innovation is Falmec's Noise Reduction System (NRS®), a technology utilized in the Silence Collection, which makes these cooker hoods the quietest in the world allowing for conversations in the kitchen at normal volumes. Models which include a radio frequency remote control allow owners to adjust the hood no matter where they are. Falmec hoods range in power from 280 cfm to over 1000 cfm to keep up with even the most demanding kitchen environments. With options such as external exhaust or filtered recirculation and exclusive make-up air solutions, designers and owners can tailor a Falmec hood to their requirements.

With the traditional approach to ventilation hoods in North America being understated with limited functionality, Falmec introduces European sensibilities bringing ventilation out of the shadows and into the forefront making a bold statement in style and functionality. A Falmec hood has the confidence to be a centerpiece in a luxury kitchen proudly showing its superior fit and finish and feature set.

Offering a design and function of hood for nearly any application and innovative options for styling and function, Falmec has positioned itself as a premiere choice for designers, installers and end users. **RO**





CALL TO ACTION



SEND US YOUR SHOTS

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

The Retail Observer is interested in featuring you in our 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.

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Book Review

Delight Your Customers:

7 Simple Ways to Raise Your Customer Service from Ordinary to Extraordinary

When asked what their work entails, most employees list the duties or tasks associated with their job roles. Very few refer to the true essence of their job, their highest priority at work which is to create delighted customers who will be less price sensitive, have higher repurchase rates, and enthusiastically recommend the company or brand to others. Without this customer focus, all that exists is a transaction—and transactional service does not make a lasting positive impression or inspire loyalty.

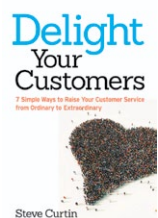
In *Delight Your Customers: 7 Simple Ways to Raise Your Customer Service from Ordinary to Extraordinary*, Steve Curtin reveals three truths common to all exceptional customer service experiences:

1. It is the essence—the most critical aspect, the highest priority—of every service industry employee's job role
2. It is always voluntary—an employee chooses to deliver exceptional customer service
3. In most cases, it costs no more to deliver than poor customer service—in other words, it's free.

The book presents seven behaviors that, when demonstrated by employees, distinguish extraordinary customer service from the ordinary, transactional customer service to which consumers have become accustomed. These seven behaviors, each of which is covered in a separate chapter, are: express genuine interest; offer sincere and specific compliments; share unique knowledge; convey authentic enthusiasm; use appropriate humor; provide pleasant surprises; and deliver service heroics when necessary.

With more than 200 real world examples from multiple industries that bring the book's lessons to life, and nine end-of-chapter summaries and review activities prompt readers to reinforce and apply what they've read as well as foster group discussion. **RO**

Author: Steve Curtin spent 20 years with Marriott International, and now runs his own customer service consulting firm, Steve Curtin, Customer Enthusiast! Follow Steve on twitter @enthused. Reach him @www.stevecurtin.com
Publisher: Amacom



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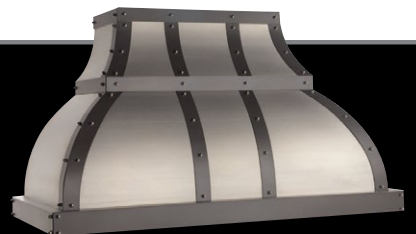


WHISPERTECHNOLOGY

OTHER COMPANIES MAY “CLAIM” THEIR RANGE HOODS ARE QUIET ... BUT WE’RE THE QUIETEST IN THE INDUSTRY — 40% QUIETER THAN THE COMPETITION. AND WE CAN PROVE IT. SEE AND HEAR THE VENT-A-HOOD DIFFERENCE FOR YOURSELF. ASK YOUR DISTRIBUTOR TO SHOW YOU OUR IPAD® DEMONSTRATION.

ONCE YOU DO, WE PROMISE, THE CHOICE WILL BE TRULY CLEAR.

Vent-A-Hood®



PROOF OF QUIET KITCHEN VENTILATION IS UNHEARD OF...

UNTIL NOW.

OTHER COMPANIES MAY TALK ABOUT HOW QUIET THEIR VENTILATION HOODS ARE. BUT ONLY ONE COMPANY CAN ACTUALLY PROVE IT – VENT-A-HOOD.

VENT-A-HOOD'S UNIQUE WHISPERTECHNOLOGY MORE THAN LIVES UP TO ITS NAME. EVEN WHEN THE FAN SPEED IS OPERATING ON THE HIGHEST SETTING, THE SOUND IT MAKES IS BARELY ABOVE A WHISPER. IN FACT, THE LOUDEST THING YOU MAY HEAR IS THE SIZZLE OF BACON ON THE STOVETOP.

SO HOW QUIET IS A VENT-A-HOOD? THE AVERAGE CONVERSATION IS APPROXIMATELY SIX TO SEVEN SONES. WHEN TESTED IN A CERTIFIED INDEPENDENT TEST LAB ON THE HIGHEST SPEED, VENT-A-HOOD RANGE HOODS MEASURED FROM 5.4 TO 6.6 SONES.

VENT-A-HOOD DIDN'T INVENT QUIET. BUT THEY DID INVENT THE INDUSTRY'S QUIETEST VENTILATION HOOD WITH THE RESEARCH TO PROVE IT.

THEY ALSO DESIGNED THEM TO BE THE EASIEST TO CLEAN. AND THEY COME WITH INDUSTRY'S BEST WARRANTY. NO WONDER VENT-A-HOOD CONTINUES TO LEAD THE WAY IN INNOVATIONS.



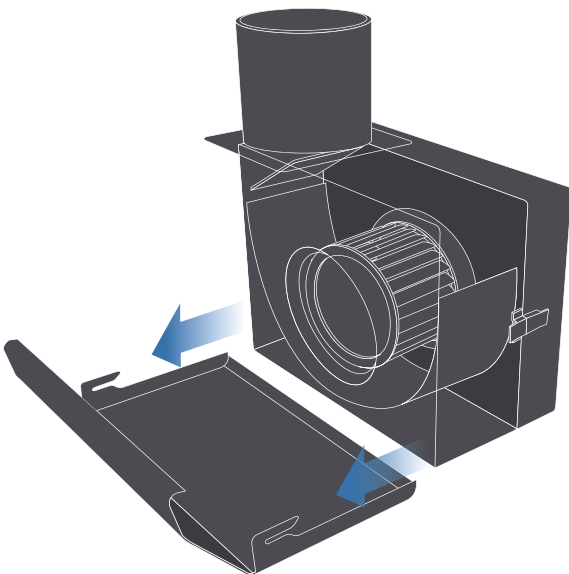
DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS IN THE KITCHEN REVEALED.

THERE'S A DIRTY LITTLE SECRET THAT LURKS IN KITCHENS ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY. IT'S CALLED... THE RANGE HOOD. MOST PEOPLE AVOID CLEANING THEM BECAUSE THE TASK SEEMS OVERWHELMING. BUT LEFT UNTOUCHED, GERMS AND ODORS CAN LINGER THERE, AND GREASE CAN BUILD UP. THAT MEANS WALLS, DRAPERIES, FURNISHINGS AND OTHER SURFACES BECOME LANDING STRIPS FOR THE COOKING RESIDUE THAT FLIES THROUGH THE AIR BECAUSE IT CAN'T GET OUT THROUGH CLOGGED FILTERS.

SO WHAT'S A PERSON TO DO? STOP COOKING? DON THE HEAVY GLOVES, GET OUT THE HARSH CHEMICALS, AND DISASSEMBLE THE RANGE HOOD? THAT'S ONE WAY TO HANDLE IT. BUT WE HAVE A BETTER SOLUTION. INSTALL A VENT-A-HOOD.

VENT-A-HOOD DESIGNED THEIR VENTILATION SYSTEMS TO DO THE HEAVY CLEANING SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO, THANKS TO THE E-Z CLEAN TRAY. VENT-A-HOOD'S UNIQUE TECHNOLOGY EFFORTLESSLY DRAWS MOISTURE, ODOR, AND GREASE FROM THE AIR THEN DEPOSITS THE GREASE INTO THE LITTLE TRAY. TO CLEAN IT, SIMPLY SLIDE OUT THE COLLECTION TRAY, WIPE IT OFF OR POP IT IN THE DISHWASHER, AND YOU'RE DONE. NO MORE DIRTY SECRET.

BUT DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT. SIMPLY SCAN THE QR CODE HERE OR VISIT YOUR NEAREST VENT-A-HOOD DISTRIBUTOR TO SEE – AND HEAR – THE PROOF FOR YOURSELF.



SCAN HERE TO SEE – AND HEAR – HOW QUIET A VENT-A-HOOD REALLY IS.



Vent-A-Hood

www.ventahood.com



BOSCH LAUNCHES GROUNDBREAKING DISHWASHER LINE AND TAKES NORTH AMERICA'S QUIETEST DISHWASHER BRAND TO NEXT LEVEL

 **BOSCH** Bosch has launched its next generation dishwasher line. Built on a completely new stainless steel platform designed for the unique needs of U.S. consumers, the new Bosch dishwashers feature a third rack on more models than ever before, sleek European designs and the virtually silent performance that is the hallmark of Bosch dishwashers.

“At Bosch we are passionate about engineering high quality appliances that exceed our customers’ expectations. We’ve challenged our engineering and design teams to push the limits of design and innovation; to create a line of dishwashers that would take Bosch dishwashers to the next level,” said Micaela Shaw, brand manager for Bosch. “This is our most exceptional dishwasher line to date. The new Bosch dishwasher line redefines what customers can expect in design, quietness and quality.”

EUROPEAN DESIGN

A sleek, modern European look has long been sought after in kitchen design. The redesigned dishwasher line incorporates a full-size stainless steel tub enabling the use of larger racks for enhanced loading ability while still maintaining flush installation capabilities. Four design options including recessed handle, bar handle, flush handle and custom panel are available. The new flush handle offers a distinctive, clean look that integrates seamlessly into contemporary kitchen designs without a handle protruding from the fascia. Stainless steel, white and black designs perfectly



complement today's modern stylings. Rounding out the European look that is uniquely Bosch are ergonomically designed control panels for perfect visibility.

THIRD RACK

Bosch has taken flexibility to the next level with the introduction of a third rack into its new dishwasher line. This high-end feature is now available in Bosch's 500 and 800 series models. The third rack adds thirty percent more loading area while providing increased flexibility. The unique v-shaped third rack allows room for long-stemmed wine glasses on the second rack while the center of the v-shaped rack provides the perfect space for large items and cooking utensils.

BEST-IN-CLASS QUIET

Bosch has made the 800 Plus, the quietest dishwasher in North America, even quieter achieving an industry best 38 dBA performance in normal operation. Research shows that noise is the #1 factor for consumers when choosing a dishwasher. For this reason, Bosch engineers address noise reduction from every angle, incorporating 18 unique sound-reduction technologies that combine to make Bosch the quietest dishwasher brand in North America. In fact, Bosch dishwashers are so quiet that an InfoLight has been included in select models to let consumers know their dishwasher is running. A new TimeLight feature which indicates the time remaining is available in the 800 Plus series models. Bosch dishwashers also feature industry-leading innovations such as two Eco-Silence brushless motors and a grindless, triple filtration system to reduce noise, vibration and the need for a loud food disposal.

EXACTING QUALITY

Part of what makes Bosch dishwashers so exceptional are the strict standards of German engineering that they are built to. From quality materials and sound reduction technologies to extreme testing including 485 points of quality checks, exacting quality is built into every Bosch dishwasher. These are the reasons Bosch is ranked highest in customer satisfaction by J.D. Power and Associates and is an ENERGY STAR® Sustained Excellence Award recipient.

This groundbreaking new Bosch dishwasher line is the result of a significant investment of over \$50 million in R&D, upgrades to the New Bern N.C., factory and new innovations at Bosch that solidifies its position as the leader in design, quietness and quality by manufacturing products that are truly invented for life.

For more information about Bosch, visit www.bosch-home.com/us.



ZEPHYR LAUNCHES VERONA ISLAND KITCHEN VENTILATION HOOD; MODERN DESIGN MEETS GREEN TECHNOLOGY

INDUSTRY FIRST DCBL SUPPRESSION SYSTEM OFFERS THE QUIETEST, MOST POWERFUL AND ENERGY EFFICIENT VENTILATION AVAILABLE TODAY

ZEPHYR Zephyr has announced the launch of its Verona Island kitchen range hood with the groundbreaking new DCBL Suppression System™. The Verona Island is part of Zephyr's Europa Collection and offers the quietest, most powerful and energy efficient technology on the market today.

A perfect blend of modern simplicity and timeless design, the Verona Island makes a bold statement over the cooktop with its straight glass canopy and LED light display. The user can select Cloud White, Deep Blue and Amber color settings to best match the kitchen décor; or a demo mode shows all three color options in 10 second intervals.

With its technological breakthroughs, the Verona Island is equipped with the industry-first DCBL Suppression technology that combines a Direct Current (DC) motor and on-board computer, which reduces the hood's noise by 77 percent.

This whisper-quiet performance keeps the focus on the conversation at the dinner table instead of a loud humming noise.

In addition to more power and less noise, the Verona Island's smart technology has reduced energy consumption by almost 80 percent. Zephyr has exceeded ENERGY STAR™ standards by offering 17 CFM per watt compared to ENERGY STAR's current standard of 2.8 CFM per watt.

| continued on page 18 |



The Verona Island is constructed of stainless steel and glass and is available in 36- and 42-inches with 250–715 internal minimum-maximum blower CFM. The hood’s Bloom™ HD LED light bulbs were designed in partnership with commercial camera lens designers and have a life cycle of 25,000 hours. They are the only range hood LED light bulbs on the market that are dimmable with near-halogen light warmth, yet remain cool to the touch regardless of how long they are in use.

“The Verona Island completes our Europa Collection, which includes a combination of wall, island and under cabinet styles. The breadth of product designs combined with first-to-market technology are synonymous with our commitment to challenging the perception of what ventilation means in kitchen design,” says Luke Siow, Zephyr president. “The Verona Island features a perfect combination of architecture and performance. It maintains the classic design that we’re known for, but is elevated to a new level with our DCBL technology.”

MOEN INCREASES STAINLESS STEEL SINK OPTIONS WITHIN ITS EXISTING PORTFOLIO, DELIVERING DURABILITY AND STYLE

EXPANDED OPTIONS AVAILABLE IN THE MOST POPULAR SIZES AND CONFIGURATIONS

MOEN With stainless steel continuing to be the most popular kitchen sink material for consumers, Moen, the number one faucet brand in North America, is reinventing its stainless steel sink portfolio. In addition to a variety of new sink configurations, Moen® sinks will now feature an updated drop-in deck design to coordinate well with current home décor.

“We’re extremely excited to launch our new stainless steel sink program,” said Cassy Osborne, wholesale kitchen product manager, Moen. “The available products include the most-popular and in-demand sizes and configurations, helping homeowners to achieve the look they want while delivering the functionality they need.”

Four new lines are available with products featuring a variety of depths, configurations and installation options to complement many kitchen décor, appliance and cabinetry styles.

- **1600™ Professional Series**

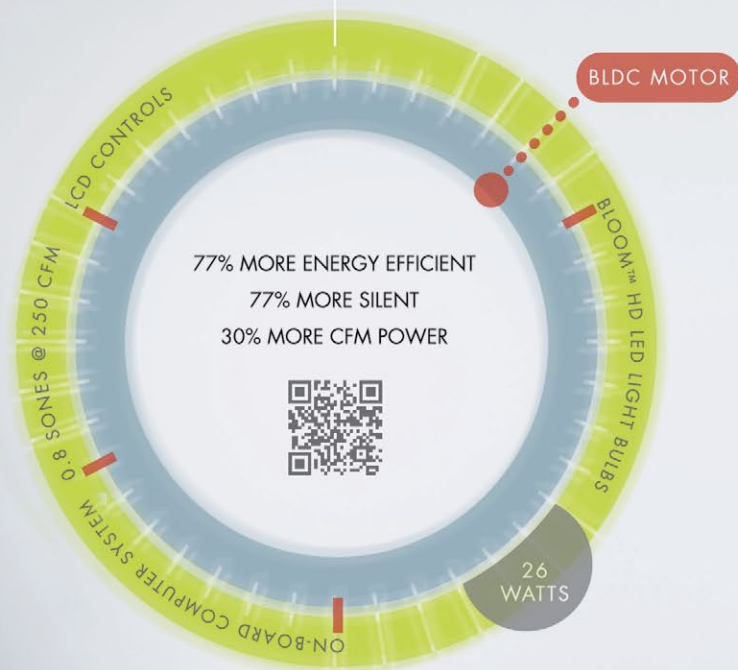
Constructed from premium, durable, 16-gauge stainless steel, each sink in the 1600 Professional Series is built to withstand the toughest chores and the heaviest pots and pans. Designed with culinary masters in mind, these top-of-the-line undermount sinks provide commercial-grade durability in your at-home kitchen.

- **1800™ Series**

High-quality construction and extensive selection come together in the 1800 Series. Strong, 18-gauge stainless steel serves as a solid base, providing reliable performance for any kitchen task. A wide array of options within the 1800 Series, including drop-in and undermount designs and an off-set configuration, provide the perfect solution to meet the needs of nearly any space.



| continued on page 20 |



The Future is Wow

Zephyr's Next Generation Europa Collection features the industry-first DCBL Suppression System,™ which results in the most silent, energy efficient and performance-driven range hoods today. Cutting edge green technology makes this collection a modern kitchen must—today, tomorrow, and forever.

Learn more about all our Zephyr products at www.zephyronline.com/RO

DCBL 

ZEPHYR

• **2000™ Series**

The 2000 Series delivers design and functionality at an attractive price. With a variety of configurations and both drop-in and undermount options, the 20-gauge stainless steel products provide quality selections that are the perfect fit with nearly any countertop material.

• **2200™ Series**

The 2200 Series offers 22-gauge stainless steel construction for sturdy functionality. These drop-in sink options are available in a single- or double-bowl configurations – the two most commonly used by homeowners.

Drop-in sinks in each line will also include Moen’s refreshed sink deck design, a minimal, transitional style which coordinates with a variety of décor and faucet designs. Like all Moen products, the new deck is thoughtfully designed: most of the deck is recessed, which allows for sponges, or other wet items, that are placed on the inner ledge to drain back into the sink, and not onto the countertop.

Moen sinks feature SoundSHIELD™ undercoating which ensures exceptional sound deadening. A wear-resistant, uniform, brushed finish offers durability and resistance to chipping, cracking, staining or peeling. Limited lifetime warranties are standard for all stainless steel sinks.

For more information about Moen’s complete line of stainless steel sinks and a full list of sizes and configurations, visit moen.com or call 1-800-BUY-MOEN (1-800-289-6636).

VINOTEMP LAUNCHES ITS DESIGNER SERIES INDOOR/OUTDOOR REFRIGERATOR AND AUTOMATIC ICE MAKER



THE DESIGNER SERIES IS VINOTEMP’S FIRST LINE OF INDEPENDENT DEALER EXCLUSIVE PRODUCTS



Vinotemp, a recognized leader in the wine storage and refrigeration industry for 25 years, launched the new Designer Series Indoor/Outdoor Stainless Refrigerator and Automatic Ice Maker. Both units are part of Vinotemp’s new independent

dealer exclusive Designer Series product line and were recently recognized with Platinum Awards for Design Excellence (ADEX).

“Vinotemp’s Designer Series is the result of decades of experience and the products are meticulously created with a certain audience in mind,” states President of Vinotemp, India Hynes. “The new Designer Series Indoor/Outdoor Refrigerator and Automatic Ice Maker represent an effective collaboration between form and function; they provide excellence through performance while maintaining a high standard of visual aesthetics.”



Features of Vinotemp’s Designer Series Indoor/Outdoor Stainless Refrigerator (VT-DS15SB90-OR):

- Available for indoor and outdoor use
- Seamless stainless steel construction
- Three adjustable chrome plated wire racks and a basket provide ample storage
- Chrome plated racking prevents rust
- Easy-to-adjust temperature control knob (temperature range 35 – 50 F)
- Interior lighting
- Front vented for built-in or freestanding installation
- Dimensions: 14.5” W x 22.875” D x 33.5” H
- SRP: \$1699.00

Features of Vinotemp’s Designer Series Indoor/Outdoor Automatic Ice Maker (VT-DS15IMSS):

- Available for indoor and outdoor use
- Seamless stainless steel construction
- Produces 44 lbs. of ice/day
- Removable ice-storage bin holds 25 lbs. of ice
- Automatic overfill prevention
- Front vented and can be recessed, built-in (fully recessed), or freestanding
- Dimensions: 14.625” W x 23.625” D x 33.5” H
- SRP: \$1699.00

The new Designer Series complements Vinotemp’s growth by providing quality refrigeration options through independent dealers. For more information, please visit www.vinotemp.com. To become a dealer please contact Robert Magro of the Product Solutions Group at 888-522-9947.

[continued on page 22]

Introducing Vinotemp's New Designer Series An Independent Dealer Exclusive



149 Bottle Seamless Dual-Zone
Wine Cooler



50 Bottle Seamless
Wine Cooler

Exclusive, patent-pending, distinctive **BLACK** wine racking
Display wine behind dual pane glass
Seamless stainless steel doors
User friendly control panel
Built-in or freestanding installation

Stainless Indoor/
Outdoor Refrigerator



Stainless Indoor/
Outdoor Automatic Ice Maker

Great taste extends beyond the bottle.

A Proud Heritage of Experience and Quality

For over 25 years, Vinotemp has been providing wine storage solutions, making us a leader in the wine storage industry. Our wine cabinets, racks, cellars, metal wine coolers and cooling systems can be found in luxury commercial establishments, gourmet food and wine purveyors, as well as trusted national retailers. Now we have extended this experience and quality to our distinctive, new line of Designer Series products.

Learn more about the benefits of being a Vinotemp dealer by contacting the **Product Solutions Group** at 888-522-9947



STREAMLINE HOODS NEW COLOURLIFE SERIES OF GLASS RANGE HOODS

STREAMLINE HOODS OPENS UP THE WORLD OF RANGE HOODS, PREVIOUSLY LIMITED TO ONLY A HANDFUL OF FINISHES AND COLORS, TO A WORLD OF UNLIMITED GLASS COLORS



Streamline Hoods minimalist Model I-435, is part of the

Streamline Hoods Colourlife Series. The Streamline Colourlife Series is available in standard glass colors of red, green, orange, white black or black pop or any color glass from the RAL color chart and a large variety of Stainless Steel finishes.

Why settle for plain finishes for your range hood when Streamline can match any color with a glass front face? How about a rosy red, a sea foam green or butter yellow? Maybe lavender is your signature color or a floral design will help pull together all the colors in your design palette? At Streamline Hoods, we love color. In fact, we love color so much that we're the only manufacturer of range hoods in the U.S. to match any color you can dream up. Our unique process opens up the world of range hoods, previously limited to only a handful of finishes and colors, to a world of unlimited color.

"Color is subjective. Color can be intimidating, but color can also be fun," states Ramona Panus, president of Streamline Hoods, "of all the choices people make when designing or decorating, color is often the biggest challenge, but, ultimately the most rewarding. The right color can evoke wonderful memories, change your mood and make a statement about your personal style. Whatever your taste, Streamline can match the colors you're dreaming of and turn them into reality."

Streamline Hoods launched in the USA in 2013 with a product line of many innovative and unique range hoods imported from Europe.

Streamline Hoods is the National Distributor of ultra modern and contemporary hoods available in many shapes and sizes. Our goal at Streamline Hoods is to provide outstanding unique products and customer service of the highest quality. Choose from hoods that match your cabinets or appliances or hoods that can be imprinted with photos or a minimalist range hood made in any glass color. Streamline Hoods has something for every taste and style. Design excellence, personalization and new and exclusive materials separate Streamline Hoods from the competition. To view the complete product line visit www.streamlinehoods.com.



FRIGIDAIRE LAUNCHES ITS NEW GALLERY FRENCH DOOR REFRIGERATOR

A CONVENIENT DESIGN OFFERING MORE THAN 100 WAYS TO ORGANIZE

FRIGIDAIRE Frigidaire has launched its new Gallery French Door Refrigerator, the latest addition to its Gallery collection. The new unit is designed with the refrigerator above the freezer and features Frigidaire's innovative organization system, which will give | continued on page 26 |

Flex to Fit All.

Brought to you by Almo



Model #FFHN2740PS

Introducing the Flexible French Door Refrigerator

The most flexible refrigerator yet has adjustable flip-up and slide-under shelves, plus stackable crisper drawers for 100+ ways to organize and customize the refrigerator interior. It's the refrigerator that flexes to fit all.

SpaceWise® Flip-up & Slide-under Shelves

Easily make room for tall or large items

Full-width Cool-Zone® Drawer

Large capacity drawer extends completely with space to store a large sheet cake and large platters

Freezer Basket with Divider

Deep freezer storage with adjustable divider

Quick Ice

Delivers up to 37% more ice

Energy Saver Plus Technology

Uses less energy than it takes to run a 60-watt lightbulb

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Fagor Announces a New Addition to Refrigerator Line

The Dual-Zone Wine Cooler



Fagor America Inc., a worldwide leader in built-in induction cooktops and innovative kitchen appliances, is excited to announce a new addition to their refrigerator line, a Dual-Zone Wine Cooler that is sleek and modern in design and allows for complete versatility in wine storing. The 24" stainless steel wine cooler is designed with two separate cooling zones to cool a variety of wines at one time. Its unique design has an

electronic touch-screen control on the glass door, allowing you to adjust the temperature and other operational functions through the glass door. The Dual-Zone Wine Cooler adds to Fagor's 24" total kitchen collection.

The new Stainless Steel 24" Dual-Zone Wine Cooler is built with 5 glide-out wooden racks, a bottle capacity of 44, which is exceptional for its size, soft interior LED lighting in each zone and an elegant blue LED display showing the real-time temperature of each wine zone.

The Fagor Dual-Zone Wine Cooler also has glide-out racks which hold all bottle shapes and fully extend at 90° door opening and a child safety lock that prohibits any unnecessary tampering with temperature. Its temperature range is from 38°F – 68°F which is perfect for all types of wines, red, white and sparkling wine, allowing you to chill an ice cold bottle of Champaign and a room temperature Pinot Noir in the same space.

The unit also has an ultra-powerful compressor and forced air cooling with dual fans that constantly maintains stable temperatures, in addition to a Vibration Neutralization System that offers triple layer protection against harmful exterior vibrations. The unit also has a low energy consumption rate, making it energy efficient. The Fagor Wine Cooler is part of the modern energy efficient collection Fagor is well-known for.

The Fagor wine cooler is a fully front breathing unit with a flush back. It can function as a freestanding Wine Cooler, an under counter unit or integrate into existing cabinetry in any home.

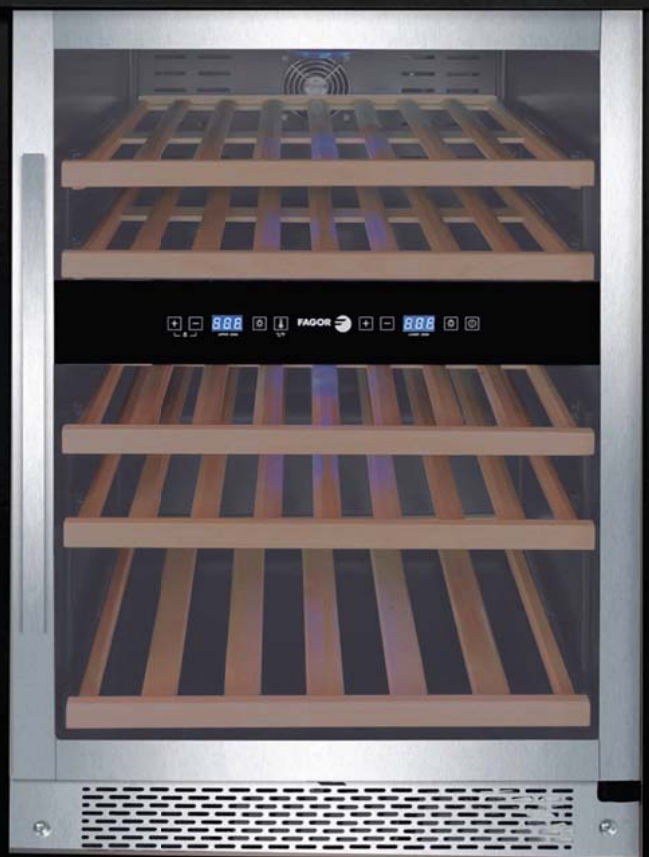
"We are constantly expanding our appliance collection to give consumers a multitude of options to enhance the versatility of their kitchens," said Sara de la Hera, VP of sales and marketing. "Our Dual-Zone Wine Cooler brings us closer to completing the 24" total kitchen solution."

The suggested retail price for the Fagor Dual-Zone Wine Cooler is \$1099.

For more information, please call 201.804.3900. **RO**

The Fagor Dual-Zone Wine Cooler

Continue the 24" Cabinet Profile with Style and Efficiency.



The new Fagor Dual-Zone Wine Cooler has a unique closed door "touch-screen" control panel that allows you to control both wine-zone temperatures without opening the door. Crafted with solid Beechwood glide-out racks that quietly hold a 44-bottle capacity in a luxurious and efficient design.

www.fagoramerica.com





Available now, the refrigerator is ENERGY STAR® qualified, available in stainless steel, black and white and retails for \$1,999 to \$2,899. Please visit www.frigidaire.com for more information.

*As compared to other consumer refrigeration water filtration systems.

consumers more than 100 ways to organize their food. The refrigerator has also earned the Good Housekeeping Seal after evaluation by the Good Housekeeping Research Institute.

The organization system features new flip-up and slide-under shelves. Unique to the industry, the Frigidaire system lets consumers customize the organization of their refrigerator to make more room for their specific pots and pans, storage containers and specialty food items.

"Our innovations are designed based on consumer-driven insights," said Joon So, vice president and general manager of Refrigeration, Freezers and Home Comfort Products for Electrolux in North America. "Between work, school, family time and other activities, consumers' lives are more complicated than ever," said So. "This refrigerator accommodates them and gives them an organized and easy-to-use appliance that delivers fresh food," he added.

Additional features include:

- Moveable and Stackable Crisper Drawers—Allows the user to customize the refrigerator based on individual needs.
- PureSource Ultra® Water Filtration—Provides best-in-class*, cleaner, fresher water and ice.
- Three-Tier LED Lighting – Corner-to-corner lighting for better visibility.
- Store-More™ Full-Width Drawer—Offers storage for small to large items.
- Store-More™ Bins—Designed to hold more, like a gallon of milk.
- Deep Freezer Basket—Deep plastic freezer storage with adjustable divider.



INSINKERATOR LAUNCHES NEW AFFORDABLE DISPENSERS AT KBIS AND CELEBRATES THE COMPANY'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY



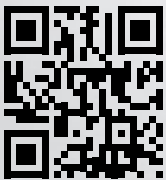
InSinkErator® first introduced its instant hot water dispensers in the 1970s, but two newly redesigned hot-only models stepped into the 21st century at the 2013 Kitchen & Bath Industry Show (KBIS). Named Classic™ and Contour™, the new models showed off their stylish new looks at | continued on page 28 |

INTRODUCING THE PERFECT PAIR

The AquaSmart™ washer and AeroCare dryer are a perfect match. The 22lb AquaSmart™ uses SmartDrive™ technology to wash your family's laundry efficiently and thoroughly, and the SmartTouch™ control dial makes it easy to select an expert wash every time.

The AeroCare dryer works with care and precision based on the needs of the fabric. Two refreshing steam cycles de-wrinkle and refresh garments.

The matching toughened glass or white steel soft-close lids provide both appliances with strength and chemical resistance. This perfect pair are made for each other.



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KBIS among the full line of InSinkErator instant hot water dispensers and food waste disposers.

"There is no better time to reintroduce our most affordable instant hot water dispensers than now, when InSinkErator is celebrating its 75th anniversary," said David MacNair, vice president of marketing for InSinkErator. "Looking ahead, the two new models in the Invite™ line Classic and Contour are just the start of more to come."

Invite is one of four lines of dispensers offered by InSinkErator, a business unit of Emerson (NYSE: EMR) and the world's largest manufacturer of dispensers and food waste disposers. The Invite Series' stylish new designs have automatic shut-off features and come with an upgraded hot water tank and a more robust, optional filtration system.

InSinkErator's dispensers come in a variety of models and up to 11 designer finishes, matching any kitchen décor, from traditional to contemporary. Instant hot water dispensers streamline the cooking process, and ease food prep and cleanup by instantly delivering 200-degree, near-boiling filtered water. InSinkErator instant hot water dispensers are available through home centers, kitchen and bath showrooms, and plumbers nationwide.

Also at KBIS, InSinkErator displayed its complete Evolution Series® food waste disposers and feature an interactive grinding station, equipped with Evolution Excel®. The disposer features three grind stages and ultra-quiet technology, allowing users to quietly grind everything from rib bones to fibrous food like celery. For more information, visit www.insinkerator.com.

[continued on page 30]

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small particle capture.*



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GRAND OPENING OF ABW'S TASTE OF LUXURY APPLIANCE SHOWROOM IN SUBURBAN WASHINGTON, DC.



Appliance Builders Wholesale, Silver Spring, MD recently hosted the Grand Opening of their new 14,000 sq. ft. "Taste of Luxury Appliance Showroom" in Silver Spring, MD.

There was a cocktail and hors d'oeuvres party for the 400 Interior Designers, Architects, Builders, factory distributors and manufacturers attending. Juan Cariba, President, said that he was thrilled with everyone's response, and based on that response he believes that his company's major expense for this facility is well justified and just what the area needed.

All the leading brands of luxury appliances were represented, with chefs cooking at many of the manufacturer's displays. There were cooking demonstrations by Viking, Wolf, Bertazzoni, AGA, Dacor, Kitchen Aid, Miele, and General Electric.

TWO-DRAWER REFRIGERATOR BRINGS NEW STYLE TO OUTDOOR KITCHENS

SUMMIT APPLIANCE OFFERS A NEW ALTERNATIVE FOR OUTDOOR KITCHEN SETUPS



Designed for built-in or freestanding use, the SP6DS2DOS is sized at just 24" wide for an easy fit under counters in patio kitchens. Inside and out, the unit is constructed from weather resistant 304 grade stainless steel, with a sealed back and integrated GFCI cord for added safety from the elements. The interior uses automatic defrost operation and has a 5 cu.ft. capacity that can accommodate tall bottles. Professional handles complete the drawer fronts.



"Drawer refrigerators are a modern alternative to traditional front-opening appliances," says Steve Ross, vice president of Felix Storch, Inc. "Customers get the same convenience of a standard refrigerator, but the unique drawer design adds something new."

In addition to two and three-drawer outdoor refrigerators, Summit Appliance's outdoor line also includes front-opening refrigerators and matching freezers, as well as beer dispensers, icemakers, and a new line of 15" wide beverage coolers. To learn more about Summit's outdoor products, visit www.summitappliance.com/outdoor or call 1-800-932-4267. **RO**



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Momentum Building for Home Improvement Activity

Spending by homeowners on improvement projects is expected to accelerate as the year progresses, according to the Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity (LIRA) released today by the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. On top of the almost 10% growth reflected in U.S. Census Bureau figures for 2012, the LIRA projects strong gains in homeowner remodeling spending continuing throughout 2013, with some moderation in the pace of growth toward the end of the year.

“Existing home sales were up almost 9% last year, and house prices are increasing in most markets across the country,” says Eric S. Belsky, managing director of the Joint Center. “This has increased the home equity levels for most homeowners, encouraging them to reinvest in their homes.”

“The strong growth that we’ve seen recently is putting pressure on the current capacity of the home improvement industry,” says Kermit Baker, director of the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center. “Contractors and subcontractors are having more difficulty finding skilled labor, and building materials costs are unusually volatile for this stage of a recovery.”

The Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity (LIRA) is designed to estimate national homeowner spending on improvements for the current quarter and subsequent three quarters. The indicator, measured as an annual rate-of-change of its components, provides a short-term outlook of homeowner remodeling activity and is intended to help identify future turning points in the business cycle of the home improvement industry. The

development of the LIRA is detailed in “Developing a Leading Indicator for the Remodeling Industry” (JCHS Research Note N07-1). In July 2008, the LIRA was re-benchmarked due to changes in the underlying reference series. These changes are explained in “Addendum to Research Note N07-1: Re-Benchmarking the Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity” (JCHS Research Note N08-1). The LIRA is released by the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University in the third week after each quarter’s closing.

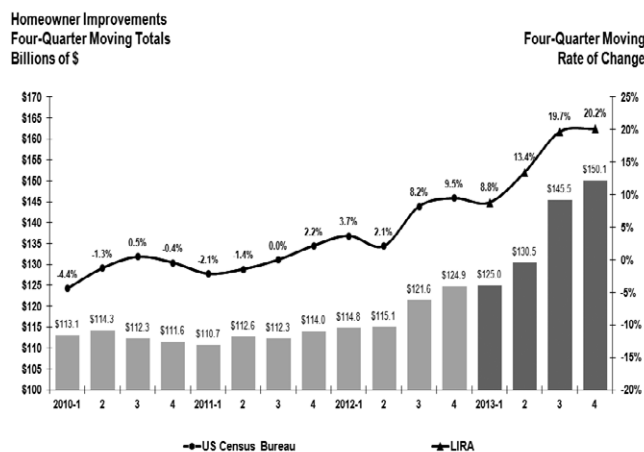
The next LIRA release date is July 18, 2013.

The Remodeling Futures Program, initiated by the Joint Center for Housing Studies in 1995, is a comprehensive study of the factors influencing the growth and changing characteristics of housing renovation and repair activity in the United States. The Program seeks to produce a better understanding of the home improvement industry and its relationship to the broader residential construction industry.

The Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies advances understanding of housing issues and informs policy. Through its research, education, and public outreach programs, the center helps leaders in government, business, and the civic sectors make decisions that effectively address the needs of cities and communities. Through graduate and executive courses, as well as fellowships and internship opportunities, the Joint Center also trains and inspires the next generation of housing leaders.

For more information, please visit www.jchs.harvard.edu. **RO**

Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity – First Quarter 2013



Note: The first quarter 2013 estimate is calculated using preliminary Census Bureau data and LIRA projections.
Source: Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University.

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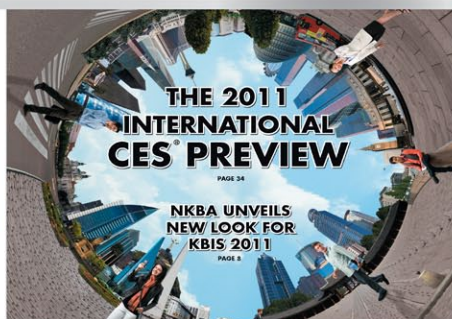
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POST NEW ORLEANS TOUR **KBIS MARKS A NEW DIRECTION**



THE LARGEST KITCHEN & BATH INDUSTRY EVENT LOOKS AHEAD TO DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION WEEK 2014

KBIS, the largest U.S. event devoted to kitchen and bath products and industry trade professionals, recently wrapped up an exciting event at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. Attracting more than 20,000 professional registrations, 400 exhibitors and over 250 media, the event reflected the overall improvement in the housing and remodeling markets.

"There is no question that KBIS is one of the best business investments for each and every segment of the kitchen and bath industry. I'm thrilled to have been a part of such an energetic and inspiring event," said John Morgan, 2013 National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) president. "The exhibits, the new learning opportunities, and the added attractions hit just the right notes to motivate everyone who joined us at KBIS."

Approximately 45% of show attendees represented the designer, dealer, and builder/remodeler audiences, and 30% of total registrants touted membership in the National Kitchen & Bath Association. The audience included a large percentage of small business owners, CEOs and presidents seeking the relationships they need to grow their businesses. Guests hailed from five continents with the strongest attendance from North America.

More than just an exhibition of new products, KBIS 2013 featured industry insights, educational programming, product innovation, cutting edge technology, exciting events and forward-thinking design. An expanded NKBA conference experienced standing-room only sessions, with healthy conference attendance. With happenings on and off the show floor, | *continued on page 36* |



most notably NKBA 50th anniversary celebrations, KBIS took over New Orleans for an energizing, engaging and action-packed three days.

“Feedback from our exhibitors was extremely positive,” said Jim Scott, managing director. “Many brought new products, new displays and new ideas to New Orleans, as well as hosting in-booth events and learning sessions which added to the overall energy on the floor.” Coming off a successful 2013 event, KBIS makes a bold move forward next year with Design and Construction Week. For the first time, KBIS and the International Builders’ Show will co-locate in Las Vegas February 4-6, 2014. Expected to draw over 70,000 professionals, KBIS is already more than 85% sold for the show.

NKBA CONFERENCE PROGRAM

This year’s vastly expanded conference program significantly enhanced the return on investment for both attendees and exhibitors. “Voices from the Industry” attracted an average of 30 participants per session during the first two days of the show, with some reaching standing-room-only at more than 70 attendees.

In addition, nine new courses providing more in-depth training attracted nearly sell-out crowds on universally relevant subjects such as “Google AdWords — An Introduction to Search Marketing,” and “Recruiting & Hiring for Success.”

“Our goal was to enhance learning opportunities at KBIS that infuse every business in our industry with fresh ideas and inspiration,” said Nancy Barnes, NKBA director of learning.

OPENING KEYNOTE

Gary Vaynerchuk, New York Times and Wall Street Journal best-selling author, as well as a self-trained wine and social media expert, presented “The Thank You Economy” in the La Nouvelle Ballroom to open the show Friday, April 20 to a packed house. Vaynerchuk inspired everyone in the room to discover new opportunities for success in the current era of social media. He successfully illustrated how authenticity, originality, honesty and good intent—powered by the Internet and social media—are competitive advantages for small businesses. His energetic presentation left the audience revved up and ready to open the show.

BEST OF KBIS

This year continued the tradition of the Best of KBIS Awards, with more than 30 manufacturers submitting products for consideration.

KBIS DESIGN STUDIOS

Eight well regarded design professionals were selected to





interpret various spaces for a range of generational lifestyles featured in the KBIS Design Studios. Each designer brought their own personal design style, love of products and brands and functional considerations to life using an advanced technology platform, allowing them to interact with their clients in more engaging ways.

30 UNDER 30

The National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) launched its first ever 30 Under 30 program at KBIS 2013. The 30 carefully selected individuals under the age of 30 made its debut in the NKBA booth on Center Stage. The group spent time exploring innovations, trends and making new connections on the show floor. The show closed with the 30 Under 30 Group returning to the NKBA Center Stage to share the results of their explorations and answered questions from the audience.



MULTIMEDIA STAGE

Show attendees stopped by the Multimedia Stage to see presentations on Luxury Bathroom Trends, Outdoor Kitchen Design, new platforms like TDN (The Design Network) and watch MyFixItUpLife LIVE as they interviewed design celebs such as Jeff Devlin, Host, DIY Network and contractors Anthony Carrino and John Colaneri, Hosts, Cousins on Call, who stormed the stage for a surprise appearance.



LOOKING FORWARD: DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION WEEK 2014

There was a bit of Vegas on the KBIS 2013 show floor. At one point on Saturday, April 20, John Morgan, President, NKBA, paraded through the aisles along with four Las Vegas Show Girls, handing out Design and Construction Week 2014 beads. Next year, KBIS will co-locate with the International Builders' Show (IBS), in Las Vegas for Design and Construction Week. At this point, KBIS 2014 is 85% sold out, retaining a majority of existing exhibitors and welcoming new exhibitors such as Ronbow, Masterbrand Cabinets, Betch and more.

"We're thrilled with the excitement, energy and enthusiasm coming out of KBIS 2013," said Bill Darcy, CEO, NKBA. "Interest in the 2014 event, coupled with the new Design & Construction Week platform, is tremendously exciting. Audience engagement is the strongest it's been in a number of years. We look forward to continuing the momentum through our KBIS platforms like KBIS 365 and kbis.com leading into an outstanding event in Las Vegas."

For the latest news and announcements visit www.KBIS.com, follow KBIS on Twitter at @KBIS2014 and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/KitchenBathIndustryShow. **RO**



Upsell Me... Please!

Nearly every time I travel, I stop by Woody Creek Cafe at Denver International Airport to buy a salad to take onboard. I'm fond of their crunchy blue cheese salad—especially when I put a scoop of tuna on top. Today, as always, they reminded me that for only a dollar more I could get a regular size instead of the small salad I ordered. No, thank you. For that same amount, I could also get a cup of soup or a half of a sandwich. No, thank you. Cookie, perhaps? No, thank you.

I'm sure the folks at the café weren't worried that I might be hungry. They were trying to tempt me with all they had to offer.. Upselling at its best.

You can't order a Big Mac without hearing the famous, "fries with that?" or "apple pie today?" Airlines have taken upselling to new heights offering more leg room for more money. You won't get there any faster, but the flight might be more pleasant.

The clerk at the grocery store often asks if I need stamps or additional cash back with my ATM purchase.

At the car wash, my impulse choice of a quick wash usually gets upgraded to include Rain-X, cleaning my trunk or a tire treatment. Won't improve my gas mileage, but might make me smile as I tool down the road.

Upselling is everywhere. Sometimes I say "yes" and other times, "no." But I'm never offended or upset by the offer. Many times, the seller has reminded me of something I forgot or helped me avoid making a mistake or a return trip to the store.

Similarly, your associates have hundreds of products and services to offer your customers. Unlike the clerks at McDonald's, though, they may not be trained to ask every customer for something more than what they've come in to buy.

The obvious add-ons are extended warranties and fabric protection. "This refrigerator is so reliable; we can extend the warranty and guarantee its performance for up to five years." For some customers, peace of mind is priceless.

Cables, hoses, range and dryer cords, batteries...those should be a given. But it may take a bit more suggestion to add screen cleaner, range cleaner or dishwasher freshener.

Even more than including add-ons and accessories, many sales give associates an opportunity to include additional products. How about trying to add a disposer to every dishwasher sale? In most homes, they're the same age and the customer might save time and money having them both installed at the same time.

How will your customer's old hood or over the range microwave look with her new cooktop? Probably old and dated. Opportunity knocking.

You would be serving a laundry customer well by suggesting she purchase a matching dryer when she stops in to buy a washer. She would be very disappointed if her dryer failed fairly soon and the matching one to her new washer was no longer available. Besides, look at the great price you could

offer on a matching pair.

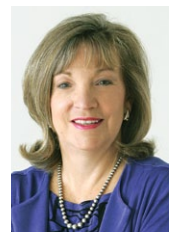
Furniture dealers have long understood the value of adding end tables, lamps and accessories to their sales. And now mattress buyers have a slew of things to buy in addition their new beds—if only someone suggested those items.

I don't know how I ever lived without my new adjustable foundation. Never mind that it cost more than the mattress; a friend in the industry told me I "had to have it." I took his advice. Of course I bought a new mattress pad, pillows and top of bed, too. It's really hard to get up in the morning.

I didn't super-size the salad today, but my car does shine. I'm pretty comfortable up here in Economy Plus on my flight to San Francisco. I love it when knowledgeable, helpful associates help me make better decisions. They're the experts.

You work hard to develop a relationship of trust with your customers. Give them the opportunity to decide how much extra they'll be willing to buy. They'll let you know when enough is enough. But they'll also say yes and be glad you were professional and helped them get everything they might want or need. They'll even come back for more. **RO**

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



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Personal Connections

Mastering the Telephone

You have only one chance to make a first impression.

While that statement is something you've probably heard at least 1,000 times, many of us think of it only in terms of meeting someone in person. We fail to realize the importance of that first impression when meeting someone over the telephone.

The truth of the matter is that, when interacting with a customer on the telephone, you must work even harder to ensure a great first impression than you would if you were meeting face to face. Why? Because your voice—and your words—must compensate for the lack of visuals that would connect you with your customer when talking to each other in person.

Here are some tips I urge you to put into practice in order to provide your call-in customers with the best possible service:

- **Answer the telephone within the first three rings, fewer if at all possible.**

The longer the phone rings, the more frustrated the customer becomes. Everyone is in a hurry today, whether it's driving down the freeway or calling a business. When you answer the phone quickly, it not only lessens the chance the customer will be irritated, it sends the message that her call is important.

- **Immediately identify yourself and your company.** You should introduce yourself over the phone just as you would introduce yourself in person.

- **Be friendly.** This sounds simple, but it isn't. Put a smile in your voice. Being friendly—and sounding friendly—helps to offset any negative feelings the customer might have and sets the tone for the conversation that will follow.

- **Have all the necessary resources readily available.** When a customer calls with a problem, the last thing she wants to do is wait while you rummage around, trying to find what you need to answer her question or solve her problem.

- **Use the caller's name.** There is no sweeter sound to anyone than the sound of his own name. Be careful, however, not to over-use the customer's name. Doing so can sound stilted and condescending.

- **Listen.** You can't provide what a customer needs unless you listen to him tell you what those needs are. Because the caller can't see you nod your head in understanding or give other visual indicators that you hear what he is saying, you must give verbal responses to let him know you are listening. And don't be fooled into thinking that the customer can't tell whether or not you are giving him your full attention—or checking your emails.

- **Don't interrupt.** When you interrupt a customer, you send a message that you are not giving her your full attention. It also increases the chance that you will

miss a critical piece of information. Wait until the customer stops talking and then ask for any additional information you might need in order to provide the best service possible.

- **Transfer a caller only when absolutely necessary.** Explain why you need to transfer him, make sure he doesn't mind being transferred, and give him the name of the person to whom he will be speaking. And don't ever hang up before you are sure that the call has been transferred successfully. There is nothing more frustrating to a customer than to be disconnected and have to call again.

Handling telephone calls—and handling them well—is a skill that can be learned. I recommend that you do some role playing that will allow you to develop the skills that will help you create a great first impression, calm a frustrated customer, and quickly and efficiently provide that customer with what he needs. Whether the caller is placing an order or lodging a complaint, a sincere and caring attitude goes a long way to ensuring a customer's loyalty to you and your company. **RO**

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



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Advice From Atticus: How to Let Them Go

I knew things were precarious when our new governor announced that she was going to ‘trim the fat’ off government. This meant over 1000 management jobs were on the chopping block. My boss called me in to say, “I’m not saying that you’re losing your job, but I want you to know what’s going on in the organization.” I had only been there a year; I had no seniority. Thank goodness for her willingness to be honest with me, otherwise, a few months later, when her boss chose to leave me a voicemail to tell me he’d decided to cut my job, I would’ve been completely shocked.

I thought this was a terrible way to learn about my subsequent termination, so I asked him about it the following Monday. “I’m confused,” I said, “I can’t think of any reason why, especially based on our past experiences as colleagues, you might choose to leave me a voicemail to tell me my job is being cut?” He said he wanted to give me as much notice as possible. I said that while I appreciated those three extra days, I would’ve more appreciated an opportunity to speak to him in person.

This was pretty much it—a couple of weeks later, I sent him an email to find out when he planned to do this. His reply: “I’m not sure. Let me get back to you on this.” Finally, I called him again to confirm my last day. “I’ve never been terminated before,” I said, “is there anything special I’m supposed to do or sign?” His reply: “No, I don’t think so.” You get the picture? Honestly, I actually felt sorry for the guy

rather than sort of indignant that I was having to fish around for details of my demise. I kept thinking there had to be a better way that both of us could feel a little bit better about the final outcome.

Here’s what I might have offered:

- **Be Honest and Sincere.** Things happen. Organizations restructure and change and grow. Sometimes, jobs end, but everyone I know will tell you they’d rather have the hard truth than spend anxious moments trying to figure out what’s going on and how they’ll be affected. Even if you can’t share all the information, share what you can and own it. Be real. People know when you’re not.
- **Show Empathy.** One of the greatest investments to make in another human being is empathy. This is a sincere demonstration that you understand what they are feeling and why they’re feeling this way. Even if you don’t know how they feel because you’ve never been in the same situation, listen. Reflect without judgment or pity. Remember this is an individual person—one size does not fit all. Be willing to listen to this person sitting across from you.
- **Be Helpful.** Be willing to talk about options, whether within or outside your organization. Ask them how you might be helpful, and follow-up. Offer connections, resources or contacts. Ask them what they’ve considered and what options they might have. Even the

smallest effort will communicate that you care about them as a human being, and that they are not just a number or a job to be cut in tough budget times.

- **Wear Those Shoes.** Remember Atticus Finch? In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, he tells his daughter Scout that she needs to consider how she might feel wearing the other person’s shoes, then she can make decisions and form opinions. Have you been here before? If not, what would you appreciate in this situation? If this person were a member of your family or someone for whom you cared deeply, how would you treat them? How would you demonstrate your humanity and humility? I’m thinking a voicemail might not be your choice to hear about your termination.
- **Remember the Relationship.** It is, ultimately, about relationships. You never know when your paths may cross again. You may never know how you might be connected to this person in another way. Additionally, how do you want to be remembered—‘that’s the guy who fired me’ or ‘that’s the guy who was kind and respectful in difficult times?’ **RO**

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





Wish

by Andrew Bannecker

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A Team's Function is Only as Good as the Strategies Employed

Leaders must learn how to help their teams achieve incremental success. When teams are created, leaders must prioritize their work projects, as an overly ambitious plan can easily destroy a new and inexperienced team.

Leaders will find that interlinked objectives building upon one another can produce greater results over time than one large and perhaps overly-ambitious project. In this manner, progress is easily measured while also motivating and building team confidence. As teams develop, this process will aid in their maturation and prepare them to tackle more demanding and complex projects.

As leaders empower teams to facilitate change in the workplace, it is imperative to give them projects with a high probability of success until the team is fully integrated into the organization. Leaders must understand that much is at stake when teams are initially employed because the organization focuses special attention on the project's success or failure.

The following guidelines will aid leaders in selecting initial projects for teams. Additionally, these same criteria can be modified for projects and team development well into the transformation of the organization.

PROCESS

Until the team has matured to the point where members are working well together, it is recommended that leaders encourage the undertaking of tightly focused and easily accomplished projects:

- The results should have a direct impact on the company's customers.
- The process should recycle approximately once a day. As a result, the changes recommended and implemented by teams will likely become evident within a few weeks. With frequent cycles, teams are able to quickly evaluate the effect of their decisions, study the impact and make necessary process changes.
- Selected processes should not be subject to any other major transition or be evaluated by any other team using methods in application. However, if the purpose of the process is to study how to make transitions, then this guideline does not apply.
- Teams should start with relatively simple processes with clearly defined start and end points. If teams would rather start with a large or complex system, then leaders should encourage breaking it down into smaller components.
- A substantial group of leaders should agree that the process selected is important to the company and its customers.
- Especially important during the initial stages of team projects, the area selected should be highly visible. This decision ensures that subsequent team results will be visible to the entire organization.

AREA

There are a couple criteria to consider when deciding upon the area in the organization that teams can have the most impact:

- The area selected should allow leaders, supervisors and operators the opportunity to cooperate and fully integrate themselves with teams. This criterion ensures the utmost input, feedback and accountability from all concerned.

PROJECTS

Leaders need to balance projects within their team environment:

- Leaders should determine that at least half of the projects they select have the potential to produce significant and measurable financial savings for the organization.
- They should ensure that at least half of the projects involve individuals who are relatively low in the organizational hierarchy.
- At least one of their projects should involve interdepartmental collaboration.

Leaders can ensure that projects succeed with small, easily obtainable steps. The process should be entered into slowly and deliberately, allowing the team to mature. Leaders who utilize these techniques help foster the desire in team members to tackle increasingly difficult tasks and assignments. The difficulty of the tasks teams take on will correspond to their gains in maturity and experience. **RO**

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

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





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12TH ANNUAL ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST HOME DESIGN SHOW

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RAVE REVIEWS FROM EXHIBITORS & ATTENDEES ALIKE

EXHIBITORS, TRADE ATTENDEES,
AND CONSUMERS WERE
EQUALLY IMPRESSED, MANY
COMMENTING THAT IT WELL
EXCEEDED THEIR EXPECTATIONS.
THE ENTHUSIASM COULD
BE FELT THROUGHOUT
THE SHOW FLOOR.

The 12th annual Architectural Digest Home Design Show transformed Pier 94 into an international marketplace for luxury design. The four-day fair, held in March, once again attracted more than 40,000 attendees. Trade attendance continues to increase and grew nearly 20% from the previous year, as design professionals see the show as a resource for new products and inspiration. From as far as Mumbai, India, to as close as Manhattan's West 17th Street, the show's 400+ brands featured a fresh mix of furniture, accessories, art, kitchen and bath products, flooring, fabric, lighting, outdoor furnishings, and more. Exhibitors, trade attendees, and consumers were equally impressed, many commenting that it well exceeded their expectations. The enthusiasm could be felt throughout the show floor. Including new and returning brands, an extraordinary lineup of star-studded seminars sponsored by Architectural Digest and The New York Times (held in the Jenn-Air Master Class Studio), culinary demonstrations (held in reFRESH, the event's kitchen, bath, and building-products section), and pier-wide fêtes, the show had much to offer.

| *continued on page 48* |

"We're thrilled with the show this year, as are our sponsors and partners, who continue to come back year after year," said Giulio Capua, vice president and publisher of Architectural Digest. "They understand that our show, more than any other, reaches the audience and customers they want to attract: savvy influencers who want the latest and best design and technology in their homes and the homes of their clients."

Jeff Petersen, director of sales for the Architectural Digest Home Design Show, remarked, "Many exhibitors now use the show as a launchpad for their new collections for the year. This adds to the enjoyment of our visitors, who delight in all the unique and innovative products they see here. Exhibitors were very busily engaged with enthusiastic visitors throughout the four days."

A score of new exhibitors seized the opportunity to show off their wares to a design-savvy audience. Dutch designer Lammert Moerman, managing director of outdoor shower manufacturer Jee-O, commented, "As a first-time exhibitor, we had no idea what to expect. The show has opened up a lot of possibilities for us.

The quality and quantity of attendees was impressive. We met an architect, coincidentally also from Holland, who said he came all the way over just to check out the show. We will definitely exhibit again next year. We want to continue to develop our brand in the U.S. and this show is helping us achieve that." Stephanie Beamer, cofounder of the Brooklyn-based Egg Collective, shared a similar sentiment, "We've met some great contacts. It's been excellent exposure." The design studio was one

of the many artisans to participate in the show's MADE section, which featured the best in limited-edition and one-of-a-kind fine art objects, furniture, and lighting.

From first-time exhibitors to key returnees, the positive vibe echoed through the aisles. "We have seen a decline in attendance at other types of shows, but the thing we like about the Architectural Digest Home Design Show is it has been consistently growing in attendance, even throughout the financial recession," stated Steve Brown, Jenn-Air general manager. The returning exhibitor upped the ante this year with a stellar lineup of new products, an oversize booth, and a prime spot on the main stage. Fellow reFRESH exhibitor Sub-Zero/Wolf East hosted cooking demonstrations in its booth and sponsored an event for more than 200 media attendees in the show lounge, outfitted by Fendi Casa. Frank Sorrentino, vice president of sales and marketing for Sub-Zero Group East, said, "The show is a great place to connect with our industry colleagues, influencers in the design community, and consumers looking for inspiration, as well as exhibit our latest and greatest products."

David Leaser of David Leaser Fine Art, who also made great connections, reported, "The response has been overwhelming for us. The first day was good. Then it turned from good to phenomenal after that. The energy and enthusiasm at this show is electric."

Attendees took note of the show's well-balanced mix of international brands, local showrooms, and handcrafted products. For consumers, it is a chance to look into the pages of the magazine and see them come to life. Trade attendance continues to rise as members of that community see the show as a resource for everything from indoor furnishings to outdoor accessories. According to interior designer Vanessa DeLeon, "This is my go-to show. I am working on a number of projects right now, from a residence in New Jersey to a private villa in St. Maarten. I found so many great products, I had to come back a second day." Many industry professionals also use the opportunity to shop the show with their clients. Brad Ford, founder of Brad Ford I.D. and the designer of the show's Architectural Digest Library & Bookshop, added, "The AD Home Show continues to get

better year after year. Not only does it have an incredible cross-section of the best manufacturers in our industry, but to have them all under one roof makes it both convenient and efficient for me and my clients. I also really liked the addition of the library and bookshop at this year's show. I thought it was a smart way to celebrate design and promote designers' work while also serving as a nice respite for attendees. I'm already looking forward to next year."

"Not only were our exhibitors outstanding, but our show partners—Architectural Digest, The New York Times, and DIFFA (Design Industry Foundation Fighting AIDS)—added to the overall excitement and buzz," commented Michael J. Rabatin, director of marketing for the Architectural Digest Home Design Show. Attendees took note of the well-curated mix of technical and topical material that was covered in Thursday's program, which was specifically geared toward the design trade. In the Jenn-Air Master Class Studio, Architectural Digest Editor in Chief Margaret Russell and celebrity designer Nate Berkus's dynamic keynote presentation on the power of personal style was delivered to a packed house. The New York Times Seminar Series drew equally impressive crowds as leading design professionals discussed everything from sustainable issues in the home-furnishings industry to the latest trends in the kitchen. As always, DIFFA's DINING BY DESIGN tablescapes were dressed to impress. Proceeds from Dining by Design's gala dinner, Cocktails by Design, and silent auction benefited the Design Industry Foundation Fighting AIDS. For more info visit: www.archdigest.com. **RO**





Catering to Today's Sophisticated Shopper

Consumers are increasingly moving toward social media, online, and mobile to buy—and retailers need to pay attention

Remember the good old days, when the parents would load up the station wagon and trek out to their local Sears to shop for a refrigerator? For comparison shopping, they may in fact have driven to two or three such stores before making a decision, returning to one later to close the deal. This shopping process could be a two-, even three-day affair, not to mention the cause of familial strife. Think bored kids and marital discord over which fridge is the best.

OK, so maybe those good old days were not so good after all. Now consumers shop in an entirely different way, and retailers need to take heed of what shoppers want—embracing all platforms as imperative for the sophisticated and evolving consumer.

The Online/In-Store Trend—The trend of the hybrid online/in-store shopping experience is exploding, with more and more consumers shopping for appliances online and then picking up the appliance at the store. This allows comparison shopping in the comfort of the consumer's living room, reduces time spent in the store and waiting in line, and also eliminates shipping (gulp) or delivery costs. Retailers' online presence should be as well-thought-out as their store floor.

Mobile Shopping—The mobile shopping experience is as much a part of consumers' lives as physical retail venues are. In a survey

recently conducted by Appcelerator/IDC of more than 3,000 mobile developers, 93 percent anticipated that it is "likely to very likely" that most retail companies will have enabled mobile commerce in 2013. "We've known that more and more consumers are augmenting their brick-and-mortar shopping with mobile buying experiences, but this quarter over 90 percent of developers anticipate most retail companies will offer a mobile commerce experience in 2013. These findings stress the ubiquity of mobile and the need for the best user experiences that are available to consumers who want to shop and pay anywhere, anytime, on any device," says Appcelerator CEO Jeff Haynie. The study also found that developers predict that 86 percent of shoppers will look up a retailer's site on their device while shopping in a physical retail store in 2013. The new shopping experience is offline, browsing and comparing, and online, sharing, social networking, and learning more about the product. In the appliance market, 40% of consumers expect to spend more on appliances in 2013, with online mobile being the primary research tool.

Social Media Influence—Social Media is an increasingly important tool as consumers look to friends to validate their purchases and generate awareness about a product. An Economic Quarterly Report on Social Media

Influence indicates that "brands are failing miserably at leveraging social media as a channel to create direct response." Pinterest, Facebook, Twitter, StumbleUpon, and LinkedIn all represent ways that consumers find out about products, and although sales are small from these sites' clickthrough, social media is still dictating a growing portion of retail sales. Harnessing this power is key. For example, one noted retailer gave out gift cards to selected people who Tweeted about them during a certain time period, encouraging social media promotion.

Combining It All—A successful retailer will understand and integrate all platforms and ways that consumers shop. A good online presence, including a website where shoppers can compare products, a strong social marketing plan and presence, an e-commerce app, and finally, a great physical retail experience will all help the appliance retailer—and any retailer for that matter—to be successful. **RO**

John White is a 20-year veteran of the appliance industry and is currently serving as the Executive Vice President of Appliances for BrandSource.



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The Millennium Buyer: How Can You Embrace Them?

Are you prepared for the new millennium buyer? Get ready for a fast paced, technology induced, "I want it now" attitude whirlwind. The new millennium buyer comes from a generation fueled by instantaneously getting information at their fingertips. Technology rules their every thought and action. This generation of consumers and their "I want it now" demeanor transcends into their buying trends. Now more than ever, it is important that the furniture industry keep up with this new age generation in order to tap into their interest now and keep them as loyal customers in the future.

The new millennium buyer walks into a store expects the store to look a certain way, which is the key to gauging interest. They want bright colors, a sleek look instead of uniformity, and when they are being presented furniture, they expect it to look like their living room instead of just rows of furniture. The new buyer wants the store to look inviting and familiar, yet trendy. By keeping up with the demands of the new buyer's interest, furniture stores can incorporate more traffic and expect increased sales from this up and coming generation of consumers.

Technology is an evolving aspect of everyday life for the new generation. Technology rules their world in all aspects. Social Media websites such as Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest dominate the market of the younger generation, as these websites serve as an outlet where consumers are checking multiple times a day. Facebook and Twitter allow ads on their website, which then populate on the user's news feed, allowing for the traffic to view their

ad and possibly click out of interest. Facebook and Twitter allow for companies and/or stores to build their own page where they can snap pictures, videos and put up sales, ads or any other vital information that their followers can see in an instant.

The social media website Pinterest allows for a different audience and different mode of getting information out there to this new generation of buyers. Pinterest is a website that allows the world to share pictures of their dream bedrooms, kitchens, living rooms and other areas of interest. By sharing these photographs, it will ignite thousands of views and exposure at a rapid pace. Take advantage of this tool by posting photographs of your furniture inventory that the "now" generation will want to go out and purchase for their own home, simply from a photograph. Social media allows for rapid paced information sharing, which can ultimately lead to more customers and increased sales.

Another new trend in the digital world is the purchasing of furniture online. Buyers are no longer fearful of buying furniture that they have not seen or touched themselves. They have put so much trust and faith into the photographs and information about the product online that they feel confident in buying the furniture over the internet. As long as the retailer discloses enough information online, they can expect a higher percentage of customers to continue purchasing furniture online. The internet allows for the shopper to shop around at the click of a button, so having interesting sales bundles increases the chance for consumers looking for



the best offer to purchase furniture from your store online.

The "now" generation is fueled by technology, instant information and quick buys. This group of new customers may see an ad on television or online and think "I really want that", and then find a way to get that item as quickly and painlessly as possible. The new millennium buyer will purchase what they want if they deem it an item that they desire, and they now expect to buy quickly online through one click of a button or through a store that has caught and maintained their attention. **RO**

Bill Bazemore is the Vice President of Furniture for Nationwide Marketing Group. Call (770) 442-9726 or visit furniture@nationwidegroup.org.





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NATIONWIDE'S MEMBERS CONVERT SHOWROOMS TO IMMERSIVE BUYING ZONES WITH ALL-NEW ANSWERS LEARNING PROGRAM

NEW PROGRAM KICKS OFF WITH INITIAL ORDERS FOR MORE THAN 1000 PRE-PROGRAMMED TABLET DEVICES FOR SALES TEAMS



Scan here to view the ANSWERS Training Trailer

Nationwide Marketing Group continued to leverage their unmatched digital sell-through assets as they premiered their latest technology-based selling system to retail members at their spring ANSWERS Learning Summit held at the Nationwide PrimeMedia center near Atlanta. The program, known as ANSWERS Immersive Buying for the Information Age, is an eleven-module video-

based learning system that teaches front-line store managers and salespeople an array of leading edge skills for working with today's smartphone wielding "iShoppers".

The program's creator Steve Bryant explained, "There was a time when salespeople held most of the cards in the sales conversation, but those days are over. Today's shoppers can access just about any information they need and shop around while they're talking to our salespeople. Our teams' jobs have been transformed from simply selling our products to helping shoppers buy them. Those who are making the most of technology to adapt are enjoying a lot of success, those who aren't will be left behind."

The new ANSWERS system helps Members take advantage of today's information technologies rather than be victimized by them and was developed based on the real world day-to-day experiences provided by a group of Nationwide's most technology-engaged members.

"Having utilized Nationwide's Masters Program for several years, the introduction of ANSWERS has taken the same core behaviors and trust-based environment and has added the fit and finish that today's customers are looking for. Our transition will be complete this fall, and we believe the ANSWERS platform will give us the ability to provide our customers with a consistent, high-touch and industry leading experience," said Mike Whitaker, director of training and development for Big Sandy Superstores. "With the ever-changing landscape of today's retail world, we needed a fresh new approach to serving today's customer at the highest level possible, and for us, ANSWERS is the Answer."

Group President Robert Weisner added, "For years, Nationwide has been investing in the most advanced digital marketing tools in the industry. This program weaves our digital signage, web-videos, infomercials, competitive pricing tools, social media and website marketing strategies into an easy-to-use daily game plan for optimizing our effectiveness on the sales floor."

Nationwide's Group and Vendor subsidized tablet devices, known as

ANSWERS Info-Pads, provide exclusive resources so that sales associates and shoppers can have all the information they need to make a buying decision at their fingertips. They come pre-loaded with price comparison programs, links to vendors' and competitors' sites, video product demonstrations, plus, a wide range of business tools. Since the announcement of the program in March, more than 1000 tablets have been ordered and Nationwide has further enhanced its educational initiatives with a total rebuild of its online learning system into a mobile optimized platform for use with smartphones and tablets.

"Our sales team has already integrated the Info-Pads into their sales routine, utilizing iMedia tube for product demos, as well as Retail deck to pull specs, show photos of products, compare prices with our competition and close the deals. We are finally able to fully embrace "Showrooming" instead of letting the customer do it on their own," says Chris Ybarra, general manager for Friendman's. "The ANSWERS program has helped our sales staff communicate more effectively with the younger demographic of consumers, enabling them to be more comfortable embracing technology on the sales floor and keeping that customer in the store."

Link to the ANSWERS Training Trailer:

www.imediatube.com/video/1512/answers-training-trailer

NATIONWIDE ANNOUNCES DETAILS FOR THE AUGUST PRIMETIME! SHOW



Registration is now open for Nationwide Marketing Group's August PrimeTime! show. The event will be held August 11-14, 2013 at The Gaylord Texan in Grapevine, Texas.

The group's thousands of independent retailers will gain exposure to product demonstrations and valuable educational opportunities only available at PrimeTime! Additionally, dealers will meet with leading appliance, electronics, and furniture manufacturers and have access to unbeatable deals. The show is branded "We are Independents. Strong. Proud. United." The theme showcases the group's recent focus on highlighting the growing success within the independent retail channel.

Nationwide is excited to share some of their newest initiatives at the upcoming show, including an exclusive look at the revamped MemberNet 4.0 site. Aside from increasing business profitability, these resources are designed to increase marketing, management, work culture, member services, and web services initiatives.

Visit www.nationwideprimetime.com for registration information. **RO**

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BRANDSOURCE ENHANCES ITS CONSUMER FINANCE PROGRAM

BrandSource has launched an enhanced new and highly competitive consumer financing program that offers group members the lowest rates in the industry combined with exciting new consumer promotions.

The new BrandSource financing program boasts attractive customer incentives, including a \$50 prepaid Visa gift card that was heavily promoted over Memorial Day weekend after testing last year with several group members.

"When a customer applies for and/or uses the new BrandSource credit card, the approval process is lightning-fast, often finalized in less than one minute," said Bob Donaldson, VP of digital communications at BrandSource. "BrandSource members' store names appear on the card next to the BrandSource logo to help build customer loyalty and encourage frequent visits."

BrandSource has partnered with a new card administrator, Citi Bank Financial Services, to offer exciting new promotions, like the \$50 gift card, double consumer rebates and more than \$1 million in bottom-line cost savings to members.

Credit approvals are nearly 80%, which is outstanding considering the economic conditions many consumers have faced.

In addition, the card offers special high-dollar ticket programs to custom installers of home theater and high-end kitchens. "To date, the biggest finance ticket amount is \$70,000, in the Ohio area," stated Donaldson. "But this finance program is designed to benefit all of our members – large and small."

The \$50 prepaid Visa Gift Card promotion provided members with their biggest credit month ever, providing both current and new card holders an opportunity to take advantage of the promotion.

In addition to the prepaid Visa Gift Card, members were able to choose the best financing terms at rates considerably lower than the lowest in the industry, which saved members even more money.

What's next with the card? BrandSource is working closely with the Citi team to develop more exciting new promotions that benefits both members and their customers, and to help drive more consumers into the stores.

"That's what it's all about," said Donaldson. "The more customers we can pull into our stores with special promotions, the more products our members will sell."

For more information, visit www.brandsource.com.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR THE 2013 BRANDSOURCE CONVENTION & BUYING FAIR



Debbi Fields

The BrandSource convention team has fine-tuned the educational sessions and keynote speaker to provide attendees with more than enough information to take back home and grow their businesses, and just in time for the holiday selling season.

This year, the keynote speaker will be Debbi Fields, who opened her first cookie store in Palo Alto, California in 1977. As everybody knows, humble beginnings launched Mrs. Fields® into a worldwide celebrity and made her company the premier chain of cookie and baked goods stores.

In addition to compelling presentations, outstanding buys and the Stampede that has yet to be matched in the industry, BrandSource members will be immersed in sessions including appliance service, Social Media, Understanding Today's Consumer, Business Management, Digital Marketing, and more. And then there's the entertainment. Three Dog Night has many number one mega hits and will perform for attendees in 70's fashion.

The 2013 BrandSource Convention & Buying Fair will take place August 25-28 at Casers Palace, Las Vegas, Nevada. **RO**



❖ Merchandising ❖ Member Services ❖ Marketing Fulfillment

What is *Outdoor SOURCE*?

Outdoor SOURCE is a member-owned, not for profit, co-operative.

Outdoor SOURCE is also the only buying and marketing group in the country focused on putting more consumers through your doors and dedicated to your day to day success.



Outdoor SOURCE Members

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- ❖ Outdoor Kitchen Appliances
- ❖ Wholesale/Retail Financing
- ❖ Indoor Kitchen Appliances
- ❖ Consumer Electronics
- ❖ Bank Card Programs
- ❖ Fulfillment Services
- ❖ Outdoor Furniture
- ❖ Member Support
- ❖ Marketing



Outdoor SOURCE Mobile App

brings more than 100,000 products directly into the hands of shoppers and members.

- ❖ An Industry first, the OutdoorSource app is free and available in the iTunes app store
- ❖ Best of class sales tools to help members compete with the box stores
- ❖ Use the app to print price tags, show competitive prices in the area and arrange for delivery



Outdoor SOURCE Support Services

Field-based District Manager

One point of contact dedicated to helping members profitably grow their business.

Customer Service & Sales Team Inside sales and customer service representatives available to answer questions regarding products, programs, promotions and services.

Retail Sales Training Dedicated training program tailored to the business needs of BrandSource members.

Member Only Intranet A password protected web site where members can access a complete library of resources for product; securely place orders and manage all back office functions.

Expert Services Offering dealers invaluable assistance in everything from financing, to human resources, health care, service plans and business insurance.

For more information contact:
outdoor@brandsource.com
or call: **800.430.0282**



What's the Real Power of a Press Release for Marketing Your Business?

Press releases are clearly defined as a tool for communicating a specific message concerning your business. The press release is your tool for letting the world know about special newsworthy events, policy changes, awards, advancements, etc. Good news about your firm draws consumer attention & can enhance your status in your industry; but the benefits of good press don't stop there...

When a professionally written release is properly distributed - it not only gets the direct attention of a broad audience of consumers—it helps to build up a reputation for your firm (and your website) as being an authoritative source on your area of expertise. When you issue a press release online, you are able to add very specific and focused keywords that relate to your business and your service/distribution area. When the PR goes out, these keywords are “crawled” (or reviewed) by automatic programming from popular search engines like Google. As these reviews occur, the search engine begins to recognize your company as being attached to a wealth of information & news on the various topics (services) that you cover. On top of that, the keywords and related terms within each of your press releases will provide direct live links to your firm's website.

Now comes the good part. As your firm is recognized as an authoritative source—you start to gain Google's respect and become more important to them. Here's why: Google (and their competitors) want to be known as search engines that give

the public what they want; that means providing the most relevant results for the billions of searches that take place each day. Let's say your company is considered an authority on widgets in Southfield Michigan—when a consumer goes online looking for widgets in Southfield Michigan—the search engines will point to you; getting you in front of potential clients and making the search engine look like the hero.

So, what goes into a press release, you wonder. The answer is fairly simple, but still requires a great deal of consideration and experience. A good press release should first grab the reader's (and search engines') attention with a well-conceived title. Then there is the body of the release—which tells the who, why, what, when, where & how—concerning your company's news. The body is followed up by a boilerplate (which is your firm's pitch telling why you are the best at what you do), and finally—your business contact information (allowing an immediate connection).

Constructing and issuing a press release is a fairly straight-forward process for the experienced, but comes with a huge learning curve for the novice. The structure for the release has to fit certain requirements in order to be published on popular news distribution sites (like eMailWire or PRBuzz). Each of these fee-based distribution services has stringent editorial controls that must be passed before a press release is accepted. Their rules have to be adhered to in order to gain access to their audiences of



thousands of reporters and writers (who can advance your story by further disseminating your report and writing related articles).

Now you have a clearer picture of the process of utilizing a press release to get your company recognized, but keep in mind that this is not a just add water solution; it will require some degree of creativity to develop newsworthy stories, skills to properly format them for distribution, a roughly \$100 (per news site) cash outlay for distribution and quite a bit of patience and time—to do it over and over again—while your site climbs through the search engine ranks... Or, you can just call a pro (Right Now Marketing) and put the task in their experienced hands while you get back to running your business. **RO**

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Disaster Planning and t



It is now six months after super storm Sandy wreaked its havoc on my home town. Marie and I consider ourselves truly blessed because unlike many of our neighbors, our living spaces were spared the awful tragedy of the flood waters by only three inches. However we did not completely escape the ferocity of the storm. Our double attached garage filled with 20 inches of sea water resulting in the loss of our extra refrigerator, our freezer and our best friend, the Wolff's

beer meister kegerator. Our hot water heater and boiler were also submerged during the storm, along with many of our personal items and many of the tools that were stored on the lower shelves. It's hard to imagine the power of sea water and the destruction it can reign down on everything it comes in contact with.

It was about 10:45 pm on the night of the storm when Marie and I decided to evacuate our home. I was watching the waters in the canal continue to rise when all of a sudden the canal could not hold anymore water and it started to spill onto the land. It was like watching the slow fill of a bathtub. It seemed like it was filling slowly but then all of a sudden, when it reaches it limit, there was no stopping the overflow.

In our haste to leave, we grabbed the small suitcase we had prepared, snatched the dog, sloshed our way to my Explorer and headed inland leaving my wife's car which ultimately became another victim of Sandy.

Our evacuation route was blocked in two directions because of the trees that had fallen across the roads and the boats that floated from their normally safe winter storage at the Marinas onto the highway. Our only remaining route was to head north on Fisher Blvd past Snug Harbor, which on a good day is usually flooded, but since we were out of options we went that way. As I had suspected, the road was flooded at its low point. With nowhere to go but forward, I slowed down to a crawl, took a deep breath, said a prayer and hoped that my Explorer would not let us down. Just

as the water began to splash over the hood, we began the slow incline to the high point of the road and finally made it all the way through.

Like an uninvited guest who had overstayed their welcome, the flood waters refused to recede. It was two days before land was visible again. That's when the looting started, but more on that later.

COMMUNICATIONS

How many of you have a transistor radio? Not many I suspect. Today we use our smart phones for almost everything until the cell towers are knocked out and phone lines are down. That is how it was the first few days after the storm. My little nephew had given me one of those crank handled transistor radios a few years earlier. Never having the need for it I put it away. Am I glad I did not throw it out! It became a link to everything that was going on around us. Unfortunately our company cell phones were sporadic at best and communication between the office and staff became almost impossible. My employees did not know what to do because we could not communicate. I am not sure if we could have done anything about an alternate means of communications but I do know that if I had an emergency action plan for my employees, it would have minimized some of the anxiety for myself and confusion for my employees. Knowing what is expected and how to react in the aftermath of a disaster is vital.



The New Normal—Part 2

BUSINESS PLANNING

Since every disaster is different, there is no way to know in advance all that will be needed. Like planning for communication interruption, you can only plan for the first couple of days. After that, everything changes on a daily basis. It is most important to have an emergency planning meeting with your key people as soon as possible. Assessing the immediate and future needs of your company and your customers is a crucial step in recognizing what may be the New Normal. Here are a few of the questions you should ask: How has the landscape of my business changed? How far off center from my business plan has this disaster pushed my company? Has the needs of my customers changed? How should I prioritize my actions? What will be the future needs of my customers and my company?

As an example, almost every appliance in every home along the Barrier Island and inland along the bay was destroyed in the flood. Huge piles of flooded appliance, almost 20 feet high, could be seen in every town. What effect would this have on our COD repair business? What effect would this have on our sales? Would one offset the other and would we have enough man power to handle the needs?

Business planning is and should be an ongoing event. It has been six months since the storm, our business customs have changed because our customers' needs have changed. We have recognized that our direction is being guided by what now will be the New Normal way of doing business.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CUSTOMERS

Understanding the impacts of traumatic events on your customers, your employees and your community is another vital process. When homes are lost and contents are destroyed, people become traumatized and do not always act in a clear and responsible manner. They are upset because they are now out of their comfort zone and their only goal is to put their life back to the way it was as quickly as possible. We are all creatures of habit and enjoy our "Normal Way of Life". Therefore when that normalcy is interrupted or changed it puts great pressure on us to return to our original comfort level. Dealing with customers who have been traumatized can be an exhausting effort. If we are to be good customer service agents, we must empathize with our customers. Empathy is essential but be careful you or your employees do not become a sponge for your customers problems. A continued diet of listening to sad stories and empathizing with your customer's plights can and will put you and your employees into a state of anxious depression.

One way to avoid the pitfall of becoming a sponge is to become a resource for your customers. If you are able to offer helpful advice, it will not only make your customer feel better but it will make you feel better that you were able to help in some small way. Get involved with your local Chamber of Commerce and your church. Knowing what is going on in your community will better prepare you to

offer timely and accurate advice. One of the things we did was to create a list of reputable local contractors along with their phone numbers. We handed them out to the good folks asking, "do you know a good electrician?" or "a good plumber" etc...

Now some people shy away from you when you mention mental health but protecting yourself and your employees from the mental strain of dealing with traumatized customers is a very real responsibility as a business owner. Almost every county has free mental health clinics. These wonderful people are more than willing to come to your place of business and give your employees helpful advice on how to avoid becoming a sponge and how to be a better and happier customer service person. We did and in less than 45 minutes, we all had a better understanding of our customers and how we should protect our mental state.

In Part III we will be discussing the looting that took place, the need for customer credit, maintaining good quality service and how to become an important resource not only for your customers but for your local town officials. **RO**

*Ralph E. Wolff, MCAP, CSM
Industry Relations, PSA*

Service News features alternating writers discussing topics of the service industry.



JAMIE FINNEGAN HIRED AS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER-CONTROL SOLUTIONS OF ALMO PROFESSIONAL A/V

EXPERTISE IN CONTROL, AUTOMATION AND INTEGRATION; FOCUS ON SUPPORTING INTEGRATORS WITH PRE-SALES TRAINING, ENGINEERING AND DESIGN



Jamie Finnegan

Almo Professional A/V, the nation's fastest growing audiovisual distributor, today announced the hiring of Jamie Finnegan as Business Development Manager-Control Solutions, effective immediately. In his new role, Finnegan serves as the technical liaison between Almo's vendor manufacturers and integrators by providing pre-sales training, engineering and design for commercial installations that require high-level systems, lighting, automation and control.

The addition of Finnegan brings Almo Pro A/V's Business Development Manager staff to a total of six technical professionals.

"Jamie brings a wealth of knowledge to Almo from his experience in the Pro AV space and, more specifically, his specialization in control systems," said Sam Taylor, executive vice president and COO for Almo Professional A/V. "He spent six years of his career working for two control manufacturers and 10 years running his own integration firm the experience on both sides of the equation makes Jamie a valuable addition to Almo."

Prior to Almo Pro A/V, Finnegan was a consultant for CFC Industrial Training. Before then he held sales and management positions for URC, Inc., AMX Corporation, Audio Video Design Group and Hi-Tech Integrated Systems, Inc. He studied business at the University of Akron and is a certified LEED green building technology instructor. Finnegan's industry affiliations include USGBC, AIA, CABA, InfoComm-ICIA, CEDIA, CEA, SIA, FPS and FPDA.

Almo Professional A/V's Business Development Managers

Almo holds the unique position as the only distributor to offer its partners a highly specialized fleet of Business Development Managers. Each one brings a multitude of expertise, such as technical knowledge, system design assistance, in-depth brand/product knowledge, bid and project registration capability and a direct line to all of the top manufacturers.

RICK HILL JOINS CLIMATIC HOME PRODUCTS AS VICE PRESIDENT

WITH EXTENSIVE BACKGROUND AND TRAINING, HILL WILL HELP THE TEAM CONTINUE THEIR LONG TRADITION OF PROVIDING "BEST IN CLASS" SERVICES

Climatic Home Products, an appliance sales and logistics leader

headquartered in the Southeast US, announced the addition of team member, Rick Hill. Hill will be joining the company as Vice President, working closely with President, Doug Allen.

"Rick is the right fit for Climatic because he understands what drives the market is not limited to sales," said Doug Allen. "Success in the market is dependent on having the foresight to execute a plan of action to help guide customers through the challenges they face each and every day. Critical to the independent dealer's success is short and long term guidance to sales trends, competitive and economic concerns, marketing strategies and general floor merchandising and training. Rick's experience and relationships with retailers, wholesalers, buying groups and manufacturers will compliment Climatic's many years of service to the appliance industry.

Hill's background includes 25+ years in the appliance industry and included several key leadership positions with Electrolux Home Products as well as experience with General Electric.

"I am delighted to be part of the Climatic team. The Bailey family is well known in the sales and logistics industry, with decades of experience," stated Hill. "They thrive on building strong trusting relationships with their customers. They're committed to the business and have a business plan that includes ambitious growth for the short and long term. I am looking forward to adding value to their already talented team."

Hill has hit the ground running attending the Spring Buying Groups shows. Meeting with the dealers and talking with manufacturers. He will be focusing on growing the existing business and searching for new opportunities and efficiencies to complement the already established Climatic portfolio. Visit www.climaticcorp.com.

IMPERIAL WELCOMES TWO NEW REGIONAL SALES MANAGERS TO ITS TEAM

Imperial Cal Products is proud to announce the addition of two new members to their national sales team, Sandy Turrietta and Marvin Berry. Turrietta and Berry come to Imperial with extensive experience in the appliance industry.

Ms. Turrietta is the regional sales manager for Texas and Louisiana. She was employed with Whirlpool for 31 years where she held the position of Contract Account Manager for 6 years. She also worked in their retail sales, contract sales and operations divisions. Ms Turrietta has extensive experience working with the building industry as well as dealers. Turrietta holds a B.S. degree in Business Management. Having raised her family in California she recently relocated to Texas. Turrietta is a member of the NKBA.

Mr. Berry is the regional sales manager for Northern and Central California. He has been working in the California appliance industry since 1962. Some of the companies Berry worked with during his lengthy career are Amana Refrigeration, Sierra Select Distributing and Dacor Appliance.

He retired from Dacor after having been the Regional Sales Manager covering Northern California, Colorado and parts of the Pacific Northwest. However, Berry realized he wasn't ready for retirement and besides, he says, "My golf game was not getting any better. I am enjoying being back in the work force." Berry and his wife Pat have 3 children. His daughter Stacie has followed in her father's footsteps and works in the appliance industry as well. Berry is a member of the NKBA.

"We are so glad to have Sandy and Marvin as part of the Imperial family. Their experience and expertise will be key as we continue to grow and expand throughout the U.S. and Canada in 2013, says Shari Stanley, president & CEO of Imperial Cal Products.

DACOR CEO MICHAEL JOSEPH ANNOUNCES CHARLES J. HUEBNER AS HIS SUCCESSOR

INDUSTRY LEADER IN DESIGN AND INNOVATION RECRUITS A NEW CEO TO REDEVELOP ITS FAMILY OWNED COMPANY



Charles J. Huebner

Dacor®, a leader in the design, manufacture and distribution of luxury kitchen appliances, announced today that its Board of Directors has unanimously elected board member Charles J. Huebner as the organization's next Chief Executive Officer. Huebner will succeed Mike Joseph, the company's current Chairman and CEO effective immediately, and will be responsible to the Board for all aspects of Dacor's operations and results.

Since 1965, California based Dacor has been led by a member of the Joseph family. Today, by recommendation of the Joseph family, Huebner will work with the company's current President and grandson of the founder, Stephen Joseph.

Under Mike Joseph's 38 years of leadership the business grew from a small company into a significant presence in the kitchen appliance industry. The development of high quality, innovative products has always been a primary focus for the company. Dacor is proud of its many "firsts", including the first 30" Pure Convection, Self-Cleaning Built-In Wall Oven which is now the industry standard. For the noteworthy impact Mike had on the industry, he was inducted into the National Kitchen & Bath Association Hall of Fame in 2004. Now Mike will manage his legacy from his seat as Chairman of the Board leaving the direction of the company to Huebner and his son Stephen.

"I am very proud of the terrific company that has been built over the past 40 years," Mike shared. "I feel very blessed to have had the opportunity to be part of the Dacor team, whose dedication and unique talents have delivered generations of products that consumers delight in using every day. We feel fortunate to have Chuck Huebner join our team, and we are

confident that he will continue to lead Dacor to a bright future while adhering to the Value Statement that we hold so dear."

Huebner has a proven business record beginning his career in sales and brand management at Procter & Gamble and later in business development for The Coca-Cola Company. He applied this experience to successful roles as President and CEO of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a unit of Hasbro, and later as Head of Worldwide Studios at Activision, the largest maker of electronic game software. He most recently led US Operations for Westfield LLC, the world's largest Real Estate Investment Trust. Huebner holds an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, and a Bachelor's degree from Hamilton College.

"I am honored to have been elected as CEO of Dacor," Chuck said. "I look forward to working with Dacor's management team and the Joseph family, and leveraging their passion to bring great kitchen solutions to the consumer."

By embracing the core family values of a fifty year old family owned company, Huebner will focus primarily on repositioning the company strategically into the luxury appliance market by strengthening overall brand awareness and increasing market share through innovative product and market development.

HAIER NAMES RIAN CAIN SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES & MARKETING FOR HOME APPLIANCES AND HOME COMFORT



Rian Cain

Haier has named Rian Cain senior vice president of sales & marketing for Home Appliances and Home Comfort. Mr. Cain comes to Haier with over 30 years of experience in the appliances industry. He will report to Ma Chunyu, COO of Haier America, and will lead all product marketing, sales and branding initiatives for Home Comfort and Home Appliance products.

"Rian Cain brings a wealth of knowledge and experience from his 30 years in the industry and we are excited for him to continue our commitment to provide innovative home solutions to consumers," said Ma Chunyu, COO of Haier America. "We are confident that his exceptional ability to build context and meaning behind our brand combined with his deep understanding of the retail industry uniquely qualify him to lead our sales and marketing teams through this next phase of our growth."

Most recently, Mr. Cain served as Vice President of Sales and Marketing with American TV & Appliances. Prior to American, he was Vice President of Sales & Marketing for Sharp Electronics for the Home Appliance division. Previous to Sharp, Mr. Cain spent the first 22 years of his career with Maytag Corporation where he held progressively increasing roles of sales and marketing responsibility. **RO**

Offering up a World of Savings

Amana brand shows customers that appliances with eco-efficient features don't actually have to cost more

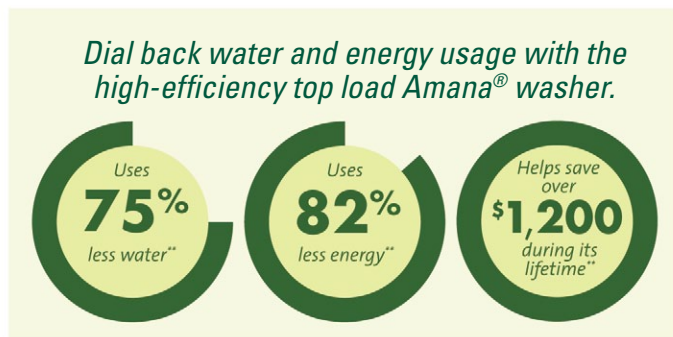
SMALL STEPS TOWARD A BETTER FUTURE

Since opening its doors in 1934, Amana brand has consistently delivered clever solutions to customers before everyone else. But more than where they've been, it's where they're going that makes all the difference.

They're working toward inspiring a greener lifestyle by helping customers lower their utility bills with resource savings inherent in many of their new appliances. It's an eco-conscious evolution springing from the thought that as customers' needs begin to change, so should the brands that cater to them.

EFFICIENCY PAYS

With new appliances, many of which feature resource savings, and a new campaign, Amana brand is surprising customers by showing them just how efficient some of their budget-friendly solutions really are.



Amana® side-by-side refrigerators use 30% less energy and help customers save \$300 over their lifetime.*

The latest Amana® dishwasher features a tall tub interior and Triple Filter wash system, which uses 35% less energy and 62% less water so customers save \$165 during the appliance's lifetime.†

SELL AN APPLIANCE, PLANT A TREE

On top of helping customers save, Amana brand is also helping them make a positive impact by partnering with the agroforestry charity, Trees for the Future.



This means that for every major Amana® appliance sold, a tree will be planted to help rebuild global deforested areas, with a donation of 2 million trees projected for 2013.‡

It's an eco-conscious evolution springing from the thought that as customers' needs begin to change, so should the brands that cater to them.

Amana brand is an appliance company with a purpose—to deliver a breadth of products that fit their customers' lifestyle and also help them save. And when it comes to selling the product on the floor, they've made it easier for you to show your customers how to clean well, store more and help save resources. **RO**

*Compared to the average annual energy usage of a pre-2000 refrigerator based on average use, 12-year life. **Compared to pre-2004 traditional top-load washers average use, normal cycle, 11-year life. †Compared to pre-2006 conventional dishwashers average use, normal cycle, 10-year life. ‡ During 2013, for every major appliance it sells in the U.S., Amana® will donate \$0.10 (the cost of each tree planted). Total donation is expected to plant over 2 million trees.



MORE THAN MEETS THEIR BUDGET

With Amana brand, your customers will discover added value for years to come, thanks to the water and energy savings built into many of our new appliances. It's how we work to inspire a greener lifestyle and help you grow your bottom line.



CALIFORNIA

Alex Holton
(949) 218-8061

NORTH WEST

Mark Collier
(206) 276-9756

SOUTH WEST

Steve Carron
(269) 277-6218

CENTRAL STATES

Mike Hake
(269) 208-8046

GREAT LAKES

Danielle Whah
(269) 876-2357

GREAT PLAINS

Derek Pline
(269) 519-2887

GULF STATES

Jim Webb
(269) 923-1068

FLORIDA

Jimmy Clark
(904) 473-5089

NORTH EAST

Mitchell Isert
(856) 829-0592

ATLANTIC COAST

Mike Druschel
(724) 538-0574

Amana[®]



Indicates appliances with resource-efficient features. Visit Amana.com to see more resource-efficient appliances.

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Sleek, stylish and ever-so-smart, this sophisticated suite of kitchen appliances combines integrated, built-in looks with outstanding performance. From refrigerator styles including the 42" side-by-side with the largest capacity in its class*, to the innovative Door-in-Door™ counter depth model, to dishwashers with the gentle power of LG TrueSteam™, every appliance represents the very best LG has to offer.

All backed by the confidence of a 2-year limited warranty on parts and labor, and the efficient performance you'd expect from the 2013 Energy Star® Partner of the Year.

*Largest in total capacity based on manufacturers' published specifications as of May 2013. Model LSSB2791ST.

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