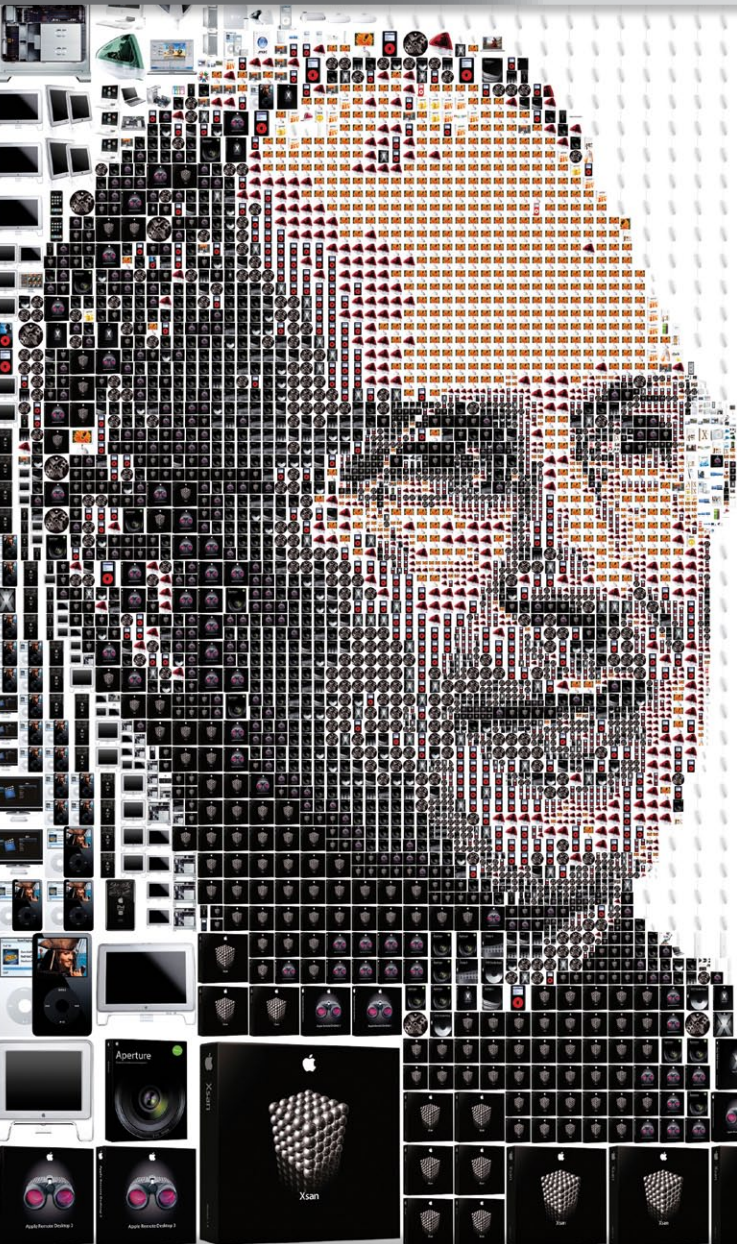


The Retail Observer

November, 2011

AN EYE ON THE INDUSTRY SINCE 1970

Vol. 22, Issue 11



IFA 2011 BERLIN-GERMANY INDUSTRY & RETAILERS CONFIDENT

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Well Done, Steve Jobs

YOU CHANGED OUR WORLD FOREVER

Apple Chairman Steve Jobs, who built the world's most valuable technology company by creating devices that changed how people use electronics and revolutionized the computer, music and mobile-phone industries, has died at 56. Jobs introduced us to the iWorld that has forever changed the way we live.

Steve was known as a visionary and devoted his life to creating great values—he pursued his own vision, his own dreams and happiness. He set out to change the world—and he succeeded. The following sentiments sum it up best.

“Apple has lost a visionary and creative genius, and the world has lost an amazing human being. Steve’s brilliance, passion and energy were the source of countless innovations that enrich and improve all of our lives. The world is immeasurably better because of Steve.” – *Apple*

“Steve was among the greatest of American innovators – brave enough to think differently, bold enough to believe he could change the world, and talented enough to do it. The world has lost a visionary.” – *U.S. President Barack Obama*



“Steve Jobs was an extraordinary man - his creativity and vision are legend. When he spoke at Stanford’s 2005 Commencement, he told our students that the key to doing great work is to love what you do. Steve Jobs loved what he did, and he inspired us all to think differently.”

– *Stanford President John Hennessy*

Jobs’ challenged us to focus on what we are good at and achieve excellence by thinking out of the box and listening to our gut feelings. Timothy F. Bednarz’ research in his book, *Great! What Makes Leaders Great: What They Did, How They Did It, and What You Can Learn from It*, says, “Great leaders take advantage of emerging opportunities, often creating demand for their products where none existed. How their resolve, determination, persistence, perseverance and refusal to quit differentiates them from their competitors.”

At a time when America is crying out for strong leadership and a brighter future, Steve Jobs, and many others throughout our history have embodied these character traits that all truly great leaders possess. He has achieved what many only dream of. Rest in peace Steve Jobs, your passion & creative fire will be greatly missed.



One last thing... “*Stay hungry, stay foolish.*”

Eliana Barriga
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The
RetailObserver

NOVEMBER 2011

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CELEBRATING OUR 22ND YEAR
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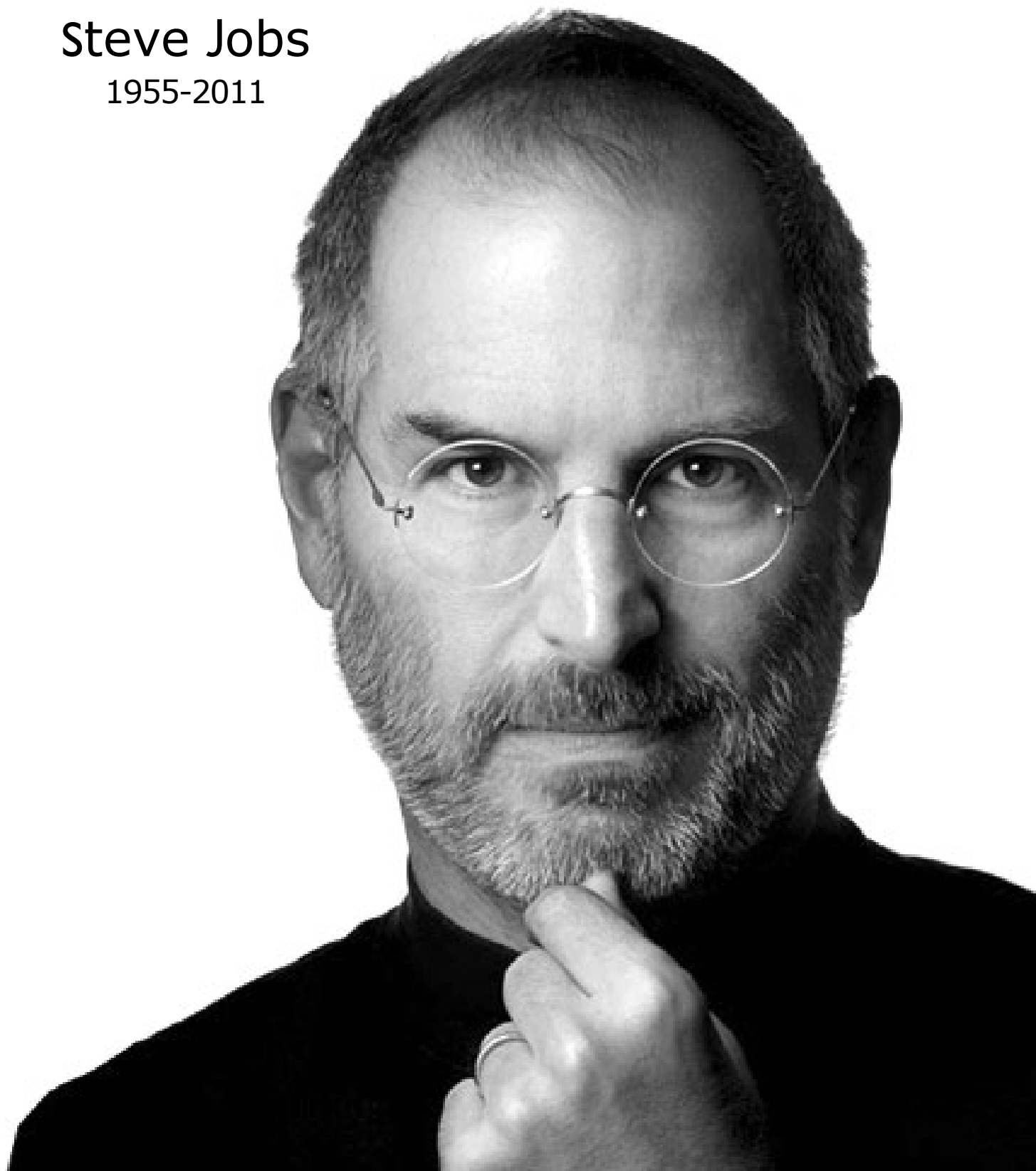
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Steve Jobs

1955-2011



“Push the Button, Max...Max!”

(JACK LEMMON 1965, THE GREAT RACE)

Okay, some of you may not be familiar with this comedic quote. To explain, in the movie, *The Great Race*, Jack Lemmon plays the character Dr. Fate whose diabolical futuristic vehicle had amazing buttons that activated all kinds of features on his vehicle. Similar to all of the buttons and apps we have on our smart phones today.

The digital age is upon us and with it comes a new age of customers with different demands. Retailers will need to do more than sell the right product mix to remain competitive. Understanding who their customers are and what drives them will be the most beneficial.

Manufacturers, retailers and media sources will need to regularly come together and explore, learn and divulge their strategies and ideas on buying and selling the newest technology and the most innovative products on the market and how to plan for what's coming in the future.

Where will these brainstorming events take place and who will lead them?

Let's start with CEA and CES. Next year's show will have over 20 conference tracks, six Super Sessions and multiple keynote speakers. Taking up every hall at the Las Vegas Convention center and three other major venues in town, there are usually close to 150,000 in attendance including over 5,000 from the media, over 1.6 million net square feet and over 2,700 companies exhibiting at this event. A great place to get the conversation started on January 10-13 (www.cesweb.org).

DSE (Digital Signage Expo) on March 6-9 (www.digitalsignageexpo.net) also in Las Vegas at the Convention Center features the latest and greatest advancements in, yes, Digital Signage. 32 seminars, 12 pre-show and post-show sessions, dozens of Vertical Industry Discussion Groups and free on-floor workshops. Everything from touch screens and software are on display at this show. This opens a lot of opportunity for discussion especially for your next marketing meeting.

KBIS, the premier Kitchen and Bath Show in the Industry will again be held in Chicago April 24-26 at the McCormick Center. With the new Kitchen and Bath's live venues and multiple conference sessions, what better place to talk to your peers in the Industry and see what is keeping them connected (www.KBIS.com).

These are just three shows of many that *The Retail Observer* will be supporting in 2012. Keep your eye on our calendar for other shows, industry news and helpful information. Keep yourself ahead of the curve in these rapidly moving and innovative times to keep pushing the right buttons, Max...Max!!!



Happy Retailing!

Moe Lastfogel

moe@retailobserver.com

The RetailObserver

NOVEMBER 2011

VOLUME 22, ISSUE 11

CELEBRATING OUR 22ND 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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IFA 2011:

Retailers & Industry Confident of Good End-of-Year Business

Retailers and consumers reacted very positively to the record number of product firsts at this year's IFA.

The world's largest and most important trade fair for consumer electronics and household appliances ended in September in Berlin, with orders placed for more than 3.7 billion euros. 238,000 visitors attended the show. 1,441 exhibitors exhibited their latest products in a display area covering 140,200 square meters.

“We were delighted the 51st edition of IFA continued the event's success story and that once again it was an attractive international platform for the trade, the industry and the consumer. We were pleased to see there was significant growth and we were very satisfied with the fair”, said Dr. Rainer Hecker, chairman of the Supervisory Board of IFA's organizers.

Dr. Christian Göke, chief operating officer, Messe Berlin said, “Once again developments at IFA were very satisfactory and we can look brightly into the future. Trade visitor numbers rose to 132,900, an increase of 12 per cent, which was much higher than last year. 51,200 came from abroad, almost twice as many as in 2010.”

The many innovations and product firsts at the show will have a positive impact on the markets as end-of-year business gets under way. Once again, IFA was able to fulfil its role as the world's largest and most important trade fair for doing business and for the consumer. According to all the major retailers there is no better time to introduce new products | *continued on page 10* |

Photos on opposite page with Miss IFA and: 1. Liebherr KBs3864 Schiefer 2. Samsung WF71284 3. The Soccer player of the 1.FC Union Berlin visiting Stefan Marquard, celebrity chef, at the AEG show 4. A various selection of fine products 5. Miele G5520SC

than at IFA. More than 45 per cent of annual sales take place after this event.

“Overall we were very satisfied with the volume of orders placed. Initial forecasts suggest that IFA-related business will total more than 3.7 million euros, making it the largest show for placing orders worldwide,” said Hans-Joachim Kamp, the chairman of the consumer electronics trade association and vice-president of ZVEI.

Market researchers expect that in 2011 the consumer electronics market will grow to 690 billion euros, an increase of about seven per cent. The European market is anticipated to grow to around 204 billion euros, an increase of six per cent, while the industry’s expectations for Germany are 27 billion euros and four per cent respectively.

In 2010, worldwide sales of large and small appliances at net industry prices reached EUR 160 billion dollars (+ 8 %). In 2011, the industry expects global demand to increase yet again. In Germany, the industry expects the market for large appliances to expand by two to three per cent and for small appliances to grow by four to five per cent. Energy and water savings, ease of operation, intelligently networked home appliances and smart grids were all topics that attracted keen interest.

“We were very satisfied with IFA 2011. It fulfilled all our expectations. This was the fourth time IFA exhibited home appliances and it is almost as though we have always been here. IFA lived up to its reputation as the world’s leading event for the home appliances industry,” said Dr. Rainer Zinkann, chairman of the Home Appliances Trade Association, part of ZVEI, and chairman of ZVEI.

LIEBHERR FOCUSED ON NETWORKING AT THIS YEAR’S IFA

Its team at the fair presented the HomeDialog System, a communication and security system for monitoring and controlling networked appliances such as wine coolers, freezers and fridge-freezers. Since July 2011, eight NoFrost freezers with smart grid capability have been available from Liebherr. Since Smart Grid is a topic of international relevance these appliances are available throughout Europe, explains Claudia Braunger from the company’s Marketing & Communication

Department. With its CoolVision designer series on show at IFA 2011, Liebherr also presented refrigerators clad in leather, glass, metal, a rust-look or wood.

HAIER PRESENTS THE HYBRID REFRIGERATOR DRAWER

Since the last IFA the Chinese home appliance manufacturer Haier Europe has equipped its A+++ refrigerators with a middle drawer whose temperature can be adjusted from plus five to minus 18 degrees C. Known as the MyZone drawers, the company describes them as the highlight of this year’s display. It is also exhibiting its new French Door refrigerators with glass front panels, and one of these models has two additional freezer compartments, giving it four doors in all.

ECONOMICAL HOME APPLIANCES FROM BOSCH

Marking the 125th anniversary of the founding of Robert Bosch Hausgeräte GmbH the company is presenting numerous appliances at IFA that offer “maximum possible performance with the minimum possible resources”, in the words of General Manager, Harald Friedrich. Friedrich explains that dishwashers now require only seven litres of water for 13 complete place settings, while no fewer than 20 of the company’s refrigerators coming onto the market in the autumn have the top energy efficiency classification of A+++. The Hot Air Eco program eliminates the need to pre-heat ovens, thereby conserving even more energy. And finally, from January 2012, all Bosch dishwashers will have a 10-year guarantee against rust. With an A++ rating some of these appliances are among the world leaders in energy saving, and the Zeolith technology also helps to save energy while the plates and cutlery are being dried.

LG PRESENTS ITS NEW SMART HOME APPLIANCES

“Smart” is the word for all the products that were displayed by the Korean manufacturer LG Electronics Home Appliances, Inc. at IFA 2011. All the large appliances are designed to operate with “Smart Grids”, which means that they can obtain more energy if the utility is feeding power into the grid at a cheaper rate. “Smart Manager” enables A+++ -rated | continued on page 12 |



refrigerators to identify what foods are being stored and how long they will keep fresh. If the appliances detect a defect they can use “Smart Diagnosis”, via a smartphone to investigate further. This means that user errors can be corrected immediately. “Smart Access” can recognize ingredients in an oven and suggest recipes, while washing machine programs can be interrupted or augmented by means of mobile phone applications. “Our aim is to be the world’s number one by 2014,” said the CEO of LG Electronics Young-ha Lee.

MIELE REVEALS THE FASTEST WHITE GOODS IN THE WORLD AT IFA

Today’s consumers want “Increased speed, easier controls and more enjoyment,” said Dr. Reinhard Zinkann, chief executive of Miele & Cie KG, at IFA 2011 and, in accordance with this demand, Miele presented the world’s fastest home appliances. ExtraSpeed glass ceramic hotplates can bring three litres of water to the boil in eleven minutes, which is three minutes faster than competing systems. The G5000 series includes the world’s fastest dishwashers. They can complete a full wash cycle in just 17 minutes, are A+ rated and, with just 48 decibels, are also ideal in open kitchens. The washing machines that combine the following functions in one appliance are unique: automatic measuring of detergent, evaporation to protect sensitive textiles, and EcoFeedback. The display shows the energy and water consumption during the washing process. Energy and cost savings can be achieved by adjusting the temperature.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA INTEREST

Jens Heithecker, director of IFA said, “Once again the global response from the media was impressive. We were delighted to have welcomed more international members of the media than ever before.”

Major TV networks such as ARD, ZDF, n-tv, N24 and, a first this year – the International Broadcast Center – were represented with news desks at IFA. Numerous foreign networks such as Al-Jazeera-TV, AP Agentur, Bloomberg, BFM (France), BTV (China), CCTV (China), CETV (China), CNBC/ NBC, I Tele (France),

Israeli TV, EBU (Switzerland), Servus TV (Austria) and TF1 (France) broadcasted from the International Broadcast Center.

IFA TECWATCH 2011: TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE MARKETS OF TODAY AND TOMORROW

Tomorrow’s world was in a prominent location at IFA. For the first time, IFA TecWatch presented forward-looking technology for future markets from all the industries represented at IFA. IFA TecWatch is unique in combining a specialist exhibition with a communication and business platform for demonstrating innovation. This outstanding section of IFA is a valuable platform where experts can exchange knowledge, where research and industry can transfer technology know-how, and as a starting point for successful business partnerships.

IFA TecWatch is also a very attractive shop window for technically interested visitors as well as for the retail trade, and enables them to prepare in good time for the new areas of business that lie ahead. People interested in finding out about the digital media and home appliances of the future received a lot of fascinating answers here.

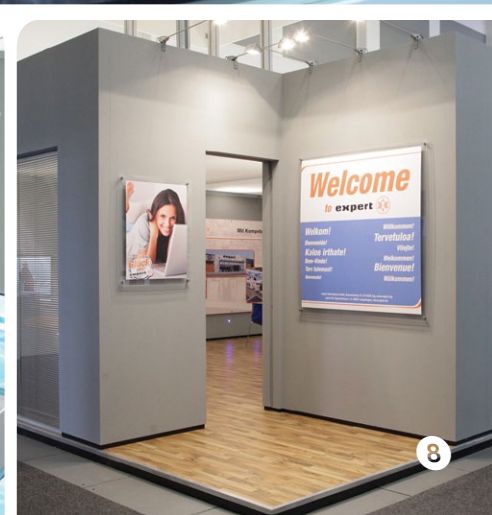
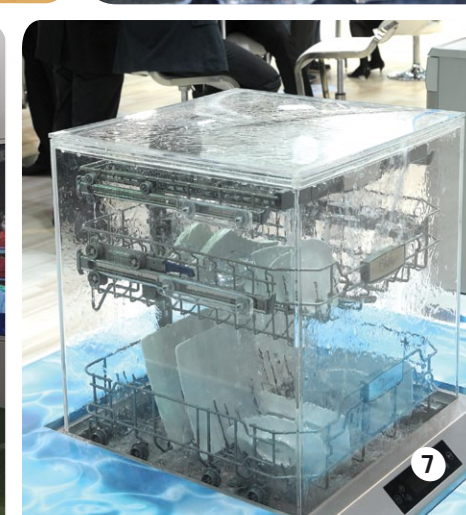
JOINT PRESENTATIONS BY ASSOCIATIONS

How will next-generation electric appliances help save resources and in what ways will they be even easier to operate? Life in the networked home was one of the key topics of a joint presentation by the three industry associations ZVEI, ZVEH and VDE, taking as their slogan “Shaping Networked Worlds. Securing the Future.”

ENTERTAINMENT AT IFA

The IFA open air concerts, the daily program in the IFA Summer Garden, and the stages on exhibitors’ stands – this year innumerable stars and starlets enthralled audiences again with their cooking shows, autograph signing sessions and live music.

Once again, with the innovation, product firsts and entertainment that it offered, was the global meeting place of retailers, the industry, the media and visitors from around the world. **RO**



CALL TO ACTION



SEND US YOUR SHOTS

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

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Book Review

Great! What Makes Leaders Great:

WHAT THEY DID, HOW THEY DID IT, AND
WHAT YOU CAN LEARN FROM IT

At a time when America is crying out for leadership, *Great! What Makes Leaders Great: What They Did, How They Did It, and What You Can Learn from It* is a timely reminder of the boldness of exceptional American leadership. Within its pages, it brings to life the names, stories, legacies and achievements of a number of truly remarkable individuals, some long forgotten by modern history.

The book is based upon the groundbreaking research of 160 influential American leaders, spanning over 235 years, from George Washington to Bill Gates. It places leadership into a historical context, illustrating how their concepts, principles and methods were developed, forged and evolved into contemporary leadership's best practices.

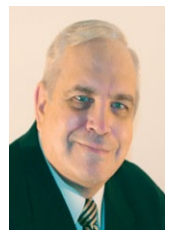
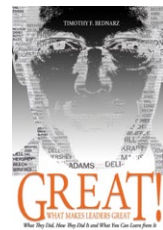
Weaving together their words and stories into a rich fabric, *Great!* leads readers through the paths these individuals forged, the barriers, adversities and failures they weathered and the battles they fought for their personal beliefs and values. It details the bold and decisive actions they took in the face of economic downturns, depressions and financial panics, far worse than what the country is currently experiencing. Readers will be absorbed into the characteristics of the resolve, determination, persistence, perseverance and refusal to quit that differentiated them from their competitors.

Great! clarifies the numerous ways the great leaders took advantage of emerging opportunities, often creating demand for their products where none existed. Readers will discover just what made them grand architects, who were able to forge building blocks of growth while possessing a zeal for executing their plans and strategies.

The book spotlights how the dimensions of humanity, humility, empathy and compassion were woven into their characters, which are emphasized through factual accounts and stories. *Great!* reveals their perceptions of wealth creation and profitability, as well as organizational sustainability. It compares and contrasts them with many contemporary attitudes and practices.

Great! is intended to inspire readers to reclaim America's greatness, one individual at a time. Step-by-step, the book illustrates the paths, values, beliefs and examples that the great leaders left for us to follow. It is a call to action for all who wish to become more effective, if not a great leader. **RO**

*Author: Timothy F. Bednarz, an accomplished business consultant, researcher and author. He has published more than 100 business books and is the CEO of American Management Development Group, Inc., Stevens Point, WI. Contact him at timothy.bednarz@majorium.com, 715-342-1018, or visit www.whatmakesleadersgreat.com
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DACOR INTRODUCES THE DISTINCTIVE™ 30" COOKTOP WITH HIGHEST BTU AVAILABLE IN ITS CLASS

dacor Designed with the features of the Distinctive 36" cooktop, the Distinctive 30" cooktop embodies dacor innovation and quality, so customers will never have to sacrifice style and performance for size.

Dacor®, a market leader in the design, manufacture and distribution of luxury kitchen appliances, introduced the new Distinctive 30" Gas Cooktop. With remarkable craftsmanship and a signature style design, the Distinctive Cooktop offers power previously unavailable in a cooktop of this size.

Dacor products target culinary enthusiasts and the Distinctive 30" Cooktop is no different. The Distinctive 30" Gas Cooktop has the highest BTU of any 30" gas cooktop in the luxury market with 54,000 BTU of overall heat output. The cooktop is equipped with five high power burners to meet every cooking need, including the SimmerSear™ burner with melting feature, which gives home chefs the option to simmer, sear or sauté with precision at ultra-high or ultra-low temperatures (up to 18,000 BTUs).

The Distinctive 30" Gas Cooktop features a one-piece spill basin and Dacor's exclusive, scratch-resistant, bead-blasted PermaClean™ finish. Dried-on spills clean up with ease and the cooktop surface will remain pristine no matter how much scrubbing it endures. The cooktop is also designed with die-cast stainless steel ergonomically angled controls for ease of use and Illumina™ Indicator Lights that glow in Dacor's signature flame-blue when a burner is on, a modern, eye-catching safety feature.

"The Distinctive 30" Gas Cooktop contains all of the features and design details that made up the Distinctive 36" Gas Cooktop, but with a smaller, more compact profile," said Steve Joseph, president at Dacor. "It features the same high powered burners and exclusive design that Dacor is known for, allowing homeowners with any size kitchen to enjoy the benefits of a Dacor cooktop."

The Distinctive 30" Gas Cooktop is the most recent collaboration from Dacor and BMW Group Designworks USA, an international leader in design strategy, premium design development, and brand communication.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES:

- **Heavy-duty Continuous Platform Grates** provide an optimum cooking surface when using many large pots and pans at once
- **Smart Flame™ Technology** preserves the finish and the life of the grates
- **Flexible installation** options allow configuration over an oven and with a raised ventilation system
- **American-made**, designed and manufactured in California

The Distinctive 30" Gas Cooktop is part of a new class of Dacor's Distinctive Series appliances, which was designed with Dacor's signature style and functionality and an unrivalled price-to-performance balance. Recent products from the Distinctive Series include the 30" Single and Double Wall Ovens, the 30" Dual-Fuel Range, the 36" and 30" Gas Rangetops, the 24" Dishwasher, and the 24" Microwave. With the Distinctive Series, more homeowners can now enjoy the style, quality and power of Dacor appliances.

For more information on Dacor, the product series, or local dealer locations, visit www.dacor.com or contact Customer Care at (800) 793-0093.

NEWPORT BRASS DEBUTS THREE NEW FAUCET COLLECTIONS

PREMIUM DECORATIVE BATH, SHOWER AND KITCHEN MANUFACTURER BRINGS METRO, ITHACA, AND KIARA COLLECTIONS TO THE MARKETPLACE

NEWPORT BRASS. Newport Brass, a premium decorative plumbing brand, manufactured by Brasstech, Inc., is proud to introduce the new Metro, Ithaca, and Kiara bath and shower collections. These faucets are now in showrooms and available to

designers, builders, home-owners, and remodelers.

Each collection has its own distinct personality. This continues Newport Brass' tradition of providing collections that allow for the fulfillment of endless design visions.

Ithaca – With a precise, scientific beauty,

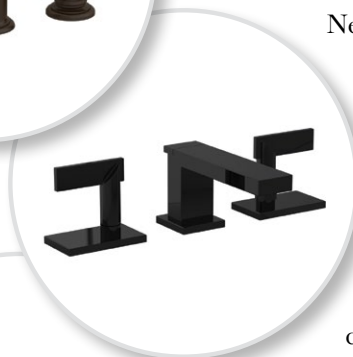
Ithaca brings the elements of ancient Greek architecture into the 21st Century. Strong, smooth columns create the foundation for the faucet and handles which are then accented by soft concentric rings at their base. Ithaca serves as an element around which the design possibilities are endless.

Metro – Metro exemplifies modern design with its clean, precise lines and superb combination of two basic geometric forms. This faucet makes a strong and definitive statement in its simplicity and requires no extraneous decorative additions.

Kiara – Like flowing water, Kiara has a graceful, fluid quality with its curved lines. The proud arch of the spout and the fountain-like handles feature a ridge that accentuates the fresh design elements found in this collection.

Jonathan Wood, VP of sales and marketing for Newport Brass commented, "It's a thrill to add these three new collections, and the 26 stunning Newport Brass finishes they are available in, to our family of fine products. The unique and highly crafted details of these products lend themselves nicely to the wide variety of finishes we have in our arsenal. Customer response has been overwhelmingly positive and we couldn't be happier to have another successful launch for our partners!"

Quality construction is important to Newport Brass, and these new products are flawlessly manufactured with patented drip free ceramic valves and include Newport Brass' direct connect hose system which provides for a simple and leak free installation. The construction is solid brass, and the faucet and accessories are available in 26 unique finishes providing the homeowner the unparalleled ability to customize their design décor to suit their particular tastes.



From traditional Oil Rubbed Bronze to contemporary French Gold, each finish delivers a customized design aesthetic that is uniquely Newport Brass. Finally, each faucet is individually hand polished and inspected.

Remodelers can choose from among Newport Brass' numerous collections to create a complete bath and shower suite that meets their particular design requirements. The many contemporary collections from Newport Brass allow for the selection of a mix of products from various collections so that homeowners do not feel constrained to just one collection when designing their new bath suite. Newport Brass truly delivers flawless beauty, from faucet to finish.

For additional information, please visit www.newportbrass.com or call 949.417.5207.

FRANKE NAVIGATES INTO SECOND CENTURY WITH ENHANCED WEBSITE

NEW PHOTOGRAPHY, PRODUCT EXPLORER AND OTHER FEATURES ADDED FOR CONSUMERS, DESIGNERS AND TRADE PARTNERS



Franke begins its second century by launching an enriched website that brings a new level of 21st century access to its products and links all the varied members of its brand community. The site draws visitors into the Franke inspired living with sophisticated lifestyle photography throughout. Providing consumers, designers and architects with a convenient way to see and select options for the rooms they are planning. Media visitors can easily access new press releases, event information and have upfront access to what is current on FrankeLuxuryUSA Social Media sites.

The newly launched website gives the growing world of Franke's social media friends, followers and tweeters access to the brand's social media. Users are invited to join in a conversation, read posts and blogs, and experience their roles and exert their influence as thought leaders of the Franke online community.

| continued on page 20 |

The Importance of Home Delivery and Installation Services

When it comes to closing the deal, no sale is really final until the refrigerator (or the dining room suite or the mattress or the TV) you've just sold is safely delivered and installed in your customer's home and that customer is in love with the purchase. Given that practically anyone with a large enough vehicle can make a delivery happen, where's the sizzle in final mile services? Aren't they all pretty much the same, after all?

Not according to Last Mile Home's Skip Lockrem. "Getting a consumer to purchase a product at a specific place for a specific price can be insanely challenging," he said. "Consumers today are provided far more options for product types and features, places to buy, peer reviews and overall selection than ever before," he said. "This ultimately puts retailers, e-tailers, and manufacturers in a tough position."

Lockrem, who is Minnesota-based Last Mile Home's general manager, says that without a consistent, easily managed last mile home delivery service, merchants risk consumer disappointment in the experience, in the product itself, and even worse, a return. Lockrem says merchants should be asking themselves questions: How will your customers be getting their new products home? Are your customers getting to take advantage of all of the features and benefits they paid for? "Without the product being setup properly," he says, "your customers may not be getting all the benefits that made them buy in the first place, and if you don't take control of delivery execution, you are simply dumping your sale into a black hole and hoping everything goes well."

He points to an adjustable bed or home theater. "In most cases, the product's latest features require assembly, specific set-up, extra connections, technical support, in-home testing. I found that not many people enjoy reading the instruction manuals. What happens is that features go undiscovered, and wires unconnected or crossed up," he says, which lead to disappointment, frustration, and returns.

Providing consumers the delivery, assembly and installation services they need is proven to reduce buyer's remorse and no-defect-found returns. Additionally "merchants enjoy a reduction in open box or refurbished items for sale, and most importantly a lift in sales," Lockrem adds.

On top of all this, "People are busy!" Lockrem says. "They bought the product for a purpose: they want to enjoy the new TV, or they want a quieter dishwasher, or they want a good night's sleep. You can make sure those things happen." What customers don't want is to wonder how to get it delivered, up the stairs, into the kitchen or bedroom, or whether they have the right tools (and know how) to complete the job.

Last Mile Home calls itself the "in-home" expert and offers services nationwide. The company provides a convenient way for merchants to manage and control the delivery from the point of sale all the way to the home theater. Lockrem's company offers web-based selling tools custom branded and integrated with delivery and installation services. Store associates can make the sale, and retailers can be assured of getting high quality, professional, insured delivery services known to satisfy shoppers.

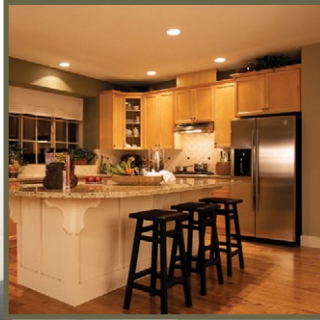
When considering what type of services a merchant needs to offer to customers, Lockrem recommends this checklist:

- Is getting a customer her product quickly important?
- Do I simply want the product delivered to her front door?
- Will customers be able to assemble or install the product correctly?
- How much time will my staff need to spend on the phone to walk them through getting it setup correctly?
- Am I willing to risk a return with this customer or product?
- Do I know if all my regions are covered by professional delivery providers who are insured?

For more information: www.LastMileHome.com or info@lastmilehome.com. **RO**

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Designers will find pages corresponding to the 2011 Franke Luxury Catalog designed with them in mind. Products and corresponding photography are organized into the same categories – Modern, Fireclay, Traditional, Classic, Transitional and Eclectic. Product pages have tabs for Related Products, Suggested Products, and Downloads.

Trade partners will now be able to download the latest training materials. New Navigation menus are designed to assist the consumer and to facilitate dialogue between designer-client and the conversation between the consumer and the showroom or dealer. Look for ‘Technical’, ‘Customer’, ‘Trade Partner’, and ‘Design’ Support under the ‘Expertise & Support’ heading.

Products that are available in multiple finishes will now be accurately depicted in their respective finishes. Using the new ‘Product Explorer,’ visitors can filter and browse products by installation, finish, number of bowls, depth of larger bowl, and cabinet size.

For more information visit www.frankeksd.com or call 1-800-626-5771.

BIZBOX, EQUIPMENT LEASING SERVICES ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP THAT MAKES NEW GREEN MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AVAILABLE TO MORE BUSINESSES

BizBox Taking your brand on the road just got easier and less expensive. BizBox™ announced a partnership with Equipment Leasing Services, LLC (ELS) that will significantly increase the number of businesses that can take advantage of its new green mobile store concept, which allows a company to take its products and services directly to the customer.

Under terms of the agreement, businesses can lease BizBox from ELS for as little as \$1,800 per month. Financing is provided through Commerce Bank of Arizona.

| *continued on page 24* |



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Manufacturer {NOTES}

Professional Style for Personal Cooking Satisfaction

EuroChef USA announced the expansion of the Italian designed and manufactured Verona Pro high performing series of cooking appliances. The new 36" Verona Pro free standing ranges join the highly visible 30" model. The 36" ranges available in dual fuel and all gas models each feature 5 high performance German brass sealed burners with electronic ignition and re-ignition. The range tops include (1) 18K powerful center burner; (2) 17K and (2) 14K burners. The all gas range tops allow for precision settings and immediate response temperature monitoring. The gas oven model offers a turbo-electric convection fan with dual fuel electric oven range offering a multi-function electronic programmable oven. Both models supplied with 3 heavy duty racks, digital clocks and timers, high quality stainless steel handles, knobs and bezels. Each is available in stainless steel along with fashionable high gloss red and black.

The expansion of the Verona Pro series comes with the 36" professional range top that is a compliment and companion piece for the 30" all gas Verona Pro Built-In Oven. The range top offers the same powerful German brass burners; electronic ignition and re-ignition and stainless steel knobs as the Pro series ranges. The Verona Pro oven boasts the same turbo-electric convection fan, 3 heavy duty racks along with stainless knobs and bezels as on the ranges.

EuroChef launched the Verona Pro line as a high quality series alternative to the full range of Verona appliances. The Verona Pro and Verona extensive line of appliances remains diversified in product offerings, still offering dual fuel, all gas and all electric ranges, ovens and cooktops in many sizes and configurations.

The Swedish made new Verona N30 series Assistent Original stand mixer features a powerful 600 watt motor rating, detachable cord and sizable 7.4 quart bowl capacity. Offered with a wide variety of standard and optional accessories, the Verona mixer becomes a valuable kitchen center is a great addition to the Verona line.

The hand crafted ILVE Majestic line of dual fuel ranges rounds out the Italian made offerings available from EuroChef USA. Offering un-paralleled 9 range top cooking opportunities, ILVE offers 5 sizes and is unique and masterfully crafted. The Majestic series of ranges, hoods and accessories allows our vendors and designers incredible opportunities to offer their customers the most beautifully crafted and highest quality product as a centerpiece to their kitchens. Keep an eye out in early 2012 for the ILVE Pro line of all gas and all electric ranges, featuring induction range top cooking.

According to EuroChef USA, Pearson SouthWest and Halex Marketing Groups have joined them to promote their products and work together on providing quality service to their customers. **RO**

EuroChef USA

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Verona Assistent

EuroChef USA

For more information, contact EuroChef USA, the exclusive importer of Verona Pro, Verona and ILVE cooking appliances.
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“This is a breakthrough opportunity for BizBox,” BizBox CEO Rick Sikorski said in making the announcement. “ELS is very selective in who they work with, and they recognize that BizBox has the ability to change the way some companies reach their market. This new partnership will give more organizations and retailers the opportunity to reach a larger audience using BizBox.”

ELS is a nationally-recognized leasing company that works with such companies as Sprouts Farmers Market, Delta Mechanical, Bob Bondurant School of Driving, Advanced Path Academics, Progressive Financial Services and Aero Care Medical Transport Systems.

Sikorski said that while BizBox will still be available for purchase, this new partnership creates an affordable opportunity for companies looking to reach their customers directly or wanting to test mobile marketing.

“In our current economy, leasing takes a certain amount of risk out of the picture,” said Sikorski. “ELS utilizes its international banking partners and its own internal line of funding to make the sale of the BizBox as smooth as possible.”

Powered by solar technology, BizBox transforms in minutes from a perfect mobile “Branded Box” to a state-of-the-art office, showroom, food or medical retail store or display center—all at the drop of a hitch and so easily that anyone can set it up. Because of the versatility, it can be designed to suit almost any business without compromising on quality. It can easily be wrapped in business colors and brands.

“BizBox is unlike anything on the market,” said Michael Wetnight of ELS. “This technology offers a completely new way for companies to take their products or service direct to their customers and do it in a simple, affordable way.”

Sikorski says BizBox helps bridge the gap between online companies and the traditional brick and mortar businesses, which will be critical to the way business is conducted in the future.

“The ‘click’ companies have relatively low operating costs but lack the ability to reach the customer in a positive, personal way. The ‘brick’ businesses have tremendously high operating costs, and are not flexible enough to get to large groups of potential customers for special events and promotions,” he said.

“Our BizBox is the only solution in the world that bridges that gap in a way that not only protects a company’s brand, but actually enhances it with the cool mobile factor.”

BizBox™ is currently hiring a national sales team of licensees nationwide. More information is available at www.bizbox4u.com.



BOSTON ACOUSTICS DEBUTS SOUNDWARE XS SPECIAL EDITION HOME THEATER SPEAKERS

BOSTON'S AWARD-WINNING ULTRA-COMPACT SPEAKERS NOW AVAILABLE IN STUNNING HIGH GLOSS FINISH



Boston Acoustics, Inc., a world-renowned manufacturer of innovative home entertainment solutions and high performance loudspeakers, is once again making really big sound from incredibly small and stylish speakers with the latest addition to its critically acclaimed SoundWare family – the SoundWare XS Special Edition Home Theater Speakers in both gloss black and gloss white finish.

Like the company’s award-winning SoundWare XS 5.1 speaker package, the new SoundWare XS Special Edition package features the smallest loudspeakers Boston Acoustics has ever produced. It’s ideal for consumers who want to enjoy powerful, room-filling sound in a stylish, ultra-compact system without the traditional “box type” loudspeakers.

The system includes five ultra-compact SoundWare XS Special Edition satellites, each measuring less than 4 inches, plus a compact 8” 100-watt (250-watt Peak) powered subwoofer. Notably, for users who want an even more immersive listening experience, Boston Acoustics is making optional SoundWare XS Special Edition satellite speakers available to create a 7.1 system. The system is designed for space-conscious and style driven consumers who want to enjoy great sounding music or powerful home theater audio. Compact satellites provide the rich audio power and performance of true two-way speakers, with 2½-inch (65mm) woofers and ½-inch (13mm) tweeters. The result is astoundingly accurate and pure sounding music, plus room-filling home theater audio.

SoundWare XS 5.1 Special Edition includes “Smart” features designed to give consumers | *continued on page 26* |

The stunning silence of German engineering.

Bosch engineering has raised the stakes by lowering the volume with its new high-performance dishwashers—the quietest line sold in the U.S.*



Silence is a Bosch virtue. That's why the new line of Bosch dishwashers is engineered to be the quietest in the U.S.* Starting with a solid molded base, Bosch engineers added three layers of sound-deadening insulation and a suspension motor, measures that effectively eliminate noise caused by mechanical vibrations. That in turn makes some units up to 300 percent quieter than comparable models. At Bosch, we believe in engineering quiet, and in the sweet sounds of silence. www.bosch-home.com/us



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several ways to enjoy all their entertainment content:

- Unique SoundWare polyhedron shape for virtually unlimited placement options
- Stealth articulating mounting brackets allow the speakers to be hung flush on a wall, or tucked away in a corner while allowing the speaker to be angled towards the main listening area
- Powered subwoofer features Boston's Patented BassTrac® circuitry for clear undistorted bass at all listening levels and includes both speaker level inputs and outputs and a line level out, providing consumers with the easiest, most flexible setup
- Miniaturized authentic 2-way satellite system for true full range sound
- Satellites feature dual wire channels for easy connections

Kevin Zarow, vice president of sales for Boston Acoustics noted, "When we introduced our SoundWare XS 5.1 home theater speaker system, we energized the entire surround sound category, offering high-value, high-style, sonic performance, placement flexibility, and space efficiency. Now, with our new SoundWare XS Special Edition Home Theater Speakers, in either high gloss black or white, we're building on the popularity of compact home theater systems for consumers who have limited space in their homes but still want to experience great sound and style."

LG ELECTRONICS OPENS FIRST U.S. HOME APPLIANCE R&D CENTER FOR INNOVATIVE APPLIANCE TESTING

REINFORCES COMMITMENT TO INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP AND ENERGY-EFFICIENT PRODUCTS MEETING TOP ENVIRONMENTAL, PERFORMANCE STANDARDS



LG Electronics USA officially opened its first Home Appliance Research & Development Center in the United States. Located in Buffalo Grove, Ill., the \$6.5 million R&D Center will provide

low-volume, high-precision product testing and consumer research using state-of-the-art methodologies and technologies.

"The Home Appliance R&D Center represents LG's commitment to meeting the needs of its customers in the U.S., ensuring the highest degree of efficiency is met," said Y. H. Lee, president and CEO of the LG Home Appliance Company. "The Center is a platform for LG to help assure that LG appliances meet or exceed industry standards, explore new technologies and, most importantly, drive innovation for next-generation products."

The 30,770-square-foot R&D Center has the capability of testing hundreds of appliances annually and is the last stop before LG products begin production. The 15,350 square-foot first floor is dedicated to major appliance testing including refrigerators, washing machines, clothes dryers, ovens, ranges, cooktops, microwave ovens, dishwashers and vacuum cleaners. It houses state-of-the-art testing equipment such as a climate-controlled chamber specifically designed to test refrigerator-freezers, consistent with test procedures prescribed by the U.S. Department of Energy.

A Consumer Insights Lab features top-notch residential kitchen, laundry room and living room spaces, designed to provide consumers with hands on experiences using LG appliances. A field focus group discussion area

| *continued on page 28* |

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allows consumers to share their reactions to the appliances, ensuring LG produces the highest quality products that meet the needs of its U.S. customers.

The second floor houses a fully functioning video studio and residential kitchen where video content is created for consumers and service technicians. Videos include product and cooking demonstrations and lifestyle hints conducted by LG home economists and customer support technicians. The professionally produced video series will be available on LG's website. The Center's offices and administrative facilities are also on the second floor, where currently 39 employees work; LG expects to expand the staff over the next 12-18 months.

"Providing the greatest benefit and value to our customers is a key aspect of our new R&D Center," said Heejin Lee, senior director of the Home Appliance R&D Center, LG Home Appliance Company. "By utilizing our advanced resources efficiently, we strive to develop the best products that meet the highest expectations, specific to our U.S. customers."

Further enhancing LG's commitment to sustainability and quality, the LG R&D Center tests products against industry guidelines set by Underwriters Laboratory (UL), UL Environment (ULE), the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM) and U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). To meet these standards, the appliances are subjected to rigorous testing for performance, energy efficiency, water usage, safety and quality.

"As part of our goal to become the most sustainable consumer products company in the world, LG worked with the Carbon Fund Foundation on carbon offsets for the Buffalo Grove facility," said Wayne Park, president and CEO of LG Electronics USA, who came from LG's North American headquarters in New Jersey to cut the ribbon on the new facility. "We are pleased to announce the new facility has CarbonFree Partner status." **RO**



LG Electronics USA President and CEO Wayne Park ushers the grand opening of the Home Appliance R&D Center, cuts ceremonial ribbon with special guests U.S. Congressman Robert Dold and AHAM President Joseph McGuire, among others (from left to right: David Stolman, Lake County Board Chairman; Joseph McGuire, President, Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers; Sid Mathias, Illinois State Representative; Dennis Sienko, Director, Technology, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity; Wayne Park, president and CEO of LG Electronics USA; U.S. Congressman Robert Dold; Linda Zastrow, Director, Consumer Advocacy, Underwriters Laboratories; Mike Terson, Buffalo Grove Trustee).

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University of Maryland Team Watershed Wins Solar Decathlon

GLOBAL KITCHEN APPLIANCE MANUFACTURER
EMBRACES TEAM AS THEY TAKE TOP HONORS

Miele congratulates the University of Maryland Team Watershed for their win at the 2011 Solar Decathlon. After nearly two years of preparation and thousands of hours of hard work and dedication, the University of Maryland Team Watershed was declared the winner of the 2011 Solar Decathlon.

Inspired by the Chesapeake Bay, Team WaterShed's design highlighted renewable energy, water quality and conservation. Their holistic approach to water conservation was a key component of the home's design, which included a modular constructed wetland that helped filter and recycle greywater from the dishwasher, shower and washing machine.

To help the team achieve their goal, Miele was proud to serve as Team Watershed's appliance sponsor. Miele supplied the team with a variety of appliances including, the MasterChef Speed Oven, Induction Cooktop and Slimline dishwasher, as well as two vacuum cleaners.

"Not only was this a great opportunity for Miele to become involved with an outstanding educational program like the Solar Decathlon, but we couldn't be prouder of the students and faculty from the University of Maryland," said Jeremy Jones, vice president of marketing for Miele. "These students are our future engineers, architects, builders and designers. They have inspired us with their innovating techniques and help spread Miele's

sustainability message that anyone can make energy saving choices in their home."

In addition to the overall competition, the teams competed in 10 contests, which Team Watershed consistently placed in the top four. For the appliance contest, teams performed everyday tasks, including having to run the dishwasher through a complete cycle in which the temperature inside the dishwasher reached 120°F to test its energy efficiency. During the Home Entertainment

contest, Team Watershed utilized the Miele Induction Cooktop and Speed Oven to host two dinner parties. One of the menus featured a gourmet five course meal made with locally harvested and seasonal ingredients including a roasted rockfish with smoked paprika romesco, handmade tagliatelle with crackled collard greens and a warm chocolate torte with almond salted caramel pears.

"We were extremely pleased to be partnering with Miele on our entry into the Solar

Decathlon competition 2011," said Brian Grieb, WaterShed's faculty project manager. "Miele has a reputation for providing elegantly-designed, environmentally-conscious, cost-efficient products that are constructed with longevity in mind. These attributes are exactly the qualities we know we needed in order to win this year."

After all contest results were tallied, Maryland earned 951 points out of a possible 1,000 to win the competition. **RO**



Ranked Highest in Customer Satisfaction.

Once again, J.D. Power and Associates has ranked Miele "Highest in Customer Satisfaction with Dishwashers".

Our new Futura dishwasher features a FlexiCare Basket System and intelligent sensor technology for a perfect clean and unmatched care.

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© 2011 Miele Inc. Miele received the highest numerical score for dishwashers in the proprietary J.D. Power and Associates 2011 Kitchen Appliance StudySM. Study based on 11,701 total responses measuring 18 brands and measures opinions of consumers who purchased refrigerators from a retail store or their new-home builder during the previous 24 months. Proprietary study results are based on experiences and perceptions of consumers surveyed in March-April 2011. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com

Scholtès Sees Niche Opportunity

Identifying a niche for high performance, European appliances, the Indesit Company is expanding its Scholtès brand in to North America.

“We are confident that the pricing and design of this product has an important place in the appliance industry, despite current economic conditions,” states Marco D’Arsie, North American sales manager. “We appeal to the customer who wants a professional-style performance product and unique design in their renovation or new build at a price tag that offers true value. And frankly, there hasn’t been a new, exciting appliance launch in North America for several years. Scholtès is it.”

The new product line consists of cooking products (built-in ovens, gas cooktops and electric cooktops), ventilation, dishwashers, refrigeration drawers, wine cabinets, beverage centers and coffee machines. It is key to note that the Scholtès North American product line has been specifically developed for the needs and requirements of the market. Product specifications acknowledge that consumers should not have to modify their own spaces and installation to accommodate European sizing.

PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS:

- **30” Built-in Oven** – a large 4.1 cu ft capacity with strong, full glide racks to support heavy pans. A unique dual fan convection system provides an even heat environment, perfect for baking, that can’t be replicated in single fan competitive models. Twelve oven modes for maximum versatility and professional results.
- **Gas Cooktops** – available in 30” (4 burner) and 36” (5 burner) widths. With 42,000 BTUs and 55,000 BTUs respectively, the cooktops offer cooking power and versatile burner configurations. Clean design and a useful flat wing above the control knobs to house spoons, spatulas and other utensils, make the cooktops the perfect accompaniment to the built-in oven.
- **Electric Cooktops** – available in 30” and 36” widths. Key features include ease of an electric smooth-top cooking surface (clean-up and care), a large spectrum of performance options, and sleek aesthetics (stainless end trim and a hint of Scholtès branding).
- **Ventilation** – available in 30” and 36” widths. The Scholtès vent hoods are elegantly designed and boast ample performance with 518 cfms. Soft touch electric controls regulate three speed levels and a vital BOOST function that captures the strongest smells in the kitchen, automatically

shutting after 10 minutes and the air is cleared.

- **Dishwashers** – both stainless and panel-ready models are offered. New hydraulic circuits and insulated water tanks ensure silent operation and energy efficiency. An intuitive range of programs for the best clean are available – from a half-load function to duo-wash for the most challenging loads that allows delicate wine glasses to receive the same proper attention as heavy pots. A flexible, dual space system maximizes usage.
- **Refrigeration Drawers** – two innovative 36” wide cooling drawers with different temperature zones to accommodate different types of food and beverages. Scholtès offers a new concept in refrigeration space for space efficiency and effective preservation. Placed beneath the counter for flexibility in kitchen design, and engineered for clever and adaptable storage configurations.
- **Coffee Machine** – professional style coffee machine for superb coffee experiences and restaurant quality hot beverages. Compact in footprint and cabinet depth for a streamlined built-in installation. The digital display gives all information at the fingertip for maintenance and safety, coffee aroma, temperature levels and much more for coffee, teas, cappuccino, espresso and steamed milk. The patented Scholtès Brewing System (SBS) assures the optimal level of creaminess in coffee.
- **24 and 36 Bottle Wine Cabinets** – designed to provide an ideal climate for preservation and storage of fine wines. Both units are cabinet depth and built-in to minimize the footprint. Special care has been given to precise temperature ranges, anti-vibration, humidity control, light minimizing and advanced circulation for pure air.
- **Beverage Center** – a flexible unit designed to house fine wine, beer and other beverages. A flat shelf for storage is perfect for food trays. Useful in the kitchen, bar or any entertainment area.

A new North American website www.scholtesamerica.com is now live with complete product specifications and use and care guidelines. The site is also rich with information about key brand attributes, chef affiliations and cultural contributions.

“We’re ready to become an important part of this market. We look forward to future growth, additional products being added to the line in 2012 and making Scholtès a household name here as it is in Europe,” said D’Arsie. **RO**



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In Review

CEDIA EXPO

Exudes Positive Energy
Delivers Qualified Att





2011 Energy and Attendees

MORE THAN 17,600 ATTENDEES AND 444 EXHIBITORS FROM 70 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES PARTICIPATED IN CEDIA EXPO 2011 IN INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA. OF THOSE PARTICIPANTS, 25 PERCENT WERE FIRST TIME ATTENDEES AND 83 FIRST TIME EXHIBITORS.

“The feedback received from attendees was positive and energetic,” said Utz Baldwin, CEDIA CEO. “According to the 2011 CEDIA Benchmarking Survey, electronic systems contractor businesses are experiencing higher revenue and profitability and judging by the data and the traffic at the show the coming year looks to be one of growth and expansion.”

CEDIA EXPO offered more than 100 CEDIA University education courses and 150 Manufacturer Product Training opportunities. The most popular CEDIA courses attended focused on home networking, content delivery, and emerging technologies/trends. According to exhibitors and attendees, CEDIA EXPO 2011 was a valuable business opportunity to connect with new buyers and identify new and future technologies. *[continued on page 36]*



RESPONSES FROM CEDIA EXPO ATTENDEES

“CEDIA EXPO is the perfect tradeshow,” said Phyllis Eliasberg, ABC TV producer. “I’ve covered many tradeshows over the last 25 years in the electronics industry and CEDIA EXPO is the most organized, targeted event that provides me with that face-to-face time I need with quality attendees and exhibitors that represent the home technology space.”

“As a first-time EXPO exhibitor, the show was an amazing introduction to the US residential marketplace,” said Ollie French, commercial director for Future Automation. “CEDIA EXPO attendees are intelligent and informed visitors with real projects. CEDIA 2011 has been a success for Future Automation and we are looking forward to next year’s show.”

“CEDIA EXPO once again blew me away,” said Phil Cordell, president, HiPhidelity. “It made me proud to be an A/V installer and excited about what the future has in store for our industry. With all of the opportunities for learning, chances to catch up with friends in the biz and cool innovations I don’t see anywhere else, I wouldn’t miss CEDIA EXPO for the world.”

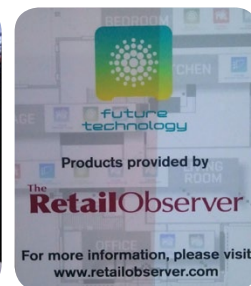
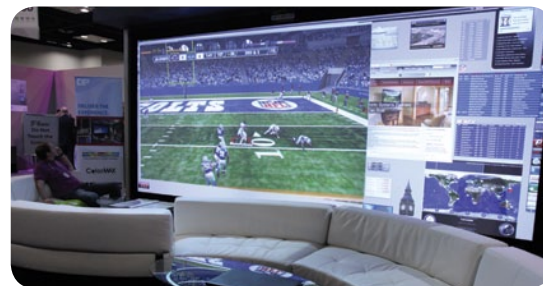
“Proficient has had huge traffic this year and the highest first day attendance over the last ten years,” said Keith Marshall, president of Proficient. “We have to thank the CEDIA folks for doing a good job of putting on a good program, building excitement and getting the turnout this year.”

“The AVC Group had a great show,” said David Scofield, director of marketing and communications for The AVC Group. “We’ve experienced wonderful booth traffic and a great enthusiastic crowd.”

Highlights of the event included the CEDIA Future Technology Pavilion which featured 29 companies displaying technologies and products that represent the future of the residential electronic systems industry.

ELECTRONIC LIFESTYLES® AWARDS BANQUET

CEDIA recognized the outstanding work of its members at the annual Electronic Lifestyles—Awards Banquet. The honorees included over 40 winning





projects in the Designer Awards competition, 16 Manufacturers' Excellence Awards winners, three inductees into the CEDIA Fellows program, and the 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. Also honored were the year's top volunteers.

The Designer Awards competition, which honors the best projects completed by CEDIA electronic systems contractors (ESC) members in the past year, featured winners in such categories as Best Integrated Home, Best Media Room, Best Hidden Installation, and Best Home Theater. The Designer Awards winners were determined by a panel of expert judges that included ESCs, architects, and interior designers. Also recognized were the three winners in the CEDIA/HGTVPro.com People's Pick Awards, which were voted on by visitors to HGTVPro.com.

The Manufacturers' Excellence Awards honorees included 10 Best New Product winners, one Sustainable Lifestyle Product Innovation winner, and five inductees into the Product Hall of Fame. The winners were selected by a panel of ESC judges. CEDIA also announced the winner of the Attendees' Choice Award as voted on by ESCs attending CEDIA EXPO.

Individuals recognized at the Electronic Lifestyles® Awards Banquet included the third group of CEDIA Fellows and the Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, which were announced prior to CEDIA EXPO. In addition CEDIA announced the establishment of the Jerald R. Vaughan Education Scholarship.

"The Electronic Lifestyles Awards Banquet offers an opportunity for all of us to celebrate design and technology excellence," said CEDIA CEO Utz Baldwin. "These award winners are leaders; their participation puts them among an elite group within the industry."

The full list of award winners can be viewed at www.cedia.org/awards.

CEDIA EXPO will return to Indianapolis September 5-8, 2012. For more information on CEDIA's global regions, visit www.cedia.org. **RO**

Almo's 2011/2012 Electronics Catalog Now Available in Print, Online and on Your Smart Phone

Almo Corporation, the major national consumer electronics and appliance distributor, announced the release of their annual full-line electronics catalog in both print and digital formats. This product packed tool offers their dealers a better way to visualize and share product information with their sales teams and customers.

"Almo's full line CE catalog was designed as a comprehensive dealer tool. In keeping with that philosophy, we make sure our dealers have easy access to the catalog wherever they work – in the office or on the road," stated Warren Chaiken, Almo president and COO. "That's why we make it available in print, online and on portable devices including the Blackberry, Droid, Palm, iPhone, iPad, and Wi-Fi tablets."



Designed as a dual purpose tool, the 2011/2012 Almo CE Catalog offers MSRP pricing, product and technical information along with integration to Almo's B2B dealer portal where inventory, pricing and ordering information are just a click away. This structure allows a reseller to use the catalog as a reference tool when working with a customer without revealing dealer pricing details.

Product categories included in this version are Home Entertainment, Portable Entertainment, Photo/Video, Communications, Mobile Electronics and Small Appliances.

Almo dealers will receive printed versions of the catalog and the digital version in both full and mobile formats can be found at www.AlmoCEcatalog-digital.com. Dealers interested in obtaining a catalog or joining the Almo team, should call 866-430-2566. **RO**

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Plan for the Holiday Season

It seems like we were just in the middle of the long August heat wave, but suddenly, the temperatures have cooled and the leaves are turning. Kids are settled back in school, the Labor Day and Columbus Day promotions are in the can. Halloween candy is getting stale and the jack-o-lantern is getting mushy. But it's still not too late to jump in and create a great holiday selling season in your store.

- **Get into the spirit.** Sure, the hours are long and you'll see some worn out grumpy customers. The marketplace may see record low pricing, but make the season fun. Do your own shopping early to avoid stressing about it later. Spend a little time with your family.
- **Get the goods.** Keep connected with your suppliers and see if they anticipate any product shortages. Make sure your assortment includes some traffic-driving leader products, some steps and a good selection of profit pieces.
- **Hone your promotional plan.** Increase your ad budget. Get your message out to your customers early and often. Use a good media mix. Schedule different events for Black Friday, pre-Christmas, after Christmas.
- **Create some buzz.** Email marketing campaigns are inexpensive and effective. Use your Facebook page to ask your customers questions about what they're looking to buy this holiday season. Create community—have customers share stories about their fondest holiday memories.
- **Decorate the store.** Don't just

re-use last year's worn out, beat up tree. Invest in new, good-looking holiday decorations. Create a theme—gingerbread or candy canes or even a tree full of ornaments made by the pre-schoolers in your area.

- **Don't forget the cookies.** Let's face it; a lot of the season revolves around food. To differentiate your store from the box stores, feed your customers crisp apples, Christmas cookies, cider or hot chocolate. If



weather permits, have a scout troop grill hot dogs as a fundraiser.

- **Sounds of the season.** Pipe the holiday music into your parking lot as well as through the store. Invite local children's chorales to have concerts in your store.
- **Give a gift.** Reward customers for coming to your store. Ornaments, mulled wine spice mix, or locally made apple cider go a long way toward building loyalty.
- **Give back.** Get out into your community. Ask your team to take a shift serving holiday dinner at a

shelter. Hold an in-store sock and hat drive for the homeless. Collect gently used items for Toys for Tots. Give a special discount to customers who bring in a can of food to donate to the food pantry.

- **Celebrate the New Year.** The week after Christmas can be as big as the week before. Build on your holiday promotions with special New Year's buys. Many dealers have been successful opening on New Year's Day.
- **Out with the old.** Hold a January White Sale or Inventory Blowout for one more push before the season comes to an end.
- **Thank your team.** The best time to have your annual holiday get together is in mid-January, not in December when your staff is tired and they have other family obligations. Thank them for their hard work and recognize special achievements.

You've got a big three months ahead of you. Consumers are expected to increase purchases this season from 3% to 4.5% over last year. You can do even better with good planning, the right inventory, a solid promotional plan, a highly motivated well-trained staff and a positive attitude. Most of all enjoy the spirit of the season yourself. **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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You Can't Hide Bad Service: Social Networks Share Customer Complaints with the World

Never before has timing been as critical to an organization's success as it is today, especially when it comes to solving a customer's problem. Technology and social networks have driven the need for timely customer complaint solutions to a new high. Those networks have put businesses throughout the world under a technological microscope, as disgruntled customers share their experiences with thousands, if not millions of people, in a matter of seconds with a simple click of a button.

In the past, customers who had a problem with a company would tell, on average, 20 of their friends, coworkers, and family members about it. Social networks, however, allow anyone anywhere to share their customer service complaints quickly and with people in every corner of the globe.

The power and appeal of social networks is undeniable. Consider this: More than 800 million people are active users of Facebook, and each of them has an average of 130 friends. More than 350 million of those users access Facebook through mobile devices such as cell phones, which means they are in touch with their friends even while they're on the go.

What do those numbers mean to you and your organization? It means that, if one of your customers has a problem, and you don't solve that

problem quickly, that customer can—and probably will—blast you to hundreds, if not thousands, of friends. And their comments and complaints often remain on social network sites for years.

Let me give you an example: When United Airlines broke a passenger's guitar in 2009, that passenger put a posting about it on YouTube. It's still



there—and it has had almost 11 million hits. Another YouTube video, posted in 2006, involves a Comcast technician, who fell asleep on the customer's couch while he was on hold for an hour with the company's central office. That video has had almost 1.7 million hits.

Consumers of all ages are increasingly turning to social network sites before they make decisions on where to spend

their money. My daughter Christina is 31 and lives in China. Before my wife Pat and I visit her, she logs onto various social network sites to check out hotels and restaurants for us. My friend, Vicki, is 62 and uses Google—which has 1 billion visitors each month—to be directed to sites, including Trip Advisor, that provide customer reviews on hotels before she finalizes her travel plans. Other popular sites are www.my3cents.com, and www.screwedbyforums.com.

You can spend millions of dollars on advertising and marketing, but if you don't solve your customers' problems, you may suffer bad publicity that will cost you millions more in the loss of potential customers. No longer do you have the luxury of waiting a few days or a week to handle a customer's complaint; you must do it within a matter of minutes. That means you must empower your frontline employees to do whatever it takes to satisfy your customers. If you don't, your sales, along with your chances of survival, may plummet. **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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Mobile Marketing Strategies

As I write this column (on a MacBook Pro), the world is mourning the loss of Apple CEO and American visionary Steve Jobs.

One of Jobs' key innovations was the iPhone. This incredible device has forever changed the way we interact with each other, the way we are entertained and the way we gather information.

The iPhone and other smart phones have also transformed the retail environment, as shoppers use texts, apps, and constant access to the Internet to inform their purchase decisions. By extension, they have transformed the way companies market to consumers by offering many new tools and channels to reach them.

If you think mobile marketing is expensive and only for big companies, think again. There are many ways mobile marketing can be scaled to meet your needs and budgets.

TEXTING

Aside from voice calls, texting is one of the most basic ways people use their phones. For small retailers or companies with modest budgets, SMS texting campaigns are a great way to engage consumers at a low cost. They can be used to drive short-term sales, engage with consumers for long-term loyalty, and they are measurable.

You can work with a local SMS service provider to rent a short code and encourage people to send texts to you in exchange for a discount or incentive. For example, in your radio advertising you might ask people to text "Sale" to 12345 for 25 percent off their next purchase.

Once they respond, that gives you a chance to allow them to opt-in to receive information on future sales or promotions. Soon you've built a list of customers around which you can create a loyalty program.

SOCIAL COUPONS

You have no doubt heard of social couponing services like Groupon or Living Social. These services are an effective way to reaching new consumers and giving them an incentive to try you out by offering a discount on a leader product or service. These services offer a simple, turn-key way to reach consumers through their mobile devices.

MOBILE ADVERTISING

A fairly new and growing tool for marketers, mobile advertising allows you to place your ads on other mobile properties like media sites, games or apps. The coolest thing about mobile advertising is that ads can be targeted by geographic location. So for a relatively low cost, you can reach people who are in close physical proximity to your location. And like most mobile marketing, it is immediately trackable and measurable, so you can see instantly how well it works.

POINT OF SALE

People always have their phones with them, and they are using them in increasing numbers to gather information while they are actively shopping. You can take advantage by creating point-of-sale displays that essentially act as a salesperson.

By scanning a QR code in your store

or showroom, consumers can see a video that demonstrates the product, get specs and details about the product, or compare the product to others like it. You can also reward them by giving them instant savings, discounts or buy-one-get-one offers.

People will use their phones regardless of what you do, so you may as well use that to your advantage.

MOBILE SITES

As you scale up your mobile marketing, you will want to think about creating a mobile version of your web site. The internet is available to everyone, everywhere, at any time. But if your site only works on a conventional computer screen, you are at a disadvantage.

A mobile site is designed to work well with touch screen functionality and be easy to read on a four-inch screen. It can be a simple, single page with basic location information, a full-blown site with rich functionality and e-commerce capability, or anything in between.

If you are a retailer, or a manufacturer, it is crucial that you find ways to reach your customers through their iPhones, Droids, and other mobile devices, no matter what your budget is. Simply put, the revolution started by Mr. Jobs is too big to ignore. **RO**

Chris Thiede, a marketing and public relations professional, works at IMRE, an agency of experts in the home industry. Chris blogs at inrehomeiq.com. E-mail Chris at cthiede@imre.com.





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Two Money Making Tips for the Price of One

These tips are not the silver bullet however; they are two more bullets in your arsenal of weapons that can hit the bull's eye faster and more accurately than most.

HERE'S TIP NUMBER 1

I just learned this one which can help to keep you on top of what your competition is doing. Go to Google Alerts and create an alert for the name of your business, your name, your employees' names, your industry, and/or any of the important vendors you might carry and anything else that you would want to know if any news is written about you.

What Google does is to search the web so that anytime any of your key words are mentioned in any type of news story or mentioned in the media, they will send you an email alert. You should also create a Google Alert for all of your competitors. If they are mentioned in the media you will be aware of it. Most businesses will do press releases when there is some type of change or initiative that they want the public to know about. Don't be the last to know – set up Google Alerts and be the first to know.

HERE'S TIP NUMBER 2

Obviously business conditions are challenging. Even the stores that are doing business and thriving are really working at it by constantly coming up with new promotions and

activities to become a destination store in the eyes of their customers. That common denominator that all successful stores seem to have is the fact that they are selling a hot product that customers are willing to pay for even during tough economic times.

In other words, the trump card for slow business is that hot re-orderable item. So what does that mean? That means that we shouldn't take the



buying process for granted. We must work harder than ever before in selecting merchandise for our stores.

We also must be constantly networking with other retailers and shopping other businesses to be able to pick up hot new trends that can be our new winning items. We need to be able to pick up these winners earlier on the curve because a winner will start up the bell-shaped curve and get to the peak and slowly come down. Too many times we are finding these hot sellers at the top of the peak or on the decline of the curve

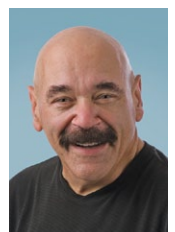
and we don't get the full benefit of that desired item.

Also, you must remember that when the item is on the incline the margins are fatter. On the decline the margins become thinner because everyone has it. What we have to do along with networking and shopping is to read as much trade information as possible. I like to go to trade shows or showrooms to see which are the busiest. In many cases it is an unscientific way of finding a winner and so many times that way works.

During economic slowdowns, people might not buy the quantity that they bought in the past. They might not spend as much money as they have in the past. But we all seem to make room for that one item that everybody is buying. During the great depression there were still vendors who were setting sales records while during some of the boom years of the nineties vendors and stores were still going out of business.

The bottom line is to work a little harder, work a little smarter, ask a few more questions, and most importantly go out and shop, shop, shop. It will make a difference. **RO**

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



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The New Principles of Kitchen Design

I have been designing kitchens for over 30 years and like most of my peers, associates and contemporaries, I have followed religiously the holy tenets of our faith, the un-questioned “work-triangle”, that was until I met a holy-man from a far away land called Michigan, on a pilgrimage to share his vision of how things should work and a set of principles to live and work by.

It is truly hard to believe that on a whole, we are still designing kitchens based on an idea born out of the “rational” movement of the 1900’s. The ‘work-triangle’ was created to maximize the efficiency and eliminate unneeded steps and movements in the preparation and cooking of the daily meals, thus allowing the woman of the house to free up her valuable time for more important tasks like cleaning, laundry and childcare.

This once private domain of the feminine world has now given way to a new social order and reflects the world that we live in. Today we find a more “democratized” environment, where everyone is welcomed in the kitchen, a place where family, friends, and guests are invited, if not encouraged, to participate in the ritual of preparation.

And with this increased activity and additional bodies, all in a high-traffic ballet of fire, boiling water and sharp pointy things, we find that the assembly-line kitchen of the past century, with its uniform horizon of sink, dishwasher, cook-top, oven and refrigerator, forever locked in its limited one-person ‘work-

triangle’, must make way to a new way of thinking.

The pilgrim I speak of is industry thought-leader, designer and manufacturer, Pete Walker. His evolutionary or maybe more correct, revolutionary concept is called the “Proximity Principles[®]”. According to Pete’s first principle, “A kitchen should be arranged around a series of task based work centers in relative proximity to each other and in proper sequence relative to tasks as they actually occur in cookery.”

According to Pete, the Principles dictate the adaptation of the site conditions to various task-appropriate layouts and the results of their use are uniformly functional. As is true of any situation, site and structural issues and the constraints of budget will impact the final result. In other words, no matter the size, shape or budget of the kitchen, the Principles always improve the use of whatever space is available.

To further his beliefs, Pete has created a line of eco-centric kitchens that embody his philosophy; the Proximity Kitchen System™ eliminates the vast number of unnecessary options, elements and configurations currently found in both domestic and imported mass-manufactured kitchen product lines. His streamlined collection leaves the designer with an elegant intersection of minimalist product and maximizes achievable function.

A kitchen based on the Principles is therefore no longer skewed by geometric happenstance; the obsolete ‘work

triangle’, but, based on a set of irreducible ‘first principles’. These principles organize a clear set of design techniques and protocols which create space that allow an individual to move gracefully through a kitchen where everything comes easily to hand as it is needed or as Pete would say, “Life within reach.”

Like any movement or belief out of the norm, Pete and his Principles have its share of nah-sayers and distracters, but there seems to be an ever growing legion of architects, interior designers and kitchen specialists, who call themselves “Proxies”, that have embraced this new thought in both mind and heart as well as action in the practice of their trade. Tammy Sagar, owner of Heart of the Home Designs and Proxie, says that “the proximity Principles simply make sense...they guide my design process in the direction of practicality without interfering with my creativity.”

If you would like to know more about Pete and the Principles or would like additional information regarding the Proximity Kitchen System, I would encourage you to visit www.proximitykitchens.com. **RO**

Kevin Henry is Senior VP of Sales and Marketing for Enkeboll Designs. You can follow Kevin’s thoughts and observation on his blog at www.theessentialkitchen.blogspot.com





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A Little Less Kerfuffle: Confrontation is Not a Dirty Word

In ordinary American conversation, you don't often hear the word *kerfuffle*¹, but it's one of my favorites from the English vernacular. Plus, it sounds more dignified than the recent use of "cluster" to define something that is just a big mess of confusion or tangle of events. In an organization, you might hear people say, "I was putting out fires all last week," to describe how they've been highly stressed, running from emergency to emergency, or trying to prevent disaster striking their business events. What's all the fuss about?

Confrontation is often confused with *conflict*. Conflict generally means we are in some sort of battle or fight; we've squared off to do battle. Confrontation, on the other hand, comes from the root words *to come in front of*, and in the workplace, it is a necessary and useful skill that can help you create the kind of culture where open and honest communication supports your business goals and your desired results. In the Influencing Options® model, we confront *to respectfully resolve an issue*—that's it: no fighting, no bearing of arms.

THE COST OF NOT CONFRONTING

Why don't people confront? Often you will hear people say that they'd do anything to avoid confrontation. Most of the time, they really mean avoiding conflict because their experience has been uncomfortable, unpredictable and painful, either for themselves, the other person, or both. Or, they're not afraid to confront, but when they do so, they are unskilled and create wreckage—they damage the relationship or make things worse. But confrontation is not

only necessary, it's a quality of life skill and it's especially important in a workplace where we are constantly faced with challenges and opportunities to resolve issues! Not confronting can be very costly because we may have issues that not only don't get resolved, but also get worse, and this not only wreaks havoc on our working relationships, it also impacts our bottom line in business.

Let's say you have an employee whose work performance is generally pretty good. However, her co-workers find her to be challenging to work with, prone to gossip and distraction, and often negative when she's not right in front of a customer. She thinks she's funny or witty as she's making fun of people or putting them down. Without effective confrontation skills, there's really no reason for her to change—no one is telling her that what she's doing is not working! And, the result could be that people won't want to work her shifts, will not be willing to help or support her efforts at work, or may even quit. This behavior is likely to leak out into her interactions with customers, too, as they may overhear negative, unprofessional comments. Confronting with respect can increase her awareness and, importantly, allow you to *ask for what you want instead*.

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU WANT

Confronting effectively and respectfully means that you decide to ask for what you want, instead of what you don't want. With our negative employee, we might say, "I need you to change the way you are talking about coworkers and customers while you are here at work. By that I mean, try to be more positive about people's contributions and strengths, or

refrain from saying anything that might hurt someone's feelings if they heard you say it in front of them . . ." When we confront in this way, the person has a better idea of what we want them to do, and, importantly, we minimize their defensiveness, which helps to build trust and make the change we want.

WHAT MIGHT A SUCCESSFUL CONFRONTATION LOOK LIKE?

- **Meet someone in private, face to face.** If someone were to make an important request of you, wouldn't you prefer this? Take the time to carefully plan how, when and where you will communicate.
- **Pay attention to your non-verbal communication.** Your tone, facial expressions, and body language will communicate your sincerity and level of seriousness to the other person.
- **Be specific.** Don't make them guess or have to fill in the blanks you've left out. Tell them exactly what you want and why it's important to you.
- **Be quiet.** Give the other person opportunity to communicate their points.

Improving your confrontation skills will help everyone experience a little less kerfuffle at work! **RO**

¹A commotion, disruption or ruckus.

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



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United Servicers Association and ASTI Build Confidence for Success

My story starts out like most appliance service technicians. I was working for an appliance service company and even though I was making a living, I felt like I would be able to start my own company and make my services better than the other companies in my area.

In 1993, I opened Ortega's Appliance Service. I was confident that I had the talent to run my own business, set my own hours and make plenty of money. By 1995, my business was surviving but not really going anywhere. I was working long hours, barely making ends meet and becoming frustrated.

As luck would have it, while speaking to the Whirlpool Tech Line, I was told about an appliance convention that was being held in Houston, Texas by Appliance Tech Talk Magazine. I attended hoping to learn more about the appliance industry and how to save my business. At the convention, I met many members of the United Services Association and connected with many business owners who were in the same situation as me. I learned so many things at the first convention that my head was spinning with ideas. I came home so excited about all of the changes I was going to make that it actually scared my wife!

I started attending USA's Appliance Service Training Institute (ASTI) conventions every year and looked forward to learning more and more in the classes that were offered. I enjoyed

meeting with my peers each year and learning more about the trends in the appliance market. I joined a USA Peer Group and felt empowered to discuss freely with them issues and ideas within our businesses; knowing that they were not competitors in my market. Every year and every class was a step up the ladder for my business. My business not only survived, it grew to a happy level.

Recently in 2009, I was considering growing the business again and felt that I was ready for the challenge. Again as luck would have it, I was servicing an appliance for a long time customer who happened to be the District Director of the U.S. Small Business Association (SBA) for New Mexico. He asked about my future business plans and suggested that I look into an SBA supported program called the Emerging 200 Initiative (E-200).

I applied for the E-200 program, a government sponsored program that accepts only 200 small business owners from across the country that show a high potential for growth. It is a seven month program where the participants engage in an intensive curriculum focused on developing a winning expansion strategy for their business, including options for capital access and contracting.

I was thrilled to be accepted into the program. I felt I was in a good position both in the business and in my personal life to take on the

challenge, but little did I know how much of my time and energy this program would take. Together with my wife, we completed the assignments and growth action plan to prepare for the final presentation. Little by little I began to realize that every unit that was covered in this program had also been covered in the classes that I had attended over the years at the USA Appliance Conventions. I realized that I already had the tools that were needed to grow and run a successful business and it gave me the confidence to make the changes needed to make my business even better. Graduation from the E-200 Program was definitely a highlight in my career! I would recommend this program to anyone who is willing to put in the work to experience the reward.

This year when I attended the ASTI Convention, I felt like I was able to contribute more to others than I ever have in the past. I am thankful to USA for the lessons I have learned over the years and look forward to giving back to others. I will definitely be at next year's AST on February 15-18, 2012 in San Antonio, TX. **RO**

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Kitchen & Bath Industry Show and National Kitchen & Bath Association Announce New 2012 Tradeshow Dates

KBIS TO TAKE PLACE APRIL 24 - 26, 2012 AT CHICAGO'S MCCORMICK PLACE

As part of Chicago's city-wide schedule adjustments to accommodate the G-8 and NATO summits in May 2012, the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show (KBIS) has moved up its annual tradeshow and conference to April 24 - 26, 2012, at McCormick Place, with the conference beginning on April 23. Owned by the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) and produced by Nielsen Expositions, KBIS brings together nearly 20,000 of the industry's top dealers, designers, builders, remodelers, retailers, and other professionals directly involved in the design and remodel of residential kitchens and bathrooms.

There will be no impact to hotel rates or availability, and the NKBA and Nielsen do not anticipate any impact on the number of attendees or exhibitors at KBIS based on the date shift. In fact, many KBIS exhibitors have already pointed out that they prefer this new date pattern during the week versus the weekend. Additionally, Candice Olson has already confirmed that she is able to serve as the KBIS 2012 opening keynote speaker on the new opening day of the show on April 24.

The National Kitchen & Bath Association and Nielsen Expositions will

continue to promote these new show dates to ensure that all potential attendees, exhibitors, media, and partners are aware that KBIS 2012 will now take place from April 24 - 26, 2012. The NKBA and Nielsen have also ensured that KBIS does not conflict with other national or international industry events.

Certified Master Kitchen & Bath Designer and 2011 NKBA President David Alderman, CMKBD, said, "In the face of Chicago's sudden need to alter the city's entire schedule of spring events due to the scheduling of the G8 and NATO summits, I'm very happy that we were able to secure show dates so close to the original schedule and maintain the show's hotel blocks and discounted pricing."

Jim Scott, show managing director, said, "Chicago is a world-class city, and on behalf of KBIS and the NKBA, we're excited to see it showcased on the international political stage. We're happy to be back in Chicago after our well-attended 2011 show. KBIS will again offer our attendees and exhibitors maximized ROI, exposure and networking, and ultimately the best show experience."

Attendees can look forward to the KBIS 2012 trade show floor featuring the newest

and most innovative kitchen and bath products from 500 global manufacturers. KBIS will offer a full conference program led by top industry change-makers, as well as play host to vital networking opportunities.

The KBIS and NKBA teams have conducted a full lodging review, and hospitality options remain fully open and space has been secured around the new 2012 dates. They also have secured the commitment of Chicago and the convention bureau to maintain exhibitor moving costs at the level they would have been if the original dates were maintained. The McCormick Place reforms to lower labor costs make the 2012 show even more attractive for exhibiting manufacturers.

Looking forward to the future of the show, Scott said, "We are also excited by the opportunity to make Chicago the home for KBIS in 2014. We will be making changes in KBIS to more fully incorporate a Chicago-wide experience in the future, extending the value of attending KBIS beyond the actual three days of this year's event."

Media and attendee registration for KBIS will be open in January 2012 at www.kbis.com. **RO**

2011 •

UPCOMING EVENTS

• 2012

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2011

NOVEMBER

10-12

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2012

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30- FEB. 3

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FEBRUARY

8-11

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15-18

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6-9

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10-13

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27-29

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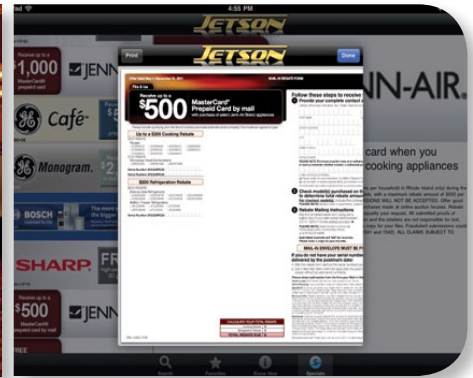
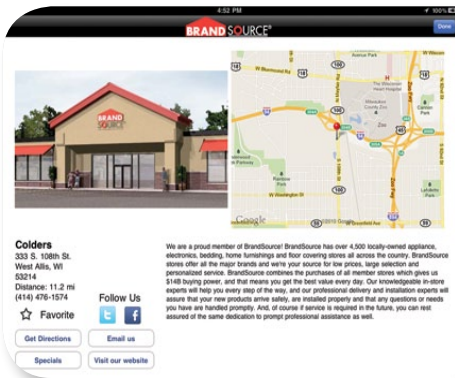
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BrandSource Mobile App Brings More Than 7,000 Products Directly Into the Hands of Shoppers

AN INDUSTRY FIRST, BRANDSOURCE APP IS FREE AND AVAILABLE IN ITUNES APP STORE



BrandSource has unveiled a new mobile app with two builds—one tailored for members and the other for consumers—that lets users quickly and easily get detailed information on more than 7,000 appliances and electronics, all in the palm of their hand. Users can get pricing information, manufacturers, colors, measurements and model numbers and search for the nearest BrandSource dealer from more than 40,000 zip codes.

A first in the industry, the new BrandSource mobile app is free, available in the iTunes app store and compatible with the iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad and iPad 2. It will work with other mobile operating systems

soon and will include additional categories such as home furnishings, according to Bob Lawrence, CEO of BrandSource.

“There’s no other dedicated home appliance app in the industry today,” said Lawrence. “Our smart search capabilities include more than 160 popular search words to make it easy for members or shoppers to get helpful information quickly. Our members can also customize the BrandSource app for their individual stores.”

Customers can search and filter by price, manufacturer, color, depth, width and/or height. Information can be shared with friends and colleagues via email, Twitter or Facebook. Additionally, an easy

tutorial is available online that demonstrates how users can search for specific products by model number (vimeo.com/29752882). A new “Know How” section offers video clips to help shoppers choose products with features that best suit their needs. Additionally, a new QR code reader scans QR codes with iPhone and iPad 2 cameras for instant details on specific items.

Members can use the app to print price tags, show competitive prices in the area and arrange for shipment directly to the customer or the nearest store. Specials and promotions are also detailed in the app; rebates can be printed and given to customers or handed to salespeople.

Visit www.brandsourcemobile.com. **RO**

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Nationwide Promotes Bazemore to New Vice President of Furniture

GROUP FORESEES OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH IN HOME FURNISHINGS AND ACCESSORIES

Nationwide Marketing Group, one of the largest buying and marketing organizations for independent retailers in the US, announced the promotion of Bill Bazemore to Vice President of Furniture.

“To provide the level of service that we do today, we must understand how a retailer operates. The kind of experience Bill brings to our organization can’t be taught, either you have it or you don’t,” said Robert Weisner, CEO of Nationwide Marketing Group. “That’s why he is such a valuable member of our executive management team and has been charged with supporting our current members and introducing our services to new furniture dealers across the US.”

Bazemore attributes his ability to support the independent from his array of experiences working on the retail and manufacturing side of furniture. His family owned independent furniture stores in Florida and after graduating from Florida State University, Bazemore continued to work in the family business.

“I have worked in this industry for the past 34 years. As a kid, I started as a porter and worked in the warehouse during summers and holidays while in college. I later worked as a credit manager then store manager and buyer,” said Bazemore. “Furniture is in my blood, I don’t see myself doing anything else.”

Bazemore continued his career, working as Vice President of RSS, a service buying group out of Baltimore, Maryland. He also worked as the general manager of retail operations for a company with retail stores throughout the Midwest and at the time, the largest furniture distributor in the country, before moving into sales and national distribution and then on to Nationwide.

“When I first started with Nationwide in 1999, the

industry had already undergone significant changes with the onslaught of imports and the independent needed a way to level the playing field with the majors,” said Bazemore “By harnessing the power of Nationwide, furniture dealers now had the opportunity to become a force in their marketplace.”

Over the past 5 years, Nationwide’s furniture division has doubled its sales through an increase in membership by 609 companies. Under current market conditions, the organization foresees continued growth in their membership and sales in home furnishings and accessories.

“We are seeing more furniture dealers seeking out the support of a buying group. But we are also experiencing growth through our existing appliance and electronics dealers who are diversifying their product mix and entering the furniture category through bedding,” said Weisner.

The group recently partnered with Serta to develop two private label bedding lines—Smart Choice and Bellagio—sold exclusively at Nationwide dealer stores.

In addition to special group product offerings and pricing programs with major manufacturers, Nationwide also provides furniture dealers with complete print, TV and web advertising packages.

“Because we own our own state of the art production studio facility in Atlanta, our marketing resources are second to none in the furniture industry,” said Bazemore. “In 2012, the group will be introducing a host of furniture email templates so dealers can reach their customers through product specific online marketing campaigns.

To learn more about the many benefits of joining Nationwide Marketing Group, contact Bill Bazemore at furniture@nationwidegroup.org or call (770) 442-9726. **RO**



Bill Bazemore



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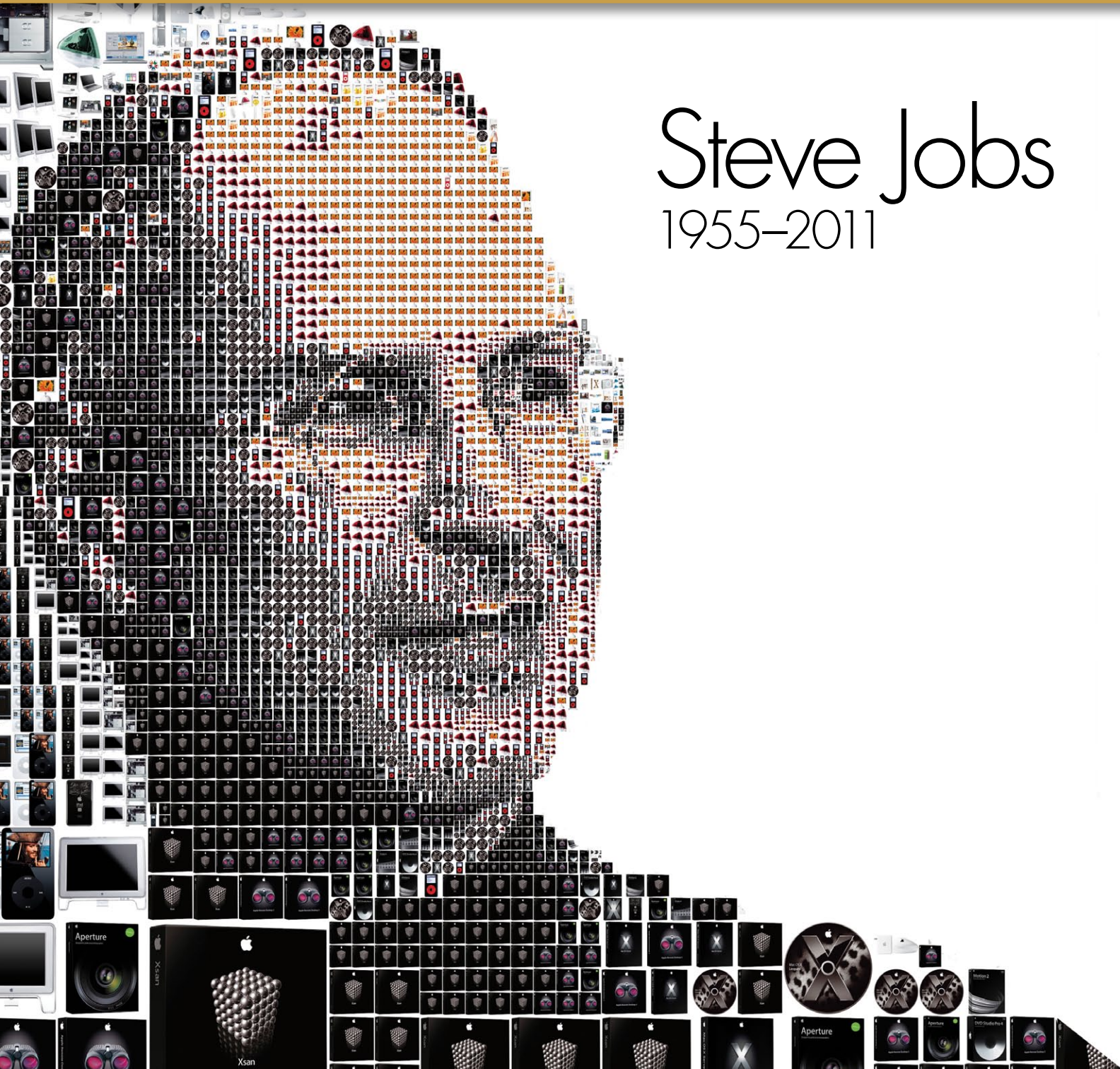
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Steve Jobs

1955–2011



1955

The Jobs family moves to Palo Alto, heart of the growing Silicon Valley

1968

Steve Jobs meets Steve Wozniak

1973

Steve gets a job at Atari, and makes a trip to India to seek enlightenment

1975

Co-founds Apple Computer with Wozniak and Ronald Wayne

Steve Jobs and Woz show off the Apple I at the Personal Computing Festival

Feb. 24 Steven Paul is born in San Francisco, CA, soon to be adopted by Paul and Clara Jobs

1960

Summer Internship with Hewlett-Packard

1969

Fall: Steve spends one semester at Reed College, Oregon, then drops out

1974

Steve and Woz start assembling Apple I computers in the Jobs' garage

1976

Steve Jobs changed the world several times over, as one of the greatest innovators and entrepreneurs of our times. Jobs, was undeniably a most extraordinary and unique human being by anyone's standard. The mastermind behind the iPhone, iPod, iPad and iMac, as well as many other devices, Jobs is remembered for revolutionizing the way we communicate today.

“We are thankful to the many people who have shared their wishes and prayers during the last year of Steve’s illness,” – *The Jobs Family*

“Apple has lost a visionary and creative genius, and the world has lost an amazing human being. Those of us who have been fortunate enough to know and work with Steve have lost a dear friend and an inspiring mentor. Steve leaves behind a company that only he could have built, and his spirit will forever be the foundation of Apple. Steve’s brilliance, passion and energy were the source of countless innovations that enrich and improve all of our lives. The world is immeasurably better because of Steve. His greatest love was for his wife, Laurene, and his family. Our hearts go out to them and to all who were touched by his extraordinary gifts.” – *Apple*

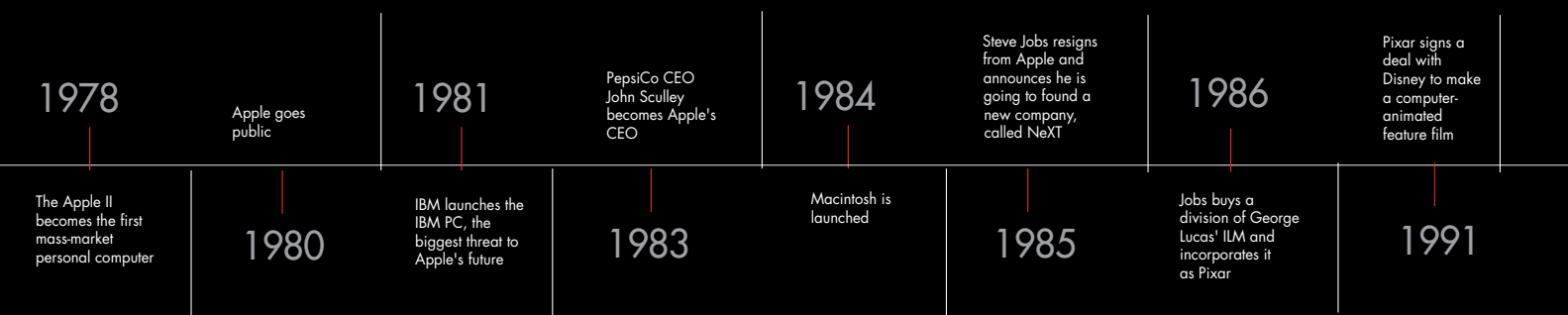
Steve was the mastermind behind the iPhone, iPod, iPad and iMac, as well as many other popularly used devices. Steve Jobs’ untimely death at the age of 56 was not only felt by the entire tech community but brought in a flood of responses from people across the globe. Apple.com invited many to publicly share their “thoughts, memories and condolences” on a webpage simply entitled, “Remembering Steve.” Here we share some of the most memorable tributes and pay homage to some of his most extraordinary accomplishments.

“Steve was among the greatest of American innovators – brave enough to think differently, bold enough to believe he could change the world, and talented enough to do it. The world has lost a visionary. And there may be no greater tribute to Steve’s success than the fact that much of the world learned of his passing on a device he invented.” – *U.S. President Barack Obama*

“The world rarely sees someone who has had the profound impact Steve has had, the effects of which will be felt for many generations to come. For those of us lucky enough to get to work with him, it’s been an insanely great honor. I will miss Steve immensely.” – *Bill Gates*

“Steve, thank you for being a mentor and a friend. Thanks for showing that what you build can change the world. I will miss you.” – *Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook founder and CEO*

Steve Jobs Illustration – Charis Tsevis



“The magic of Steve was that while others simply accepted the status quo, he saw the true potential in everything he touched and never compromised on that vision. He leaves behind an incredible family and a legacy that will continue to speak to people for years to come.”

– *George Lucas, filmmaker/producer*

“Steve was my hero growing up. He not only gave me a lot of personal advice and encouragement, he showed all of us how innovation can change lives. I will miss him dearly, as will the world.” – *Jerry Yang, Yahoo!, Inc.*

“The digital age has lost its leading light, but Steve’s innovation and creativity will inspire dreamers and thinkers for generations.” – *Howard Stringer, Sony Corp., CEO*

“Steve Jobs was an extraordinary visionary, our very dear friend and the guiding light of the Pixar family. He saw the potential of what Pixar could be before the rest of us, and beyond what anyone ever imagined.” – *John Lasseter, chief creative officer at Pixar and Walt Disney Animation Studios*

“Steve’s legacy will extend far beyond the products he created or the businesses he built. It will be the millions of people he inspired, the lives he changed, and the culture he defined. Steve was such an “original,” with a thoroughly creative, imaginative mind that defined an era.”

– *Bob Iger, Walt Disney Company president*

“Steve Jobs was a great California innovator who demonstrated what a totally independent and creative mind can accomplish. Few people have made such a powerful and elegant imprint on our lives.”

– *California Gov. Edmund Brown*

“Steve Jobs was an extraordinary man, a pioneer in the computer industry, his creativity and vision are legend. When he spoke at Stanford’s 2005 Commencement, he told our students that the key to doing great work is to love what you do. Steve Jobs loved what he did, and he inspired us all to think differently. He will be profoundly missed.”

– *Stanford President John Hennessy*

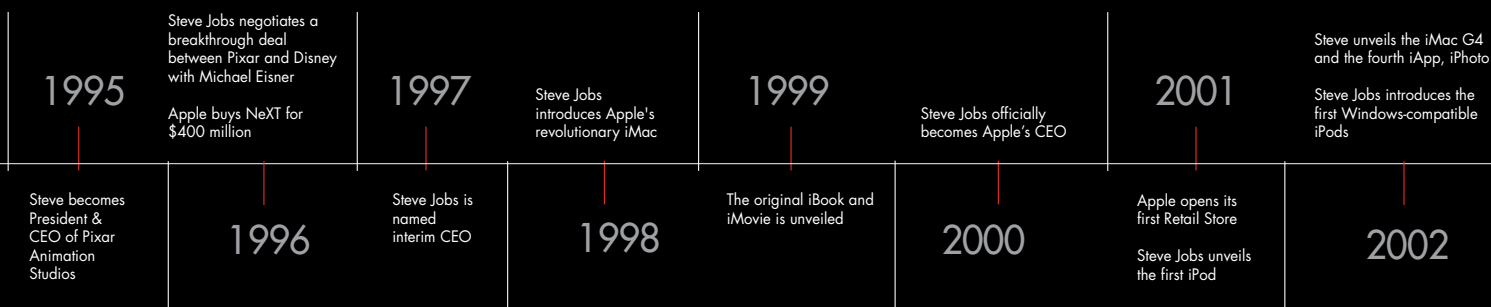
“America lost a genius who will be remembered with Edison and Einstein, and whose ideas will shape the world for generations to come. Over the last four decades, Steve Jobs saw the future and brought it to life long before most people could even see the horizon. Steve’s passionate belief in the power of technology to transform the way we live brought us more than smart phones and iPads - it brought knowledge and power that is reshaping the face of civilization.”

– *Michael Bloomberg, New York City Mayor*

“Steve Jobs was a man of absolute integrity. He pursued the deepest truths in his imagination with unabashed passion, uncompromising singularity of purpose, and unyielding urgency. Apple’s tenacious actualization of his transformative and lofty vision of integration brings us closer together. He was a force of nature, a volcano, and a man who loves and misses his family. The world is much poorer today. And always.” – *Wynton Marsalis, jazz musician*

STEVE JOBS: IN HIS OWN WORDS

“There’s an old Wayne Gretzky quote that I love. ‘I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been.’ And we’ve always tried to do that at Apple. Since the very beginning. And we always will.”



“Here’s to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes... the ones who see things differently — they’re not fond of rules... You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, but the only thing you can’t do is ignore them because they change things... they push the human race forward, and while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius, because the ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones who do.”

“The most compelling reason for most people to buy a computer for the home will be to link it into a nationwide communications network. We’re just in the beginning stages of what will be a truly remarkable breakthrough for most people--as remarkable as the telephone.”

“It’s really hard to design products by focus groups. A lot of times, people don’t know what they want until you show it to them.”

“My model for business is The Beatles. They were four guys who kept each other’s kind of negative tendencies in check. They balanced each other and the total was greater than the sum of the parts. That’s how I see business: great things in business are never done by one person, they’re done by a team of people.”

“That’s been one of my mantras — focus and simplicity. Simple can be harder than complex: You have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. But it’s worth it in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains.”

“We don’t get a chance to do that many things, and everyone should be really excellent. Because this is our life. Life is brief, and then you die, you know? So it better be damn good. It better be worth it.”

“A lot of companies have chosen to downsize, and maybe that was the right thing for them. We chose a different path. Our belief was that if we kept putting great products in front of customers, they would continue to open their wallets.”

“Being the richest man in the cemetery doesn’t matter to me... Going to bed at night saying we’ve done something wonderful... that’s what matters to me.”

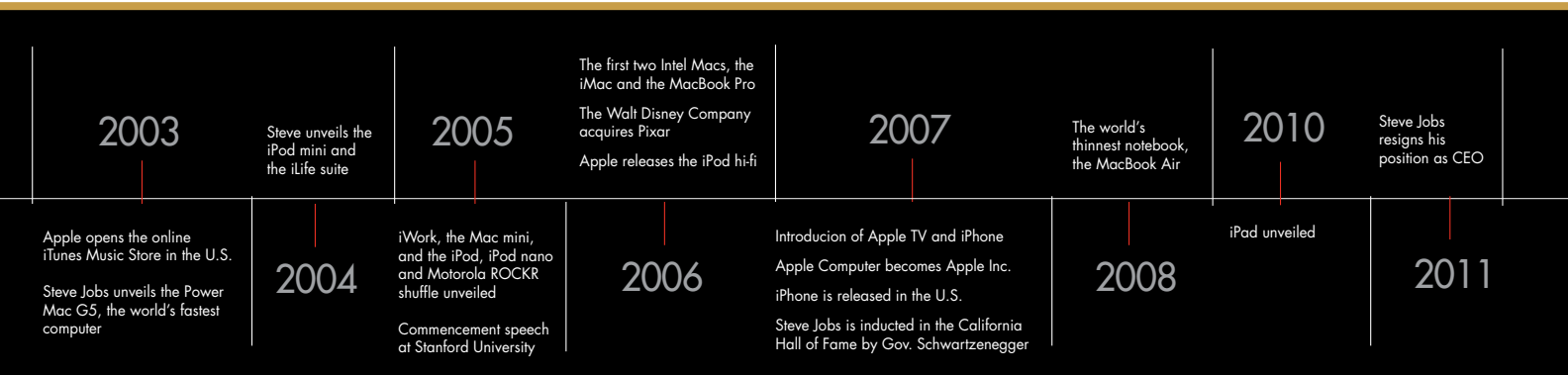
“When you’re a carpenter making a beautiful chest of drawers, you’re not going to use a piece of plywood on the back, even though it faces the wall and nobody will ever see it. You’ll know it’s there, so you’re going to use a beautiful piece of wood on the back. For you to sleep well at night, the aesthetic, the quality, has to be carried all the way through.”

“You can’t connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something—your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.” – *Stanford commencement speech, June 2005*

One last thing... “Stay hungry, stay foolish.”

REST IN PEACE STEVE JOBS, YOUR PASSION & CREATIVE FIRE WILL BE GREATLY MISSED. – *The Retail Observer*

RO



U-LINE FOUNDER

Henry H. Uihlein

1921-2011

Henry Uihlein passed away peacefully at his home surrounded by his family on August 30th. He had recently celebrated his 90th birthday—90 years filled with great achievements, passion for life, and giving to others.

Henry Uihlein was an amazingly smart, intuitive and well respected business person as shown through the transition of the Ben-Hur Manufacturing Company into the founding of U-Line in 1962. His approach to innovation, manufacturing, engineering, design, and sales provided the foundation from which a successful company was built and continues today. He led the company until his retirement in the early nineties.

Upon his retirement Uihlein put the company in the hands of his trusted sons and the wonderful and talented employees; all responsible for making the company so strong. Those who worked with Uihlein had the utmost respect for him. This respect was based on Uihlein's care and consideration for his employees.

On behalf of the U-Line Corporation and its employees, Jennifer Uihlein, current President of U-Line Corporation and grand-daughter of

Henry Uihlein states, "We are all working here today because he took his innovative idea, a stand-alone ice maker, gathered his top 5 employees at Ben-Hur, and started U-Line."



Jennifer Uihlein paid further tribute to her grandfather saying, "He truly lived a great and full life. My grandfather was an amazing athlete playing years of football

and hockey. He loved the outdoors, horseback riding and the beautiful state of Montana; he was a true "Mountain Man." He was silently philanthropic supporting many important local charities and causes, continuously giving back to the community in which he lived. He also helped many people start their own small businesses through SCORE. I continue to be amazed at how many people I meet that tell me that my grandfather was instrumental in helping them gain the resources, tools, and courage to follow their dreams and open their own business."

On his 90th birthday, Henry Uihlein said that he had "travelled a million miles," which is not hard to believe. Through his travels he touched the lives of many people. Most importantly, behind the athlete, mountain man, business-man and generous giver was a kind family man who loved his wife, sons, their wives, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He leaves behind innumerable individuals who are grateful he was in their lives. He taught each of them lessons and values that they shall never forget and leaves behind wonderful memories of a great man.



RETAILERS • DISTRIBUTORS • MANUFACTURERS

TRADE SHOWS, SHOWROOM OPENINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

BKBG ANNUAL CONFERENCE

BKBG marked their 16th year at their annual conference held September 21-24 at the Sheraton Denver Downtown in Denver, Colorado.

The six new Vendors welcomed were:
 Atlantis Outdoor Cabinets
 Brandom Cabinets
 ClosetMaid
 JSI International Inc.
 Lenova
 Stainless Living

Members in attendance viewed a wide selection of products exhibited by BKBG Preferred Vendors and took advantage of the opportunity to network and exchange new ideas.

1. BKBG presented the Vendor of the Year Award for 2011 to Your "other" Warehouse.
2. New BKBG members were presented with a BKBG Showroom Plaque
3. BKBG Members and Vendors enjoyed an afternoon of golf and incredible scenery at the Arrowhead Golf Club in Littleton, CO.
4. Incoming President Stu Dettelbach of SD Kitchens in Baltimore, MD presented a plaque to outgoing President Rick Caccavello of Central Kitchen & Bath in Winter Park, FL.
5. Members spent quality time with BKBG vendors discussing new products and placing orders.



Maytag® Laundry Goes Bigger and Better

THE BRAVOS XL™ TOP-LOAD LAUNDRY PAIR GIVES CLEANING MORE ATTENTION AND CLOTHES MORE SPACE

For those looking to spend less time in the laundry room but still get better results, Maytag brand has designed the new Bravos XL™ series. With an industry-best* Cold Wash cycle and 4.6 cu. ft. capacity, this is Maytag brand's largest high efficiency (HE) top-load washer and the first product on the market with a cycle developed specifically for use with HE cold water detergent. This continues to highlight Maytag brand's long history of laundry innovation and cleaning heritage.

This uniquely designed Cold Wash cycle provides extra cleaning action and an active soak phase that powers out tough stains for the cleaning performance of a warm water cycle with the energy savings of using cold water. This cycle is in addition to the best cleaning in the industry* enabled by the PowerWash™ system, which combines the stain-fighting power of hot water and exclusive PowerSpray technology, optimal dispensers and the PowerWash™ cycle to evenly distribute detergent for enhanced cleaning.

"Consumers often debate the effectiveness of cold versus hot water cycles. They know warm or hot water washes clothes well, but they want the cost savings of a cold water wash," said Brett Oleson, senior manager of Maytag brand laundry products. "Maytag brand offers an easy solution with the Bravos XL™ Cold Wash cycle. When used in conjunction with a cold water-formulated HE detergent, the Cold Wash cycle will help save energy while providing a dependable and powerful cleaning action."

HOW COLD WASH CYCLE WORKS

1. Concentrated detergent is sprayed evenly onto the load in a fan pattern while the basket slowly spins to provide maximum coverage.
2. The basket then spins slightly faster to pull the detergent

through the fabric fibers while using an efficient low water level.

3. During the cycle, an active soak phase provides time for enzymes in the detergent to latch onto and break down stains, increasing the effectiveness of the enzymes.
4. Extra cleaning action and high spin speeds help power out stains like coffee, grass and ground-in dirt.

MORE MONEY SAVING FEATURES

All washers in the Bravos XL™ series meet the Consortium for Energy Efficiency (CEE) Tier 3** energy specifications, which puts them among the most efficient in the industry. They use up to 76 percent less water and 78 percent less energy compared to pre-2004 traditional top load washers.

The 7.3 cu. ft. capacity high-efficiency Bravos XL™ dryers feature Advanced Moisture Sensing that uses sensors and moisture strips to evenly dry loads and virtually eliminate over drying and shrinking. There are also steam cycle options available to smooth out wrinkles and freshen fabrics.

Bravos XL™ washers and dryers are designed, engineered and assembled in the U.S.A. and each one comes from Ohio to you. Staying true to Maytag's belief that "What's Inside Matters™," the Bravos XL™ series is built with Maytag® Commercial Technology (MCT). Additionally, the washer has a 10-year limited parts warranty on the motor and stainless steel wash basket. Please visit www.maytag.com for more information. **RO**

*Among leading competitive brand top load washers; comparable cycles and settings.

**Based on the Consortium for Energy Efficiency qualified product ratings. Visit cee1.org for more information.

BRAVOS XL™
LAUNDRY PAIR



10 YEAR
LIMITED PARTS
WARRANTY
MOTOR • WASH BASKET

Visit maytag.com for warranty details.

BEST CLEANING IN THE INDUSTRY

ENABLED BY THE POWERWASH™ SYSTEM*

PowerSpray technology combined with the PowerWash™ cycle and optimal dispensing provides exceptional cleaning results.



WHAT'S INSIDE MATTERS™

*Among leading competitive brand top load washers; comparable cycles and settings.

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Superior integration. Superior preservation.

U-Line is proud to introduce the newest evolution in modular refrigeration — the Modular 3000 Series. Modular refrigeration is putting the right product at the right place at the right temperature, providing optimal accessibility and preservation. The Modular 3000 Series offers 18" and 36" wide products that integrate into a range of cabinetry styles while providing design flexibility and immediate access to food and beverages.



Concealed European Hinges allow seamless integration with inset, overlay, framed and frameless cabinets.



Fully adjustable and concealed toe-kick allows for a solid, flush installation from the door to the floor.



U-Select™ Control precisely chills food and beverages with five distinct modes — Deli, Market, Pantry, Root Cellar and Beverage.



U-Line's Modular 3000 Series Wine Captain® Models have three distinct wine preservation modes: Sparkling, White and Red — designed to provide precise refrigeration and maximize preservation.