

The Retail Observer

December, 2012

AN EYE ON THE INDUSTRY SINCE 1970

Vol. 23, Issue 12



IFA 2012

BERLIN—THE HOME OF THE DIGITAL WORLD

ADVANCES IN APPLIANCE TECHNOLOGY AT IFA:

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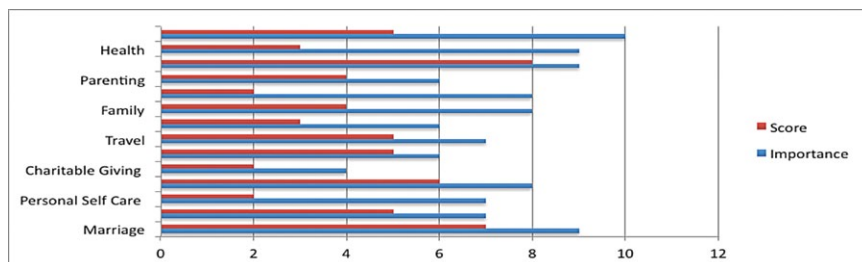
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Measure the Effectiveness of Your Life

So here we are, right in the middle of the Holiday Season and heading towards the New Year already! I find myself busy wrapping up 2012 while simultaneously organizing both my personal and business goals for the rapidly approaching 2013.

I recently took seminars with David Byrd on *Overcoming Organizational Apathy* and Tony Robbins on *Decisions & Destiny: Understanding and Directing the Forces that Shape Your Life*. These men are top in their field and both teach the importance of how the choices we make shape our reality. Each day take time to plan the steps needed for effective goal setting, score your actions taken in order to measure the effectiveness of the system to create the life you want to live.

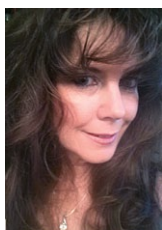
"How Are You Measuring Your Life?", a blog by Zeke Camusio, Digital Aptitude's CEO, repeats these themes. He lists and rates the areas of life that are important, such as marriage, friendships, business and health and looks at the percentages of effectiveness attained by the choices made, to see what needs to change in order to live a life more in harmony with your dreams. He created a spreadsheet Life Score, that you can find and customize at: www.digitalaptitude.com, to be used as a roadmap to reorient your compass of life to align with your vision and goals you set for yourself and your business.



"The goal of this exercise is to get an accurate idea of what's going well and what you should be working on, not to get a high score to show off. Review this spreadsheet every few months. Life is impermanent. What's very important to you now will probably be much less important in a few months and vice versa. More importantly, if you take your action items seriously, your score for every category will constantly change" said Zeke.

When investing in a growing business, we need to take time out of our daily grind to gain sight of where we are headed, map out the direction we need to go and re-adjust our plans accordingly by updating our vision statement to adapt to the ever changing terrain we are traveling in today's economic climate.

So, plan tomorrow before tomorrow comes, and plan next year before the New Year arrives.



Here's to your successful achievement,

Eliana Barriga
letters@retailobserver.com

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CELEBRATING OUR 23RD YEAR
AS THE RETAIL OBSERVER

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Holiday Cheers

Cheers to you as you have made it through another year with 2012 almost behind us (except for the taxes). How was your year? Did you meet your goals...? What are you planning for next year? What products or services are you thinking about for 2013? To help you through the upcoming year, The Retail Observer is planning to bring you coverage of the industry as we see it.

With so many opportunities for education through trades shows and associations we have chosen to take a more in depth view of International, National and Regional shows and events that will help keep you up to date on the current trends and product offerings to grow your business.

The big names from all segments of the kitchen sector will be represented at LivingKitchen 2013 taking place in Cologne, Germany in January. Covering an area of 452,084.24 square feet, more than 175 well-known National and International suppliers will bring their latest ideas and innovations to the trade fair – from kitchen furniture and built-in appliances, to sinks, fixtures, worktops, lighting and accessories.

Taking Place at the end of January, Las Vegas Market is a unique business platform in the Furnishings world that delivers a confluence of new opportunities as only the industry thought-leader can. Featuring an incredible breadth and depth of product offerings, attendees have easy access to nearly 1,500 world-class manufacturers and fresh new resources.

Architectural Digest in March and Dwell on Design in June both promise to be great shows for the East and West coasts respectfully. Even though these 2 shows draw a somewhat different crowd, many appliance manufacturers are planning to show at both of these design oriented events.

KBIS in April will be in New Orleans. This year professionally designed Lifestyle Quarters, representing key areas of the home, will be strategically located throughout the show floor. Each designed area will reflect the influences, and showcase the lifestyle options that meet the wants and needs of Gen Now, Gen X, Zoomers and Prime Timers.

As usual we will be covering the various Brandsource, Mega and Nationwide conventions as well as many of the Service association Training events from MSA, PSA, PSOC and USA. Please keep an eye on our calendar as we will be adding more events for your review. Don't forget that by viewing the digital version of The Retail Observer, you are able to click on the links and logos through-out the magazine to get more information on the products and events we cover. Our magazine is both Android and "iPlatform" friendly.



Happy Retailing

Moe Lastfogel

moe@retailobserver.com

The Retail Observer

DECEMBER 2012

VOLUME 23, ISSUE 12

CELEBRATING OUR 23RD 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 2012

BERLIN IS THE HOME OF THE DIGITAL WORLD

Retailers Optimistic About Christmas Trade —
Renewed Marked Increase In Trade Visitor Numbers



Berlin is the meeting place of the digital world. From 31 August to 5 September, 1,439 exhibitors presented their numerous product debuts on a display area occupying 142,200 sqm (+ 1.4 %). With business concluded exceeding 3.8 billion Euros (+3 %) and attendance reaching 240,000 (+1%), the world's leading trade show for Consumer Electronics and Home Appliances in Berlin achieved record results.

"IFA has continued to build on its high global standing in 2012. We witnessed full display halls, enthusiastic audiences and visitors, very satisfied exhibitors and an impressive worldwide media response", said Dr. Rainer Hecker, chairman of the supervisory board of Gesellschaft für Unterhaltungs- und Kommunikationselektronik (gfu), the organizer of IFA.

Dr. Göke, chief operating officer, Messe Berlin: "Business was lively and along with the innumerable product debuts this underlined IFA's standing as the world's leading event for the Consumer Electronics and Home Appliances industries. The digital and networked world is at home in Berlin. "

"The wealth of innovations, which to some was a surprise, was enthusiastically received by both the trade and the general public. With business concluded higher than last year and with the number of innovations on display IFA has laid the foundations for continuing market expansion. Accordingly, both the industry | *continued on page 10* |

and the trade are optimistic about end-of-year business”, said Hans-Joachim Kamp, member of the supervisory board of gfu and vice-president of ZVEI.

“We were fully satisfied with IFA 2012. Both the exhibitors of large-scale and small electrical appliances registered an impressive response to their innovations. The fifth edition of Home Appliances@IFA has successfully taken this tried and tested presentation platform for the home appliances industry another step forward”, said Dr. Reinhard Zinkann, chairman of the Consumer Electronics Trade Association ZVEI.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE VISITOR NUMBERS RISE

The organizers are delighted with the participation of 142.300 (+7%) trade visitors, more than 42.800 (+11%) of whom came from abroad. With these numbers of growth IFA is underlining the global importance for the industry, trade and media.

IFA DISPLAYSEARCH BUSINESS CONFERENCE - TELEVISION BREAKS OUT OF TV

The IFA DisplaySearch Business Conference explored consumer entertainment in tablets, smart phones, and smart TVs while examining the many ways to enhance TV-viewing experiences through companion screens. The event delved into the innovative technologies being developed for this type of use and allowed trade visitors to check out the products being shown at IFA.

Key Themes:

- Consumer usage behavior of tablets, TVs, and smart phones
- Evolution of TV services to exploit multiple screens
- How apps change and enhance viewing
- How the CE industry is adapting to create experiences, not just devices

IFA TECWATCH - TECHNOLOGY FOR THE MARKETS OF TOMORROW

IFA TecWatch is the platform for innovation - the IFA future lab for technologies and applications in the consumer electronics and home appliance industries. In Hall 11 visitors to IFA explored key global issues in the context of institutional and industrial research.

IFA TECWATCH 2012 THEMES

- **smart LIVING**—What comforts and conveniences will everyday life offer us in the future? TecWatch presented innovative solutions, ranging from gesture-based commands to networked homes. A special highlight was the E-House, a prototype for living in a totally networked environment, presented by the ZVEH in cooperation with the ZVEI and VDE.
- **Soon in 3D & Hd**—The show stars at IFA included displays with resolutions many times higher than HDTV. Media production and

distribution at this high level of quality is a key TecWatch topic. Advanced 3D technology was also featured at the TecWatch exhibit, including software that automatically merges image data from various angles for a navigable 3D view.

- **The Future of Broadcasting**—Dynamic Broadcast and White Spaces are the keywords for more effective use of the full broadcasting spectrum. An important role is also played by the division of tasks between radio and Internet.
- **Second Screen**—Tablet computers have evolved to become an essential tool in front of the big TV screen. TecWatch presented sophisticated apps designed to comfortably navigate through the universe of digital media.
- **Automotive Networks**—Make phone calls, receive text messages, dictate notes, synchronize data and use intelligent traffic management systems inside the car. TecWatch exhibitor Ford showed how all of these functions can be integrated into an easy-to-use electronic concept.
- **Wearable Technology**—Prototypes of electronic devices integrated into clothing have been attracting attention for years. Now the time has come for the first consumer-friendly wearable technology. TecWatch unveiled some spectacular examples.
- **Tecwatch Exhibitors**—Connected Living, Docomo Communications Laboratories, Ford, Fraunhofer Institutes FOKUS, HHI, IIS; industry associations ZVEH, ZVEI, VDE; Deutsche TV-Plattform, HDMI Licensing; Beuth Hochschule für Technik Berlin, Technische Universität Braunschweig, HTW Hochschule für Technik Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, University of Potsdam, Videoweb, Wearable Technologies
—Cost of indoor space/ row stand, 2012 (EUR / m²): 184.00

IFA 2012 STATISTICS

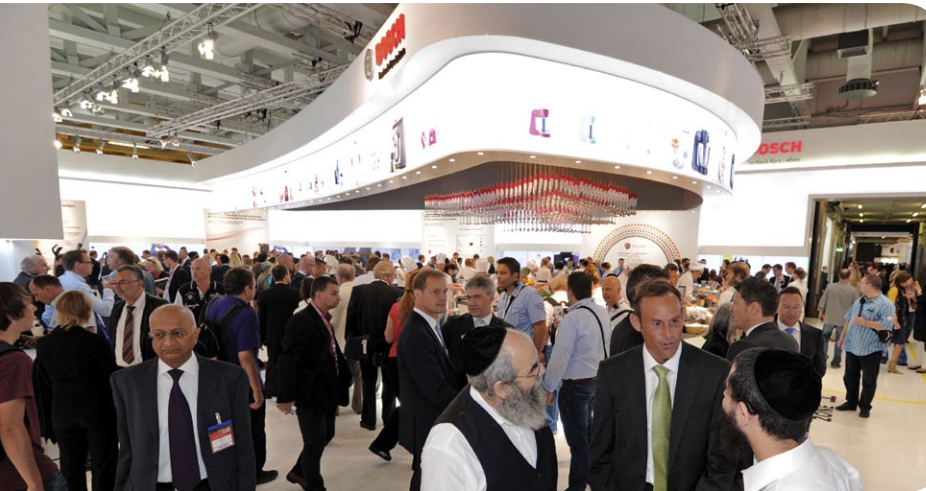
Statistical Details

- Order volume: more than 3.8 billion euros
- Rented display space (m²): 142,200 (+1,4%)
- Total no. of exhibitors: 1,439
- No. of countries: 55
- Total no. of attendees: 240,000 (+1%)
- No. of trade visitors: 142.300 (+7%)
- No. of international trade visitors: 42,800 (+11%)
- No. of media representatives: 6,128
- No. of international media representatives: 2,279 (+4,5%)

NEXT SHOW DATES:

IFA 2013, the world’s leading trade show for Consumer Electronics and Home Appliances, will take place from September 6 – 11, 2013.

For more information: www.b2b.ifa-berlin.com/en. **RO**



CALL TO ACTION



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

The Retail Observer is interested in featuring you in our snap-shot page, "Retailers Observed", where you can see what your industry buddies are up to.

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Book Review

Going Social

Excite Customers, Generate Buzz, and Energize Your Brand with The Power of Social Media

Over the past several years, social media has created a tsunami of change in brand marketing, e-commerce, product development, and customer service—for all kinds of consumer-driven and B2B companies. Many blog posts, articles, and books have been written to help entrepreneurs and marketers leverage social media to connect with an audience of avid buyers. Yet, as frontline strategists know, social marketing isn't something to be mastered in six simple steps or by following 10 immutable laws. Besides the fact that social platforms are continually evolving and expanding, the way to succeed socially varies from business to business.

GOING SOCIAL highlights the specific strengths and advantages of different social platforms—Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+, Foursquare, Instagram, YouTube, Yelp, and more. Throughout, Goldman reinforces core practices and his philosophy for social success.

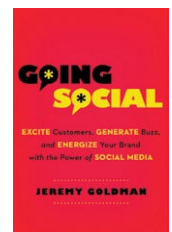
"True social marketing," he stresses, "is about developing ongoing relationships with your customers, rather than optimizing around a small specific campaign."

Packed with enlightening examples and practical advice, *GOING SOCIAL* shows readers how to:

- Devise the right social strategy for their brand, clearly define their social message in relation to their customer, and start a conversation with a point.
- Determine their brand's voice and personality, and engage with customers in a way that's consistent, authentic, and human.
- Develop relevant, compelling content—images, photos, games, customer testimonials, and more—that gets customers interested and keeps them interacting.
- Become truly customer-centric, starting by actively listening to and acting on customer feedback, and build a loyal community of brand advocates.
- Avoid common social pitfalls, recover from social faux pas, and keep their brand's reputation intact.
- Identify super influencers, deepen their relationship with MVCs (Most Valuable Customers), and grow word of mouth substantially.

Making a successful transition from traditional marketing to online engagement is crucial to business today. With *GOING SOCIAL*, any business leader or marketer can get an edge on choosing the right social channels, perfecting the right social strategy, and forging genuine, meaningful, and rewarding connections with customers. **RO**

Author: Jeremy Goldman, a recognized expert in social marketing, has managed e-commerce and social media for many major brands. He is currently AVP of Interactive Communications for iluminage inc., a Unilever subsidiary he helped found. twitter.com/GoingSocial
Publisher: Amacom Books



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LG REIGNS SUPREME

With 33 cubic feet of storage space, LG's new Mega-Capacity Refrigerator is the **largest capacity French Door Refrigerator** on the market.* That means more food. More drinks. More of everything everyone wants from a fridge.

How'd they do it? Smart innovation, that's how. It's the same height and width as last year's model, with a redesigned icemaker and a streamlined layer of insulation. And best of all, it's backed by one of the industry's best warranties.

The new Mega-Capacity Refrigerator is the biggest indication yet that when it comes to product innovation, LG stands at the forefront.



To learn more about LG Refrigerators and join LG in the fight against hunger as we partner with the Share Our Strength and Food Bank For New York City charities, go to LG.com/US/refrigerators

The Linear Compressor is backed by a 10-year limited warranty, one of the longest in the business.



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33 cu. ft.
MEGA-CAPACITY
REFRIGERATOR

FLOATING AIR CLEANING APPLIANCE WINS ELECTROLUX DESIGN LAB 2012

Electrolux A hands-free stirring utensil. A tasting spoon that tells you what ingredient is lacking. This is what the future of household and cooking appliances looks like at the 10th annual Electrolux Design Lab competition. Aeroball by Jan Ankersztajn from Poland was awarded first prize in finals at the Triennale Design Museum in Milan.

The Electrolux Design Lab 2012 jury, comprising Design Director at Electrolux Thomas Johansson, award winning chef Davide Oldani, distinguished designer Dante Donegani and popular design blogger Kelly Beall, selected the winner from ten global finalists. The winning concept is a collection of luminescent, hovering balls that can filter and fragrance the air in a room. They float using helium and drift down to the ground when they are ready to be changed.

The jury was impressed with how the student's creative and insightful thinking reflected this year's theme, Design Experience, and how successfully the concept met the challenge of creating a holistic sensorial experience. "We rely on our senses for almost everything, so considering the senses is an important factor when designing appliances," says Thomas Johansson, head of the jury. "This year's winning concept is a truly innovative concept that uses space in a unique way and delights our surroundings. It also changes our perception of an air cleaner, because it is delicate in aesthetics, it is emotional and also relevant, because it addresses the consumer's needs."

The second prize in the competition went to Ben de la Roche from New Zealand. His design concept is a refrigerated wall that allows the user to press storage containers and bottles directly into the wall. Impress uses thermoacoustic technology and gases such as argon and helium that are non-ozone depleting and harmless to the environment. The jury's motivation was: "Impress is a visual experience that is energy saving and simplifies the user's life."

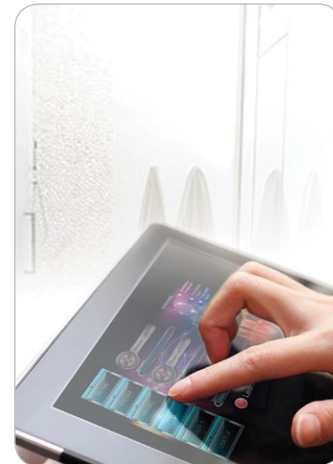
Third prize went to Tastee by Christopher Holm-Hansen, from Denmark. His design concept is a taste indicator, in the form of a spoon, that utilizes receptors based on the human taste bud to tell you what ingredients you need to improve your cooking. The jury's motivation was: "Tastee is a tool that offers guidance for your palate in order to bring out the chef that is inside of you." People's Choice Award went to Tastee after receiving over 1,000 unique votes on Facebook.

Electrolux Design Lab is an annual global design competition



open to undergraduate and graduate design students world-wide. Established in 2003, the competition is encouraging and facilitating young designers in the pursuit of innovative home appliance design. "Creating new value and propositions is what innovative design is all about. Electrolux is committed to innovation in design, research and development and Electrolux Design Lab is one way of exploring new arising ideas. In addition the competition is a chance for us to meet the design talent of tomorrow", said Stefano Marzano, chief design officer at Electrolux.

Electrolux Design Lab 2012 challenged design students to draw inspiration from professional experience creators such as chefs, architects, interior designers and hotel designers to design future home appliances that will provide a fuller sensory experience. The brief for 2012 was looking for concepts that best reflect Electrolux proud heritage of Scandinavian Design whilst working to create new home appliances that stimulate, engage and enlighten all of our senses. The jury considered entries based on intuitive design, innovation and consumer insight. One of the purposes of the competition is to function as an innovative arena for the introduction of new talents and products to the market. First prize is EUR 5,000 and a six-month paid internship at an Electrolux global design center. Second prize is EUR 3,000 and third prize of EUR 2,000.



GRAFF®, NATIVE TRAILS AND THERMASOL® WIN PRESTIGIOUS DPHA INNOVATIVE PRODUCT AWARDS



The Decorative Plumbing & Hardware Association (DPHA) – the industry's leading trade association, recently

honored manufacturers GRAFF, Native Trails and ThermaSol (all of which are represented by the Los Angeles-based advertising and public relations firm DRS and Associates) with awards for innovation in design. The companies were recognized during DPHA's Annual Conference and Product Showcase in the following categories:

GRAFF received the Innovative Plumbing Product of the Year – Water Delivery award for its Ametis collection. Designed in collaboration with Davide Oppizzi, Ametis challenges what we know of faucet and shower design with its unique shape and configuration. Fluid and sensuous, Ametis guides the water through the gentle curves of the faucet, providing a visual representation of the idea that life is a cycle. Equipped with an electronic system comprised of a colored | *continued on page 18* |



ring which changes from red to blue (and vice versa) depending on changes in the water temperatures, Ametis is the future of faucet technology.

Native Trails received the Innovative Furniture Product of the Year award for its Halcyon Vanity. From the brand's recently launched Renewal Series and sporting 100% Bamboo content, this piece showcases the material's beauty by combining Caramel and Woven Strand in a unique, compact contemporary design.

ThermaSol received the Innovative Accessory Product of the Year award for its Solitude Mobile Application. When synched with an easily installed module that turns the ThermaSol ProSeries™ and AF Series steam shower generators into a network peripheral, the Solitude Mobile App allows users to control all functions of their ThermaSol steam shower systems (including generator maintenance, light and music, temperature settings and more) from anywhere within the home's Wi-Fi network via iPhone, Android and wireless tablet devices.



VALUE IS THE NEW BLACK: DACOR LAUNCHES 2 NEW VALUE-CENTRIC RANGES

THE NEW DISTINCTIVE GAS AND ELECTRIC RANGES DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL POWER AND PERFORMANCE AT A PRICE POINT SPECIFICALLY FOR THE VALUE-CONSCIOUS HOME CHEF.

dacor Dacor®, a market leader in the design, manufacture and distribution of luxury kitchen appliances, announced the addition of the Distinctive™ 30" Gas Range and Distinctive 30" Electric Range to their successful Distinctive™ Series.

Exclusivity and premium price tags have long been the hallmark of affluence, but the newest arrivals from Dacor redefine "luxury" and are focused on quality craftsmanship and ease of use, without compromising Dacor's signature design elements and features. Whether a stylish upgrade, a replacement purchase or as part of a complete kitchen remodel, the Distinctive™ Series Ranges are value-engineered to deliver unparalleled power and performance.

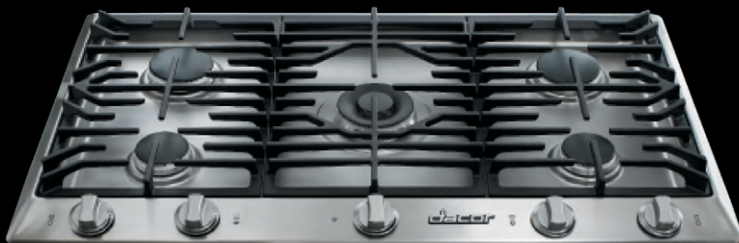
"The Distinctive Ranges have a number of unique features that won't be found on other products in this class. Besides the "fit and finish" and unique styling, these are the first downdraft compatible gas ranges in the industry." said Steve Joseph, president of Dacor. Mr. Joseph went on to say, "The addition of the gas and electric ranges builds upon the success of the Distinctive™ Series which brings Dacor style and quality to the more value-conscious homeowner."

| continued on page 20 |





[Distinctive 30" Dual-Fuel Range]



[Distinctive 36" Gas Cooktop]



[Distinctive 30" Wall Oven]

Are your customers ready
for Dacor?

Give them this simple test:
Find the peach.



Your customers don't need to be master chefs to enjoy our new Distinctive™ Series of appliances. But they do need an appreciation of high performance, high style and the ability to identify a peach of a value.

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dacor

The Life of the Kitchen.®

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Whether gas or electric, these ranges offer exclusive features you would only expect to find in more up-market units, such as an angled control panel for easy viewing, dedicated Illumina™ Indicator Lights with Dacor's signature flame-blue glow when a cooktop element or oven is on, and professional heavy-duty die-cast stainless steel knobs with a metallic finish to complement the décor of virtually any kitchen. One of the standout features is the 4.8 cubic foot oven capacity, one of the largest oven interiors on the market today. In addition, the oven is equipped with two GlideRacks™ with easy-pull handles to assist in managing heavy dishes in and out of the oven. The Distinctive™ 30" Gas and 30" Electric Range will be available as free-standing and slide-in models.

The Distinctive™ 30" Gas Range is fueled with efficiency. Two exclusive 14" extra-wide continuous platform grates allow home chefs the flexibility to prepare gourmet meals over the largest continuous cooking surface in its class. Three sealed gas burners power-up to 15,000 BTU while one SimmerSear™ burner delivers between 800-18,000 BTU to delicately simmer at a food-safe temperature, or sear without scorching. Dacor's exclusive Perma-Flame™ Technology guarantees hours of safe, uninterrupted cooking by automatically re-igniting the flame should a burner unexpectedly go out. Optional interchangeable accessories include a 14" wide griddle, a 14" wide searing grill, and a wok ring, which maximize the cooking experience.

The Distinctive™ 30" Electric Range is the perfect combination of sophisticated style and expert engineering. A triple, a dual-, and two single-circuit heating elements beneath an easy-to-clean black glass surface give home chefs seven cookware position options, with up to 2,500 watts of power. Each element heats pots and pans quickly and consistently with precise control. The electric range ships standard with Dacor's exclusive Four-Part Pure Convection™ System, a feature typically found in Dacor's premium luxury Discovery™ Series Ranges and Wall Ovens. The convection element, baffle, fan, and filter allow home chefs to simultaneously cook multiple dishes without flavor transfer.

And to top it all off, personalize your Distinctive™ Range by selecting one of two handle options, the professional Epicure® stainless steel handle, or the proprietary Dacor integrated stainless steel handle, giving the range a flush and clean contemporary look.

All Distinctive™ Series appliances are designed with Dacor's signature styling and functionality at an unrivalled price-to-performance balance. Recent products from the Distinctive™ Series include a 30" Single and Double Wall Oven, a 30" Dual-Fuel Range, a 36" and 30" Gas Rangetop, as well as a Gas and Electric Cooktop, a 24" Dishwasher, a 30" Warming Drawer, a 24" Microwave, and a 30" Ventilation Wall Hood.

The Distinctive™ 30" Gas and 30" Electric Ranges are designed

and manufactured in California, alongside many more core cooking products. Pricing for the Distinctive™ 30" Gas Range starts at \$3,099 UMRP and the Distinctive™ 30" Electric Range at \$3,299 UMRP. The ranges are now available through authorized Dacor dealers and retailers nationwide. For more information 800.793.0093.



CAL FLAME LAUNCHES PREMIUM 4-BURNER GRILL
LEADING BARBECUE AND HEARTH MANUFACTURER ADDS
INNOVATIVE STAINLESS STEEL GRILL TO LINEUP



Cal Flame, an industry leader in innovative hearth and barbecue products, is pleased to announce the launch of the new Premium 4-Burner Grill.

"The Premium 4-Burner Grill is perfect for those seeking a top-of-the-line grill with ample cooking space and premium features that meet all their barbecue needs," said Casey Loyd, president of Cal Spas. "This feature rich grill is priced to move and offers everything our dealers are looking for in an outdoor grill."

The Premium 4-Burner Grill features four high powered 15,000 BTU burners, a 15,000 BTU infrared backburner and 800 square inches of cooking space. The innovative grill also features an independent ignition on all burners, full width warming rack and convenient self-cleaning grill lights for nighttime grilling. The Premium 4-Burner Grill comes standard in liquid propane but can easily be converted to natural gas.

Cal Spas® was founded in 1979 as a provider of luxury hot tubs. Today, the celebrated hot tub giant is world renowned as the #1 Global Manufacturer of Home Resort Products™. | continued on page 22 |



The Award-Winning Samsung Smart Washer.



Onyx Pictured. Also Available In:



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An 8" Touch Screen LCD makes it easier to select the right cycle and monitor wash time. The Smart Control app* on your smartphone allows you to remotely start the washer and notifies you when your laundry is done.

*Smart Control app available for iPhone 4/4S and Galaxy S1/S2.



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Saves over 90 minutes on the average week-load of laundry*

A cleansing jet shoots water and detergent, and a rinsing jet shoots clean water rapidly, reducing washing time – by up to 15 minutes.

*Normal one-hour wash can now be completed in as little as up to 45 minutes as compared to WF511 washer without SpeedSpray™. Based on DOE standard's average of 7.5 loads per week.



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Climatic has been in the distribution business for more than 75 years, and we understand that while our partnership is with you, ultimately it is the consumer who drives your business. Our expertise in the retail industry is your best tool to move product and grow your business. In fact, with our help and outstanding products, our dealers have enjoyed double-digit year-over-year growth against the depressed major appliance market. We offer everything you would expect, such as several strategic locations, drop-ship, internet fulfillment, experienced customer service and 24 to 48 hour delivery – it's all of the unexpected qualities that make us exceptional and your best kept secret.



The company produces premium collections of lifestyle products from its headquarters in Pomona, Calif. and distributes worldwide through a network of specialty dealers. The Cal Spas brand family of products includes Cal Spas hot tubs and swim spas, Cal Designs gazebos, Cal Heat indoor and outdoor saunas, and Cal Flame high-end BBQ grills, outdoor barbecue islands, outdoor fireplaces and firepits. Learn about Home Resort Living at www.calspas.com.

Studies of Harvard University. The LIRA suggests that the seeds for what appears to be a very robust remodeling recovery have been planted, with annual homeowner improvement spending expected to reach double-digit growth in the first half of 2013.

“After a bump in home improvement activity during the mild winter, there was a bit of a pause this summer,” says Eric S. Belsky, managing director of the Joint Center. “However, the LIRA is projecting an acceleration in market activity beginning this quarter, and strengthening as we move into the new year.”

“Strong growth in sales of existing homes and housing starts, coupled with historically low financing costs, have typically been associated with an upturn in home remodeling activity some months later,” says Kermit Baker, director of the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center. “While the housing market has faced some unique challenges in recent years, this combination is expected to produce a favorable outlook for home improvement spending over the coming months.”

| continued on page 24 |



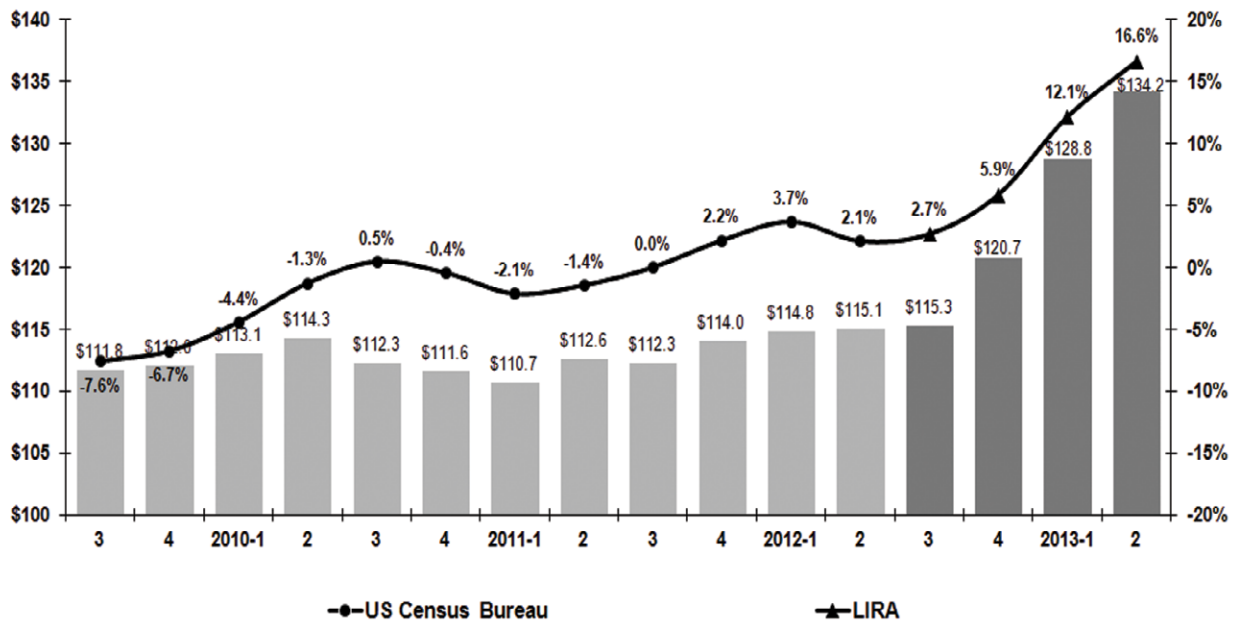
LIRA: HOME REMODELING SPENDING SET TO ACCELERATE

An improving housing market and record low interest rates are driving projections of strong gains in home improvement activity through the end of the year and into the first half of 2013, according to the Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity (LIRA) released today by the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center for Housing

Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity – Third Quarter 2012

Homeowner Improvements
Four-Quarter Moving Totals
Billions of \$

Four-Quarter Moving
Rate of Change



Source: Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University.

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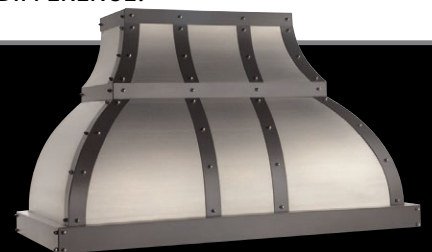
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VENT-A-HOOD'S WHISPERTECHNOLOGY MAKES OUR RANGE HOODS THE QUIETEST IN THE INDUSTRY, EVEN AT THE HIGHEST SPEED. WHILE OTHER BRANDS ARE WELL ABOVE THE CONVERSATION LEVEL, WE'RE 40% QUIETER. ASK YOUR DISTRIBUTOR TO SHOW YOU THE WHISPERTECHNOLOGY IPAD® PRESENTATION. WE'LL REVEAL THE PROVEN TEST RESULTS. YOU'LL HEAR THE DIFFERENCE.

Vent-A-Hood



The Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity is designed to estimate national homeowner spending on improvements for the current quarter and subsequent three quarters. The indicator, measured as an annual rate-of-change of its components, provides a short-term outlook of homeowner remodeling activity and is intended to help identify future turning points in the business cycle of the home improvement industry. The development of the LIRA is detailed in "Developing a Leading Indicator for the Remodeling Industry" (JCHS Research Note N07-1). In July 2008, the LIRA was re-benchmarked due to changes in the underlying reference series. These changes are explained in "Addendum to Research Note N07-1: Re-Benchmarking the Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity" (JCHS Research Note N08-1). The LIRA is released by the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University in the third week after each quarter's closing. The next LIRA release date is January 17, 2013.

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

FIVESTAR RANGE AND HADCO HOST EVENT TO HONOR ARTIST THOMAS ARVID



Earlier this month, cooking appliance manufacturer FiveStar Range and Atlanta-based distributor HADCO teamed up to host an exclusive event to honor the many achievements of Atlanta's own artist Thomas Arvid and celebrate his current exhibition at the Marietta-Cobb Museum of Art. The event featured displays of Arvid's works, an array of Silver Oak wines, and delicious culinary treats, all centering on the concept of "Reflecting the Good Life." Also the title of the exhibition, "Reflecting the Good Life" is open now through December 15 at the MCMA museum in Marietta.



For over twenty years, Arvid has been rendering elaborately detailed lifestyle paintings focused on this concept and has made quite a name for himself – both in the art and culinary world – for portraying vibrant colors and perfectly capturing images of the good life. He specializes in still life realism, often capturing images of wine and spirits, both corked and uncorked. Also a cooking enthusiast, Thomas owns and cooks on a FiveStar Range and has long supported the Cleveland, Tennessee-based company. When FiveStar was given the opportunity to sponsor the exhibition and help host a kick-off event, the company jumped at the chance. Soon after, its Southeastern distributor HADCO climbed on board to host the event in its beautiful showroom in Suwanee, Georgia.

Ever present and captivating, Thomas played an active role in the event, teaming up with HADCO's Chef Jared Swift to demonstrate a few appetizer recipes on a FiveStar range. The two cooks worked together brilliantly, offering product-exclusive feature tips, like how to use the FiveStar sealed burners' searing high BTU output to prepare braised beef and its delicate simmer to whip up a champagne-infused cranberry sauce reduction, just in time for Thanksgiving. The pair also gave attendees loads of banter-filled entertainment and, ultimately, produced delicious food for guests' enjoyment. Of course, both Thomas and Jared also offered helpful tips for pairing recipes with the perfect wines, completing the perfect good life blend. From the event, it was clear that Arvid not only knows his way around a canvas but also around a kitchen.

For more information on FiveStar visit www.fivestarrange.com.

For more information on Hadco visit www.hadco.net.

| continued on page 26 |



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FAMOUS FOODIES GET COOKING ON BLUESTAR PRO KITCHEN RANGES AND APPLIANCES AND SHARE THEIR HOME COOKING TIPS



Sure, restaurateurs and top chefs have posh, high-performance kitchens in their

restaurants or TV shows, but what do many consider the best kitchen range to whip up Sunday morning pancakes or roast a Thanksgiving turkey for their own families? Many chefs who desire restaurant-quality results for their own home cooking select BlueStar pro appliances and have joined the new BlueStar All Stars Chef program.

The BlueStar All Stars Chef program was created to inspire home chefs everywhere to achieve restaurant-quality results at home and already boasts notable foodies such as acclaimed Iron Chef Jose Garces; Chef Allison Vines-Rushing, recipient of the Rising Star Chef of the Year 2004 James Beard Award; Two Star Michelin Chef Josiah Citrin of Los Angeles; Chef Slade Rushing of New Orleans; and well-respected educators Chef Matthew Borchardt, Director of the L'Ecole Academy in St. Louis and Chef Director Richard Simpson of The Institute of Culinary Education in New York City.



CHARLES PARK PHOTOGRAPHY

COOK LIKE A PRO AT HOME

Through the BlueStar All Stars program, top chefs share cooking tips, favorite kitchen tools and select recipes and offer a peak into the home life of some of the culinary world's most talented chefs. These talented foodies also explain why Blue

Star is an ideal choice for their own kitchens.

Highlights include:

- Iron Chef and Restaurateur Jose Garces is used to the best and most powerful equipment in his restaurants, and now the best and the most powerful is in his home: a 36-inch BlueStar. Chef Garces designed his BlueStar for the comfort of cooking at home – a beautiful Royal Blue model with two 22,000 BTU burners and a griddle – perfect for Saturday morning pancakes with the family.
- Chef Allison Vines-Rushing has a gift for casting familiar ingredients and recipes in a flattering new light. A busy restaurateur – she and husband Slade own acclaimed New Orleans restaurant MiLa – Allison also is a new mom who makes her own baby food on her 36-inch BlueStar.
- Chef Josiah Citrin, best known for the highly respected Melisse Restaurant in Santa Monica, California, also is a proud owner of a 36-inch BlueStar Precious Metals range in bronze with a charbroiler. Why BlueStar? “The way it is made, commercial, yet perfect for home, and yes, the power,” says Chef Citrin. “I love the interior size of the oven...it holds full sheet pans!”

| continued on page 28 |



CRAVING

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- Chef Slade Rushing raves about his new BlueStar range: “We knew the BlueStar was just the well-built ‘diesel of a stove’ we wanted to own forever.” He also fell in love with the BlueStar drop-in wok, and loves the 22,000 BTU burner power. His Oyster White BlueStar range with antique copper trim is front and center in his new kitchen.

Built with the highest-quality materials and the distinctive workmanship that comes from 130 years of expertise, BlueStar offers a fully customizable line to suit the specific needs of the home chef. The BlueStar trademark UltraNova® burner produces 22,000 BTUs of cooking power, resulting in shorter cooking times and an even simmer. Its full motion grates make it easy to maneuver pots and pans between burners. The open burners provide better heat distribution for even cooking, and an infrared broiler produces 1850 degrees of intense, searing heat. BlueStar ranges offer the industry’s largest oven capacity and can accommodate a full size commercial 18”x 26” sheet pan. Its heavy duty, durable design offers sturdy, all stainless steel construction.

What’s more, BlueStar’s fully customizable pro appliances are available in 190 different colors as well as custom colors. A full spectrum of designer colors – from vibrant Ruby Red to subdued Stone Gray – help reinvent the kitchen as a work of art. BlueStar has been handcrafting cooking equipment at the company’s Reading, PA factory since 1880.

For more information, please visit www.bluestarcooking.com.

DSE 2013 FUNDAMENTALS SEMINAR PROGRAM TO PRESENT BUSINESS BASICS, CASE STUDIES & STEPS TO DEPLOYMENT SUCCESS



Digital Signage Expo® (DSE), the world’s largest and longest running International Tradeshow and Conference dedicated to digital signage, interactive technology and digital out-of-home networks (DOOH), will present an all new immersive four-part Digital Signage Fundamentals Seminar Program designed specifically to prepare those investing for the first-time to deal with initial planning and execution challenges.

The Digital Signage Fundamentals Seminar Program, to be presented in Las Vegas February 27-28, 2013, is part of DSE’s eight-track Educational Conference and is designed specifically for those DOOH network operators of both revenue- and non-revenue generating systems, digital signage (DS) end-users, and systems integrators and installers who are relatively new to the industry. This educational track is intended to provide an introduction to the DS industry by promoting a better understanding of the seven elements that comprise a DS system. Topics to be covered include:

- Case Studies: The Trials & Triumphs of Two Successful Digital Signage Network Launches
- Planning & Substantiating a Project: The Business Side of Dynamic Digital Signage
- Estimating Total Cost of Ownership: The Hidden Costs of Digital Signage Deployment & Operation

| continued on page 30 |



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French Door Refrigerator



Steam Laundry



- Working With Your IT Team: How to Work With IT to Make Your Digital Signage a Success

Instruction will be a straightforward presentation of “how to” in terms that are easy to understand and immediately applicable. Each session will be led by professionals who will be sharing hard-earned experience and come from a variety of disciplines within DOOH Networks, as well as end-users from the financial, retail and hospitality fields, along with knowledgeable industry consultants and technology providers.

Richard Lebovitz, educational director for Exponation, LLC, which produces DSE, said, “The DS Fundamentals Track is targeted primarily at attendees who come to DSE to learn how to get started,” but he acknowledged that, “it is a track that also remains popular with repeat attendees who want to revisit some of the basics from time to time.”

Registration for the Fundamentals Seminar Program, or any of DSE 2013 educational conference seminars is now open at www.digitalsignageexpo.net.

Mark your calendar now: Digital Signage Expo® 2013, co-located with the Interactive Technology Expo and Digital Content Show, will present its three-day conference on February 26-28, 2013. The Exhibition Hall will open for two days on February 27-28, at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas. To reserve exhibit space contact Jeanne Phillips, (770) 649-0300, Ext 16. Or, for more information, visit www.digitalsignageexpo.net. You can follow DSE on Twitter at DSEexpo, or for all DSE 2013 updates, use #dse2013. For year-round news and information on digital signage, visit DSE’s new Digital Signage Connection web portal at www.digitalsignageconnection.com.

BATH AND KITCHEN BUYING GROUP HOLDS ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



With 127 member showrooms in attendance, BKBG was thrilled to have experienced the largest member showroom attendance of any conference in their 17-year history. “The synergy between members and vendors was the most energetic, positive and productive I can ever remember”, said Stu Dettelbach, BKBG president.

BKBG welcomed five new members:
 Creative Kitchens—*Huntington, West Virginia*
 Gilley Kitchen + Bath—*Winsted, Connecticut*
 Jacob Evans Kitchen & Bath—*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*
 One of a Kind Design—*Anchorage, Alaska*
 Wall Solutions—*Ridgeland, South Carolina*

Elkay Cabinet Division was recognized as the BKBG Vendor of the Year during the annual conference. Elkay was presented the award in recognition of their commitment to quality, product innovation, customer service and representation in the field.

During the 2012 BKBG Conference, attending Members and Vendors spent an evening at the World of Whirlpool located in the historic Reid-Murdoch Center in downtown Chicago. Working Whirlpool kitchens lent themselves well to delicious foods for all the attendees prepared by award-winning chefs.

For more information, contact Nyra Mueller, BKBG Director of Membership, at 314-966-0117 or nyra@thebgs.com. **RO**



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IMMER BESSER

Great Gift-giving Ideas from Liebherr

Wine Storage Units and Humidors

Liebherr Refrigeration North America, the worldwide leader in luxury refrigeration, recommends two unique last minute holiday gift ideas that are sure to be crowd pleasers for entertaining this season.

A nice addition to any home, Liebherr's compact WS1200 gives wine enthusiasts ideal storage in an attractive package. The well-appointed stainless steel cabinet holds up to 12 bottles of Bordeaux on solid beech-wood shelving and has a convenient drawer that can maintain a warmer temperature than the wine compartment for holding wine accessories or chocolates.

Other product features of the WS 1200 include:

- As a freestanding unit, the wine cabinet can be easily placed on a bar or in the family room.
- Alarm system to alert homeowner if door has been left open or temperature has been compromised.
- Insulated glass door with UV protection and activated charcoal filter to protect wine from busy kitchen influences, such as light and odor.

- Energy-efficient LED ceiling light emits virtually no heat and is dimmable to cast a cool glow across the room.

For the cigar aficionado, the XS 200 Humidor provides the optimal environment in humidity, temperature and hygienic conditions, the three areas that matter the most to the preservation of cigars. True to form, the unit is designed with Liebherr's signature sleek, European styling making it an attractive accessory in any entertaining area. Additional key features of the XS 200:

- Liebherr's unique MagicEye control system allows individual settings for humidity and temperature due to three different control circuits with four fans.
- An activated charcoal filter ensures the quality of airflow for fresh, clean air.
- The stainless steel unit is small enough to be a side-by-side companion to Liebherr's WS 1200 wine storage unit.

To view the entire line of wine storage units or cigar humidor and find a local dealer, visit Liebherr's website: www.liebherr-appliances.com. **RO**





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It's not how much you spend on your kitchen – it's how intelligent you are while doing it. Just ask any Liebherr owner. Our stainless refrigerators resist fingerprints, hold more food, keep it fresher longer, and come with a warranty that meets or beats other brands you're considering. It's the premium refrigerator that makes your kitchen look beautiful – and you look brilliant. Be wise and follow the QR code below.



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ADVANCED APPLIANCE TRENDS IFA: MESS

LG'S STEAM TECHNOLOGY REMOVES DIRT FROM CLOTHING AND TABLEWARE

LG Electronics Inc. has come to IFA 2012 with new, energy-saving and larger home appliances. In this case the term larger applies to the increased volume while retaining standard dimensions. For example, the walls of the 60 centimeter wide freezer cabinets are five millimeters thinner but with improved insulation. Sensors in the refrigerators measure the outside temperature and adjust the cooling output accordingly. A number of different washing movements by the drums of the new washing machines ensure the best possible results for every kind of material from the finest fabrics to heavily soiled sportswear. Steam technology is used to remove allergens, and LG employs the same technology in its dishwashers, because steam removes even stubborn, encrusted food leftovers.



SAMSUNG: REFRIGERATORS WITH MORE CAPACITY AND FASTER WASHING MACHINES

Investigations carried out by Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd. have revealed that the main factors influencing German consumers when buying a refrigerator are the economical use of energy, best use of the available space and good environmental compatibility. The Korean manufacturer has therefore developed a new range of combination fridge-freezers with standard dimensions but enhanced insulation and a better use of space to increase capacity to 400 litres. The 'Foam Active' technology in Samsung washing machines ensures that the detergent forms tiny bubbles and penetrates deeply into fabrics to remove the dirt. Even at 20 degrees cleaning, it is thorough but gentle. A series of air purifiers promises a life free of allergies, and the new robot vacuum cleaners can recharge themselves.



APPLIANCES IN TECHNOLOGY BOUNDS IN BERLIN



ELECTROLUX: PROFESSIONAL KITCHEN EXPERTISE FOR PRIVATE HOMES

Electrolux is providing private homes with the technical capabilities already available to hotels and restaurants: “One in three hotels, and half of all the Michelin star restaurants in Europe use Electrolux kitchen appliances”, says CEO and President of AB Electrolux, Keith McLoughlin, at IFA 2012, where he and Jonas Samuelsson, Head of Major Appliances EMEA, are presenting the new “Inspiration Range” of appliances. The CombiSteam is a steamer with a capacity of 74 litres, for example, and combines the advantages of a steamer with the strengths of an oven. Samuelsson is particularly pleased with the “Chef Function” of the InfinitePure induction hotplate, which enables cooks to set temperature zones with low, medium and high heat in seconds. “The Inspiration Range will be on the German market in January 2013”, announced Klaus Wühl, general manager for Electrolux in Germany.

SIEMENS: ENERGY-EFFICIENCY MEETS USER FRIENDLINESS

The home appliances being exhibited by Siemens-Electrogeräte GmbH at IFA 2012 are remarkable not only on account of their energy efficiency but also because they make “a clear statement about individual lifestyles”, according to Roland Hagenbucher, general manager of the Home Appliance Division of Siemens-Electrogeräte. With their 48 micro-inductors the Full Area induction ovens can recognize even the smallest pans, and the hotplate even follows the pan if it is moved. The new dishwashers with ‘speedMatic’ technology only require six litres of water for 13 standard place settings. When the ‘turboSpeed’ is activated, clean glasses and plates can be returned to the party table after only 20 minutes. With its heat pump technology the iQ 800 dryer can achieve results 50 per cent better than the threshold figure for the energy efficiency A rating.

| continued on page 36 |

A WORLD FIRST: MIELE PRESENTS ITS SCENTED DRYER AT IFA 2012

“Improved performance, greater comfort and more enjoyment” is the slogan adopted by Miele & Cie KG for its new home appliances at IFA 2012, according to the company’s managing partner Dr. Reinhard Zinkann . They include the world’s first washer-dryer that automatically scents the washing during the drying process. This is achieved by means of a small bottle, which is installed in the door and contains sufficient for 50 cycles. The scents have been developed in a perfumery in Grasse, France. Making its debut at IFA is a new wine conditioning cabinet, equipped with an angled decanting rack to ensure that the wine scale settles at the bottom of the bottle. Wine glasses can be stored in a compartment of the cabinet so that they are properly cooled prior to being used to serve white wine or champagne. The new Miele heat pump dryer requires less than 1.3 kWh of energy for seven kilograms of washing. This makes it 65 per cent more energy efficient than EEC A and accordingly it has an A+++ rating.

BOSCH PRESENTS ENERGY-SAVING REFRIGERATORS & PET HAIR VACUUM CLEANERS

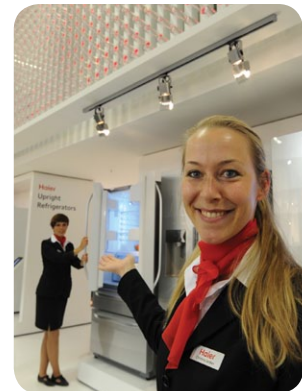
The built-in combination fridge-freezer, the SmartCool, made by Robert Bosch Hausgeräte GmbH , is more economical than a low energy lamp”, according to Michael Bohn, marketing manager Germany, speaking at IFA 2012. These A+++ units require only 140 kWh, whereas a lamp uses 158 kWh. The company is committed to implementing the energy transition in the home and accordingly Bosch GmbH seeks to educate consumers, says Bohn. As part of this process it has introduced a free internet platform and customer service application entitled “myBosch”. Bosch aims to supply advanced technology and, with its wide range of products, to achieve the maximum spread: 50 of its fridge-freezer models are rated EEC A+++; while 30 of the cooker-oven combinations have energy efficiency that is 30 per cent better than EEC A. And out-standing performance is the main feature of the “Zoo’o ProAnimal” vacuum cleaner with its “Animal 360” set of nozzles. With its four-way fibre removing attachment that adapts to the shape of any furniture it deals very effectively with pet hairs.

AEG APPLIANCES PROTECT FIBERS AND ARE VERY ENERGY-EFFICIENT

AB Electrolux is celebrating the 125th anniversary of its premium brand AEG at IFA 2012 and is using the occasion to present many new products. “The ProTex appliances are “best in class”, says Klaus Wühl, general manager of Electrolux Germany . One of them, the AEG ProTex Plus eco-washing machine, does not just comply with EEC A+++ but is 30 per cent more energy efficient. The fiber-protecting ProTex drum enables even the most sensitive materials to be washed, as has been acknowledged by the fact that it has received the Woolmark Gold award. The AEG ProTex heat pump dryer helps to conserve resources and is in the top energy efficiency category, A+++ . With this appliance AEG has set a new world energy conservation record, according to the Elektrolux spokesperson Elisabeth Lokai-Fels.

HAIER IN FUTURE REFRIGERATORS WILL SUGGEST THE RECIPES

Haier Europe is presenting EEC A+++ minus 40 washing machines at IFA 2012, which measure out the precise amount of detergent required, automatically adjust their program to the degree of soiling, and remove residues in between spin cycles.





“The 26 Series appliances combine our entire expertise”, explains Reuben Trevino, marketing & communication assistant Europe . Some of the other appliances are provided with an antibacterial door seal and a detergent tray. Haier is presenting the prototype of a three-door fridge-freezer combination whose opaque front panel becomes transparent when touched. It also has a function that assesses the amount of food stored in the unit and advises when replenishments are needed. If the owner cannot be bothered, the ‘ideas’ function suggests recipes based on the contents of the refrigerator.

GORENJE AUTOMATICALLY REDUCES ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Gorenje GmbH is presented the prototypes of its new generation of fridge-freezers at IFA 2012: ‘IonAir’ technology keeps food fresher for longer and, in particular, it eliminates bacteria, fungi and unpleasant smells, according to Marketing Manager Elisabeth Wieser . If a large number of glass bottles are stored in the refrigerator the ‘AdaptCool’ system measures the interior temperature and reduces the power output if the bottles themselves are helping to cool the inside of the appliance. The Vita Line ovens have a 65 litre cooking space and a three-stage ‘VitaTower’: the cooking tower comprises three perforated ceramic containers for carefully steaming. These appliances will probably be in the shops in Germany in 2013. The IQcook, however, is already available. It uses sensors in the lids and induction hotplates for an ideal temperature setting. This can reduce energy consumption by up to 40 per cent compared with standard hotplates.



EUROPEAN DEBUT FOR BUILT-IN KITCHEN APPLIANCES FROM PANASONIC AT IFA

The electronics manufacturer Panasonic Corporation is exhibiting its built-in kitchen appliances for the first time at IFA 2012, and they will go on sale in Europe in September. At the top of the range is an induction hotplate with infrared sensor technology, which can be used by amateur cooks to select the right temperature precisely and at any time. The hotplate area is enhanced by a brightly illuminated ring and blue LEDs. Panasonic is also presenting a high quality A+++ dishwasher with a separate tray for cutlery, touch-control operation, low noise levels and several different baskets, making it the ideal choice for any modern home. The steam irons have a two-way base with an area of 28 x 12 centimeters. This large base enables them to move smoothly in all directions. As a result it is almost impossible to inadvertently make creases when ironing.



WORLD DEBUT FOR THE PHILIPS HOMECOOKER FROM JAMIE OLIVER AT IFA

Cooking, steaming and roasting: the ‘Homecooker’ can do it all. Philips Consumer Lifestyle is responsible for a new development in home appliances. At its heart is a hotplate with settings for temperatures of between 40 and 250 degrees C. With its steaming basket, noodle insert, pan and cutter the preparation of stews, curries or roast potatoes or even risottos could not be easier. “The highlight of our display at IFA has been developed jointly with Jamie Oliver, and this unit is making its world debut here in Berlin,” says Henrik Köhler, head of consumer lifestyle and general manager of Philips GmbH . The company’s aim was to meet the needs of people coming home hungry after a hard day at work, with little inclination to spend much time in the kitchen but keen to enjoy healthy, fresh food. **RO**

An Innovative Progressive Pricing Strategy

Since its beginning in 1937, Progressive has taken an innovative approach to auto insurance. They offered drive-in claims service before any other auto insurance company, and were the first, to allow customers to pay their premiums in installments—an appealing option for those who couldn't afford annual payments.

Progressive wanted—and still wants—to make auto insurance accessible and easy so more people could protect their vehicles.

Progressive insurance company was once the place where high risk drivers bought their car insurance. Boys under 25 and others with more than a few points on their licenses could go there, pay a little extra and still drive legally. Few today, however, think about the company that way.

The company has since become the industry leader in price transparency. In 1994, even before the Internet boom, they introduced 1-800-AUTO-PRO, a cutting-edge auto insurance rate comparison shopping service. Consumers no longer had to call several companies to compare auto insurance rates—in one phone call to 1-800-AUTO-PRO, they'd receive a Progressive quote and comparison rates for up to three competitors. Plus, if customers wanted to buy from Progressive, they could purchase an insurance policy directly and immediately on the phone. Wow! Now that's world class service.

Now, of course, that process is replicated on the Progressive website or at 1-800 PROGRESSIVE. And they have Flo.

What does that have to do with you? Everything.

Dealers often tell me that they price products on the floor at some inflated price—perhaps MSRP—because “all customers want to negotiate for a better deal.” But if you listen closely, you'll see that what they really want is assurance that they're getting a good value.

I rarely hear a customer say, “I want to buy it for \$50 less than your price” or “can you sell it for \$929?” Most customers will ask “is that your best price?”

If it isn't, you're left squirming as you say, “let me see what I can do.”

If you've priced your floor at or near what products really sell for in your market, you can say “Our customers don't have to beg for better pricing. We check our competitors so that we can guarantee that our customers always get a great value shopping here. AND...we guarantee our pricing for thirty days after you buy from us.”

Even better, take some key models and do what Progressive has done—show some of your competitors' prices right on the product. Display your low price comparisons on your website and in your ads. You'll gain credibility with the customer and allay their pricing objections before they even start.

But how can you make any money?

Not all products are price sensitive. Ask enough questions so that you can help your customers choose fully featured—and more profitable—merchandise. If customers were only interested in getting the lowest price, there would be no market for the Ritz Carlton, BMW, Ralph Lauren, Rolex, or Gucci. Even mid-priced Toyota, Marriott and Applebee's would be out of business. People would only stay at Red Roof

Inn, drive Kia and wear sweats from Wal-Mart.

Some vendors—like Jenn-Air and Sub-Zero—have developed strict UMRP policies insuring price stability and profits. Others, including some consumer electronics brands, have instituted MAP pricing to help stem the price decline of their products. Support those policies by suggesting those brands to your customers.

Bundle products, delivery and installation and accessories. Build unique packages—surge protector, HDMI cable, mount, screen cleaner and extended warranty with delivery and installation; or delivery, dryer cord, vent kit, year's supply of detergent and a warranty. Your competitors don't give away accessories and services and neither should you.

I'm sure that Progressive occasionally loses a customer by quoting its competitors' prices to their prospects. But judging from their explosive growth, they've gained far more.

You're meeting your competitors' prices every day. So why not make it a competitive advantage instead of a defense move?

My guess is that you'll have happier customers and a better bottom line.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy and profitable holiday season. Let's look ahead to a bright and successful New Year. **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.





Wish

by Andrew Bannecker

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Customer Service Myths

The Real Story Behind Superior Service

Ask for a definition of customer service, and you probably will be met with a long pause, followed by a disjointed and vague response. While most people, including CEOs throughout the world, think they know what customer service is, many of them do not.

Customer service is quality products, convenience, competitive prices, timely responses, reliability, a personal touch, speed, accuracy, and knowledgeable employees. It is doing what you say you will do. It is operating on the belief that no transaction is complete unless the service your customers receive is great enough to motivate them to return to you.

Companies throughout the world are facing increasing competition, driven in large part by the Internet, which allows customers to compare products, services, and prices 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Meanwhile, social media such as Facebook allows consumers to share their complaints—and their praises—with millions of people throughout the world.

There are several myths regarding customer service that not only are roadblocks to treating your customers in a way that will make them loyal to you for life, but that also will have a negative impact on your bottom line. Here are four of them:

- You can improve customer service by hiring more employees. Like many things in life, quantity doesn't equal quality.

You can add all the employees you want but, if they don't understand—and practice—the fundamentals of customer service all you have done is add to your payroll. It's critical that you hire people who enjoy working with people and that you provide them the tools they need to serve your customers.

- Pay your employees more, and their performance will improve. Money does not drive performance. Money is not a motivator. Money will not change attitudes and behaviors. So, what will? Recognition. Positive reinforcement and public praise will motivate your employees to do more and to do it better. I believe that recognition is every much a basic human need as food and water. When you fill that need, you will improve performance and develop a team of employees who are driven to do their best.
- All employees are empowered. Don't kid yourself; most employees are not empowered to do whatever it takes to satisfy your customers. There are several reasons for this. Employees are afraid they will make a mistake that will result in a severe reprimand or, worse still, being fired. Meanwhile, managers and supervisors are afraid they will lose power and prestige, if they allow their underlings to make empowered decisions. If you really want to improve customer service, it is imperative that you allow employees to bend and break the rules in order to make your customers

happy—and that you reassure them that they will not be punished for doing so. You also must send the message to the rest of management that a major part of their jobs is to encourage empowerment. Doing so will have two results: It will improve customer service, and it will allow management to focus on other tasks.

- Everyone understands customer service. They do not. And, if your employees do not understand it, how can you expect them to provide it? It is your responsibility to ensure that all employees can identify the elements of customer service—and then to train them and give them the tools they need to provide it. Conduct customer service training programs at least three times a year to provide employees the skills they need and to keep enthusiasm high. Then coach them, nurture them, and praise them. The time and money you spend in doing so is an investment in your company's future. The return on that investment, in terms of customer loyalty and increased sales and profits, will drive your business. **RO**

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



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If Disney Were to Run Your Business, How Would It Change?

I hold a season pass at the four Disney parks here in Orlando and I just received my renewal information in the mail. It hit me how the marketing wizardry of Disney far surpassed the average independent retailer. So what do they do differently?

Ask any retailer what the most important tool is in building up a business and they will surely tell you it's word of mouth advertising. That the way to generate word of mouth advertising is to have a great product, great service, and great prices so the public would tell all of their friends and "voila", you would have customers beating a path to your store.

There's nothing wrong with that model with the exception that your competition is doing the exact same thing, and there is more competition now than ever before. So isn't that what Disney does? ABSOLUTELY. I like to say they create word of mouth advertising on steroids. What I mean by that is, the average family of four attending Disney World tells all of their friends and family before they've even left to go on their Disney vacation! While they are at the attractions, they are taking pictures and movies on their smart phones and posting them on social media having parties to show their pictures when they return home. That is word of mouth advertising on steroids.

I don't know many retailers that can create word of mouth advertising like that. So why doesn't Disney just stop

there? Because they believe that they must keep their name in front of the public, so they run advertising on television, billboards, print ads and radio. That is where the similarity ends and Disney's Marketing Magic steps in.

Disney creates a theme for all of their advertising for the year, from the "I'm going to Disneyworld" that was used from excited kids saying it -- to sport stars after winning the world series or Super Bowl, to "The Happiest Place on Earth" theme, to "Making Memories." Do you have a theme every year for your advertising? If not, why not?

Disney is about Celebrations - it is part of their core belief. Parades are held honoring sports teams. The community that Disney created is called Celebration and Celebration Hospital even has an MRI machine that looks like a giant sand castle! Creating word of mouth advertising goes on and on with Disney.

It doesn't stop there. Disney's marketing magic doesn't just rely on all of that advertising and word of mouth, even though it is probably the best in business today; they are Pro-Active in their marketing, meaning they bring people to Disney for more than just going to a theme park or ride the rides. Disney Institute sponsor contests and has become the center for corporate meetings. They have become the "go to" place for cheerleading and dance and sports competitions. They even have a formal system to capture

ideas from the general public. Do you? Many retailers are doing this such as competitions like most beautiful home in your town or the best store windows in town.

The point is simple. If Disney, with all of their word or mouth advertising, doesn't sit back on their reputation and is constantly looking for other means to generate traffic, we must be as Pro-Active as they are. Disney targets specific markets such as the local markets, offering reduced prices for local resident passes.

So what would Disney do if they were running your business? They would create the best customer experience, bring more customers to your store by all ways possible--from classes to events, creating new streams of word of mouth advertising for you. They would be Pro-Active looking for new target segments and make your business a leader in your field. Your store would become the "go to" place in your town! The philosophy is basic—and it works, so put it to work for you!

I have to go now—I have a class at the Disney Institute in an hour. **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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Risk and Reward: Are We Having Fun Yet?

As we look toward 2013, what sort of lessons have you learned? What intentions are you setting for yourself in your business?

A few years ago on a trip to the Bahamas, I willingly and purposefully got into a tube of rushing water positioned six stories above a shark-filled lagoon, crossed my arms over my chest and shot down the 60-foot Leap of Faith. I did this twice! Then, if that wasn't enough, I went with three other adventurers to the nearly 200-foot long body slide and a 50-foot vertical drop into the Abyss.

Perhaps you're a veteran water park attendee? Adrenaline junkie? Perhaps not. I like roller coasters as much as the next big kid, but I don't typically make it a practice to launch or hurl myself bodily. I'm going to admit right now that this activity involved a lot of screaming. I'm not necessarily proud of this, but it is what it is. I actually thought that I might, on the second and third time down, behave better—be more reserved. But let's be honest—first, this is not an attractive sport—you're wet, your hair is plastered to your head if you're lucky, and sometimes, your limbs deserve the word *akimbo*. Second, it was FUN! I couldn't have held in those screams and giggles even if I'd really, really tried. I just gave myself over to it.

I love how they've named these silly things "Leap of Faith" and "The Abyss." I think about how, when we take on the role of a leader, we are venturing into the unknown, charting new territory—because we cannot know whether we'll plunge into the cool, blue pool or whether we'll have to

emerge from the shark-filled lagoon. And frankly, even if it is a bit scary, why are you doing it if it's never any FUN? If you're always holding yourself tightly wound, lips pursed and teeth clenched, thinking that you'll just get through another day, another quarter, another year until you can retire—what's the fun in that? I ask my clients who are stressed, over worked an unhappy to assess what I call the 85% Rule: if you're not pretty darn happy, excited and thrilled with your work 85% of the time, it's definitely time to take a closer look. 15% of the time, you might have to deal with bad days, annoying people, and tough business times. But if you've been hanging around 60 or 40% for a long period of time—you need an Abyss moment. You need a big belly laugh or a good scream!

Two things I took away from The Atlantis experience:

- **Take risks and have faith in yourself.** The darn waterslide took 14 seconds! Thousands had gone before me—how risky, really, is that? All of my fear, anxiety, stress, worry, etc. was inside my head based on the perceptions I had about the context of my situation. What can you do, right now, that doesn't involve hurtling down a waterslide but feels risky nonetheless? Have you got a great idea that will make your team better, more productive, more effective? Do you need to face that colleague or employee because you should have addressed an issue and now it's feeling too late? (It's never too late to do the right thing!)

What's one thing you can do tomorrow that's a bit out of your comfort zone that can really contribute to your growth as a person or a leader?

- **Have some fun!** Laugh at yourself! The funniest part of the waterslide for me was that I could only imagine how silly I looked and how absurd I must have sounded. Self-deprecating humor demonstrates wit, intelligence and a sense of fun. If you don't think you're funny, go find an old picture of yourself with your worst hair-do ever! You probably thought you looked pretty cool, right? One of my favorite sayings is *Never underestimate the value of being self-entertained*. I think I'm hilarious—who cares if anyone else does or not? Sometimes, it's okay to laugh at your mistakes, too. Learn from them, make it right, and move on. Don't take yourself so seriously—I say this to myself as much as I offer it to you—I needed the Leap of Faith as much as the next person!

Well, what are you waiting for? Surely, right now, you're looking a lot better and feeling a lot stronger and smarter than that silly woman shivering at the lip of The Abyss. **RO**

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



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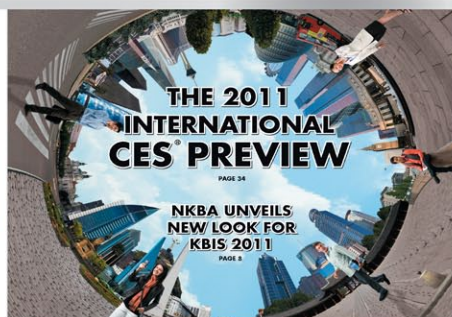
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Dealing With the



THE MANAGER WHO HOPES THAT PROBLEMS WILL GO AWAY ON THEIR OWN WILL BE FACED WITH THE FOLLOWING CONSEQUENCES:

CLOSELY CONTROLLED INFORMATION, INEFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES, LOSS OF CRITICAL SKILLS, MINIMIZING PROFIT POTENTIAL, DISCONNECTION BETWEEN COMPANY AND CUSTOMER BASE, & DETERIORATION OF GROWTH

Managers are overwhelmed and burdened with many tasks and responsibilities in a constant quest to improve results. It is easy for managers to ignore the many challenges that confront them while hoping that issues will resolve themselves. However, rather than disappear, unmet challenges create a new set of problems that can represent a deepening morass from which managers must extricate themselves.

Problems and challenges are a regular and ongoing occurrence: some surface as daily tactical problems and issues, while others are more complex, time-consuming and strategic in nature. In all forms, problems can overwhelm the manager and sap their productivity.

Managers must create a systematic approach to problem solving to allow time for their regular duties and responsibilities. Without a detailed, time-focused approach that allows managers to break challenges down into more manageable components, they will quickly feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the demands facing them.

The manager who hopes that problems will go away on their own will be faced with the following consequences:

- **Closely Controlled Information**

The flow and control of critical information is a management issue. Many managers base their personal power on how they manage and control information made available to their people. Yet the free-flow of information to frontline employees is essential for success. Managers who attempt to micromanage their employees and limit the

Challenges of Change

information fed to them, contribute to undermining the efficiency of the team.

Employees are hindered when they are not given the information they need to be competitive. Without the information and authority to make decisions on the spot, their efforts can be negatively impacted by delays. When decisions are pushed up the line for managers to make, bottlenecks are often created and critical decisions are not made in a timely manner; potential results include lost productivity or poor customer service. At a time when customers are increasingly demanding, this can be extremely problematic. Rather than make employees more effective by streamlining the process, managers often erect additional barriers that hinder performance.

- **Loss of Critical Skills**

In response to slow economic conditions, many companies cut their discretionary spending and slash training budgets. Rather than focus on the development of skills that can have a direct bearing on the success of a company, many allow skills to become outmoded and ineffective during slow periods. Consequently, companies experience an additional decline in performance, which then necessitate further cuts.

Rather than focus on reducing training budgets, managers should seek to sharpen employee skills to achieve the same objectives. Studies have shown that a 2% increase in customer retention over the previous year's performance

levels will result in a 10% reduction in operating expenses. This is due to the additional retained business impacts of economies of scale.

- **Disconnection Between Company and Customer Base**

With the changes in purchasing habits of customers and a closer examination of the roles and returns that specific products or services offer managers, those who fail to meet critical challenges can find themselves increasingly disconnected from their customer base.

Employees who fail to understand their clients' profit economics and who are not attuned to the rapidly shifting complexion of business will find it increasingly difficult to meet their customers' needs. As companies neglect training, they rob their people of critical skills at the apex of change.

- **Inefficient Use of Resources**

Not only are companies more demanding, but the use of various new methods and technologies have made for more diverse methods of collecting and disseminating information. The use of face-to-face meetings is in many circumstances no longer the most efficient use of resources. Phone and Web conferencing can supplement traditional meetings and free managers to pursue more essential activities.

Additionally, if managers fail to focus on the desired outcomes of their business processes and the behaviors required to

achieve those goals, they are, once again, inefficiently using their resources. Failure to align desired behaviors and goals with compensation plans will result in a failure to meet objectives and negatively impact the organization.

- **Minimizing Profit Potential**

The failure to meet new and ongoing challenges through heightened training can result in the minimization of profit potential. Employees who do not understand the profit economics of their products/services cannot comprehend how they might impact and improve the profitability of their own efforts.

- **Deterioration of Growth**

Managers who neglect to deal with a new problem are either in denial of the situation or hope it will resolve itself. However, a failure to meet challenges will create a domino effect across the entire organization. All challenges are interconnected: each impacts the other. If solutions are not addressed in tandem, they risk failing. Consequently, when managers fail to meet the issues facing them head-on, they can easily undermine their unit and organization's growth. The hazard is always present, but the consequences manifest themselves in increments, and the impact is only truly felt over time. **RO**

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The New Face of Audio

Consumer-Friendly, High-Performance, Sleek, and Wireless Audio Products Spell Opportunity for Retailers

I recently travelled to Asia specifically to engage audio manufacturers; pinpoint audio growth opportunities, identify future trends, and gain a full understanding of line transitions for 2013. What I learned there, in addition to what we saw at CEDIA EXPO, is extremely exciting—especially for the traditional TV/Appliance retailer who might not normally carry audio products.

Audio manufacturers are designing sleek, Jetsons-esque products that consumers will be proud to display in their homes and that have better sound quality than we've seen in a very long time. Take the Sound Bar category for example. This all-in-one surround solution was designed to be mounted under a flat-panel display in lieu of a 5.1-channel surround system. Some people simply didn't want to deal with the wires and design headaches traditional surround systems presented in the average living room. Lesser manufacturers quickly caught on and began to make cheaper iterations that didn't do the category justice.

Many well-respected manufacturers are now coming out with rock-solid sound bars that will delight audiophiles and average Joes alike. For example, Definitive Technology just introduced their SoloCinema XTR Sound Bar. It isn't cheap at \$1,999, but sets a higher standard for sound quality and design, including five channels, HDMI inputs, lossless surround processing, and a wireless subwoofer so that homeowners can enjoy deep bass without wires. Likewise, Bose has the number-one selling sound bar in the industry, the

CineMate, which retails for \$1,499 and offers very good audio. Many of these high-end sound bars can do the HDMI switching required with multiple video sources (like a game console, AppleTV, and a DirecTV receiver), eliminating the need for an outboard HDMI switcher or a receiver. At lower price points, Paradigm debuted its first sound bar, the Soundtrack System (\$799), and Klipsch premiered the G17 horn-loaded sound bar at \$499. Zvox's sound bar can actually bear the weight of your TV, making installation easier. The company offers surround sound from a single chassis as low as \$199, with their best-selling unit going for \$399.

While these surround sound systems are great solutions for watching movies and TV, multiroom wireless audio has traditionally been an expensive and invasive procedure with systems starting in the tens of thousands of dollars and requiring complicated installation. With advances in wireless protocol, the advent of technologies like Apple's AirPlay, and products like Sonos, multiroom audio is now an absolutely attainable reality for any budget, and can be had for as little as \$300 to \$500 a room. Pioneer's Wi-Fi Speaker System (starting at \$299), for example, lets homeowners enjoy their music throughout the entire home regardless of where it is stored. These wireless sound stations are all-in-one stylish speakers with amps built in. Multiple units can be placed throughout the home for multiroom audio. As with any AirPlay-enabled product, users have complete control of their

entire iTunes music library via their iPads or iPhone, as well as most manufacturers' smartphones.

All of this begs the question: Why should the traditional TV/Appliance retailer care? For one, all these systems offer very deep margin. At times, you can make more money on a \$399 sound bar than you will on a \$1,000 TV. And with these new, high-quality lines, retailers can now offer customers first-rate audio instead of sound that is just "good enough." Plus, with the extremely simple setup they offer, you don't need an "installation crew" or "programmers" to get these devices into your customers' homes. Finally, for products with AirPlay, you are tapping into the entire database of iTunes users. In fact, the qualifying question for products like Pioneer's Wi-Fi Speakers or Klipsch's G17 Air should simply be: "Do you use iTunes?"

The future of new audio is now. Manufacturers are making sure that retailers have great opportunities by making wireless products with mass appeal, sleek design, great performance, and excellent margins. For all these reasons and more, audio is a hot category to consider adding to your retail mix today. **RO**

Jim Ristow is the executive vice president of consumer electronics for BrandSource, helping to establish it as one of the largest and most influential CE merchandising groups in the United States.





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Like many other Americans, I am taken with the election process and am left confused. While there are two very distinctive approaches to leading our country that may seem pretty clear in theory, that communication is often clouded with offensive tactics, defensive responses and a bantering that leaves me dazed. There is much to be said about street tactics in many venues. Our industry is not different. Winning is the only option for retail competitors and the various means of communication are misleading and confusing. It can be natural to load both barrels and fire away at the consumer. Don't get me wrong, the necessity to reach consumers through multiple channels is important...but we should think about the approach and make sure the message is simple and consistent.

I recently wrote an article around the concept of “Disrupt or be Disrupted!” Either we attack and disrupt our market place or allow our competitors to attack and disrupt our businesses. The problem is that in today's marketplace, disruption creates complexity and confusion for the consumer, which eventually reduces the latter part of the purchase decision to pricing.

- **Keep it Simple**

I sincerely believe simple is better. In past articles, I have referenced Nationwide Marketing Group's Merchandising

model. Our merchandising strategy is a simple “Draw-Escape-Sell” story in every brand and category. This is certainly just one approach in many, but it removes the clutter. Show the consumer, with confidence, how much research went into determining what assortment you chose to offer. You will buy better, display your assortments better, eliminate confusion (both within your business and with consumers) and create a story for your customers that their best interest is your priority.

- **Improve Your Odds**

Keeping your assortment simple requires breaking the tradition of serving all vendors. In today's world, that is impossible and you cannot afford to allow your supplier relationships to thin out. You must make some hard choices, but ones that can become a central part of your story. The big box assortments most brands because they are not nearly as concerned with customer satisfaction as they are about ringing the register. You can use this to prove you are the solution. Also, you must run your business to maximize the best of each vendor program. You cannot do this if you are trying to serve all. Dig down and determine which brands and products represent the best value for your customers. Partner with them and be all you can be. The story within your

the Clutter . . . Keep it Simple

organization becomes the same story to your customers. Tell everyone that every single product in your assortment is a strategic decision to create value.

- **Remove the Clutter**

Keeping your assortment simple also allows for a simple approach to your salespeople and your customers. Larger vendors offer thousands of SKU options, but interestingly, only a handful make up the bulk of the business. At Nationwide, we specifically focus on only these SKU's. Our Draw-Escape-Sell strategy simply removes the clutter on many fronts.

- **Simple Merchandising**

- *One "Draw" SKU* in each category to use in advertising and promotions as a means of creating a price sensitive attraction for consumers.

- *The "Escape" SKU* is the first step in creating incredible value for the consumer. The feature levels within these SKU's provide at least twice the value as their retail premiums suggest. The consumer is left with a "no-brainer" value choice to make.

- *The "Sell" SKU* is just that. This is the SKU that provides the consumer with the very best in class and the latest in innovation.

- **"Escape"**

While this simple concept has been

around since time began, it has been executed in many inconsistent ways and not always the simplest to understand. At NMG, we stack the Escape SKU's with the bulk of margin by negotiated cost and added merchandising and promotional resources to create a huge value for the consumer, while maximizing the profits to you. Think about it... "Is it more sensible to dilute precious dollars across 100 SKU's or allocate them, strategically to just 20"? Many of these SKU's are exclusive and cannot be purchased through the Big Box. If properly presented, you can make a living with these SKU's and provide fantastic consumer solutions in harmony.

- **"Sell"**

At NMG, we allocate the "Sell" SKU's with the greatest level of value for the consumer. The true pathway to profit is built into this category, while awarding the very best in innovation to your customers. Your cash register will love you for a high mix of these products and you simply cannot please your vendor partners any better or maximize your programs to the highest degree!

- **Live in the Real World**

At Nationwide, our relationship with key suppliers is based on reality in the marketplace. To live in a world where

costs and retails are associated with MAP is ridiculous. We have a dedicated department to analyze the market on a daily basis, allowing me the opportunity to work with vendors with fact based data so we can keep the integrity of the D-E-S plan in play at all times. It is based on "real retail values", "real gross margins" and "real profit pictures". As retailers, we do not make wishful deposits to the bank...we make real ones.

This is not rocket science, but it does require a tremendous amount of work and discipline. A simple approach is as simple as the thought and work that exists behind it. By using reality and the application of resources to create value for the consumer and profits for your business is critical. There are so many benefits to simplicity and your customers will reward you with their business and recommendations for simplifying their lives and creating a fantastic purchase experience, backed by all of the value that you bring to them. Keep it simple and it will be much easier to exceed expectations! **RO**

Jeff Knock is the Senior Vice President of Appliance Marketing for Nationwide Marketing Group, a leading buying and marketing organization for independent retailers.



Nationwide Employee Additions

**NATIONWIDE
MARKETING GROUP:
NEW DIRECTOR OF PR
& COMMUNICATIONS**

**NATIONWIDE
WEB SERVICES:
METHODS TO GET HELP
RETAILERS BECOME
INVOLVED WITH
MOBILE SHOPPING**

**NATIONWIDE EAST:
THREE INDUSTRY
VETERANS ADDED TO
MANAGEMENT TEAM**



Alex Knock

NATIONWIDE MARKETING GROUP HIRES NEW DIRECTOR OF PR AND COMMUNICATIONS ALEX KNOCK HIRED AS DIRECTOR, PUBLIC RELATIONS & COMMUNICATIONS.

Knock, a Christopher Newport University alumni was most recently an Account Coordinator at renowned marketing firm The Martin Agency, based in Richmond, Virginia. Knock fills the position previously held by Michelle Acosta. "I am thrilled to have the opportunity to bring a fresh perspective and be involved in the evolution of Nationwide Marketing Group to a company that is social media savvy, hip, and culturally relevant," says Knock.

Having worked on a variety of business accounts, Knock comes armed with experience in public relations, social media marketing, mobile app development, and a strong digital background.

"It is exciting to bring on a new team player with an innovative and creative flare. We have great things in store for Nationwide this year," says Robert Weisner, CEO of Nationwide Marketing Group.

CONTINUED GROWTH OF MOBILE SHOPPING: WHAT CAN RETAILERS DO?



December is finally here—the home stretch for Holiday shopping. Years ago, consumers would brawl for the last items on the shelves at stores everywhere. With so many vehicles providing consumers the option to shop online without ever leaving their home, retailers have an obligation to not only continue to drive foot traffic to their storefront, but to immerse themselves in the mobile shopping atmosphere.

The Nationwide Marketing Group Web Services Team has developed methods to help independent retailers get involved.

ions and Web Services News

Let's start with smartphone users. We help our retailers build a limited functionality mobile website that serves as an immediate redirection when consumers visit the site on their device. The interface is user-friendly and contains only the necessary information. Consumers are just a button away from turn by turn directions and a phone call to the store, which provides more opportunity for retailers to increase foot traffic and interest in their business.

Then we have the tablet users— those who will engage in product research online. So many consumers are downloading broad shopping apps to do so. What we do for our retailers is expand their store information and product specs to be featured across the board on many of these shopping apps. While browsing through an app to purchase appliances, electronics or furniture, our retailers business' and inventory can not be missed.

"By arming our members with the appropriate tools to be prevalent in online searches and in the app world, we continue to find ways to help them succeed with changing consumer trends," says Frank Sandtner, Vice President of Member Services Operations for Nationwide Marketing Group.

Find out more about these member services at our upcoming PrimeTime! show in Las Vegas on March 3-6, 2013.

NATIONWIDE EAST ADDS 3 INDUSTRY VETERANS



Nationwide East is proud to announce the addition of 3 industry veterans to its growing team of Territory Managers. These additional positions within the region will allow Nationwide East to provide increased service and even stronger relationships with current members. All three have years of experience dealing with independent retailers. The majority of their time will be out in the field

calling on Nationwide East members. The new Territory Managers are: David Crow, Dean Hanby, and Mike Hauer.

Co-director of Nationwide East, Dave Robison, stated, "We simply needed more horsepower in the field. Communicating Nationwide's exclusive Whirlpool – GE and Frigidaire programs in the eastern third of the United States requires a physical presence throughout our region. Nationwide's huge growth in furniture and bedding programs had our existing staff stretched too thin. In October alone we launched a new G.E. and Wells Fargo Nationwide exclusive consumer finance offer, a new secondary financing offer from Uown, a new website solution from Tail-Base, as well as communicated several new offers from DSI Systems, our distributor partner, to our members. The addition of these three new professionals will bring our service and communication with our members to an all-time high." **RO**



Left to right: David Crow, Dean Hanby, and Mike Hauer

BrandSource CE Division Visits Asia

Meets with Audio Manufacturers, Identifies Audio Growth Opportunities, Future Trends



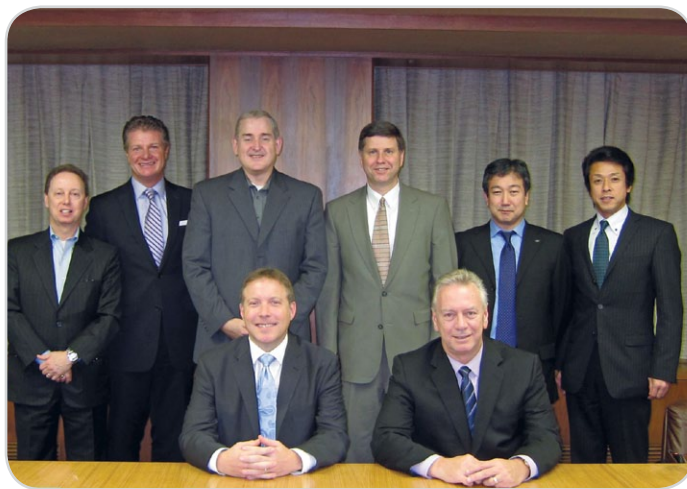
ProSource, the largest specialty and consumer-electronics merchandising group in the United States and the specialty CE division of the BrandSource buying group, recently participated in a series of highly successful meetings with key audio manufacturers in Asia. A dominant market leader in the audio category, ProSource travelled to Asia to collaborate with audio manufacturers and identify key trends and growth opportunities for group members and gain a full understanding of line transitions for 2013.

“Audio is an extremely important category for our group,” says Dave Workman, president/CEO of ProSource and president/COO of PRO Group. “While other buying groups travel to Asia for video, few do the same for audio. At ProSource, we recognize the tremendous value for both our dealers and manufacturers by

having these valuable and highly collaborative discussions. These powerful, in-person meetings allowed us to share views and find new growth subsets in the audio category.”

ProSource met with D&M, Yamaha, Harman/Kardon, and Onkyo/Integra. ProSource members in attendance included Steve Weiner (ListenUp), David Glassman (IQ Home Entertainment), Bob Cole (World Wide Stereo), and Tim Freeman (Crutchfield).

“We always come away from these trips with a keen understanding of how to improve audio sales and we discover new ways to help our dealers excel,” says Jim Ristow, Executive Vice President of Consumer Electronics for BrandSource. “We will now work closely with our members to develop a plan of action for 2013 and begin new initiatives in the audio category to benefit both members and manufacturers, as well as consumers.” **RO**



2013 • UPCOMING EVENTS • 2013

HANUKKAH—DEC. 8-16

CHRISTMAS—DEC. 25

KWANZAA—DEC. 26-JAN. 1

2013

JANUARY

7-10

NATIONAL APPLIANCE SERVICE CONVENTION 2013

Sheraton Miami Airport Hotel
MIAMI, FL
www.psaworld.com

8-11

INTERNATIONAL CES CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW

Las Vegas Convention Center
LAS VEGAS, NV
www.cesweb.org

14-20

LIVING KITCHEN 2013

Koelnmesse Fairground
COLOGNE, GERMANY
www.livingkitchen-cologne.com

22-24

2013 NAHB INTERNATIONAL BUILDERS SHOW

Las Vegas Convention Center
LAS VEGAS, NV
www.buildersshow.com

28- FEB 1

WINTER 2013 LAS VEGAS MARKET— GIFT+ HOME – VEGAS KIDS

World Market Center
LAS VEGAS, NV
www.lasvegasmarket.com

FEBRUARY

10-12

VDTA/SDTA CONVENTION & SHOW

Las Vegas Convention Center
LAS VEGAS, NV
www.vdta.com

17-20

BRANDSOURCE NATIONAL CONVENTION & EXPO

Marriot World Congress
ORLANDO, FL
www.brandsourceconvention.com

26-28

DIGITAL SIGNAGE EXPO 2013

Las Vegas Convention Center
LAS VEGAS, NV
www.digitalsignageexpo.net

MARCH

2-5

INTERNATIONAL HOME + HOUSEWARES SHOW

McCormick Place
CHICAGO, IL
www.housewares.org

3-6

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www.nationwideprimetime.com

6-9

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Walt Disney World
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www.asti.us

9-12

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DALLAS TX
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13-16

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Paul Sikir

SUB-ZERO'S PAUL SIKIR ELECTED AHAM CHAIR

The AHAM Board of Directors elected Paul V. Sikir as Chair of the AHAM Board of Directors, effective immediately. The special election was held to fill the unexpired term of Robert P. Scaglione, who recently left Sharp Electronics Corporation and subsequently resigned from his AHAM leadership position. Sikir, who is vice president, Design Engineering with Sub-Zero Inc., will fill the remainder of the current two year Chair position which runs through the 2014 annual member meeting. He has previously served as AHAM Treasurer and Chair of the Major Appliance Division.

Jennifer Mintman, general manager, Consumer Home Services with GE Appliances was elected First Vice Chair, filling the vacancy created by the elevation of Paul Sikir to Chair. Mintman will also continue in her position as AHAM Treasurer. She previously served as Major Appliance Division Chair.

D. Jeffrey Noel, corporate vice president, Communications and Public Affairs with Whirlpool Corporation was elected Second Vice Chair, filling the vacancy created by Mintman's elevation. The Vice Chair terms of Jeff Noel and Jennifer Mintman will coincide with that of Paul Sikir.



Tim Ebner

TIM EBNER JOINS PERLICK AS VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Perlick Corporation, a leader in total package bar equipment, beverage dispensing systems, and luxury residential undercounter refrigeration, today announced the appointment of Tim Ebner as the company's vice president of marketing and business development.

In the new position, Mr. Ebner will focus on both Perlick's commercial and residential product lines. His responsibilities entail; marketing, business development and engineering, product development, introduction planning and product roll-out.

"We are excited to welcome Tim into the Perlick family," states President and CEO of Perlick, Paul Peot. "His extensive knowledge of global marketing along with his product development and engineering background make him an asset to the continued growth of Perlick's business."

Before joining Perlick, Mr. Ebner was the global product leader for Enerpac and the vice president of product development and intellectual property at Master Lock Company. At Perlick, Mr. Ebner plans to leverage his experience to help increase Perlick's market presence and improve category innovation.

"In addition to geographic expansion and an increased emphasis on the Perlick brand, I plan to work with Perlick's talented executive team and engineers to further product innovation," states Mr. Ebner. "It's an honor to be a part of the Perlick family and its impressive legacy. I look forward to guiding Perlick into its next century of business."



Mr. Matthias Ginthum

BSH BOSCH AND SIEMENS HOME APPLIANCE GROUP APPOINTS NEW MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

BSH Bosch and Siemens Home Appliance group officially appointed Mr. Matthias Ginthum to succeed Mr. Jean Dufour as executive manager of BSH's global marketing, sales and logistics divisions, effective October 9, 2012.

Mr. Ginthum has worked for BSH in various managerial positions since 1990, most previously as the director of BSH's global laundry care business. A business studies graduate, Mr. Ginthum began his career within BSH's strategic planning department. He subsequently took on the role of executive manager of BSH France from 1996 to 1999 before becoming head of Corporate Controlling in Munich.

Mr. Dufour will be leaving the company as of October 31, 2012. He has resigned from his post for personal reasons, with the agreement of the Supervisory Board.



Claudia Lazar

ROHL ANNOUNCES NEW DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT MARKETING

ROHL LLC, one of the most recognized luxury brands in the kitchen and bath industry, is pleased to announce the hiring of Claudia Lazar, director of product marketing.

With nearly 25 years of experience in product development, Lazar brings a wealth of experience developing product strategy for closely held companies with a clear market position. In this newly created position, she will direct Product Marketing and be responsible for

product line management.

"Claudia brings a deep knowledge of product management, which is critical to our ability to manage our product portfolio profitably," said Lou Rohl, CEO and managing director of ROHL LLC. "Her Lean Manufacturing and Six Sigma credentials will be invaluable as we continue to refine our manufacturing relationships and deliver world class service through our supply chain."

Lazar received her MBA from Pepperdine University and has a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Evangel College. She works out of ROHL headquarters in Irvine, California.

companies, the most recent of which had multiple locations offering a wide variety of kitchen and bath products to both the trade and consumers. There, she was integral in defining the strategy to identify and approach new opportunities.

Her knowledge and vast network of industry relationships also stems from 10 years of service on the NKBA Board of Directors, including her role as the 2009 National NKBA President.



Suzie Williford

NEW DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND MEMBER RELATIONS JOINS THE NKBA STAFF

The National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) has a new addition to their staff. Suzie Williford has accepted the role of Director of Business Development and Member Relations, overseeing the corporate sales, customer service and member relations departments. In this position, her responsibilities will include membership growth, KBIS participation development, sponsorship sales, along with the development and management of domestic and international partnerships. Williford is anticipated to work towards the development and implementation of new strategies that generate business opportunities and maximize existing initiatives, relative to the more than 50,000 member association.

"Suzie possesses the specific expertise and experiences that will be required to achieve success in this essential role," according to CEO Bill Darcy. "As the NKBA continues to make strides in establishing itself as the leaders in learning for the industry, we see this role as necessary to our success. The gains made in business development will serve as the financial foundation for what we're able to offer members of our association and the industry, in the way of content necessary to their success."

With a proven track record, Williford brings the experience of more than 25 years in business development and sales management. As President of Williford & Associates, she offered consulting services in the areas of sales strategies, team building and profitability. In addition, she accepted public speaking commitments and conducted seminars. Previously, she has held positions as Vice President of Sales for two kitchen and bath



Sarah Kramer

ZEPHYR® NAMES SARAH KRAMER AS DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

EXPERIENCED MARKETING AND BRAND STRATEGIST REJOINS KITCHEN RANGE HOOD INNOVATOR

Zephyr®, the innovators of design-forward kitchen range hoods, today announced it has hired Sarah Kramer as Director of Marketing, effective October 22, 2012. Kramer will oversee Zephyr's marketing and business development, brand strategy, corporate communications and product launches.

Kramer comes to Zephyr with more than 10 years of combined marketing and brand strategy experience in the high-end consumer appliance industry. She began her career at Zephyr as marketing manager, where she assisted with a brand strategy and research initiative that resulted in new messaging, corporate ID, website and marketing materials.

Kramer was most recently working as director of marketing and business development for Fuego, designer and developer of modern outdoor grills. At Fuego, she successfully launched the start-up's brand, managed all sales channels, independent contractors and executed all company tradeshow.

"We are excited to welcome Sarah back to Zephyr and tap into the knowledge that she's gained over the years; she is an incredibly talented executive that brings a high level of enthusiasm and marketing expertise," said Luke Siow, president of Zephyr. "We've experienced enormous growth over the past year and our strategy is to bring a strategic team member on-board who can help us achieve even greater success; with Sarah, we've found just the right person." In her new role at Zephyr, Kramer will be responsible for continuing its strong brand presence in the industry at the consumer and retail level through design strategy and business development. In addition, Kramer will head all consumer and trade marketing through advertising, PR and social media. **RO**



Automation: Key to Efficiency, Growth and Profit

What is automation? Quite simply, it's using machine mechanisms to accomplish desired processes, instead of employing direct human labor.

Why is automation often preferred?

Humans are expensive. This is obvious in regard to employed personnel, but it's just as true (perhaps even more so) in regard to your own time. Any of your energy, time and attention that's taken for one task detracts from what's available for another – such as fishing, golf, or maybe even spending more time with your kids. Or, engaging in other business activities that do more to directly advance profit.

In hearty contrast, machines are cheap. A \$350 computer will happily labor 24/7 without complaint, for years on end.

Given so massive a magnitude in cost difference, it's foolish—nay, near criminal—for humans to persist in the performance of tasks, worry and drudgery where super-cheap automation can bear the burden instead.

Let's be clear. Where work tasks are infrequent, novel and/or unique, the ingenuity, adaptability and sheer brilliance (that are uniquely human traits) may indeed be needed, and therefore appropriate instruments to deploy. But where tasks are more routine and patterned, (and for such reason amenable to brute machine strengths), it is a waste of sheer madness to employ human hands, brains and stress

hormones instead. It is wrong, and should not be done.

You likely are not aware of the immense automation available for today's service office.

For the most part, humans are not needed to answer the phone. Your customers can book themselves online, they may confirm or change appointments online, even check on how their tech is running on the day of the appointment, or on progress of the job otherwise. Humans are not needed for acquiring dispatch requests from manufacturers or other third-parties. Such reception can and should be automated via direct, computer-to-computer communication.

Humans need not be involved in going laboriously through tomorrow's jobs to determine what parts techs should be taking with them, or through yesterday's to see what parts should have come back. A machine should compile this information automatically, and provide a beautiful interface for a human to indicate what is in fact being moved, and in what direction (of course, the machine further keeps track of where everything is at. A human should not have to labor to determine what needs ordered for restock. A machine should provide the list, and automate the ordering process too.

Humans should not stress through routine reviews of work-in-progress, worrying to assure steps are not falling through the

cracks. A machine should do this worrying, and stressing—leaving it to a human to provide needed human input, solely when the machine detects an absence of suitable progress.

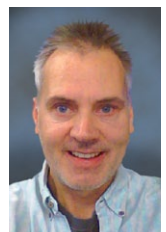
Human hands should never touch paper. Well, at least not paper as involved in standard, day-to-day work flow. If human hands are touching paper in these circumstances, it's a sure sign humans are doing things manually that machines could do better, and via automation.

If your office is appropriately automated, it's likely you are adroitly managing at least four techs per office person (perhaps more). It means you are likely thriving, making more money than most, though with less effort, and much less stress. If you are not appropriately automated, it's likely your ratio of support personnel to techs is much less favorable, that you worry too much, and work far too hard. Worst of all, it's likely you're doing it all for a much smaller bottom line.

The lesson here is simple: Automate!

Automate anywhere and everywhere it's advantageous. Check out the latest and best software systems, such as ours or others. You'll be amazed at what automation can do for you. **RO**

Author: *Glade Ross*
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The Aftermath - What the Servicer Can Expect

Hurricane Sandy was one of the worst natural disasters that the East Coast has suffered in many years. Millions of homes were flooded, utilities damaged and general devastation in an area not used to such conditions. Besides the wind damages, salt water permeated every nook and cranny, several feet high in many homes. This creates a whole new set of problems when facing salvaging and repair of water-damaged appliances. Our business as repair experts puts us in the limelight for the next several months as insurance claims will be filed to recover the damages.

There is both a positive and a negative side to everything. On one hand, we will be deluged with service calls, whether to repair or simply provide an estimate for repair/replacement. This is the positive side of the scale for us. We need to keep in mind that any appliance with electrical parts inside should be condemned. Any refrigerator, water heater, oven, range, garbage disposal, window a/c or gas furnace should be condemned on the spot if found to be fully or partially submerged in water. Here is a quote from President and CEO of Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Institute. (AHRI)

"Standing water in a yard, house, or basement can damage a home's heating, cooling, and water heating equipment in ways that are not always readily apparent and putting families at risk," said AHRI President & CEO Stephen Yurek. "We advise homeowners to play it safe and replace, rather than repair,

flood-damaged heating, cooling, and water heating equipment."

RUDD heating and cooling issued this statement for immediate release: "In the short term the equipment may run, but over time, wiring harnesses and other components may have long term issues and degradation of safety functions, reliability and performance.

If there is any question whether flood water has reached a gas or oil furnace or boiler, it should be checked by a qualified contractor. This equipment has valves and controls that are especially vulnerable to water damage from floods—damage that might not be visible. Corrosion begins inside the valves and controls, and damage may not be apparent, even if the outside of the device is clean and dry. At a minimum, this damage can result in reliability problems.

There is also an environmental health issue from flooded appliances. Flood waters contain marine bacteria and e-coli which can be wicked up into the cabinet of the appliance and cause illness. It is almost impossible to detect and remediate that kind of intrusion, so to be safe, it is better to condemn the appliance than try to repair it. Be up-front with your customers and explain the hazards and pitfalls of trying to repair a saltwater-damaged product and remind them of the possible health issues. Many of your customers without insurance will ask that you try and save the appliance. Obviously that choice is yours, but be sure to have your customer sign a waiver

to protect yourself and your company.

Appliance dealers will receive the largest benefit from the aftermath of Sandy because sales of new appliances will skyrocket and the old appliances you were used to fixing will be gone. But the future for the servicers in the affected areas is not so bleak. You will be called by your customers to do inspections and estimates for the insurance companies. Don't feel bad about charging your customer for your service because their insurance company will reimburse them for your service. (Just be careful to keep your pricing at the same level or perhaps a little lower than you were before the storm.)

Your services will also be required to do gas leak inspections and new appliance installations as the dealers will not have the manpower to handle the volume that they will experience.

If you are energetic and are thinking ahead, you as a Certified Appliance Professional will have many new opportunities in the immediate future. Opportunities such as installations, inspections and estimates, dryer vent replacement, gas leak detection and simply being the appliance expert in your trading area. This is also an opportunity to expand your services. When one door closes the other will open if you are focused.

To any of you who lost property in the hurricane, you have my deepest condolences and are in our prayers daily. God Bless! **RO**

Author: Jim Campbell, PSA, Mcap, CSM



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Liebherr Servicer of The Year

Near the end of 2011 Liebherr began promoting its new Servicer of the Year Award during each of its technical training classes hosted throughout the year by the Liebherr Service Center managed by ADCO Service. An announcement about the award was also sent via email to all of Liebherr's current service contractor partners.

On 1st, Liebherr presented the first awards at ADCO's facility in Scottsdale, Arizona. The 2012 Servicer of the Year recipients, Orrett Bennett and Ricardo Martinez, were each presented plaque-mounted certificates and gifts of several Liebherr branded promotional items. After the presentation the honorees enjoyed dinner with management from ADCO and Liebherr.

Both gentlemen were chosen for the consistent positive customer feedback received through Liebherr's Customer Service Satisfaction Survey, their excellent working relationship with ADCO, and a dedication to the Liebherr brand.

In 2013 Mr. Bennett and Mr. Martinez will

join ADCO and Liebherr staff on Liebherr's exclusive 'Train the Trainer' trip to the factory in Ochsenhausen, Germany where they will spend the better part of a week touring the facility, training in Liebherr's world class service training facility with top Liebherr Service minds and experiencing all that the great German culture has to offer.

Mr. Bennett is the owner / operator of Pinnacle Appliance Repair servicing Chicago and its surrounding suburbs and Mr. Martinez is the owner / operator of Luxury Appliance Repair looking after the L.A. County region. Both gentlemen credit their customer service excellence to becoming an independent servicer. By being able to control the number of calls they do in a day, they are able to take their time and do the job to both their own and their customers' satisfaction. At the ceremony both gentlemen expressed their sense of pride about receiving the award.

"It's good to know that hard work pays off.", said Mr. Bennett.

Credit was given to ADCO for the amazing

support they provide to servicers.

"If it wasn't for all the technical support from ADCO I wouldn't be as successful as I am.", offered Mr. Martinez.

Karl Benecke, president of ADCO Service stated, "I wish we had technicians like these gentlemen in every market."

Liebherr is the largest producer of premium refrigeration in the world with over 2 million appliances built annually. They have been manufacturing refrigeration products since 1954 and have been distributing in the U.S. since 2004. All the products distributed in the U.S. are Energy Star qualified where possible and are manufactured at their facilities in Ochsenhausen, Germany and Lienz, Austria.

ADCO has been Liebherr's national service provider in the U.S. since Liebherr first entered the market and are an integral part of their continued growth and success as well as the success of those technicians in the field taking care of Liebherr customers. For more info: www.liebherr-appliances.com. **RO**



Left to right: Karl Benecke – President of ADCO Service, Ricardo Martinez – Owner / Operator of Luxury Appliance Repair, Orrett Bennett – Owner / Operator of Pinnacle Appliance Repair, Andrew Sullivan – Head of Technical Department for Liebherr Refrigeration for the Americas



Liebherr manufacturing facility in Ochsenhausen, Germany

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Kasmar Publications, Inc. Celebrates 25th Anniversary with Launch of "KITCHENS" App for iPad®

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Kasmar Publications, Inc.
25th Anniversary



Kitchens By Professional Designers has expanded and gone global. Kasmar Publications are carried at booksellers around the world, at major booksellers and home improvement centers.

Recognized nationally & locally, Kasmar Publications are now available at the Apple App Store for the iPad, and will soon be available for Android tablets. Go

to the App Store, search for Kasmar Publications, then download our KITCHENS app. Currently we have four of our most current publications ready for downloading:

- Kitchens 23 (printed version Sold Out)
- Kitchens 24
- Designer Kitchens, Baths & Other Rooms
- Designer Kitchens, Baths & Master Suites

"I just thought you would like to know that we have received more phone calls with people inquiring about our kitchens from your magazine than anywhere else," says PJ Salerno, Salerno's Kitchens, Saddle Brook, NJ. "The calls have come from Maine, Atlanta, and the Midwest as well as right here in New Jersey. Thank you for doing such a great job in representing Salerno's Kitchens of Saddle Brook. Keep up the good work! It has been great working with you for the past 17 years and we look forward to many more!"

NKBA HALL OF FAME MEMBERS

Don and Kasnea Martin introduced Kitchens By Professional Designers in 1987, the first consumer publication

solely dedicated to professional kitchen design. We have since experienced outstanding success in both the sales of our kitchen & bath publications and as a marketing tool for the featured designers.

KITCHENS BY PROFESSIONAL DESIGNERS

Kasmar Publications pioneered the first magazine of its kind in the field of professional kitchen design over twenty years ago with the introduction of Kitchens By Professional Designers.

"Kitchens" continues to raise the bar each year with the latest exciting and beautiful professionally designed kitchens from across the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Informative articles written by kitchen experts explain and illustrate the latest on a variety of subjects you should know before building or remodeling your kitchen.

All featured kitchens, products and articles have been approved by our Selection Committee/Advisory Board to meet the industry's most current technical and design standards. As with all of our publications, each design entry has been constructed in actual homes.

For further information:

Contact: andrea@kasmarpub.com, write to: P.O. Box 12638, Palm Desert, CA 92255, visit: www.kasmarpub.com, or call: (760)773-2874 **RO**

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Whirlpool Corporation: Invested in America

An American Company Helping American Communities

What does it mean to be “Invested in America”? For Whirlpool Corporation, it’s not about which company spends more money or spins the most impressive sounding facts and figures. It’s about connecting with their roots as an American company born of the American dream and fueled by American ingenuity for more than 100 years.



The dedicated workers at the Marion, Ohio, manufacturing facility

HERITAGE

In 1911, in the heart of the Midwest, Louis Upton, his uncle, Emory Upton, and their neighbor, Lowell Bassford, saw the innovations and advancements of the times, and founded what would become Whirlpool Corporation. Their goal was simple: create quality home appliances that make the lives of American families easier. Whirlpool Corporation has come a long way since those early days, but their investment in America has never wavered.

COMMITMENT

Today, Whirlpool Corporation provides more U.S. jobs

than all other major competitors combined. But employing more Americans is just the beginning. They take great pride in this country and the success of those who make it their home.

That is why Whirlpool Corporation is also dedicated to eliminating substandard housing in U.S. communities. They donate a freestanding range and ENERGY STAR® qualified refrigerator to every Habitat for Humanity home built in the United States, so families will have high-quality appliances for years to come.

They are committed to the life-long success of youth in U.S. communities, and have partnered with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, as well as joined the fight against cancer with the Cook for the Cure program – their partnership with Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

VISION

Though Whirlpool Corporation has grown from a family-owned business to an international company, their roots remain firmly grounded right here in America. And their goal is much the same as it was in 1911: change the lives of American families, and in the process, help them change the world.

Whirlpool Corporation credits retailers across the country with helping them reach this goal every day: *“It is you, our retailers, who have been an integral part of our story throughout the years, and have shared that story with your customers. You are the heartbeat of our organization, and for that, we thank you.”*





The future belongs to those who build it.

Whirlpool Corporation is proud to be opening the largest premium cooking facility in the world at its new state-of-the-art plant in Cleveland, Tennessee, home to the dedicated employees whose efforts make our products the best in the business.

Whirlpool Corporation is investing in America. Of the products we make, more than eighty percent of what we sell in America is built in America. The future belongs to us.



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If interested in joining Whirlpool Corporation as they Invest in America, contact your Regional Sales Director:

California Alex Holton (949-218-8061)	North West Mark Collier (206-276-9756)	South West Steve Carron (269-277-6218)	Central States Kelly Safis (269-759-8427)	Great Lakes Tom Ellspermann (269-923-5051)	Great Plains Sherry Clem (269-408-0402)	Gulf States Jim Webb (269-923-1068)	Florida Jimmy Clark (904-473-5089)	Atlantic Coast Mike Druschel (724-538-0574)	North East Mitchell Isert (856-829-0592)
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