

The Retail Observer

June, 2012

AN EYE ON THE INDUSTRY SINCE 1970

Vol. 23, Issue 6

2012 NKBA DESIGN COMPETITION WINNERS

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Uniqueness is What Makes You Strong

I hope you were able to attend this year's Kitchen and Bath Show (KBIS) in Chicago this April. The industry is still buzzing about it and *The Retail Observer* can't get enough. So our cover story for this issue is honoring the KBIS Award Winners. I'm sure the judges had a hard time choosing from such innovative and beautifully designed entries. From the small powder rooms to the Large and spacious kitchens; there's no doubt about it that the competition was fierce. Check out all the winners and see if you get any ideas from their exquisite jobs well done!

Back home in the shop, retailers sometimes get caught up in the selling and forget about the importance of the salesforce. Libby Wagner shares ways you can keep your team in tip top shape by keeping things personal. Gregory Slayton shares with us in his book *Be a Better Dad Today! Ten Tools Every Father Needs*, thoughts on how being a good dad is the most important job a man can hold. Fatherhood failure is costing America billions of dollars each year and this book provides men and sons the tools they need to save America from the devastation of this failure. However, if you're ready to capture the attention of the now publically traded Facebook empire of 901 million monthly active users, you may want to read Jeff Knock's article on embracing social media marketing.

Jim Ristow's article *Alive and Kicking* reminded me of a recent story I heard on a public radio show about keeping the independent spirit. The owner of a local coffee shop decided she needed to follow the lead of Starbucks and provide customers with Wi-Fi. But what she found is that her coffee shop, that was once alive with customers' conversations and laughter, was now almost crypt-like with only the sounds of fingers tapping on laptops. The few who dared to sit and chat were deterred by evil glances from those who were working. At that moment, she decided to go back to what she knew made her shop different. She stopped providing Wi-Fi and almost overnight the store was once again filled with people coming in to escape work, sit down, relax for a moment and enjoy a good cup of coffee. Actually, her shop ended up being even busier than before since she was the only owner in town who didn't have Wi-Fi and offered customers a real coffeehouse experience.

As an independent owner myself, I valued that story and I hope it will remind you to remember that you can be different and remain profitable regardless of what the competition is doing. So, until the next issue...



Keep the independent spirit alive!

Eliana Barriga

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The Retail Observer

JUNE 2012

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CELEBRATING OUR 23RD YEAR
AS THE RETAIL OBSERVER

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KBIS – It's Over, So Let's Sort This Thing Out

By a show of hands, how many of you went to KBIS this year? How many are planning to go next year? Great! From what I see many of you went – in fact over 32,000 attended, but a lot of you didn't. Why? This is my question. Is it because you went to Europe for the show there or because you listened to someone who didn't go because they said it would be small and no one was showing product? If it was either of those reasons – too bad... you missed out.

This is the NKBA's premier Kitchen and Bath Show, where everyone from our industry needs to stand up and take attention. Is your business making more money than you can handle? Or maybe you feel you don't need any fresh ideas; if so let us all know what you are doing so we can get on the band wagon too! Or possibly you based your decision not to go on the fact that a few manufactures that you wanted to see weren't going to be there (so you thought.) Or did you read somewhere that someone said it wasn't going to be worth going and canceled your trip?

Over 500 companies showed products; quite a few were very unique and could hold that competitive edge you need in your stores. Many of the companies you thought weren't showing were actually there, partnered with other manufacturer's to create a total experience in their booths. Viking partnered with Cambria to show a new high-end line of products that were absolutely stunning. Whirlpool had a presence in the BKBG booth. Not only did Sub-Zero/Wolf have their own beautiful booth launching new product – along with Best by Broan, they made the Poggenpohl booth look amazing.

Another big thing you missed was the educational opportunities; many companies had lecture areas built right into their booths with their own speaker series, CEDIA and NARI teamed up on the floor to discuss Integration and Remodeling, and the NKBA provided classes in their classy and sophisticated booth located in the center of the showroom floor, serving as the central hub for the entire show, which by the way – was one of the best we have seen in many years!

My suggestion for next year: don't rely on what a few people say as they put down our Industries' only real show, and go next year; show your products, take a class and walk the floor. Who knows, you might just find that one idea or product that can help turn your whole business around. And for those of you who keep commenting in Social Media and were not there; please keep it to yourself and let people who care make up their own minds.



Happy Retailing!

Moe Lastfogel

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The RetailObserver

JUNE 2012

VOLUME 23, ISSUE 6

CELEBRATING OUR 23RD YEAR
AS THE RETAIL OBSERVER

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2012 NKBA Design Competition Winners

INNOVATION, DESIGN AND CREATIVITY

The NKBA Design Competition is open to NKBA members only. The NKBA Design Competition recognizes the talent of kitchen and bath designers to plan safe, functional, and beautiful spaces. A panel of NKBA-certified designers from all of the NKBA's

eight geographic regions of the United States and Canada judged the projects based on visual appeal and creativity, as well as principles of design, presentation, and safety and ergonomics, using the NKBA Kitchen and Bath Planning Guidelines.

CATEGORY 1 – SMALL KITCHEN

FIRST PLACE WINNER

Comfortable Elegance

Tracey Scalzo, CMKBD

Euro Tech Cabinetry, Inc. | Sarasota, FL



SECOND PLACE

Peridot Perfection

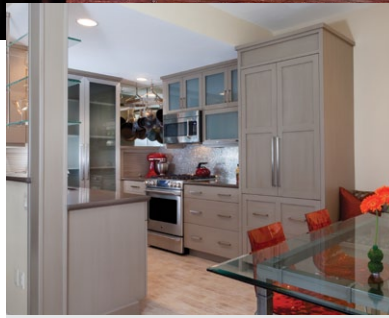
Tim Scott

XTC Design Incorporated

Toronto, ON

Co-Designers:

Erica Westeroth, CKD, NCIDQ
and Sheena Hammond



THIRD PLACE

Simple Sophistication

Sandra Tierney, CMKBD, CID

Cabinets by Design

Escondido, CA

Co-Designer:

Doreen Owens, CKD, CBD, CID

| continued on page 10 |



SECOND PLACE

A Fair Beauty

Kimberly Larzelere
Kimberly Larzelere Interiors
Redwood City, CA



THIRD PLACE

Distinctive & Full of Flair

Elina Katsioulas-Beall, CKD
DeWitt Designer Kitchens, Inc.
Pasadena, CA



FIRST PLACE WINNER

Organic Retreat

Glen Prairie, CKD
Total Living Concepts | Barrie, ON
Co-Designer: Celeste Pilon

CATEGORY 2 – MEDIUM KITCHEN

CATEGORY 3 – LARGE KITCHEN

FIRST PLACE WINNER

The Presence of Hospitality

Peter Ross Salerno, CMKBD

Peter Salerno, Inc. | Wyckoff, NJ

Co-Designer: Jonathan Olesky



SECOND PLACE
Sleek Simplicity, Defined
Laurie Belinda Haeefe
Haeefe Design
Santa Monica, CA



THIRD PLACE
Colonial Grandeur
Contemporized
Nicholas Geragi, CKD, CBD
Klaff's | Norwalk, CT
Co-Designer: Damani King



| continued on page 12 |



SECOND PLACE

Pure Serenity

Jaque Bethke

PURE Design Environments

Eden Prairie, MN

Co-Designer: Amy Medler



THIRD PLACE

Lapis Lazuli

Gina Bon, CKD, CBD

Airoom Architects and Builders

Lincolnwood, IL



FIRST PLACE WINNER

Art Nouveau Inspired

Elina Katsioulas-Beall, CKD

DeWitt Designer Kitchens | Pasadena, CA

CATEGORY 4 – POWDER ROOM

CATEGORY 5 – SMALL BATH

FIRST PLACE WINNER

California Dreamin'

Elina Katsioulas-Beall, CKD

DeWitt Designer Kitchens | Pasadena, CA

Co-Designer: Karen Frid-Madden



SECOND PLACE

Resonating with Refinement

Tim Scott

XTC Design Incorporated
Toronto, ON

Co-Designers:

Erica Westeroth, CKD, NCIDQ
and Sheena Hammond



THIRD PLACE

Flow Blue China

Cindy McClure, CKD, MCR, GCP

Grossmueller's Design

Consultants, Inc
Washington DC

| continued on page 14 |



SECOND PLACE

Graceful Geometry

Leslie Lamarre, CKD, CID
TRG Architects | Burlingame, CA
Co-Designers: Erica Shjeflo
and Casey Darcy



THIRD PLACE

An Air of Elegance

Karl F. Utzman
Design Studio West | La Jolla, CA



FIRST PLACE WINNER

A Spa for All

Yuko Matsumoto, CKD, CBD
Altera Design & Remodeling, Inc.
Walnut Creek, CA

CATEGORY 6 – LARGE BATH

Book Review

Be a Better Dad Today! Ten Tools Every Father Needs

BROKEN FAMILIES CAUSE ECONOMIC DEVASTATION IN U.S.

An emotionally unstable household breeds economic instability at alarming rates. Slayton says, “We get involved in business and politics to ensure a better future for our kids. But it’s easy to lose perspective that the most important thing we can do to keep America healthy for tomorrow is to *Be a Better Dad Today!*”

Being a good dad is the most important job a man can hold. Fatherhood failure is costing America billions of dollars each year, from unemployment to drug abuse. What can be done about it? This book provides men and sons the tools they need to save America from the devastation of fatherhood failure.

Slayton reminds fathers that they can fulfill their parental responsibilities and overcome whatever issues they may have inherited or grown up with. He studied the art and practice of fatherhood on six different continents over the past 25 years.

Is the role of fatherhood in crisis? 40 percent of all children are the victims of “Father Failure” and statistics on teen pregnancy, mental illness, incarceration, school drop-out and teen-suicide—all point to the critical need for every father to be involved in the life of their children. This certainly isn’t your dad’s generation, and this book gives advice on how fathers can stay connected with their children despite their busy schedules. Slayton also discusses special circumstances like single dads, blended families and long-distant dads.

With humor, empathy and relatable advice, this book speaks to all fathers, no matter their situation, even speaking to fathers who haven’t really played much of a role in their children’s lives at all. An inspirational and practical guidebook that will show fathers how to become the best dad they can be—for their family’s sake as well as their own.

To underscore his commitment of strengthening fatherhood and families, Gregory Slayton has committed to donate 100% of his book royalties to charity. In addition to this, Slayton is making his book available to the Fellowship of Fathers Foundation, so they can offer a free book to ANY active duty military man requesting one through their military Chaplain. Additional information is available at www.beabetterdadtoday.com. RO

Author: Gregory Slayton is an American professor, businessman, philanthropist, former ambassador, and father of four. His greatest passion—for fathers to be the best dad they can be—comes from his own personal story.



Publisher: Regal Books-May 2012

CALL TO ACTION



SEND US YOUR SHOTS

LOOKING FOR RETAILERS, DISTRIBUTORS AND MANUFACTURERS engaged in their element while at trade shows, special events, showroom openings or just plain group get-togethers.

The Retail Observer is interested in featuring you in our new snap-shot page, “Retailers Observed”, where you can see what your industry buddies are up to. Please e-mail us your hi-res photos in .jpg format. Include the captions with the photos you send for consideration and be sure to put “Retailers Observed” in the subject line. Send to: production@retailobserver.com

FEATURED THIS MONTH:
KBIS 2012



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NEW FRIGIDAIRE GALLERY® DISHWASHER WITH ORBITCLEAN™ WASH ARM

FRIGIDAIRE Consumers are frustrated with dishwashers that need to be run more than once to make sure caked-on food is washed completely from the plate. To ensure dishes are cleaned right the first time, the new Frigidaire Gallery® Dishwasher with OrbitClean™ Wash Arm delivers a cleaning performance no other dishwasher can beat.

The exclusive OrbitClean™ Wash Arm improves cleaning by focusing four times more water and detergent in a concentrated area. The arm rotates in a satellite action in the tub, distributing water to the toughest spots on dishes to achieve a more thorough clean and rinse. In addition to its revolutionary new cleaning technology, this latest model also boasts the best drying performance in the industry^[1] and is quietest in its class.^[2] The Sahara Dry™ Cycle eliminates the need to towel-dry before putting dishes away. And, with its quiet performance, consumers can enjoy family time together without interruptions.

The Energy Star® qualified dishwasher is part of a unique collection of Frigidaire® products – Built with American Pride – designed, assembled, and engineered in the U.S.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCT FEATURES INCLUDE:

- DishSense™ Technology – Sensors select the cycle based on cleaning needs
- SpaceWise® Organization System – Adjustable racks and the largest silverware basket^[3]
- Smudge-Proof Stainless Steel – Protective coating to reduce fingerprints and smudges making the dishwasher exterior easy to clean
- AquaSurge™ Technology Cycle – Adjusts washing pressure based on needs

- Multiple-Cycle Option – Easy-to-use cleaning cycle options including Top Rack, Rinse Only and Heavy Wash

The Frigidaire Gallery® Dishwasher retails for \$549 to \$649 and is available in stainless steel, black and white. A special introductory offer for all dishwashers with OrbitClean™ technology purchased from May through June, 2012 is an additional one year extended service agreement.^[4]

[1] Based on industry standard dryability testing using Effortless™ Dry.

[2] In its class based on published manufacturer specifications for similar MSRP models.

[3] Among leading brands.

[4] Receive an additional one year warranty with purchase of OrbitClean™ and BladeSpray™ Wash Arm Dishwasher Models FPHD2485, FGHD2465 & FGBD2445. Warranty includes, labor, parts and /or replacement products.



2012 KALAMAZOO OUTDOOR GOURMET GRILL LINE – COOKING VERSATILITY, SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE



Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet™—an innovation leader in high-end outdoor cooking and entertaining equipment—introduces an assortment of 12 grills that will change how casual grillers, barbecue enthusiasts and chefs cook outdoors, just in time for the summer.

Kalamazoo's newly redesigned Hybrid Fire Grills™ combine the convenience of a gas grill with the superior heat characteristics of a charcoal grill and the flavor of a wood grill or smoker. Backyard barbecuers can use these different fires separately or in combination to pursue any outdoor cooking technique—grill, smoke, sear, roast, rotisserie and more—all on one grill.

New H-shaped custom-cast, brass Dragon Burners™ deliver more linear control zones, with each 25,000 BTU burner tailoring the heat to a specific section of the cooking area. Burgers can be cooked at one temperature while vegetables get their appropriate amount of heat; each on their own custom laser-cut cooking surface. Gas cooking temperatures range from 250°F to 700°F+. When using charcoal or wood, temperatures extend from 150°F to 1,200°F.

The grills also feature a dedicated ignition burner to fire the main burners. This “pilot light” is part of the most reliable ignition system in the market. The special-purpose burner is paired with electronic hot surface ignition and an engineered “flash tube” to ensure quick starts, even in the windiest conditions. The ignition burner can also be used alone for low-temperature smoking and barbecuing.

Changing fuels is as easy as opening a drawer. Simply leave the patent-pending Hybrid Fire Grilling Drawers™ empty to use a Kalamazoo as a gas grill. Load them with wood or charcoal and use the main burners below to start a solid-fuel fire.

Sleek and streamlined, the grills’ exterior is inspired by minimalist architecture. The design aesthetic gives them the ability to fit harmoniously into almost any outdoor kitchen design style or patio setting.

The Kalamazoo, Michigan-made Hybrid Fire Grills come in four sizes and 12 models. They range in price from \$9,995 to \$26,195 and include built-in and free standing options:

- K500: two burners, 506 square inches of primary cooking surface, 50,000 main burner BTUs
- K750: three burners, 726 square inches of primary cooking surface, 75,000 main burner BTUs
- K1000: four burners, 1,012 square inches of primary cooking surface, 100,000 main burner BTUs
- K1500: six burners, 1,452 square inches of primary cooking surface, 150,000 main burner BTUs

“Our goal at Kalamazoo is to continue delivering the ultimate outdoor cooking experience,” said Pantelis A. “Pete” Georgiadis, chairman and president of Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet. “Our new Hybrid Fire Grill line has taken the best grill on the planet and made it even better. You cook on it and you are hooked for life! Our Hybrid Fire Grills will out cook, outlast and outperform any other grill on the market.”

For more information call 800.868.1699 or visit www.kalamazoogourmet.com.



LIEBHERR'S NEW REFRIGERATION MODELS REMAIN IN LINE WITH CONSUMERS' LIFESTYLE

LIEBHERR INTRODUCES FIRST FULLY INTEGRATED 30" UNITS



Liebherr Refrigeration North America, a worldwide leader in environmentally

responsible refrigeration, is launching the 1500 series, its first fully integrated 30" single door refrigerator-freezer combination.

The HCB 1560 features Liebherr's patented BioFresh technology in separate compartments where temperatures are kept just above freezing—keeping fruits, vegetables, fish and meats at an optimum humidity level, allowing them to stay fresh up to three times longer than in traditional refrigerators.

Perfect for condo or apartment living, the HC 1540 model does not require a water connection for the IceMaker thanks to a well-appointed 1.5-liter internal water tank that is conveniently removable for replenishing water used to produce ice cubes.

Both the HCB 1560 and HC 1540 can be concealed behind cabinetry or stainless steel, giving designers flexibility and the homeowner ideal food storage conditions. These 30" models also offer the possibility of custom design with flush 24" deep cabinet installation, a feature not available in competing units.

“We're very excited to introduce Liebherr's first fully integrated 30" models,” said Thorsten Platt, vice president of Liebherr Refrigeration North America. “As the current trend of fully customizing kitchens is extremely popular in home renovations, it was important for | *continued on page 18* |

Liebherr to provide consumers with compact, yet efficient, appliances that fit within their kitchen's design."

Both units are ENERGY STAR rated and will be available at fine and specialty appliance retailers across the U.S. and Canada with a manufacturer suggested retail price of \$5,479 USD for the HCB 1560 and \$4,869 USD for the HC 1540. For more information visit www.liebherr-appliances.com.



**SCOTSMAN'S
BRILLIANCE®
NUGGET ICE
MACHINES BRING
THE ORIGINAL
CHEWABLE ICE™
HOME**



Scotsman® Ice Systems, the innovator of the popular chewable ice that has become a fast food craze, now brings the same soft, chewy ice into the home with its new Brilliance® residential nugget ice machines.

These 15-inch ice machines conveniently fit under the counter in the kitchen, bar or outdoor setting, and dispense the same Original Chewable Ice™ that took the country by storm when Scotsman first introduced the ice to the foodservice industry in 1981.

Scotsman's nugget ice is made with bits of compacted ice that are soft and chewable. Its soft form enables the ice to take on the flavor of the beverage to create a better tasting drink. For the first time, consumers can satisfy their cravings for this delicious ice in the convenience of their own homes.

Producing more than 80 pounds of soft ice in 24 hours, Brilliance Nugget ice machines not only complement any kitchen or home entertainment area, but offer energy and water efficiency benefits as well. Designed with a sleek stainless steel cabinet, they can be installed with a custom wood front to match surrounding cabinetry, enabling them to virtually disappear. Or, to provide design flexibility, they will accept a white, black or stainless steel front panel accessory kit.

Brilliance Nugget is also approved for outdoor use to equip

your open-air entertaining area, whether on the deck or by the pool. In addition, they also feature user-friendly control panels, lighted bins and self closing doors, and are available with built-in drain pumps to allow installation flexibility. Visit www.scotsman-ice.com for more information.

SUB-ZERO, INC. AND WOLF APPLIANCES GET SMART AND MAKE MEALS MORE DELICIOUS WITH CONTROL4

INDUSTRY'S FIRST SMART APPLIANCE APP AND SMART APPLIANCE MODULE BRING ENERGY SAVINGS, ACTIONABLE ALERTS AND APPLIANCE DIAGNOSTICS TO TODAY'S KITCHEN



To innovate the consumer culinary experience, Sub-Zero, Inc., and Wolf Appliance, Inc., an industry leaders in premium refrigeration and cooking equipment, announce the global availability of the new Smart Appliance App and Smart Appliance Module, engineered by Card Access to integrate into Control4® wireless home control systems.

"Incorporating technology within our products reinforces our commitment to improving our customers' ownership experience," said Michele Bedard, vice president of marketing for Sub-Zero and Wolf. "Our non-exclusive relationship with Control4 allows us to meet modern consumers' desire for products that add convenience to their everyday routine and appliances with home automation technology deliver on that promise."

The Smart Appliance App builds on the premise that today's consumers are looking for solutions that enhance their lifestyle, and every busy home chef knows having an alert system that allows meals to be monitored from anywhere in the home is just that. The system's functions include notifications of pre-heat and timer completion, current oven temperature, and knowing when meals are finished cooking based on the internal temperature probe's reading.

System alerts can notify homeowners when the refrigerator door has been left open, helping to prevent temperature variances that lead to food spoilage. The app can also maximize energy efficiency by lowering the refrigerator's power consumption at different times of day. Specific lifestyle needs and preferences such as increasing ice production prior to entertaining, saving energy in vacation mode and choosing the Sabbath mode for religious observances can also be met by the software. An additional benefit of the technology is an | continued on page 22 |

Can your gas grill do this?

The legendary Hybrid Fire Grill from Kalamazoo can. A seriously powerful gas grill that also cooks with charcoal and wood.

Scan the QR code to see the ultimate grill in action.



Learn more at KalamazooGourmet.com

800.868.1699 K/BIS Booth 926



Bertazzoni Awarded “Best of Show” At KBIS 2012

ITALIAN COOKING COMPANY’S SEGMENTED COOKTOP RECOGNIZED
AS STANDOUT PRODUCT AT KITCHEN & BATH INDUSTRY SHOW

At the industry’s top kitchen and bath show with more than 550 exhibitors, Bertazzoni, the oldest family-owned manufacturer of cooking appliances, was recognized with the prestigious KBIS “Best of Show Award” for one of the company’s newest products, the Segmented Cooktop. The award is given to the product that exhibits the best in functionality, quality/durability, flexibility, aesthetics/style, and innovation.

The Bertazzoni Segmented Cooktop combines the power of gas, electric griddle, and induction cooking in one product platform to transform surface cooking for good. The low profile design fits the standard cut-out for a 36” cooktop and each cooking surface is designed with three 12” segments per fuel type.

“Between receiving the Best of Show Award and connecting with the warm and welcoming design community, we had a very exciting week at KBIS,” said Nicola Bertazzoni, vice president of sales and sixth-generation family executive for Bertazzoni, who was present at the show to accept the award. “When we set out to create the Segmented Cooktop we recognized that people are more and more aware of the advantages of induction, gas, and griddle cooking surfaces and would love to be able to combine them without having to choose just one.”

AN AWARD WINNING PRODUCT LINE

The Segmented Cooktop is just one of dozens of products included in the Bertazzoni Built-In Line which was launched in fall 2011 and designed to offer homeowners unparalleled style and precise performance. Also included in the line is a series of wall ovens and ventilation systems that are available in both Professional and Design models and feature several industry firsts:

- Exclusive high-resolution LCD display with user-friendly touch interface to control the oven functions
- Dual diagonal convection technology for optimal heat distribution on seven levels
- The Assistant, a bank of cooking sequences uniquely customized for nine food categories and equipped with sensors to provide the cook

with the optimal cooking results

In addition to the KBIS “Best of Show Award,” the Built-In suite of cooktops and wall ovens have been recognized with other industry awards for their sleek design and advanced innovation since the time of launch:

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

“As a company and as a family, we strive to create innovative products that exude our passion for cooking and design,” said Paolo Bertazzoni, president and fifth generation chief executive officer of Bertazzoni. “We are humbled that our work has been recognized by the industry.”

DESIGN RESOURCES TOOLS

Also announced at KBIS, the Bertazzoni Design Resources initiative will include a set of three new tools to help the design community incorporate Bertazzoni products into blueprints and interior design layouts:

- A website where designers can download specs, images, and 3D drawings for all the Bertazzoni products. The site will include a member-only section which will showcase designers’ work and allow them to share tips and comments with peers.
- A complete Bertazzoni e-catalog, available to all licensed users of 20-20 design software, the leading kitchen planning software solution created specifically for kitchen and bath industry professionals.
- A physical toolkit that will include the Bertazzoni product catalogs, a printed specification guide with all details necessary for planning and installing Bertazzoni appliances, and a disc with the 20-20 e-catalog (Available summer 2012).

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



THE BERTAZZONI DESIGN SERIES BUILT-IN OVEN



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enhanced service experience. General service requests can be sent directly to Wolf and Sub-Zero's certified service professionals through the Control4 system, leading to quicker diagnosis and resolution of problems.

"Today's mobile devices are aiding mainstream adoption of connected home technology," said Susan Cashen, senior vice president of marketing for Control4. "Consumers want to be able to monitor and control everything in their home anywhere, at any time. With Control4 and the new Smart Appliance App and Smart Appliance Module, homeowners can effortlessly manage their Sub-Zero and Wolf appliances."

All new Sub-Zero built-in refrigerator models and Wolf E series wall ovens are manufactured to accommodate the aftermarket installation of the new Smart Appliance module. Existing built-in and E series models must be outfitted with the module after receiving an update from a Sub-Zero and Wolf factory-certified service technician. The Smart Appliance Module is engineered by Card Access to enhance functionality of select Sub-Zero and Wolf appliances when integrated with a Control4 system.

For more information about Sub-Zero and Wolf appliances compatible with Control4, please visit subzero-wolf.com/smartkitchen. The Smart Appliance App is downloadable for free from Control4's 4Store at 4store.com. The Smart Appliance Module is available through Control4's dealer network. Please visit: www.control4.com for more information.



CAPITAL'S NEW DUAL FUEL SERIES ENGINEERED FOR BEST OF ELECTRIC & GAS OPTIONS

CONNOISSEURIAN SERIES PROTOTYPE WAS ON DISPLAY AT THE 2012 KITCHEN & BATH INDUSTRY SHOW



Surjit Kalsi, chairman of Capital Cooking Equipment Inc., prides himself on listening and responding to his customers. Capital customers, distributors and its dealer network began asking for a dual fuel range last year after the successful launch of the open burner Culinarian range. This past April, the company debuted its extensive dual fuel cooking series at the Kitchen

& Bath Industry Show. The new dual fuel Connoisseurian Series incorporates the best technology from both its electric ovens and gas ranges, offering both open and sealed burner versions, all self clean in 30", 36", 48" and 60" configurations.

"The Connoisseurian definitely fills out our product line," states Joey Kitabayashi, vice president of engineering at Capital. "We've been known for all-gas ranges but dual fuel is also a popular choice in the marketplace. We've worked to take the best attributes of our built-in electric wall ovens and match that with styles of gas cooktops that we have had great success with. Our dealers are excited to offer a Capital product in dual fuel that contains so many other Capital features that customers appreciate such as moist cooking and rotisserie."

Capital has made important advancements with the new Connoisseurian line-up. The oven sizes have been increased, ranking Connoisseurian ovens amongst the top usable capacity of all dual fuel ranges on the market. All primary ovens have Capital's exclusive MoistRoast cooking feature that uses moisture, not steam, to produce perfect, moist roasting and baking, and also features Capital's popular motorized rotisserie system. The secondary ovens in the 48" and 60" sizes are fully functioning with bake, broil, convection, roast and self clean. And for safety, the engineering staff tested the external temperature of a fully operational baking oven and found it to be up to 30°F cooler-to-the-touch than many competitive models.

Another important feature doesn't involve cooking, but listening. Capital engineers incorporated a two-speed cooling fan system in the oven. The high, noisier speed is only triggered when the oven is at extreme high temperatures over a long period of time, such as operating the self cleaning mode. What is considered "normal" oven use, i.e. temperatures under 400°F for under two hours triggers only the low speed cooling fan that is very quiet and not noticeable in a busy kitchen environment.

Offering both open burner and sealed burner system options in the Connoisseurian line will appeal to all cooking styles and preferences. The open burner system developed for Capital's Culinarian line is ideal for the home chef looking for restaurant power and advanced cooking functionality made possible by the open flame. The sealed burner system that Capital uses in its Precision Series is the most common gas cooktop system where the flame is controlled by burner caps of different sizes. Customers can choose which style of Connoisseurian is appropriate for their own lifestyle.

| continued on page 24 |

Extraordinary Performance. Uncommon Value.

Liebherr Refrigeration and Capital Cooking products are professional grade appliances for the astute consumer seeking extraordinary performance without the extraordinary price. Both leaders in their class, Liebherr offers intelligent, organized, energy-efficient refrigerators that show like a work of art, as well as provide superior food preservation for better health and wellness. Capital Cooking ranges and cooktops are sophisticated, performance driven ranges that would please the most discriminate chefs.

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CONNOISSEURIAN SERIES FEATURES

Available in 10 standard colors (door and kick plate). Custom colors can also be ordered.

Primary ovens have:

- Moistroast – Moisture-based cooking function preventing food from drying out when cooking

- Rotisserie – Built-in, motorized

ALL ovens have the following features:

- Bake, Broil, Roast, Delicate Bake
- Self Clean
- Meat Probe cooking
- Convection Fan cooking for Bake, Broil, Roast
- Hidden Bake Element under glass
- Ribbon Broil Element under glass
- Dual Kitchen Timers (5 seconds to 11 hour 55 minutes)
- Timed Cook – You can set the oven to turn itself OFF after a set amount of time
- Delay Cook – You can set the oven to start cooking at a set time of day
- Clock – Displays the time of day when range is not in use
- Dual Halogen lights in each oven
- FlexRoll Racking system
- Sabbath mode

CONNOISSEURIAN SERIES SIZING

30" Oven size:

- 25-1/8" Wide X 16-1/2" High X 21" Deep (19" usable)
- Overall capacity – 5.0 cubic feet; Usable capacity = 4.56 cubic feet

36", 48" & 60" Primary Oven Size:

- 27" Wide X 16-1/2" High X 21" Deep (19" Usable)
- Overall Capacity – 5.4 cubic feet; Usable Capacity = 4.88 cubic feet

48" Secondary Oven Size:

- 12" Wide X 16-1/2" High X 21" Deep (19" Usable)
- Overall Capacity – 2.4 cubic feet; Usable Capacity = 2.18 cubic feet

60" Secondary Oven Size:

- 18" Wide X 16-1/2" High X 21" Deep (19" Usable)
- Overall Capacity – 3.6 cubic feet; Usable Capacity = 3.27 cubic feet

The Connoisseurian Series went into production in May 2012 and will be distributed throughout the United States and Canada to specialty retailers during Summer 2012. Visit capital-cooking.com.



AIR KING EXPANDS ITS OFFERING OF PROFESSIONAL RANGE HOOD LINERS



Air King has expanded its line of Professional Range Hood Liners to include a variety of widths, depths and blower options. This expanded offering will accommodate virtually any custom range hood liner need.

Air King's expanded line of range hood liners includes smaller widths to accommodate the standard range sizes as well larger sizes to accommodate the professional 60" cooktops. It also comes in depths of 19.25" and 22.5". No matter what you're custom canopy dimensions, Air King is sure to have a range hood liner to fit your needs. The durable design makes it an excellent choice for your indoor kitchen remodel or your new outdoor kitchen.

The liners are ETL listed for damp locations and can be customized to the ventilation needs of the cooktop or grill with HVI-certified performance options from 300 CFM up to 1200 CFM. Available in a range of widths from 30 to 60 inches, the liner can be installed in canopies over multiple sizes of stoves and grills. The integrated stainless steel fascia and liner give the installation a finished look while protecting the underside of cabinetry.

"A lot of people are using custom range hood canopies that match their cabinets. Our expanded LIN offering is perfect for these types of kitchen installations. Homeowners who are looking to integrate an exhaust system into their overall design now have an option that allows them to place the exhaust system within cabinetry or a façade above the grill," said Jeff Kenkelen, president, Air King.

The Professional Liner Series is constructed of 304 stainless steel that will not discolor over time. The included dishwasher-safe baffles capture

| continued on page 28 |

MAKE KITCHEN VENTILATION ACCESSIBLE

The Air King ESADA ENERGY STAR® Qualified range hoods are compliant with the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) and feature a white, remote mounted control switch. The control switch can be mounted either on the wall or at counter height for maximum accessibility. The ESADA series provides powerful ventilation and is one of the quietest range hoods on the market today. ESADA range hoods are available in Stainless Steel, White or Black finishes and 24", 30" or 36" widths.



ENERGY STAR® PARTNER OF THE YEAR

Air King offers a full line of ENERGY STAR® qualified exhaust fans and range hoods to fit all budgets and ventilation needs. These products along with Air King's commitment to energy efficiency education have earned the honor of being named a 2012 ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year.



Interior Designer, Author, and Makeover Television Personality Libby Langdon Teams Up With Liebherr Refrigeration

Liebherr Refrigeration North America, the worldwide leader in environmentally responsible refrigeration, announced that they have joined forces with interior designer, author and makeover television personality Libby Langdon as their third-party spokesperson.

In her role, Langdon will serve as an expert to raise brand awareness of Liebherr within the highly influential consumer and design communities through a public relations campaign including media relations activities, social media and industry events.

“We’re thrilled to welcome Libby Langdon to the Liebherr family,” said Thorsten Platt, vice president of Liebherr Refrigeration North America. “Langdon’s engaging personality and expertise in innovative design trends brings a fresh perspective to Liebherr. She offers wonderful solutions for our consumers who are looking for smart kitchen design ideas.”

To kickoff her role, Langdon hosted *Splurge Wisely: Stylish Kitchen Design Ideas for Every Budget*, a seminar for media on the latest trends in kitchen design last March at the Architectural Digest Home Design Show in New York City. Presenting at Liebherr’s exhibit booth, Langdon provided smart saving tips for getting the most “bang out of your buck” when renovating a kitchen. She also helped introduce Liebherr’s 1500 Series, their first fully integrated 30” models, to attending media and home appliance dealers.

“I believe that in all of the spaces I design, big and small, there

are certain items you want to splurge on and others you can save on -- it’s all in how you mix it,” explains Libby Langdon. “Especially for what many consider the most important room in their home, the kitchen, splurge on the items that are really going to make a difference, like a Liebherr refrigerator.”

As an added bonus, Langdon was the designer of Liebherr’s table installation at DINING BY DESIGN, presented by DIFFA: Design Industries Foundation Fighting AIDS. Held at the Architectural Digest Home Design Show,

DINING BY DESIGN, the most anticipated, high-design charitable event, showcased top designers who created fantastic, one-of-a-kind tabletop installations. Her unique design installation revolved around the theme of Creating the Perfect Climate. Liebherr creates the perfect refrigeration climate and Langdon created an inviting atmosphere for an al fresco dinner party.



Acclaimed for her easy, elegant, everyday style, interior designer Libby Langdon has earned praise from national and international clientele on both residential and commercial projects. Her first book, *Libby Langdon’s Small Space Solutions*, offers innovative and inexpensive design ideas to help small space dwellers live large.

Consumers and members of the design trade can find an authorized Liebherr retailer by clicking on the ‘Inquire’ tab on www.liebherr-appliances.com. **RO**





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It's a match made for a dream kitchen. A Liebherr integrated refrigerator fits elegantly and seamlessly with your cabinet design. And it more than satisfies your desire to spend intelligently. It also holds more food and keeps it fresher longer. It's everything you'd expect from a high-end refrigerator at a price you wouldn't. Meet your new Liebherr by following the QR code below.



www.liebherr.us/hg

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grease and debris and are easy to remove and clean. To illuminate the cooking surface, up to three dimmable 45-watt maximum halogen lights are included. An internal thermostat detects when the heat level rises to an excessive amount and will automatically start the hood. Metal control knobs that can withstand the higher temperatures of outdoor cooking are located on the control panel at the front of the hood.

Visit www.airkinglimited.com/pages/hoods/lin1.html.

AHAM HONORS APPLIANCE INDUSTRY LEADERS AT ANNUAL MEETING



The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM) recognized its top volunteer leaders for their service and leadership to the appliance

industry at AHAM's annual member meeting held at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort in Naples, FL, April 22-23. The theme of this year's meeting was "Strategies for the Future," and focuses on ways manufacturers, suppliers and retailers can work together on issues such as energy efficiency, sustainability and how these sectors will shape the homes of the future by utilizing smarter, more energy efficient appliances.

The Home Appliance Industry Leadership (HAIL) Award, the industry's top honor that recognizes individuals who embody industry leadership, have made innovative use of AHAM resources to benefit the industry and who have volunteered significant time and effort to an AHAM project, was presented to Kevin Mazzella, chief engineer at GE Appliances & Lighting and Dave Aupperlee, senior manager, product safety and regulatory affairs, at Bissell Inc.

Mr. Mazzella is a 20-year GE employee and received the award for leading the development of the industry's first sustainability standard for refrigeration products, a groundbreaking effort two years in the making. Mr. Aupperlee joined Bissell Inc. in 2008 and was honored for his leadership as a Chairman of the Floor Care-Portable Appliance Sustainability Task Force where the entire industry has benefited from his knowledge of regulatory issues and environmental science and his willingness to serve as a mentor to his colleagues.

The AHAM Distinguished Service Award recognizes significant contributions by virtue of longevity and quality of service to AHAM and the home appliance industry. This year the award was presented to members of the Refrigeration and Portable Floor Care Sustainability Task Force for their hard work in developing sustainability standards for refrigeration products and portable and floor care products. This is only the second time that the Distinguished Service Award has been given to an entire task force.

Additionally, AHAM presented its Emerging Leader Award, which recognizes and encourages service and volunteer leadership among AHAM members, to Scott Mohler, engineering technician | *continued on page 30* |

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with Lasko Products, Inc. and Brice Bowley, platform leader, air products with GE Lighting & Appliances. AHAM congratulates all award recipients. The 2013 AHAM annual member meeting will take place on April 28-29 at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Washington, D.C.



SURVEY OF HABITAT FOR HUMANITY HOMEOWNERS SHOWS INCREASES IN SELF-ESTEEM, WELL-BEING AND FAMILY HEALTH



Habitat's Women Build program and Whirlpool Corporation co-sponsored habitat homeowner survey conducted by Center for Applied Research at the University of Southern Indiana

A recent survey of habitat for humanity homeowners indicates significant increases in areas of homeowners' self-esteem, well-being, overall family health and neighborhood pride. The survey reflects input from more than 320 Habitat homeowners (more than 85 percent of them women) in 44 U.S. cities who had bought their homes within the past five years, and measures the impact of homeownership and respondents' satisfaction with the Habitat partnership experience.

Habitat's Women Build program and Whirlpool co-sponsored the survey, part of a two-week survey conducted by the Center for Applied Research at the University of Southern Indiana. During an International Women's Day Women Build symposium on women and housing, hosted by Habitat for Humanity's Women Build program on March 8, researchers presented findings from the survey.

SOME KEY FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY INCLUDE:

- Nearly 74 percent of respondents reported that their family state of well-being improved after moving into their Habitat home.

- More than 98 percent reported moderate to high self-esteem after moving into their Habitat home.
- 93 percent take pride in their neighborhood.
- 97 percent felt that Habitat has improved their quality of life.
- 53 percent felt that their Habitat home has helped improve their job opportunities.
- 57 percent indicated that adults in the home are furthering their education.
- 74 percent indicated that their family's overall health had improved since moving into their home.
- 90 percent of women surveyed felt a sense of power being part of a Habitat build.
- 84 percent felt safe in their neighborhood since moving into their Habitat home.
- 56 percent felt that their children can walk safely to school since moving into their Habitat home.
- 69 percent have transportation choices in their neighborhood since moving into their Habitat home.
- Before homeownership, only 31 percent of respondents focused on "green" efforts; after homeownership 71 percent of respondents had that focus.

Beyond the statistics, the survey yielded more qualitative evidence—in the homeowners' own words—of the positive impact that decent, affordable housing and the Women Build program have on lives and communities:

- "My son is excelling at school. I think a large part of that is the house. He can have a set bed time. He can have a quiet place to do his homework. We couldn't do any of those things while staying with someone else."*
- "I gained a lot of courage and strength and faith in my community. I have the ability to focus on building my own business now that I have a home. I love growing a garden. I am very involved in my community. I am continuing my education."*
- "I have learned a lot but the basic skills have helped me make minor repairs since moving into my home."*
- "I have learned to manage my money better. The stress level has gone down. I'm not constantly worrying what is going to break down."*

A co-sponsor of the survey, Whirlpool Corporation has been a national partner of Habitat for Humanity for more than 12 years, donating more than 140,000 ranges and Energy Star qualified refrigerators to new Habitat homes built in North America, serving 71,000 families.

Habitat for Humanity's Women Build recruits, educates and nurtures women to build and advocate for simple, decent and affordable houses in their | continued on page 32 |

WE'RE THE QUIETEST. AND WE CAN PROVE IT.

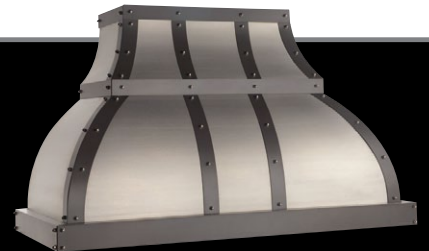


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communities. The first all-women built Habitat house was constructed in 1991, and since Habitat's Women Build program was formed in 1998, more than 1,900 Habitat for Humanity Women Build homes have been constructed in partnership with Habitat partner families.

Habitat's International Women's Day Women Build symposium also featured discussion around international women-led households. Beth Birmingham, associate professor of Leadership and Change at Eastern University in St. Davids, Penn., discussed her research around Habitat for Humanity's impact in Macedonia, Mexico, Vietnam and Tanzania.

International Women's Day honors the work of the Suffragettes, celebrates women's success, and reminds of inequities still to be redressed. For more information, to donate or to volunteer, please visit or follow us at:

www.habitat.org,

www.facebook.com/habitat

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join Habitat's blog community at www.habitat.org/blog.



DCS BY FISHER & PAYKEL: BRINGING INNOVATION TO THE FOREFRONT WITH ACTIVESMART™ TECHNOLOGY THROUGH THE LAUNCH OF THE FRENCH DOOR REFRIGERATOR



DCS by Fisher & Paykel once again brings "cool" to the kitchen with the introduction of their French Door Refrigerator. Be the first to view and experience the new model that surpasses other professional cooling appliances by a landslide.

Chefs and moms alike will rejoice! Not only is this refrigerator reliable and durable, it houses the most sophisticated technology to date. The French Door Refrigerator has storage for everything from party platters, large entrees to magnificent five tier birthday cakes. With its superior ability to preserve and store the freshest ingredients, this refrigerator is sure to please the chef in all of us!

If function is an ingredient consumers are looking for, look no further! The French Door Refrigerator features are limitless:

- All drawers are designed with high quality full extension runners.
- The deli drawer is perfect for separate storage of cheeses and meats and keeps food you are defrosting separate from other items.
- The fruit & vegetable drawer features the unique Humidity Control System which enables different food types to be stored at their preferred humidity level.
- Storage bins are completely clear to assist for food viewing.
- The freezer drawer features a huge storage space for frozen items as well as roll out shelving with plastic bins for smaller frozen goods.
- Shelves and bins are removable to create a fully customizable storage solution. So whether it's everyday or soirée living this refrigerator accommodates all lifestyles. The 2011 Counter Depth French Door Refrigerator features new commodities including:
 - Energy Star® qualification. Internal water filter.
 - Deeper door bins for larger items.
 - Cantilevered gas shelving to enable easier cleaning.
 - High quality stainless steel finish, tall handles, hidden hinges. Professional design with focus on function, performance and quality.

Designed with super capacity, food preservation and entertaining in mind. The optional surround kit makes for a seamless addition to any new or existing professional kitchen design.

At 19.5 cu ft, the interior space is superior to that of similar sized alternatives and also features ActiveSmart™ technology, automatic ice making, chilled and filtered water on demand and strong extendable storage drawers.

Complete information regarding DCS & Fisher & Paykel's current refrigeration offerings are available at www.dcsappliances.com/product/indoor/refrigeration/

You can also get more information at www.dcsappliances.com or call us toll free at 888 936-7872. **RO**

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Performance
Precision
Control



Substantial
Quality
Durable

2012 NKBA Design Competition SPECIALTY AWARD WINNERS



THE PRESENCE OF HOSPITALITY

One has to do a double take to realize this isn't a restaurant, it's someone's home kitchen. With two passionate cooks as clients, the designers were challenged to create a kitchen that served as both a professional culinary experience and a comforting eating space.

PETER ROSS SALERNO, CMKBD

Peter Salerno, Inc. | Wyckoff, NJ

Co-Designer: Jonathan Olesky

Photo: Peter Rymwid Architectural Photographer

BEST KITCHEN



A SPA FOR ALL

This soothing California spa-like bathroom was reconfigured their disjointed master bath to something they and their pet dogs could both enjoy.

UKO MATSUMOTO, CKD, CBD

Altera Design & Remodeling, Inc
Walnut Creek, CA

Photo: Douglas Johnson Photography

BEST BATH



COMFORTABLE ELEGANCE

Lavish attention to detail belies the hard-working functionality of this kitchen. It is both comfortable and lush with notable features such as custom copper-foiled mullions on glass front wall cabinetry, a stainless and copper basket-weave apron front sink, and blown glass pendant lighting.



^
^ AFTER >>>



<<< BEFORE

TRACEY SCALZO, CMKBD

EuroTech Cabinetry, Inc.
Sarasota, FL

Photo: Tom Harper Photography

BEFORE & AFTER KITCHEN

GREEK ISLES BLUE

Bright blue and beautifully spacious, this bathroom is a breath of fresh air and natural light. Based on the existing footprint, this bathroom is the perfect marriage of functionality and aesthetics.



BEFORE



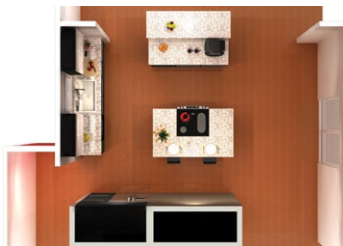
AFTER >>>



SANDRA GAYLORD, CKD

Gaylord Design, LLC
Summerville, SC
Photo: Matt Bolt

BEFORE & AFTER BATH



STYLISH SIMPLICITY

Designed with an injured young veteran in mind, this slick, spacious kitchen was dubbed "Fit for a Hero" by the designers.

CHERYL HAMILTON-GRAY, CKD

Hamilton-Gray Design, Inc.
Carlsbad, CA
Photo: PreviewFirst.com

BUDGET-FRIENDLY KITCHEN





WARM COPPER COMPOSITION

This first floor safari-themed bathroom was expertly designed removing only one fixture and keeping within a budget of \$12,000.

KATHERYN W. COWLES, CKD, CBD

K.W. Cowles Design Center, LLC
Pensacola, FL

Photo: Bruce Graner

BUDGET-FRIENDLY BATH



A CHILD'S GARDEN IN BLOOM

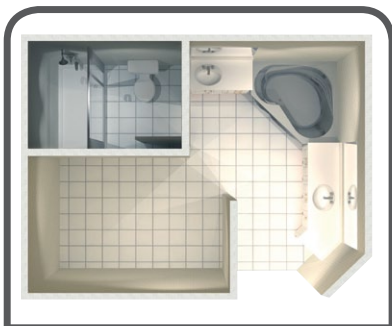
Green wasn't the only color in mind for this winning design. Inspired by Mexican architect Luis Barragan and the client's wish of a child's garden, the result is a fun family kitchen.

ELINA KATSILOULA-BEALL, CKD

DeWitt Designer Kitchens, Inc.
Pasadena, CA

Co-Designer: Karen Frid-Madden
Photo: Suki Medencevic

GREEN DESIGN



BEFORE ^
 ^
 v AFTER



GREEK ISLES BLUE

This fantastic before and after design followed specific guidelines for a client with medical needs. The entire design was based around a ceiling hoisting system that can bring the client safely from his bed to the toilet or shower without trouble.

SANDRA GAYLORD, CKD

Gaylord Design, LLC
Summerville, SC
Photo: Matt Bolt

UNIVERSAL DESIGN





COMFORTABLE ELEGANCE

Throwing away the idea that beauty is only skin deep, the design provides a welcoming space to the owner – a cooking enthusiast. Lavish attention to detail belies the hard-working functionality of this kitchen.

(18,971 consumers voted on HGTVRemodels.com and chose this design as their favorite from the 9 kitchen winners.)

TRACEY SCALZO, CMKBD

EuroTech Cabinetry, Inc.

Sarasota, FL

Photo: Tom Harper Photography

PEOPLE'S PICK KITCHEN



A SPA FOR ALL

(27,623 consumers voted on HGTVRemodels.com and chose this design as their favorite from the 9 bath winners.)

YUKO MATSUMOTO, CKD, CBD

Altera Design & Remodeling, Inc.

Walnut Creek, CA

Photo: Douglas Johnson Photography

PEOPLE'S PICK BATH

Eeny, Meeny, Miny, Mo

I recently met with a dealer faced with a number of different opportunities to grow the business. The three owner-managers were all committed to expansion, but were having difficulty deciding which path to take. As a result, they were doing nothing.

In meeting with them, I realized that like most retailers they had no process for making important decisions. The CEO didn't want to simply exercise his authority over his team. The team, in this case all family members—were afraid of taking a vote and risking a 2-1 outcome. Instead, they were trying to come to consensus and find a solution that they all agreed on. Unable to do that, though, they were getting nowhere.

We make decisions all the time. Decision-making is one of the defining attributes of great leaders. Study accomplished military and business leaders and you'll find that much of their success lies in their ability to make good choices.

Webster defines *decide* as "arrive at a solution that ends uncertainty or dispute." But how are good decisions made? Flip a coin? Take a vote of the stake holders? The study of decision-making is exhaustive. In his book, *Winning Decisions: Getting it Right the First Time*, J. Edward Russo talks about the importance of generating all the possible options and alternatives to make a good decision.

Your decision-making approach may mirror your management style. If you're authoritarian, you make the decision alone and accept the consequences. If you are more collaborative, you'll gather a team to help resolve the problem. And if you're

consultative, you'll use that team to help gather the data needed to find a direction and then probably decide yourself. Like other types of problem solving, there is a process to making decisions.

- **Realize when and why you need to make a decision.** Do you carry too many brands? Do you need to terminate a poor performer? Can you afford another delivery vehicle? Is it time to open another location? Who will you promote to store manager?
- **Declare the decision.** Decide what the decision is, how you'll work it, and who should be involved. We need a new truck; the warehouse manager and the CFO will do the research and get the bids and then the executive leadership team will buy it—or not—based on the information they gather.
 - *Frame the problem.* What are you deciding and why? "Our customer service is declining because we can't get deliveries made in a timely fashion."
 - *Get the right people involved in the process.* If the sales manager is tracking delivery schedules, he'll know when the resources you have aren't working, but it's not his job to know about what trucks get the best mileage, need the least service and work best for your deliveries. Whoever controls your budgeting will have input on how much you can afford.
 - *Work the problem: Get the facts and list the alternatives.* Re-routing deliveries so you get more efficiency out of your current fleet? Buy vs. Lease? Buy one bigger truck and sell a smaller one?

Brand X or Y? Now or later? Get as many facts as possible *within the limits of time you imposed on yourself and your ability to process them*. Remember that virtually every decision must be made in partial ignorance. Lack of complete information must not be allowed to paralyze your decision. A decision based on partial knowledge is usually better than not making the decision.

- *Rank the alternatives.* What is better, cheaper or will have the best return? Which location has the best access or the most customers who match your target consumer? Use a scale of 1-5 to visualize.
- **Commit the resources and move forward.** Don't disappoint those who have helped make the choice by overriding the decision or by delaying action. If you aren't ready to do something, don't tackle the issue in the first place.

As owner-managers, you are constantly asked to make decisions and help solve problems. Some are minor and have little long-term impact, but others have greater risk and hopefully, greater reward. If you work to develop decision-making like any other management skill, you'll find those tasks challenging and rewarding. **RO**

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



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Speed, Price, and Service

WINNING COMBINATION INCREASES CUSTOMER LOYALTY AND REVENUES

Walk into an Apple Store anywhere, and you will see one of the best and most successful retail operations in the world. An employee immediately greets you, asks what you need, and enters your name into a handheld device that registers you for the next available assistant.

As you wait your turn, you look at the Apple products laid out throughout the store. Not only do they represent the best in technology, the prices are competitive. Apple is one of the top three companies in the world at using the winning combination of speed, price, and service. It has the highest sales per square foot of any company in the world and is the most valuable company in the world. You would do well to make Apple a role model for your own organization.

Consumers today are busier than at any other time in history. They're working longer hours, raising families, and tending to a host of other responsibilities and activities. When they need to make a purchase, they want to do it quickly, and they want to get the best price—and service—possible. Are you meeting those needs for your customers?

Amazon.com ranks right up there with Apple, when it comes to giving customers what they want. The financial rewards of doing so are more than a little impressive; Amazon had sales of \$41 billion last year, a 41 percent increase over 2010. If you follow the lead of Apple and Amazon,

you will attract new customers, increase the loyalty of your current customers, and see your sales skyrocket.

SPEED

Speed is an incredible marketing tool, but you cannot sacrifice accuracy in the process. You must do whatever you can to give customers what they want, when they want it. When you can do something faster than your competitors, you will win the race for customers.

One of the major roadblocks to speed, as well as to customer service, are the policies and procedures most companies have in place to make sure that 1 percent of their customers don't take advantage of them. Meanwhile, the other 99 percent of their customers are frustrated. When you restrict your frontline employees with ridiculous policies and procedures, you not only slow down the process of serving your customers, you can drive them right into the open arms of your competitors. Do whatever is necessary to make it easy for people to do business with you. That includes eliminating policies and procedures that get in the way of providing the best customer experience possible.

PRICE

Never underestimate the power of price. If you have a premium product, like Apple does, you can charge more, but Apple would not get those prices if it didn't combine its products with speed and service.

When it comes to price, there are several steps you can take to ensure your prices are competitive. The most important is to eliminate waste and control costs—and then pass those savings on to your customers. How do you do that? Ask your front-line employees for suggestions on ways to improve productivity and cut costs. They're the experts, and you will be surprised at the ideas they come up with.

SERVICE

People love a great customer experience; that's how you create customer loyalty. If the service you provide is simply OK, it won't get you into the game. You must provide service that is so incredible that people are more than happy to give you their business—and their money. You must constantly train your employees in the art of customer service, introducing new training programs every four months in order to keep enthusiasm and skills at a peak.

Speed, price, and customer service are the three fundamentals of a successful business. Make them a priority, and you will increase both your customer base—and your revenues. **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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Are You Swimming Upstream?

Last week I went out to dinner with my neighbor with whom I haven't had much contact in the year that I lived next door to him. He is a fisherman extraordinaire. His thick wrinkled well-tanned skin only added to his mystic and allure of the wise old fisherman character, ala Ernest Hemingway. His advanced age couldn't hide his sharp mind and keen wit which seduced me into listening to every word and story he shared.

Throughout the night as he told one tale after another in vivid detail and panache, I kept on thinking about the Toby Keith song, "I ain't as good as I once was, but I'm as good once as I ever was". He had more than one wild fishing adventure left in him. He was bright, ornery and just a wise and captivating old feller. I learned a life lesson that night that I hadn't expected to learn.

I asked why he was able to catch so many fish while others didn't? His reply was slow and precise. He said that was an easy question, taking his time to reply only to add to the drama of his response. Then he uttered the words, "I think like a fish".

GREAT! That solved the meaning of life. But the more I thought about it, the more profound it became. Think about it. Fish swim upstream? They go against the current. Now that's dumb. Why didn't someone teach the fish to just go with the flow? Fish swim in schools which makes it easier to get caught. Fish never seem to learn from their mistakes and get lured in again and again with the same type of bait and many times it isn't real, just a make-believe fly or worm.

SO WHY DO WE WANT TO DO ANYTHING LIKE A FISH?

You only want to think like a fish if you want to catch them. It's like our businesses. If you want to catch the customer and get that customer to buy, then we have to think like a customer. Customers are going to do comparison-shopping online. Since when is that a bad thing? However, it was a concern for an upstate New York retailer who felt she



deserved more loyalty from her customers. She always gave this one particular customer the best possible price & best service. She was insulted. Give me a break. That is not how customers think.

Don't get all in a tizzy when your customers expect you to offer coupons online today. And don't get upset when they ask you for them. They are the customer, they might not always be right but they are the customer and they are

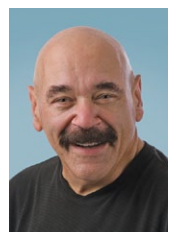
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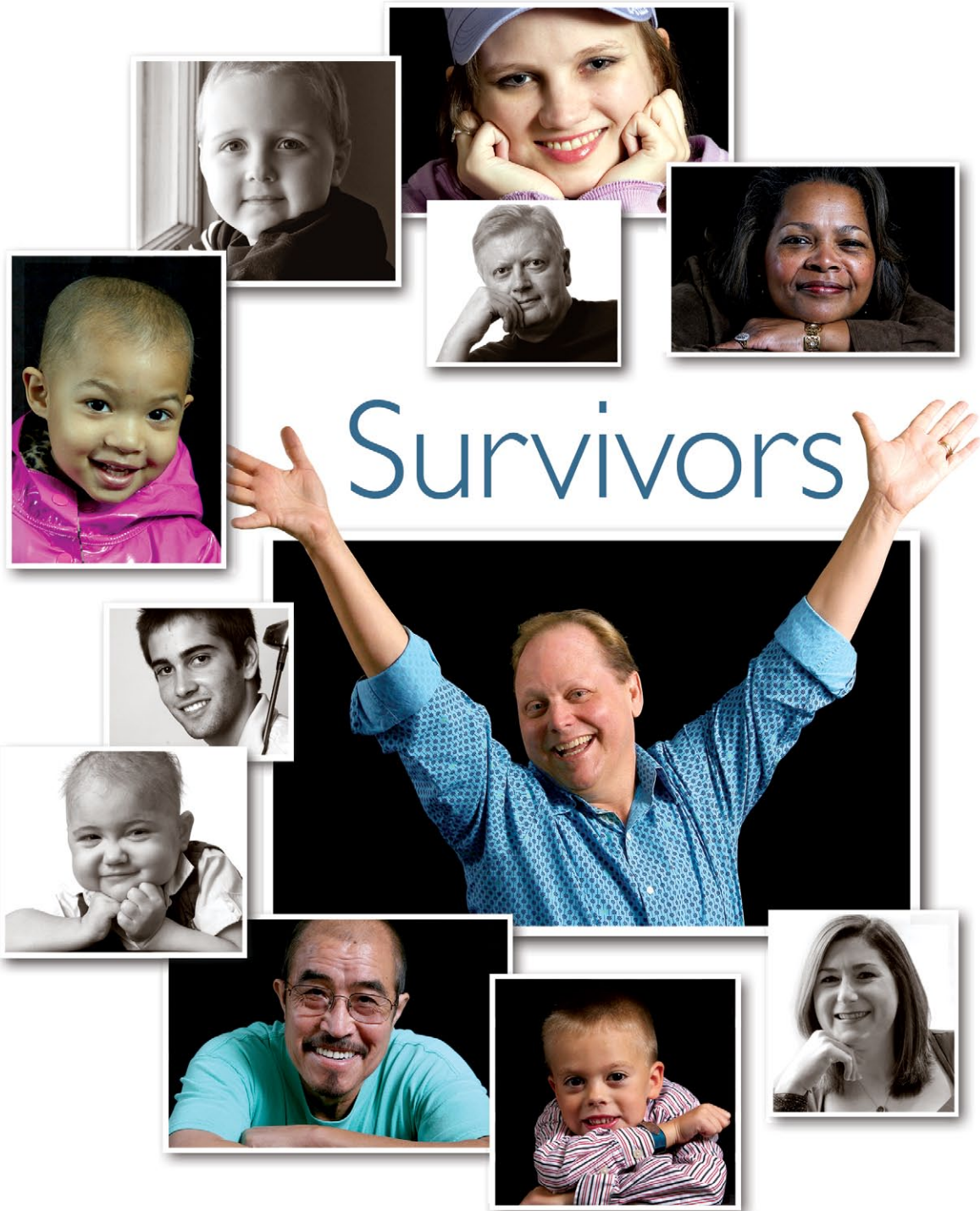
Then we have the retailer who puts coupons online but really doesn't want the customer to find them. Trust me... customers will. It was the customer who coined the phrase "Seamless Integration" WHY? Because they believe doing business with you online, on the phone, or in the store is all the same. It's seamless. Yet we have all heard a customer service rep say, "Oh that's the online division."

So how do customers think? They want the best merchandise-presented in the way they want and like it presented-at a price that they perceive is fair and competitive. Notice I didn't say the cheapest. Sure, sometimes they want the cheapest but let's not forget convenience beats cheapest everyday of the week.

So don't think like the fishing pole, hook, or the person holding the pole. Think like that fish that is looking for food and wants to survive the process. The things the fish do might not be the smartest or advance their goal BUT that is what they do. Let's think like a customer and we will catch more than our share--just like my new friend, Carl, the fisherman extraordinaire. He didn't talk about the one that got away. He talked about the ones he caught. Because he THINKS LIKE THE FISH!!! **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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It's Personal, and It's Business

Some have a hard time understanding organizations' discomfort with the people thing. Sure, people are messy, chaotic, unpredictable, funny, extreme, intense . . . the list goes on. What strikes me as odd and oddly dysfunctional is the either/or dichotomy I run up against in organizations over and over. It's as if we want to reclaim the business model of the Industrial Era—the one that revolutionized manufacturing—that we're all supposed to perform the same tasks in the same way, day after day, as if we are working on an assembly line. Even that isn't an accurate picture of modern production and manufacturing. Why isn't work about the people and the work itself? Why do we persist in thinking the people thing doesn't matter, is secondary to the work itself? It isn't.

In the Great Places to Work® Trust Index®, employees respond to “57 statements that cover credibility, respect, fairness, pride, and camaraderie”. These elements are about principles, values and relationships. Trust is the foundation of any strong relationship, no matter the context. Patrick Lencioni, in *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, begins with the foundation of trust in rebuilding a team that's broken. The Twelve Questions developed by the Gallup Organization are designed to measure the strength of a workplace and primarily center on clarity of expectations, regular feedback, relationships, and people being able

to work in their areas of strength. There are plenty of articles and books piling up on my bedside table to support this integration of the work thing with the people thing, so why do we still resist it?

I think it's about fear. Fear that our great plans for work productivity and performance will get all messed up with the messy people. Someone's mother will die. Someone else will get divorced. Our team leader will get breast cancer. Our IT guys don't get along and now we can't get our software loaded. Everyone's scared of the HR director. All of these people issues are about being human and imperfect. Smart leaders not only make room for the people thing, they embrace it, cultivate it, grow it. They engage it and use it to make their organizations stronger, more productive, and more successful. And they care about whether or not the *people thing* is working because, in the end, if it doesn't, the goals of the organization won't be working either because *they are supposed to do the work!*

How can you impact the human element of human performance?

1. **Clear the swamp.** Find out what's going on that gets in the way of people doing their best work. What are the obstacles to high levels of productivity, trust and morale?
2. **Create opportunities for building trust.** Take time to find out about your coworkers as people by offering opportunities to get to know one another. Opportunities for team building are not just about

touchy-feely exercises. Meaningful work and opportunities for growth within your organization help to build the essential value of trust.

3. **Help people learn to confront effectively.** Issues around poor performance or disruptive behaviors have a huge impact on people. The cost of not dealing with these issues is too high for an organization to ignore.
4. **Facilitate Problem Solving.** Effective problem solving often takes time, but if you are willing to get at the real issues by listening, asking good questions, and encouraging the move out of victim-mode into a place of action, this will increase productivity and impact morale, too.
5. **Recognize, or else.** One size does not fit all for recognition of good work and praise, so take time to find out how people like to be recognized—gesture of thanks and faith, increased responsibility, compensation, etc.

Let's make a commitment to change our either/or paradigm about the workplace. It's not personal or business, it's personal and business. The *people thing* is essential to the work! **RO**

Libby Wagner, author of *The Influencing Option: The Art of Building a Profit Culture in Business, works with clients to help them create and sustain Profit Cultures.*
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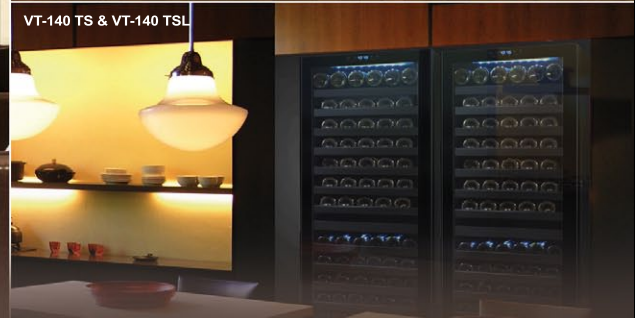
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WHY THE INDEPENDENT RETAIL SHOULD NOT GIVE UP ON 1080P PLASMA TV SALES

In the face of commoditized products, it's hard to see the logic for the independent retailer in selling a product—such as flat-panel televisions—that seems to be tapped out in terms of margin and that can be had for ridiculously low prices at big box stores or on the Internet.

Contrary to what some dealers think, however, it has never been more important for the independent retailer to embrace the 1080P plasma category. Yes, I said plasma. It's only real performance limitations are in brightly lit rooms. Other than that application, most experts agree plasma has the best picture (especially on non-HD content); the box stores have difficulty explaining the benefits of the technology; and there is less margin pressure. Box stores simple “clerk” LED panels while the independent retail channel needs to “sell” and explain the plasma technology and its benefits. This increase in effort in this channel gives customers a better experience while offering dealers more margin.

In fact, there is still money to be made in flat panel in general, especially with some of the new vendor policies. While these vendor policies are far from perfect, most are making a conscientious effort—after billions in losses by many—to bring profitability back for themselves and for the retailers. For example, some are enforcing price restrictions and dictating how products can be sold on the Internet. And without a clear channel to sell step-

up product, the vendors will be left with only entry-level products sold in clubs and on the Internet, which is not a good situation for them—or the independent retailer—to be in. The independent retailer is that clear channel.

In fact, it is the independent retailer who has the opportunity to shine by showing consumers their expertise in perfecting the 1080p plasma experience at home. While the independent retailer has more product training, sales training, and the ability to manipulate the environment at will for the best possible in-store demo, big box stores fall short. They don't have the staff, expertise, or the proper environment to show a 1080p plasma at its absolute best.

Let's take, for example, the case of a recent homeowner who brought her 60-inch LED panel home from a big-box store only to realize that the image was subpar and looked nothing like what she saw in the store. Even after tweaking it to get away from the blown-out whites, overly pink flesh tones, murky black levels, and blinding brightness levels that allow TVs in a box store to compete with the fluorescent lights overhead, the image looked soft. A technician from the store came to her home, scratched his head, and advised her to bring the display back to the store. After several more missteps and an expensive in-home calibration, the install crew finally realized that her DirecTV satellite receiver was set to the lowest resolution available and that

instead of using an in-wall-rated HDMI cable, she was using a standard HDMI cable, causing a slew of other problems. The expertise required to get the most from her equipment was simply nonexistent. The independent dealer, on the other hand, can show a demo that will look as good in the customer's home as it did in the store.

The independent retailer also needs to remember that the TV is the focal point of the system. A bigger, better image is what people come into the store for. Displays can therefore be used to add on to the sale. Cables, Blu-ray players, audio systems that sound as good as the image looks, HDMI switchers, surge protectors, and more are all items the customer needs to truly enjoy their fantastic 1080p plasma display.

Selling plasma the right way—so that they work to their full 1080p potential—is important to give the client the absolute best experience possible. So rather than abandoning plasma in favor of products with lower margins, the independent retailer needs to demo, add-on, sell, and upsell. Rest assured, the customer will thank you for it with repeat business and referrals. **RO**

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



Bathroom designed by NKBA member Holly Rickert | Photo by Peter Rymwid Architectural Photographer

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OWN DETERMINATIONS.
HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR
CUSTOMERS AGREE WITH YOU?
DO YOU KNOW IF OR HOW
YOUR CUSTOMERS VALUE WHAT
YOU OFFER? DO YOU REALLY
KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER'S
NEEDS? HOW DO YOU LISTEN
TO YOUR CUSTOMERS TODAY?

I recently was privileged to attend a very prestigious conference revolving around a theme of “Disrupt or be Disrupted”! Some of the worlds top CMO’s attended and it was a very intense program. The concept is such that we have a simple choice. Either we attack and disrupt our market place or allow our competitors to attack and disrupt our businesses. The phenomenon we all know as “Social Media” is at the very forefront of the “Disruption” concept. I was astounded at the magnitude of relevance that “Social” is gaining on a daily basis. Companies that embrace the concept will prosper and those that don’t will be left behind, at best. The “digital” world we live in has dozens of online platforms that, as retailers, we must embrace. This column will focus specifically on the “Social” platform. This platform can be one of the most valuable tools to learn more about the questions posed above. What’s more, studies show that consumers love for local businesses to solicit this information, from them, publicly.

We are all familiar with Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. If you’re a social media junkie, you might also be into new sites and tools such as Pinterest, Google+, Path, Pair, FamilyLeaf, Viddy, and Mobli.

Consider the fact that Facebook, alone, is now approaching 1 billion users.

Businesses are using FB in ways never imagined. Critical patients and organ donors are finding FB to be a core-networking platform. Every age group can be reached. Iceland is even re-writing their entire constitution on FB! Imagine what it might look like a year from now?

While many social networks may come and go, one thing is for sure...the relevance of this “Social” platform will continue to grow.

Create Your Value Proposition...

Be proactive and ask some of your more valued customers to help you determine your true value, according to them. Interview them to find out what benefits your business offers that are most attractive to them. Find out if their perceptions match yours and if they don’t, change yours to match theirs. Involve them in creating your story and reward them for doing so. Their input is invaluable in determining your worth and incentives for them to help you are a minimal investment. Do this with as many customers as you can. They will be glad to help you now and later, online!

Create Your Online Relationships...

While advertising, promotions, sales events and special offers are major components of drawing in consumers and writing business, they are mostly

Business Sociable?

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of an informational nature. I believe that the successful retail business is still about developing and maintaining relationships with consumers. While building websites and managing your business within search engines are now standard procedure, none can “develop relationships” with customers like “Social” can.

Make sure your business is aligned with the major social sites and is growing in awareness. Creating a FB page for your business is easy...if you are not sure how to start, just ask any willing teenager over 12 years old to design it for you! It starts with creating friends; evolves with customers, then delighted customers, then rave reviews, then referrals. It's the least expensive form of marketing you can invest in, but it does cost time and effort to manage it forward.

Manage Your Relationships...

Remember those interviews and the development of your value proposition? Now it's time to take them online with your friends and customers. Just like any personal relationship, “Social” requires time, attention and great care. As an owner, it is your responsibility to own the relationship between your business and your customers. That said, there are numerous options to involve family, sales managers and sales associates in the process of

managing your relationships online. Start by requiring your sales associates to work with their customers to become friends of the business and incentivize them to post “likes” or positive experiences. As an example, an extra service or accessory can be offered in return for positive postings. An ongoing promotion can be put in place, rewarding customers who purchase through “Social” referrals. There are endless ways to build your network. Your business will be rewarded by the domino effect that positive consumer experiences have in a community. Delighted customers will be glad to help you and it will soon spread like wildfire! Also, this is one platform that will allow you to run circles around your primary competitors.

Mend Your Relationships...

As we all know, some transactions will not go as planned. Solving consumer problems or disputes is always a priority, but never so important as online. My daughter recently graduated from college and now works for an advertising firm that has a division solely dedicated in providing reputation management for their clients. It is very important that you do the same for your business. According to Harvard Business School studies, businesses

that visibly solve consumer problems, through “Social” media are likely to attract connected consumers... Consumers like to see that humble (after-the-sale) behavior...especially in an open platform.

One could argue that it is difficult to measure ROI on the “Social” platform. I would argue that is the BEST indicator of how your business is perceived in the marketplace. “Social” is a platform that can be a retailer's greatest friend or worst enemy. Procrastination is not an option here. Remember, “Disrupt or be Disrupted”.

Finally...“Social” can be a great tool to attract young family members or friends into the business. “Social” can become a first step, followed by numerous other online projects that can pull our youth into our businesses, keep their interest, grow these platforms and push us through to new levels with consumers. Who knows, later, they may even want the keys to that business you have worked so hard to establish over the years! **RO**

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



PRO Group and HES Strengthen ProSource Partnership

Effective April 1, 2012, the buying groups HES and PRO Group have entered into a comprehensive long term agreement under the umbrella organization ProSource. ProSource which is the forward-facing entity that represents the membership of both organizations to the vendor community is the largest consumer electronics buying group in the industry with over \$3 billion in annual retail sales.

Under this strengthened agreement, David Workman has assumed the newly created role of President and CEO of ProSource in conjunction with his current responsibilities as President and COO of PRO Group.

A newly formed six-member Steering Committee has been created with equal representation from the respective Boards of both PRO Group and HES. The objective of this Committee is to build the future direction of ProSource and to assist in the prioritization of the group's initiatives. The charter members of this committee include George Manlove, chairman of Vann's, Murray Huppin, president of Huppin's/OneCall, Walt Stinson, president of ListenUp, David Pidgeon, CEO of Starpower, Bob Dodge, CEO of Talk of the Town, and Andy Kersey, CEO of Hamlin & Kersey.

ProSource will also establish two additional committees, a Custom/Control Committee and a Marketing Committee to further address the changing needs of the membership within both organizations.



David Pidgeon

Vance Pflanz

Dave Workman commented, "Jim Ristow and I have had a vision for our two organizations stretching back for almost three years. We each have the privilege of managing two very successful buying organizations, but with the myriad of changes that continue to occur in the CE industry, we knew that we needed to change as well. While PRO and HES will continue to function independently from an operations standpoint to cater to the specific needs of each organization's member base, this agreement finally allows us the opportunity to harness the potential of our combined volume and work even more closely with our core partners. We believe that the strength of our buying power, combined with the strategic infrastructure of Expert Warehouse will deliver growth opportunities unrivaled by any other buying group. I am extremely excited to work even more closely with Jim Ristow, Dean Sottile, Andy Orozco and the rest of the ProSource team as we proactively address the needs of our membership

and vendor partners."

Jim Ristow, executive vice president of HES added, "We believe that the challenges being faced by big box retailers today present the industry with vibrant growth opportunities in specialty CE and integration. This final step in the ProSource merger allows us to combine resources and unify our focus to advance the position of our group members and vendor partners."

Founded in 2011, ProSource is a cooperative member owned, not-for-profit buying group that includes members of both the Home Entertainment Source (HES) and PRO Group. With retail sales of over \$3.1 billion, ProSource is the largest specialty and consumer electronics merchandising group in the United States, which allows ProSource to negotiate stronger programs with manufacturers, helps independent retailers stay relevant to consumers, and keeps the specialty A/V channel competitive. ProSource leverages the assets of both HES and PRO Group, including PRO Group's 26 years of industry experience, and the resources of HES and parent company, BrandSource, to offer unparalleled benefits to its members. ProSource currently represents over 500 retailers and more than 950 storefronts. While PRO Group and HES maintain separate identities, ProSource represents as a single, combined and focused business to the vendor community.

For information on becoming a member, please call (800) 430-0282. **RO**

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(l to r) James MacAlpine of Nationwide and Chris Penn of Warrantech at the PrimeTime! buying show held in February at the Gaylord Palms in Orlando where RentDirect Nationwide members were given a sneak peek at a new warranty program for RTO dealers.

RENTDIRECT NATIONWIDE INTRODUCES TWO-YEAR PRODUCT WARRANTY FOR RTO DEALERS

At Nationwide Marketing Group’s PrimeTime! event held in February, NSI Warranty administered by Warrantech, talked about the upcoming release of a brand new warranty extension that would give RentDirect Nationwide members an additional year of coverage after their 1-year manufacturer parts and labor warranty expires.

“We are very pleased to offer this exclusive member benefit that can potentially save members thousands of dollars in service costs,” said James MacAlpine, vice president of Rental & Business Development at Nationwide. “This program is a more profitable solution for rental dealers because it gives the dealer ownership over the warranty so that the product can be rented out to multiple customers and still be covered.”

To date, there are a few rent to own suppliers that offer extended product warranties that can be purchased by the dealer but they are severely marked up and have category limitations.

“Our program covers most major appliances,

televisions, and computers,” said MacAlpine. “So, the potential to attract more customers with brand name recognition and increase ticket sales is enormous, and will definitely give our members the competitive edge needed to compete against the nationals.”

RentDirect Nationwide members can register for the program through MemberNet, the group’s online communications site. For additional help getting started or for a complete list of RentDirect Nationwide member benefits, contact James MacAlpine at (336) 722-4681 or email questions to jamesm@nationwidegroup.org

NATIONWIDE MARKETING GROUP INKS AGREEMENT TO PURCHASE CANTREX

NATIONWIDE LOOKS TO ACQUIRE CANADIAN GROUP

Nationwide Marketing Group has entered into an agreement to purchase Cantrex, Canada’s premier buying group with over 1200 storefronts producing annual sales approaching \$2 billion.

Nationwide has enjoyed a long-standing collaborative relationship with the Cantrex team and view this agreement as an excellent opportunity to further increase the group’s scale, improve efficiencies and enhance member services.

“Adding billions of dollars to our buying power with the stroke of a pen is a good thing for our members and another exciting step in Nationwide’s continued growth,” said President of Nationwide, Robert Weisner. “We look forward to finalizing the transaction by month’s end and additional details will be provided as they become available.”

Les Kirk, chief operating officer of Nationwide, added, “Both Nationwide and Cantrex bring assets to the relationship that will be leveraged to benefit the members of both groups. The synergy between these two companies is incredible and we were immediately impressed with their leadership team. We expect a fairly seamless transition and look forward to continued growth for our members, vendor partners and our organization.”

Nationwide Marketing Group is the United State’s largest buying and marketing group for appliance, furniture, electronics and rent to own with some 3000 independent dealer members and \$12 billion dollars in combined sales. **RO**

2012 •

UPCOMING EVENTS

• 2012

FATHER'S DAY—JUNE 17

JUNE

11-13

NEOCON WORLD'S TRADE FAIR

NeoCon - Merchandise Mart
CHICAGO, IL
www.neocon.com

27-28

PCBC 2012 HOMEBUILDING TRADESHOW

Moscone Center
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
www.pcbc.com

JULY

National Picnic Month

30-AUG 3

LAS VEGAS SUMMER MARKET

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

AUGUST

19-22

PRIMETIME! BY NATIONWIDE

Gaylord National
NATIONAL HARBOR, MD
www.nationwideprimetime.com

28-29

BRANDSOURCE CONVENTION

Caesars Palace
LAS VEGAS, NV
www.brandsourceconvention.com

31 – SEPT 5

IFA 2012

Messe Berlin
BERLIN, GERMANY
www.ifa-berlin.com

SEPTEMBER

5-7

BATH & KITCHEN BUYING GROUP (BKBG) ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Hyatt Regency O'Hare
ROSEMONT, ILLINOIS
www.BKBG.com

5-8

CEDIA

Indiana Convention Center
INDIANAPOLIS, IN
www.cedia.net

6-9

MEGA FALL NATIONAL CONVENTION

Downtown Marriott
LOUISVILLE, KY
www.megagroupusa.com

25-29

CERSAIE-

International Exhibition
of Ceramic Tile and
Bathroom Furnishings

BOLOGNA, ITALY
www.cersaie.it

OCTOBER

National Kitchen & Bath Month

13-18

HIGHPOINT MARKET

HIGH POINT, NC
www.highpointmarket.org

11-12

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY - RETAILING SUMMIT

Ritz Carlton Hotel
DALLAS, TX
www.crstamu.org

24-26

PREMIER DPH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Gaylord Palms
ORLANDO, FL
www.premierdph.com

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



Independent Audit Confirms Record Numbers of Exhibitors, International Attendees at the 2012 International CES®

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA)®, owner and producer of the International CES®, announced that 3,319 exhibitors from around the globe unveiled new technology products at the 2012 International CES, a 22 percent increase over last year's show. A record-number of international professionals—35,734—attended the show from more than 150 countries, representing an increase of 13 percent over last year. An independent audit, performed by Veris Consulting, LLC, confirms CES's status as the world's most important technology event and North America's largest annual tradeshow of any kind.

The 2012 International CES, held January 10-13, 2012, in Las Vegas, Nev., spanned 1.86 million net square feet of exhibit space and welcomed a record 156,153 industry professionals overall. "The 2012 International CES was the largest in show history and was bursting with innovation as the world's most important technology event," said Karen Chupka, senior vice president, events and conferences, CEA. "These record-breaking audit results confirm that CES continues to be the must-attend event that unites the global technology industry, including Fortune 500 executives, retail buyers, content producers, entertainment executives, venture capitalists, engineers, government officials and media from every corner of the world."

Senior-level executives and top decision makers continue to take advantage of the unparalleled networking and business opportunities at CES. According to the Veris audit, 43 percent of 2012 CES attendees are senior-level executives. Presidents, CEOs and/or business owners made up 15 percent of attendees. Nearly one-third of all attendees are the final decision makers when it comes to new product purchases or partnerships with other companies, with 97 percent identified as having buying decision influence. More than 12,000 attendees represented companies with more than \$500 million in total annual sales, up four percent over last year.

The Veris audit also confirms that CES attracts leaders from diverse business areas including entertainment, retail, education, engineering

and venture capital industries. This year, more than 12,000 retail buying organizations, 5,000 manufacturers and 6,000 engineering companies came to CES.

Each year, influential media and analysts attend CES to report on the latest consumer electronics technologies and trends. 5,000 media and industry analysts attended the 2012 CES, and media coverage of CES was up 35 percent over 2011.

The International CES has been named North America's Greenest Show by Trade Show Executive Magazine, and this year, CEA significantly expanded its recycling and repurposing efforts by recycling 75 percent of show materials from the 2012 CES. CEA collected a record amount of materials to recycle and repurpose, including more than 35,700 square feet, equivalent to 20,000 pounds, of magnetic banners; 28,600 square feet of vinyl banners; 16,000 square feet of other show signs and materials; and for the first time, almost 50,000 pounds of show publications.

Veris is certified by the Exhibition and Event Industry Audit Commission (EELAC) to perform audits. As part of the Veris audit, each CES attendee is counted only once, and show size is calculated using only exhibit space sold, not hallways or bartered space.

The CES audit provides absolute verification of exhibition records, including direct on-site observation, examination of registration systems and testing of attendee records. Post-show analysis included direct confirmation sampling, reconciliation of attendance lists, elimination of duplicate names, and verification of demographic data with the source of documentation.

Final audit numbers may differ from preliminary estimates given onsite due to additional badge pick-ups and badge reader reports. This audit complies with the industry standards for audits adopted by both the EELAC and the International Association of Exhibition and Events (IAEE).

The 2013 International CES is scheduled for January 8-11, 2013, in Las Vegas. **RO**



Wish

by Andrew Bannecker

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ENINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS



KBIS 2012 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The National Kitchen & Bath Association's annual show and conference brought together 32,078 confirmed registrations, this year's event felt a surge of energy and revitalization, delivering on the promise to provide a new experience and opportunity to touch the future. A special thanks to everyone who participated in making KBIS 2012 a great show. We hope to see everyone next year in New Orleans!





Fleet Tracking to Get the Most Out of Every Gallon

With gas prices rising steadily this spring, ensuring efficient use of fuel among your fleet of vehicles is increasingly crucial. Because fuel costs can so quickly eat up a business's profits, it is important for companies in the service industry to be aware of the latest tracking technology and how it can ensure that your company uses fuel as efficiently as possible.

There are several ways in which GPS fleet tracking can save your company money on gas, not the least of which is providing real-time updates that enable managers to always know their employees' locations so that they can find the most direct routes possible between your customers' homes. Should a customer call in with an emergency need, fleet managers can quickly determine which employee is in the closest proximity to the urgent request and route technicians immediately to that "additional call" while at the same time providing stellar customer service by providing accurate expected arrival time based on distance and drive-time.

Another crucial way in which GPS fleet tracking helps ensure fuel efficiency is through cutting down on idling time. Every hour of idle time can consume up to two gallons of gas, and a fleet tracking system can keep you constantly aware of which vehicles are idling and for how long. If just one of your employees is letting their vehicle idle an hour a

day, you could reasonably save an estimated \$150 per vehicle every month in unnecessary fuel costs. By implementing a no idle policy in your company, you could eliminate unnecessary associated fuel costs through GPS idle reports and even real-time "alerts" which notifies you by email or text message during an idle event taking place. This type of immediate feedback ensures attention and accountability for fuel expenses. A company with just 5 vehicles could realize \$9,000 in annual cost savings.

Employee abuse of company time and property is yet another way in which profits can be wasted, and through GPS fleet tracking, you will always know if your employees are making out-of-the-way stops, taking much longer routes than necessary or are using your company's vehicle to conduct personal business. Even more devastating is when a company finds one of their employees "moonlighting" and having the audacity to use the company vehicle to do so. Owners and managers will have the peace of mind knowing that trucks and fuel are only being consumed for company business on company time.

Aside from running reports that list all "stops" and "trips" in the company vehicles, an "alert" can be set up so that whenever a vehicle moves for whatever reason outside of "working hours", the appropriate manager can be notified in real-time. Many businesses alone find this alert to be

of value enough to justify the cost of GPS fleet tracking, especially when the over all mitigation of company liability is factored into the equations. For example, when a vehicle is stolen from a driveway at night, recovery efforts can begin immediately.

Many business owners endure the fear of their employees billing the company for fuel, yet actually filling up their own personal vehicle. Tracking mileage to know how the fuel consumption was used as well as tracking stops so that you know your vehicle was actually there to have been fueled up in the first place can eliminate this fear. Saved locations, called Landmarks, can be saved so that required fueling locations close to the shop can be tracked more efficiently when approving monthly fuel company invoices each month.

A great deal depends on your business's success and your fleet operating expense is a considerable expense when it comes to your bottom-line. You can have the peace of mind that comes with knowing that, while fuel prices may continue to rise, unnecessary fuel consumption will be decreasing in your company or at least all fuel expenditures are justified. USA recommends GPS fleet tracking from Virtual Fleet Supervisor; check them out at www.VirtualFleetSupervisor.com. Tracking system today cost less than \$1 per vehicle per day and will ensure you "get the most out of every gallon". **RO**

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Expansion: Is it for You?

For those of you that are familiar with PSA net, you are aware that many topics are brought up for discussion. Recently one of our members asked a question in regards to expanding their business. In his situation a property had become available that formerly housed an appliance company. He was debating whether the increased exposure would pay for the added expenses that he would incur. There were responses to his specific question but there are many other questions that need to be addressed when considering any form of expansion.

With the current state of both the service industry and the economy, many of us will have an opportunity to expand our businesses. Whether that is adding more technicians, moving into a different facility, or opening up new service avenues, etc....

Let's take a closer look at some of these possibilities.

Is it time to move into a bigger facility? Maybe you are working out of your home and business is taking it over. Your garage is serving as an over flow parts warehouse as well as a possible shop. Having the office at home takes time away from your family (as there is always something to do with the business). I know because I have been there. Our business worked out of my home for the first 3 1/2 years until it became too much. We then leased a 750 square foot office/warehouse, which we were in for 1 1/2 years until we outgrew that. At that time we purchased a 2500 square foot office and warehouse. I wanted to give you that history so that we can discuss some of the other expenses that you will incur with a change in facilities. This is first hand

knowledge as we went through some of these issues.

There are many things that go into a move that you must be prepared for. Sometimes you can be caught off guard by expenses that you do not foresee, (we were not expecting to have to buy a new phone system when we moved into our current location). You have the start up expenses such as damage deposit, first and last month rent (if you lease) or a down payment, telephone and Internet installation, insurance, office furniture, etc... If you were working out of your home there are new expenses that you will be incurring such as utility bills. You may have paid these from the business account, but now you will have 2 sets of utility and phone bills (a bill for the business and a bill for home). You will need separate property insurance as





American Red Cross

well. What benefits will the new location provide? More revenue due to better visibility, more room so that you are not tripping over parts or each other etc... These are some of the things that you will need to consider when contemplating a move in locations; will the benefits outweigh the costs?

Let's take a look at the manpower issue. You are considering opening up a new service market such as commercial or HVAC, or maybe you are having trouble staying caught up with your current service requests. It sounds like it may be time to add a technician; that is if you can find one with experience, if not do you have time to train someone?

Let's assume you can find a technician with experience; now you need a truck and insurance, let alone some inventory along with specialty tools and supplies. In most cases this will cost you between 5 to 7 thousand dollars minimum; assuming that you only need a down payment to buy or lease a vehicle and put a small usable inventory into it. You then have to pay a salary of some kind while you are developing this segment (or increasing current business), in many cases this may result in a loss for a period of time. You also have other smaller expenses such as a benefit package, workers comp insurance, and payroll taxes, etc....

Now if you have to hire and train a person your expenses will be much higher. You will have salary, workers comp and payroll taxes right from the beginning as well as any benefits that you provide during the training period. This training period could be anywhere from 2-3 weeks and up to 6 months depending on the trainee. Then when they are ready to be out on their own you still have the vehicle and inventory expenses. Is your company ready to take on this added burden? Have you projected the potential revenue increase against the costs that you will incur? If so, you can then make a good business decision.

What about diversifying into a new revenue stream? Maybe light commercial work, HVAC, or even just opening up to a new brand, or expanding your current territory. These are things to consider before just saying yes we are going to do this. Will you be able to receive proper training or do you learn on the fly? You should look at investing in some inventory and any specialty tools that may be required to properly service the new product line. Do you have the manpower to take on the additional workload or will you need to hire more people? For a service business this will be the easiest and least expensive way of expanding your business, but there are still costs that will be incurred along the way.

As a business owner we are all in business to make a profit and provide for our families; as well as providing a stable work environment for our employees who have families of their own. But we need to remember that sometimes a short-term loss will result in long-term gains.

Expanding your business can be rewarding, but comes with many challenges along the way and must be well thought out. **RO**

Tom Lundin, MCAP, CSM PSA



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Recent tornadoes have destroyed many communities and left many families in need.

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The National All Service C

Professional Service Association (PSA) recently hosted our 23rd annual convention, March 28 through 31, 2012 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. What a success this was! The comments from all of the attendees were positive and the people who had attended previous National All Service Convention's (NASC) said it was even better than any previous conventions and didn't think it was possible to top the last one—but we did!

The attendees enjoyed the convention very much and learned much in the classes they attended. Some said they had a difficult decision choosing which class to attend, because many classes were inviting but the times were conflicting, so there was only the ability to attend one class at a time. They also enjoyed a time of camaraderie and socializing with other servicers that came from as far away as Hawaii and as close as Florida and the Caribbean. The sponsors, trainers, and trade show participants were on top of their game. I cannot begin to thank them enough, for their support of NASC 2012. Their efforts and sponsorship helped make this convention the success that it turned out to be. It is through this type of support and joint effort we are able to improve the perceived image of our chosen industry, Major Appliance Service.

This year's convention was once again structured to accommodate the entire staff of an appliance service company, from the one man shop to the larger multiple technician operations. It had classes for the trainee or newer technician, as well as the seasoned tech that needed to brush up on his basic skills and knowledge. There were technical classes from the manufacturers for the experienced technician to advance his knowledge about the latest trends and innovations coming from many of the manufacturers. There were many classes designed to improve management skills, as well as a couple of fun classes like balloon art and custom greeting card design that could be incorporated into some of your business models or promotions. All of these classes were designed to improve your skills and advance your knowledge, to enable you to become a better technician, owner, manager or support staff member.

Day one classes were well attended in the areas of training and certification. The first day classes covered Samsung, Electrolux, LG and Whirlpool. Topics covered were Consumer



Industry roundtable discussion



PSA's first Hall of Fame Award, given

Relations and Management techniques. Certification was big, and by the end of the convention we had 76 people ready to certify or re-certify, as the case may be, being just the first step in becoming a Certified Service Center and many servicers are working to this ultimate goal. At day's end we enjoyed a Tradeshow Cocktail Social followed by an open hospitality suite for the evening. It always amazes me at the amount of information that is exchanged at the hospitality suite as people unwind from the day's activities and share their successes and failures with other servicers in this relaxed atmosphere.

Day two classes started with Certification testing followed by the technical classes for Scotsman, U-Line, Viking, Blomberg, ASKO, Whirlpool, Samsung, Speed Queen, G.E., and Fisher & Paykel. The basics were Energy Star Refrigeration, and Basic Electronics and D.C. Circuits. How to become a Certified Service Center; Best Practices for delivering high quality service and Marketing to Grow Your Business were the management classes for the day. The afternoon had Service Bench, PSA Education Meeting and the SKILLS U.S.A. Meetings to update everyone on the current happenings in our trade schools. The evening wrapped up with a trip by bus to the Mai-Kai Polynesian Restaurant for an evening of dining and entertainment, Polynesian style, yes grass skirts being worn by the lovely ladies on stage as they demonstrated the many dances of the people from the Pacific Islands. WOW!!! What a good time this was as we all had a fantastic evening away from the hotel and a break in the massive amount of training we were each getting.



Convention 2012 Summary



to Phil Whitehead and Jim Campbell



Classes in training and certification

Day three classes and certification were given on Servicing Laundry Products, No Flame Resistance Silver Soldering, Servicing LCD Televisions and Basic Electronics and D.C. Circuits. The technical classes were on the following: Electrolux, Scotsman, Viking, Blomberg, U-Line, ASKO, DACOR and Fisher & Paykel. The management classes covered Employee Relations and Company Policy Manual, Rossware (Service Desk Training), Cost of Doing Business and Negotiating Skills for Greater Profits. The classes ended at 5:00 followed by a cocktail social and ended with the awards banquet acknowledging some very deserving people in our industry.

Life Time Achievement Award was presented to Bill and Peggy Wingstedt for their tireless unrelenting contribution to the appliance service industry with their publication *Appliance Service News* (which I will miss).

PSA's first Hall of Fame Award was given to two gentlemen, Phil Whitehead and Jim Campbell, who were honored for having given of their time and knowledge to assist servicers all over the country and a few outside of the country.

The President's Award was given to Linda Knudsen and Jake Burkholder for their untiring efforts improving the offerings and benefits of being a PSA member. The Directors Awards were presented to Randy Westra, Doug Clay and Michael Krokidas for their dedication to helping other servicers on PSANet with technical assistance. We were also pleased to present our newest appliance service Certified Service Center Award to Peter Lomas of Accurate Appliance Repair.

Of course the evening went well with the meal and awarding of the door prizes, along with those people who well deserved their recognition awards.

On this morning of the fourth and final day of the convention, we had a dance instructor, Deborah Holloway, who held an impromptu Hula Dance Class, and the ladies had a lot of fun learning the moves and meanings of the Hawaiian Hula Dance. The morning provided an Industry Roundtable discussion which was lively and several problems addressed and solutions offered. Certification was also on the agenda and many had delayed their attempt until today in order to take advantage of the classes which would improve their chances of passing. Basics consisted of Servicing Gas Products, Electrical Circuits and Wiring Diagrams, G.E. Refrigeration and Board Problems, and Meters and Testing Procedures. Technical was on G.E., Fisher & Paykel, and Speed Queen. Management covered Service Bench, Understanding Personalities to Become a Better Leader and Excel Basics and Beyond.

All too soon it was over, but there is always next year when we will once again come together to refresh our relationships with other servicers and make new friends as we gather once more for our annual convention. I would be amiss if I did not thank all the attendees who came to the convention, especially the Sponsors, Trainers, Tradeshow Participants and Door Prize providers. It is through your participation and attendance that we are able to make NASC such a success. It takes all of us to reach this threshold and together with our actions and participation we can improve our industry.

To those of you who were unable to attend, I would like to say that you missed a great convention. Well worth your time as well as your financial investment. I challenge you to join us for the next one, so mark your calendars now, budget your expenses and plan to be a part of this educational extravaganza. I look forward to seeing you all once again next year – or to meeting those of you who will be joining for the first time, whichever the case may be. Thanks for a GREAT CONVENTION and come join us January 7 through 10, 2013 in Miami! **RO**

Don Holman, Mcap, CSM—PSA President

Manufacturer {NOTES}



MAYTAG BRAND REVOLUTIONIZES OVEN CLEANING WITH FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND AQUALIFT™ SELF-CLEANING TECHNOLOGY

Maytag brand is revolutionizing how ovens can be cleaned with the introduction of AquaLift™ self-clean technology. Maytag brand's latest line of freestanding ranges offer homeowners an innovation to self-clean the oven interior with an exclusive enamel oven coating, low heat and water to release baked-on spills in less than one hour.

At a generous capacity of up to 6.2 cubic feet*, Maytag® ranges have an industry-leading capacity** and are the first to offer AquaLift™ self-clean technology. Additional performance features combine the power of the bake and broil burners, convection fan and power vents to preheat in eight minutes.***

The ranges have been engineered with an exclusive enamel oven coating that activates with water and low heat, allowing moisture to release tough baked-on messes. In less than an hour, the oven is ready for a final wipe-down to remove food and debris, with no odor or extreme heat like traditional high-temperature self-clean ovens.

“Whether it’s the lasagna that bubbled over or the pic filling that dripped, oven spills happen to all of us. But thanks to AquaLift™ self-clean technology, you can now get your oven clean without the long wait, high heat or odors associated with a traditional self-clean,” said Kate Davidson, senior brand manager, Maytag brand.

The cooktop offers flexible element sizes and comes in three different power options: gas, electric and induction. The induction Power Center cooktop features an 11-inch 3,700-watt Speed Heat™ element that boils 40 percent faster****, a 9-inch 3,200-watt induction element and two 6-inch 1,800-watt elements, providing the flexibility and power needed to cook any dish.

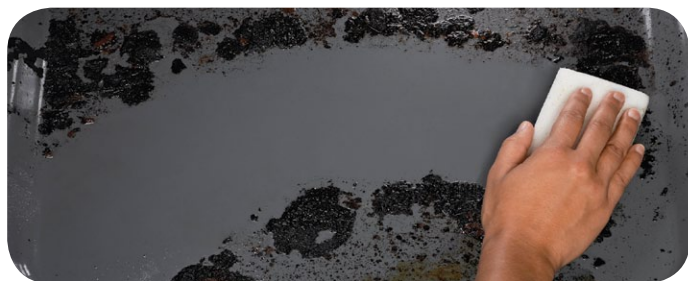
These ranges are designed, engineered and assembled with pride in Tulsa, OK.

**Available in electric and induction models only: MER8670A, MER8775A, MER8880A and MIR8890A.*

***Among leading brand single cavity electric 30” freestanding ranges.*

****Based on single rack baking in model MER8880A and MIR8890A.*

*****Based on information at www.theinductionsite.com. RO*



NEW MAYTAG BRAND WALL OVENS:

SPACE AND POWER FOR HOMEOWNERS, EASY INSTALLATION FOR REMODELERS

The Maytag brand line of new wall ovens provides homeowners with the oven capacity and power needed for faster cooking, as well as the new Flex Install System (FIT System) to make installation easy for kitchen remodeling. The FIT System includes a new trim design and an adjustable internal base to make installation and wall-oven replacement easy. The system ensures that the new Maytag® wall oven will fit almost any existing wall cutout.

“New Maytag brand ovens offer installers a simple solution for varied wall-oven cutouts,” said Terri Connett, senior contract channel manager at Whirlpool Corporation. “Even better: the new ovens have the power and impressive features that homeowners want.”

With the industry’s leading capacity of 5 cu. ft.*, homeowners have space for a wide variety of cooking needs. The Power Preheat function makes it possible to preheat the oven 40 percent faster than standard oven preheating**. High-end features, such as a roll out rack, recessed broil, extra-large window and monochromatic LCD screen, will also make homeowners take notice. The new wall ovens will be available in May.

**Gas model provides 3.9 cu. ft. of space in the lower oven and 2.1 cu. ft. of space in the upper oven*

***Based on single rack baking*

WE GUARANTEE THE FIT,^{*} SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO

Select Maytag® wall ovens with the FIT system are backed by our FIT System Limited Guarantee to fit in your customer's existing cabinet cutout of compatible width and configuration, or Maytag brand will provide up to \$250 toward professional cabinet modification.*



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

With industry-leading** capacity and a 10-year limited parts warranty on the elements,† these built-in ovens are dependably designed to meet all your customers' cooking needs. Select 30" models also preheat the oven up to 40% faster,†† warming up in as little as 8 minutes to get meals to the table faster.



Visit maytag.com for warranty details.

WHAT'S INSIDE MATTERS™



*FIT System Limited Guarantee: If our 27" or 30" standard single or double wall ovens featuring the FIT System do not fit your existing cabinet cut-out of a compatible width and configuration, contact us within 30 days of the purchase date and receive up to \$250 toward the cost of professional cabinet modification. Valid for qualified replacement models purchased between 5/1/12-12/31/12; excludes new cabinet installations. Visit maytag.com/fitsystemlimitedguarantee for complete details. **Among leading brand 27" and 30" wall ovens. †Visit maytag.com for warranty details. ††Single rack baking with Power Preheat versus three-rack without option. ®Registered trademark/™Trademark of Maytag Properties, LLC or its related companies. ©2012. All rights reserved. MYC13348

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Great Lakes
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SIMPLY THE BEST, AND THE BEST, AND THE BEST.

Introducing the Frigidaire Gallery® Dishwasher
with exclusive OrbitClean™ Technology.

The Best Clean¹



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

The Best Dry²

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

The Best Quiet³

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

¹ Based on ANSI-AHAM-DW-1-2010 for plastic interior dishwashers.

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

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

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