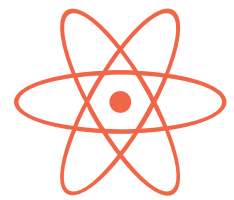


The Retail Observer

August, 2009

The Monthly News Magazine with Personality

Vol. 20, Issue 8



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Publisher's Statement
Celebrating Our 20th Year!

The RetailObserver, Inc.

5542 Monterey Road #258
San Jose, CA 95138
800.393.0509 • 408.228.1270
Fax 408.360.9371
production@retailobserver.com
info@retailobserver.com
www.retailobserver.com

To receive a copy of the
Retail Observer online, go to
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Eliana Barriga

Publisher and Creative Director

Moe Lastfogel

Director of Sales and Marketing

Vera Gibson

Marketing Coordinator

Terry Price

Art Director

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

David LaFollette

Dean Landers

Kelly M. Rigdon

Mark Schaffeld

Christopher Thiede

John Tschohl

Elly Valas

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Now is the Time for Successful Businesses to Seize Opportunities

YES, EVEN DURING A DOWN ECONOMY...

I believe in great opportunities in any economic climate. In a downturn, no matter how bad it gets, people will still be spending money; they'll just be more careful. Let's face it with roughly a 10% unemployment rate in the U.S. that still means there is 90% employment. What are you waiting for? You need to continue to offer real value and quality for a reasonable price and seize the opportunities as they arise.

But, don't just take my word for it. See what some unbiased, well-known experts have to say...

- A Harvard Business School professor noted, "It is well documented that brands that increase marketing efforts during a recession, when competitors are cutting back, can improve market share, and ROI..."
- *The Harvard Business Review*. "The rationale that a company can afford a cutback... because everybody else is cutting back is false... The company courageous enough to stay in the fight... can bring about a dramatic change in market position."
- Dr. Francois Sauer (author of *Relearn, Evolve, and Adapt*): "Why is it that some individuals are able to adjust to a continually changing environment, while others find themselves paralyzed and frustrated by the changes around them? Why do some organizations who have experienced great success in the past suddenly find themselves ineffective and lost at the same time that others thrive?"

Monitor your competitors. By definition, recessions are temporary—and successful companies don't abandon their growth strategies due to temporary setbacks. Here's what happens in bad times — disruption. Disruption means things change. And things often change quickly and dramatically. When things change, there are opportunities and a successful business seizes opportunities—that's what makes them successful businesses. In fact, 16 of the 30 companies that make up the Dow industrial average were started during a recession or depression. These include Disney, FedEx, McDonald's, General Electric, IBM and Johnson & Johnson. Let's take a look at the years 1973-1975. At the time, the United States had an unpopular president, was in the midst of the Watergate scandal and was at the tail end of an extremely costly war that had divided the country. Gas prices jumped by nearly 50% in just two years. Consumer confidence dropped to an all-time low.

It was a terrible time to start a business, right? Well, here are just a few of the companies started in those awful years of the early 1970's: Supercuts, Chili's, Cablevision, Famous Amos cookies, Oakley and, oh, yes, a small company called Microsoft.

So what opportunities are you going seize?

Happy Retailing,



Moe Lastfogel

The Pendulum

WORK-LIFE BALANCE: REDUCE STRESS AND RESTORE HARMONY

With my personal milestone event announced to the (appliance) world last month, I have been examining the concept of work-life balance and ways to create a more harmonious lifestyle and make my dreams come true. So how do I begin this balancing act? This balance they say is the key to well being, or so it seems, but only in theory. How can there ever be balance when the Pendulum is perpetually moving back and forth through a center point of equanimity? You can't freeze frame that moment, it's constantly passing thru...

When your work life and your personal life feel out of balance, stress—along with its harmful effects—is the result. The good news is that you can take control and give yourself the time to do the things that are most important to you. The Mayo Clinic has some sound advice to help you find the balance that's best for you. "For most people, juggling the demands of career and personal life is an ongoing challenge. With so many demands on your time—from overtime to family obligations—it can feel difficult to strike this balance. The goal is to make time for the activities that are the most important to you.

- **Keep a log.** Track everything you do for one week: work-related and non-work-related activities. Decide what's necessary and what satisfies you the most. Cut or delegate activities you don't enjoy and don't have time for.
- **Take advantage of your options.** Find out if your employer offers flex hours, a compressed workweek, job-sharing or telecommuting for your role.
- **Learn to say no.** Whether it's a co-worker asking you to spearhead an extra project or your child's teacher asking you to manage the class play, remember that it's OK to respectfully say no. When you quit doing the things you only do out of guilt or a false sense of obligation, you'll make more room in your life for the activities that are meaningful to you and bring you joy.
- **Leave work at work.** With today's global business mentality and the technology to connect to anyone at any time from virtually anywhere, there's no boundary between work and home — unless you create it. Make a conscious decision to turn off your cell phone and put away your laptop computer.
- **Manage your time.** Rethink your cleaning standards. An unmade bed or sink of dirty dishes won't impact the quality of your life. Do what needs to be done and let the

rest go. If you can afford it, pay someone else to clean your house.

- **Communicate clearly.** Limit time-consuming misunderstandings by communicating clearly and listening carefully. Take notes if necessary.
- **Nurture yourself.** Set aside time each day for an activity that you enjoy, such as walking, working out or listening to music. Unwind after a hectic workday by reading, practicing yoga, or taking a bath or shower.
- **Set aside one night each week for recreation.** Take the phone off the hook, power down the computer and turn off the TV. Discover activities you can do with your partner, family or friends, such as playing golf, fishing or canoeing. Making time for activities you enjoy will rejuvenate you.
- **Protect your day off.** Try to schedule some of your routine chores on workdays so that your days off are more relaxing. Doing one or two loads of laundry every day, rather than saving it all for your day off, and running errands in batches are good places to begin.
- **Get enough sleep.** There's nothing as stressful and potentially dangerous as working when you're sleep-deprived. Not only is your productivity affected, but also you can make costly mistakes.
- **Bolster your support system.** Give yourself the gift of a trusted friend or co-worker to talk with during times of stress or hardship. Ensure you have trusted friends and relatives who can assist you when you need to work overtime or travel for your job.

Creating balance in your life is a continuous process. Demands on your time change as your family interests and work life change. Balance doesn't mean doing everything. Examine your priorities and set boundaries. Be firm in what you can and cannot do."

I hope this summer allows you to take the time you need for yourself and your loved ones. Only you can restore harmony to create the life you want to live.



Eliana Barriga
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PC Much More Than

PCBC is a community of builders and manufacturers, building scientists and architects, environmental engineers and landscape companies, working together to advance the art and science of community building. Started 50 years ago as the Pacific Coast Builders Conference, PCBC brings together people creating better communities, imagining and building the places where we love to live.

PCBC The Show is held each summer in San Francisco's Moscone Center. Featuring hundreds of exhibiting companies displaying the latest product and service innovations and three days of executive conferences, forums, workshops, and speakers, PCBC The Show is the idea marketplace for leading residential builders, developers, architects, investors, product manufacturers, and advisers in the industry.

PCBC is a marketplace of ideas and diverse perspectives, a 'think tent' for those who design, develop and create the places we live. Our work is informed and energized by what we value.

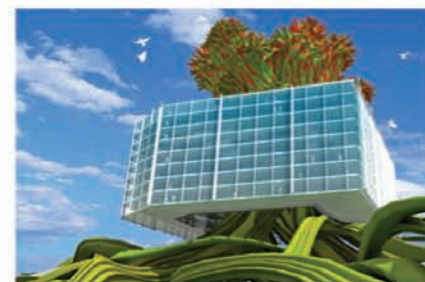
The following list of core values reflects what is truly important to PCBC as an organization. These are values that don't change over time or with the market but rather they guide us, much like a beacon, when our visibility is most challenged. Many people feel PCBC is a special gathering—something unique and valuable, something to protect. These core values are the primary reasons for this feeling, and they transcend our size, our numbers and our balance sheet.

- We believe community is the best expression of what it means to be human. We respect individuals and honor our collective interests, strengths, and cultures.
- We believe sustainability means taking responsibility for our quality of life, today and tomorrow. We are learning how to balance concerns for the planet, people, and prosperity.
- We believe innovation in both products and ideas leads to enduring and positive change. We champion the inventions and approaches that can make a difference.
- We believe in the power of design to create a shared pride of place in our communities and to enhance the quality of our lives.
- We believe urban living and compact development is an artful enterprise. We bring together the people who are changing how we live in cities, connecting the places where we live and work.

PC



PCBC A
the new age



 the new age of invention  the new age of invention

BC[®] a Builders Show



- We believe integrity of purpose and action is our true inspiration. We present the people whose stories and ideas unite us in our common purpose.

EXHIBITOR PROFILE

PCBC The Show features products — and the companies that create them— covering an extensive range of residential building materials from new home technologies to the explosion in green products.

BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER

“For many PCBC exhibitors, a 10-by-10 booth is plenty to sell builders on their products,” according to Bill Burnett, former Real Estate Editor for the San Francisco Chronicle.

“They call them the 10-by-10’s, or sometimes just the 10’s. These are the smallest plots of real estate at the Moscone Center that exhibitors can rent during PCBC week. And for \$3,600, all they get is the floor space. Tenant improvements are extra,” Burnett stated.

“But a tour of these small displays shows that a lot of marketing can be accomplished in 100 square feet. A handful of exhibitors paid a premium of \$4,500 to set up their displays in the Smart Solutions area, prime space dedicated to things green and sustainable.”

Burnett stated that “Stephen Ross, Vice President for Summit Appliances, said 100 square feet is all he needs to get his message across. ‘We have specialty projects for each marketplace so we customize a 10-by-10 booth for each show. If we had a larger booth, we’d just fill it up with more stuff,’ said the Bronx, NY maker of compact appliances and outdoor kitchens. Ross, who has come to Moscone two other times, likes the Show this year. “ ‘We’re not seeing the usual tire kickers, or the usual entourages. The people here are the ones making the decisions.’ ” (www.summitappliance.com)

ATTENDEE PROFILE

Verified registrants representing the Western United States, Canada, Mexico and more than 25 other countries include homebuilders, developers, architects, investors, general contractors, trade contractors, interior designers, real estate brokers, consultants, product manufacturers, and other industry advisors.



 the new age of invention  the new age of invention



THE KEYNOTES

Fareed Zakaria, Editor, Newsweek International*Opening Breakfast - The Post American World*

Fareed Zakaria is a global economic and political trend spotter. He's the editor of *Newsweek International*, writes *Newsweek* cover stories and columns that reach 25 million readers weekly and hosts CNN's weekly international news program *Fareed Zakaria GPS*. The Indian-born author of the bestselling book *The Post-American World* has been an ABC News analyst and appeared on *Charlie Rose*, *The NewsHour* and, of course, *The Daily Show*.

**Adam Werbach, Global CEO, Saatchi & Saatchi S***The Future of Sustainability: Social, Cultural, Economic and Environmental*

Controversial sustainability expert Adam Werbach stirred things up at PCBC 2009. The youngest-ever President of the Sierra Club at 23, Werbach has since been vilified by the environmental community for working with Wal-Mart to help lead their global sustainability initiative. Attendees heard his unique perspective on a sustainable business vision that unites operational, marketing and HR objectives. Werbach founded *Act Now* to engage the corporate and media world in social, environmental, cultural and economic change. It is now Saatchi & Saatchi S, the world's largest sustainability agency. A communications advisor on climate change for the National Academies of Science, Werbach has appeared on *The O'Reilly Factor*, *Charlie Rose* and *Politically Incorrect with Bill Maher*.

**Kevin Carroll, Author and Founder of "Katalyst"***Rediscovering Play: Bringing Fun and Passion to Your Work...and Life*

Storyteller and "katalyst" Kevin Carroll motivates companies like Nike, Starbucks, ESPN, Mattel, Capital One and the National Hockey League to improve team dynamics and communication to achieve their bottom-line goals. The founder of Kevin Carroll Katalyst/LLC, Carroll is the author of *Rules of the Red Rubber Ball: Find and Sustain Your Life's Work* and *What's Your Red Rubber Ball?! Discover Your Inspiration and Chase it for a Lifetime*.

**Seth Godin, Bestselling Author & Marketing Guru***Closing Keynote: The Future of Marketing is Leadership*

Seth Godin is a bestselling author, entrepreneur and agent of change. His books (including *Permission Marketing*, *Purple Cow* and *The Dip*) have changed the way people think about marketing, change and work. He's also the author of the world's most widely read marketing blog. In Seth's latest bestseller, *Tribes*, he argues that the most powerful form of marketing is leadership—and he shows how anyone can now identify, connect and lead a tribe of passionate believers, creating movements that matter.

| continued on page 8 |

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Southeast: Steve Campbell 727.939.8191	South Central: Marc Ingram 972.770.3313	Southwest: Craig Cracchiolo 480.367.2911	



*Based on an 8-lb. AHAM load, 10 loads per week.

A DAY-BY-DAY FOLLOW-UP

By *Bill Burnett, former Real Estate Editor, San Francisco Chronicle*

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17 PCBC KNOWS COOL

INNOVATIVE 2009 COOL PRODUCT WINNERS ADVANCE HOMEBUILDING IN MANY WAYS

There's sexy, and then there's cool.

At PCBC sexy might mean a refrigerator that reminds you when to go grocery shopping, or a private elevator. Cool goes a step further.

In the eight years PCBC has been giving out the Cool Product Awards, a "cool" product has come to mean one that improves homebuilding, makes a new home more inviting to a buyer and improves the sustainability of our resources.

This year, a panel of homebuilders, media and architects chose winners in four categories: Conserves Natural Resources; Contributes to a Healthier, Safer Living Environment; A New, Cool Invention; and Saves Energy.

Here are the coolest of the cool, PCBC's 2009 Cool Products winners:

CONSERVES NATURAL RESOURCES

EcoStar, a roofing tile manufacturer out of Carlisle, PA has added a new, 10-inch size to its Majestic Slate product line. Heidi Ellsworth, a Regional Manager for the company, said the new tile can be mixed with 12-inch EcoStar tiles for a roof that has the look of true slate. Ellsworth said the tiles, made mostly of rubber and plastic, use 80 percent recycled materials, will not fade and will last at least 20 years. www.ecostar.carlisle.com

CONTRIBUTES TO A HEALTHY, SAFER ENVIRONMENT

Icynene, the spray-foam insulation company, has been around for a decade. Rather than come up with a new product, the Buffalo, NY company improved the one it already had. The company's LD-R-50 foam is made with castor oil rather than oils derived from fossil fuels. Regional Sales Manager Patrick Bullion said the castor bean is essentially a weed. Crops are not irrigated, nor do they require pesticides. www.icynene.com

A NEW, COOL INVENTION

Panasonic scored a hit with its new line of WhisperGreen ventilation fans. The company says the fan moves 80 cubic feet of air per minute and is equipped with variable speed controls and a motion sensor. The company says a new motor allows the WhisperGreen to exceed ENERGY STAR® guidelines by as much as 550 percent. www.panasonic.com/consumer_electronics/ventilation_central/WhatsLurking.asp

SAVES ENERGY

Custom-Bilt Metals, a 35-year-old Chino, CA, manufacturer of metal roofing, is the first to market a clean look for solar panels. The FusionSolar system uses a thin-film solar laminate that is already integrated into the roof. "It can't break. It's completely walkable and there's no roof penetration," said Joe Chiovare, a representative for the company. www.custombiltmetals.com

THURSDAY, JUNE 18 IMAGINING THE FUTURE

PCBC AND GOLD NUGGET AWARDS TEAM UP TO IMAGINE HOW HOMES AND COMMUNITIES OF THE NEAR- AND MORE-DISTANT FUTURE WILL BE DESIGNED

PCBC has seen the future – and according to a number of architects and architectural students around the West, it's smaller, denser and multigenerational.

To celebrate its 50-year anniversary, PCBC partnered with the Gold Nugget Awards, the architecture and design contest that at 46 years old is no spring chicken itself. The idea was to look to the next 50 years and beyond.

Architecture firms and teams of architects and college students were asked to "imagine the future" and produce concepts for where and how we'll live in the next generations.

PODS OF BANGLADESH

Assume that by the year 2152 global warming has caused thousands of acres of Southeast Asia to be flooded by encroaching seawater. KTG architects and Cal Poly Pomona did – and came up with a novel solution. They proposed high-rise towers anchored to the sea floor and composed of self-sufficient pods. The twisting monoliths would contain independent units for living, recreation and community life, as well as modules to collect water, compost waste and generate power.

THE HELIOTROPIC HOUSE

University of Idaho students and South Coast Architects designed what could easily be a luxury home 10 or 20 years from now. The three-story house comes with separate living space for a friend or family member. Think multi-generation. The home would feature photovoltaic panels to catch the sun, a rooftop system to collect rainwater and a windmill to harness the wind. If built, the house would live up to its name by rotating to track the sun.

HOME TO 3 GENERATIONS

Here's one that could happen in the near future. In Huntington Beach, Calif., 20 acres sits scraped and ready, the site preparation complete. Before the building industry ground to a halt, the plan at Sea-Shore Village was to erect 192 single-family houses. Martin & Associates architects

have radically changed the concept, slightly increasing the density to 252 units but adding lots of open space and diversity. Worth noting are a number of designs for two-story triplexes – two units on the bottom, one on top – in which aging baby boomers, their aged parents and their returned-from-college kids could live comfortably. The plan also includes a number of live-work units. Market researcher John Martin said the project could break ground as early as next year.

BYE-BYE BIG BOX

When mega-stores go out of business B3 Architects and Berkus Design Studio think there should be more left behind than acres of metal and concrete. Their concept is to reinvent the space, keeping some retail but also adding residences, including live-work space. The architects say this denser living fosters social activity, thus building community. B3/Berkus also offered other blue-sky glimpses into the future, including a case study for the rebuilding of New Orleans that features a number of raised peninsulas for housing. The firm also dreams about a “Botanic Community” where the suburbs have been reinvented, partly by building homes whose roofs do double duty as vegetable gardens.

FRIDAY, JUNE 19

ATTENDEES FOCUS ON BUSINESS AT PCBC 2009

PCBC 2009 proved to be an intimate, rather serious affair—a place where attendees were more interested in doing business than in doing cocktails and dinner.

But show officials said that was expected given the sharp downturn in the homebuilding industry during the past three years, but added that given the feedback from attendees and exhibitors alike, PCBC’s 50th Anniversary edition has to be considered a success.

“We expect attendance will be somewhere in the 13,000s,” said Linda Baysari, Senior Vice President of Meetings and Conventions for the California Building Industry Association, which sponsors the conference each year. Last year’s attendance was 19,995.

Last year, 600 exhibitors leased booths; this year the total was 350. And, while the show has used all three of Moscone Center’s convention halls in the past, this year PCBC fit snugly into just the South Hall.

“It’s an accurate reflection of the industry,” said Baysari, who is running her 16th PCBC. “When you think about housing starts being off 82 percent, it’s not surprising to see that impact the show. If anything, in the worst market that anyone has experienced, it’s surprising that so many would show up. It certainly shows the resiliency of the industry.”

CBIA President and CEO Robert Rivinius, who is finishing his 30th year at the helm of the Association, said that while PCBC is smaller for obvious reasons, he saw a lot of positive energy at the Moscone Center. “I think people have a sense that we’ve bottomed out. We won’t come roaring back but we are entering a time of recovery. The folks that are here are the survivors. And they feel pretty good about that,” he said.

Both Rivinius and Baysari said that while size matters to some degree, PCBC is more importantly a place to network and to toss around ideas. “Remember the Wednesday night cocktail circuit?” Rivinius said. “How many parties were there – 30, 40? This year there might have been five or six, but they were full and fun. It’s just that there’s more of a sense of business this year both with the exhibitors and attendees.” Baysari often gauges a show’s success by the comments coming from the exhibit floor. “I’ve been very pleased with what I’m hearing,” she said. “This core group (of builders) that remains is sending their leaders, their founders. These are people who are going to lead us out of this. There are people on the floor that are saying, ‘Show me product. I’m ready to buy.’ “For me, this isn’t an issue of how large PCBC is, as long as the leaders in the industry are participating, it can be a one-hall show. My challenge is to keep the representation there. It’s not about size; it’s making sure we have all the right exhibitors represented.”

A number of big-name companies were no-shows this year, most notably, Kohler, Viking and Sub-Zero/Wolf. “It’s their loss. They’re missing out on a good market. Their competitors are here,” Rivinius said, citing such long-time exhibitors as General Electric and Whirlpool. He also pointed out that many Western builders forego the huge national show in January and do all their research at PCBC. “But, we’re going to work on getting them back. They’re important to the show and to the industry.” Rivinius said recovery is coming but it’s not going to be fast. “I’m getting good vibes from around the state. There’s a lot of enthusiasm. Next year I want to say 2009 is the year we bottomed out.”



THE GOLD NUGGET AWARDS

The Gold Nugget Awards are a centerpiece of PCBC—Homebuilding’s Premier Tradeshow and Conference. Combining the prestige of the awards themselves with the excitement of its Academy Awards-style presentation, these ceremonies feature music, entertainment and the exceptional visual presentation of winners. The 46th ANNUAL GOLD NUGGET AWARDS recognizing builders, developers,

GE's Hottest Cooking System Yet:

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GE Profile™

Long preferred by commercial chefs and discriminating European cooks alike, induction cooking provides superior control over virtually any recipe. Soon this remarkable technology

will transform a wide range of kitchens: The first GE Profile™ free-standing range with induction cooking will be available in North America in July 2009.

The innovative technology cooks via a magnetic field to provide the responsiveness of gas, remarkably fast heating and excellent efficiency. Offered exclusively under the GE Profile brand, the range provides home cooks the higher level of control needed to achieve superior results.

FASTER, MORE-EFFICIENT COOKING

Induction technology saves precious minutes by bringing water to the boiling point faster than gas or electric cooktops. It also saves time after dinner, because spills will not cook onto the stove. The seamless design allows any liquid or food to be simply wiped away.

With induction cooking, the surface surrounding the burners does not get hot. Instead, a current is produced when an induction-compatible pan with a steel or magnetic bottom is placed on the cooktop. The current heats the pan and cooks the food inside.

Less energy is wasted with induction cooking compared to gas or electric, because the technology transfers heat directly to the cookware and the food, rather than heating up the surface area of the cooktop. With a 3700-watt output element, the innovative cooktop assures that meats, vegetables and soups cook quickly and efficiently. Sauces and other delicate foods may be gently warmed on the simmer level.

With all the performance benefits of popular GE Profile free-standing ranges and a variety of new features, the new ranges with induction cooking give home chefs the tools they need to prepare food with restaurant-quality results. Designed in a variety of colors, finishes and sizes, the new free-standing ranges will be available in July 2009.

GE Consumer & Industrial spans the globe as an industry leader in major appliance, lighting and integrated industrial equipment, systems and services. Providing solutions for commercial, industrial and residential use in more than 100 countries, GE Consumer & Industrial uses innovative technologies and “ecomagination,” a GE initiative to aggressively bring to market new technologies that help customers and consumers meet pressing environmental challenges, to deliver comfort, convenience and electrical protection and control. General Electric (NYSE: GE) brings imagination to work, selling products under the Monogram®, Profile™, GE®, Hotpoint®, SmartWater™, Reveal® and Energy Smart™ consumer brands, and Entellisys® industrial brand. For more information, consumers may visit www.ge.com.

The Haier Home “Inspired by you. Made by us.” Tour Hits the Highway

MOBILE HOME SHOWCASES THE NEWEST HAIER PRODUCTS INCLUDING A 42" HDTV, FULL KITCHEN AND LAUNDRY ROOM

Haier®

Haier America, a leading manufacturer of home appliances and electronics,



hit the open road this summer with its exciting Haier Home Tour. The tour launched July 4th weekend at Taste of Chicago in Chicago IL, the 53-foot tractor-trailer folds down into a fully accessible front porch with a three-room walk-through for visitors. Each room is furnished with Haier products, including Haier air conditioners that cool the entire mobile home.

"We have truly outdone ourselves and have taken our company to the next level with this summer's tour, showcasing most of our product lines in the traveling Haier Home," said Michael Jemal, Haier America's President and CEO. "From a kitchen suite, to laundry, to flat-panel high-definition LED televisions, Haier really does offer everything for the home, so millions of consumers will have a chance to see the best of what we offer at fairs and festivals across the country."

The living room showcases a mounted R-Series 42" HDTV that plays footage of NBA action, as Haier is the official HDTV of the NBA. The kitchen features a wide variety of Haier products, including the Counter Depth French Door Refrigerator, Haier's new tall tub dishwasher and a 40 bottle wine cellar. Finally, the laundry room showcases a working washing machine and dryer. As an added bonus for touring the vehicle, the Haier products also have forms available for mail-in rebates from \$20.00-\$100.00.

The most exciting part of visiting the Haier Home is the chance to win a line of Haier products from inside the truck, including a refrigerator, a washing machine and dryer! Visitors attending the events can follow clues through the tour of the home and then text in to win or visit <http://www.haieramerica.com/haierhome2009>.

HAIER HOME TOUR SCHEDULE

DATES	MARKET	EVENT
7/31-8/2	Columbus, OH	Ohio State Fair
8/6-8/9	Bethlehem, PA	Musikfest
8/14-8/16	Indianapolis, IN	Indiana State Fair
8/21-8/23	San Mateo, CA	San Mateo County Fair
8/28-8/30	Sacramento, CA	California State Fair
9/5-9/7	St. Paul, MN	Minnesota State Fair
9/11-9/13	Stone Mountain, GA	Yellow Daisy
9/18-9/20	Puyallup, WA	Puyallup Fair

(Schedule subject to change)

Keep up to date on the tour through Twitter <https://twitter.com/HaierAmerica> or <http://www.haieramerica.com/haierhome2009>

Kobe Offers New Products to Line-up

KOBE

KOBE Range Hoods is a leader in quiet kitchen ventilation. KOBE Kitchen ventilation products are designed by Tosho & Company, Ltd., their parent company in Japan. Tosho & Company, Ltd. has been in the business of selling quality products in Japan and globally for over 40 years. Here are their new offerings:



KOBE NEW WALL MOUNT COPPER HOOD SERIES:

- Handcrafted and customizable on designs and sizes
- 6~8 Weeks delivery time



KOBE NEW ACCESSORY LINE OF COPPER BACKSPLASH SERIES:

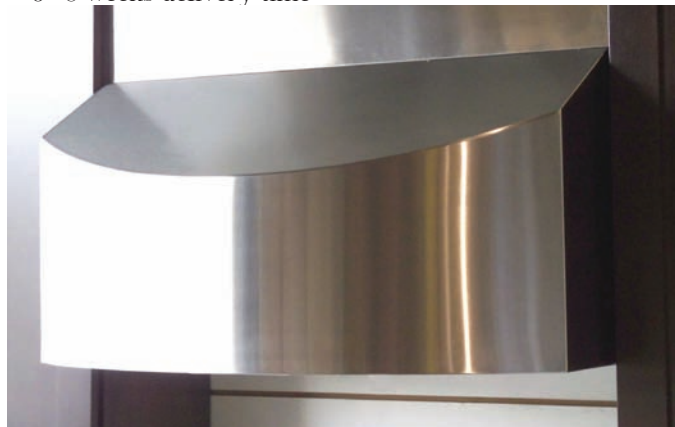
- Handcrafted
- 5 standard designs
- Standard size: 36" x 20"
- Customizable on designs and sizes
- 6~8 weeks delivery time

| *continued on page 12* |



KOBE NEW ACCESSORY LINE OF BRASS BACKSPLASH SERIES:

- Handcrafted
- 24 standard designs
- Two standard sizes:
- 36" x 20"
- 30 1/4" x 20 1/4"
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- 6~8 weeks delivery time



KOBE NEW PROTOTYPE

- CH-04 series - multi-style hood:
- Multi-style hood – can be installed as under cabinet or wall mount (duct cover optional) style.
- Sizes: 30", 36", 42", 48"
- Seamless, bold, modern design
- 1000 CFM (high)
- Unique QuietMode™ feature
- 4 speed / rotary controls
- 2 level lightings
- 2 halogen lights (12v 20w) for 30" & 36" hoods;
3 halogen lights (12v 20w) for 42" & 48" hoods.
- LED lights available soon
- Baffle filters (dishwasher safe)
- ISC safety feature (integrated sensor control)
- 3-minute delay shutoff feature



KOBE NEW PROTOTYPE

- RA-05 series – European wall mount hood:
- Sizes: 30", 36", 42", 48"
- Seamless, elegant and modern design
- 1000 CFM (high)
- Unique QuietMode™ feature
- 4 Speed / rotary controls
- 2 level lightings
- 2 halogen lights (12v 20w) for 30" & 36" hoods;
3 Halogen Lights (12v 20w) for 42" & 48" hoods.
- LED lights available soon
- Two heat lamps
- Baffle filters (dishwasher safe)
- ISC safety feature (integrated sensor control)
- 3-minute delay shutoff feature

ABOUT KOBE

KOBE Range Hoods is recognized for providing top quality kitchen ventilation products in the United States, as well as Canada. Our goal is to design kitchen ventilation product with innovative styles, pioneering technology at an attractive price. The result of KOBE's extensive research and development is a series of kitchen ventilation products that are seamless, elegant, powerful, and possessing a very unique feature, the QuietMode technology. This famous and remarkable QuietMode feature allows you to operate your range hood without the irritation of fan noise while cooking and entertaining your family and guests in the kitchen. It is precisely described in our motto, "So Quiet...You Won't Believe It's On!"

KOBE Range Hoods has experienced tremendous growth throughout its history due to our attention to quality and customer service. We invite you to join us and play an important part in the innovation that KOBE creates for the kitchens of the future!

Visit www.koberangehoods.com | continued on page 14 |

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Maytag® Bravos® High-Efficiency, Top-Loading Laundry Pair Now Offers Largest Capacity Available in the Industry



LARGER 5.0 CUBIC FOOT (I.E.C.) WASHERS ALSO FEATURE FASTER SPIN SPEEDS



The Maytag® Bravos® high-efficiency, top-load laundry pair now has an even larger capacity of 5.0 cubic feet (International Electrotechnical Commission), enabling it to wash up to 18 pounds of laundry per load. The larger capacity washer also has an increased spin speed of 1100-RPM to extract more water for faster drying and commercial grade components, such as a stainless steel wash basket and double balancing rings, to ensure Bravos laundry pairs provide dependable service for years to come.

Maytag brand homeowners look for both dependability and efficiency in their appliances. According to a recent Whirlpool Corporation survey*, 84 percent of consumers said that energy, not water or time, is most important to them when it comes to home appliance efficiency. As the first top-load to meet Tier III Consortium for Energy Efficiency (CEE)** energy specifications, Maytag Bravos uses up to 67 percent less energy and 70 percent less water than traditional top-load washers. Additionally, its larger capacity allows for larger loads of laundry to be washed, reducing the number of loads of laundry per week, which leads to further energy savings.

Durable components and dependable features make up the Bravos pair. A Smooth Balance™ Hung Suspension System with Superior Vibration Control allows the washer to operate smoothly and minimize vibration, while double balancing rings counter-balance off-balance loads, even during an 1100-RPM spin. An impeller wash system with Sensi-Care™ technology effectively cleans clothes and the Gentle Breeze™ drying system with IntelliDry® sensors quickly and efficiently dries clothing.

Select Bravos models offer steam and sanitization | continued on page 16 |



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features. The sanitary and the super wash cycle are proven to remove at least 95 percent of dust mites and pet dander from clothing, and are an effective alternative to bleach. The Bravos steam dryer offers a variety of cycles to quickly rejuvenate a single item or outfit, to relax wrinkles from clothes left overnight in the dryer, or to refresh and deodorize throw pillows, comforters or curtains.

**This survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive on behalf of Whirlpool Corporation between December 29 - 31, 2008 among 2,042 US adults aged 18+. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a full methodology is available.*

***CEE Tier system is based on the Department of Energy Consortium for Energy Efficiency ratings. Percentages compared to conventional top-load washers.*



Reinventing the Outdoor Cooking Experience

TRADITION FOR DCS BY FISHER & PAYKEL

Outdoor design innovation: DCS by Fisher & Paykel continues to lead the industry in outdoor cooking equipment design. They are bringing greater versatility to its Liberty Collection in 2009 with new corner island design and flexible kitchen layouts.

Reinventing the outdoor cooking and entertaining experience is nothing new for DCS by Fisher & Paykel. The company has been an industry design leader in the outdoor cooking category for years and has announced its redesigned Liberty Collection.

DCS by Fisher & Paykel liberated the world of outdoor cooking and entertaining in delivering the first “see-it today, cook on it tonight” outdoor kitchen island complete with three professionally styled 30-inch cooking components: the All-Grill, the Side-Burner Sink and the Side-Burner Griddle. Continuing to redefine its unique design, DCS by Fisher & Paykel offers new Liberty Collection features, including expanded outdoor refrigeration options and customized layouts to allow home culinary experts to create their own outdoor kitchen worthy of a gourmet chef.

“This is the second year in a row that we have expanded the options in our Liberty Collection line,” said Laurence Mawhinney, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Fisher & Paykel Appliances. “Our Liberty Collection design truly allows you to build your kitchen island in any configuration you want.”

Incorporating the entire family into the outdoor cooking experience was one of the primary considerations of the DCS design | continued on page 18 |



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experts in developing the new curved island design. This option further enhances the interactive 360 degree viewing capability of outdoor cooking for the chef and guests, enabling everyone to more easily watch and participate in the meal's preparation. The corner configuration provides more than adequate spacing between whichever suites of outdoor cooking components you choose. Other impressive aspects of the new design are the ample countertop preparation area and storage space.

All the capabilities of your indoor kitchen can finally be realized in an outdoor setting. Connectivity, simplicity, performance, ease of use and installation are what sets apart The Liberty Collection as its components are shipped ready to assemble. Beyond its adaptable design, overall cooking performance is what truly distinguishes the Liberty Collection. The All-Grill unit features two independent burners each capable of 25,000 BTU, a patented DCS Grease Management System® that reduces flare-ups by effectively keeping oil and grease away from the flame as you grill, and ceramic radiant technology that ensures the cooking surface has an even heat distribution. You can cook anything from delicate fish to steaks with delicious results.

The Side-Burner Griddle includes two sealed burners (17,000 BTU each) and a stainless steel griddle (12,000 BTU) and enables you to tackle dishes typically not cooked in outdoor kitchens such as pancakes or omelets.

The DCS refrigeration line up now features a cooling drawer unit, a traditional cold storage unit, a beer tap and an ice machine. The DCS Outdoor Beer Dispenser is the perfect accoutrement to your outdoor entertaining.

To find out more about the DCS by Fisher & Paykel brand, please call 888-936-7872 or you can also get more information at www.dcsappliances.com.

Retail Advisory Board Meeting

R RIGGS DISTRIBUTING, INC.



Riggs Distributing, Inc. in Burlingame, CA hosted its semi-annual Retail Advisory Board Meeting in its facility this year. Robert Hostetler, Vice President of Sales, hosted

over twenty-five key retail salespeople in a conference that included a wide range of topics. During this meeting, retail salespeople discussed current market trends and successful merchandising programs and advertising strategies.

The salespeople cited successful programs they have instituted in their individual dealerships. Mr. Hostetler stated, "The exchange of ideas was extremely beneficial to all that attended." He went on to say, "What better way to gauge the pulse of our business than to have a round-table discussion with people from different trading areas within the California market."

These Retail Advisory Board Meetings have proved to be extremely important—indeed, essential—during these challenging times.

New Maytag Side-By-Side Refrigerators Bring Convenience and Durability to the Kitchen



REFRIGERATORS PROVIDE FORM AND FUNCTIONALITY WITH FILL-N-CHILL™ AND RIGHT-SIZE ICE CUBES

Fill-N-Chill™ dispenses ice and water together, right-size ice cubes fit easily into refillable water bottles and adjustable SpillCatcher™ shelves keep messes contained. These are among the numerous improvements available within the new Maytag brand lineup of ENERGY STAR® qualified side-by-side refrigerators. The new refrigerators are equipped with an array of features that fit the way homeowners live today and are built better with durable components to provide years of convenience within the kitchen.



The new Fill-N-Chill side-by-side refrigerator provides households with a variety of reliable refrigeration options homeowners can dispense water and ice simultaneously, program the water to dispense the exact amount needed for a recipe or ensure fruits and vegetables last longer with the Freshlock™ crisper pan. The Fill-N-Chill refrigerator adds

versatility to the kitchen, as well as durability, since its exterior comes complete with die cast handles on the stainless steel and Silver-Ultra models that are not only aesthetically pleasing, but also built to endure the test of time. The feature-loaded Fill-N-Chill appliances are a part of Maytag's 2009 product line up, which is engineered to provide long-lasting refrigeration solutions.

The Fill-N-Chill dispenser ensures each and every serving of water is at its coolest, dispensing ice and water concurrently from a single pad. The dispenser easily accommodates a variety of containers, including glasses, pans and pitchers up to 9 inches tall, making water and ice accessible at the push of a single button.

The Maytag side-by-side Fill-N-Chill refrigerators will be available spring 2009.

Bluestar™ Launches 2009 Line of High-Performance Gas Wall Ovens



BlueStar™, manufacturer of high-performance gas ranges, cook tops, and hoods for the residential market, officially announced the launch of its 2009 line of built-in gas wall ovens for the home. The ovens are available in 24", 30" and 36" sizes and can be

ordered in 190 different colors.

The 24" oven features a swing door, while the 30" and 36" models feature French doors. All oven sizes offer convection cooking and feature a 25,000 BTU burner, a 15,000 BTU ceramic infrared broiler, as well as the largest oven capacity in their class.

"One of the biggest changes for 2009, besides an optimized aesthetic, is dependent French doors. Now when you open the left door on the 30" and 36" ovens, the right door will open simultaneously. This is an incredibly useful feature in commercial kitchens—and we've brought the same concept to the home chef with our 2009 model wall ovens," says Mike Trapp, BlueStar's Vice President of Operations.

BLUESTAR GAS WALL OVEN PRODUCT FEATURES:

- 24", 30", and 36" ovens available as single ovens or two single ovens double stacked.
- 24" features swing door; 30" and 36" feature French doors.
- Powerful 25,000 BTU burner within each oven.
- 15,000 BTU ceramic infrared broiler.
- Largest oven capacity available on 24", 30" and 36" gas wall oven.
- Convection oven cooking.
- Full extension oven rack.
- Heat assist element standard for quick start-ups and 3,000 BTU of additional power.
- Natural or propane.
- Available in 190 colors.

"All the research is showing people are staying home and cooking more. And they're increasingly seeking quality products that both look good and perform at a high level. I think that's why the wall ovens have struck a cord. The combination of the high performance gas convection oven, French doors, and 190 colors is truly unique. It's still early, but the wall ovens have already become one of the most popular new product introductions in BlueStar's history. We started delivering the product in May to distributors who had backordered the product and sales have not slowed down since," says Keith Wolf, BlueStar's Vice President of Marketing.

Customers can order the ovens in 190 different colors, at no extra charge. Custom colors are also available. Retail prices range from approximately \$2,520 for the 24" single oven to \$8,732 for two 36" single ovens double-stacked.

A full list of features and pictures are available on the BlueStar website: http://www.bluestarcooking.com/pr_wo.html#top

ABOUT BLUESTAR

BlueStar—The Only Genuine Restaurant Range for the Home™—manufactures high-performance freestanding gas ranges, cook tops, drop-in cook tops, wall ovens, hoods, salamanders, indoor charbroilers, and cookware for the residential market. The company's unique open burner system produces 22,000 BTU of cooking power, resulting in shorter cooking times and an even simmer. Each BlueStar range is hand-crafted in Reading, Pennsylvania and features burners that can be custom configured at the time of order. Most BlueStar models are available in 190 colors, at no extra charge. For more information, please visit www.bluestarcooking.com. **RO**



architects, and land planners with communities and projects in the 14 Western States and ALL international countries.

Any project or development that was open for sale, lease or rental from January 1, 2007 to date of entry located in the following states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. Gold Nugget winners share one common denominator: excellence and innovation in addressing complex design/build issues.

For more information on the Gold Nugget Awards and this year's winners visit www.goldnuggetawards.com

PROJECT OF THE YEAR: Yanonali Court, Santa Barbara, CA

Builder: Berkus Constructions

Developer: Del Mar Development/Berkus Construction

Architect: Jeffrey Berkus & B3 Architects, a Berkus Design Studio Increments



Judges Statement: The design review process in Santa Barbara is about as stringent as they come, but that didn't stop the architects and builders behind this boutique venture from turning a quarter acre into something special. As a group, the five small infill units (all less than 2,000 square feet) that make up this little pocket neighborhood scored LEED Platinum certification and went on to become a pilot for the city's "Built Green" program. Water-conserving features such as onsite rainwater collection, pervious paving materials, and xeriscaping with sustainable irrigation practices are central to its drought tolerant mission. The homes, which are oriented around a central courtyard with a shared outdoor fireplace and fountain, respect and abide by the area's Spanish architectural traditions, but they aren't cookie cutter. Each residence is thoughtfully oriented with its own unique entry and arrival sequence. The scale is sublime, and the little things – from wrought iron details to arched windows and doors – are nothing short of impeccable. Herein lies a model for good architecture and craftsmanship, as well as sustainability.

PCBC® 2010 is tentatively scheduled from June 9 - 11 at the Moscone Center. See you next year! 



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Experience the Thrill of the Grill

LakeView Appliance Distributing introduced the Viking Mobile Outdoor Living Demonstration Display. The mobile display will allow customers to browse through the latest in Viking Outdoor Products and experience on-going demonstrations with Viking premium outdoor gas grills and smokers. Customers will learn to maximize their grilling performance with the basic skills of everyday grilling and smoking. They will improve their knowledge, to help choose the right grill for them. They will also, gain a basic understanding of outdoor equipment, site selection and design of outdoor living spaces.

Installed in the Mobile Display is 14-1/2' of Viking stainless steel cabinetry featuring: 24" TruSear™ burner; 53" E-Series premium gas grill; double side burner; electric smoker oven and a set of refrigerated drawers. The live demonstration products include: 53" E-Series grill with TruSear™ complete with a gas oven in the cart and the all new Gravity Feed™ Charcoal Smoker which was recently featured in *Time Magazine* as "The King Of Grills".



During the last few weeks, successful events took place at:

- Fireside Hearth and Home, Eagan, MN
- BMW Motorwerks, Bloomington, MN
- Trage Bros., Forest Lake, IL
- All Inc., St. Paul, MN
- Vent-A-Hood of the Twin Cities, Hopkins, MN
- TopLine Appliances, Baxter, MN
- MJ's Contract Appliance, Oakdale, MN
- ABT Electronics, Glenview, IL
- Grand Appliance and TV, Crystal Lake, IL and Wauwatosa, WI
- Young's Appliance, Glen Ellyn, IL

Many more events are scheduled throughout the remainder of the season.

Those who attended experienced all aspects of outdoor cooking and smoking from low and slow cooking, quick cooking of searing and resting fundamentals, vertical roasting, steaming, direct and indirect cooking principles as well as grilling that perfect steak. **RO**



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Liebherr Shines with Innovative New Finish — SmartSteel

MAINTAIN THE BEAUTY OF STAINLESS STEEL WITHOUT THE FINGERPRINTS



Liebherr's extensive research on making its signature stainless steel finish design more user friendly has resulted in SmartSteel being introduced in its 2009 freestanding product offerings. The new SmartSteel finish means the refrigerator doors are more scratch resistant, more durable and easier to clean, but importantly, the aesthetics of the stainless steel are not compromised in any way.

"The difference between SmartSteel and competitive finishes that don't show fingerprints is the process in which the coating is applied," explains Thorsten Platt, Vice President Liebherr North America. "Competitors use a thermal process to apply the coating. Using heat in this way, the stainless steel is left with a yellowish hue. Our process uses advanced UV technology to apply an exceptionally thin coating maintaining the true look and integrity of the stainless steel. This is especially important in refrigerators where there is such a large, visible surface area."

From the consumer's perspective, SmartSteel virtually eliminates fingerprints, and if fingerprints are detected, they can be wiped clean with a dry cloth. In keeping with Liebherr's ActiveGreen commitment, this also eliminates the need for stainless steel cleaners or glass/window cleaners that contain chemicals.

SmartSteel is available on all new freestanding units at 24", 30" and 36" sizes. Visit www.liebherr-appliances.com to view Liebherr's full product line of freestanding, built-in and fully integrated refrigeration and wine storage products.

WHY BUY LIEBHERR?

The name Liebherr symbolizes innovation, skill and drive. Recognized as a specialist in refrigeration and freezer technology worldwide, Liebherr consistently introduces new solutions for freshness.

The combination of trendsetting materials and classic lines offer a distinct design that gives the products their unique identity. It becomes a tangible expression of the superior quality expected in a Liebherr appliance. **RO**



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Wine meets design.

All eyes are on Liebherr's new HWS 1800, a wine storage cabinet that exhibits fine wine in full view rather than under the counter. With the capacity to hold 18 bottles, this innovative unit is surprisingly compact. Coupled with its diminutive size, a sleek recessed handle opens up opportunities for integration beyond the kitchen into the dining room, living room or study. Once inside, your bottles will benefit from ideal storage conditions such as precise temperature control and features that protect against light, odor & vibration, allowing you to enjoy the wine as much as the unique design.



Speed Queen Adds New Distributor in Texas

Laundry equipment manufacturer Speed Queen recently added The Nunn Co. Ltd. as a distributor of its line of commercial quality home laundry products.

"The Nunn Company has a history of quality almost as long as Speed Queen," said Chuck Melton, National Sales Manager of Speed Queen home laundry equipment. "We're pleased they will be adding the Speed Queen line and feel confident their excellent sales staff will expand awareness of the strengths of our products," Melton added.

Based in Amarillo, The Nunn Co. has rich history in Texas, dating back almost 100 years to 1910. The company also has an appliance warehouse in Lubbock. In addition to Speed Queen laundry equipment, Nunn distributes furniture, electronics and other major appliances.

"The Nunn Company is proud to be distributing Speed Queen products to independent dealers," said Richard Kirkland, Marketing Director and Field Sales Manager for Nunn. "Our customers demand quality and Speed Queen's commitment to commercial quality is evident not only in its role as a leader in the coin laundry market but also in the longevity of its products for the home. That made the brand a natural fit for us."



Speed Queen offers a complete line of highly efficient frontload and topload washers for the home, as well as dryers, stack dryers and stack washer/dryers. All of the brand's products are built in Ripon, WI with the same commercial quality components as its models for use in coin laundries and apartment laundry rooms. Each model boasts an industry-leading 3-year parts and labor warranty.

New this year, Speed Queen added the Imperial Series, a washer-dryer set featuring true stainless steel cabinets and wash tubs. The frontload washer averages just 13.9 gallons of water per cycle and holds an ENERGY STAR® rating. In addition to the standard 3-year parts and labor warranty, the Imperial Series comes with a 5-year warranty on all parts.

For more information about Speed Queen's complete line of commercial quality home laundry equipment and the company's industry-leading warranty, call 920-748-3121 or visit www.speedqueen.com. To learn more about The Nunn Co. Ltd, visit www.nunnco.com. **RO**



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Speed Queen® PRESENTS

THE IMPERIAL SERIES



Speed Queen begins its second century in business with another crowning achievement. The Imperial Series combines true stainless steel construction, inside and out, with the peerless performance the brand is known for. The results are a regal look for your laundry room and royal treatment of your laundry loads. Visit us at www.speedqueen.com/imperial



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BOS Substance

SHOWCASING BOSCH'S 2009

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On June 8th, appliance retailers, home builders, interior designers and members of the media visited a unique art installation in New York City: The Bosch Substance Gallery. The gallery served as a festive showcase for Bosch's 2009 product introductions. Holger Fietz, Bosch's Director of Strategic Brand and Channel Management, explained the show's theme, "Quality and efficiency: that is the substance of every Bosch product."

Bosch CEO Michael Traub was on hand to greet guests throughout the reception and personally toured customers through the many exhibits. He explained the gallery was created to embrace the scenic loft's views of the Manhattan skyline while allowing guests to fully experience and appreciate the precision German Engineering that went into each of Bosch's all-new laundry, dishwashers and cooking products.

The event kicked-off with the world premiere of Vision Laundry. Engineered to make the smartest use of energy and water, the ENERGY STAR® qualified Vision is a new full-size front-load laundry line that features the most energy- and water- efficient full size front load washers in the U.S. Vision laundry will be available August 15 as both side by side and stacked configurations.

Vision washers and dryers use advanced EcoSmart™ technology, a network of sensors and intelligent controls, to deliver the most efficient performance without compromising cleaning results. In Vision washers, EcoSmart continuously analyzes the wash cycle and automatically adjusts water level, temperature and suds level. EcoSmart's water savings are

1. [L-R] Holger Fietz, Director of Strategic Marketing and Channel Mgt., Michael Traub, CEO, Chef Kerry Heffernan of Southgate, Gotthard von Hundt, Sr. VP Laundry, Larry Santello, National Trainer 2. Michael Traub 3. Bosch's 800 Plus dishwasher - quietest dishwasher on the market

SCH e Gallery

PRODUCT INTRODUCTIONS

MOE LASTFOGEL

amplified with ActiveWater™, a system that uses 70% less water per load than the industry average. In Vision dryers, EcoSmart senses remaining moisture throughout the cycle to lower the energy usage.

In the adjacent display, visitors were able to see Bosch's new 800 plus dishwasher launched in May. Available in both Integra and Evolution models, the 800 plus is engineered to be the most efficient dishwasher ever sold in North America. It also provides the industry's lowest sound level – just 40 dBA. Bosch dishwashers have been ranked #1 in the J.D. Power & Associates annual customer satisfaction survey for three years in a row.

Chef Kerry Heffernan, Executive Chef of Southgate at the Essex House Hotel, demonstrated the ease of use of Bosch's new induction and electric cooktops featuring both AutoChef cooking sensor technology and precise SteelTouch controls. Throughout the event, Kerry effortlessly cooked several of his signature dishes and served the results directly to guests. AutoChef technology will be available on induction cooktops in July and electric cooktops in August.

Linea refrigerators flanked the bar to provide cold beverages for the guests while the new TASSIMO T65 brewers, featuring a digital display, prepared a range of hot beverages including coffee, real milk cappuccino and latte, espresso, crema, tea and hot chocolate. The new TASSIMO brewers will be available in August.

For more information on Bosch's new line of products, visit the company's brand new Web site: <http://www.bosch-home.com/us>

| continued on page 30 |

at 40 db **4.** Chef Kerry Heffernan demonstrating Bosch's cooktop with AutoChef to guests **5.** New laundry lineup **6.** Martin Knobloch, Sr. VP Dishwashers with guest **7.** Gotthard von Hundt, Sr. VP, Laundry demonstrating Bosch Vision to guests





1. Sustainable setting 2. Holger Fietz, Director of Strategic Marketing and Channel Management 3. Lori Orr, National Product Specialist demonstrating Bosch Linea refrigerator to guest 4. Mark Petrino, Regional Sales Manager with guests 5. Santiago Ananos, Director of Dishwashers demonstrating 800 plus to guests **RO**



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- SteelTouch™ controls with PreciseSelect™ can be set to 17 different heat levels, all with a single touch. Plus, the sophisticated touch-on-steel technology provides easy-to-use, responsive operation.
- Induction is the most efficient cooking method, with up to 60% greater efficiency than gas cooktops.
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- Countdown element timers automatically shut off each element for easy, timed cooking of multiple dishes.



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Fall Las Vegas

BUSINESS SURVIVAL SERIES PROVIDES RETAI

COMPILED BY

Signifying its commitment to providing its Market attendees with the tools they need to thrive, World Market Center Las Vegas today announced its lineup for its Business Survival Series to be held during the inaugural Fall Las Vegas Market, Sept. 14–17. The seminars will feature leading minds who have demonstrated the ability to excel in hyper-competitive environments such as the one the home furnishings industry currently faces.

“The Business Survival Series is designed to educate and equip attendees seeking ways to identify new revenue streams and maximize their profits amid highly challenging economic conditions,” said Robert Maricich, World Market Center Las Vegas President and Chief Executive Officer. “We have secured some of the nation’s most recognized and respected leaders to share their best practices and how they apply to the home furnishings industry. In a rapidly changing global marketplace, the insights and expertise shared in these seminars will be vitally important to every segment of the industry, and we anticipate enormous turnouts for the program.”

Also participating in the series will be Bill Child and Jeff Benedict. Child is the founder of R.C. Wiley Home Furnishings and subject of the book, *How to Build a Business Warren Buffett Would Buy*, which was written by Benedict. *How to Build a Business Warren Buffett Would Buy* is the story behind a family-owned business that had only one asset—a pick-up truck—when it started in 1954; today the company is owned by Warren Buffett and is valued at over \$1 billion.

Benedict, in conversation with Child, will explore the R.C. Wiley Furnishings Company’s unique business approach which allowed it to grow from a humble, small storefront into a multi-million-dollar company. Sharing valuable life lessons about leadership, frugality, honesty, integrity, innovation and customer service. The discussion will take place Monday, September 14 at 4 p.m. in WorldForum, Building B, 16th floor, and will be followed by a wine and cheese reception and a book signing.

Facebook has become a popular social media website that is changing lives and how the world does business. On Thursday, September 17 at 10:00 a.m. in WorldForum, Building B, 16th floor, Leslie Carruthers, President of The Search Guru—a search engine marketing (SEM)/

2009 Las Vegas Market

LEARN INNOVATIVE RESOURCES TO SUCCEED

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search engine optimization (SEO) company—will present “How to Use Facebook and other Social Network Media to Grow Your Business.” Leslie is a seasoned Internet marketing professional and search engine marketer. She will provide tips for marketers utilizing these new pages including the importance of posting updates frequently and taking advantage of Facebook advertising to bring prospective customers to your page.

In today’s struggling economy, companies are being forced to diversify and look beyond the nation’s borders for opportunities in order to survive. The U.S. Commercial Service, part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, provides assistance to U.S. companies in their exporting and international expansion efforts. With over 100 offices in the U.S., and in 85 countries, the USCS serves as a global network of trade specialists providing resources and services to U.S. exporters. Andrew Edlefsen, Director Las Vegas Export Assistance Center U.S. Department of Commerce, will provide attendees with valuable information on assistance the federal government can provide. This informative seminar will take place on Tuesday, September 15, at 8:00 a.m. in WorldForum, Building B, 16th floor

“This diverse group of speakers will offer an invaluable range of perspectives from which our attendees can draw inspiration and guidance,” Maricich said. “By tapping into the group’s collective expertise, business operators will return home with a deeper understanding of how to better position their organizations for success over both the short-term and the long-term.”

A majority of Market’s seminars will take place on the 16th floor of Building B. Additionally, the NHFA/WHFA Retailer Resource Center is located there and features a number of resources, including enhanced technology, coffee bar, Internet cafe, vendor space and a “Launch Pad” for new product introductions. For detailed descriptions of the programming scheduled for Fall 2009 Las Vegas Market, visit www.lasvegasmarket.com/events and click on the Interactive Events Calendar.

The Fall 2009 Las Vegas Market is scheduled for September 14 - 17, 2009 at World Market Center Las Vegas. Attendees can register and reserve discounted rooms online now at www.LasVegasMarket.com. **RO**



About DPD

YOUR SOURCE FOR DECORATIVE PLUMBING PRODUCTS

Located in Fremont, CA (50 miles southeast of San Francisco), Decorative Plumbing Distributors (DPD) ships mid- to high-end plumbing lines anywhere in the world. The majority of our product lines are made in Europe, which have been producing the highest quality kitchen and bath products for years.

DPD sells to wholesalers, kitchen and bath dealers, tile shops, and hardware stores—not to homeowners, plumbers, contractors, designers, and architects. We do not want to compete with our customers for the same business. We feel this is a unique difference between other distributors and us. We train all our inside sales to know the product lines we sell - hence not just be order takers but true customer service providers. They can answer questions that save our customers time and money.

With two warehouses (one in Northern, and one in Southern California) fully stocked with today's most popular products, we can fill your order immediately and ship it same day. Our customers benefit from our Web Order Entry program which allows them to check stock, pricing, account status, and place orders 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. So no matter where you are or what time of day it is here in Fremont, a DPD Customer has full access to our inventory so they won't lose that sale because they had to put the client off until they could call during "normal business hours."

Our web site includes a dealer locator which allows the homeowner, plumber, contractor, designer, and architect to

locate a dealer either in their local area or with an e-commerce web site. We use this Dealer Locator to support our customers and in turn help consumers find the products they need quickly.

The management staff at DPD has over 40 years of plumbing expertise. Whether you buy directly from us or through one of our dealers, you can be assured that you have access to the most current product information. Our dealers receive regular updates including new product announcements, specials, updated pricing, and industry news. We also offer training classes on the different product lines

as well as a "Plumbing 101" class to help new showroom salespeople learn terminology and product specifics, making them more knowledgeable to help their customers and make the sale.

So whether you are looking for a unique kitchen faucet, gold plated towel bar, bathroom sink to match the color in your wallpaper, dolphin fixtures, bidet toilet combination, look no further. DPD is the decorative plumbing source for you.

Decorative Plumbing Distributors is one of the most unique distributors in the country. We sell mid to high-end product lines to wholesalers, kitchen and bath dealers, hardware stores, and tile and cabinet shops. We can ship same day from our warehouse that is stocked with the most popular items being sold today. Our staff is constantly trained on the product lines we carry and can help make sure you order right the first time. **RO**



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DPD distributes mid- to high-end kitchen and bath fixtures. Knowledgeable staff for personal assistance, together with 24/7 online access to check stock, place orders, see great specials and more. Thousands of SKUs ready to ship same day.

Gleeps! 6 Things To Do On Every Service Call

THE SOFTER SIDE OF TECHNICIAN TRAINING

Out in the field, we are trying to run a profitable service company repairing appliances for a predominantly female market. Soft skills, which are attributes that women generally tend to possess, not men, are a critical component in the service experience since our male technicians are primarily dealing with female customers. A broken appliance involves more than the repair itself, it may also involve a customer whose world has been inconvenienced and altered, creating a very stressful environment.

GLEEPS! a simple acronym standing for Greeting, Link, Examination, Explanation, Proposal, and Seal. The focus of **GLEEPS!** is to help a technician to deliver exceptional customer service.

The added benefits of **GLEEPS!** to be realized by technicians will include:

- Self-confidence resulting from the professionalism developed from having a set process for delivering top-notch customer service.
- No anxiety in dealing with frustrated customers because technicians have now created a friendly rapport, which produces a tension free environment.
- An opportunity to earn additional income by selling service accessories and other needed repairs.



1. **The GREETING:** Remember, you are setting the stage for the customer to have a positive experience with you and your company. Address your customer by name at the door when you are greeted and introduce yourself by your first name. "Hi Ms. Jones. My name is Dean from Landers Appliance. I understand you have a refrigerator that's giving you some trouble." Treat your customer with dignity and respect. Remember, you are the invited guest! Act like it.
2. **The LINK:** Pay attention and listen to your customer. Don't be so totally focused on the repair that you forget your manners. You have entered into this person's home and most people, women in particular, are uncomfortable having strangers in their house. Everything you do and say will have a positive or negative impact. Make sure you understand the problem with Mrs. Customer's appliance by asking specific questions. Notice something to converse about that is not appliance related. Establish rapport and create a "link"!
3. **The EXAMINATION:** Look at the appliance holistically, not just at the complaint listed on the service ticket. Be thorough! One of the biggest frustrations customers have is

when we fail to make the proper repairs on the first trip (or second trip if parts had to be ordered) or if we fail to notice something that they forgot to mention, but is a problem for them. Inspect all common potential problems such as ice maker supply lines, refrigerator filters, washing machine fill hoses, dryer exhaust ducting, dishwasher air gaps, etc. Look for ways to enhance your repair by giving away some minor adjustment or small repair free of charge. Find ways to be her hero!

4. **The EXPLANATION:** Your explanation should thoroughly explain what happened to their appliance, pointing to the defective components. Explain what the total cost will be to complete the repair. If parts must be ordered, explain the procedure and the expected time delay. Ask if they have any questions. On a COD call, tell them if you think it is worth it or not. Give customers your professional opinion! That's why they hired you in the first place.

5. **The PROPOSAL:** After you've completed the repair but before presenting her with the final bill, ask if there is any other appliance in the home that you can look at, as a courtesy, before leaving.

Explain that your company services the full line of appliances and offer suggestions that improve safety issues or appliance life expectancy. You are already in the house and the time it will take to look over another appliance is miniscule compared to the good will you'll generate, not to mention the potential additional revenue from any needed repairs. Don't miss this opportunity!

6. **The SEAL:** After you've looked over any additional appliances, go over what you did to repair the unit, and show Mrs. Customer the defective part(s). Point out your written warranty on the service ticket, give the final price and collect payment. Give Mrs. Customer her receipt, your business card, a sticker and a magnet and remind her to call if she has any problem with any of her appliances! Thank Mrs. Customer for her business!

Once you catch on to the concept, select a date to implement **GLEEPS!** Perform these six components every day for the next month and then perform a self-review. Satisfied customers will continue to use your company for their entire appliance needs, and they'll tell their family and friends about the great experience they had with your company. **GLEEPS!** to you! **RO**

Dean Landers is the President of Service USA

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GE-CIA Collaboration Reveals Future with Flexible Paper-thin OLED Technology

GE's ongoing development of a revolutionary, energy-efficient light source of the future—flexible, paper-thin, organic light-emitting diodes (OLEDs)—and its collaboration with industrial design students from the Cleveland Institute of Art (CIA) show how truly limitless lighting design and application will become in the years ahead.

“OLEDs hold great promise as the next big lighting technology for both commercial and residential use,” says John Strainic, Global Product General Manager of Lighting at GE Consumer & Industrial. “Many of these potential applications conceived by the CIA students align nicely with what lighting designers, architects and other thought leaders have told us they want to accomplish with OLEDs.”

GE challenged the students to conceptualize designs that would take advantage of two key attributes that commercialized GE OLEDs are expected to feature: flexibility and thinness. This contrasts with the rigid glass form that other companies appear to be pursuing.

Concealed, under-shelf lighting for retailers, flexible signage for advertisers, illuminated stairs for architects, light-up wallpaper for decorators and illuminated safety outerwear for emergency services personnel are just some of the real-world applications that the CIA students envisioned for GE. The students' imaginative perspectives take center stage in a video that GE debuted at LightFair International 2009, a global lighting industry trade show held in New York City in May. It is viewable at www.YouTube.com/GElightingFuture or directly at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYwgjEYzBH4&feature=channel_page.

The CIA students delivered hundreds of concepts that are now under review with product management and researchers at the company's Nela Park facility in Cleveland and at its

Global Research Center in Niskayuna, NY. GE projects its first commercialized OLED products will be introduced in late 2010 or 2011.

STUDENTS SHAPE THE FUTURE OF LIGHTING

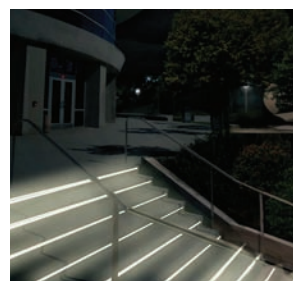
Working with Douglas Paige, Associate Professor of Industrial Design at CIA, and students in a “Future Design Center” class, GE conducted a series of “design ideation” or idea generation sessions. The students were asked to develop feasible application concepts using OLED technology.

The first semester of the class focused on research, ideas and concepts. Students in the second semester picked up where students from the first semester left off. The second semester involved refinement, modeling and prototyping phases, as well as final product recommendations.

Matthew Beckwith, Designer in Residence at CIA, says part of the process of understanding the client's challenge is to go out in the world and find out what has already been done and what has been successful. “It's really important to get the students hands-on to make their ideas relevant,” he notes.

Beckwith says the GE team, led by Jason Raak, GE's OLED Program Marketing Manager, pushed the students to think freely and conceptualize without limits or concern about viability. Beckwith notes, “Our approach allows crazy, big ideas to surface before the class shifts gears and begins to craft all that creativity into something that's relevant for a client, and ultimately, consumers.”

“Year after year, a primary objective of the class is to put our industrial design students in a consultative role with area companies,” says Paige. “Our work with GE was a perfect marriage.” **RO**





CEA Honored for Environmentally Helpful Employee Benefits

CEA RECEIVES THE INCENTIVES AWARD FROM COMMUTER CONNECTIONS

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA)[®] was honored at the National Press Club by Commuter Connections, a program of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Because of the outstanding program offered to CEA employees, CEA won the Connections Employer Recognition Award for Incentives.

“We have proactively implemented programs and benefits that encourage employees to use alternatives to driving. We also support telecommuting and flexible work arrangements,” said Gary Shapiro, CEA President and CEO. “The Washington metropolitan area is where our employees work and live; we believe it is important to work together to help protect this environment.”

CEA’s telecommuting and alternative transportation programs have significantly reduced the impact of commuting on the environment. According to the calculations provided at CommuterConnections.org, CEA’s employee benefits have encouraged the reduction of total annual commuting miles by almost 500,000 and saved over 25,000 gallons of fuel.

CEA offers a diverse menu of benefits to its employees to encourage these commuting savings. Currently, 40 percent of CEA employees take advantage of these benefits and use an alternative method of transportation to commute to CEA’s Crystal City location, a location chosen in 2007 specifically because it is near public transportation.

CEA benefits include compensation for employees who carpool, public transportation subsidy, bike storage, telework options and a fully equipped gym with showers and changing facilities. Also in 2008, to decrease commuting by its employees, CEA created a mortgage assistance benefit of up to \$25,000 for employees to use as an interest-free forgivable loan to buy a home in Arlington County.

Since this program’s inception, ten employees have taken advantage of this financial assistance and moved closer to work, thus reducing their commuting time.

“We are pleased to receive this honor,” concluded Shapiro. “We know many of these benefits help save our employees’ time and money and will have a long-term positive impact on our environment.”

ABOUT CEA:

The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) is the preeminent trade association promoting growth in the \$172 billion U.S. consumer electronics industry. More than 2,000 companies enjoy the benefits of CEA membership, including legislative

advocacy, market research, technical training and education, industry promotion and the fostering of business and strategic relationships. CEA also sponsors and manages the International CES—Where Entertainment, Technology and Business Converge. All profits from CES are reinvested into CEA’s industry services. Find CEA online at www.CE.org. **RO**



Ensuring Facility ADA Compliance



GUARD DOG™ CORD PROTECTOR

CROSSGUARD™ RAIL BARRIER

Ever since the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) went into effect on January 26, 1992, it has dramatically improved the lives of disabled individuals by working to make all public places in the United States both accessible and hospitable to those with disabilities. But even though the ADA has greatly helped in achieving a better quality of life for disabled people over the past 17 years, the changes didn't happen overnight, and are, in fact, still underway today.

It's important to realize that ADA compliance is a process, with requirements that must be considered on an ongoing basis. Here are a few guidelines:

PARKING

One of the most recognizable hallmarks of the Americans with Disabilities Act, designated handicapped, or accessible, parking is a key convenience for disabled people who aren't able to traverse moderate to long distances through parking lots. Whether you're constructing a new facility or currently occupy one

that hasn't been fully updated to ADA standards, be sure that your parking area meets the following guidelines:

- To determine how many parking spaces should be designated for disabled clients, customers, or employees, consider the total number of parking spaces your facility has. The general rule of thumb is that 1 parking spot in every group of 25 or fewer spaces needs to be handicapped-accessible. That would mean dedicating 1 accessible spot per every 25 or fewer spaces, 2 accessible parking spaces for lots ranging from 26-50 spaces, etc...
- Each accessible parking space must be marked with a sign bearing the international symbol of accessibility.
- Accessible parking spaces should be the ones closest to a wheelchair-accessible entrance, and be located on level ground that is free from potentially dangerous sloping.
- Accessible parking spaces should be bordered on the

right or left by a clearly marked access aisle, which allows disabled individuals plenty of room to enter and exit their vehicle, and comfortably transition to a wheelchair or other mobility device. Access aisles for van-accessible spaces should be at least 8 feet wide, while those adjacent to car-accessible spaces should be 5 feet in width.

- A flat, stable, slip-resistant, stair-free accessible route must lead from each access aisle to the nearest accessible building entrance. If the access route must cross through an area with vehicular traffic, a marked crosswalk should be provided.

ENTRANCES

The most vital element of an ADA-compliant facility is an accessible entrance, without which many disabled people would be prevented from entering your business or facility. One of the key actions in creating an accessible entrance is to remove any and all stairs leading either up or down to entrances—even a single shallow step can be enough to discourage, or make impossible, the entry a person who is wheelchair-bound or has other mobility limitations. Here are some additional guidelines to follow in the creation of accessible entrances:

- If your facility has more than one entrance, they don't all have to be accessible. However, all non-accessible entrances must have clear signage directing the way to the nearest accessible entrance.
- In multi-entrance facilities, accessible entrances must be left open or unlocked during business hours. If an accessible entrance needs to be kept locked because of security concerns relating to its location, it must be equipped with an intercom or doorbell so that staff can be made aware when someone needs to use the entrance. In such cases, the intercom, buzzer or bell needs to be mounted at accessible level, no more than 4 feet above the ground.
- The removal of steps generally results in the installation of ramps or lifts. If you'll be replacing steps with a ramp, the ramp should have as shallow a slope as possible, never exceeding a rise/run ratio of 1:12.
- If the slope of a ramp is 1:20 or steeper and its total vertical rise exceeds 6 inches, the ramp must be equipped with handrails, both for the stability of those traversing the ramp, and to prevent people from falling off – or rolling over – the edge.
- If possible, grade the ground adjacent to a ramp to match the ramp's slope – this prevents steep drop-offs, and increases the overall safety of the ramp.
- All accessible ramps must be a minimum of 36" wide.

- Don't overlook door hardware. Any type of door handle that requires tight grasping, twisting, or use of a thumb-latch can present an entry obstacle, particularly for people with mobility issues or arthritis. Lever and loop handles are the easiest types for everyone to use, and are excellent choices for accessible entrance hardware.
- Large stores, entertainment venues, and other facilities equipped with turnstiles and/or security gates should be built or modified so that people who use wheelchairs, canes, crutches or walkers can easily enter and exit. Suitable options include removing a turnstile, implementing an accessible turnstile, or providing an accessible gate adjacent to existing standard turnstiles.

CORD COVERS AND RAMPS

Ramps may play a key role in creating accessible entrances, but they're also an appropriate, and often necessary, means of helping those with disabilities to safely and successfully cross ground and floor obstructions like cables, hoses and air lines. In cases where such objects need to be routed across halls, pathways, and other public-access areas of your facility, maintain ADA-compliance in the following ways:

- Cover extension cords, data cables and hoses with a low profile, heavy-duty cord cover that complies with ADA standards, such as the Guard Dog™ 5-Channel Low Profile Cord Protector.
- If the low profile cord protectors mentioned above aren't appropriate for your application, use standard heavy-duty polyurethane cord protectors that can be connected to ADA-compliant ramps. We recommend gently sloping, slip-proof Cross-Guard™ Access Ramps, which easily connect to several different types of cord covers, and can be fitted with an optional ADA-compliant side rail system added safety.
- In instances where handrail assistance may be needed, rail barriers can be added to ADA-Compliant crossings over cables and hoses.

For a complete list of ADA compliance guidelines, please see the US Department of Justice's ADA Standards for Accessible Design.

*Christina Hansen is a Product Specialist at CableOrganizer.com—a leading eTailer of cable, wire and equipment management solutions including those assuring ADA compliance. She may be reached through the company's Web site located at <http://CableOrganizer.com>. **RO***

Bits and Pieces

In keeping with my own summer reading habits—mostly magazines, short stories and romance novels—I thought I'd throw out a few quick thoughts that have been bubbling in my head.

I'm starting to hear many dealers complain about a new competitor—membership clubs like Direct Buy. Stop whining and start acting. Go to one of their presentations to find out exactly what they offer. Promote “No Membership Fee” in your store and in your advertising. At about a \$5,000 membership, the average consumer would have to spend \$40,000 to \$50,000 to come out ahead of your everyday pricing.

In her new book *PrimeTime Women: “How to Win the Hearts, Minds and Business of Boomer Big Spenders”*, Marti Barletta explains why women are such valuable customers. They buy 85 percent of everything. They buy two-thirds of all new cars and influence the purchase of 85 percent of all cars sold. Women are more profitable customers because of their loyalty. Word of mouth—good or bad—spreads faster among women than men.

If women are so important—especially in appliance purchases—does your restroom look like her powder room or the bathroom in your mechanic's shop? Will your customer eagerly take her kids in there or leave quickly to find a better place for them? Is it spotlessly clean, well-lit and always stocked with soap, towels and toilet paper?

Oprah isn't the only one touting the value of real gratitude. Gratitude is a powerful and potentially profitable emotion to inspire. In the next few months, Hyatt Hotel guests will be treated to “random acts of generosity” like picking up drink tabs or paying for a massage in the spa. And it won't be just their Gold Passport Diamond guests that will get a treat. It could be a first time guest or frequent stayer.

A study coming out in the *Journal of Marketing* shows the role of gratitude in human relationships. Customers who are made to feel grateful become enduringly loyal as a result. Gratitude can “increase purchase intentions, sales growth and share of wallet.”

If a free drink makes someone loyal to a hotel, would a plant (they last longer than fresh flowers) or a gift certificate to your town's best restaurant get your customers talking about you?

Learning is part of the culture at Miller Waldrop Furniture. The store's sales team always has a book they're reading and discussing to provoke thought

about how to serve their customers better, improve their own attitudes, and grow sales. In a ten-minute meeting before the store opens, they discuss a chapter. Team members are expected to read the assigned chapter on time but are free to do it during their downtime on the floor.

Great reads could include *The Fred Factor* by Mark Sanborn; *Hug Your Customers* by Jack Mitchell; *The Seven Habits of Effective People* by Steven Covey; *Winning* by Jack and Suzy Welch; or *Raving Fans* by Ken Blanchard.

How much selection is too much? In a June 26th *Wall Street Journal* article, reporters found that retailers are cutting back on the variety they display. Their motivation is a combination of economic reasons—smaller assortments are easier to order and track and require smaller inventory investments—and shopper sentiment. Walgreens is limiting their selection of superglue to 11 types, down from the 25 they once carried. Wal-Mart is getting rid of all but 4 of the 24 tape measures they stocked. Large retailers are expected to trip their product selection by as much as 15%.

Although the reductions will challenge vendors vying for shelf space, consumers have long complained that if selection is too broad, they can't make decisions and in fact frequently leave without buying what they came for. It seems that independents, who carefully select their product assortment to match the needs of their target customers, have already streamlined their offerings. You work hard to help your customer select the products for her home without confusing her. Still, even with more limited selections, be sure your stores look full and that you fill all the “holes” in your display. Some customers who see a missing display item assume the missing one was the best one since it's out of stock.

As the song goes, “*Summer time, and the livin' is easy.*” Enjoy the season. Take time for friends and family. Get outside to bike, hike and swim. Go camping or fishing. Fire up the grill and invite the neighbors over. Celebrate the sunshine, rejuvenate and have fun. **RO**

*Elly Valas is an author, retail consultant and speaker. She is the co-author of *Guerrilla Retailing*. She can be contacted at elly@ellyvalas.com or visit her website www.ellyvalas.com.*



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Don't Run From Complaining Customers

SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS AND YOU WILL BUILD CUSTOMER LOYALTY

"I am so sorry. Let me change your delivery date so we can schedule it for when you do not have to take time off work. Would you like me to pick up your old appliance while we are there? Is there anything else I can do to help you?"

I was shocked at this exchange between a retail store and its customer. Why? Because it is so rare that an employee of any business will actually apologize for a mistake, take responsibility for it, and correct it—all within a matter of one minute. And yet, that is exactly what should occur when attempting to provide the best possible service to a customer.

Let me give you an example of how not to handle a complaint. I recently had a problem with my new refrigerator. I called the retail chain that sold the appliance and got tired of them every 30 days having to come out and fix the same thing. The ice dispenser freezes up if you use crushed ice. I also called the CEO of the company to discuss this lemon and his staff said there was nothing wrong with this model. What did that company do? NOTHING. They never solved my problem or even cared. What was the result? I no longer will be their customer.

When a customer complains, you should be grateful. Why? Because that customer is giving you the opportunity to make things right, and to retain their business. Research shows that only about 4 percent of customers will tell you when they have a problem. The other 96 percent simply won't do business with you again. Instead, they quietly fume and take their business—and their money—elsewhere. They also will tell an average of 10 other people about the problem they had with your organization.

Handling customer complaints is a critical element in providing exceptional service. It's also one aspect of any job that employees fear and, consequently, mishandle. The reason is twofold: They take complaints personally, and they haven't been trained in how to deal with irate customers. In fact, many employees quit their jobs because they don't like—and don't know how—to deal with complaining customers. When employees are trained to deal with complaints, the organization wins on two fronts. It not only retains its customers, it retains its employees.

When handling complaints, employees can win customers' loyalty by following these six steps:

Listen carefully and with interest to what the customer

has to say. Don't get defensive, either with your words or your body language. Remember that the customer is not attacking you personally; he is merely describing the problem and hoping you can solve it.

Put yourself in the customer's place. Make responses that show you care about the customer's problem. You might say, "I don't blame you for being upset." When you show empathy for a customer's situation, you defuse the situation and have a calming influence on the customer. Never directly challenge the customer. Even if the customer is wrong and you're right, don't attempt to prove it. The goal is to solve the problem, not debate who is at fault.

Ask questions in a caring, concerned manner. The more information you have, the better armed you will be to solve the problem to the customer's satisfaction.

Suggest one or more alternatives to address the customer's concerns. Ask the customer what she feels would be an appropriate solution then make some suggestions on your own. Become a partner with the customer in solving the problem.

Apologize without blaming. Nothing defuses a potentially volatile situation better than a sincere apology. When a customer sees—and hears—that you are sorry for the problem he is experiencing, he will respond in a like manner. Don't participate in fault-finding.

Solve the problem or find someone who can solve it. When complaints are solved quickly, it saves the organization money because, every time a complaint is moved up the ladder, it becomes more expensive to handle again. **RO**

*John Tschohl is an international service strategist and speaker. Described by Time and Entrepreneur magazines as a customer service guru, he has written several books on customer service, including *Loyal for Life*, *e-Service*, *The Customer is Boss*, *Achieving Excellence Through Customer Service*, and *Ca\$hing In: Make More Money, Get a Promotion, Love Your Job*. His bimonthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge, www.customer-service.com. You can also contact him via email, John@servicequality.com or call 800-548-0538.*



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BUILD

Add Some Trick Plays to Your Marketing Playbook

It's funny how well sports analogies relate to business and marketing. This is especially true of football. As an American male, I can't resist a football analogy, and with football season just around the corner, it seemed appropriate. So if you're not a football fan, I apologize. The first part of this column may be tiresome, but I promise it makes a good point.

In 2007, Boise State University played Oklahoma University in the Fiesta Bowl. The matchup pitted a perennial powerhouse in Oklahoma against a program with a short football pedigree in Boise State. Oklahoma lost. I don't want to dwell on a sports story too much here, but the way in which Boise State won that game contains some lessons about marketing and business.

Boise State won by running a lot of trick plays, including a spectacular hook-and-lateral that resulted in a long touchdown. That was the only way they could have won. If they would have played the game straight up, trying to match Oklahoma's strength and size, they would have been trounced. In essence, they won because they were more creative and more willing to take risks than their opponents.

If you run a small business, think of yourself as Boise State, and think of your larger, well-funded competitors as Oklahoma. The only way you can beat them (by beat them, I mean take some of their market share) is to be bolder, scrappier, nimbler, and more creative. You have to take some risks and try some trick plays. Here are some trick plays you can add to your playbook.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media tools like Facebook and Twitter are great because they allow you to experiment, try some new things and see what works, then try something else.

So how can you use Social Media as a trick play? The real question is what can't you do? There are so many possibilities, it's impossible to list them all. You could set up a fun game or quiz on your company's Facebook page that gives people a chance to interact with your brand and keep coming back. You could set up a Twitter account as a way to answer customers' questions and help them make purchase decisions. The main thing is that you start participating in Social Media sites like Facebook and

Twitter and get a feel for how they might work for you. Then let your mind run free.

ADVERTISING

All of your large competitors have huge advertising budgets and can outspend you. So you might think, how is advertising a trick play? When creating ads for print, TV or radio - create bold ads because that's what gets noticed. Make them wild, funny or even borderline inappropriate. Make fun of your competition. Make fun of yourself. Do whatever you have to do to get noticed. I should warn you here that there is a thin line between edgy and offensive. Be careful about how you approach that line, or you could be getting noticed for the wrong reasons.

Where you place the ad can be just as bold as the ad itself. If you are a kitchen appliance dealer, the logical thing would be for you to place ads in a local home magazine or during a home improvement TV show. Just remember, that's where your competition is, too. Where else can you advertise where your competition doesn't? Maybe there is a political blogger in your city that draws a large audience. Maybe you can advertise on placemats at a local restaurant or on dry cleaner hangers. Maybe there is a youth or adult sports league that needs someone to sponsor their uniforms. The key is to find a medium that reaches your audience, but in a way that's unexpected, then your brand will stand out.

Whether it's through old media (advertising) or new media (Social Media), there are plenty of tricks you can pull to make some gains on your competition. But you have to look outside the normal channels for opportunities. More importantly, you have to be unafraid to take a risk.

In football, as in marketing, trick plays very often don't work. But when they do, the results are spectacular. You just have to take your shot. **RO**

Christopher Thiede owns BUILD Communications, a branding and PR firm. Read Christopher's blog at www.ideas2cheer.com.



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Engaging Your Customer

According to Webster's dictionary, when you engage someone, you occupy the time or compel the attention. When your store is designed to engage the customer you immediately pull them into your world. Recently I was approached by a retailer looking to make their display platform more intuitive for the customer. Most displays that I have seen or have been involved with over the years never really were designed with that approach in mind. Again the first thing I did was to look up the definition. According to Webster when something has an intuitive trait it is readily learned or understood.

After giving some thought as to how I wanted to approach this, I went to the internet and started looking at appliance manufacturers catalogs. I was surprised to find a lot of intuitive information that was being provided to describe special features found in some of their products. With one manufacturer, their new front load laundry pair had nineteen features and benefits shown, each one having a very cool picture and an explanation about it. As I continued to explore these many features I found it to be a very engaging experience. I asked myself, "I wonder how many sales people particularly those on faster moving sales floors could even come close in trying to explain all of the features and benefits of this product."

As I began the design process I kept asking myself why do most displays not provide an avenue for incorporating a method to visually and verbally pitch the product. For the most part all I ever see is the price tag on the appliance with maybe a few features listed. In stores where they use displays some may include generic imagery along with pricing and a few features but that is about as far as it goes. The only time I really see product features really being hyped is when the manufacturer provides a display specifically designed to promote the product launch.

With this project I was designing two displays. The first was a modular free standing backdrop fixture for cooking products as well as laundry. The second was a freestanding display that would be used for refrigerators. The most

important consideration that I was giving to the displays was incorporating a flexible signage system that not only provided a method for showing price but visual key features. With most products if you can visually show a few key features with a description of the feature the display becomes more intuitive and will engage the customer.

In order to arrive with a signage system design that was modular, and allowed for a flexible change out of both key feature pictures and pricing, we had to make sure it was economical to manufacture as well. Exploration of three more design approaches was necessary to come up with the right signage solution.

This display system is only one example of ways in which we can engage the customer. Another one that comes to mind is a small but effective way to show how wall anchors work. I was in Lowes the other day looking for a wall anchor. Well for you hardware buffs out there, there are many styles and types to choose from. Lowes had a small Plexiglas box which inside displayed each wall anchor mounted into substrate material so you could exactly how they worked. It really helped me in my selection process.

So, take a little time to look at how you display your product and better still, how you tell the story to your client. Even if the sales person is knowledgeable it is still true that a picture can be worth a thousand words. **RO**



With over fifteen years of experience in store planning and design, Mark Schaffeld has been providing quality design to the appliance, electronics and furniture industry. He has partnered with a well known appliance manufacturer for fourteen years working with their independent dealers and helping them achieve increased sales through well designed stores. Mark has not only helped dealers within the fifty contiguous states but has also worked with retailers in Honduras and Guatemala. Mark and his company the retail strata G group can be reached at: Mark@retail-strata-g.com or visit his web site at www.retail-strata-g.com

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Tough Economy Spells Opportunity for Improvement



Turn on a TV, open a newspaper, listen to talk radio, or surf the net and you are certain to get your fill of the doom and gloom that is our economy. In fact, most of us can simply walk onto an empty showroom floor, or review our financial statements to get a quick reality check. The economic downturn has forced all businesses to re-evaluate every aspect of their operation. Business leaders are asking tough questions: How can we cut costs and still meet our customer's expectations? Should we invest in new systems or try to better optimize existing software? How do we continue to grow revenue in what many consider to be the worst economic downturn since the great depression?

There are many critical decisions facing business owners as they attempt to navigate through an unpredictable business climate. Cutting costs is a business reality in today's environment, but simply cutting costs without consideration of your long term vision is not a strategy...it's desperation. Business owners will need a strategy that not only reduces costs, but allows: investment in technology to drive productivity; development of standard operating procedures that improve backroom efficiency, while allowing valuable resources to focus on customer touch points; and strong leadership that drives a culture that embraces change and process improvement.

As we analyze processes, implement new systems, and develop new strategies to grow revenue and market share, it is imperative that we not forget the opportunity to truly transform our business through culture and change management. As we have all experienced, change is difficult for any organization. Employees who are not part of the process are inherently fearful of any change, as they interpret efficiency as job loss. Wherever possible, initiatives should be developed and operationalized through a cross functional team approach versus management mandate. The long term impact of cross functional team implementation is employee buy-in, and total business process improvement versus departmental efficiency. Instead of resentment and fear, your employees own the new processes, policies, and procedures. The result is a new culture that embraces change, with a focus on continuous process improvement.

Leaders are adept at knowing how to quickly rein in costs, negotiate a better deal to drive incremental margin, or uncover new market opportunities to fuel growth. Effective leaders in today's economic climate, understand that driving efficient

execution to grow your business profitably is only achieved through clear vision, well defined and communicated expectations, operational excellence and technology optimized to drive process efficiency. We no longer have the luxury of relying on our employees to manage in the absence of structure, or strictly perform miracles to meet our customer's expectation.

Over the next several months, David LaFollette and I will be contributing editorials that focus on strategies to help answer these and other important issues facing businesses today. We will cover topics including:

- Drive operational efficiencies through process improvement
- Utilize technology to automate and simplify processes
- Develop standard operating procedures that deliver consistent customer service
- Develop metrics to manage costs and improve cash flow
- Grow revenue and share through effective sales and merchandising
- Implement marketing strategies that optimize your advertising dollar
- Develop cross functional teams, and change management
- Foster a business culture that drives your vision

We can't control the economy, but in every downturn there is opportunity. Businesses must recognize that conventional wisdoms no longer apply. You must not only implement new strategies to drive revenue, and cut costs, but also drive ownership and create buy-in through cross functional change management. The end result is not just improved efficiency and new avenues of revenue generation, but a transformation from a culture of entitlement, to a new culture of accountability. Both David and I look forward to the opportunity to share our insights and experience as we work with manufacturers and dealers to help better implement improved processes, cut costs, drive revenue, and grow the bottom line. **RO**

Kelly M. Rigdon and David LaFollette are business consulting partners in R2: Rigdon Resources, a firm specializing in working with both manufacturers and distributors to cut costs, increase revenue, embrace technology and grow the bottom line. These two industry veterans represent over 43 years of consumer products business experience, and have a lifelong passion for the appliance industry. Learn more at www.r2-online.com

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CALENDAR 2009

AUGUST-2009

- 5 **Almo Expo**—Radisson Riverfront, Covington, KY
10-11..... **Almo Expo**—Turning Stone Resort, Verona, NY
13..... **Almo Expo**—Sheraton Bloomington Hotel, Bloomington, MN
16-19..... **Nationwide Primetime**—Walt Disney World, Swan & Dolphin Resort,
Lake Buena Vista, FL
30-Sept.3.... **BrandSource Convention**—Paris Hotel, Las Vegas, NV
-

SEPTEMBER-2009

- 1-4 **MEGA Group USA/Best Brands Plus Convention**—San Antonio, TX
4-9 **IFA 2009 Consumer Electronics Unlimited**—Berlin, Germany
10..... **NKBA Advanced Appliance Course**—Dacor Design & Culinary Center,
South San Francisco, CA
14-15..... **Almo Expo**—St. Charles Convention Center, St. Charles, MO
14-17..... **Fall 2009 Las Vegas Market**—World Market Center, Las Vegas, NV
18-20..... **SQI Worldwide Conference**—Park Plaza Hotel, Bloomington, MN
24..... **The Luxury Sale with speaker Suzie Willford**—Hacienda Del Sol, Tucson AZ
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OCTOBER-2009

- 1 **NKBA Advanced Appliance Course**—Miele Design Center at LUWA Distributing,
Seattle, WA
7-8 **Digital Music Forum West**—The Roosevelt Hotel, Los Angeles, CA
8-10..... **Bath & Kitchen Buying Group**—Hilton Anatole, Dallas, TX
17-20..... **High Point Furniture Market**—High Point, NC
18-21..... **2009 CEA Industry Forum**—Phoenix, AZ
19-22..... **Digital Hollywood Fall**—The Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel, Santa Monica, CA
22..... **Ventilation by Design with speaker Ric Coggins**—Arizona Wholesale Supply, Tucson AZ
26-28..... **NARI Fall Business Meeting**—Indianapolis, IN
28-30..... **Remodeling Show 2009**—Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis, IN
-

NOVEMBER-2009

- 6-8..... **Custom Builder Symposium + Design Institute**—Hilton San Diego Bayfront,
San Diego, CA
15-17..... **AHRI 2009 Annual Meeting**—J.W. Marriott,
Washington D.C.

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NOTE: Attention Buying Groups, NKBA and NARI Chapters, Distributors and Manufacturers: Please submit your meeting schedules to info@retailobserver.com ASAP so they may be included in our coming events calendar. If you would like to receive the Retail Observer please go to www.retailobserver.com to subscribe.



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National Kitchen & Bath Association and TOTO® Host the NKBA Outstanding Student Awards

The National Kitchen & Bath Association is proud to announce the winners of the NKBA Outstanding Student Award. Sponsored by TOTO, the award recognizes the top kitchen and bath design students at NKBA-accredited schools across North America, and rewards the top student at each school with a \$450 scholarship. Some 33 schools with kitchen and bath design programs accredited by the NKBA received the award this year.

“TOTO is proud to support future designers because it is their vision that will help develop and drive our industry,” said TOTO USA spokesperson Lenora Campos, Ph.D. “The

Outstanding Student Awards program recognizes an elite group, and TOTO is honored to partner in their development. We look forward to the many ways they will contribute to this dynamic industry.”

“The NKBA is thrilled to recognize these talented students for their exceptional kitchen and bath design skill,” said NKBA Academic Relations Manager Sherylin Doyle. “We’re very grateful for TOTO’s support in making these awards possible.”


To see photos of the winners go to http://www.nkba.org/students_scholarships_2009toto.aspx

TOP DESIGN STUDENTS — NKBA OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARD

Alexandria Technical Institute..... *Matthew Lawrence*
 Arapahoe Community College *Mindy Knaster*
 Art Institute of Philadelphia *Juli Faulkner*
 Baker College of Auburn Hills *Jaclyn Chamberlain*
 Baker College of Clinton Twp..... *Janis Rizzo*
 Boston Architectural College *Lani Smith*
 Brigham Young University - Idaho *Emily Wilson*
 Cañada College *Karen Machado*
 Century College..... *Sheryl Paisley*
 College of DuPage *Paulette Panzer*
 Dakota County Technical College *Callie Veden*
 Harper College *Deanne Karamanian*
 Indian River State College *Angela Magro*
 Indiana State University..... *Casie A. Orr*
 Johnson County Community College..... *Genevieve Hamel*
 Lakeland College..... *Pamela Berry*
 Lone Star College - Kingwood..... *Sheree A. Degennaro*

Lord Fairfax Community College *Mary O’Connell*
 Montana State University—Great Falls..... *Verna Vuckovich*
 Mt. San Antonio College *Cecilia Yang*
 Murray State University *Jordan James*
 Palm Beach Community College *Judith Bradley*
 Portland CC - Rock Creek *Nikki Jeffers*
 Portland CC - Sylvania *Suzie Dahl*
 San Diego Mesa *Donna Tran*
 Seminole Community College *Kristen Sellers*
 Triton College *Noppharat Kositthanasarn*
 University of Georgia *Gloria Valencia-Martin*
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and sustainability—a commitment that pushes the company beyond industry standards. The winner of numerous domestic and international awards and recognitions, TOTO USA is certified by ISO 14001: 2004 and ISO 9001: 2000. TOTO USA is the only plumbing manufacturer to be honored as Water Efficiency Leader by the Environmental Protection Agency. TOTO seeks perfection by design as it continuously innovates sustainable water technologies that enhance the lives of its customers and the environment. For more information, please visit www.totousa.com or call (888) 295-8134. 



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BrandSource 40 Years Ago and Today

Forty years ago business was experiencing a new growth with the advent of the dual power (cook and defrost) microwave oven. Customers were skeptical but accepting and quickly discovered that this new kitchen appliance could save them time by defrosting foods but cooking would still be done on the stove top and in the oven. A GE ice and water 24 cu ft side by side refrigerator was top-of-the-line, with a new feature of crushed ice through the door, at a retail price of \$1,299. And Maytag dealers paid in advance for their inventory and the factory paid for parts only during warranty calls.

Independent retailers were joining forces against the box stores of that era, buying together to lower acquisition costs to better compete against the lower prices offered by Yellow Front, Sears and other stores.

Advertising appliances, electronics and furniture products for independents was newspaper ads, usually black and white, and radio. In some markets, television advertising could be afforded on local network stations. The key to sales forty years ago was getting the customer to come into 'our' stores.

Cable TV was in its early stages of growth, and the portable music revolution was starting with something called a Walkman, by Sony.

Fast forward forty years later. Kitchens can hardly manage without a microwave oven and the brand names that pioneered the product are have all but disappeared. That GE side by side refrigerator sells for \$999 and today's kitchens feature \$3,000 refrigerators. The iPod has revolutionized the way we listen to music, and today we can access any kind of information or news from our cell phones, unheard of forty years ago except in the movies.

The box stores names have changed to Best Buy, and Sears is still a contender. What has changed the most is the technology that affects customer's lives and the way

retailers go to market.

The biggest challenge to retailers today continues to be getting customers to walk through 'our' front doors. The challenge in doing so has changed dramatically. Today the Internet impacts everything we do.

BrandSource began as a buying group, offering lower prices on products members purchased. Over the past forty years the BrandSource has transitioned to not only provide lower acquisition costs, but to also provide lower priced health care services, lower cost financial services, lower cost advertising and marketing products, and is providing members with educational services that are no longer provided by suppliers.

BrandSource provides members with next day delivery of consumer electronics products at truck load pricing, through Expert Warehouse, and those warehouses have expanded into major appliances, providing just in time inventory, reducing a members need for costly warehouse space while staying price competitive.

The pioneer of national Ecommerce internet sales for its members, BrandSource is rapidly moving into new technologies to provide its members with hands on training for increasing internet sales, marketing to consumers through the internet and building their customer loyalty, all through highly effective, low cost internet applications.

This year's 40th Anniversary convention in Las Vegas will feature educational seminars to improve BrandSource members ability to reach out and get the attention of more customers, increasing both floor traffic and sales through the internet.

The technological changes retailers have seen in the past forty years is accelerating and providing challenges, along with exciting sales opportunities. BrandSource will continue to keep its members at the front end of that technology. **RO**



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PrimeTime! Orlando Florida Offers Independents Double Selection and Savings at Disney

Nationwide Marketing Group plans to host two floors of exhibition space for PrimeTime!, their bi-annual vendor exhibition and conference, in Orlando, Florida scheduled for August 16 – 19, 2009 at the Swan and Dolphin Resort in Walt Disney World.

“The last time we were in Orlando, our entire show fit onto one floor” said Robert Weisner, Executive Vice President of NMG. “In August, we will be taking up two floors for the buying show and using additional space for seminars and meetings. This is a true testament to the growth of our organization and the real benefits dealers are getting from attending the show.”

Independent dealers from across the country have already registered for the event, many to take advantage of the special promotions and programs only available at PrimeTime! including the Cash Back Now rebate program and PrimeTime! University, a roster of free business courses taught by industry experts.

NMG ran giveaways to draw dealers to register early for PrimeTime!. The giveaways included a 3-night stay at the Swan & Dolphin



Top: Warehouse Direct Nationwide works with dealers on product specials and delivery. Center: Entrance to PrimeTime! in New Orleans, LA. Bottom: PrimeTime! University presents a course on Guerrilla Marketing taught by industry guru, Ed Tate.

Resort, two 4-day Disney passes and a special VIP evening for up to 10 guests ending with a pontoon ride to watch the Epcot Illumination Fireworks.

Along with hundreds of appliance, electronics, furniture and service exhibits, NMG will also be showcasing new offerings including; an on-the-spot deep discount furniture auction, a live demonstration of the organization's affordable website service which has been updated with brand new features, their highly customizable in-store display fixture system and recently developed electronics accessory line.

“Our dealers will be pleased at the selection of products that will be available to them at PrimeTime!. Many of our vendor partners will also be offering show only specials so there are huge opportunities to save more than enough to cover the cost of the trip.”

To register for the largest buying show for independent dealers in the country, or for more information on PrimeTime!, please visit www.nationwideprimetime.com.

For information about the many benefits of membership with Nationwide Marketing Group, visit www.nationwide-marketinggroup.org. **RO**

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Charlie Love – 812.471.3261 or clove@tcfif.com or
Ray Ouellette – 603.293.8226 or rouellette@tcfif.com

Canada

Bob Eddy – 877.800.4430 or beddy@tcfif.com or
Tracy Williams – 877.800.4430 or twilliams@tcfif.com





NAHB Honors The Year's Best in Green Home Building

Home building industry leaders honored the best in green residential design and outstanding advocacy efforts at the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) National Green Building Awards.

The awards dinner on May 8 kicked off the 11th annual NAHB National Green Building Conference, which was held in Dallas last weekend. Don Ferrier of Ferrier Custom Homes in Fort Worth, honored as the 2007 Green Builder Advocate of the Year, served as master of ceremonies.

In a trying year for the home building industry, when housing starts dropped to record lows in a sputtering economy, green homes represent "hope and the future, and the future is green home building," Ferrier said. "The ladies and gentlemen we honor this evening understand that. These awards honor their leadership and their practical example to others in the industry."

THE WINNERS WERE:

- CONCEPT HOME OF THE YEAR: *CVH Inc., for a home in Coupeville, WA.* Tight insulation and other energy-efficient features meant homeowners spent \$76 on electricity in the first month they lived there—and that was before the builder installed photovoltaic panels on the rooftop and the monthly bill became a credit, rather than a debit, Ferrier said.
- AFFORDABLE HOME OF THE YEAR: *Imagine Homes, San Antonio, TX.* The company noted for its cost-effective techniques to attract first-time buyers was honored for the second year in a row.
- LUXURY HOME OF THE YEAR: *Solaire Homebuilders of Bend, OR.* With beautiful interior finishes, this custom home was built with reclaimed and recycled materials and designed to be 60 percent more energy efficient than required by code.
- PRODUCTION HOME OF THE YEAR: *Celebrate by Del Webb, an active-adult community in Fredericksburg, VA,* is taking green features to a larger scale and now certifying the homes in this new development to the National Green Building Standard.
- SINGLE-FAMILY REMODELING PROJECT OF THE YEAR: Honors went to *Red-B Construction for a Durham, NC,* home with striking design and extensive use of deconstruction techniques that improve resource efficiency.
- MULTIFAMILY REMODELING PROJECT OF THE YEAR: *Hardwick G.C. Inc. of Orlando, FL,* turned an early 20th-century bungalow into a charming duplex that has a rainwater harvesting system, native landscaping and other water-efficient features.
- MULTIFAMILY RENTAL PROJECT OF THE YEAR: *Tonti Properties' 270-unit community in Frisco, TX,* is the first ENERGY STAR®-certified development in the region. The company created an on-site tree farm during construction to enable landscapers to replant trees moved during the building process.
- CONDOMINIUM PROJECT OF THE YEAR: *Onion Flats LLC of Philadelphia, PA* created an 8-unit infill project in the Northern Liberties neighborhood featuring slick, modern design, solar panels, green roofs and great city views.
- TOWNHOUSE PROJECT OF THE YEAR: *Asdal Builders LLC* was honored for a New Jersey rental development that caters to senior citizens and focuses on sustainable, low-maintenance design and cost-effective geothermal heating.
- DEVELOPMENT OF THE YEAR: The community of Woodlands Edge in Little Rock, Ark., developed by *Rocket Properties LLC* has nature trails, wildlife preservation areas and an extensive education program for its residents focused on environmental stewardship of the grounds.

Build San Antonio Green and the Missoula (Mont.) Building Industry Association were honored as the local green home building programs of the year, while the city of Chicago was named Governmental Advocate of the Year for its extensive voluntary energy-efficiency improvement programs and for encouraging green roofs on high-rise buildings.

EcoBroker International won Group Advocate of the Year honors for its green building education efforts among real estate brokers.

Donna Shirey, a longtime NAHB Remodelers leader and green-building professional from Seattle, was honored as Remodeling Advocate of the Year.

Architect Michelle Kaufmann, known for her groundbreaking green and modular design, was named Individual Advocate of the Year.

John Freer, a longtime Missoula BIA leader and founder of the association's green building council, was honored as NAHB Green Builder Advocate of the Year. **RO**



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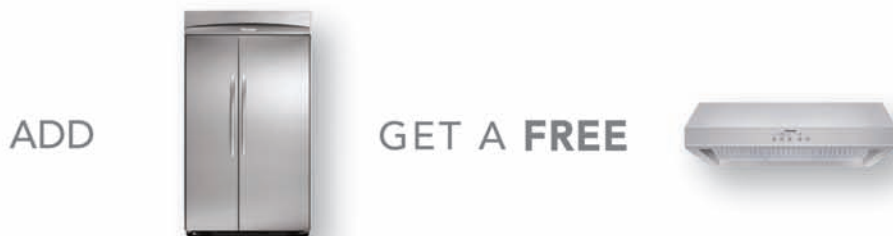
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