

The **RetailObserver**

September, 2008

The Monthly News Magazine with Personality

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WORLD MARKET CENTER

LAS VEGAS DELIVERS RECORD
ATTENDANCE, OPTIMISM, AND
EXCITEMENT AT SUMMER MARKET

SEE INSIDE—PAGE 4



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WHERE'S THE MAYO?

I received this email many months ago and with school now back in session, I thought I would share it with you, our readers. Just when things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and the two beers.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, he wordlessly picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly, as the pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He again asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everywhere else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "yes."

The professor then produced two beers from under the table and poured the entire contents of both into the jar effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things—your family, your children, your health, your friends and your favorite passions, and if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full."

"The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car. The sand is everything else—the small stuff. If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Spend time with your children and grandchildren. Spend time with your parents. Visit with grandparents. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your spouse out to dinner. Play another 18 rounds. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first—the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the beer represented. The professor smiled and said, "I'm glad you asked. The beer just shows you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of beers with a friend."

Happy retailing and drink one for me,

Moe Lastfogel



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WORLD MARKET CENT RECORD ATTENDANCE, OPTIMISM,

LAS VEGAS MARKET ROCKS WITH RECORD ATTENDANCE,

Records were broken, premieres were held and milestones were marked at the Summer 2008 Las Vegas Market, July 28-August 1, the first show to be held entirely on World Market Center Las Vegas' ultra-modern 57-acre campus since the Market's July 2005 launch.

From the moment July Las Vegas Market kicked off with its record-setting opening day attendance, its energized pace and portfolio of unique offerings demonstrated why World Market Center Las Vegas is the world's fastest-growing integrated home and hospitality contract furnishings showroom and trade complex. The opening of the iconic Building C – a 16-story, 2.1-million-square-foot structure – created the most efficient Market to date, allowing manufacturers, buyers and designers from around the world to convene in a single location.

Total registrations exceeded the historic average of 50,000 and were up 4 percent over the last July Market; total attendance was up 7 percent. In particular, there was a dramatic increase in attending buyers, with 15 percent more retailers and 93 percent more designers attending 2008 Summer Market than in July 2007.

“Considering the very difficult environment in the home furnishings industry, this is a remarkable uptick,” said World Market Center President and Chief Executive Officer Robert Maricich. “At World Market Center Las Vegas we have a compelling platform to do business. We set out to create excitement and provide an environment of optimism—and we were successful by every measure.”

Furthermore, many exhibitors reported that qualified buyer traffic was up in their showrooms and that order-writing was brisk, defying the challenging environment in which the industry is currently operating.

“Our written business at Market was up well over 20 percent, and it was our most successful

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ER LAS VEGAS DELIVERS AND EXCITEMENT AT SUMMER MARKET

320 NEW EXHIBITORS AND NEW BUILDING OPENING

Summer Market thus far,” said Lee Fautsch, vice president of sales/home furnishings for Flexsteel Industries, Inc. of Dubuque, Iowa. “We need to be in Las Vegas – it’s very important to us.”

“The quality of traffic we’ve had has been excellent. The major re-launch of Pennsylvania House alone has made it a great Market,” said Dave Pinamonti of Universal Furniture.

In all, more than 1,500 exhibitors showed their newest products, including 320 new companies and 120 companies who expanded their World Market Center footprint.

July’s Market featured more than 200 international exhibitors from 20 countries; further reinforcing World Market Center’s standing as the industry’s new global hub. Of the non-U.S. companies exhibiting this summer, 30 percent were from Canada, 29 percent were European-based, 21 percent were based in Latin America and 20 percent were from Asia.

“We have been busy from 8 a.m. to closing,” said Suzanne Kelly, Vice President of Home Furnishings of The Robert Allen Group in New York which opened a new 30,000 square-foot flagship showroom in World Market Center’s Building C. “We’re seeing people from across the country and meeting local designers for the first time. There are many international buyers here as well, especially from Mexico, Canada and even Dubai.”

“Provasi has showrooms all over the world, and we are making this our headquarters in the U.S.,” said Gina M. Fard of Provasi. “We believe Las Vegas Market will be the center point of the high-end in the U.S.”

| continued on page 6 |



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- 1. Rod Stewart
- 2. NaturesCast
- 3. Andre Agassi and Steffi Graf
- 4. Robert Maricich, Donald Trump and Ande Maricich
- 5. Kathy Ireland
- 6. Abbyson
- 7. World Market Center, Building B



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Perhaps the most prominent example of World Market Center's growing international appeal was the U.S. premiere of Fiera Milano's Design Italiano. The one-of-a-kind, museum-quality exhibit features the best in Italian furniture design from 1956 to today. The 8,000-square-foot exhibit consists of nearly 100 pieces from 13 top designers and manufacturers, including B&B Italia, Cassina, Flexform and Minotti. Design Italiano was conceived, organized and curated with the support of Fiera Milano, Regione Lombardia and the city of Meda. The exhibit runs through the end of the year on the first floor of Building C at Las Vegas Design Center.

BUILDING C FURTHER ENHANCED OVERALL MARKET EXPERIENCE

The debut of Building C, the stunning 16-story facility added hundreds of exhibiting companies to the complex and, for the first time, allowed every exhibitor and buyer to experience Market exclusively on World Market Center's downtown campus in three inter-connected buildings. With the completion of Building C, World Market Center now stands at more than five million square feet of world class home and hospitality contract furnishings showroom and exhibit space, exceeding the size of any trade merchandise mart in the United States.

Andrew Gajdamowicz, of Lord Selkirk Furniture in Winnipeg, Canada, was one of thousands of attendees who said the opening of Building C and its 2.1 million square feet of showroom space made an enormous difference in his Market experience. "With the addition of Building C, World Market Center is much nicer and bigger. Not to mention, it's easier to see all the exhibitors here. Overall, World Market Center is a beautiful and fun environment."

"Las Vegas is becoming more and more important," according to Scott Reid, chief marketing officer of Lenoir, N.C. - based Broyhill Furniture Industries, Inc. "Having all the buildings on one campus makes it clean, new and fresh. Everything is integrated together. We were very pleased with the traffic we received, and written business was up because we introduced a lot of new products."

ROD ROCKED THE HOUSE

Support for World Market Center Las Vegas came out in droves throughout the day on July 28—the largest day in the market's seven show history. During the thrilling global-themed ribbon cutting, complete with confetti and a sea of waving flags representing various countries from the world, actress Susan Anton stood in the wings with World Market Center's management looking on. Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman extolled the project and its contribution to the renaissance of downtown Las Vegas. "This is an amazing project," Mayor Goodman said, commending management and everyone in attendance for contributing to its success.

Following the spectacular ribbon-cutting to mark the official opening of Building C, Grammy Award-winner Rod Stewart put an exclamation point on what was already the industry's biggest night with a high-energy performance exclusively for Market attendees. More than 12,000 buyers, designers and exhibitors came together for the free and exclusive concert, which featured many of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame star's greatest hits. The multi-platinum artist kept the crowd cheering, dancing and singing along well into the evening.

According to Maricich, "No one could have imagined that in three years we would be at this point. At a time when people are looking at the glass being half empty we are playing to win." He added, "All of the necessary ingredients for doing big things are in place. Our owners have enormous resources, they have enormous passion for what we are doing and they are really smart people. That is the recipe for changing everything."

And one ingredient to that recipe is good, old-fashioned fun according to Maricich. Market-goers don't just come to Las Vegas for the provocative ideas and cutting-edge products. The event is also about having a good time. "In these challenging economic times, we felt we owed it out our exhibitors to pull out all of the stops," says Maricich. "We brought Rod Stewart to Las Vegas, in partnership with Serta, as a show of optimism and a celebration of fellowship."

ONE-OF-A-KIND PERSONALITIES, PRODUCTS AND PRIZES TOPPED MARKET WEEK

Las Vegas' star power attracted an impressive roster of celebrity licensees including Nicole Miller, Donald Trump, Andre Agassi, Stefanie Graf, Kathy Ireland, Kelly Preston and more.

Kathy Ireland, who has over 20 brand partners worldwide, says she is encouraging all of her brand partners to show in Las Vegas. "World Market Center was built with great vision and integrity and it's exciting to see what has happened in a short amount of time. It is bringing people together from all over the world and that is truly exciting in this industry," she said.

Nicole Miller, who attended Las Vegas Market for the first time, showing her collection at Excelsior Designs, was equally impressed for her first visit to World Market Center, saying, "I think (World Market Center) is a great venue. I love the architecture of it and I think it's going to be a great draw.

It's so central, everybody can come here and see so many things at one time because it's so huge." She added, "I think Las Vegas is going to be the Mecca for certain industries and certainly the furniture industry. It's going to become very, very important."

Las Vegas Market's second "Design Icon" award recipient, Larry Laslo, who is one of the foremost product designers

in the world that embraces an eclectic, “livable contemporary” style, was honored at a reception on July 31.

Commenting on his Las Vegas Market experience, Laslo says, “It was the most wonderful week of lectures, concerts, dinners, design stars, rock stars, showrooms and new products I’ve seen in a Market!”

Tomorrow’s cutting-edge designers were also soaking up the Las Vegas spotlight. Jessica Konawicz of Raleigh, N.C. and Jittasak Narknisorn of Woodland Hills, Calif. won the top prizes in the first-ever “One Good Chair International Design Awards” that were held at the July Las Vegas Market and co-sponsored by Las Vegas Design Center at World Market Center Las Vegas, the Sustainable Furniture Council and *Western Interiors & Design* magazine.

With over 300 entries received from all around the world, the program encouraged entrants to contribute their vision for a new kind of “eco-chair” that focuses first and foremost on form.

“The One Good Chair competition challenged designers to push existing paradigms for the design and manufacture of chairs. Ultimately that is what makes this competition fresh and interesting and why we chose to sponsor it,” said Maricich. “We see it as our role to be a thought leader for the industry, to inspire tomorrow’s designers and to help them imagine the possibilities.”

The Winter 2009 Las Vegas Market is scheduled for Feb. 9 to 13, 2009. For more information, please visit www.LasVegasMarket.com.

ABOUT WORLD MARKET CENTER LAS VEGAS

World Market Center Las Vegas is an integrated home and hospitality contract furnishings showroom and trade complex in Las Vegas. With the opening of Building C, World Market Center now stands at more than five million square feet of space, exceeding the size of any trade merchandise mart in the United States. When fully built, at 12 million square feet in 8 buildings, World Market Center will be the largest trade show complex in the world. The \$3 billion, state-of-the-art campus will showcase furniture, decorative accessories, gifts, lighting, area rugs, home textile and related segments, as well as the Las Vegas Design Center (LVDC), open year-round. **RO**

1. Amini opening: Robert Maricich—CEO LV Market, Michael Amini—CEO/Founder, Larry Rinaldi—President of AIC, Jack Kashani—Co-owner WMC **2.** Nicole Miller Furniture **3.** Ribbon cutting ceremony **4.** Steinworld Lighting **5.** Meximuebles Home Furniture



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INDUSTRY NEWS

HAIER AMERICA'S NEW STACKABLE LAUNDRY OFFERS VERSATILITY WITH THE WASHING AND DRYING QUALITY OF FULL SIZE LAUNDRY

STACKABLE LAUNDRY UNITS PROVIDE ALL THE CLEAN WITH LESS SPACE

Haier



Haier America, a leading manufacturer of home appliances and electronics, announced the availability of a new stackable washer and dryer unit, giving consumer's a laundry option that is perfect for closets and other smaller areas. Condo and apartment living doesn't mean you can't have all of the options of full size laundry.

At the standard 24 inches wide and 24 inches deep, the HBF1055TVE washer comes in with 1000 RPM spin speed and can be stacked with the HDY6-1 electric dryer to create one unit that fits nicely in a closet or they can be placed separately side-by-side. The washer offers a 1.8 cu. ft. stainless steel drum, 12 fabric care wash cycles as well as auto select wash/rinse temperature.

This perfect space saving option offers front load with features such as soak, extra rinse, 4 spin speed and spin only as well as a bleach, fabric softener and detergent dispenser.

The ultra-quiet HDY6-1 electric dryer offers a 3.5 cu. ft. stainless steel drum, dual temperature settings, dry time selector and temperature sensor drying. The new heavy duty stacking kit DK6-1 allows you stack the units and feel secure.

MSRP for the entire unit \$1,099.

INNOVATIVE FAUCET FROM WATER, INC. USES DISHWASHER AIR GAP FOR DOUBLE DUTY

THE WATER GAP FROM WATER, INC. ELIMINATES THE NEED FOR EXTRA HOLES IN THE KITCHEN SINK

Water, Inc. is proud to offer its versatile Water Gap, a combination accessory water faucet and air gap, the required venting device for dishwashers that usually appears atop the sink. A masterpiece of dual functionality, Water Gap saves both time and money with easy installation into a pre-existing sink hole, thereby eliminating the need for replacing either the kitchen sink or drilling another hole for an accessory water faucet. What's more, the Water Gap is as stylish as it is functional, complementing virtually any kitchen's décor.

The Water Gap handles both its assignments with ease. As an air gap device, it provides needed ventilation for the dishwasher and installs quickly into virtually any sink's pre-existing dishwasher air gap hole. As an accessory faucet, the Water Gap truly excels. Not only does it have a swivel spout with a generous 3.5-inch reach, ideal for filling pots and pitchers, but it also features lead-free construction and locking-lever operation.

The Water Gap is made for dispensing filtered water from point-of-use systems—under-counter and reverse osmosis alike—available from Water, Inc. It also is well-suited for chilled water, which can be

| *continued on page 10* |



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provided by Water, Inc.'s EverCold® instant-chilled water system. Thus, one single unit—the Water Gap—can simultaneously vent a dishwasher and provide filtered, chilled water, making it an indispensable companion in any kitchen.

Amazingly, the Water Gap's functionality is matched by its aesthetics, with sleek, contemporary lines that belie its air-gap mission. The Water Gap is available in Chrome and Satin Nickel finishes.

FABER ADDS TO CURRENT DISTRIBUTION NETWORK



Faber has added Pace Distribution Group of Dallas Texas to their family of Faber rangehood appliance distributors. Pace will distribute Faber in Texas, Oklahoma and Southern Kansas and Southern Missouri. The addition of Pace adds a key component to Faber's national and Canadian network of distributors. Currently Pace also distributes Bertazzoni, Fuego and Wells Sinkware. Visit www.faberonline.com for more information on the complete line of Faber ventilation. Faber is the premium kitchen ventilation company for over 50 years manufactured in Fabriano, Italy. **RO**

In Memoriam

APPLIANCE INDUSTRY BIDS A FOND FAREWELL TO LONG-TIME FRIEND, "ARNIE" ALSETH

Arnie owned and ran local Seattle appliance store—Monarch Appliance—for over 33 years and was an active member of the AVB/Brand Source Northwest Buying Group for many of those years. He often spoke fondly of relationships with his fellow dealers and vendors, as well as the memories of the distributor-sponsored getaways. His obituary, as prepared by his family, follows:



ALBERT ARNOLD ALSETH

"Arnie" Alseth died peacefully in his sleep on June 25, 2008 at age 81. Born in Seattle on May 18, 1927 to Albert and Lillie (Nelson) Alseth, Arnie lived most of his life in what is now the city of Shoreline. He graduated from Edmonds High School, and was a Fireman 1st Class in the Pacific Fleet in WWII. After the war he worked in sales at Monarch Stove Store in north Seattle, and the Bon Marché in downtown Seattle and Southcenter. He then bought

Monarch Stove Store, renamed it Monarch Appliance & TV, and owned that successful business for 33 years until its closure in 2005.

Survivors include Nancy, his wife of nearly 60 years; children Cindy L. Hadden (Dave), Vicki Molleston, Julie Newkirk (Brett), and Alan Alseth (Ronna Vigers); grandchildren Jessica, Jamie, Bonnie, Ema, Eddie and Adian; and sister Louise Friar. Private inurnment at Floral Hills, Lynnwood. Memorials suggested to Canine Companions for Independence (<http://www.cci.org>). **RO**



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PRIMETIME! BY NATIONWIDE



Vegas Style

PrimeTime! attendees received VIP treatment at the Kickoff event held on Sunday, August 17 at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center in Las Vegas, Nevada. The theme for this PrimeTime! by Nationwide was an ALL ACCESS pass to countless opportunities in one big show. The event marked the beginning of PrimeTime! by Nationwide Marketing Group, the largest vendor exhibition for independent retail dealers. A red carpet led into the main ballroom where unexpected guests were interviewed by a Joan Rivers impersonator. They were also greeted by screaming fans and camera flashes from undercover paparazzi actors.

"It was great, most people didn't know they were really being taped until you started walking toward the ballroom and realized the entire scene on the red carpet was being televised live," said Dan Matthews, owner of Action Rent to Own in Texas. "Everyone was having a good time watching Joan Rivers interview people as they walked in on four huge projected screens." Over two thousand in attendance watched as Michael Israel, inspirational painter, put the final touches on his newest masterpiece, "Nationwide Recycles Takes Flight" at the

PrimeTime! Kickoff on Sunday, August 17 at Mandalay Bay Resort in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The artwork, which consists of three stacked refrigerators, was painted live on stage at the PrimeTime! Kickoff event and was created for an ENERGY STAR art exhibition called "The Art of Recycling: The Coolest Show in Town" at the National Building Museum in Washington DC. Nationwide Recycles Takes Flight will be showcased alongside other refrigerator art at the exhibition from August 25—September 2.

We saw the art exhibit as a perfect opportunity to introduce our new Nationwide Recycles logo that symbolizes our long-term commitment to conservation, the environment, and a national extension to our ENERGY STAR products sales efforts and campaigns like Recycle My Old Fridge, said Richard Weinberg, National Merchandise Manager of Appliances at Nationwide. "Michael's performance helped build excitement for our new logo that we hope will continue to spread to all member dealers and vendor partners who were in attendance at PrimeTime!." | *continued on page 14*



Nationwide PrimeTime! kickoff ceremony



Mandalay Bay Resort in Las Vegas, Nevada



Wells Fargo staged a great booth



Jim Skaggs and Josh Rettich of GE, Kelly Ciulla and Barry Bredvik of Pacific Sales of CA along with Andy Spanye



Miele's team - Jeff Polucci, Alan Carnevale, Rick Harris, Keith Russell, Eileen Waters, Cortney Winger, Steve Evans and Jarrett Bryant



A Joan Rivers impersonator adds to the entertainment as participants look on



Michael Israel recycled masterpiece titled, "Nationwide Recycles Takes Flight"



Miele's classic laundry technologies



Wayne Small of Renwes Sales, Lake Forest, CA with Tim McLoughlin of Purcell Murray of Huntington Beach, CA



Michael Israel—Artist at work



New 5 liter capacity tabletop beverage dispenser by Danby



Joe Lapekas of Truck Skin



LG steam laundry pair



Whirlpool's sales team keeping busy writing orders

The Nationwide Recycles logo is the organization's brand wrapped in bright lime green arrows and circles with the addition of the word recycles in the same lime green color. The new logo was used as the theme for Michael's painting, "Nationwide Recycles Takes Flight," and was displayed on water bottles, signage and publications during the three-day buying show.

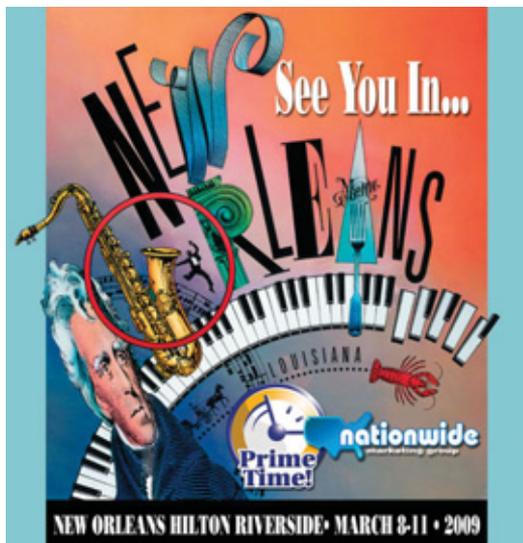
Two-and-a-half miles of red carpet welcomed over 3,000 attendees from thousands of companies across the country at the biannual vendor exhibition held on Monday and Tuesday. The PrimeTime! 250,000 sq. ft. show floor was full of the latest innovations and concepts from top manufacturers. Nationwide Members had the opportunity to take advantage of booth incentives including millions of dollars off rebated merchandise through the Cash Back Now program and other exclusive show offers.

"In a challenging economy we see this as a huge success for our organization and it says a lot about the value of what PrimeTime! offers our members and vendor partners," said Robert Weisner, Executive Vice President of Nationwide Marketing Group. "Our vendor partners see PrimeTime! as an excellent opportunity for them to effectively reach out to a viable independent retail market representing 8,000 storefronts across the country," said Weisner.

"PrimeTime! offers its members valuable tools for running their businesses and many of these resources are not easily accessible or available to them outside of the show. For instance, due to the high participation from vendors this year, CashBack and other show special programs offered deeper discounts and more aggressive pricing on purchases made exclusively at PrimeTime! NMG also introduced brand new member benefits and services along with the addition of new course offerings and free training seminars." 650 members registered for PrimeTime! University that included brand new 2-hour Power Sessions on Wednesday morning. "We have a responsibility to our members and vendor partners to push through the recent economic challenges and host a buying show that will continually provide them with the tools needed to succeed in today's marketplace. Our goal is to exceed their expectations and I believe we did a good job of meeting that objective this PrimeTime." Vendors included brand name appliance, electronics and furniture manufacturers who showcased merchandise from their newly launched product lines.

"It was a successful show from start to finish," said Ed Kelly, President of Nationwide Marketing Group. "We are looking forward to providing our members with even more in New Orleans."

The next PrimeTime! will be held March 8-11, 2009 at the Hilton Riverside in New Orleans, Louisiana. For more information on PrimeTime! and the benefits of Nationwide Marketing Group membership call (336) 722-4681 or email info@nationwidegroup.org. **RO**



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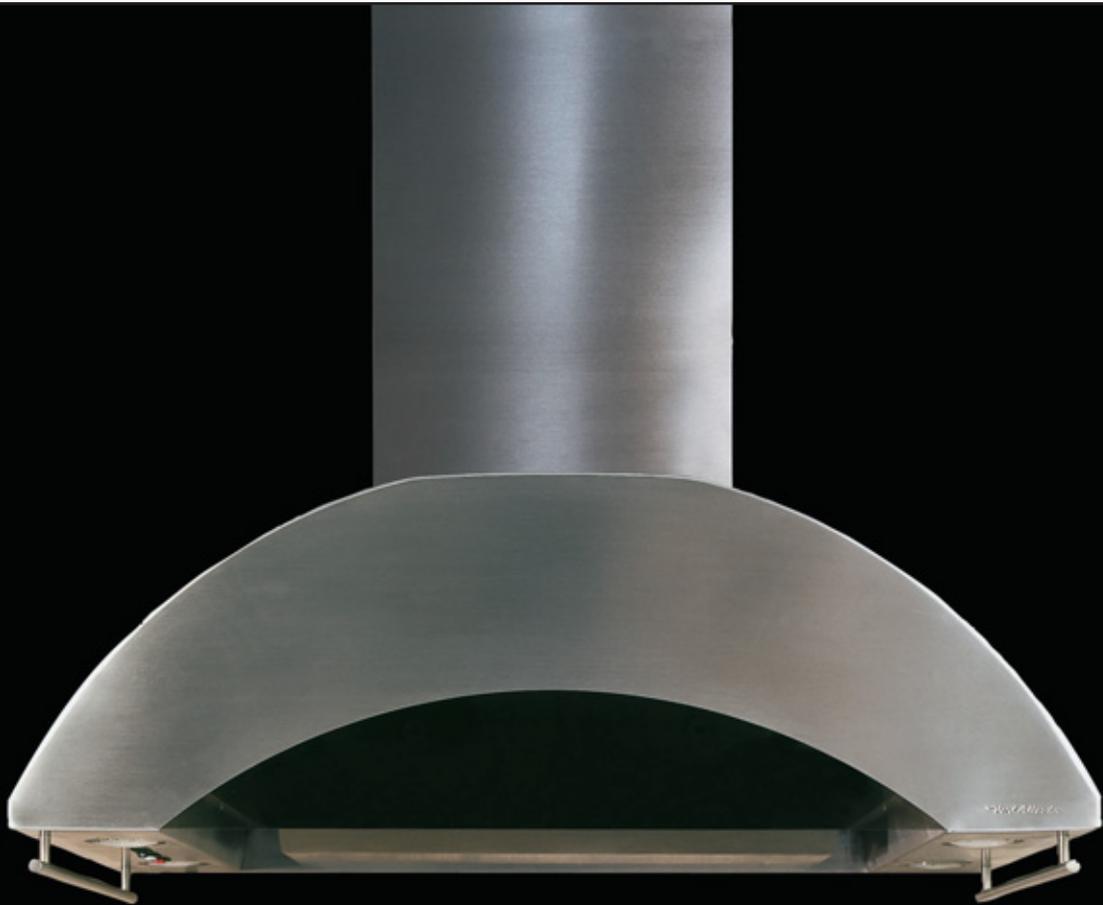
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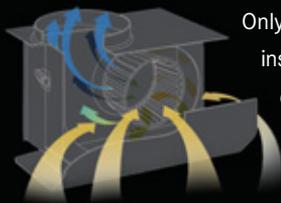
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LIEBHERR'S 2062 SERIES NOW AVAILABLE

NEW 36" REFRIGERATOR ALREADY A DOUBLE AWARD WINNER

BURLINGTON, Ontario—As Liebherr's new 2062 Series arrives in North America this week, the German manufacturer's latest offering is already a double award winner. This brand new product just received prestigious Plus X Awards in Europe in both the "Design" and "Ease of Use" categories. Judges recognized its French door and double freezer drawer design, unique LED light columns, the Soft Close door system and state-of-the-art electronics.

The Plus X Award jury is comprised of 19 well-known journalists and design and engineering experts and is considered the "Oscar" in the field of technology. Liebherr has multiple Plus X Awards in the Large Appliance category from this year and last, recognizing the company's consistency in innovation, responsible manufacturing and premium quality products.

The following statement from the Plus X Award web site, summarizes the importance of this award for consumers:

The Plus X Award honors "innovative companies that today are already

thinking about tomorrow... With this principle in mind, the Plus X Award distinguishes products that are viable for the future. And it does so in categories that are of interest to many consumers: Innovation, design, ease-of-use, ergonomics and ecology."

Liebherr's 2062 Series, consisting of three models—the Freestanding CS 2062, the Fully Integrated HC 2062 and the Stainless Integrated HCS 2062—is now available from fine appliance retailers across North America. Consumers and members of the design trade can find a Liebherr retailer by visiting www.liebherr-appliances.com and using the Dealer Locator tool.

To obtain further product information and high-resolution images for the 2062 Series or any other refrigeration and wine storage product from Liebherr, contact Leanne Newman. **RO**



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Reinventing the 36" refrigerator.

This is what happens when you leave Liebherr engineers and designers alone in a room with a fridge. Leading design and innovation now exists in the 36" size category with the introduction of the new 2062 Series of high performance refrigerators available in freestanding and integrated models.

Unique LED light columns and LED drawer lights illuminate almost 20 cubic feet of storage capacity. The dual refrigeration system, with two separate variable speed compressors, provides superior and consistent cooling in the most energy efficient manner possible. And the elegant French doors coupled with double freezer drawers make it a kitchen showpiece.



2062 SERIES NOW AVAILABLE

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LIEBHERR
Design, Quality and Innovation

LIKE A RECIPE PERFECTED FROM SCRATCH—

THE ALL-NEW GE MONOGRAM PROFESSIONAL RANGES AND RANGETOPS ARE TODAY'S BENCHMARKS OF CULINARY INNOVATION

LOUISVILLE, KY—Imagine you had the time to create a product from scratch, to start with a clean sheet of paper, to consider every detail based on input from consumers as well as designers. That's exactly the approach GE followed when creating its new line of Monogram® Professional rangetops and dual-fuel ranges – designed to serve as the new culinary benchmark for the at-home chef.

“Throughout this process, we've built upon GE's 100-year history of cooking innovation to create a new line of products that offers the best in terms of cooking power, capacity, performance, and design,” said Andrew Spanyer, Monogram Cooking Product Manager. “This is an authentic cooking machine for authentic cooks, who cook for the pleasure of sharing their love of food.”

The Rangetop—Offering up to 126,000 BTUs of total cooking power, the rangetop delivers a full spectrum of performance capabilities and versatility. Dual-flame stacked burners provide a full range of cooking performance; from a variable low simmer of 140-195 degrees F, to a high output of 18,000 BTUs, and everything in between. The new stainless steel and aluminum clad griddle offers 18,000 BTUs (natural gas) of cooking power, allowing fast and consistent heating across the entire cooking surface. An adjustable output 14,000 BTU ceramic infrared grill is also available.

The Ovens—Beneath the powerful gas rangetop are two fully functional, self-cleaning, European reverse-air convection ovens that offer world-class capacity and performance.

Capacity—The large caterers' oven is uniquely sized to accommodate a full-size 18-inch by 26-inch caterer's sheet pan. In fact, it can handle three! The second oven—the smaller everyday oven—easily handles 9-by-13-inch casserole dishes.

Extraordinary Baking Performance—Both ovens feature the Monogram baking system, which combines European reverse-air convection and six heating

elements for superior baking results. This system is paired with precision electronic controls to optimize and control the heating elements during pre-heating and baking for superb results.

Each oven is also complete with full-extension, self-clean racks that are designed to stay in during the self-clean cycle.

Design & “Touchpoint” Innovation—From the refinement of the controls to the bull-nose task lighting, Monogram designers have left the past behind and approached all design elements with a new perspective to reflect today's design aesthetic

Illuminating the control knobs are unexpected LED task lights under the bull-nose that provide a functional—and theatrical—touch. This same attention to detail is reflected in the cooking temperature and time displays, which make controls easy to read.

Heavy-duty, counter-balanced oven doors are designed to hold-open at any desired angle, with a slight pull of the stainless steel handles.

A key element of this design is the 304-grade stainless steel construction, which combines precision machining with meticulous

hand finishing to create a refined appearance, with no exposed seams or screws.

When it all comes together, the new line of Monogram Professional ranges and rangetops will be available in the Fall of 2008, which will mark just one more milestone in GE's 100-year history of cooking innovation.

The GE Monogram 48-inch professional dual-fuel range will be available in natural gas or liquid propane models and will be backed by a 2-year limited warranty (see written warranty for details). The all-new collection will also include 36-inch and 30-inch ranges and 48-inch and 36-inch rangetops.

For details on the complete line of Monogram professional cooking appliances, please visit www.monogram.com **RO**





Pretty. Impressive.

With bold colors, sleek lines and signature doors, the stylish GE Profile™ frontload washer and dryer pair changes the way you look at laundry. And that's just the beginning. The revolutionary SmartDispense™ pedestal holds up to six months of detergent and fabric softener,* then dispenses just the right amount for each load. The StainInspector™ stain removal system treats more than 40 common stains, from grass to grease. And, thanks to the CleanSpeak™ communication system, the washer electronically alerts the dryer to preset dry cycles and helps save time. All together, this laundry pair is the perfect combination of great appearance and innovation to assist your busy lifestyle.

The GE Profile™ frontload washer and dryer pair will be available in July, so act now to add a touch of style and innovation to your sales floor.



*Based on an 8-lb. AHAM load; 10 loads per week, SmartDispense technology pedestal sold separately.



imagination at work

GE Profile™

For more information on GE Monogram® appliances, please contact:

- Northeast: Pete Furfaro at 508.698.7790 • Mid-Atlantic: Pat Deldebbio at 215.953.5518 • Southeast: Steve Campbell at 727.939.8191
- North Central: Steve Stremke at 630.771.0341 • South Central: Jill Locklear at 972.770.3313 • Northwest: John Boyd at 425.226.7194
- Southwest: Jim Skaggs at 480.367.2913

SOUTHEAST BUILDING CONFERENCE ATTRACTS 10,222 TO 30TH ANNUAL EVENT



Seeking the knowledge they need to survive challenging times, 10,222 housing and construction professionals recently converged on Orlando for the 30th annual Southeast Building Conference (SEBC)/GreenTrends event at the Orange County Convention Center.

Education, exhibits and the excitement surrounding the SEBC's first-ever live concert were the highlights of the conference and trade show, which coincided with the Florida Home Builders Association (FHBA) Summer Builders Conference and Board of Directors meeting.

Seventeen intensive educational courses—leading to business-building professional designations—were held at SEBC 2008 and attended by 470 delegates while another 501 delegates took advantage of 50 general seminars, many of them offering continuing education requirements for Florida contractors.

“Green” was the magnet for many as 132 attendees took the two-day Green Building for Building Professionals course leading to the professional designation of “Certified Green Professional,” or CGP. Seminars on the green home certification, green products and green marketing were also well attended.

Over 300 companies presented 800 exhibits at the SEBC trade show, including special sections of booths on green building products and services, hurricane mitigation resources, and landscaping materials and techniques.

Music and entertainment icon Charlie Daniels and The Charlie Daniels Band presented a lively 90-minute concert for an audience of 1,500, ending the evening with the group's classic hit “The Devil Went Down to Georgia.”

President Robert Parrish of Tallahassee and Second Vice President Ann Hagen of Orlando presided over the FHBA conference, which included meetings of the state association's committees, councils and task forces, and the summer Board of Directors meeting.

State legislative leaders were on hand for the FHBA Governmental Affairs Committee meeting, where a lively debate on Amendment Five was waged, and the Board meeting featured Punta Gorda builder Jay Carlson being named FHBA's President-elect and two Past Presidents—Ron Copenbarger of Jacksonville and Richard Durling of Fort Myers—being announced as the newest inductees into the Florida Housing Hall of Fame.

FHBA's next meeting is the Annual Fall Conference on October 1-4, 2008 at the JW Marriott Hotel in Orlando and next year's SEBC/Green Building Show is July 30-August 1, 2009, again at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando. | *continued on page 22* |

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SEEN AT THE SEBC (SOUTHEAST BUILDING CONFERENCE)

HELD AT THE ORANGE COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER, ORLANDO, FLORIDA
JULY 30TH THRU AUGUST 2ND 2008



1. Greeting the competition — Joe Dillon of ALMO to John Whiteley of Whirlpool 2. Mark Pollitz and Chris Spencer were hanging with the cupcake in the Electrolux booth 3. Pinnacle Sales Group, Inc. Dundee, FL — Ron Avery, Pete Ronco, Leon Thomas, Wayne Findley, Andrew Savant and Michael Jones 4. HADCO — Kurtis Schuttler, Mark Spears and Tony Massa 5. Almo Specialty Products — Charles Zimmerman, Larry Feldman, Frank Robichaud, Josh Dillon and Joe Dillon 6. Whirlpool Corporation — Dean Brown, Jack Strombeck, Jim Millard, Nancy Harvey, John Whiteley and George Howard 7. G.E. Appliances — Al Knowles, Jeff Jackson, Sandi Metts-Lopez, David Acker and Joe Lomascolo giving water the treatment **RO**



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Chocolate, Pumpkin, Plum, and Sage are just some of the classic flavors now available as exclusive Viking finishes.



**CHATEAU COLLECTION WINE CELLAR BY MARVEL®
AWARDED CONSUMERS DIGEST "BEST BUY"**

Wine cellars and refrigeration products enable lifestyle enhancement throughout the home; Green ribbon award highlights outstanding quality and value. Consistent with its reputation for luxury, quality, style and sophistication, Marvel®, the leading manufacturer of luxury undercounter refrigeration products, was recently awarded the *Consumers Digest* Best Buy rating for its Chateau Collection, 54-Bottle Wine Cellar, model 6SWCE.

Consumers Digest defines Best Buys as products that offer the most value in a given price range. The Chateau Collection of wine cellars and beverage refrigerators, with Sentry System™ temperature monitoring, combines the latest technology with Marvel's elegant appeal and quality.

Consumers Digest Best Buys are products that are available nationally and merit special attention from consumers based on a combination of performance, ease of use, features, durability, warranty, efficiency, styling, and maintenance and servicing requirements. The awarded Chateau Collection Wine Cellar tips the scale in all these areas, but especially in ease of use and features, with Sentry System monitoring keeping wine at just the right temperature for optimal flavor and storage life.

"We're very pleased to have this wine cellar recognized by such a longstanding and respected consumer research and testing publication," said Gerry Reda, senior vice president of sales for Northland-Marvel. "In addition to outstanding quality and looks, this unit features easy-to-use technology that offers the industry's only real-time temperature read-out of wine. Display lighting and fine finishes add the "wow" factor to increase any room's appeal."

Marvel is the industry leader in style, design and range of refrigeration choices for discriminating homeowners worldwide. Marvel products are available with sleek stainless steel, monochromatic color choices and overlay doors for full integration into surrounding cabinetry. From kitchens to master baths, morning rooms, media rooms, dens and libraries, Marvel undercounter refrigeration products allow homeowners to enjoy foods and beverages anywhere in the home.

CHATEAU COLLECTION WINE CELLAR 6SWCE INCLUDES:

- Sentry System temperature monitoring
- Contents temperature display: Displays the actual, real-time temperature of the wine
- Door ajar monitor: The alarm sounds when the door is inadvertently left open
- High/Low temperature monitor: Alerts the user to out of range temperatures or power loss
- User-activated Sabbath mode: Disables display, lights and controls for up to 72 hours
- Elegant blue LED display: Discreetly covered by the door frame for a sleek, streamlined look
- Style and function
- Six full-extension, glide-out racks and one stationary wine cradle hold all types of bottles, including half wine bottles; round-based Champagne bottles; high-shouldered, Bordeaux bottles; and tall, slim, Riesling bottles

| continued on page 26 |



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TASTE PERFECTION



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Marvel Dual Zone Wine Cooler

Fluctuations in temperature can negatively alter the flavor of a fine wine or conceal its true depth. For a wine to reveal its complexity, it should be served at precise temperatures.

The Dual Zone Wine Cooler by Marvel offers two compartments with the control needed to serve wine immediately at optimum temperatures. Both compartments in the Dual Zone Wine Cooler are monitored by Marvel's exclusive **Sentry System™**, allowing any varietal to be maintained with precision. The displayed temperature is actually a calculated temperature of the wine in the bottle, not just a set point.

Remove inconsistency and replace it with subtle distinctions that characterize fine wine, compliments of the Dual Zone Wine Cooler.

www.lifeluxurymarvel.com



PART OF THE AGA RANGEMASTER GROUP

FABER LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

Faber, the premier kitchen ventilation company has re-launched their website www.faberonline.com. The new site offers many new features that will allow customers and dealers to access information more easily than before. The flash photo gallery has a couple hundred photos available to browse to become inspired for your own kitchen design. Also, there is a For owner section with helpful tips and hints and a green / environmental concerns page, and an expanded "about the company" section. All of the spare parts, specification sheets and installation instructions are still available for downloading. Come visit the website and see what's new including the new line of range hoods coming out in 2008. **RO**



MARVEL® WINE CELLAR | *continued from page 24* |

- Vibration Neutralization System minimizes wine disruption which can stir up sediment
- Argon-filled, dual-paned, UV-resistant, tinted glass door with reversible swing delivers a clean appearance
- Four distinctive colors—monochromatic black with black interior, monochromatic white with white interior, stainless steel framed door with black cabinet and black interior, and overlay-capable framed door with black cabinet and black interior—provide solutions for any color scheme
- Display lighting showcases the wine or can be used as ambient room lighting
- Clean, continuous toe kick adds a stylish finish **RO**



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BSH HOME APPLIANCES CORPORATION ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENTS TO FOUR NEW SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT POSITIONS

The only manufacturer in the United States with four premium brands—Bosch, Siemens, Thermador and Gaggenau—BSH Home Appliances Corporation announces appointments to four new Senior Vice President positions within the Operating Committee. Each product division will now be lead by a senior vice president, reporting directly to the president and CEO, Michael Traub.

GOTTHARD VON HUNDT—Gottard von Hundt now heads the laundry division, including full-size front-load washer and dryers and 24” stackable units. Since 2003, von Hundt held the position of Director, Product Marketing for the North American market and began focusing on the laundry division in late 2006. Prior to that, he was Director, Global Marketing for dishwashers based in Munich.

MARTIN KNOBLOCH—Martin Knobloch now heads the dishwasher division, including the launch of a new dishwasher category called Ascenta which will be sold under the Bosch brand. Previously, Knobloch held the position of Director, Global Product Marketing for dishwashers based in Munich. Prior to that, he was Manager of Corporate Strategy.

DR. ANDREAS MEIER—Dr. Andreas Meier now heads the cooking division, including wall ovens, freestanding ranges, gas, electric and induction cooktops, and ventilation. Previously, Meier held the position of Managing Director for BSH Home Appliances Ltd. (Thailand). Prior to that, he headed Corporate Strategy for BSH Group based in Munich.

E-LIN TAN—E-Lin Tan now heads the refrigeration division, including free-standing (counter-depth and standard-depth) and built-in categories. Previously, Tan held the position of Head of Global Product Line Management for the refrigeration division based in Giengen, Germany. Prior to that, she was in the Corporate Technology department based in Munich.

“Each of the new senior vice presidents brings valuable experience and the kind of inventive thinking that will help BSH maintain growth in the product divisions they will oversee,” said Michael Traub.

ABOUT BSH

BSH Home Appliances Corporation is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bosch and Siemens Hausgeräte GmbH, headquartered in Munich, Germany, the world's 3rd largest home appliances manufacturer. BSH Home Appliances Corporation manufactures and markets small and major home appliances under the Bosch, Siemens, Thermador, and Gaggenau brands throughout North America. Manufacturing facilities are located in New Bern, North Carolina, and LaFollette, Tennessee. Further information can be found at: boschappliances.com, boschsmallappliances.com, thermador.com, gaggenau-usa.com, siemens-home.com, and bsh-group.com. 



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We're never satisfied unless our products are the best they can be. That's why we built our new 30" gas cooktop with five burners instead of the usual four. It's just one of the models in our newest line of Bosch gas cooktops. Available in 30" and 36" widths, they offer up to 17,000 BTUs of heating power, **POWERSIM**® burners, and a striking new look that is sure to be a welcome addition to your showroom floor. Add more power to your sales—and your customers' kitchens—with new gas cooktops from Bosch. Call 800.944.2904 or visit www.boschappliances.com



BOSCH
Invented for life



BERTAZZONI REVEALS VERSATILE AND EFFICIENT 36" DUAL FUEL RANGE

NEW SELF-CLEANING MODEL COMBINES PRECISION COOKING, MAXIMUM POWER

Bertazzoni, the leading Italian manufacturer of precision-engineered cooking systems, announced today it is expanding its product line with the addition of the company's first self-cleaning 36-inch Dual Fuel range. The Dual Fuel range offers the versatility of an electric oven and a gas range with optional natural or LP gas installation. Additional features include five- or six-burners and the option to choose from either a stainless steel or vibrantly colored version available in Bertazzoni's complete color palette—verde (green), bianco (white), rosso (red), crema (beige), nero (black), blu (blue), giallo (yellow) and vino (burgundy).

"Through advanced technology, the new 36-inch Dual Fuel range adds the perfect amounts of performance, accuracy and elegance to any kitchen," said Paolo Bertazzoni, the company's fifth generation president. "Homeowners will appreciate the imaginative detail, ease and multitude of functions provided with this Bertazzoni designer professional range in their kitchen."

ELECTRONIC OVEN AND GAS RANGE COMBINE IN 36" DUAL FUEL MODEL

The stylish new 36-inch Dual Fuel range comes complete with a main oven, featuring precision temperature settings and high efficiency gas burners. Highlighted with eight different cooking functions, including European convection and a full width broiler, Bertazzoni's precision-controlled oven offers maximum power and cooking flexibility.

The 36-inch self-cleaning Dual Fuel model also features:

- Best-in-class one-piece work top styling with uniquely sealed burners and a seamless surface for quick and easy clean-up.
- Heavy-duty cast iron grates for easy movement of any kind of cookware.
- Child-safe valves on all burners that stop gas flow if the flame goes out—even during a power outage.
- Easy one-touch ignition systems and max. cooking power of 4500 W.
- Uniquely balanced air-flow fan, which provides even heat distribution for single and multi-level roasting and baking—without flavor crossover through a third ring heating element convection technology.
- Precise control of oven temperature from 125°F to 500°F
- Enameled wire shelf support with optional telescopic glides.
- Triple-glaze door to ensure minimal heat loss and low-temperature external surfaces.
- Stainless steel and eight vibrant color options available.
- Design-matched backsplashes and adjustable range hoods with three power settings.

The 36" Dual Fuel range will available September 1, 2008 via Bertazzoni's extensive distributor network throughout North America. United States suggested retail pricing for the 36" Dual Fuel five burner range begins at \$4,799 for stainless steel and \$5,599 for color. United States suggested retail pricing for the 36" Dual Fuel six burner range begins at \$ 4,999 for stainless steel and \$5,799 for color. **RO**



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ALMO'S FULFILLMENT SERVICES DIVISION & POWER MERCHANDISING CORPORATION TO ENTER INTO STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

NEW COMPANY TO BE POWER-HOUSE IN TURN-KEY FULFILLMENT FOR THE E-COMMERCE, LOYALTY AND INCENTIVE ARENAS

Almo Corporation and Power Merchandising Corporation (PMC) today announced a strategic alliance which unites Almo's Fulfillment Services

Division and PMC. The new entity, Power Merchandising Company, LLC (PMC), operating as a joint venture, will provide a broad array of high quality brand name consumer electronics, appliances and general merchandise to the loyalty, incentive, and e-commerce channels. PMC will focus its efforts on the loyalty and incentive channels while the Almo e-Commerce Group will continue to focus and expand its efforts offering fulfillment services to the e-commerce channel.

"Our goal is to be a one-stop source for our dealers and fulfillment customers, from brand diversity to product breadth to automated ordering and shipping services" said Warren Chaiken, President and Chief Operating Officer of Almo Corporation. "The combination of our two operations creates a unique offering that will provide our customers not only the industries leading brands, but a complete selection of accessories as well. We look forward to creating increased value and accelerating the growth of our combined business through synergies, scale, and shared resources." The joining of PMC and Almo's Fulfillment Division provides great benefit to its new, combined customer base by expanding existing product offerings and increasing operation and logistics efficiencies.

Joe Corrigan will be the Chief Operating Officer of the new venture. The new reporting structure aligns the product offering of PMC and Almo Fulfillments Services under a single leader and leverages the combined expertise of both teams for dynamic future growth.

"Almo has a very solid reputation across the distribution industry, and its core competencies align with PMC's business strategy," said Joe Corrigan, founder and principal of PMC, Inc. "Together with Almo's national warehousing facilities, product offerings and operating efficiencies and PMC's customer base and expertise in sales and marketing, we are well-positioned to achieve our next phase of significant growth in the fulfillment channel."

This new, powerhouse entity is able to provide the best service and largest selection of electronics merchandise in the premium and incentives channel. As the leading turnkey fulfillment partner, PMC will offer over 40 leading consumer electronic, appliance and general merchandise brands, world-class logistics with 11 nationwide distribution centers, and a host of automated and customizable services. Plus, the new entity will provide exceptional partner services from dedicated



incentive representatives to fully managed client merchandise and custom e-commerce web sites. Customers will now have access to additional

brands including Panasonic, Garmin, Samsung, Sony, Sharp, Phillips, Pioneer, Hitachi, Canon and more.

PMC will maintain operations in Elkhorn, Wisconsin focusing on the premium channel. Almo's e-Commerce Division will continue to operate from Almo's corporate headquarters in Philadelphia, PA. PMC sales inquiries can be directed to Eric Anderson at eric@pmcusa.com. Almo e-Commerce sale inquiries can be directed to Mike Harris at mharris@almo.com.

ABOUT ALMO CORPORATION

Almo Corporation is the nation's leading independent distributor of Consumer Electronics and Major Appliances. Known for its Rapid Ship services and exceptional customer service, Almo distributes over 40 of the industries top brand names. Dealers and Retailers have instant access to a wide variety of Consumer Electronics, Major Appliances, Mobile A/V Electronics, Digital Imaging and Professional Residential Kitchen and Outdoor Appliances. Almo's comprehensive fulfillment & ecommerce division provides drop-shipping services, daily inventory updates, EDI capability, customized packing slips and, customized labels along with access to our extensive inventory. Same-day shipping and next-day delivery enables our customers to provide timely deliveries to their customers. Founded in 1946, Almo is headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and operates 12 regional distribution facilities with over 1 million square feet of warehousing throughout the United States. More information on Almo is available by contacting the company directly or at Almo's web site located at www.almo.com.

ABOUT POWER MERCHANDISING CORPORATION

Power Merchandising Corporation (PMC) is a leading provider of high-quality brand name consumer electronics and merchandise. As a leading distributor to the special markets channel, PMC has developed preferred relationships with the most respected suppliers and manufacturers in the business. As a result, PMC delivers the best brands with the highest quality, superior pricing, and rapid turnaround to help their customers succeed. PMC provides marketing and sales expertise, merchandise expertise, superior pricing, and brand-name merchandise that have built deep customer relationships. **RO**



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RUSSELL S. MINICK NAMED PRESIDENT OF ELECTROLUX HOME CARE PRODUCTS

LEADER BRINGS HOME INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE AND CENTRAL VACUUM EXPERIENCE TO ROLE AS HEAD OF EHCP



BLOOMINGTON, IL, Aug. 21, 2008—AB Electrolux of Sweden has named Russell S. Minick president and CEO for Electrolux Home Care Products (EHCP), the Group's operation for floor care and small appliances in North America, which includes the Electrolux, Eureka and Sanitaire brands and the division Electrolux Central Vacuum Systems (formerly Beam Industries). Minick most recently served as president of the Electrolux Central Vacuum Systems division. He replaces John Case,

who is leaving the company to pursue a new opportunity.

"Russ is a hands-on leader who is flexible, practical and results-oriented," said Morten Falkenberg, president and CEO of floor care and small appliances for AB Electrolux, the parent company of EHCP. "With his broad experience from different types of businesses, I'm confident that Russ is well prepared to build on the recent successes in North America to continue to take our floor care business to the next level."

Minick will assume his new position on Sept. 1, 2008, and will report to Falkenberg.

"I'm thrilled to broaden my reach within the company to work with each of our well-known, distinct brands and lead the excellent team already in place," said Minick. "EHCP has an unwavering focus on customer-driven innovation, and I understand the importance of that commitment to our overall success in the marketplace."

Minick has served as president of the Electrolux Central Vacuum Systems division, which manufactures and ships central vacuums to 45 countries throughout the world, since June 2006. He joined the organization with extensive management expertise, including prior experience as president of HNI Corporation's The Gunlocke Company, a contract office furniture company focusing on private office case goods, conference room furniture, lounge furniture and executive seating. As leader of this \$100 million company, Minick led a staff of approximately 885 employees, launched several high impact new products and grew revenue significantly.

Before HNI, Minick was the senior vice president of sales, marketing and product development at True Temper Sports, where he was responsible for growing revenue, developing new lines of business and new products. Minick also worked at Ford Motor Company as the general manager, extended warranty operations, where he had full responsibility for the company's global extended warranty business.

Minick began his career with Maytag Corporation in a variety of sales leadership positions of escalating responsibility, culminating with the role of director of national accounts. In this position, Minick was responsible for all the sales, marketing, product development and logistics for Maytag's largest customers.

"Russ has a track record of success in industries undergoing great change, and we look forward to seeing his leadership | *continued on page 40* |

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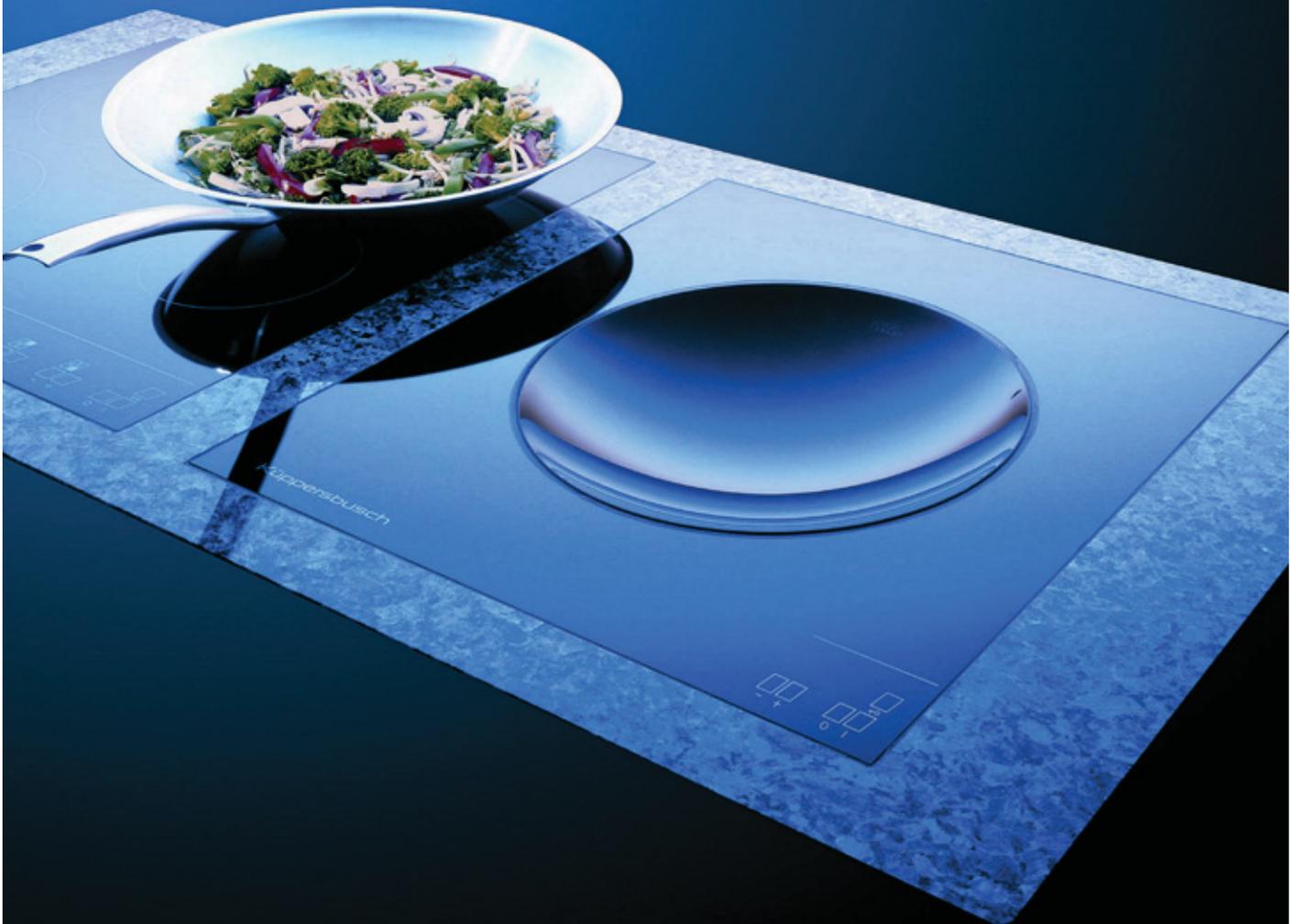
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CARMEN CAZARES AND PSYCHELIA TERRY AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS "WHIRLPOOL INDUSTRY & COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD"

Whirlpool Corporation's annual "Whirlpool Industry & Community Service Award" was presented to Carmen Cazares and Psychelia Terry, both Contract Channel account managers in the Whirlpool Corporation Western region. Honored during the 2008 PCBC® The Premier Building Show, Cazares and Terry received the award for their incomparable leadership, countless contributions to the building industry and relentless involvement within the community.

Since joining Whirlpool Corporation in 2004, Terry has been actively involved in every community she's called home. As a resident of Las Vegas only since 2006, Terry has quickly become a driving force in the community. Terry is an active volunteer for several different organizations and activities throughout her community, including the monthly Salvation Army clothing drive and Feed the Homeless program; the March of Dimes "March for Babies"; the Las Vegas Martin Luther King Celebration Community Enlightenment Parade; and the Alpha Kappa Alpha high school student youth program, silent auction and scholarship ball. Terry also is involved in the Southern Nevada Home Builders Association, mentors local high school and college students, is part of the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, and volunteers for gift-giving programs for homeless children. Additionally, she is working on completing an Executive MBA in an advanced program offered by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

"Psychelia is a very strong employee with high moral

standards," said Alexander Holton, Southern Pacific contract division director. "Staying true to her rapid advancement history, she performs extremely well as an account manager in the Las Vegas area and has become a strong go-to person for me and others on the team. She is extremely engaged in community service and builder industry activities, and a leader in almost everything she sets out to accomplish."

Cazares joined Whirlpool Corporation in 2000. Since that time, she has been active in the Home Builders Association (HBA) of Northern California, is a member of the HBA Women's Council, and co-chairman of the HBA Homes of Our Own committee, which educates fourth grade through high school students on the home building process. Carmen also is an active Habitat for Humanity® volunteer, working on several home builds, and a member of the Family Selection Committee for Habitat for Humanity® East Bay, where she serves as a Spanish translator for current and future homeowners.

According to Edward Lindner, North Pacific contract division director at Whirlpool Corporation, "In addition being a high performing account manager, which is a very time demanding position, Carmen just received a degree in business management and marketing from the University of Phoenix after taking night courses for four years. She has developed into an extremely dynamic person in the building industry and her community. Carmen is certainly an inspiration and positive influence on all of her co-workers, especially me."

KITCHENAID INTRODUCES ITS QUIETEST DISHWASHER EVER

NEW EQ™ WASH SYSTEM EXCEPTIONALLY QUIET WITH UNCOMPROMISED PERFORMANCE

For homeowners who believe nothing should interfere with good times and good conversation in the kitchen, a pioneering brand in the dishwasher category that introduced its first model almost 60 years ago is now offering its quietest dishwasher ever. Featuring the new EQ™ Wash System and Whisper Quiet Ultima™ Sound Insulation System, this latest KitchenAid brand undercounter dishwasher is exceptionally quiet with a sound rating of only 48 dBA, or decibels, a level close to that of a quiet room (40 decibels) and well below a moderate rainfall (60 decibels).

"The challenge for our engineers in developing an even quieter KitchenAid brand dishwasher was to maintain the high performance that KitchenAid is known for," said Debbie O'Connor, senior manager of Brand Experience for KitchenAid. "Not only did they meet the challenge of less noise with powerful performance, their design also resulted in a more energy efficient dishwasher."

The EQ™ Wash System provides optimal cleaning performance and noise reduction while also saving water and energy. The system features a true variable speed motor that helps to minimize operating noises by starting slowly and adjusting its operating capacity to deliver the power needed based on the wash cycle. Alternating wash zones focus the washing action, while using less water and energy for high performance cleaning. A three-stage filtration system captures food particles as the water circulates within the dishwasher to maximize efficiency of its pump. For enhanced drying performance, the interior of the dishwasher is heated by a dedicated drying element.

"In addition to being our quietest, our latest dishwasher is 58 percent more efficient than ENERGY STAR® standards," said O'Connor. "Beyond being ENERGY STAR® qualified, it also has an efficiency designation from the Consortium for Energy Efficiency (CEE), making it eligible for energy rebates in select states." **RO**

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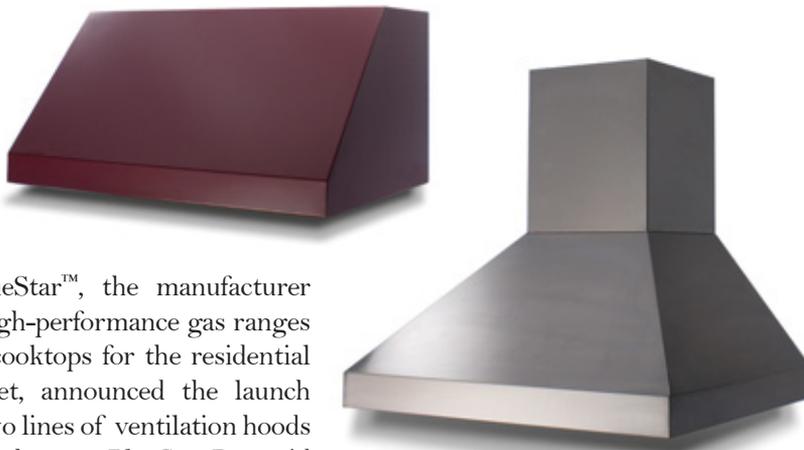
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BLUESTAR™ LAUNCHES TWO LINES OF HIGH-PERFORMANCE HOODS

PRO-LINE AND PYRAMID HOOD LINES AVAILABLE IN 190 STANDARD COLORS



BlueStar™, the manufacturer of high-performance gas ranges and cooktops for the residential market, announced the launch of two lines of ventilation hoods for the home—BlueStar Pyramid Hoods and BlueStar Pro-Line Hoods.

Both BlueStar hood lines are available in 30", 36", 42", 48", 54", 60", and 66" width sizes and peak at 1200 CFM. While the lines feature similar performance capabilities, the Pro-Line hood offers a more traditional, restaurant-style appearance, while the Pyramid hood has a more designed, chimney aesthetic. Both models are available in 190 standard colors—so consumers can match their hoods to the color of their range and kitchens.

"Any time we introduce a new line of BlueStar products, our overriding objective is to deliver well-constructed products that perform at the highest level. When you're thinking about ventilation, the most crucial performance elements are the quality of the steel and construction, the air capture, and the CFM power. BlueStar hoods use commercial grade 18-gauge 300 stainless steel construction, are available in 6" increments up to 66", and deliver up to 1200 CFM. And what's become a BlueStar trademark, our hoods are available in 190 standard colors—the most in the industry," said Keith Wolf, BlueStar's Vice President of Marketing.

BLUESTAR HOOD FEATURES INCLUDE

- Available in 30", 36", 42", 48", 54", 60", and 66" width sizes.
- Pro-Line: 30" and 36" models available in 600 or 1200 CFM.
- Pyramid: 30" model available in 600 or 1200 CFM. 36" model available in 600 or 1200 CFM.
- 42" and larger sizes available in 1200 CFM.
- Commercial grade 18 gauge 300 stainless steel construction.
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- Quiet performance.
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in action as he ushers Electrolux Home Care Products into its next phase,” said Falkenberg.

Minick graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in marketing and a minor in business communication from the University of Northern Iowa.

An internal and external search is underway to identify the new head of Electrolux Central Vacuum Systems.

WATER, INC. WELCOMES NEW REGIONAL SALES MANAGER

MICHELE GRAVINA TO LEAD SALES IN COLORADO AND WYOMING



CARSON, CA., Aug. 19, 2008—Water, Inc.—a premier distributor of luxury water products, decorative plumbing, and high-end appliances for the home—is proud to welcome Michele Gravina as regional sales manager.

In this role, Gravina—who has five years of sales experience—will be responsible for all of Water, Inc.’s sales efforts in Colorado and Wyoming. She earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from the

University of Colorado at Boulder.

“Michele brings sales experience and enthusiasm to her new position at Water, Inc.,” notes Major Avignon, president of Water, Inc. “We are confident that she will continue the sales growth in Colorado and Wyoming.”

Gravina lives in Littleton, Colo., with her husband and two children. In her spare time, she enjoys outdoor activities such as skiing, hiking and golfing.

NICOLA BERTAZZONI JOINS FAMILY BUSINESS, FILLS NEW MARKETS DEVELOPMENT POSITION

SIXTH GENERATION BERTAZZONI SON JOINS 125-YEAR-OLD ITALIAN MANUFACTURER OF COOKING SYSTEMS

Bertazzoni, the leading Italian manufacturer of precision-engineered cooking systems, is pleased to announce that Nicola Bertazzoni, who represents the company’s sixth generation, has joined the company as head of New Markets Development. In this new position, he will continue the company’s global expansion of the Bertazzoni brand portfolio into new markets. He will be tasked with creating new strategies for market expansion, while concurrently analyzing requirements, constraints and opportunities associated with the commission.

“As Bertazzoni extends its reach into new areas, I am proud to carry on the 125-year-old legacy of Bertazzoni quality and tradition – marrying the company’s rich history with the cutting-edge engineering innovations of today,” shared Nicola Bertazzoni. “I’m looking forward to exploring these new markets and playing a role in the company’s continued success.”

Nicola Bertazzoni possesses a technical background in industrial engineering, and received his degree from Università degli Studi di Modena. He formerly held a senior buyer position with Toyota. Just prior, Nicola Bertazzoni served as program manager, buyer and purchasing strategic team leader with Fiat Group. **RO**

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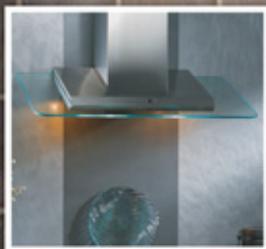
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SIX-FIGURE BASE SALARIES COMMON FOR EXPERIENCED RETAIL BUYERS

SURVEY BY EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRM CAREER MANAGEMENT

Although their roles have narrowed over the years, experienced buyers at retail companies commonly command six-figure base salaries that are augmented by bonuses.

According to a survey recently conducted by retail executive search firm Career Management, nearly 60 percent of buyers with 10 or more years of buying experience earn more than \$100,000 per year, with 43.8 percent of respondents reporting salaries (excluding bonuses and other compensation) in the \$100,000-\$150,000 range, 11.4 percent in the \$150,000 to \$200,000 range, and 4.2 percent exceeding \$200,000. At the lower end of the scale, 24.0 percent of buyers within this group earned in the \$80,000 to \$100,000 range, 5.2 percent were in the \$70,000 to \$80,000 range, and 11.4 percent earned less than \$70,000.

Among respondents with five to 10 years of buying experience, approximately one-third had six-figure base salaries, with 27.7 percent earning between \$100,000 and \$150,000 and 6.2 percent surpassing \$150,000. Rounding out this group, 21.5 percent reported salaries in the \$80,000 to \$100,000 range, 26.2 percent earned between \$70,000 and \$80,000, 13.8 percent were between \$60,000 and \$70,000, and 4.6 percent earned less than \$60,000.

Just over half of the respondents with less than five years buying experience earned over \$70,000, with 28.4 percent in the \$70,000 to \$80,000 range and 23.8 percent exceeding \$80,000. Rounding out this group, 20.5 percent had salaries in the \$60,000 to \$70,000 range, 11.4 percent were in the \$50,000 to \$60,000 range, and 15.9 percent earned less than \$50,000.

In an overwhelming number of cases, these buyers can augment those salaries with bonuses, with 83.3 percent of respondents indicating they are eligible for such compensation. The average size of the bonus in relation to annual salary was up to 10 percent for 24.2 percent of respondents, 10 percent to 20 percent for 39.6 percent of the group, 20 percent to 30 percent for 25.0 percent of those surveyed, 30 percent to 40 percent for 5.6 percent, and 40 percent-plus for another 5.6 percent.

“The salary levels point to a highly competitive market. Retailers have found that it’s very difficult to attract and keep the right buyers,” said Lloyd A. Lippman, president and CEO of Career Management. “At the same time, though, more and more chains are giving incentives to buyers tied to individual and company performance.”

“All of this is occurring at a time when the buyer has taken on a far more specialized role in larger retail organizations,” he continued. “Years ago, buyers were involved in everything from product design, development and sourcing, to the allocation of goods to the stores. Today, a number of those functions are handled by other departments, with the buyer essentially responsible for coordinating the efforts of all those teams while understanding the needs of the store’s customers.”

| continued on page 44 |

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AMONG OTHER FINDINGS:

- Only 20.4 percent of respondents were responsible for allocating purchase orders to their stores, with the remaining 79.6 percent indicating that this function was handled by an allocation team.
- A majority (59.2 percent) of respondents said they are responsible for quantifying the size of the buy, while 20.4 percent indicated that this function was done by planners, and another 20.4 percent noted that this was handled by a committee.
- More than 57 percent of the buyers said they travel less than 30 workdays a year, with 23.7 percent away from the office less than 15 days, and 33.6 percent away from 15 to 30 days. Among the balance, 30.9 percent said they travel 30 to 60 days, 9.2 percent are away from 60 to 90 days, and 2.6 percent are away more than 90 days.

Career Management's confidential survey was conducted among buyers in the following categories and industries: apparel, footwear, jewelry/accessories, furniture/decorative home/house wares electronics/appliances, sporting goods, office products, books/music, hardware/home improvement/auto supplies, department store, discount store/warehouse club/off-price big-box, and catalog/e-commerce. The findings were validated against responses from human resources executives, general merchandise managers and divisional merchandise managers from major chains who were queried in a separate survey by the firm.

In that separate survey, the HR execs, GMs and DMs were also asked about career opportunities and turnover rates for buyers within their companies.

THE SURVEY FOUND:

- The majority of companies recruit their buyers internally, with 37.5 percent of respondents indicating that 50 percent to 75 percent of their buying team is promoted from within and 18.8 percent saying that better than 75 percent of the team comes from inside. Among the remainder, 15.6 percent said that 25 percent to 50 percent of the buying team is recruited internally and 28.1 percent put that proportion at less than 25 percent.
- Divisional merchandise manager is the next step on the career path for buyers at an overwhelming 75 percent of the companies surveyed, trailed by planning director (12.5 percent) and 'other' (12.5 percent).
- Nearly two-thirds of the companies (62.5 percent) reported an annual turnover rate of less than 10 percent in their buying ranks, while 28.1 percent put the turnover rate at 10 percent to 30 percent, and 9.4 percent said the rate exceeded 30 percent.

"Our findings confirm that turnover has been significantly reduced in the buying ranks as companies are finding ways to keep their buyers longer," Lippman concluded.

To see the complete survey findings, including salary and bonus data within several major retail industry categories, visit Career Management's website, www.careers4retail.com, and follow the link to 2008 Buyers Survey. **RO**



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13TH ANNUAL WEBBY AWARDS SEEKING WORLD'S BEST RETAIL SITES

CALL FOR ENTRIES FOR THE "INTERNET'S HIGHEST HONOR" KICKS OFF—
SEPTEMBER 16, 2008



What do Ikea Mattress, Nike Women, and Sherwin-Williams Color Visualizer have in common?

They've all won the Best Retail Website award at the Webby Awards, the leading international award honoring excellence on the Internet.

From September 16th to December 19th, 2008, The 13th Annual Webby Awards will accept entries for the Best Retail Site of the Year. Last year, Ikea Mattress took home the top prize at The 12th Annual Webby Awards on June 10, 2008. Nominees included Around the World in 5 Kitchens, Moo, Nike Golf Apparel, and Samsonite Black Label.

"The retail industry continuously raises the bar every year with groundbreaking work," said David-Michel Davies, Executive Director of the Webby Awards. "The Webby Awards is an exciting opportunity for industry leaders to have their work shine in the international spotlight."

Hailed as the "Internet's highest honor" by the New York Times, The 12th Annual Webby Awards received a record 10,000 entries from over 60 countries. The awards season was capped by a star-studded June gala showcasing an influential group of Internet luminaries including Stephen Colbert, David Byrne, and Black Eyed Peas front man will.i.am.

The Webby Awards is presented by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences, a 550-person judging academy whose members include Vinton Cerf, R/GA's Chief Bob Greenberg, "Simpson's" creator Matt Groening, Arianna Huffington, and Harvey Weinstein.

To enter a Website in the 13th Annual Webby Awards, visit www.webbyawards.com. The early entry deadline is October 31, 2008. Retail industry sites can also enter in interactive advertising categories and feature categories such as Best Navigation and Best Copy Writing. Nominees will be announced in April and winners will be honored at the gala ceremony in June 2009. In keeping with Webby tradition, all winners' speeches are limited to just five words.

ABOUT THE WEBBY AWARDS

Hailed as the "Internet's highest honor" by the New York Times, The Webby Awards is the leading international award honoring excellence on the Internet, including Websites, interactive advertising, online film and video, and mobile web sites. Established in 1996, the 12th Annual Webby Awards received nearly 10,000 entries from all 50 states and over 60 countries worldwide. The Webby Awards is presented by The International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences. Sponsors and Partners of The Webby Awards include: Adobe; The Creative Group; Nokia; .ORG; Level 3; Getty Images; The Barbarian Group; Digital Kitchen; Adweek; The New York Times; Variety; Wired; IDG; FirstMarkCapital; Brightcove; PricewaterhouseCoopers; 2advanced.Net; KobeMail and Museum of the Moving Image. **RO**



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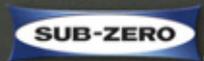
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NIelsen CLARITAS PARTNERS WITH LEADING CONSUMER DURABLES BUYING GROUP

AGREEMENT INVOLVES SEGMENTATION ANALYSIS OF TWO MILLION CUSTOMER RECORDS;
FINDINGS ARE BEING MADE AVAILABLE TO BOTH RETAILERS AND MANUFACTURERS

In an effort to provide important market research data to both retailers and manufacturers in the consumer durables market, Nielsen Claritas, The Nielsen Company's leading marketing information source, announced today that it has partnered with the Nationwide Marketing Group, one of the premiere buying and marketing organizations for the independent retailer within that space, to conduct a sweeping segmentation analysis of more than two million customer records from a select group of Nationwide member dealers.

The analysis, which is expected to be completed in September, is being done with the use of the Nielsen Claritas PRIZM® lifestyle segmentation system, which classifies the U.S. population into 66 segments based on various socio-economic data, such as income, age, race, occupation, education and household composition. Additionally, PRIZM includes information about lifestyle attributes that are critical to shaping advertising and marketing strategies, such as where people vacation, what they drive and their favorite brands.

Nielsen Claritas Vice President Neil Portnoy, who heads up the consumer durables sales team, said the data provider has been successful over the years in performing PRIZM analyses for top national retail chains to show them who their best customer is, and, through Nationwide, is now committed to leveling the playing field so the independent retailer can effectively compete with those national chains.

"Through this partnership we hope to help the independent retailer uncover hidden market potential," he said, adding that Nationwide will also provide the findings from the analysis to an exclusive group of manufacturers.

Adam Thomas, Vice President/Appliances for Nationwide, said the buying group is offering the data to the manufacturers so they can partner better with dealers to drive more valuable store traffic and grow sales.

"By aligning manufacturers and dealers, and leveraging the intelligence gleaned from this study, the focus is on targeting the right customers, with the right message using the right media and measuring results efficiently," he said.

"I applaud Nationwide for taking a look at the market in a new and exciting way and helping both their members and strategic manufacturers to define both the market potential and their customers in order to increase foot traffic in member stores," Portnoy said.

ABOUT NATIONWIDE MARKETING GROUP

For more than 30 years, Nationwide Marketing Group has helped thousands of independent appliance, electronics and furniture dealers not only compete but win in today's competitive marketplace. With over 2,800 members operating some 8,000 store fronts with over \$11 billion in combined annual sales, Nationwide is America's foremost buying and marketing organization.

ABOUT THE NIELSEN COMPANY

The Nielsen Company is a global information and media company with leading market positions in marketing information (ACNielsen), media information (Nielsen Media Research), online intelligence (NetRatings and BuzzMetrics), mobile measurement, trade shows and business publications (Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter, Adweek). The privately held company is active in more than 100 countries, with headquarters in New York, USA. Nielsen Claritas is the pre-eminent source of marketing information about people, households and businesses within any geographic area in the United States. For more information please visit: www.nielsen.com or www.claritas.com. **RO**

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FOCUSING ON MEMBER TRAINING

EDUCATING MEMBERS IN SALES TECHNIQUES AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TO HELP CLOSE MORE SALES

With the holiday selling season quickly approaching, Brand Source is helping members close more sales through professional sales training, retail private credit card sales training and extended service contract training.

One year ago, Brand Source launched a complete retail sales and management training program that teaches retail salespeople every step of the sale. The training program was designed specifically for Brand Source through the Friedman Group, international sales and management training specialists. The program focuses on customer satisfaction and retention for retail sales people while helping sales managers and business owners focus on goal setting and sales close rates. All members who enroll in the training program receive a free World Class Sales and Management seminar at the Friedman Learning Center in Henderson, Nevada. Members who started the program last year report more successful sales closing rates.

RETAIL CREDIT TRAINING—AND A CRUISE

Brand Source continues to show members new areas to make and save money. The Brand Source Card, accepted by over 3,000 retail stores, offers members a tremendous step up opportunity by offering higher credit rates than most credit cards. In-Store sales training is available to all Brand Source members who accept the card, through the six Brand Source National Market Managers who focus specifically on sales training. Brand Source will offer Brand Source Card 0% interest for 12, 18 and 24 months promotions through the end of the year that cost members less than standard credit card processing fees. This benefits both members and consumers.

Brand Source announced at the National Convention and Buying Fair a retail salesperson's incentive 7 Day Caribbean cruise for eight retail salespeople. The contest runs September 1 to December 31.

The Brand Source Card program has become a valuable sales and marketing tool, accepted by Brand Source, Brand Source Flooring Gallery, Home

Entertainment Source, Maytag Source and Sleep Source stores across the nation. The card gives consumer more opportunities to purchase nearly everything for their home through Brand Source member's stores. The in-store sales training will help retail salespeople better explain the cards overall benefits to consumers.

EXTENDED SERVICE PLAN TRAINING

The media has had several stories about disposable flat panel TVs from the box stores. These are products with no back up parts availability, leaving the consumer out of luck when the product fails after the manufacture's warranty expires. The Brand Source Expert Protection extended service plan program provides for new products if parts are no longer available, making the service plan more valuable than ever before.

Today's major appliances feature touch control panels with electronic components that are affected by power fluctuations and power surges. Now more than ever consumers need to be offered service plan protection. Brand Source has a team of six certified sales trainers who offer in-store and regional sales training seminars for the Expert Protection service plans, including the new service plans for furniture coverage.

Over 700 Brand Source members offer the Expert Protection service plan policies and the goal this fall is to reach as many as possible, in their stores for hands on personal training.

INTERNET TRAINING

With over seventy percent of today's consumers researching consumer electronics and major appliances on line before making a store visitation, Brand Source is also focusing on regional Internet training meetings to help members become more aware of the steps they need to take to attract more consumers who search the internet.

Brand Source is providing more training this fall than ever before, and is taking steps to improve all aspects of the training programs available to members. **RO**



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MASTERCLASS CONFERENCE 2008: INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVES

THE NKBA WELCOMES LINDA ELLIOTT SMITH, FASID & KEN JONES, MBA

OCTOBER 1ST & 2ND, 2008—GEORGIA WORLD CONGRESS CENTER ATLANTA, GA

The NKBA is pleased to announce that speakers Linda Elliott Smith, FASID and Ken Jones, MBA will be presenting at MasterClass Conference 2008: Industry Perspectives, to be held on October 1st and 2nd in Atlanta.

Linda Elliott Smith, FASID will offer a presentation on “Designing for Multi-Generation Lifestyles—At Home and At Work.” Ms. Smith will explore the growing trend of several generations living and working in the same home or office. This course examines the multi-generational aspect of how designers will approach the challenges of designing for diverse age demographics.

Ms. Smith has been a practicing interior designer for over 23 years, and is president of Smith & Associates, Inc., an award-winning interior design firm specializing in contract, hospitality, and residential interior design. Through her experience, she has developed an understanding of the value of continuing education to help practicing interior designers stay current and informed about changes in the industry.

Ken Jones, MBA will offer a presentation on “Sustainable Competitive Advantage.” If you had to compete against yourself, how would you win? Mr. Jones will discuss specific steps to take if you find your wheels stuck in the ditch. When is it time to work on, versus in, your business?

Mr. Jones has more than 25 years of experience creating, building, and selling businesses. His background includes an array of responsibilities with documented success in the areas of entrepreneurial development, turnaround management consulting, software development and

implementation, and e-business creation. As Director of the Entrepreneur & Venture Development Center at The University of Houston Downtown, his responsibilities include educating students in the skills of entrepreneurship and new venture creation, as well as creating and implementing educational initiatives and community involvement.

MasterClass Conference 2008: Industry Perspectives will be held at the Georgia World Congress Center in co-location with the Green + Design Show, produced by Nielsen Business Media.

This year, the conference will be held for a day and a half, giving attendees direct access to presenters each day. On October 1st, there will be roundtable discussions, as well as an evening reception. This year, attendees can look forward to topics including sustainability and universal design, among others. [RO](#)

REGISTER TODAY!

You can register in any of four ways:

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BRAND BUILDING

TAKING A RISK CAN LEAD TO BRANDING GOLD

I'll admit it. I love the Olympics.

As I write this, the Olympics are winding down and will soon be over. While I will miss watching elite athletes compete in obscure sports like water polo, fencing and synchronized diving, it will be nice to get to bed at a decent hour and not have to drink a gallon of coffee in the morning.

As I watched some of the Games the last couple weeks, I drew some inspiration from the athletes that can be applied in the branding and marketing game.

I was reminded that to really stand out, you have to take a risk.

No sport demonstrates this better than gymnastics. The competitors who perform riskier, more difficult routines are rewarded with higher scores. They fly all over the gym, doing flips and twists and feats of strength and balance that amaze us.

When they perform all the elements correctly and, of course, stick the landing, they dazzle the crowd and wow the judges. They are rewarded with medals, adoration and, if they're lucky, sponsorship deals.

By contrast, the athletes who perform safe, easy routines are never noticed. Their performances may be okay, but they're met with mild applause from the audience and mediocre scores from the judges. They finish respectably in the middle of the field, but have no shot at greatness.

That same approach should be taken with marketing. If you really want to stand out, you need to take a risk. Try something that will make your brand outrageous, different and unique.

By trying a riskier marketing "routine," and performing all the moves correctly, you will wow your customers. You will set yourself apart in a sea of dull competitors who are all the same.

The hard part is figuring out what risk to take.

Start by reminding yourself who your target customers are. Why do they come to you? What are their needs? How do they find out about you and your competitors? This will help you determine what kinds of marketing messages they are likely to respond to.

Then try to learn from what other companies in your area

are doing to market themselves. What are some risky moves that have paid off for them? How might you use their approach in your own marketing?

By developing an appreciation for good marketing, you can get some good ideas about how to build your brand.

Finally, review your own marketing efforts. If you've been playing it safe and doing the usual, expected advertising, it's probably worked reasonably well for you and you've managed to maintain pretty good brand awareness.

But if you want a shot at greatness, you need to shake up your marketing. Think about what you can do to make people notice your advertising. Think of the wildest, strangest, craziest, stupidest ideas you can. Then see if you can harness those ideas to work for you.

There's a good chance you'll come up with a gold-medal routine.

On the other hand, there's an equally good chance you won't. The thing about taking risks is they carry a greater possibility of failure.

Some of the gymnasts who attempt the harder routines fall off the apparatus or miss the landing, dashing their medal hopes. We see them tearfully embracing their coaches and teammates.

But, as the saying goes, they gave it a shot.

Risky marketing strategies sometimes don't work. They might not deliver the intended message, and get met with scorn and ridicule by customers.

This is not a reason not to take the chance, however. Gymnasts who want a shot at a medal have to take the risk. Companies who want their brands to get noticed are under the same obligation.

If it doesn't work, you go back to the drawing board and try again. Unlike the Olympic athlete, you don't have to wait four years before you get another shot. **RO**

Christopher Thiede owns BUILD Communications, a branding and PR firm. He can be reached at chris@buildcommunications.com.



NARI JOINS WITH THE NKBA TO OPPOSE INTERIOR DESIGN TITLE AND PRACTICE ACTS

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE REMODELING INDUSTRY AND THE NATIONAL KITCHEN & BATH ASSOCIATION COMBINE FORCES TO FIGHT UNNECESSARY INDUSTRY REGULATION

The National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) has joined with the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) and other national organizations in opposing restrictive and unnecessary design regulation. The proposed regulation stems from the efforts of a small, but influential group of interior designers who are lobbying state legislatures across the United States for legislation that would regulate who may provide interior design services to the public and would prohibit the large majority of designers from practicing their profession.

“The NKBA is very pleased to have NARI join us in our efforts to oppose the attempts of a handful of interior designers who seek to limit their competition by imposing arbitrary licensing restrictions on the design community,” said Edward S. Nagorsky, General Counsel and Director of Legislative Affairs for the NKBA. “There is a concerted effort on the part of a select few designers who insist that everyone seeking to practice interior design attend their approved schools, pass their approved exam, and apprentice under them, all without any demonstration that the current practice of interior design by those who don’t meet these self-imposed standards is in any way a cause for concern. Such unnecessary and anti-competitive legislation will limit consumer choice in retaining the services of a professional designer, while increasing the costs of design services beyond the reach of the ordinary consumer.”

The broad sweep of the proposed regulation includes many of the services that members of NARI provide on a daily basis. “NARI resolutely supports the NKBA’s efforts on this issue,” said Gwen Biasi, Director of Marketing and Communications for NARI. “It is essential to protect the remodeling industry from disruptions in businesses that already face significant challenges by market conditions.”

The NKBA has been instrumental in educating the design community about these attempts to limit the market for interior design and dictate who may or may not provide these services. Through its legislative

website at www.capwiz.com/nkba, in addition to articles, publications, and presentations to local NKBA chapters, trade associations, and other grassroots organizations, much of the industry is now aware of what is at stake.

NARI joins the NKBA, American Institute of Architects (AIA), Interior Design Society (IDS), and the International Furnishings and Design Association (IFDA), in addition to numerous other organizations, in their efforts to defeat interior design licensing. For more information on title and practice acts, please visit www.capwiz.com/nkba or contact Edward S. Nagorsky, NKBA General Counsel and Director of Legislative Affairs, at 800-THE-NKBA (843-6522).

ABOUT NARI

The National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) is the only trade association dedicated solely to the remodeling industry. With more than 7,700 member companies nationwide, the Association-based in Des Plaines, Illinois-is “The Voice of the Professional Remodeling Industry.™” NARI is a professional association whose members voluntarily subscribe to a strict code of ethics. For more information, or to locate a local NARI chapter, visit NARI’s website at www.RemodelToday.com, or contact the national headquarters office at 800-611-NARI

ABOUT THE NKBA

The National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) is a non-profit trade association that owns the Kitchen/Bath Industry Show & Conference (K/BIS®). With more than 40,000 members, the NKBA has educated and led the kitchen and bath industry for 45 years. The mission of the NKBA is to enhance member success and excellence, promote professionalism and ethical business practices and provide leadership and direction for the kitchen and bath industry worldwide. For more information, please visit the NKBA Press Room at NKBA.org/Press or call 800-THE-NKBA (800-843-6522). 

GOOD NEWS!

GAS PRICES CLIMB OVER \$4 A GALLON

It's getting harder to watch the news every day. We're still at war in Iraq, facing a nuclear threat with Iran and watching mounting tensions throughout the Middle East.

The dollar is weak and the Federal Reserve Bank hinted at rising inflation. Truck factories are closing and airline losses are in the billions. The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index continued its downward trend in June to a 16-year low. The Index now stands at 50.4 (1985=100), down from 58.1 in May. Unemployment has skyrocketed.

The good news, though, is that gas prices are over \$4.00 a gallon.

Good news? Elly, surely you've lost your mind.



Who could find anything good in record-high gas prices? We're experiencing pain at the pump, not pleasure in filling our tanks.

Here's how high gasoline prices are good for business. When consumers spend \$50 to \$60 for a fill-up, that fuel is a precious commodity not to be wasted. There's no cruising, going out for a ride on Sunday afternoon and no needless shopping trips.

High gas prices mean that every customer coming through your door is a buyer. There's no more "just looking" or "we might be buying a home theater in a few months." There are no more tire kickers or "lookey Lous." When your door swings, it's opportunity knocking.

The only question is whether that customer will buy from you or from your competition. The store that is best prepared will win the battle for that customer.

Spiff up your showroom. Make sure your store looks fresh and inviting. If you want to differentiate yourself from your bigger competitors, make your showroom look more home-like and less store-like. Touch up the paint and clean the carpets. Whether you're displaying sewing machines, guitars or refrigerators, be relentless about keeping gear clean.

Make sure all of your displays are connected and fully operational. Check remotes for batteries and ensure that lighting systems work perfectly.

Today's consumer is value-driven. Don't believe that your business is bullet-proof because you only cater to the rich and famous. An article in the Sunday New York Times titled "It's Not Easy Being Less Rich" spoke to the financial anxieties high net-worth families are facing as their fortunes fall from \$20 million to \$8 million and their year-end bonuses vanish.

Value doesn't necessarily equate to cheap. Customers who choose to come to your store know that you're not a warehouse club, but they still want to buy the most they can get within their budget.

No matter what you sell, display an entry-level value priced product. Show customers how moving up to better merchandise increases value by adding real benefits.

Don't be disarmed with customers asking for better pricing. Everyone wants assurances that they're getting the best possible deal. A customer who asks "is this your best price?" may just need reassurance that you're really acting in his best interest. If you have done your job and explained the benefit you're offering, you can respond with "it IS a great price. We give all of our customers our best prices every day."

Many sales opportunities are lost because of the associate's fear of asking the customer to buy. Make sure you tell each prospect that their business is important to you and that you'd like to have them as a client.

Focus on the customer not on the product. If there's ever been a time for great selling practices, this is it. Ask more questions to find out what is driving the customer.

A quilter needs a different sewing machine than a novice sewing her first garment. A serious music buff may be more interested in buying better speakers while a sports fan may just

be interested in getting the biggest display he can afford. A gourmet cook may be willing to put additional money into a convection oven or a six-burner cooktop with a grill.

Ask lots of questions. Use "leading questions" to tell people about features they may not know about and to help them choose more highly-featured products. "If you're like most customers, Steve, you're probably tired of having to use a bunch of remote controls just to watch a movie. Would you be interested in seeing a single remote that will operate all the features of your entire system?" You added a great customer benefit and more than a couple of profit dollars.

Design great demonstrations. Many purchases are emotional. A good demonstration reflects an associate's intimate knowledge of the prospect's unique desires. He'll show a movie buff clips from the films with best sound and video or show scenes from Shrek or Finding Nemo to the family looking for good entertainment. A jazz fan will hear a great variety of the best performers. If you're selling to me, you'll cue up Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band in New York City.

Demonstrations that come alive and make customers want the same kind of experience they find in your showroom will move them from shopper to buyer.

Don't forget the telephone. Sales associates have long rued the telephone as an interruption and a nuisance. Many assume that customers who call only want pricing information.

Now, however, those prospects may simply want to make sure that the trip they make to your store is worthwhile—that they don't waste precious gas driving around town from store to store.

Be courteous. Take a deep breath before answering the phone. Answer with a greeting, the name of your company and your name. "Thank you for calling Minnesota Music, my name is Sally."

Use the same great selling skills you'd use in person on the phone. Ask and use the customer's name. Get the customer's permission to ask the same kind of questions you'd ask them in the store so that you give them information about the products that will best meet their needs.

Make an appointment for them to come in for your demonstration. Promise to be available at their convenience. Rising gas prices may mean less store traffic, but that may not be a bad thing. You may no longer have to worry about customers grilling you and then using your expertise to buy online or from a competitor.

I think there's a real silver lining to this cloud. Don't fret high gas prices, use them to your advantage. **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.*



COMING EVENTS

CALENDAR 2008-09



SEPTEMBER-2008

- 7-11 NARI Fall Business Meeting-Sheraton Baltimore City Center Hotel, Baltimore, MD
9-12 The Remodeling Show-Baltimore Convention Center in Baltimore, MD
18 NKBA Northern CA-CCRE Prep Course-Dacor- South SF CA
20 NKBA Northern CA-CKD/CBD Exam-San Francisco Bay Area
-

OCTOBER-2008

- 19-22 CEA Industry Forum-Las Vegas, NV
22-25 Bath & Kitchen Buying Group Fall -Westin Boston Waterfront, Boston, MA
23 NKBA Northern CA Meeting-European Kitchens-Palo Alto CA
27-30 Digital Hollywood-Hollywood, CA
-

NOVEMBER-2008

- 4-7 EHX Fall 2008-Long Beach, CA
18-19 Future of Television-East New York, NY
-

DECEMBER-2008

- 12 NKBA Northern CA Holiday Party-The St. Francis Yacht Club-SF CA
-

JANUARY-2009

- 8-11 2009 International CES-Las Vegas, NV
20-23 International Builders Show-Las Vegas NV
-

FEBRUARY-2009

- 25-26 Digital Music Forum-East New York, NY
-

APRIL-2009

- 22-23 CEA Washington Forum-Washington, DC
-

MARCH-2009

- 8-11 Nationwide Primetime-Hilton Riverside-New Orleans, LA
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AUGUST-2009

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YOUR MONEY DOCTOR

Project management in corporate environments has become popular and is quite useful. Project managers are trained to manage and improve everything from information technologies to construction, and we know how important it is to the final product to have a solid business plan, an organization chart, a schedule for the day, etc. This allows you to use your day most effectively, to see the overall picture, and to make the best choices according to that picture. A strange phenomenon occurs on the commute from work, though. All the things you learned regarding preparing, planning, and proper execution are suddenly relegated to some 'at work only' place in your mind, and you start to stress over what to make for dinner.

How does this relate to finances? In a hundred different ways; take dinner as one small example.

How often have you panicked on your way home? No time to cook before the kids get home... no time to cook and eat before meeting friends for a movie, so you stop for takeout on the way. Not only a bad meal choice, also a bad financial choice. Or what if you get a call when you arrive home, someone needs a favor. You balance that with time for a meal, say yes to the favor and eat fast food on the way. Again, bad food, bad financial choice. Extend this to other areas of your life and you have a potential financial disaster. Organization is vital. If your life is in disarray, your finances will be as well.

You need a plan. Proper planning can lower your stress levels, help you say "no" to things that ultimately have no place in your day, and help you make more financially sound decisions. Time management gurus like Steven Covey, Hyrum Smith, and others have written many books offering solutions to help manage our ever-growing task lists. These books offer tremendous insight and are extremely helpful, but be aware of one potential issue with them. Planning can become one of the many tasks you feel you need to accomplish on any given day, and

that serves only to increase stress levels when unrealistic expectations cannot be met.

But planning doesn't have to be complicated.

Traditional project management is simple. Initiate, Plan, Execute, and Close. Then Evaluate the process. (This simplification will likely incur the wrath of those who do this for a living but it really is only as complicated as you make it.) Most of us know how to do this at work; we need to realize we can – and should – do the same thing at home. Over the next five articles I will explain each of these elements in more detail and show how they can increase your efficiency and money. **RO**

With 17 years of management experience, Gregory Hedges has developed a sharp eye for identifying inefficiencies, cross-purposes and miscommunication—and for how quickly they can affect an individual's personal wealth. Utilizing the tools of the Four Pillars of Financial Stability and project management, he emphatically helps individuals and families set priorities and create the balance they need for their financial health. Greg holds certifications in credit counseling and project management. He is an active member of the Project Management Institute®, National Association of Credit Counselors and an Affiliate Member of the American Psychological Association.

He has spoken to many organizations including the New Mexico Mortgage Lenders Association, New Mexico Association of Mortgage Brokers, community workshops, and seminars. He is highly skilled in organization methodologies, developing a wide range of custom databases, websites and internal controls to increase effectiveness and profitability.
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¹ Project Management Book of Knowledge, Project Management Institute®



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The idea is catching on and soon there will be other airports as well. The easiest way to enroll is to go to one of the above airports and visit their enrollment center where they will take your photo, verify your passport, finger-print you and take a picture of your iris. For more information you can visit them online: www.flyclear.com.

WHAT'S NOT SO NEW!

Well, the stimulus checks have been mailed, and most of them have been cashed, but the economy isn’t stimulating!!! Rising prices, lousy home sales, property devaluations, as well as wages fixing or decreasing as inflation rises is eating away at the worker’s take home pay. Tight credit, the surge in food and energy costs, and a lack-luster economy create a potent combination that is hitting the consumer hard. The inflation gauge jumped by .08% in June and this is the biggest increase in more than 20 years.

The big concern is the price of oil. Both McCain and Obama are plugging for more energy alternatives. McCain wants more nuclear energy plants plus more drilling for

oil. Obama has not fully endorsed the nuclear idea but is persistent in demanding more alternative options such as wind, methane, solar power, and so on. We are not in a recession -- yet!!! But if high oil prices continue it could press us into one. Not a depression but a recession. As I write this article, the cost of oil seems to be decreasing and economic experts are predicting gas will fall to a range of \$3.50 to \$3.75 per gallon. Don’t forget—it’s an election year! Strange things happen during election years.

Are you about to retire? When you do, will you be able to maintain the same lifestyle you have now? A grim study has recently revealed that almost three out of five middle class retirees will run out of money if they keep the same lifestyle when they retire. Most retired people will have to reduce their lifestyle or their standard of living to avoid financial problems. About 77 million baby boomers will retire in the next few years. Many of them have small savings accounts and live beyond their means.

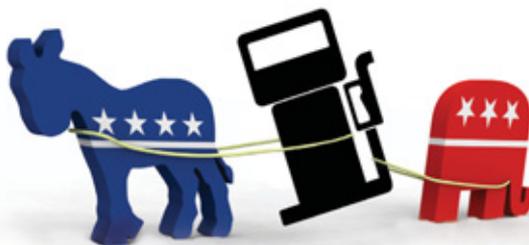
A recent study found that those retirees who rely only on Social Security have a 90 percent chance of running out of money right after retirement. Retired people must have a guaranteed income other than Social Security to survive and they must be prepared to reduce their scale or style of living.

I have many friends who are retired and most of them tell me that they aren’t living quite the grand life they had before retirement. The biggest problem is inflation. If they retired ten years ago, their income was adequate or more than adequate at that time... but not today.

Today is entirely a different story that will once again be influenced by the upcoming election and determined by who becomes our next president. By the time you read this, the national conventions will be over and both McCain and Obama will have their running mates chosen. Most Americans are bored stiff with the politics and yearn for the election to be over. About 40% of voters already know who they will vote for and the undecided will determine the final outcome. Who are you voting for?

Charles Edmonds

Charles Edmonds **RO**



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