

The RetailObserver

November, 2008

The Monthly News Magazine with Personality

Vol.19, Issue 11

LIEBHERR NORTH AMERICAN DEALERS ENJOY A EUROPEAN GETAWAY

SEE INSIDE—PAGE 4



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Publisher's Statement
Celebrating Our 19th Year!

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DEADLINE FOR
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IS NOV 10, 2008



VIEWS

MOE'S MUSINGS

VIEWS

MY VOTE WENT TO...

ALFRED E. NEUMAN FOR PRESIDENT

"He is just as smart as the other candidates and twice as popular"

HIS STANCE ON THE ISSUES:

- **Guaranteed Health Care:** Ban all HMO's and medical insurance. Outlaw the American Medical Association. Change the medical deductions on the 1040 to 100%. Result: People will shop for their medical needs, thereby reducing inflated prices of pharmaceuticals, laboratories, doctors, and hospitals. After all, medical insurance is designed to guarantee that the medical industry be paid, not that people receive adequate treatment.
- **Social Security:** Since when?
- **Education:** The Government should stay out of it. Government interference only perpetuates existing stupidity.
- **Welfare:** Get a job.
- **National Security:** Who would be stupid enough to invade the U.S.? And what would they do with us if they won? Would it be any worse than what we have now?
- **Congress:** Cut salaries to what these idiots are worth. Minimum wage for entry level.
- **Protecting the public from itself:** The government has no business interfering in people's lives or protecting us from our own stupidity.
- **Lobbyists and Special Interests:** Tax all cash flow at 50%. Tax all religious institutions that engage in politics. (separation of church and state works both ways)

ON THE CANDIDATE

- He decided to run for office because the other candidates were all so boring.
- He has never failed at business, defrauded the Small Business Administration, sought special favors from the Government, or inhaled.
- His brother never fixed his election.
- He has no wife to cheat on.
- He is not a politician and makes no promises, which he wouldn't keep anyway.
- He has never been investigated by 60 Minutes, ATF, IRS, or the National Inquirer.
- Heads of State: "I don't know them. They're all foreigners anyway."

But just remember: If voting could really change things, it would be illegal.
Paid for by the Friends of Alfred E. Neuman for President

Happy MAD Retailing-

Moe Lastfogel



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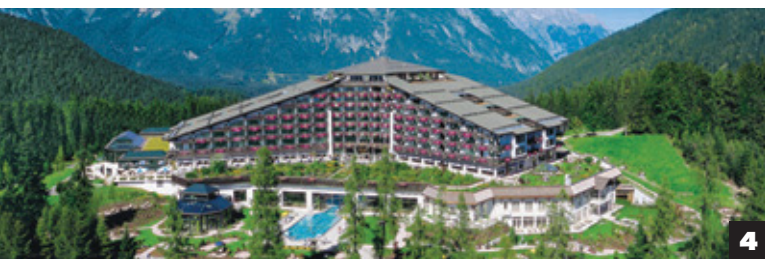
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LIEBHERR NORTH AMERICA European

BY ELIANA



Liebherr, in its continuing efforts to educate the North American market about the quality of its products, sent 34 dealers and guests to its facilities in Ochsenhausen, Germany. These dealers came from Washington DC to San Francisco and from Texas to Toronto. It was a pleasure for Moe and me to join this fun group on our first major European trip since taking over the Retail Observer. We were very excited to participate in this once-in-a-lifetime adventure.

The entire group flew into Munich, Germany on the morning of September 20th and were greeted by the smiling faces of Larry Feldman of ALMO Specialty Products, Don Dixon of Tri State Distributors and Marc Perez, Vice President of Liebherr North America, the main hosts for this event.

After clearing customs and counting luggage (except for a few lost bags) we loaded into our bus and were off on our adventure. Our first stop after an hour and a half ride on the world famous Autobahn was our hotel which was the 5-star Interlpen-Hotel Tyrol in Telfs-Buchen, Austria built by Dr. Liebherr for his business associates.

We were captivated by the Interlpen-Hotel from the moment of our arrival. Its imposing exterior was complemented by the spacious yet cozy Alpine interior, creating a soothing and harmonious atmosphere. The luxurious interior décor, with its elaborate hand carved woodwork and forged wrought iron in the lounges, restaurants and bars, contributed greatly to the lavish hospitality of this resort hotel. Absolutely spectacular!

After a brief lunch and a few hours of free time to roam the grounds, we were treated to a superb dinner in their amazing restaurant. Chef Zangerl enjoys an excellent reputation that extends beyond Austria's borders. His innovative creations made from fresh products surprise discerning gourmets time and again. A truly outstanding pleasure—white glove service doesn't even begin to describe this feast. The half-board features a six-course evening menu with a selection of dishes to choose from, served in the warm and cozy dining room.

The next morning we were treated to one of the largest breakfast buffets we have ever seen that included an extensive

1. My beer's bigger than yours is! 2. Moe Lastfogel, Eliana Barriga and Michael Brielman
3. 8 beers...WOW! 4. Hotel Interlpen 5. Hofbrau House Munich 6. Eliana and the

CAN DEALERS ENJOY A Getaway

BARRIGA

meat and cheese assortment with complete rounds of over 50 cheese varieties to choose from. After our meal, we were off to the beautiful and picturesque town of Innsbruck, home of the 1964 and 1976 Winter Olympics. The tour of this historic town unfortunately lasted only a couple of hours as the afternoon held an adventure at the famous Neuschwanstein Castle in the Bavarian Alps of Germany. This castle is the most famous of the three royal palaces built for Louis II of Bavaria, sometimes referred to as Mad King Ludwig. Begun in 1869 and left unfinished at King Louis's death in 1886, the castle is the embodiment of 19th century romanticism. It is a fantastical imitation of a medieval castle and most of you are already familiar with it. The Sleeping Beauty castle in Disneyland was modeled after Neuschwanstein. After hours of climbing up and down stairs and seeing incredible views from the many vantage points in the castle, we packed up on the bus and headed to the sleepy little Bavarian town of Memmingen.

Memmingen began as a small settlement during the late Roman period and grew into an independent Imperial town. It is now an urban treasure trove in the Swabian-Bavarian lowlands of the Alps. In the early 16th century, great civic confidence led Memmingen to become a Center of the Reformation. The first European Declaration of Human Rights, known as the "12 Peasant Articles," was formulated here around the same time. Ancient architectural masterpieces continue to pay witness to this important medieval trading centers' economic and cultural heyday.

The hotel was in quaint euro-style with its own Bavarian beer garden and nicely appointed rooms. After dropping off our bags we were taken on a brief tour through the winding streets of this once thriving hub of trade, ending up at a small family-run tavern and treated to a delicious down-home cooked meal, complete with the local beer of Memmingen. After dinner, many of us returned to our rooms, tired from the day's full events, and the rest of us completed the evening over schnapps and music in the hotel's bar. What a great way to end a truly amazing day.



6



7



8



9



10

Liebherr crew 7. Innsbruck's Famous Gold roof 8. Midway roller coaster at night Oktoberfest 9. Oktoberfest inside the tent 10. Group shot at Liebherr factory



After a short night's sleep and a hearty breakfast of meats, cheese and bread, we were off to the factory in Ochsenhausen, Germany. We began our factory tour in the showroom gallery featuring their North American specialty products as well as the products for Europe and worldwide markets. We've been sworn to silence on what else we were shown, but let's suffice it to say, they have quite the array of machinery and new products in development. One thing that Liebherr is very proud of (and we can discuss) is their new R&D center.

Pushing the boundaries of innovation has always been of pivotal importance to Liebherr as a leader in refrigerator/freezer technology and their newly-completed Development Center allows them to continue forging innovative solutions geared to customer needs all over the world. "The new R & D Center is important to both the trade and consumer segments in North America," stated Marc Perez. "Our dealers can be confident in the fact that Liebherr will remain on the forefront, always investing in better design and greener ways to manufacture." Covering an area of over 4,000 m², the new center gives Liebherr engineers numerous rooms for climate and noise measurement, an X-ray room, state-of-the-art laboratory equipment and prototyping facilities giving them the ideal environment for preparing products for mass production or for systematically improving existing models.

Modern rooms for climate measurement simulate real-world testing conditions and climate chambers enable the simulation of ambient temperatures ranging from 50°F (10°C) to 110°F (43°C) and humidity levels up to 90%. As a result, the interplay of all the refrigeration components—including the electronic control systems, evaporator design and fine tuning of the ideal compressors—can be optimized very early on for the global use of the appliances. Although the lowest energy consumption possible is a primary goal, engineers at the new facility are also mandated to exceed all expectations for low noise emission and use state-of-the-art acoustic test rooms for optimizing running noise. All the components in newly developed appliances undergo comprehensive endurance testing to guarantee Liebherr quality. The Liebherr Ochsenhausen facility was established in 1954 and today has over 1,900 employees.

The food never seemed to stop in Europe. That night's dinner was a trip in itself, literally. Our bus took us deep into the Bavarian countryside to a restaurant that has been serving travellers for well over 400 years. As both a restaurant and a museum, this was a culinary treat as well as a feast for the eyes. On display were old paintings of saints, ancient cooking equipment, and a variety of carvings. The food was filling and the many varieties of beer and schnapps kept this group well entertained. Then it was back to Memmingen to the tavern in the hotel where we spent the rest of the evening listening not to traditional music but to "the Boss",

11. What happens in Munich stays in Munich 12. Classroom study 13. First dinner in Memmingen 14, 15. Second dinner near Memmingen 16. Table 1, Oktoberfest

Bruce Stringsteen. Morning came quickly and we were off to our final destination, Munich, the city of “Oktoberfest.”

The day started out on the autobahn again, but this time we had a choice. We could visit downtown Munich for a tour or go to the new BMW Welt (World) Museum and Delivery Center. We chose the museum. What an architectural wonder! Our small group of six spent three hours viewing this company’s engineering feats from the past to the present and projected into the future. To see the cars, motorcycles and history of BMW in one place in such an impressive display was awe inspiring—well worth the trip. It was time to catch up with the rest of the group but we did make a quick lunch stop at the world famous Hofbrau House in Munich. Beer, sausage, pretzels and mustard—we were in Heaven. We met up with the group, checked into our hotel and then went off to Oktoberfest.

Why is it called Oktoberfest when it actually begins in September? The first Oktoberfest was held in the year 1810 in honor of the Bavarian Crown Prince Ludwig’s marriage to Princess Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen. The festivities began on October 12, 1810 and ended on October 17th with a horse race. In the years that followed, the festival was prolonged and moved forward into September because the nights were warmer and the visitors were able to enjoy the gardens and stroll over “die Wiesen,” (the fields) much longer without feeling chilly. Historically, the last Oktoberfest weekend was in October and this tradition continues into present times.

For those of you who think this is just a drunk-fest, you are well mistaken. This is the best county fair we’ve ever been to. The midway had some of the largest roller coasters and swings we’ve seen at this kind of event and there were pretzels as large as a small child. Fourteen tents lined up side-by-side in two rows to define the main food and beer gardens. Now, when we say tent, we’re talking about the size of a big top. Our tent, which was sponsored by Spaten Munich Beer, had a seating capacity of 5900. It was run by the Haberl family and its history dates back to 1881, when the butcher Johann Rössler opened his “mechanical ox rotisserie” which has since grown to occupy one of the largest tents there. Reservations to attend fill up one year in advance. Our group had two long tables reserved and by the end of the night we had made many new friends and drunk many tall beers. The music was traditional for the first few hours, and then the Germans began to rock. They knew all the words to both old and current American rock songs and every one of the 6000 plus attendees in this tent were on their feet singing for the next five or six hours. We recommend this experience to everyone. As for the rest of the evening, like they say, what happens in Bavaria...

We would like to thank Liebherr for their incredible hospitality, lifelong memories, and the making of new friends.

Auf Wiedersehen. **RO**



17. Liebherr’s showroom 18. This Oom-pah-pah band rocked the house 19. Our tent at Oktoberfest 20. Table 2, Oktoberfest

LIEBHERR'S MOMENTUM CONTINUES TO BUILD

MORE PREMIUM PLUS MODELS INTRODUCED TO MEET NORTH AMERICAN DEMAND

Liebherr's Premium Plus 24" refrigerators – the HC 1060 and the HC 1011 were just introduced in May of this year, and following this successful launch, there is already demand for product variations to meet consumers needs. Liebherr announces the new HRB 1110 – 24" fully integrated refrigerator with BioFresh and the HF 851 – 24" fully integrated freezer with icemaker. These models were prototyped and displayed at K/BIS 2008 and will go into full production in November of this year. The units will be available at Liebherr's appliance and kitchen dealers across North America in the first quarter of 2009.

"We've had continuous consumer and designer enquiries about a fully-integrated product with BioFresh," states Marc Perez, Vice President of Liebherr North America. "Now we have a full 24" refrigeration tower, the HRB 1110 with BioFresh AND the product has the ability to be completely hidden behind cabinetry. It's perfect for the custom kitchen," adds Perez.



Liebherr's patented BioFresh system provides the perfect climate for keeping your foods fresh longer and makes a substantial contribution to a healthy diet. With the temperature maintained at just above freezing and at an ideal humidity level, fruit, vegetables, meat and fish

retain their vitamins and minerals, delicate flavor and attractive appearance for up to three times longer than in a normal refrigerator.

With a full refrigeration tower, the obvious side by side companion is the full freezer with icemaker, the HF 851. "North American consumers use freezers much more than Europeans who tend to shop daily," explains Perez. "When doing business in this market, we are committed to providing products that match the lifestyle," he adds.

These two new Premium Plus models have all the unique and green features of the previously released 24" integrated products and more, including:

- Revolutionary new LED light columns in the refrigerator
- Freezer drawers on smooth, telescopic rails and professional freezing technology (FrostSafe) to guarantee continual circulated air
- Easy to install door-on-door technology for better design options
- Soft close door system technology (used by high-end cabinet manufacturers)
- ENERGY STAR® rating according to new standards effective since April 2008.

To read more about Liebherr's BioFresh technology, please visit liebherr-appliances.com. **RO**



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DESIGN

WITH LIEBHERR



A design contest that rewards innovation, creativity and green thinking using Liebherr refrigeration.

With Liebherr refrigeration products appearing ever frequently in beautifully designed custom kitchens, Liebherr is giving designers the opportunity to showcase their work, and earn fabulous prizes. Categories include best use of Liebherr full size and undercounter refrigeration, most ActiveGreen kitchen using a Liebherr product, and best use of Liebherr wine storage outside the kitchen. Spread the word and visit www.liebherr-appliances.com for full contest details.

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FISHER & PAYKEL APPLIANCES PARTNERS WITH PLANET GREEN TO PROMOTE GREEN LIVING FOR THE HOME

PLANET GREEN'S EMERIL GREEN SERIES FEATURES FISHER & PAYKEL'S HIGH-END COOKING APPLIANCES FOR A SECOND SEASON BEGINNING IN 2009



Fisher & Paykel Appliances has entered into a partnership with the television network Planet Green to promote green living for the home.

The company's cooking appliances will be featured in the network's new series Emeril Green, airing Monday through Friday at 8 and 8:30 PM (ET). Specific products used on the show, include Fisher & Paykel's cooktop and DCS by Fisher & Paykel grill.

With many Americans unsure about the best ways to cook with organic and locally grown foods, Emeril Green inspires consumers by using high-quality produce, seafood and meats to solve their food dilemmas. Set in Whole Foods Market, Chef Lagasse enrolls the store's knowledgeable team and other food experts to help real-life cooking-challenged individuals learn about and handpick the best foods. After shopping with each individual, Chef Lagasse prepares a meal with each guest that demonstrates the convenience and ease of using fresh ingredients in everyday meals.

As part of the partnership agreement, Fisher & Paykel will also be identified as a sponsor in the program's open and close, as well as the in-show feature in which viewers ask Chef Lagasse questions ranging from what food makes him feel better to where his signature 'bam' came from.

Many years before the recent push for green products and initiatives in this country, Fisher & Paykel Appliances was creating energy efficient home appliances with environmentally friendly manufacturing processes. The company's legacy of green innovation stretches back to

its start in New Zealand more than 70 years ago.

"We view this partnership as a great opportunity and a logical fit with our company's green message," said Laurence Mawhinney, VP of sales & marketing for Fisher & Paykel Appliances. "Protecting the environment has long since been an integral part of our company culture at Fisher & Paykel. We have been at the forefront of providing innovative products that promote green living for many years."

You can also get more information at www.fisherpaykel.com or call us toll free at 1-888-936-7872.

To find out more about Discovery's Planet Green Network, you can go to <http://planetgreen.discovery.com> and <http://www.treehugger.com>

ABOUT PLANET GREEN

Planet Green is the first and only 24-hour eco-lifestyle television network with a robust online presence and community. Launched in June 2008, our on-air content reaches 50 million homes, offering more than 250 hours of original green lifestyle programming. Both online and on-air, Planet Green's content is entertaining, relevant, and accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds. By representing a broad range of ideas and perspectives, Planet Green is taking an active role in generating conversation and motivating individuals to take action when it comes to improving the environmental status of our planet.

That mission extends online at PlanetGreen.com and on our sister site, TreeHugger.com. PlanetGreen.com is filled with solutions-oriented tips and information that can help you make your life a little (or a lot) greener. Our eco-minded community includes fan sites, articles about how to go green, and forums where users can interact. With expert advice and info from our on-air personalities such as Annabelle Gurwitch, Emeril Lagasse, and Steve Thomas, plus our team of eco-savvy writers, Planet Green is your user's guide to living mindfully on this big blue marble we all call home. Our experts will help you navigate the options for detoxifying your home, life, and planet—without the jargon or the guilt trips—so you can start being the change you wish to see in the world. Passionate, positive, and always practical, Planet Green is bursting with smart tips and inspiring advice.

SYNERGY SYSTEMS, INC. RENEWS NARMS SPONSORSHIPS

Synergy Systems, Inc. of Richmond, VA has renewed a major sponsorship role of support for the 2009 NARMS International 14th Annual Spring Conference & Exposition;

committing to platinum level sponsorship, undertaking co-sponsor naming rights for the annual NARMS Golf Outing and hosting the Synergy Networking Dinner during the four-day conference in April.

“We’re extremely grateful to have member companies stepping up their support of our annual NARMS Spring Conference,” says Dan Borschke, NARMS President and CEO. “It takes a certain level of financial resources to develop and execute the conference at the level that our members have come to expect. Company support from retail industry partners, like Synergy, help make that happen!”

As a non-profit trade association, NARMS International relies heavily on sponsor contributions to support conference educational programs and other speaker program offerings while limiting conference registration fees. In 2008, over twenty NARMS member companies, including Synergy, stepped forward with generous support sponsorships.

NARMS member companies perform well over \$3 billion in merchandising services, sales marketing, event marketing, demonstration and other retail services annually. The association promotes and establishes industry standards and provides critical industry research and educational information about the industry with member companies servicing such classes of trade as: grocery, drug, mass, department, home & building centers, computer & office supply, electronic, value retailers, specialty and convenience retailers. Additional NARMS information is available at www.narms.com, including information about the 14th NARMS Spring Conference & Exposition at The Broadmoor in Colorado Springs, CO on April 4-7, 2009.

FUEGO NORTH AMERICA WINS SPARK! AWARD—SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR

THE FUEGO MODULAR TURNS HEADS AND LEAVES ITS MARK
AT THE INTERNATIONAL DESIGN COMPETITION



The Fuego Modular by Fuego North America—creators and developers of the industry-redefining Fuego outdoor grills—went up against hundreds of other product and concept designs in the Spark Design Awards 2008 Competition. After careful judging, the Fuego Modular was awarded a Spark! Award, the competition’s highest honor.

The Spark Design Awards is a two-phase international design competition in which judges evaluate designs based on elegance and beauty, sustainability, integration, safety, ergonomics and expressiveness. Overall, the designs are measured for their ability to “stretch the envelope” and enhance lifestyles in a positive and tangible way. The competition, which began in 2006, bestows winners with a Bronze Spark, Silver Spark, Gold Spark or the ultimate Spark! Award. The Spark! Award validates superlative designs and recognizes the best designers in the industry.

“We are extremely grateful and honored to be recognized as a Spark! Award recipient for a second year in a row,” says Alex Siow, Fuego president and CEO. “This competition encourages designers to push boundaries and think outside the box, which is exactly what we sought to achieve with the Fuego Modular.”

The sleek and revolutionary design of the Fuego Modular was created by award-winning industrial designer Robert Brunner, who co-founded Fuego with Siow in 2006. The Fuego Modular—which brings the kitchen outdoors—features a sink, cooling and warming units, dining bar and optional shade tent. Unlike traditional outdoor kitchens that become permanent fixtures in the backyard, the Fuego Modular can be disassembled and moved at the homeowner’s discretion.

ABOUT FUEGO

Fuego North America designs and manufactures products that challenge the status quo in outdoor entertaining. The company has created a modernist rethink of the grilling experience, providing the best in functionality, technology and style. With pioneering designs that are original, innovative and bold, Fuego offers products that create the ultimate outdoor social hub. The Fuego grills have received international recognition, such as the iF Product Design Award, Chicago Athenaeum Good Design Award and IDEA (International Design Excellence Award). For more information about the Fuego grills, the company and its people, contact Fuego North America at 888.88.FUEGO, or visit www.fuegoliving.com.

SPARK DESIGN AWARDS

Spark is a bold new competition—a unique crossroads of design—where the interests of all participants are represented and their strengths | *continued on page 12* |

brought to bear. It leaps beyond the mid-century view of design and validates the best ideas and creative work of the year. The competition awards participants with a Bronze Spark, Silver Spark, Gold Spark or the Spark! Award for their innovative and exceptional designs. For more information about the Spark Design Awards visit www.sparkawards.com.

WHIRLPOOL CORPORATION EXPANDS ON-STAFF NKBA CERTIFIED DESIGN TEAM TO SUPPORT DESIGN COMMUNITY

Whirlpool Corporation's dedicated program for building and design professionals, The Inside Advantage™, announces that Andrea Hutchins, AIA, and Dan Page-Wood, Associate AIA, have earned Associate Kitchen & Bath Designer (AKBD) credentials from the National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA). With the accomplishments of Hutchins and Page-Wood, Whirlpool Corporation is the only appliance manufacturer with an on-staff NKBA certified design and marketing team.

Our close involvement with the NKBA helps us better meet the needs of the design community. Andrea and Dan's accomplishments help further this involvement, said Mark Johnson, FAIA, CKD, architect and senior manager of architecture and design marketing at Whirlpool Corporation. As part of our Architecture & Design Marketing Group, their accomplishments continue to translate into meaningful assistance for designers and architects. Hutchins latest project is developing a new NKBA course on sustainable products and finishes used in the Sustainable Kitchen by Whirlpool Corporation. The course will include all major components for the kitchen and how they qualify for national green home certification programs, including ENERGY STAR® home and LEED® for Homes. The course is also slated to meet the 2009 AIA Sustainable Design (SD) course requirement.

Page-Wood is currently developing Whirlpool Corporation's next collection of Google® SketchUp™ 3-D appliance models for the Google® 3D Warehouse Web site that will include point values for national green building programs. Google SketchUp is a powerful, yet easy-to-learn, software developed to provide quick and easy 3-D forms for conceptual stages of design. The Google 3D Warehouse is a repository of 3-D building objects that expedites the design process.

As part of The Inside Advantage™, the Architecture & Design Marketing Group creates educational, informational, and experiential resources and events to engage design professionals and build on their knowledge of Whirlpool Corporation's portfolio of brands. Recent industry firsts developed by the group include the first home plan book/CD/Web site of green home designs for the housing industry in collaboration with Alan Mascord Design Associates, the first Podcast series for architects and designers to receive continuing education (CE) credit, and the first branded appliance collections for Google® SketchUp™, AutoCAD®, 20/20 Fusion and Chief Architect® CAD software users within Google's 3D Warehouse. | *continued on page 22* |



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The Fulgor product portfolio allows the customer access to a full range of appliances featuring high-end, harmonizing design and exacting performance for every aspect of the kitchen. And with distribution limited to an exclusive network of independent dealers, big box stores are no competition. Also, as proof of our commitment to innovation, Fulgor is continually launching new products and categories to exceed the expectations of culinary connoisseurs and dealers alike.

COOKING Built In Ovens // Gas Cooktops // Electric Cooktops **CLEANING** Tall Tub Dishwashers // Dish Drawers **MICROWAVES + SPECIALTY COOKING** Over the Range Microwaves // Microwave Drawers // Over the Counter Microwaves // Built In Microwaves // Countertop Microwaves

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SPEED QUEEN ADDS NEW DISTRIBUTOR IN MEMPHIS

Laundry equipment manufacturer Speed Queen recently added Woodson & Bozeman Inc. as a distributor of its line of commercial quality home laundry products.

“Woodson & Bozeman brings the kind of strong reputation for superior customer service that Speed Queen looks for in a distributor,” said Chuck Melton, national sales manager of Speed Queen home laundry equipment. “Their professional approach and knowledgeable staff will no doubt further enhance our position in the marketplace,” Melton added.

Based in Memphis, Tenn., Woodson & Bozeman opened in 1934. The firm distributes a variety of products including electronics, appliances and heating and cooling equipment to customers in Memphis and across the Mid south. It also operates a kitchen design business under its umbrella.

“Speed Queen’s American-made quality is well-recognized in the commercial market,” said Wally Moon, sales manager of Woodson & Bozeman. “We are excited to help expand awareness of the brand’s products and their superior durability in the consumer markets we serve,” he added.

For more information about Speed Queen’s complete line of commercial quality washers, dryers and stack washer-dryers, dryer/dryers designed for the home and the company’s industry-leading warranty, call 920-748-3121 or visit www.speedqueen.com. To learn more about Woodson & Bozeman Inc., visit www.woodsonbozeman.com

WATER INC. HIRES NEW BRAND MANAGER

MARK R. HOWLETT TO LEAD PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT,
SALES AND MARKETING

Water, Inc.—a premier distributor of luxury water products, decorative plumbing, and high-end appliances for the home—is proud to welcome Mark R. Howlett as brand manager of water products. In this role, he will oversee the multitude of water brands that comprise Water, Inc. and will be responsible for product development of both new and existing products, as well as marketing and sales management for the company.

Howlett, who has 15 years of experience in management and product development, is an independent contractor and owner of Howlett Consulting in Azusa, Calif. Howlett Consulting is a product development and strategic marketing company geared toward innovative business solutions. Howlett has a comprehensive knowledge of the water appliance industry and previously owned Alternative Environmental Solutions, a water appliance business based in San Fernando, Calif. Before that, he was general manager of Culligan of North Los Angeles County, the largest Culligan water dealership in North America.

“We are thrilled to have Mark as part of the Water, Inc. team,” notes Major Avignon, president of Water, Inc. “With his extensive background in the water appliance industry and knowledge of product development, we look forward to him expanding Water, Inc.’s brand recognition.”

A past president of the Pacific Water Quality Association (PWQA), Howlett maintains a director position on the organization’s board and participates in legislative and governmental affairs. In 2005, Howlett | *continued on page 34* |



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DISTRIBUTOR DOINGS

WATER INC., 3M AND BODY GLOVE INTRODUCE THE BODY GLOVE WATER FILTRATION SYSTEMS



Dealers, are you frustrated watching your margins eroding due to internet web sites?

Tired of manufacturers changing product labels and calling their product “new”?

Has your customer ever asked you where they can recycle their old water filter cartridge?

Water, Inc. has addressed all three questions and more. After 30 years as Everpure LLC's* largest single distributor in the world, Water, Inc. is both proud and excited to bring you the new Body Glove water filters manufactured by 3M. So you say, “why Body Glove and 3M”? Body Glove and 3M are brands that are nationally and internationally recognized. Both companies are leaders in their perspective brands and product categories.

Since the 1950's the founders of Body Glove, Bob and the late Bill Meistrell have demonstrated a respect for the world we live in and have created environmentally friendly products. In the 1950's, the two brothers initiated the first South Bay, CA beach clean-up, in the 1980's they instituted re-usable grocery bags and in 1989, they were important players in the Exxon Valdez oil spill clean-up.

3M needs no introduction with thirty core consumer product categories used around the world. Water, Inc. partnered with 3M to create the most technologically advanced point of use water filters for the home with 50% more flow, 50% more capacity, and 100% green. Not only will your customers enjoy the latest technology and performance for clean drinking water, they will like the fact the cartridge can be recycled. Dealers will enjoy the improved margins with the global Body Glove M.A.P. policy. Water Inc. will be distributing product both on a national and international level.

Our four newest products cover three different levels of filtration and capacity combinations.

BG-1000—Our entry level unit
0.75 GPM Flow & 1,000 gallon capacity
Cartridge & Labeling made from sustainable & recyclable materials
Offers Tri Stage filtration

BG-3000—An upgrade from Level 1 - Our mid grade unit
0.75 GPM Flow rate & 450 gallon capacity
Cartridge & Labeling made from sustainable & recyclable materials
A higher level of Tri Stage filtration

BG-3000R—An eco-friendly upgrade version for existing Everpure* users
0.50 GPM Flow rate & 350 gallon capacity
Cartridge & Labeling made from sustainable & recyclable materials
A higher level of Tri Stage filtration

| *continued on page 20* |

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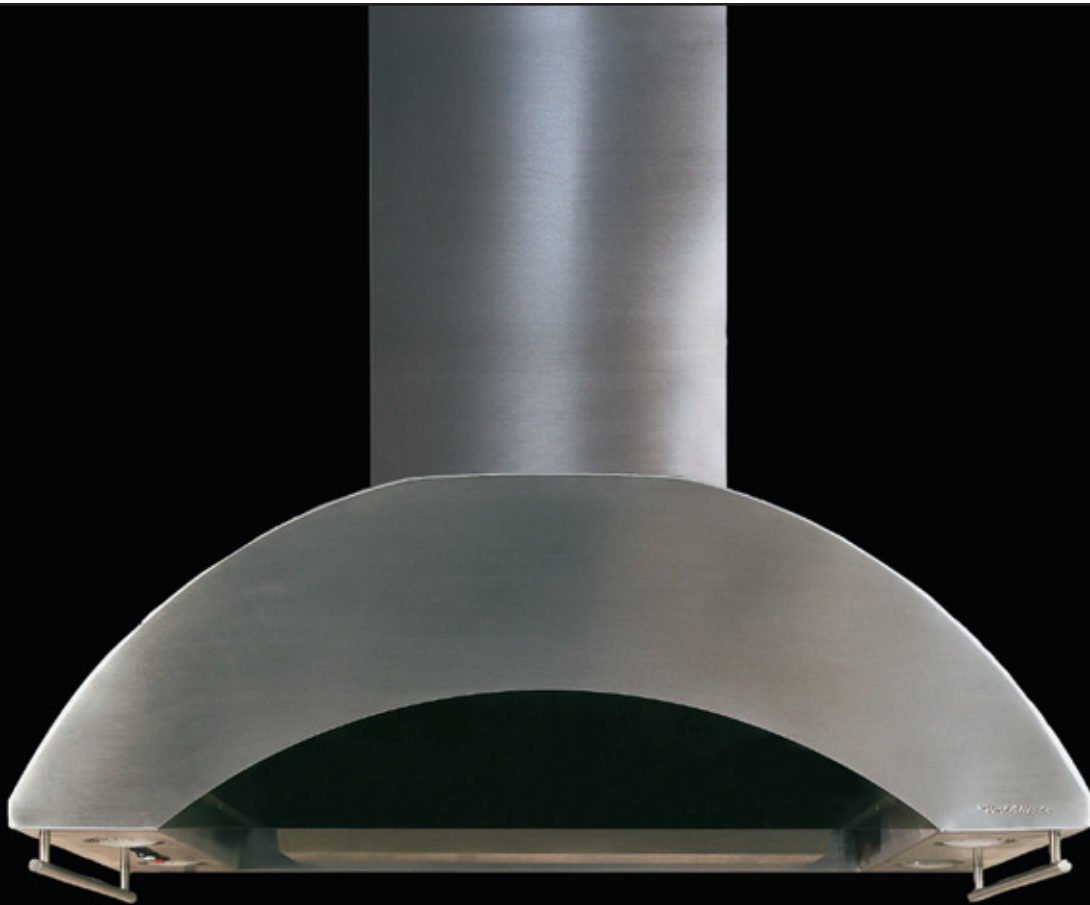
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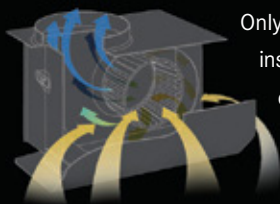
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PRODUCT IN REVIEW

MICRO-TRIM HELPS APPLIANCE DEALERS AND INSTALLERS SEE THE DOLLARS AND \$ENSE IN CUSTOM TRIM KITS

It goes without saying that the goal of the kitchen appliance dealer is to move as much merchandise as possible in the form of microwaves, ovens, cooktops and the like. Often, however, dealers are limited in what they can sell by the size constraints of existing openings in cabinetry, restricting the product offerings that can be made to the buyer. What should be a world of options and sales opportunities, are narrowed to but a few, as even factory trim kits often do not meet the needs of appliance dealers looking to maximize their customers' options for kitchen appliances.

"We used to be very limited in what we could sell for an existing cutout in a kitchen," said Mark Lafferty, Vice President for Sales at Lafferty's Appliance in Texarkana, Texas. "For replacement you had to go to the particular model or style of what was in there before. It may not have been what they wanted. We had to deviate from what the customer wanted to what would fit the space, and it really did limit our profit potential."

As a result, a growing number of kitchen appliance dealers are discovering a solution in the form of custom trim kits that allow them the flexibility to offer homeowners the appliances that will really work for them. For those dealers interviewed for this article, the resulting profits from utilizing the custom trim kit option have been immediate.

"Custom trim kits allow me to expand the offerings to my customer, which makes me more money," said David Watson, outside sales rep for Kiva Kitchen and Bath in Los Angeles, who has been relying on custom trim kits for a number of years. "It also saves my customers a ton of money from having to have cabinets and counters re-cut and hiring people to do that. It saves them hundreds of dollars in many cases and that makes me look good and creates more sales in the long run."

"You can sell a wider variety of product lines to fit any application," Lafferty agrees. "That's what custom trim kits basically offer: a complete array of adjustability. If a customer wants a particular model and it's anywhere close to the size of the hole, we can now do it."

Both Watson and Lafferty utilize custom trim kits from Santa Ana, Calif.-based Micro-Trim. Since 1983, Micro-Trim has focused solely on standard and custom trim kits for residential and commercial products. Although "custom" in any industry usually carries negative connotations of slow turnaround times and high costs, this is not the case with a custom trim kit. Usually much less expensive than manufacturer-provided trim kits, each trim kit is customized to fit existing cutouts, and can be exactly matched to a broad range of manufacturers and colors. Micro-Trim, for example, can turnaround a custom trim kit in as little as 48 hours. Manufacturers provide trim kits to help their appliances fit existing spaces—but these have yielded varying results. "Manufacturers' trim kits are determined on the manufacturers' specifications, not what the consumer has in their home," said Jeannie Marie Alcantor, sales rep for Friedmans Appliance in Pleasant Hill, California. "And not what the consumer might have in terms of cabinetry adjacent to their built-in appliance. So most of the time they don't work for you."

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According to Lafferty, the custom trim kits equate to not just more sales, but more profit per sale as well. "When we sell a microwave, for example, it's automatic: we're going to put a trim kit around it, if it's going into a built-in slot," he said. "We basically double our profits on selling the microwave. The trim kits are affordable to purchase, and you can turn around and make a nice profit on them."

Alcantor has found Micro-Trim to be very knowledgeable on all appliance makes and models. "With the manufacturer's name and model number, they can pull the information and specifications of the overall dimensions of the product," she said. "That determines the internal dimensions of the trim kit. And the consumer basically just needs to fill in the overall dimensions of how they want their product fitted. In addition to dimensions for clearance, there are also dimensions that need to be met in terms of proper ventilation," Alcantor adds. "If that's not met, the first thing I get is a call back from the company stating that there is an issue."

Appliance installers, like dealers, are also jumping on the custom trim kit bandwagon.

General contractor Matt Stalie, owner of Stalie Construction, performs installations for Home Depot, and can speak to the drawbacks in putting new appliances into existing cabinetry. "When you're dealing with ovens you have one kind of problem where people have stained cabinets," he said. "You're always going to see any kind of patch job because you can't match 20-year-old stain unless you redo the whole kitchen." For built-in cooktops, the problems are even more profound. "If the customer had a countertop that is old granite or tile or Formica and the opening was too big, there was really no fix unless somebody re-did the countertop," says Stalie. Stalie currently utilizes trim kits from Micro-Trim to provide his customers with more options.

"With the option of a custom trim kit, I can just go to a customer's house and order what I need and when it's installed then I'm done, and the customer's done," says Stalie. "We don't leave with anything unfinished now."

For more information about custom trim kits, contact Micro-Trim at (800) 338-8746 or at www.microtrim.com. **RO**

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Whirlpool Corporation is the world's leading manufacturer and marketer of major home appliances, with annual sales of approximately \$19 billion, more than 73,000 employees, and approximately 70 manufacturing and technology research centers around the world. The company markets Whirlpool, Maytag, KitchenAid, Jenn-Air, Amana, Gladiator and other major brand names to consumers in nearly every country around the world.

CRAIG TAYLOR RETURNS TO LEAD TWIN SESSIONS AT NARMS

Craig Taylor of TalentKeepers will return in 2009 to lead two human relations' based sessions at the NARMS International 14th Annual Conference & Exposition being held in Colorado Springs, CO next April. The twin general interest sessions will be entitled "Engaging and Retaining a Distributed Merchandising Workforce" and "Onboarding for Part-Time Employees: Keep Merchandisers Longer and Improve Performance" and will take place during programming on Monday afternoon, April 6 and the morning of April 7.

Craig Taylor is Vice President of Client Services at TalentKeepers, a global leader in employee retention solutions. A leader in the HR, learning and talent management profession for over 25 years with experience at American Express and Walt Disney Company, Taylor has held executive positions at major training and human resource firms including AchieveGlobal, Wilson Learning and Click2Learn.

Taylor also is an award-winning columnist and contributing editor for several publications with writing focused on employee retention, talent management, leadership, learning technology and more.

SMEG USA, INC. RESTRUCTURES

As of October 7, 2008 Smeg USA has undergone some internal restructuring. As a result, Mr. Edward Ryan, National Sales Manager, is no longer part of the Smeg family. Smeg USA, along with the backing of its parent company, MEG SPA (Italia), is completely committed to its integration into the US appliance community and has every intention to continue growing and expanding in this market. Service and quality levels that each individual dealer, distributor, and end user is accustomed to receiving from the Smeg staff will be unaffected. Although Smeg staff members have specific job functions, any one of them can and will make every possible effort to resolve any concerns or issues that may arise. We appreciate and value our relationship with each dealer, distributor, and end user with which we interact and hope that all interested parties continue to benefit from our partnership. We look forward to many prosperous years of joint success! **RO**



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SHOWROOM

MARVEL SIMPLIFIES WINE SERVING

CHATEAU COLLECTION EXPANDS WITH DUAL-ZONE WINE CELLAR
FEATURING SENTRY SYSTEM

Marvel Industries simplifies wine serving with the launch of the Marvel *Chateau Collection* Dual-Zone Wine Cellar. An elegantly designed, single-cabinet cellar, the Dual-Zone houses two independently controlled and monitored compartments that are adjustable from 40–65°F. Each compartment temperature can be customized for service of white, red or sparkling wines—a crucial feature, since fluctuations or temperatures that are too cold or too warm won't reveal the wine's full flavor.

This model also houses features that echo throughout the brand's Chateau Collection.

The exclusive Sentry System™ refrigeration monitor operates in real time to actively maintain optimal conditions in both compartments. Its discreetly located LED display reflects the actual temperature of the liquid inside the bottle—the only system on the market to do so, since other wine cellars display only the temperature setting or the compartment air temperature. The system also monitors critical components like door ajar, power failure or temperature change.

Full-extension, glide-out racks cater to individual tastes by ably holding all types of bottles, from splits to Champagne, for a 44-bottle capacity.

This well-appointed model provides other thoughtful features typical of Marvel. A Vibration Neutralization System protects wine from mechanical movement that can damage wine flavor. Dual-pane, tinted, UV-resistant glass doors allow display of wine while protecting bottles from the light-producing chemical reactions that degrade wine's color, aroma and tannins. A message center continuously provides system status. Elegant interior lighting displays wines and may be set for continuous illumination with one-touch control. Built-in Sabbath mode is user-activated.

The new Marvel Dual-Zone Wine Cellar is available through Marvel's network of over 700 dealers nationwide. For complete information regarding this model, or to locate a Marvel distributor near you, visit www.lifeluxurymarvel.com or contact Marvel at 800-428-6644.

ABOUT MARVEL

Marvel is the leading manufacturer of luxury under counter refrigeration products, including wine cellars, beverage and wine refrigerators, refrigerated



drawers, outdoor refrigerators, ice machines and beer dispensers. All models are available through a national network of retailers served by local distributors. For complete information or to locate a Marvel distributor near you, visit www.lifeluxurymarvel.com or contact Marvel Industries, a part of the Aga Rangemaster Group, at (800) 428-6644. **RO**



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TASTE PERFECTION



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Marvel Dual Zone Wine Cellar

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 Cellar by Marvel offers two compartments with the control needed to serve wine immediately at optimum temperatures. Both compartments in the Dual Zone Wine Cellar 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 Cellar.

www.lifeluxurymarvel.com



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Northland (www.northlandnka.com), the leader in modular refrigeration solutions, offers unique products to help homeowners ease holiday headaches this season with large combination refrigerator/freezers offered in 48-, 60- and 72-inch widths. This range of large capacity refrigerator/freezers delivers from more than 32 cubic feet of storage, with the largest models delivering over 48 cubic feet of capacity—all a perfect fit for kitchens tasked with big holiday entertainment chores.

“With the holidays and large, family meals on the horizon, Northland offers refrigeration products that make kitchens more useful, convenient, and stylish,” said Tony Ellett, national sales manager for Northland. “Our patented designs achieve greater capacities and deliver the most usable space to accommodate deep items like roasters, serving platters and other large items that other brands simply can’t hold.”

Northland makes the industry’s widest variety of built-in refrigerators and freezers in widths that range from a super-slim 18 inches to a spacious 72 inches. And, because Northland uses a patented, above-box cooling system, each size delivers 10 to 20 percent more space inside than competitive brands.

Northland makes refrigerators and freezers in four widths (18”, 24”, 30” and 36”), four door finishes (stainless steel, gloss black, glass and panel ready) and two interior finishes (stainless steel and Arctic white). Homeowners choosing Northland enjoy the modular design trend that frees them to create customized refrigeration centers of almost any size and configuration. Homeowners also can enjoy special features like doors with trim that transitions smoothly into surrounding cabinetry, or finishes that complement commercial cooking appliances.

Like all of Northland’s products, the largest capacity models are offered in refrigerator/freezer widths combined into useful packages. They include:

- 48" side-by-side refrigerator/freezer (8 models) with 32.5 cu.ft. of storage capacity
- 60" refrigerator/freezer (12 models) with an impressive 39.3 cu. ft. total of storage
- 72" refrigerator/freezer (12 models) offers a vast 48.3 cu. ft. of interior space

Combining great looks with high capacity, Northland now offers the GX glass refrigerator door, available on all of Northland’s glass-door models. The GX glass design enables seamless integration between glass-door columns and solid-door models, creating a companion look and design versatility across the line. **RO**



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AGE DOES MATTER—MILLENNIALS ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE FUTURE OF THE RETAIL INDUSTRY

REPORT SHOWS THAT MALLS WILL CONTINUE TO BE PRIME GROUND FOR REACHING THIS IMPORTANT DEMOGRAPHIC

The future of retail's most important consumer group is the Millennials who represent an estimated spending power of \$200 billion, says a report from Jones Lang LaSalle, the financial and professional services firm specializing in real estate. Millennials defined as sub-tweens (10-14) to 29 year olds will total 86 million by 2015 becoming the country's largest single consumer generation.

Along with their seismic potential spending power, their often attention-strapped attitude, penchant for brands and astute political beliefs, this group is also more ethnically diverse than any other generation. Retailers and shopping mall owners and managers need to pay close attention to this consumer group that could shape their future success, says Jones Lang LaSalle Retail which manages more than a hundred shopping malls across the nation.

"We've all heard about boomers and know what makes them tick but the Millennials are a generation that retailers and marketers have to understand and embrace," said Greg Maloney, CEO and President of Jones Lang LaSalle Retail. "Jones Lang LaSalle's in-depth research and intimate knowledge allows us to recognize their optimistic nature, their environmental values, and desire for authenticity. This knowledge is key to us advising our clients on finding the right products and right stores to cater to this vast consumer segment. With the tumultuous state of the economy, now is a good time to reel them in."

The report, 'Age does matter' found that retailers and mall management companies should analyze age group metrics rather than the traditional method of consumer household income profiles. Understanding the culture and mindset of this significant generational faction is the key to shaping the right mix of retailers and merchandise to capitalize on their business. "It's about grasping the consumer, how they think and applying a cross-generational strategy to cash in on their colossal spending potential," added Maloney.

"Millennials tend not to respond to traditional advertising or anything too slick," said Sally Hertz, Director of Sponsorship at Jones Lang LaSalle Retail. "So we market to them using techniques and programs that reach, engage and make direct connections so that they can experience the product before purchasing."

While Millennials are important to retailers, we cannot discount the significance of the highly-publicized Boomer generation (age 45-64). The two groups combined will make 52 per cent of the industry's shopper base or 165 million potential consumers by 2015.

Developers have already taken notice of what the Boomer generation requires in shopping malls. Open-air centers have been developed to create the most desirable environment for the senior shopping segment. They are easy accessible and group similar retailers together. Mixed-use malls appeal to both generations as they provide the opportunity for customers to live and work close to shopping amenities, restaurants and entertainment.

| *continued on page 42* |



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AWARD DINNER YEARLY HIGHLIGHT

MINNESOTA CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL KITCHEN AND BATH ASSOCIATION

BY DICK ROHLAND

The Minnesota chapter of the National Kitchen and Bath Association recently held its annual Design Competition Award Dinner at the historic Gale Mansion in Minneapolis. The local chapter brought in Robert Mack, FAIA as the featured speaker for the evening event.

The Award Dinner has become a highlight of the Minnesota chapter. Always a fun filled and well attended event, it gives local designers and others in the industry a chance to sit down and relax with their peers and discuss local design trends with other designers, appliance, plumbing, cabinetry and surface professionals

At the same time, they get to see creative and functional kitchens and baths designed by their peers that they believe are showcase rooms. This years' Design Competition drew 63 entries in nine categories.

Mack is a registered architect in Minnesota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Montana and the District of Columbia and is certified by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. Since co-founding Macdonald & Mack Architects in 1976, Mack has specialized in historic preservation, restoration and adaptive reuse projects.

Before co-founding his firm, Mack had extensive experience with the Office of Archaeology and Preservation of the National Park Service and worked with several architectural firms.

Prior to the awards' presentation, Mack stepped back into time with a spirited and sometimes humorous look at the earliest design, appliance and plumbing trends to the current.

| *continued on page 42* |



Camille Jackson, CJ Interiors; Karie Place, Kitchen Comfort; Stephanie Jauret and Tanya Kula, Montaggio were caught red-handed placing bets on who would take home awards.



Enjoying the evening are Christine Nelson, Christine Nelson Design; Holly Lesmeister, Trebuchet Communications and Kristin Erickson, Minnesota Standard Showplace.



Robert Mack took the guests back in time and to the present with a historical look of the design evolution of kitchens and baths.



Lisa Weck, Cambria and Carri Carlson, Home Space Solutions took time out from their hectic evening of signing guests in for a quick picture.

best

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SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS AMERICA LAUNCHES SAMSUNG RECYCLING DIRECTSM

COMMITTS TO COMPREHENSIVE 50-STATE TAKE-BACK AND RECYCLING PROGRAM ACROSS ALL SAMSUNG PRODUCT LINES INCLUDING SAMSUNG TELEVISIONS, MONITORS AND OTHER CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

Samsung Electronics America, Inc., a market leader and award-winning innovator in consumer electronics, today announced SAMSUNG RECYCLING DIRECTSM, its commitment to the take-back and recycling (TB&R) of Samsung-branded consumer electronics across all of its product lines. Beginning October 1, 2008, people will be able to drop off their Samsung-branded consumer electronics sold in the United States at convenient collection sites, including permanent drop-off centers in all 50 states, and at a wide range of recycling events across the country. Through this convenient recycling program, Samsung-branded consumer electronics will be accepted for no fee, and non-Samsung-branded consumer electronics will be accepted for a nominal fee paid directly to Samsung's contracted recycling partners upon delivery of the e-waste.

"Since the 1996 launch of our global Green Management Initiative, Samsung Electronics Company has been a staunch advocate of preserving our environment and greening the consumer electronics industry," said DJ Oh, President and CEO, Samsung Electronics America. "As a global enterprise, we have worked diligently to put our environmental responsibility philosophy into practice across our worldwide operations, among our suppliers and partners, and within our local communities. Today we are very pleased to once again affirm those philosophies by announcing that our SAMSUNG RECYCLING DIRECT 50-state take-back and recycling commitment extends across all Samsung-branded consumer electronics sold in the United States with the exception of home appliances. However, there will be a growing number of drop-off locations that will accept home appliances."

Samsung elected to contract directly with recycling companies, unlike other consumer electronics TB&R programs that rely on intermediaries. Samsung conducted extensive research into the qualifications, capabilities, and integrity of these companies to ensure that they mirror Samsung's own environmental philosophy. As such, the SAMSUNG RECYCLING DIRECT program will only utilize recyclers that do not incinerate, landfill, or export toxic waste to developing countries. The SAMSUNG RECYCLING DIRECT program also allows Samsung to track and monitor all of the collected consumer electronics for added assurance that it is recycled responsibly. Mr. Oh added, "We took the extra

care to develop the SAMSUNG RECYCLING DIRECT program to achieve the highest integrity end-of-life standards. Samsung Electronics America has set scorecard standards with our contracted recyclers, and we will track and monitor their processes and results very closely." SAMSUNG RECYCLING DIRECT results will be posted on www.samsung.com/recyclingdirect throughout the year. This will provide an unprecedented level of transparency to the public.

The SAMSUNG RECYCLING DIRECT program joins the numerous TB&R initiatives that the Company currently has in place. Samsung's Information Technology Division currently has a 50-state S.T.A.R. Toner Recycling Program for printer cartridges and the Envirosync initiative which takes back and recycles Samsung-branded and other branded office equipment for no fee to the end-user or reseller when purchasing new Samsung-branded office equipment. In addition, Samsung also provides recycling for mobile phones through its 50-state Samsung Mobile Take-back Program. Samsung's commitment will now apply to all Samsung-branded consumer electronics ranging from televisions, DVD and VHS players, audio equipment and home theater systems, to cameras, camcorders, computer monitors, printers, and peripherals. In addition, a growing number of fixed drop-off locations will be made available for home appliances.

"As a leader in the consumer electronics industry, we at Samsung listened carefully to our consumers' needs and wants to build the consumer-centric SAMSUNG RECYCLING DIRECT program which delivers on their highest priorities," stated Steven Cook, senior vice president and chief strategic marketing officer, Samsung Electronics America. "This resulted in a convenient way to responsibly recycle their consumer electronics products so that our consumers can enjoy a digital lifestyle in good conscience."

Mr. Oh concluded, "As with any program of this magnitude and consumer-centric focus, considerations that include convenience, respect for environment and people, responsible program management, and the highest integrity are absolutely critical for a sustainable success. We at Samsung recognize our colleagues in the consumer electronics industry who have | *continued on page 34* |



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introduced take-back and recycling initiatives in recent months, and we sincerely invite those companies seeking a path to environmental responsibility for them to join us in our commitment to tackle this important issue.”

Additional information about today’s announcement and Samsung’s environmentally-responsible activities can be found at www.samsung.com/recyclingdirect.

ABOUT SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS AMERICA, INC.

Samsung Electronics America, Inc. (SEA), based in Ridgefield Park, NJ, is a subsidiary of Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd. (SEC). SEA markets a broad range of award-winning consumer electronics, information systems, and home appliance products, as well as oversees all of Samsung’s North American operations including Samsung Telecommunications America, LP, Samsung Semiconductor Inc., Samsung Electronics Canada, Inc. and Samsung Electronics Mexico, Inc. As a result of its commitment to innovation and unique design, SEA was ranked #6 in the Electronics Industry segment in Fortune Magazine’s “Most Admired Companies 2008,” and named as one of Fast Company’s “Fast 50 Most Innovative Companies of 2008.” Among popular *BusinessWeek* rankings, SEC ranked #26 in the publication’s “Most Innovative Companies of 2008” and #21 in the “100 Best Global Brands” for 2007. SEC is also a top patent holder, ranking second overall in the U.S. in 2007. Please visit www.samsung.com for more information.

ABOUT SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS CO., LTD.

Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd. is a global leader in semiconductor, telecommunication, digital media and digital convergence technologies with 2007 consolidated sales of US\$103.4 billion. Employing approximately 150,000 people in 134 offices in 62 countries, the company consists of four main business units: Digital Media Business, LCD Business, Semiconductor Business, and Telecommunication Business. Recognized as one of the fastest growing global brands, Samsung Electronics is a leading producer of digital TVs, memory chips, mobile phones and TFT-LCDs. For more information, please visit www.samsung.com. **RO**

PROMOTIONS | *continued from page 14* |

was awarded Man of the Year by the PWQA for his efforts in revamping this multi-state trade association. Through his extensive experience, Howlett has gained invaluable expertise in water reuse and salinity reduction programs. His industry outreach efforts include the Inland Empire Utilities Agency and the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Howlett is a volunteer executive director for the Partnership for Johnson Valley, a non-profit, public land-access protection organization. In this capacity, he regularly meets with military and trade organizations to help ensure ongoing desert access to publicly managed lands.

Howlett earned a bachelor’s degree in business management and marketing from the University of Phoenix. In his spare time, he is scoutmaster of Troop 161 in Temple City, Calif., where he leads the high-adventure scouting program. Howlett lives in Azusa with his wife and three sons. **RO**



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BlueStar™, the manufacturer of high-performance gas ranges, cooktops, and hoods for the residential market announced the introduction of its new high performance 24" Companion Piece Gas Range.

As with all BlueStar ranges and cooktops, the 24" Companion Piece is an all gas product. The range features 4 open burners; including two high-powered UltraNova™ 22,000 BTU burners and a 130° gentle simmer. The cooking surface is available in four different configurations – the standard four open burner configuration or an optional charbroiler, griddle, or French top.

"The 24" Companion Piece is unique because it can be used in so many different ways. For example, consumers in urban markets with less kitchen space can use it as their primary stove. It's small enough to fit into the smallest kitchens, yet it still provides the professional performance for which BlueStar is known. With four gas burners, a convection oven with an infrared broiler and a width size over 20", as well as full motion grates, you're getting an incredible amount of power and performance in a small space," said Mike Trapp, BlueStar's Vice President of Operations. "Consumers can also purchase the 'Companion Piece' as a supplement to their existing stove, if they would like to add more burners or a different cooking surface to their kitchen."

Originally a manufacturer of high-powered commercial ranges, BlueStar now markets exclusively to the residential market. The hand-assembled quality of BlueStar products has caught the attention of cooking enthusiasts, from professional chefs to amateur cooks, who demand uncompromised quality in their appliances. What sets BlueStar ranges apart from other premium cooking products is their performance. Trapp explains that BlueStar products are built with restaurant specifications in mind, which give users professional-quality results. The products are stacked with features generally restricted to professional chefs, but designed for the home

kitchen. BlueStar's unique 22,000 BTU open burner system is the most powerful open burner on the market.

ABOUT BLUESTAR

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



BlueStar 24" Companion Piece (shown with optional Griddle surface and in Ruby Red)



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ALMO LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE-WWW.ALMO.COM AND ALMO ACCESS™ LAUNCHED WITH ENHANCED FEATURES AND A NEW LOOK



Now regular users of Almo's websites will discover a more user-centric site with updated features and a new look and feel. Both sites, the corporate site located at www.almo.com and the dealer-only B2B site located at www.access.almo.com, were debuted with a host of new features.

HERE IS WHAT ALMO.COM SITE USERS CAN EXPECT:

- A professional look that better represents Almo's core brand
- Clear and concise navigation with multiple access paths
- Dealer information by market served as well as by product category
- Instant access to online dealer application forms
- In-depth information on Almo's service and product offering

"While this is an exciting transition, it is only the beginning of the plan for enhancing our sites," said Ed Gibbons, Almo Executive Vice President. "Almo's web site is very extensive and this is only the first phase in an ongoing process of redevelopment and usability enhancements."

DEALERS THAT UTILIZE ALMO'S B2B INTRANET SITE, ALMO ACCESS™ CAN EXPECT:

- Expanded search result data which includes images, availability, MSRP and MAP in result view.
- Product detail pages with expanded specs, features, associated PDF's and more.
- Automated accessory compatibility listing per product
- Exclusive Online Training Room
- Catalog and Literature Downloads

Over the past 36 months, Almo has continually rolled out new site features that enhance the dealers' online experience. These features included ePay and Online Invoices, Online Monthly Specials listed by manufacturer, an Online Ad Planner where dealers can build their own professional ads and customized end-user spec sheets. Almo Access is an extensive online dealer resource offering order entry 24/7, real-time product availability and pricing, live rebate center, order tracking and history, and more. Due to the extensive nature of this Almo resource, new features will continue to be added as they become available.

We welcome you to visit the new site at www.almo.com. Existing dealers that are not utilizing Almo Access are encouraged to check it out by registering at www.access.almo.com/register.asp.

ABOUT ALMO CORPORATION

Almo Corporation is the nation's leading independent | *continued on page 40* |

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USA STRIKES OUT ON THEIR OWN—AGAIN!

The United Servicers Association (USA) announced they are going to leave the North America Retail Dealers Association to re-establish themselves as an independent association. The leadership of USA believes that the need to provide educational and technical training to the service industry will be best served by the organization focusing solely on service related matters. The appliance service industry has become increasingly aware of the need to operate as more professional businesses. USA has made it their goal and purpose to provide the tools and education necessary for service operations to gain new perspectives and insight into how to run profitable service operations, delivered through programs such as the Regional Service Meeting (RSM) and the Service and Retail Convention (SRC). These types of venues will continue with additional locations and sponsors. Additional initiatives will be announced in the coming weeks.

The newly formed Board of Directors was appointed and Dean Landers will become acting President, Tanner Andrews Vice President, Dale Luther Treasurer and Rod Williscroft Secretary. An Executive Director has yet to be appointed.

USA is very thankful to NARDA and their leadership group for their partnership and looks forward to working with NARDA in future endeavors.

ALSO

The United Servicers Association (USA) has struck a deal with buying group Brand Source to hold the national service convention SRC09 at the same hotel and on the same dates as the Brand Source Summit convention March 22-24 at the Hilton Anatole in Dallas. Registration for the event will be \$399 or \$1000.00 if you want three room nights included. The registration will include the opening reception, as well as breakfast and lunch daily. There are several less expensive hotels in the local area so members can book rooms elsewhere if desired.

The SRC09 will be held in a separate part of the hotel away from Brand Source but members of each group will be allowed access to each others programs and will share meals together.

You can register for the event by going to our web site at www.unitedservicers.com or call our office at 800.683.2558. Classes will include business management and hands on technical training from all the major manufacturers. This event is sure to be the largest in the industry with the addition of Brand Source. Make your plans to attend now. Everyone from the industry is invited.

United Servicers Association, 800.683.2558. www.unitedservicers.com **RO**

ALMO | *continued from page 38* |

distributor of Major Appliances and Consumer Electronics. Known for its Rapid Ship services and exceptional customer service, Almo distributes over 50 of the industries top brand names. Dealers and Retailers have instant access to a wide variety of Major Appliances, Consumer Electronics, Mobile Audio/Video Electronics and Professional Residential Kitchen and Outdoor Appliances.

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. **RO**



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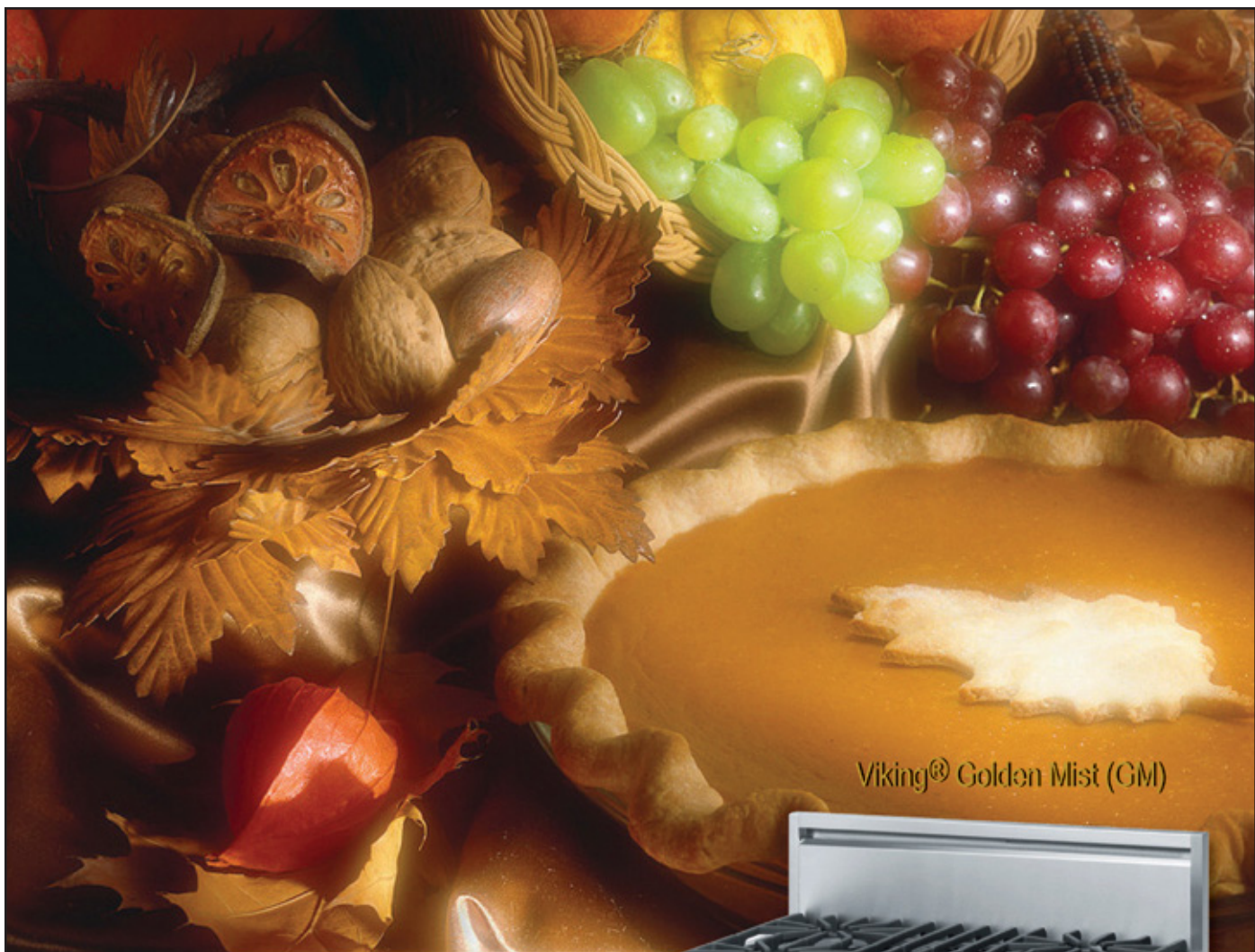
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Golden Mist, Apple Red, Pumpkin, Plum, and Sage are just some of the classic flavors now available as exclusive Viking finishes.



AGE DOES MATTER | *continued from page 28* |

“We can’t ignore the boomers, they are distinct in their shopping habits and requirements and are equally as important as the Millennials,” said John Bemis, Director of leasing at Jones Lang LaSalle Retail. “Shopping malls often sit on the best real estate in the country so they have a unique advantage. Being creative – perhaps having some innovative anchor tenants like Apple or service providers like health centers—could be the answer to appealing to both factions of core shoppers.”

Mr. Bemis continued, “Retailers need to think about cross-generational merchandise while mall owners need to lease space to stores that will entice the Millennials and Boomers. We know that despite the surge in internet shopping, both generations are still shopping mall enthusiasts so having the right tenant mix and keeping the concept fresh is essential.” **RO**

NKBA AWARD DINNER | *continued from page 30* |

Following Mack’s presentation, the winners were announced and here is a sample of a few.

SMALL KITCHENS (Less than 35 sq. ft. of countertops)

First Place: Susan Palmquist, CKD, Sawhill Custom Kitchens and Design, Minneapolis, MN

Second Place: Lynne Stryker, CKD, Spaces Into Places, Inc., St. Paul, MN

Honorable Mention: Jean-Claude Desjardins, Belle Kiitchen, LLC, Minneapolis, MN

MEDIUM KITCHENS (35 to 50 sq. ft. of countertops)

First Place: Carol Sadowsky, CKD, The Woodshop of Avon, Edina, MN

LARGE AND OPEN KITCHENS

(Greater than 50 sq. ft. of countertops including additional spaces)

First Place: Carol Sadowsky, CKD, The Woodshop of Avon, Edina, MN

Second Place: Kristy Conlin, CKD, Partner’s 4 Design, Minneapolis, MN

Third Place: Susan Palmquist, CKD, Sawhill Custom Kitchens and Design, Minneapolis, MN

Honorable Mentions:

Lisa-Jahn Harrison, CKD, Valcucine, Minneapolis, MN

Lori Jo Krengel, CMKBD, Kitchens by Krengel, St. Paul, MN

MOST DRAMATIC KITCHEN MAKEOVER

First Place: Susan Palmquist, CKD, Sawhill Custom Kitchens and Design, Minneapolis, MN

MOST DRAMATIC BATHROOM MAKEOVER

Winner: Lori Jo Krengel, CMKBD, Kitchens by Krengel, St. Paul, MN **RO**



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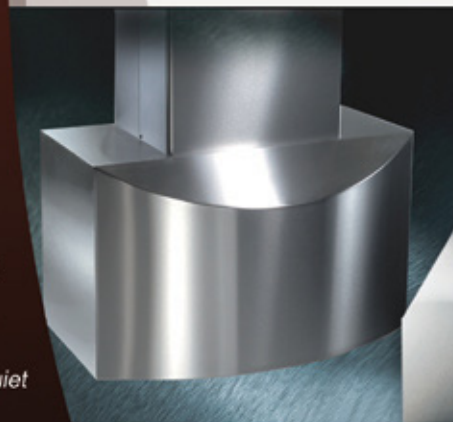
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EUROCHEF ADDS NEW OFFERINGS

EuroChef USA is pleased to be the exclusive importer of two of the finest lines of custom Italian made cooking products. Fratelli Onofri and ILVE are both hand-crafted in Italy and recognized as premiere European appliance manufacturers.

EuroChef is pleased to announce the introduction of a brand new concept in cooking range finishes from Fratelli Onofri. The new Hammered Look finish creates a beautiful and timeless appearance while providing a clean "fingerprint free" surface.

Available in both bronze and steel finishes, these dual fuel ranges are offered in single and double oven configurations. The finishes easily coordinate with all stainless, black and copper surfaces. Innovative cooking techniques along with classic design and an elegant appearance create a beautiful and timeless addition to your kitchen.

ILVE is world renowned for high quality standards and unique product design and features. These dual fuel ranges are available in colors to match your décor in a variety of sizes—36" – 40" – 48" – 60". Trims are available in chrome and brass.

Your choices of cooking configurations include fry-top griddles, coup-de-feu burner surface, fish-grate burners and optional accessories from pizza plates, chopping boards and steam cooking basins just to name a few.

Fratelli Onofri and ILVE products are in stock and available across the country. The quality and design are like no other appliances available anywhere. Rounded Cooktop Corners, Plinth Style Legs, French Burners are just a few features you will find that are not available on any competitive product.

Get involved with Fratelli Onofri and ILVE lines now. EuroChef will be adding many new models in the very near future for both brands.

ABOUT FRATELLI ONOFRI

The history of the Fratelli Onofri brand goes back 50 years when it was introduced in the Italian market after World War II. Thanks to unique products designed by master craftsmen and built using the finest materials, Fratelli Onofri was immediately renowned as one of Italy's premium brands for free standing ranges. Being one of the very first brands to launch a full line of built-in appliances in the late 1960's added to our excellent reputation, which has remained unparalleled ever since.

ABOUT ILVE

ILVE's modern manufacturing facility represents 50 years of tradition and is a story of continuous technological research. Renowned for innovation and superior design, ILVE dual fuel ranges come in an array of colors and configurations limited only by your imagination. A host of options gives you the opportunity to custom design your own range. Also a pioneer of nostalgia cooking ranges and professional hoods and ovens, ILVE is one of the finest European specialty manufactures of cooking appliances. **RO**

EuroChef USA, INC.
Fratelli Onofri

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For more information, contact EuroChef, the exclusive importer of Fratelli Onofri & Ilve cooking appliances.
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THE NKBA EXPANDS DUTIES OF TWO MANAGERS FOR MEDIA AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

BILL DARCY AND TIMOTHY CAPTAIN ASSUME GREATER RESPONSIBILITIES
WITHIN THE NATIONAL KITCHEN & BATH ASSOCIATION

The National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) announced today that it has restructured its marketing department in order to provide more comprehensive services to its members, business partners, trade show attendees, and the media.

Bill Darcy, former Manager of Business Development, has been promoted to Senior Manager of Marketing. In this new role, he will continue to be responsible for providing sponsorship opportunities, seeking out business partnerships, developing affinity programs for NKBA members, and acting as the staff liaison to the Advisory

Council of Manufacturers/Suppliers and Ad Hoc International Committee. In addition, the NKBA Shows & Conferences team will now report to Darcy. He will oversee all production elements of K/BIS and other conferences owned by the NKBA. Darcy joined the NKBA in November 2006 as Manager of Marketing Partnerships. He earned a bachelor's degree in management from Moravian College and has previously served as General Manager of Nazareth Speedway and Senior Director of Corporate Account Management for International Speedway Corp.

In addition, the NKBA has placed its Editorial Services, Public Relations, and Market Research departments under the management of Timothy Captain. The former Manager of Editorial Services, he is now Manager of Editorial Services & Public Relations, responsible for the content of all NKBA communications, including marketing materials, media initiatives, and industry and consumer research. Captain joined the NKBA in December 2007 as



Bill Darcy—Senior Manager of Marketing

Manager of Editorial Services after serving as a senior editor with Laptop Magazine and Buyers Laboratory. He earned a master's degree in economics from Montclair State University and is completing an MBA in marketing from Centenary College of New Jersey.

“This restructuring of our marketing efforts recognizes the great contributions that Bill and Tim have made to the NKBA,” said CEO Don Sciolaro. “Bill has done outstanding work in creating sponsorship opportunities, developing new programs, and forging business relationships, while Tim expertly communicates the NKBA's value to the media, consumers, and industry professionals.”


For more information regarding business or media opportunities with the NKBA, please contact Julie Senzig, Business Development Representative, at (800) THE-NKBA, x3362 or at jsenzig@nkba.org.

About the National Kitchen & Bath Association



Timothy Captain—
Manager of Editorial Services & Public Relations

The National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) is a non-profit trade association that owns the Kitchen/Bath Industry Show & Conference (K/BIS®). With over 40,000 members, the NKBA has educated and led the kitchen and bath industry for more than 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, visit the NKBA Press Room at NKBA.org/Press or call 800-THE-NKBA (843-6522). 

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NATIONWIDE RENTAL COALITION CONFERENCE NUMBERS HIT THE ROOF

RENTDIRECT NATIONWIDE CHANGES LOCATION TO ACCOMMODATE LARGER TURNOUT

RentDirect Nationwide has announced that The Gaylord National Harbor Resort Hotel and Convention Center will be the new location for the upcoming Nationwide Rental Coalition (NRC) legislative conference in Washington, DC on April 21-23, 2009.

The legislative conference was originally scheduled to be held at the renowned Ritz Carlton but according to RentDirect, due to an overwhelming response in pre-registration, a larger space was needed to accommodate the increase in expected attendees.

“We are ecstatic at the positive responses we are getting from our members and vendor partners since the inception of the NRC,” said James MacAlpine, Executive Director of RentDirect Nationwide. “The change in locations will ensure we have sufficient meeting space and hotel rooms to host a successful conference.”

The Gaylord National Harbor is one of the largest combined hotel and convention centers on the East Coast and is ideally located 15 minutes from the Capitol. The resort provides views of the Potomac River and Old Town Alexandria and guests are pampered with contemporary

luxury and all the amenities of a five-star resort including fine dining, spa, shopping and fitness center.

RentDirect has committed to covering the cost of room, tax and fees for a two-night hotel stay at The Gaylord National Harbor during the conference for the first 200 registrants. Nearly 100 industry members and vendors have already pre-registered for the conference at last month’s PrimeTime! in Las Vegas. Space is limited, to secure your free accommodations today register online at www.sterlingevents.com/nrc/.

ABOUT NATIONWIDE RENTAL COALITION

The Nationwide Rental Coalition is an exclusive member benefit of RentDirect Nationwide. The NRC provides RentDirect members and vendors opportunities to support industry legislative initiatives at all levels of government. RentDirect Nationwide is the rent-to-own division of Nationwide Marketing Group, the largest buying and marketing organization for appliance, electronics and furniture independent retailers with more than \$11 billion in volume and 2800-plus members operating some 8,000 retail storefronts across the country.



NATIONWIDE MARKETING GROUP SETS SHIPPING RECORDS IN 3RD QUARTER

Nationwide Marketing Group (NMG) continues to set records in warehouse distribution of flat panel TV’s, audio equipment and accessories. DSI Warehouse Direct Nationwide (DSI) reported today that nearly 9,500 orders were shipped in the 3rd quarter to NMG member dealers across the country.

“We had another huge month with Nationwide Marketing Group,” said Dave Seibert, Senior Vice President of Operations for DSI. “We made a huge push to track and get all orders out the door in record time.”

According to Seibert, DSI’s goal was to get the majority of orders placed at the recent NMG’s PrimeTime! buying show in Las Vegas, into the system and shipped by the end of the month. DSI’s sales team worked diligently with NMG member dealers and was successful in reaching this goal.

“These record numbers prove once again that the services and programs NMG provides, including our warehouse distribution system, play an important part in our members’ ability to remain profitable in a down market,” said Mike Decker, Vice President for Nationwide Marketing Group.

Seibert attributes the successful quarter to a tightly managed inventory system, top notch sales team, merchandising support from NMG and quick responses from member dealers.

“Even with all of this volume, our inventory is at \$45 million,” said Seibert. “It’s the season to have inventory high and we feel confident that this is the biggest inventory in the industry and substantial enough to support independent retailers in the 4th quarter.” **RO**



For more information
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and Their
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Making History Together

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Our country and our industry face unparalleled challenges. But by coming together, we can make a significant impact on key legislation - and you can be involved.

We Mean Business...

Join us at the first ever NRC Conference in Washington D.C. where you'll meet face-to-face with Congressional leaders who are making laws that affect your livelihood. This is your opportunity to have your say and make history by shaping RTO legislation for the better.

Your Stay Is FREE...

If you're a RentDirect member, accommodations at the renowned Gaylord National Harbor Resort and transportation to meetings around Washington are on us. You've come to expect a first class experience from all Nationwide events, and the NRC Conference is no exception.

Help Shape History...

Everyone needs to do their part to protect our way of doing business. Make plans to join us for this truly historic event. Together, we will make an impact.

CRUISING WITH BRAND SOURCE

This has been an exciting year for Brand Source members who have the opportunity to qualify for three different 8 day 7 night Caribbean cruise promotions. Members can earn a cruise from Bosch, Expert Protection and the Brand Source Card. These trips are geared to both the business owner and to retail salespeople. In total over 60 couples will depart together on February 9, for the Caribbean cruise. In addition the three Bosch Distributors, Echelon, Radio Distributing and Purcell Murray are offering Brand Source Exclusive awards on this cruise.

Not to be out done, Brand Source is offering members an Electrolux Windstar week long cruise and Fisher and Paykel is offering a Brand Source Alaskan cruise. Over 30 couples will be Cruising with Brand Source on these trips.

Brand Source is offering these exclusive cruises to help put fun back into this business, and by rewarding retail salespeople Brand Source is directly targeting the people that help make it all happen.

BLACK FRIDAY PREPARATIONS

When it comes to Black Friday and special buys on consumer electronics, Brand Source members who have waited until the last minute were first in line for special limited quantity consumer electronics buys announced during Jim Ristow's (Brand Source Executive Vice President, Electronics) 4th quarter webinar. The webinar featured a future view of the CE business for the balance of 2008 into 2009. During the webinar event, open to all Brand Source electronics dealers, Ristow announced the special Black Friday offers available exclusively to Brand Source members through the Expert Warehouse.

During Black Friday 2008 Brand Source members took advantage of the specials and reported strong holiday kick-off sales on products that they were never competitive on in the past. One member joyfully reported an unexpected long line of customers outside of his store Black Friday morning, and stated that the customers kept coming in all day long, unlike past years when he didn't have something very special to offer.

Brand Source and Expert Warehouse work closely together to provide members with highly competitive consumer electronics buys and during the holiday kick off season they reach out with even deeper savings and offers.

2009 SUMMIT

Next year's Brand Source, Summit will be held in Dallas, Texas, at the Hilton Anatole, March 25-29, 2009. Members from all divisions, including Home Entertainment Source (custom consumer electronics), Mobil Electronics Source (12V/Car Audio), TRIB (rent to own) and the Brand Source Service Division along with U.S.A. servicers will meet for educational workshops, product and service training seminars and a two day buying fair. This event has become the industries largest of its kind and has more than tripled in size over the past four years. Additional information and details will be available to all members and suppliers in November.

SALES TRAINING

Brand Source continues to offer its customized retail sales training program to all members, along with World Class Sales Training sessions, held at the Friedman Learning Institute in Henderson, Nevada. The 2009 training schedule is being finalized and Brand Source members who participate in the video training can attend a World Class session free of charge. **RO**

OOPS!

EDITOR'S RETRACTION: PHOTO ERROR

In the October issue we presented the wrong unit in the photo from Bosch. Here is the award-winning Tassimo unit they manufacture. We apologize for the error.





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 **Electrolux**

¹Fastest time based on smallest load/Fast Wash and Fast Dry cycles selected for various load compositions. ²Based on manufacturer specifications.

WORKING WITH COLOR

It is undeniable that color affects us both emotionally and psychologically. Imagine the beautiful blue green waters of the Caribbean. Every time that I have had the opportunity to travel to the Bahamas or Cancun there is one thing that is always unforgettable the soothing and calming effect the water has on me. As you fly into the area and see the beautiful water from above your mind and soul are immediately soothed and you know you are officially on vacation.

The colors in your store also have the same affect on your customer. Stark white walls or old brown paneling do absolutely nothing to stimulate the senses. Let's take a moment and look at the affect certain colors can have. First we have Cold. The cold colors consist of hues of blue, blue greens, and teals.

These colors have a soothing affect on the mind. They are used in retail environments where it is important the customer feel relaxed and at ease. A good example would be a day spa or any area in a store where you may want to slow down the pace. The opposite is Hot. With hot colors, especially red the body becomes stimulated. Red is an aggressive color and for that reason you will see it on signage advertising a sale.

Another use of red in a retail environment is to create a focal point. Many stores will use red towards the rear of the store to grab attention and pull the consumer through the space. Dark colors are strong and tend to and can convey a variety of moods from somber to dignified. In the higher end areas of a store not only will the colors be darker, but lighting as well. The combination of the two implies higher end more sophisticated products. Cool colors are somewhat different than cold colors. Cool colors have a much broader range from blues to greens to and violet. These colors are perceived as soothing and calming with meditative qualities. So as you look at the moods you want to create within the space, remember—the color you choose can be critical and the affect it has on your customer.

Now let us look at a few color schemes. There are many types of color schemes from powerful to vital to

traditional and tropical. Let's look at a few that are common to retail interiors.

Refreshing color schemes actually use colors found in the cold or cool palate. These color schemes can provide a year round feeling of soothing and relax full. When a retail space provides a calming environment it will tend motivate the customer to spend more time in the space. As we all know the longer we can keep a customer in the store the better our chances in closing a sale.

With a powerful color scheme, red is the dominate color. Whenever red is used on a wall in a retail space the eye will gravitate to that area. Retailers will use red on rear walls to draw attention and move the shopper in and through the space. Red and variations of red will also be

used as an accent on walls where featured products may be displayed. When using powerful colors it is important not to overuse them as they increase focus where used.

Friendly color schemes will create a sense of community or social feeling. With a friendly color scheme orange and orange hues are the underlying dominate color. Think of the glowing flames of a fire. The orange hues give

the feeling of comfort and warmth. Any area in your store where you want to create a warm and inviting feeling the use of orange with blues and blue greens will provide for a family-like feel. **RO**



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

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WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE TOUGH GET BRANDING

These are tough financial times, to be sure. As of this writing, the Dow is way down, closing below 9,000 for the first time in years. By the time you read this it hopefully will have rebounded some. But with consumer spending down, the housing market struggling, and a recession on the horizon, it's clear the retail sector is in for some lean times. In other words, a perfect time to invest in your brand! Normally tough economic times mean cutting back and tightening the belt, and for good reason. Companies, worried about decreasing revenue, cut marketing budgets and other "non-essential" expenditures. This is a healthy survival instinct, but it may cause you to miss some opportunities that will pay back big time when happy days return. A slow economy offers a tremendous opportunity to invest in your brand. With just a little investment and effort, you can gain serious ground on your competition and position yourself for future growth. This may sound like self-serving advice from a marketing guy, and it is. But there are several reasons why investing in your brand now makes good business sense.

COMPETITION IS LIGHT

The natural tendency during economic slowdowns is to hunker down and ride it out. You're doing it and so is your competition. What better time to get your name out there? Slow economic times presents an opportunity to gain a greater share-of-voice much more easily (and inexpensively) than during fast times. Even though they may not be buying as much as they used to, consumers are still out there, and they're still receptive to branding messages. If your competition is sitting on the bench, you get these consumers all to yourself. By continuing your advertising, direct mail and other efforts, you can increase your brand awareness more easily than when you had a lot of competition doing the same. When things turn around—and they will—consumers will most likely remember your brand, because you stayed with them.

TRY NEW THINGS

Economic slowdowns also give you the chance to try new, innovative marketing techniques, or just to polish up your existing program. Face it. When times were good, you were too busy to worry about marketing. It was all you could do to keep up with orders. Your biggest priority was handling all the business that came in the door. There was no time, and no need, to concentrate on your marketing. Now, things are slow, and you can devote more time and resources to checking some things off your marketing to-do list. Is your Web site hopelessly

outdated? Are your point-of-purchase signs as good as they could be? Could your brochures use some new photography and a fresh design? This is also a good time to try new marketing tools. Educate yourself about the power of social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. Start a blog. Think about some ways to use your Web site to connect with consumers and build preference. Now is the time to address those things, because when business picks up, you won't have time.

RATES ARE GOOD

Marketing communications firms and ad agencies are usually among the first companies to feel the effects of tough economic times. The suppliers they work with—photographers, printers, media outlets—also feel the pain.

This gives you an opportunity to get more bang for your buck. When demand is low, agencies, photographers, printers, even TV and radio stations are willing to go the extra mile for your business. They might lower their rates or give you better service. They will appreciate you more because good, paying clients are in short supply. Also, because of layoffs and downsizing, there may be plenty of talented people available. If you're looking to hire someone to help with your marketing, or seeking a freelancer to work on some projects, you should be able to find some good, eager people.

KEEP THINGS POSITIVE

Perhaps the biggest reason to invest in your marketing is psychological. Rather than spending time and energy worrying about the economy and cutting back, being aggressive keeps you and your company positive and focused on the future. Treating down times as an opportunity, you take control of your destiny. You stay busy working on things that will drive sales and put you ahead of the curve when the turnaround comes. Of course, I'm not suggesting that you be fiscally irresponsible. You have to make tough decisions in times like this to keep your business running. But being aggressive with your marketing when competition is light and costs are low presents a unique opportunity for your company to maximize the impact of your brand. **RO**

Christopher Thiede owns BUILD Communications, a branding and PR firm. Stay in touch with Chris at twitter.com/chris_thiede.



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HOW MAIN STREET MUST RESPOND TO WALL STREET

NO MATTER HOW FAR AWAY YOU ARE FROM NEW YORK AND DC, it's difficult to ignore the news about the country's deepening financial crisis. Even if you're not in the business of subprime loans, derivatives and wildly risky investments, you're an unwitting victim.

Consumer confidence continues to fall as prices on staples rise. 24/7 news updates continually flash across our TVs, our computer screens and our cell phones.

Here are some things you can do to ensure that your business continues to grow during these troubled times.



SAY YES

What you say and how you say it impacts how you respond and behave. J. Mitchell Perry has documented the way positive speech creates optimism and a sense of well-being. If you play a positive mantra in your head-repeating the joys of entrepreneurship and the thrill of owning your business-you will be better prepared for the battle ahead than if you sink into a “woe is me” or “the sky is falling” mentality.

I spoke with a children’s shoe retailer this weekend and asked her about business. Instead of complaining that her business was off 25% from her record-breaking sales last August, she dug back and found that she was up 15% from her more average 2006 back-to-school sales.

Get your team onboard and try to replace all of the knee-jerk “no” responses with positive ones. When someone asks if they can go to lunch, say “sure, John, in about fifteen minutes when Sue comes back in” instead of “no, I need you to stay here and cover the floor.”

We’ve been through tough times before and we’ll muddle through this one as well. Optimism trumps pessimism every time.

OPENLY COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR TEAM

Listen closely when your staff members come to you with their concerns. Don’t forget that their retirement funds may be down and that their paychecks don’t go as far as they used to.

Be honest and open about the state of business and seek input and feedback from your team members.

Let your staff know that you’re watching expenses carefully to ensure you ride the storm out. Don’t leave them guessing about possible layoffs and cut-backs. Remind them that with prudent management and their help, the company will weather this storm.

CONNECT WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS

Previous clients are your best source of business. Start a home-improvement blog with tips on how to reduce home heating costs or how to maintain the products you’ve sold them. Put up a community bulletin board in your store so that local schools and charities can promote their events.

Promote the savings that customers can find in trading old appliances for Energy Star products, or from proper ISF calibration of their flat screen TVs. If they didn’t purchase one before, remind them of the benefits and peace of mind that come with maintenance agreements.

Contact customers after every sale to answer any questions they may have. Ask for referrals of their friends who may be interested in the products and services you offer.

TAKE YOUR BANKER TO LUNCH

Stay close to your lenders. Make sure that no matter

how bad the news is you deliver any required reporting in a timely matter. If you’ve taken steps to stem the red ink, take your financials to your banker personally or call your floor plan representative to explain your plan.

Be pro-active in keeping your borrowing down to avoid paying interest and bumping up against your credit limits. Reduce your inventory. Buy only what you can sell by the time the invoice is due. Buy more frequently even if you have to pay freight or a higher price on smaller orders.

KEEP PROMOTING

Advertising is not the place to reduce your expenses. Don’t give your community or your competitors a sense that you’re going out of business.

Have fun, memorable events. A local shopping area had an Italian festival this past weekend and the crowd was huge. Music, food, wine, face-painting and a great experience brought folks not only to the fair, but into the stores as well.

Hold private customer sales for your best clients or new product demonstrations for architects, builders and designers.

If you’re advertising prices, make sure yours is as low as any of your competitors’ on the same kind of products. Well-trained sales associates should be able to show customers benefits of more highly-featured products.

GET OUT OF YOUR OFFICE

Avoid spending your day staring at your sales reports or at the rising and falling stock market.

Get onto the floor and onto the telephone. Be a leader-visible and out in front. Stay close to your team members and help them make sales and stay in the game. Be a cheerleader and reward small successes.

Although unemployment has risen, almost 94% of Americans are still working. Jobs may be shrinking on Wall Street, but most people are going to work at the same jobs they had last month and last year.

Americans are a resilient lot. Although we’ve come to love it, double digit business growth is the exception, not the norm. Business may be cool for a while and may never be as hot as the last few years, but it will come back.

Those with the patience, fortitude and plan to survive will come out stronger on the other side. Let me know what you’re doing to weather these turbulent times. **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.*



NOVEMBER-2008

- 4-7 EHX Fall 2008—Long Beach, CA
11 CES New York Press Preview featuring CES Unveiled @ NY—New York, NY
18 NKBA AZ chapter meeting—AYA Kitchens & Bath/Scottsdale, AZ
18-19 Future of Television East—New York, NY
-

DECEMBER-2008

- 12 NKBA Northern CA Holiday Party—The St. Francis Yacht Club-SF CA
16 NKBA AZ chapter meeting—BSH Gallery/Scottsdale, AZ (Christmas Party)
-

JANUARY-2009

- 6 CES Unveiled: The Official Press Event of the International CES—
Las Vegas, NV
8-11 2009 International CES—Las Vegas, NV
20-23 International Builders Show—Las Vegas NV
-

FEBRUARY-2009

- 9-13 Las Vegas Market “Experience the New World”—Las Vegas, NV
19-22 Mega Group USA/Best Brands Plus Convention—Renaissance Nashville
Hotel, Nashville, TN
25-26 Digital Music Forum East—New York, NY
-

MARCH-2009

- 8-11 Nationwide Primetime—Hilton Riverside, New Orleans, LA
19-21 Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association Expo—Reno-Sparks Convention
Center Reno, NV
22-24 International Home and Housewares Show—McCormick Place, Chicago, IL
22-25 The Summit-Brand Source Convention—Hotel Anatole, Dallas TX
-

APRIL-2009

- 4-7 14th NARMS Spring Conference & Exposition—The Broadmoor,
Colorado Springs, CO
22 Digital Patriots Dinner—Washington, DC
22-23 CEA Washington Forum—Washington, DC
25-30 High Point Furniture Market—High Point NC
30 -5/3 K/BIS 2009—Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, GA.



EVENTS

CALENDAR 2008-09

AUGUST-2009

- 16-19 **Nationwide Primetime**—Walt Disney World Dolphin, Orlando, FL
24-26 **Brand Source Convention** —Paris and Bally's Resorts Las Vegas NV.
-

SEPTEMBER-2009

- 1-4 **Mega Group USA/Best Brands Plus Convention**—San Antonio TX
14-17 **Las Vegas World Market Fall**
-

OCTOBER-2009

- 17-20 **High Point Furniture Market**—High Point NC

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YOUR MONEY DOCTOR

Advice always looks great on paper. You have probably experienced this yourself when trying to implement the latest fad in time management or productivity. My goal is always been to explain how theory works in “real” life and not rely on the unrealistic expectations we usually place upon ourselves. I have been going through the Project Management Life Cycle the last couple articles, explaining how this simple methodology can increase effectiveness and keep more money in your pocket. We are now to the Plan Phase of the process and I personally am in this phase with my own business.

Recently I was presented the opportunity to expand what I do to Los Angeles, CA. This meant moving my base of operations to Los Angeles without impacting my current client base in Albuquerque, NM. In order to take full advantage of this I needed to move quickly. I did not have time to sit and ponder the pros and cons. This is the real world and some of our decisions have to be made quickly. In this case, I needed to respond within the week. Not because of impatience, but due to time tables that had already been set in motion. As you may recall in the last article, Initiation, the first phase, is where the life cycle begins. I had to quickly access what needed to be done to accomplish a move with minimal impact on the business as well as my family. Keep in mind; I am talking strictly of the move in this example.

Once I had established the scope of what needed to occur I was now in the position to start planning how to make it happen. What equipment, i.e. computers, printers, would I need to ship to my new office. What licensing and other credentialing needed to be updated? How do I maximize my time spit between two locations? I started simply by identifying each element. Once each of the elements are recognized I can now drill down to the next level and start breaking each of them apart into their pieces. Let’s take one of the elements. What equipment do I need is the primary question. I need a basic office supplies. I have those already. Is it

cheaper to ship them or to purchase new? Ultimately it was cheaper to ship the items I needed rather than purchase new. It is as simple as this; being proactive as opposed to reactive. This is not new information but it is seldom practiced.

Planning is the most time consuming and critical phase of the process. With the proper planning the execution phase with basically take care of itself and only require monitoring. I say this as I fly to my first meeting in Los Angeles and to what is undoubtedly going to be an interesting adventure. **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. For more information, visit www.thefourpillars.org



¹ Project Management Book of Knowledge, (PMBOK) 2000 ed. – Project Management Institute

² Project Management Book of Knowledge, (PMBOK) 2000 ed. – Project Management Institute



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CLOSING THE SALE



Recently my wife Ruth and I had to purchase a new refrigerator. I knew in advance what model and make I wanted and I decided to go to five different stores to see how the salespeople would pitch me the product. Having spent most of my life in sales, I am always interested in how the salesman

performs, especially when it comes to “the close.” Ask any salesman to name the most important part of his job and he’s almost certain to say, “Closing the sale.”

My first job (before I went into the publishing business) was selling advertising specialty items—ball point pens, calendars, key chains, you name it. The company I worked for had a catalog with about 1000 items. I learned to sell by trial and error, no one taught me. After 30 days in the field cold-calling both small and large businesses, I knew there was something wrong with my sales technique.

I began to rehearse my sales pitch with Ruth. Night after night I would try to sell her some specialty goodie or another. I soon became quite adept with my sales pitch, but my actual sales volume was still very low. One night, while trying to sell her some calendars, she made a remark that I have never forgotten. She said, “You haven’t given me a reason, even a little reason, why I should buy from you!”

This hit me like a ton of bricks! “I’m not giving my prospects a good reason, even an itsy bitsy reason for deciding to buy from me right NOW.” It was an old story, “sold but not closed.”

In our search for our refrigerator, out of the five

stores we visited, only ONE salesman got me to buy. What did he do that the others didn’t? He said the magic words. “If you place your order now, we can deliver your refrigerator this afternoon.” When I said we wouldn’t be home, he immediately said, “What time tomorrow morning do you want us to deliver?”

You can be sure of one thing—the sole difference between selling a prospect on the value of your product and not making the sale is almost always because they don’t have a “reason to buy today.”

“Sold but not closed” keeps me thinking of the narrow margin that separates the winners from the losers. Not one of us wants to part with our money until something enters the picture to make us feel that there is a compelling reason, or even some little reason, that makes NOW the right time to buy.

Moral of the story: Don’t forget to ask for the sale!

IT’S ALL OVER BUT THE SHOUTING!

By the time you read this, the election will be over and the country will begin the difficult task of adjusting to the new President and his coterie of followers. Whichever candidate wins, he will be faced with a vast multitude of problems—more problems and difficulties than many other presidents have faced.

Let us hope that our nation and our lawmakers will unite behind whoever wins, concentrate on the many problems we have, and work toward a common goal of what’s best for our country and NOT what’s best for a select few.

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