

THE WHOLESALE[®]

News of Plumbing • Heating • Cooling • Industrial Piping Distribution



Walker's Supply Co. recently opened a palatial 10,600-square-foot showroom in picturesque Maryville, Tenn., known as the front door for the Smoky Mountains. More than 500 vendors and customers attended the inaugural festivities. Product from some of the industry's top vendors in the plumbing, lighting, appliance and cabinet arena are on display, including working showers, whirlpools and kitchens, and the latest in faucet design. See more on this beautiful new venue on page 12.

APR Supply opens 2 new Pa. branches

LEBANON, PA. — Scott Weaver, president of APR Supply Inc., has announced the opening of APR's two newest branches, through the September 8 acquisition of the assets of H&S Supply Co. in New Oxford and Gettysburg, Pa. The new facilities are located at 627 York Street, Gettysburg and 310 Lincolnway East in New Oxford. Gerald Wine will assume the branch manager duties at APR's newest locations.

"We are very excited to open these
(Turn to APR Supply, page 33.)

Wolverine Canada acquires Granby's Kamco Division

LONDON, ONT. — Wolverine Tube (Canada) Inc. purchased all of the assets from the Kamco Division of Granby Industries Limited Partnership in a transaction that closed October 31.

"Kamco is a leader in coated copper tube products and represents an excellent expansion opportunity to Wolverine Canada into a niche, value-added segment, which is our strategy for future growth," noted Jean Noelting, president of Wolverine Canada. "We plan to move
(Turn to Kamco... page 33.)

Focusing on high-perf polymer systems

REHAU announces strategic shift from commodities, redefines focus

LEESBURG, VA. — Within its overall strategic shift away from the production and sale of commodity products, REHAU announced that it will exit municipal PVC pipe manufacturing and supply in Canada, as well as its business as a PEX plumbing systems supplier in the U.S. and Canada.

Production of municipal PVC pipe ended as of October 31, with sales continuing through

March 31, 2009. The company will also support PEX plumbing systems orders through March 31, 2009, and will provide full-scale customer assistance to ensure a smooth transition into alternative plumbing systems product lines thereafter.

"This decision is part of a significant company-wide initiative to hone our construction focus on high-performance polymer systems,

which provide quality, energy-efficient solutions," said Dr. Kathleen Saylor, REHAU North America CEO. "Over the past several years, REHAU has innovated a number of products and systems to help address the global energy and infrastructure challenges we face now and in years to come. Providing such systems solutions for our customers is REHAU's strength,
(Turn to PEX mfr... page 33.)



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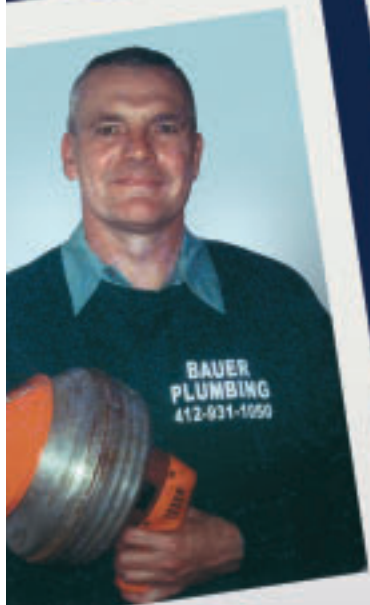
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INDUSTRY NEWS

Chicago rolls out 'green' carpet for 2009 AHR Expo

WESTPORT, CONN. — The latest in green products, technologies, trends and solutions will take center stage at the 2009 AHR Expo®, January 26-28 at Chicago's McCormick Place.

Building on the green focus of last year's show in New York, the AHR Expo will place a special emphasis on environmentally friendly and energy efficient products and technologies. Green building, sustainable design and renewable energy will be just a few of the topical subjects that will be covered at the 61st edition of the world's largest HVACR exposition.

In addition to the hundreds of environmentally conscious products and technologies on display, several green seminars and sessions will also be offered to attendees, including:

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star Program will host an information booth as well as conduct an educational session.

- The Partnership for Environmental Leadership, a collaboration of six green-minded industry associations, is driving its HVAC Mobile Green Classroom on to the AHR Expo show floor. Attendees will have free access to valuable hands-on learning opportunities presented inside this informative classroom. The training trailer demonstrates new and innovative technologies used to enhance a building's energy efficiency while maintaining occupant health, safety and comfort.

- The U.S. Green Building Council will present a full-day LEED educational program.

- The Green Mechanical Council will provide two free educational programs for interested attendees.

- The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers will offer several seminars on a variety of important green topics.

- AHR Expo will also sponsor several green-focused sessions.

To recognize industry suppliers who offer products for a cleaner indoor environment, the AHR Expo will again present the Indoor Air Quality designation. Companies that showcase products for indoor air quality improvement receive a special IAQ sign to display in their booths.

Also, the most innovative green HVACR product will be selected from among exhibitor submissions as the winner of the prestigious 2009 AHR Expo Innovation Award in the Green Building category.

Many exhibitors said they are planning on showcasing green solutions. Keeping with the green theme, the Expo will produce many of its promotional materials in digital format and place them online, thus eliminating thousands of sheets of paper.

"As a leading information resource for the HVACR industry, it is critical that the AHR Expo keep its attendees on the cutting edge of the latest green products and issues," said Clay Stevens, president of International Exposition Company, which produces and manages the Expo.

For more information, call 203/221-9232 or visit www.ahrexpo.com.

Precision Castparts to buy Hackney Ladish

PORTLAND, ORE. — Precision Castparts Corp. has agreed to acquire Hackney Ladish Inc., a leading producer of forged pipe fittings for critical energy infrastructure and related applications.

With more than 80 years of experience manufacturing of pipe fittings, Hackney Ladish offers one of the widest ranges of product types and sizes in the industry. Headquartered in Dallas, Texas, Hackney Ladish operates manufacturing facilities in Russellville, Ark., and Enid, Okla.

"The acquisition of Hackney Ladish significantly broadens our role as a supplier of critical components to energy markets worldwide," said Mark Donegan, chairman and CEO of Precision Castparts Corp. "Right now, Hackney Ladish is the market and technology leader in the manufacture of pipe fittings for oil and gas applications, and we see great potential in continued growth on both domestic and international fronts. Going forward, we will look to leverage their products and capabilities with our Wyman Gordon and Special Metals pipe and tube operations into power genera-

tion, chemical/petrochemical and other applications."

The cash acquisition of Hackney Ladish will be immediately accretive to earnings. Subject to regulatory approvals, the acquisition is expected to be completed in December 2008, after which Hackney Ladish's results will be reported as part of the Forged Products segment.

Precision Castparts Corp. is a worldwide, diversified manufacturer of complex metal components and products. It serves the aerospace, power generation, automotive, and general industrial and other markets. PCC is a market leader in manufacturing large, complex structural investment castings, airfoil castings, and forged components used in jet aircraft engines and industrial gas turbines. The company is also a leading producer of highly engineered, critical fasteners for aerospace, automotive, and other markets and supplies metal alloys and other materials to the casting and forging industry.

For details, visit www.precast.com or www.hackneyladish.com.

Arenberg honored by ASA Industrial Piping Division



Tim Arenberg of Columbia Pipe and Supply (second from left) is congratulated by incoming IPD chairman Pat Adams; Guy Mersereau, incoming IPD vice chairman; and Dennis Niver, IPD chairman.

CHICAGO — Timothy P. Arenberg, president of Columbia Pipe & Supply in Chicago, is the recipient of the American Supply Association's Industrial Piping Division's inaugural IPD Award of Excellence.

This award was established in 2008 to honor a member of ASA's Industrial Piping Division for achievement specifically related to the PVF sector of the PHCP industry. It is given at the discretion of the IPD executive council. Nominees have a record of significant accomplishment in the PVF industry, including overall influence on the current status of the channel, a history of dedicated service to IPD, active participation in the division's activities, projecting a positive industry image and positively affecting the industry in general.

"In considering Tim's nomination, we took into account many factors, including his leadership of Columbia Pipe & Supply, one of the most respected and successful PVF enterprises," said Dennis Niver, chairman of the IPD division. "Tim

was a member of the IPD executive council for seven years, and, during his time as chairman, he had the foresight to expand IPD beyond its boundaries to include more diverse elements of the supply chain. It's one of the most important influences that allowed the division to grow into the powerful group it is today."

In accepting the award, Arenberg said, "I am deeply grateful for this honor. When I look out and see the individuals that make up the group assembled here, I feel very good about our future and am humbled to have been selected to receive this award among all of my peers and mentors."

The IPD is a special interest group within the American Supply Association, comprised of ASA member firms whose business is predominately the distribution or manufacture of industrial and mechanical pipe, valves, fittings and allied supplies.

For information about IPD, contact Amy Black at 312/464-0090 ext. 208, or e-mail ablack@asa.net.

WinWholesale opens Windustrial Company in Seattle area

DAYTON, OHIO — WinWholesale Inc., one of the nation's largest wholesale distributors, has opened Seattle Windustrial in Kent, Wash., to provide mechanical contractors from Olympia to Bellingham with a complete line of pipes, valves, fittings and accessories.

The new company provides counter sales and delivery service, and carries products such as Anvil pipe hangers and supports, Milwaukee ball and butterfly valves, and Star pipe and fittings.

Mike Baker is president of Seattle Windustrial. He joined WinWholesale in 1996 and previously was president of Portland Windustrial in Oregon and Elko Windustrial in Nevada.

"With two other successful Windustrial company starts under his belt, Mike knows the business cold," said Monte Salsman, WinWholesale chief operating officer. "He's the right person to expand WinWholesale's reach into the busy I-5 corridor in the Seattle area with a team that has more than 50 years of experience. They offer their customers quality products, in-depth knowledge of those products and exceptional customer service."

There are more than 470 local Win companies in 44 states and nearly 100 Noland locations, mainly in the Southeast. Noland is a wholly-owned subsidiary.

On the **1st** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
A Forged Bushing in a Brass Tee.

On the **2nd** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Two Solid Plugs and
A Forged Bushing in a Brass Tee.

On the **3rd** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Three Wastenuts,
Two Solid Plugs and
A Forged Bushing in a Brass Tee.

On the **4th** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Four Bronze Caps,
Three Wastenuts,
Two Solid Plugs and
A Forged Bushing in a Brass Tee.

On the **5th** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Five Bull Head Tees...
...Four Bronze Caps,
Three Wastenuts,
Two Solid Plugs and
A Forged Bushing in a Brass Tee.

On the **6th** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Six Forged Steel Crosses,
Five Bull Head Tees...
...Four Bronze Caps,
Three Wastenuts,
Two Solid Plugs and
A Forged Bushing in a Brass Tee.

On the **7th** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Seven Merchant Couplings,
Six Forged Steel Crosses,
Five Bull Head Tees...
...Four Bronze Caps,
Three Wastenuts,
Two Solid Plugs and
A Forged Bushing in a Brass Tee.

On the **8th** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Eight Threaded Unions,
Seven Merchant Couplings,
Six Forged Steel Crosses,
Five Bull Head Tees...
...Four Bronze Caps,
Three Wastenuts,
Two Solid Plugs and
A Forged Bushing in a Brass Tee.

On the **9th** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Nine Cast Iron Flanges,
Eight Threaded Unions,
Seven Merchant Couplings,
Six Forged Steel Crosses,
Five Bull Head Tees...
...Four Bronze Caps,
Three Wastenuts,
Two Solid Plugs and
A Forged Bushing in a Brass Tee.

On the **10th** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Ten Seamless Nipples,
Nine Cast Iron Flanges,
Eight Threaded Unions,
Seven Merchant Couplings,
Six Forged Steel Crosses,
Five Bull Head Tees...
...Four Bronze Caps,
Three Wastenuts,
Two Solid Plugs and
A Forged Bushing in a Brass Tee.

On the **11th** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Eleven Malleable 90's,
Ten Seamless Nipples,
Nine Cast Iron Flanges,
Eight Threaded Unions,
Seven Merchant Couplings,
Six Forged Steel Crosses,
Five Bull Head Tees...
...Four Bronze Caps,
Three Wastenuts,
Two Solid Plugs and
A Forged Bushing in a Brass Tee.

On the **12th** day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Twelve Reducing Elbows
Eleven Malleable 90's,
Ten Seamless Nipples,
Nine Cast Iron Flanges,
Eight Threaded Unions,
Seven Merchant Couplings,
Six Forged Steel Crosses,
Five Bull Head Tees...
...Four Bronze Caps,
Three Wastenuts,
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Showroom displays that customers can operate are only part of the fun at Walker's Supply Company's expansive, 10,000+ square foot showroom. For the whole story, see page 12.

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Next Month

Morris Beschloss interviews Bill McGivern, CEO, The Macomb Group.

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SMART MANAGEMENT

Put marketing to work on customer-related tech initiatives

Last month I started a discussion about the need for wholesalers to have a web presence, to provide technology and support to their trade customers, as well as some general thoughts about marketing. As a reminder, while you are working to earn the role of primary supplier (first call, first stop, last look) with your trade customers, your goal is to be the one-stop-shop for your target customers. That one-stop-shop includes products and services that those customers need to operate their business. Ideally they shouldn't have to call a competitor unless you mess up the situation badly.

More and more trade customers expect you to provide some of that technology and support that they need in their businesses as a part of earning the right to be their primary supplier. While some contractors are quite advanced, most would like their wholesaler partner to help them with technology. Correctly or incorrectly, most contractors think their wholesaler understands technology because there are so many computers, printers and terminals scattered liberally around most wholesale locations.

I also want to reiterate one point that I made last month. Providing any technology or support services to your customers is a *marketing activity*, not an information technology task. As with any service you provide, the only reason that you provide any technology or support is to profitably sell more than you

would have sold if you did not provide the technology or support. Said another way, customers must value your investment enough that they are willing, in the end, to pay for it.

It is marketing's job to evaluate technology the same way any other marketing investment's return on investment is evaluated. (Some of you might be saying

Providing any technology or support services to your customers is a *marketing activity*, not an information technology task.

to yourself, "We don't think about the ROI for any of our marketing programs.") I believe that every marketing investment should be measured to determine if it provides a proper return. I will say, though, that many marketing investments are difficult to measure and some have a lag in their ROI production. Advertising is tricky in that most of it doesn't create an immediate turnaround in customer buying patterns. While it would be cool if your spiffy campaign caused customers to immediately flock to your doors, sadly it seldom works that way. Instead, most of us have to see an advertisement or campaign several (some of us 8+) times to really digest and understand it. I think web order entry also has a lag in ROI. You make the investment and work to get the kinks out of your system over time. After it is cleaned up, fast and easy to use, some customers will start to use it and it will

generate a proper return.

As I said before, the impact of many marketing programs is difficult to measure, but it is critical to determine whether the marketing activity is having a positive impact on sales or the customer's perception of your company.

As an aside, I am always cautious whenever I ask the sales force about any

marketing programs. I have found that, in many cases, their response is contaminated with all sorts of biases and other issues like:

- It's the boss' pet project...the boss is awesome and always right...even when he is wrong
- The salesperson is threatened by the program since it makes the customer beholden to the company — not the salesperson
- The salesperson said the program wouldn't work and he is determined to prove he is right.

There are many scenarios but I have, over the years, found it difficult to detect and then strip off the complexities of a salesperson's agenda. The best approach is to get information straight from the customers' mouths using non-directive questions. (Non-directive questions don't insert a bias into the question like, "What do you think of our crappy counter service." The customer might have had great experiences at your counter but now he is questioning what his answer would have been. The idea is to ask, "How is our counter service?" Good. "What makes it good?" Your people. "How do they make it good?" "You said Good but are there any areas where we could improve?")

Back to the original point, customer-oriented, customer-used technology is the marketing department's bailiwick. They are the champions and drivers of these initiatives.

As I said last month, the sales team should be directly involved in introducing or training customers to use any marketing initiative that the company provides. That includes:

- Promotions
- Catalogs
- Web catalogs
- Any software that helps the contractor to run his business or complete his work
- Any training programs offered to the contractor
- Handheld barcode tools provided to the customer.

Catalogs are pretty low-tech, but your sales team should hand-deliver your cat-



BY RICH SCHMITT
Management specialist

alog to each customer and prospect. I have seen pallets of catalogs sitting in wholesalers' counter areas for everybody and his brother to take.

I can't think of a faster way to devalue all of the hard work and money you invested in your catalog than giving it away to anyone for *free*. Even your dumbest customer can calculate, in his head, the value of that catalog. *Zip, Zilch, Zero*. Contractors will be taking them home to level the table in their dining room at that price or to patch the hole in their insulation. At the very least, put up a sign saying, "The new catalogs are in!!!" Then have your counter people do an introduction. (Of course, when you are very busy, the intro is short but, when possible, a more detailed presentation is good.)

A salesperson or counterperson should be coached on delivering the catalog. You cannot count on them to develop a polished presentation for your catalog. (Or for any product or market-

I can't think of a faster way to devalue all of the hard work and money you invested in your catalog than giving it away to anyone for *free*.

ing for that matter.) They should hand (as in put *into* his hands) a copy to the owner(s) and buyer for each active customer or targeted prospect. The salesperson should explain the value of the catalog. "This is what we stock. I bet you didn't know that we stock 11,257 products. Plus we have an additional 3,200 products in the catalog that we can get for you. They are marked as 'non-stock' to help you know when we have to order it." He should thumb through the book showing the customer all of the great product lines and products that you have for sale. He should demonstrate the handy index(s) as a way to find products. He should use your catalog as he puts quotations together for projects. If the customer needs more copies to keep in his trucks, the salesperson should say that he may be able to get additional copies that he will bring on his next visit. The catalog is a valuable resource to the contractor even though he may not know it. I know this sounds like too much theater but even if you do just a little of this, your great catalog will be more highly valued by your customers.

Some additional thoughts on your website:

- Your website should be high func-
(*Turn to Marketing is... page 70.*)

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LONG TANGENT/BELLED END – various industries such as pulp and paper, emergency and tanker trucks and other applications requiring special fittings or economical fillet welding techniques.

MARINE - marine industry requirements for specialized fittings in a variety of materials suited for marine applications.

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Circle 7 on Reader Reply Card

INDUSTRY NEWS

Ferguson opens three new showrooms

NEWPORT NEWS, VA. — Ferguson has opened three new showrooms:

- A 12,500-square-foot facility at 2451 17th Street in Sarasota, Fla.
- A 4,300-square-foot facility at 3186 Cass Road in Traverse City, Mich.
- An 18,000-square-foot showroom at 2860 North Federal Highway in Fort Lauderdale.

“We are excited to enhance our current location by providing our customers



with a state-of-the-art facility for their clients to select products for their home,” said John Zink, appliance manager for the Ferguson’s Fort Lauderdale showroom. “This new site features a large selection of top-of-the-line products under one roof, providing a level of convenience never before available to our customers in this market.”

Ferguson’s showrooms are designed with homeowners, plumbers, builders, remodelers and designers in mind and offer a vast selection of plumbing products and fixtures, including appliances, lighting and cabinetry, from today’s most recognized manufacturers. They feature fully functional displays and a very knowledgeable staff.

“There is no facility in the Sarasota market like this,” said Sarasota branch manager Maleah Jordan. “It is thrilling to be able to service the market with such an assortment of products under one roof. It

will allow us to meet the needs of more customers than ever before.”

Traverse City branch manager Kip Costigan noted, “We have a wide assortment of unique bath and lighting fixtures and outstanding customer service that you can’t find at big box locations. This facility is more than double the space of our old location, with more room for the latest products.”

To schedule an appointment, contact the showroom in Sarasota at 231/946-1490, Traverse City at 941/951-0110 or Ft. Lauderdale at 954/254-3322.

Caroma honored by *Popular Mechanics*

HILLSBORO, ORE. — Caroma, a leader in dual flush toilets, high efficiency urinals and stylish sinks, recently received *Popular Mechanics*’ Breakthrough Product Award for its Profile Smart dual flush toilet, a unique design for water conservation. The Breakthrough Awards

celebrate innovations poised to change the world.

Graywater systems can sharply reduce water usage in the home without any sacrifice in convenience. This clever system directs fresh water through the integrated faucet for hand washing. It

then drains from the sink into the tank for the next flush. It’s a way to bring smart, green design into everyday life.

“Water conservation has always been the critical foundation to Caroma’s research and development efforts,” said Derek Kirkpatrick, North America manager. “The Profile Smart is the first of its kind, incorporating a unique, integrated dual flush push button and spout combination designed to lower total bathroom water usage. This exciting innovation is helping Australia with their severe drought situation and will be introduced in North America in 2009.”

For information, call 800/605-4218 or visit www.caromausa.com.

Caroma’s Profile Smart toilet uses graywater from a built-in basin for flushing.



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EQUITY

Equity Plumbing is a new Marketing Group that offers marketing services and sales support to a network of independent Wholesale Plumbing Distributors. Equity provides Distributors and Manufacturers access to a powerful national membership network, proprietary marketing plans, special promotional materials, and advertising opportunities. What does Equity have on tap for your business?...

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Walker's Supply hosts grand opening at showroom

MARYVILLE, TENN. — *Breathtaking!! Gorgeous!!! Awesome!!!*

Adjectives could not do justice to the reaction of the people as they ascended upon the palatial 10,600-square-foot showroom of Walker's Supply Company



Long-time factory representative *Buster Saffles* and Walker's president *Stanley Snowden* at the grand opening.

in picturesque Maryville, Tenn., known as the front door for the Smoky Mountains. The new facility opened its doors for the inaugural festivities on October 27 with vendors and customers numbering 500 strong. Product from some of the industry's top vendors in the plumbing, lighting, appliance and cabinet arena were on display for all to behold and gaze in merry wonderment.

From the plumbing world, spectacular items from Kohler, Delta, Basco, Danze, Aqua Glass, D'Vontz and many others too numerous to mention give hope to struggling bathrooms everywhere. Working showers and whirlpools, the newest in faucet design and a state-of-the-art working showerhead and body spray display make this a premier showcase adventure in the Southeast.

The beautiful lighting from vendors such as Kichler, Quozel, Maxim and



At the ribbon cutting for Walker's new 10,600-square-foot showroom in Maryville, Tenn., *Stanley Snowden*, president, wields the scissors to open the facility.



From left: *Nancy Butcher*, showroom manager; *Stanley Snowden*, president; *John Wallace*, owner; *Ric Miller*, branch manager; and *Pam Tinsley*, lighting manager.

OBITUARY

Henry E. Longley Jr., wholesaling executive

WILMINGTON, N.C. — Henry Edgar Longley Jr. died at his residence on November 21, 2008. He was born in Wilmington, N.C., on January 19, 1933, the son of Henry Edgar Longley and DeLean Ayers Longley.

Longley is survived by his wife of 53 years, Ann Penton Longley; and three daughters, Elizabeth Longley Donald, Margaret Longley White (Lee) and Emily Penton Longley. He also had four grandchildren.

Longley attended New Hanover High School and graduated from Valley Forge Military Academy. He earned a mechanical engineering degree from North Carolina State University. After two years in the United States Air Force at Patrick Air Force Base in Florida, he returned home to take over the family business, Longley Supply Company. Serving as president for 46 years,

Longley was dedicated to growing and sustaining the business, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in July 2006.

Longley was a past president of the Southern Wholesalers Association, and also served on boards and committees for a variety of local civic and charitable organizations.

Along with being active in his community, Longley enjoyed the outdoors, playing golf, hunting, fishing and cheering for his Wolfpack team.

The service was held November 24 at Saint James Episcopal Church, followed by interment at Oakdale Cemetery. Memorial gifts may be sent to the N.C. State Wolfpack Club, Henry E. Longley Scholarship Fund, P.O. Box 37100, Raleigh, NC 27627, or to the Lower Cape Fear Hospice and LifeCare Center, 2222 S. 17th Street, Wilmington, NC 28401.

Savoy House help illuminate the scene for the valued patrons who comprised the remainder of the week's clientele. Ceiling fans of every shape and size from manufacturers such as Monte Carlo, Minka-Aire and Fanimation give the showroom a unique and eclectic appeal; as well as, keeping the hard-working staff cool and refreshed.

Working kitchens featuring appliances from the likes of Whirlpool, Wolf, Miele,

Subzero and a cavalcade of some of the finest manufacturers — combined with the statuesque beauty of cabinetry from Kraftmaid, Mid-Continent, Prestige and Omega — make for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see the finest in craftsmanship and beauty in a working environment. Choosing from the veritable potpourri of options available to the consumer may be overwhelming to say the least.



Shower displays are only a small part of the extensive showroom, which boasts working, push-button showerhead wall.

With the adjoining 75,000-square-foot warehouse, office and counter facility, this undertaking is Walker's way of showing their unwavering support for the community and continuing to provide the best in service, price and selection for the East Tennessee market, while working its way into the forefront of the industry for years to come.

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At the Grand Opening, branch manager *Ric Miller* shows visitors around the new showroom, which also features working kitchens.

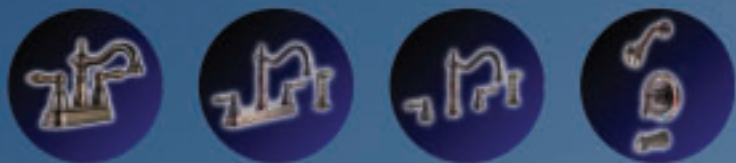
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INDUSTRY NEWS

Showroom educator, columnist offers webinar, teleclass educational seminars

LINCOLN, CALIF. — Peter Schor, educator, speaker, writer, author and showroom columnist for *The Wholesaler* since 2004, has created a low-cost and high-value “custom tailored” webinar or

teleclass series for plumbing and DPH product selling showrooms.

“Right after 9/11, I realized that many people were not traveling as much to receive educational information,” Schor

noted. “There was lost travel time and work to and from the live seminar locations; and then jamming too much information in a day once the attendees got there.”

Nielsen Business Media, which owns 40 publications and 135 trade shows, and brings the industry the *K/BIS* and *Hospitality Design Conventions*, has a division that owns numerous magazines such as *Training*, *Presentations*, *Sales & Marketing Management*, *Human Resources* and more. Nielsen Business Media also owned *Online Learning Conferences and Expos*. In 2002, Schor became registered and certified in facilitation of “online e-learning.”

“It was very easy coming from platform speaking to learn how to deliver short, impactful content educational programs in either webinar or teleclass formats,” Schor said. “The webinar requires that the attendee must have high speed web access. It is very effective because it has many bells and whistles including recording capabilities, shows animation, audience polls and questionnaires, testing accountability and many other tools!”

Realizing that not every company has this ability to have high speed web access, Schor came up with a very effective “teleclassing format” using the phone to access up to 1,000 people on one line, utilizing a pre-sent PowerPoint, hand-out and much more.

Schor is offering teleclassing or webinars to single- or multiple-location showrooms on a company basis. The attendees can range from four to 500. The seminars are each 45 minutes long and tie into a series of weekly, monthly or bi-monthly content. Each series of six, eight or more will be “customized” to the need of each company, its market, the challenges, obstacles and problems that hold the showrooms back from reaching its full potential. Each 45-minute segment will tie into the next upcoming event. Teleclassing is a very effective tool in these economic conditions. The sessions are held in each time zone across the U.S., one hour before the showroom opens up each morning. This is similar to live PKs.

While each program is custom crafted, they include content that showroom people are starved for in the areas of increasing sales, profit margins, creating higher traffic, and some of the 50+ skills and tools that showroom people need in these challenging economic conditions. The programs can be co-facilitated by the director of showrooms or owners and information can be delivered to your entire network at one time.

Schor consults with bath/plumbing manufacturers in helping them take their products to market both nationally and globally. This is also a great tool for manufacturers to work with Schor with their downline showrooms.

For more information on costs, industry references and more, contact Peter Schor via e-mail at pschor@dynamicresultsinc.com, through his website at www.dynamicresultsonline.com, or by phone at 916/408-5346.



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INDUSTRY NEWS

CPMR marks 20 years serving AIM/R, reps

ARVADA, COLO. — Platinum is the traditional 20th anniversary gift. Sure, it's expensive, but when you look back over two decades, what better way to acknowledge the value of time spent together than affixing something of great value to it? That's why the 20th anniversary celebration in January of MRERF's Certified Professional Manufacturers' Representative program is so important — and so valuable — to AIM/R and the manufacturers' representative profession.

The CPMR program is available for anyone providing outsourced sales functions to manufacturers, regardless of industry. It is a professional designation earned by an individual, not a firm. The CPMR program is executive education for firm owners and managers. Participants invest one week annually for three years on campus at Arizona State University. Attendees gain knowledge and insight into operating a business more effectively and profitably. Included among the many subjects in the program's curriculum are:

- Understanding the Legal Concerns of Your Firm
- Line Profitability Analysis
- Succession Planning.

During the three years of CPMR programming, designation participants create an international network of colleagues with a common body of knowledge and mutual ethical standards. Reaching beyond a single industry and across the profession, the CPMR designation identifies individuals who are committed to being on the leading edge of their profession.

The sheer number of reps who have participated in the program only partially tells the story of the its success. Since its inception 20 years ago, a total of 2,015 reps have graduated. Of that number, 178 are AIM/R members. Currently, there are 205 reps enrolled in the program and another 100 are expected to begin this month. The real measure of the program's success, however, becomes clear after weighing the words of successful graduates.

Consider the following:

- David Coleman of A.H. Deveney & Co. Inc. in Eclectic, Ala., who earned his certification in 2007, points to the insight he gained about how to effectively run an agency. Two areas of the curriculum that he found to be especially effective were negotiating with manufacturers and steps to take to motivate your own sales staff.

- It was as a result of attending AIM/R meetings and observing that the top-notch reps all had CPMR after their names that got Rick Martin to take the step for

himself. Martin of Soter-Martin Sales & Marketing, Richmond, Va., explains, "I've always believed in education, and I wanted to succeed, just as the reps I was seeing had succeeded. I also like that word certified. That means professional to me, and it was something I wanted to make an investment in."

Martin points to what he learned about the importance of properly preparing for sales calls and the need to constantly evaluate the lines that you represent as areas of the curriculum that he's found especially beneficial: "I'm 100% behind CPMR, and it's something I would do again. Many of us have a tendency to believe that we're the only ones in this boat. It was reassuring to learn there are so many others just like us. Whether we're selling French fries or electrical conduit, we're all in the same business."

- "For agencies that have the next generation ready to come into the business, CPMR provides them with the education they need to be successful." That's how Paul McLafferty of Inland Sales of Chicago views the certification program. Although he completed the program in 2006, he maintains its value has been constant: "I've got all the textbooks nearby, and I consult them regularly."

- Bill Freeman of Spirit Group Inc. in Orlando, graduated from CPMR in 2000. Freeman said, "One of the major benefits for me was the ability to pick up ideas from the other reps who face the same management problems and business challenges that I do." He added that, "CPMR is of real value for someone who's either already in a management position or is being groomed for such a position. I'd have to agree with one of my former CPMR classmates who said that the program was like completing an MBA program for reps."

Hardly resting on the laurels the CPMR program receives from graduates, Susannah Hart, MRERF's executive director, explained that, "The program is evaluated annually and revised in response to marketplace changes. The CPMR Education Committee observes sessions and considers student evaluations when updating the curriculum and teaching staff. During the last 20 years there have been many improvements in all of the subjects taught in CPMR. Recent changes to the curriculum brought Managing Multiple Generations, Compensation Packages and Services Marketing to the program. Core sessions are continually improved to meet the changing needs of our participants."

For more information, visit www.mrerf.org.

New book explains the industrial sales process

BRYAN, TEXAS — *Fundamentals of Industrial Distribution: The Sales Process* is a newly released "how-to" book directed to industrial distribution salespeople or anyone wanting to better understand a solution-based selling process.

It breaks down the selling process from start to finish, including chapters that focus on the following topics:

- Planning the sales call
- How to set the initial meeting
- Making a good first impression with a professional introduction
- Effective questioning and listening techniques for discovering buyers' concerns
- Presenting products and services as solutions to problems
- A practical approach to objections
- Closing the sale.

According to the authors, Mitchell Harper and Norm Clark — each of whom has a diversified background in industrial distribution — this is a working book, not a theoretical one. It is designed for industrial rather than retail sales and is meant to be an ongoing

tool for sales professionals rather than a one-time read. The book lays out the sales process in a chronological order, which allows readers to refer back to specific areas for help, versus having to re-read the entire text.

The process as outlined and the tips provided throughout the book are time tested and will help build a successful relationship between salespeople and their clients. The authors believe that long-term success is achieved when both the distributor and its clients have mutual ongoing benefit. This can only be accomplished through above-board conversations that align benefits with value received.

Fundamentals of Industrial Distribution: The Sales Process is available by e-mailing mitch@hwpo.com or visiting www.hwpo.com.





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INDUSTRY NEWS

OBITUARY Bill O'Hagan, Mueller chief executive

MEMPHIS, TENN. — William D. O'Hagan, 66, of Jupiter, Fla., passed away October 27 at his residence. He was president and CEO of Mueller Industries.

O'Hagan was born in Bayonne, N.J., the oldest of six children. He was raised with a strong work ethic, and was well-known for his pre-dawn arrival at his office. He started in 1960 with Phelps Dodge Corp., working in their tube mill as a time study clerk. O'Hagan worked his way through the ranks to marketing director.



Bill O'Hagan

Phelps Dodge offered a program for employees to attend Rutgers University evening school, so O'Hagan juggled work and school, graduating in 1970. That year, he was named Phelps Dodge Young Man of the Year. He also completed the Harvard Business School PMD program in 1972. The following year, he joined Cambridge-Lee Industries in Boston. Over the next eight years, he served first as vice president-international and manufacturing, and later as general manager of Raleigh Copper Fittings in Miami.

O'Hagan joined Nibco in Elkhart, Ind., in 1981 as vice president-international operations for Mexico and Europe. He later served as vice president-manufacturing for copper and

(Turn to O'Hagan, page 18.)

An industry giant passes

BY MORRIS R. BESCHLOSS
PVF and economic analyst

Bill O'Hagan's premature death has deprived the industry of an irreplaceable giant, whose shoes can never be filled.

Rising to the pinnacle of leadership in Mueller Industries, one of the most respected PHCP industry corporations, Bill never lost touch with the many associates that made his meteoric rise possible. As a personal friend, as well as an industry colleague, we both shared the knowledge that this industry was our family. Bill went further and said, "My personal life, outside of my family, is solely involved with my many industry friends and associates."

Having served with Phelps-Dodge and as a top executive with Nibco, O'Hagan was the only candidate seriously considered by chairman Harvey Karp, who was looking for a chief operating officer after the Quantum Fund had

bought predecessor Mueller Brass out of bankruptcy. When Harvey visited me about prospective candidates, I told him there was only one, who had literally been fashioned to lead Mueller into the prominent position that the company eventually assumed.

At the time, I emphasized that Bill O'Hagan would prove more invaluable than the most expensive machinery that the company could acquire. My prognostication actually turned out to be too conservative.

O'Hagan built Mueller Industries into one of the leading manufacturers of copper tube, plastic fittings and other copper-based products through acquisition. In more than 15 years of managing Mueller Industries, O'Hagan provided the personal leadership so reminiscent of the titans that have traditionally provided the underpinnings of our \$75-billion industry.

I'm especially privileged in having

(Turn to Giant, page 18.)

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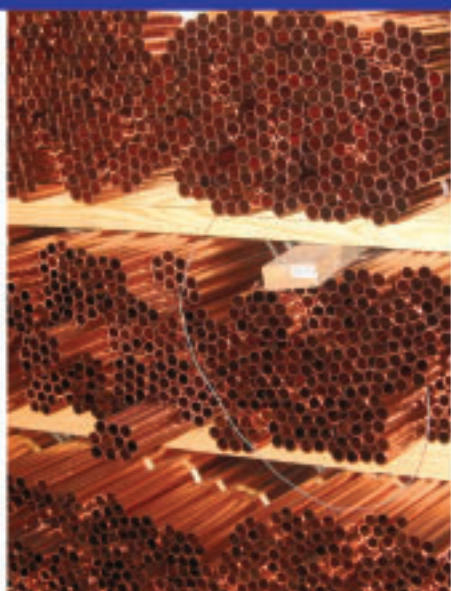
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INDUSTRY NEWS

Murray Supply holds a Bradford White Counter Day

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — Murray Supply Company held a counter day sponsored by Bradford White on October 23. Phillip Ayers from Snider Inc. introduced the Bradford White Perfect Candidate program to a number of cus-

tomers and employees. The customers enjoyed hotdogs and hamburgers, as they discussed the features of new products in the marketplace with sales associates from Murray Supply Company.

Bradford White carries a wide range of

items from 2-gallon compacts to industrial giants, along with super-efficient eF series commercial units and large storage tanks with capacities of more than 5,600 gallons.

Murray Supply Company is a family owned and operated company that is based out of Winston-Salem, N.C. The company is engaged in the wholesale



Phillip Ayers from Snider Inc. shows customers a selection of Bradford White products at the Murray Supply Company counter day.

distribution of residential and commercial plumbing products, industrial and commercial piping as well as kitchen and bath fixtures. Murray Supply Company serves their customers from five branch locations and two showrooms in North Carolina.

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O'Hagan

(Continued from page 16.)

plastic fittings, and later as vice president and general manager of residential products.

In 1992, Harvey Karp, who represented the interests of the largest unsecured creditor of Mueller Industries, approached O'Hagan and he accepted the offer of chief operating officer. Just six months later, O'Hagan was promoted to president.

According to a biography of O'Hagan written by the late Don Caffee for the former's induction into *The Wholesaler's* PVF Hall of Fame in 2005, Mueller at that time was "a debt-riddled company that had been mis-managed in the 1980s and left directionless. ... Under his [O'Hagan's] direction, Mueller was relocated to Memphis, a new operating team was brought on board, and the company went back to basics and began to make money again. An acquisition turned around the plastic fitting business and Mueller has not looked backward."

In 1993, O'Hagan was elected a director of Mueller, and the following year was named chief executive officer.

O'Hagan is survived by his wife of 44 years, June O'Hagan, and his daughter, Kelly O'Hagan.

A Memorial Mass was held on November 6 at St. Paul of the Cross Catholic Church in North Palm Beach, Fla. The family suggests anyone considering a memorial in memory of O'Hagan make a contribution to the charity of their choice.

Giant

(Continued from page 16.)

brought Bill O'Hagan into the PVF Hall of Fame, an honor that both he and Mueller Industries have richly deserved.

Rest in Peace, Good Friend, and know you will always be enshrined in the hearts of the industry that you loved so dearly, and whose respect for you will be eternal. ■



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INVENTORY COUNTS

Balancing between inventory turns and customer service

BY JASON BADER

Inventory management specialist

As I sit here reviewing the economic turmoil of the last several months, I can't help but consider how my distribution clients are reacting to the news. Without a doubt, many are finding themselves very wary of borrowed money and are looking for ways to bring cash back into the organi-

If you spin the inventory too quickly, you will develop holes in stock. Let it deteriorate too far and the phone will stop ringing.

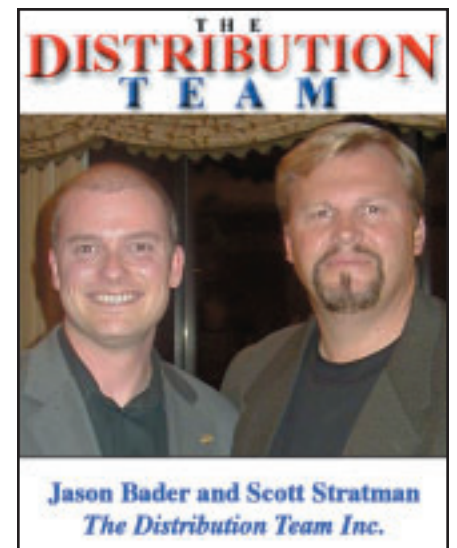
zation. As I have mentioned in several articles, the biggest cash asset in a distributor's business is inventory. This appears to be the logical place to start shoring up the reserves. I definitely encourage our clients to look at prudent reductions in inventory. Most distributors hold at least 30% more inventory than necessary to keep up with current customer demands. It is the panic-based reductions that I want to caution distributors against.

When I work with clients, one of their greatest concerns is the turning of inventory. This seems to be the prevailing metric associated with a healthy organization. The conventional wisdom appears to say that the faster you turn the inventory, the better you are. In fact, many organizations have developed

incentives based solely on turning the product. While turns should be *part* of a compensation strategy, it can't be the *only thing* we measure.

Determining turn ratios the right way

Just so we are all on the same page, here is a quick clarification of the inventory turn ratio. Inventory turn is a measure of how well your inventory investment is performing financially. To determine the inventory turn in your business, take the annual cost of goods sold from stock sales and divide it by the average inventory value. One of the most important words in that formula is stock from "stock sales." This is where I see the greatest confusion when distributors calculate this metric. They tend to throw all sales into the numerator of the equation.



When you include a drop ship in the measurement, are you really measuring the performance of your money? Did you invest your money to hold that item in inventory? Of course not. The inventory was held at the supplier's facility. This logic holds true for non-stock specials that you buy for a customer. Transfers to fulfill a customer order are often included in the inventory turn calculation for the selling location. Should they be? When you are determining the performance of inventory in a certain

(Turn to Meeting your... page 22.)



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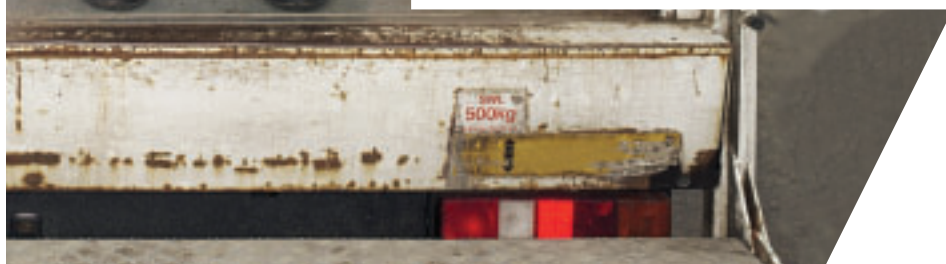
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INVENTORY COUNTS

Meeting your customers' needs and your inventory goals can be a tricky process

(Continued from page 20)

branch, transfers should be excluded. Again, we are not using the inventory of the selling branch, we are capitalizing on the assets of the shipping branch. You can see how the numbers can be skewed. This is why I am very skeptical when I see industry averages. How sure are we that the other guy did the math right?

If my compensation was based solely on inventory turns, I could easily achieve the goal. The fastest way to increase inventory turns is to reduce the average inventory value. If you want to reduce inventory, quit cutting purchase orders. Believe me, you would bring that average down in short order. Unfortunately, it would also have severe consequences on your sales figures, but that isn't what we are measuring. Can anyone see the danger?

Be smart about reducing inventory value

I am very concerned that distributors may be leaning toward a wholesale

slashing of inventory values in order to preserve the cash. Things like buying budgets and buying after the 25th of the month might be coming out of the closet. Folks, these are dangerous practices that focus on short-term gains and create long-term problems.

If you want to reduce inventory value, take a hard look at the dead and dying inventory. Get rid of the inventory that no one seems to be interested in. Be very cautious when a supplier suggests that you need to carry the whole breadth of the line. Look at your safety stock levels on the least popular items. Breadth of line is okay, but don't allow depth in the less popular items.

As I mentioned earlier, the wholesale reduction of purchase orders will have negative consequences. Without inventory on hand, your customers will see you as an unreliable supplier. This is why we must measure our customer service level in conjunction with the inventory turns. It is not good enough to

just put inventory in your warehouse. You need to bring in the products your customers want. More importantly, you need to bring the products in when your customers want them. Meeting your customers' needs is what the customer service metric is all about.

How to measure your customer service

The formula for measuring customer service is this: Take the number of lines (on customer orders) shipped complete divided by the number of lines ordered. This is a fairly strict measurement of how well you met the customers' needs. If a customer orders 10 grinders and you have eight in stock, you ship the eight and backorder the other two. What is the customer service level on this line of the order? Many would argue that it is 80%. Wrong. It is 0%. You failed to meet the request of the customer. The customer wanted 10 and you gave them eight. If they *wanted* eight, they would have *ordered* eight. Think of measuring the

customer service performance by the order. For example, if there were 10 lines on a customer order, and we were able to ship eight of those lines complete, we would achieve an 80% customer service level for that order. Seems a bit harsh, doesn't it?

Let's put this another way. Say you stick your ATM card in the bank machine and request \$100. The machine spits out \$80 and tells you to come back tomorrow for the other \$20. That 80% isn't bad, right? You only have to wait a day for the remainder. Are you satisfied with this transaction? I have a feeling that some of you would let your frustration be known to the little camera in the ATM.

Now that we are measuring customer service percentages, what is the goal? We typically like to see our clients shoot for an overall percentage of 90% to 95%. Anything higher than 95% would force us to invest a ridiculous sum of money in our inventory. We probably wouldn't have the space to achieve 96% or higher. This is an overall inventory percentage. Some items will be higher than 95% and others will be lower than 90%. Here is a great way to use this measurement: Make sure that your most popular items — the top 5% your customers expect you to have — are in the 99% to 100% range. This will give you the appearance of having everything when they need it. As the popularity drops, the customer service percentage can drop with it.

When you are measuring a vendor line, watch out for an overall service level in the low 80%. This means that you are carrying too little inventory or that you may simply be carrying the wrong inventory. Go back and review the hits ranking to see which items are most and least popular. Adjust your levels to get the customer service percentages in line.

Turns and customer service is the balancing act all inventory managers must face. If you spin the inventory too quickly, you will develop holes in stock. Backorders will occur, and customer service will deteriorate. Let it deteriorate too far and the phone will stop ringing. Conversely, when you tip the scales too far toward the customer service side, your turns will be reduced and you'll be forced to borrow more. One side can't exist independent of the other.

In uncertain economic times, the distributor that balances their inventory asset will be in better shape long term than the organization that panics and makes short-term decisions. As always, I am here to help you move forward. Good luck. ■

Jason Bader is the managing partner of The Distribution Team. The Distribution Team specializes in providing inventory management training, business operations consulting and technology utilization to the wholesale distribution industry. Bader brings over 20 years of experience working in the distribution field. He can be reached at 503/282-2333, by e-mailing jason@distributionteam.com, or on the web at www.thedistributionteam.com.

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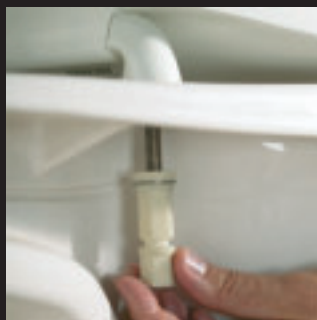
A breakthrough in toilet seat installation improves mounting hardware from top to bottom, from inside out. It's a simpler, more secure system that cuts installation time by a third and prevents toilet seat loosening.

It's easier to use, too. Just tighten the lower portions of the innovative one-piece nuts. They shear when properly tightened. A finned bushing securely centers bolts in mounting holes to prevent shifting. Finally, the new design and materials create stronger clamping forces that eliminate costly callbacks to re-tighten loose seats!

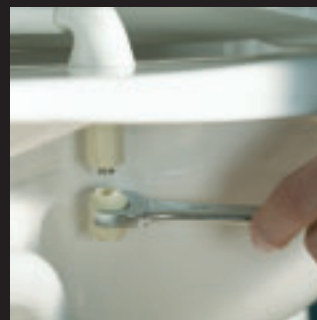
breakthrough TECHNOLOGY



Assemble hinges.



Hold seat centered while finger-tightening nuts.



Using a 5/8" wrench, alternately tighten until lower portions shear off.

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Delta unveils dynamic new brand positioning

INDIANAPOLIS — Delta® recently announced a new direction in its evolutionary brand positioning, built around the theme, “A Smarter Way for People to Experience Water.” The brand cam-



aign, which includes everything from television and print advertising to packaging and the website, is the most comprehensive in Delta history.

“Research with more than 6,000 consumers revealed the brand’s key attributes — smart, dynamic, visionary and genuine,” said Rick Roetken, vice president-marketing. “We’ve captured these values in an expansive new tagline that invites consumers to ‘see what Delta can do.’”

Using a tone that’s upbeat and genuine, the new Delta print and TV campaigns are designed to showcase the beauty and smart features of Delta products, and elevate consumer and customer perceptions of the brand.

Heading the brand makeover is a new consumer print campaign, which debuted in October issues of *Better Homes & Gardens*, *National Geographic*, *The Economist*, *The New Yorker* and many other science, technology and traditional home and garden publications. The campaign includes five dramatic ads with factoid headlines that appeal to the brand’s information-seeking audience. Smart, witty and very

direct, the copy then goes on to explain unique innovations, such as DIAMOND™ Seal Technology, MagnaTite™ docking or water-efficient features.

Dramatic imagery and captivating music make the new Delta TV campaign break out of the advertising clutter. The “Charmer” spot features the Allora® pull-down kitchen faucet and highlights the exclusive Delta MagnaTite magnetic docking technology to the beat of snake charmer music. Arresting lighting and color in the “Diamond” spot shows how Delta faucets are used in everyday life. The ads, which debuted October 13, will run on average 150 times each week this fall on such networks as HGTV, Discovery, History, Food Network and Travel Channel.

In another move that highlights the Delta brand’s commitment to a fully integrated, far-reaching campaign, Delta will also gain consumer exposure as the exclusive plumbing sponsor of the 2009 HGTV Dream Home, a sweepstakes giveaway that attracts more than 40 million people. The Delta brand’s Victorian® kitchen pull-down faucet with leak-free, lead-free* DIAMOND Seal Technology and Victorian and Lockwood bath collections featuring WaterSense® labeled lavatory faucets will be installed in the home — a Tuscan-style farmhouse in Sonoma, Calif.

(* Once inside the faucet, water is not in contact with metal contaminants.)

Delta has also updated its logo to coincide with all the changes. Adding a red background behind the existing

Delta logo creates a bolder, brighter design that jumps off packaging, displays, advertising and other sales and marketing materials. The red “badge” provides a crucial advantage in a crowded marketplace.

An all-new website, www.deltafaucet.com, reflects the look and feel of the repositioned brand. Completely rebuilt, the site takes advantage of the latest internet tools and techniques to provide high-resolution images and powerful features that help visitors find what they need quickly and easily.

The definitive source for information on Delta products and services, the new site helps customers locate product information for a change-out or remodel, tells how to get repair parts or customer support and instructs them where to buy Delta products — right from the home page. And for the brand’s information-hungry, forward-thinking target audience, in-depth product and smart feature information is available and constantly evolving.

Among the new website features are the following:

- My Delta saved items — Visitors

who find products or images they like can place them in their My Delta folder and save them for future reference.

- Compare items — Side-by-side comparisons of products, including images and various attributes, are easy with this feature. Users can compare any number of products.

- Filtering — This feature allows users to narrow their product search by selecting only specific attributes, such as a particular smart feature, the number of holes required or WaterSense certification.

New Delta packaging is designed to stand out in the aisle. Featuring a high-contrast black and white color scheme, a clean, uncluttered look and easy to understand iconography, the new design makes it easy for buyers to find the product they’re looking for and to understand the key features and benefits.

New packaging features include improved product images, key feature and benefit icons, an updated Delta logo, simplified side panel and consistent back panels.

For more information visit www.deltafaucet.com or call 800/345-DELTA.

New release of MITS Report expands database support

SEATTLE — MITS®, provider of reporting and business intelligence solutions, has announced a new version of its popular operational reporting solution, MITS Report.

Eighteen months in the making, MITS Report 2.0 includes complete integration with a wide range of MultiValue and relational databases, giving customers more consistent and powerful reporting capabilities in today’s multi-platform computing environments. The release also is more usable, with a new look and dozens of data access, presentation and integration features.

Enhanced MultiValue and relational database support

With version 2.0, all MITS report functions can be used with nine additional databases. Support has expanded to a combination of MultiValue and relational platforms, including: TigerLogic D3™, OpenQM, Northgate Reality, Microsoft SQL Server®, MySQL® database management system, PostgreSQL, InterSystems Cache®, Oracle® and Apache™ Derby. MITS Report continues its complete support for IBM’s UniVerse® and UniData® platforms.

For companies that utilize more than one database platform, users can create reports while remaining in a single, familiar environment and interface, according to Gary Owen, MITS vice president-software operations.

Easier integration, Excel connectivity, and PDF

The new release adds a range of new Web application programming interfaces (APIs) which enable software solution vendors to more thoroughly embed MITS Report within their own applications. With complete integration capabilities, end users may use MITS Report

within a third party solution without ever realizing it.

“Now any application, wherever it was developed, can be integrated with MITS Report via web services,” said Owen. MITS has successfully integrated MITS Report with .NET applications.

The new release helps users set up dynamic connections to MITS Report from within Excel workbooks. Users can connect to a report from within any Excel document and a spreadsheet can be automatically updated as the underlying data presented by the report changes. Excel power users can integrate the filtering, summarizing and formatting capabilities of MITS Report with consolidation, pivot tables, and other advanced Excel features.

PDF export capability improves the functionality associated with creating and distributing reports via email directly through the MITS Report interface.

Usability and reporting features

MITS Report features a new appearance. “Everything just fits together more cleanly,” said Owen. “We’ve also made countless refinements to the user interface, so the solution works more intuitively.”

For example, clicking on the “last updated” date on a report results in an immediate option to refresh the underlying report data for latest results. In another, users can jump instantly to a specified page instead of scrolling through a report.

A new prompting feature allows report authors to set up contextual menu-based prompt lists for filtering reports, and allows a single report to replace many in cases where the only difference across reports is, for example,

(Turn to MITS... page 26.)

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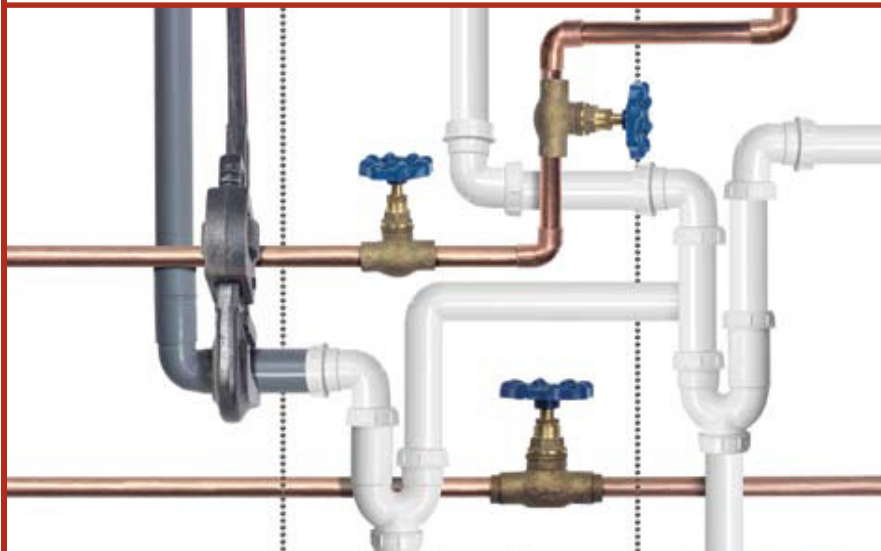
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Circle 23 on Reader Reply Card

INDUSTRY NEWS

Meier Supply celebrates DC, HQ expansion project

JOHNSON CITY, N.Y. — Meier Supply Company Inc. celebrated the expansion of its distribution center and corporate headquarters here with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on September 25.

The expansion project, which was completed earlier this year, added 10,800 square feet to their distribution center. The additional space includes 1,600 square feet of office space, a state-of-the-art conference room, and new offices for their IT department.

"The additional warehouse space allows us to continue operating efficiently as we grow," said Frank A. Meier Jr., president and CEO of Meier Supply Co. "It also gives us the extra space we need to carry a new product line. City Multi by Mitsubishi is on the leading edge of technology and efficiency for heating and cooling multiple zones. We expect it will be very popular."



Frank A. Meier Jr., president and CEO of Meier Supply Co., cuts the ribbon on the company's expanded distribution center.

Meier Supply, a wholesale distributor of HVACR products that celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, was founded in 1957 by the Meier family. The company is currently managed by the third generation of the Meier family and employs several members of the fourth generation.

They have more than 100 employees and 17 locations in New York and Pennsylvania. For more information visit www.meiersupply.com.

MIT S

(Continued from page 24.)

a date range, department identifiers or other easily selected data.

Subtotal and total lines — or rows on summarized reports — can now present averages as well as sums for any column. Summarized reports are easier to use. Now users can expand any subtotal into its component details without expanding detail throughout the report.

Significant is the ability to hyperlink a report column to web content or specific application function. A user checking an inventory report, for example, can see an unusual stock level, click on that column and row, and instantly call up a related vendor or item screen in another appli-

cation and click to the relevant part of another application or website so they can do something about it.

Simplified maintenance, improved performance

New performance enhancements and tools assist internal and external support staff as well. Support Console lets administrators review commands and notifications for faster, easier problem-solving and boost performance by identifying opportunities to refine queries and other operations, Owen explained.

Report source updates in which reporting data are pulled from operational databases are handled more precisely, with e-mail notification when report source updates are completed.

For more information, visit www.mits.com.

Matco-Norca: Winter heating products special

BREWSTER, N.Y. — With the winter heating season nearing, Matco-Norca has announced its 2008 Heating Products Special, with discounts on over 20 products.

The company is offering discounts on the following product lines:

- Brass radiator steam angle valves, in sizes ranging from 1/2" to 1 1/2" (nuts & tailpiece on sizes 1" and 1 1/4")
- Brass radiator gates valves, in sizes 1" and 1 1/4"
- C.P. steam air valves, in sizes 1/8", 1/4" and 3/4"
- Cast iron circulator flange kits (2 flanges, 4 bolts and 4 nuts per kit), in kit sizes 3/4", 1" and 1 1/4"
- Boiler manifold headers in 2, 3 and 4 zones and 12", 18" and 24" lengths

- Baseboard tees in 3/4" and 1" both with 1/8" FIP outlet (3/4" available with vent cap)

- Backflow pPreventors (BFP 90).

Prices for these products and others are available through December 31, 2008. For details, visit www.matco-norca.com or call 800/ 431-2082.

Matco-Norca is a leading supplier of code-compliant plumbing, pvf and irrigation products for use in residential, commercial and industrial installations. The company is one of the largest independent distributors of imported malleable fittings, steel nipples, valves and plumbing specialties in the U.S., with four national distribution centers and eight regional warehouses.



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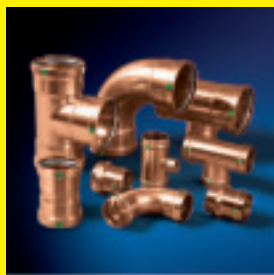
With the ProPress System, secure connections can be made from 1/2" to 4" with the same tool for copper and stainless significantly reducing equipment costs and labor time. The patented ball-tip actuator swivels 180° to provide increased flexibility in tight spaces and adds over 20% reduction in actuator jaw weight for increased comfort.

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BESCHLOSS BEAT

Q&A with Ernie Coutermarsh

Setting the pace for PVF industry leadership

BY MORRIS R. BESCHLOSS
PVF and economic analyst

Although I thoroughly enjoy my monthly Q&As with top manufacturers and distributors in the PVF sector, my greatest nostalgia is reserved for those with whom I've literally grown in the plumbing-heating-cooling-piping industry.

Usually utilizing *The Wholesaler's* December issue for my "walk down memory lane" with those who are still relevant, it gives me pleasure to call special attention to those whom I consider close personal friends, as well as industry shakers and movers.

I've had the pleasure of reminiscing in past years with Dave Weiner of Marketing Support; Frank Finkel from Davis & Warshaw; John Pope with F.W.



Morris Beschloss (left) interviews Ernie Coutermarsh, senior vice president-industrial, for F.W. Webb.

Webb; Bill Arenberg of Columbia Pipe; Gary Cartright with P&E; and John and Michael MacDonald, well-known members of that great industry family.

It's with special gratification that this year I feature Ernie Coutermarsh, the larger-than-life industrial expert, who has built F.W. Webb's PVF business into an excess of \$150 million annually. This has not only contributed to the company reaching the pinnacle in the nation's Northeast, but it has also elevated the company's PVF volume to one of the leading factors in the nation.

Coutermarsh combines the rugged strength of his U.S. Marine background with previous experience in industry at Salisbury, Md.-based Shore Distributors. Since building up F.W. Webb's massive industrial business for the past 40 years, Coutermarsh has also gained national prominence as the shaker and mover in all matters PVF.

It didn't take long for Bill Weisberg, CEO of Affiliated Distributors, to deter-

mine Coutermarsh's expertise and put him on the Board of Directors of its PVF Division.

Ernie is a close personal friend and I'm proud to share the following interview with you.

Beschloss: *How many years have you been actively involved in our beloved PVF business, and what prompted you to get into it?*

Coutermarsh: CEO John Pope made the decision to expand the focus of F.W. Webb to industrial PVF. In 1969, I started with Webb in Nashua, N.H., and remember making joint calls with John on industrial prospects and at the time New England was dominated by some of the great names in PVF. Over subsequent years they became acquisitions. At that time, they derided us to prospects as being a "bathtub house." This was historically true, but they did not appreciate John's commitment to building Webb into the best provider of our core distribution function — and that the function applies to PVF as well as plumbing and heating supplies. The Webb brand had been a household name since 1866 and we were intent on building on its legacy!

Beschloss: *Your move to F.W. Webb 40 years ago has turned into a positive circumstance for you, the organization and the industry. What were the fortunate factors that brought this about?*

Coutermarsh: My entry into distribution began in 1966. After my discharge from the USMC, I joined Shore Distributors in Salisbury, Md. Frank Morris was the CEO at the time, and he inspired me with his passion for the industry. I owe him a lot for this. In 1969, I returned to my home state of New Hampshire, applied for an outside sales position at F.W. Webb and was hired. Here I met John Pope, who possessed a combination of passion, vision and leadership. The Webb company's history, tradition, pride and reputation were key ingredients that attracted me. John provided an entrepreneurial environment that made it possible for all of us to realize true opportunity and career satisfaction.

Beschloss: *Knowing John Pope's modus operandi, I know he gave you free rein to build up Webb's industrial infrastructure, including several propitious acquisitions. Would you elaborate on these, please?*

Coutermarsh: John gave me the freedom to develop a game plan and supported the vital action steps with investment, people and marketing. He let me make some mistakes, which are a natural part of the learning curve. He also gave his own time and energy to help make it happen. John personally

worked with me to acquire key product lines, to make calls on the industries that we targeted. He was my chief mentor and asked the hard questions that helped keep the proper focus.

Webb evolved into an aggressive PVF force, and customers and competition started to respect what we were accomplishing. The supreme compliment was that many of these competitors and their people gravitated to the Webb industrial PVF team. Over the years Webb acquired Atlantic Pipe, Braman Dow Company founded in 1848, Kennebec Supply, Kentrol control valve and instrumentation house, Sevco safety relief valve pressure management center, International Supply, W.L. Blake, Babbitt Steam, Utilities Supply USCO engineered plastic PVF piping and valving, and our most recent, Burns Supply in Syracuse, N.Y.

Beschloss: *Despite the de-industrialization of your trading area (the Northeast as well as upstate New York) Webb built one of the strongest PVF distribution centers in the U.S. How was this accomplished?*

Coutermarsh: New England and New York still have a lot of industry. We pay attention to what customers say they want from the supply chain. MRO and OEM customers need a supplier that can be the most effective and lowest-cost producer of the function of distribution. We are that supplier in New England and New York. F.W. Webb has 71 locations supported by a 10-acre, under-roof distribution center. In addition, we have a pipe and sprinkler fabrication shop, a pipe distribution center, Webb Bio-Pharm division, Webb Piping Products division, Webb Pump industrial and commercial pumps & repair, and CD Sales master distribution of PVF. Also, Webb's Integrated Supply/VMI team are expert in taking cost out of the equation, utilizing technology and sharing our expertise at managing just in time, lean and green solutions.

Beschloss: *It's well known that the greater Houston-based industrial business and exports are the leading movers of the PVF boom that our sector is enjoying currently. Which end-use industries and what type of contractor establishments are you involved with in your trading area?*

Coutermarsh: Power, Chemical, Pulp & Paper, OEMs, MRO, Biotech, Pharmaceutical, Institutions, Industrial plants, Mechanical Contractors, Export.

Beschloss: *Is your company planning greater PVF emphasis in the future? If so, in what particular geographical areas?*

Coutermarsh: We are a grassroots company and our expansion is most often a result of our entrepreneurial general managers submitting growth plans to Jeff Pope, president of F.W. Webb. If

it makes sense and matches our corporate objectives, then we take action. Binghamton, N.Y., and Concord, N.H., are our most recent expansions. 2009 will see Newburgh, N.Y., open, which will give us coverage into northern New Jersey. We expect the economy will provide additional opportunities.

Beschloss: *With exports commanding such an increasingly significant segment of PVF products in our industry, is F.W. Webb participating in this arena to any degree?*

Coutermarsh: Yes. Many of our priority product lines in one way or another are international companies. Valves come from all over the world; our primary domestic pipe company was bought by the Russians. Customers are seeking low-cost country-sourced products. The world has shrunk and this trend is bigger than all of us. My friends and A-D PVF affiliates and manufacturers are sharing our expertise to ensure that together we have quality standards that protect us and our customers.

Our industry is fortunate that there are

"New England and New York still have a lot of industry. We pay attention to what customers say they want from the supply chain. MRO and OEM customers need a supplier that can be the most effective and lowest-cost producer of the function of distribution."

some of the most knowledgeable people that willingly share knowledge and help make the American PVF industry the best in the world. Examples are Gary Cartright of Piping & Equipment; Bill Weisberg, CEO of Affiliated Distributors; and Gary Jackson, vice president of A-D's PVF division; the PVF Roundtable; ASA's Industrial Piping Division; and you, Morrie. I have read the *Beschloss Perspective* for years, read all of your columns in *The Wholesaler*, as well as your blog. We live in the information age and to make smart decisions the information must be good.

Beschloss: *In your capacity as a national observer of the PVF sector's progress, please give us your outlook for 2009, both in the Northeast region as well as the greater U.S.*

Coutermarsh: I will defer to you on the national perspective. In the Northeast we intend to grow by hunting where the ducks are. The economy obviously will be a test for all of us. Nevertheless, I am optimistic that change creates new opportunities. Industrial customers will desperately seek cost reductions. PVF distributors need to make sure that they understand the customers' process enough to lead in pointing out where these opportunities exist and capitalize on them.

My confidence comes from the tradition of our company and the excellent people that are F.W. Webb Company. I am a firm believer that customers need to understand why a supplier is relevant to them. In 2009, we will make sure they know why F.W. Webb Company has been in business for 143 years! ■

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Halsey Taylor receives Greenspec listing

OAK BROOK, ILL. — Halsey Taylor, a company dedicated to providing safe drinking water since 1912, announced that its new HVRGRN water cooler has been approved for inclusion in the *GreenSpec Directory*, published by BuildingGreen LLC.

Halsey Taylor developed the HVRGRN cooler to offer the industry's most innovative and ecologically sound pressurized cooler. The independent panel of *GreenSpec* editors determined that the unit's performance and design minimize ecological impact while maximizing economic performance, meeting the criteria for a GreenSpec listing and even prompting the creation of a new Green Products sub category, an industry first for water coolers.

The HVRGRN water cooler is approximately 50% more energy-efficient, consumes nearly 40% less water and uses less refrigerant than any other comparable water cooler in the indus-

try. Utilizing a highly efficient refrigeration system and a lower flow bubbler, the green model is engineered to significantly conserve both energy and water. In addition, the HVRGRN does not contain paints and coatings, eliminating VOC emissions from the manufacturing process.

With its stainless steel construction, the cooler is manufactured from highly

recyclable material and offers long-lasting durability. When equipped with the 1,500-gallon filter and easy-to-operate glass filler, the HVRGRN offers a volume of clean water equivalent to 12,000 16-ounce plastic bottles, providing an alternative, safe water source ideal for use in schools, hospitals, hotels and other public and commercial buildings.

For details, visit halseytaylor.com.

Elster American Meter receives Measurement Canada Accreditation

CLEVELAND — Elster American Meter has become an authorized qualified organization to inspect and certify instruments on Measurement Canada's behalf and has documented, established and maintained a quality management system that meets the requirements of

Measurement Canada's accreditation standard, S-A-01.

"We are delighted with the Measurement Canada Accreditation, representing our dedication to quality and service," said Dr. Kevin Warner, vice president-sales and marketing. "It

recognized the contributions spanning the entire Elster American Meter organization: operations, research and development, customer service, quality and sales and marketing. It also illustrates Elster's vision to deliver unsurpassed solutions to our customers through creative and innovative processes. For us, this accreditation is a symbol of honor from one of North America's largest and most respected certifying bodies, and we will view it as incentive to further our leadership efforts in gas measurement and control."

Elster American Meter, one of the only U.S.-based Measurement Canada accredited organizations, has acquired the necessary measuring and test equipment, inspection certificates, test and non-compliance reports, rejection tags, inspection markings, verification indicators and seals. The company has begun certifying device types from small to large diaphragm meters with Inspection types 100% verification; 100% reverification with acceptance sampling S-S-series.

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INDUSTRY NEWS

PEX manufacturer REHAU to leave crowded commodities market

(Continued from REHAU, page 1.)

and is where we need to concentrate our resources for the future.”

Staff adjustments related to REHAU's exit of the municipal PVC pipe industry include the loss of 40 positions at the company's plant in Prescott, Ont., which will indefinitely cease production of PVC pressure and sewer pipe at the end of this month. In addition, eight positions across REHAU's North American headquarters and sales offices will be eliminated, and nine staff members will be reassigned to industrial and renewable energy product growth areas. A total of 22 positions tied to REHAU's PEX plumbing systems business will also be eliminated across its headquarters, sales offices and related manufacturing plant, and an additional 10 employees will be reallocated to other areas of strategic focus. All staffing adjustments will commence immediately, with continued transition through March 2009.

REHAU became the first PVC pipe extruder in North America upon opening its municipal pipe manufacturing plant in Prescott in 1970. In addition, the company introduced cross-linked polyethylene (PEXa) pipe for plumbing applications to the North American market in 1997, capitalizing on more than two decades of previous experience with the product in Europe.

“Our expertise as a company has always been in the innovation and introduction of the latest polymer technologies,” Saylor said. “Having paved the way for products that have now become commodity entities in the marketplace, it is time for us to exit these markets and concentrate on advancing the next set of cutting-edge offerings for the construction industry.”

Bill Johansen, business unit manager for REHAU's heating and plumbing group, said, “We have realistically assessed the commoditized nature of the PEX plumbing systems market, recognizing that tight profit margins cannot justify future efforts. As REHAU's business philosophy supports responsible product innovation under stringent and extensive testing standards, we have otherwise decided to focus our resources toward the future through polymer systems innovation.”

The company plans to direct its efforts toward establishing and further defining the market for integrated low-temperature heat source and distribution systems, including PEXa-based radiant heating, geothermal ground loop and solar thermal systems.

“We are pursuing an emphasized focus on helping our customers understand the ways they can expand

“Our expertise as a company has always been in the innovation and introduction of the latest polymer technologies.”

— Kathleen Saylor

their product lines by logically integrating low-temperature heat source and distribution systems,” Johansen explained. “This will foster a win-win situation across the board, perpetuating additional expertise and differentiation for our direct customers, and enabling greater implementation of increasingly in-demand, cost-saving renewable energy technologies in residential and commercial applications.”

REHAU will also concentrate on introducing or further defining the market for residential fire protection systems, radiant cooling systems and pre-insulated PEX energy transfer pipe. Additionally, the company will continue to fill a mid-term technology pipeline with innovations including biomass, ground-air heat exchange and rain water management solutions.

“We have come to this decision at a time when choice is still viable, and outside market conditions have not yet required us to formulate an urgent conclusion,” said Saylor. “It has resulted from careful consideration of the best path for REHAU's long-term growth, as well as the need to continually address our customers' dynamic requirements. We expect at the end of this process to be even stronger as a company, and to further exemplify REHAU's dedication to the delivery of unlimited polymer solutions.”

For more information, call 800/247-9445 or visit www.rehau.com.

Kamco

(Continued from Wolverine, page 1.)

the assets of Kamco into our own facility to reduce costs and gain advantage of logistics efficiencies by shipping their products with our own as the customer base is often the same.”

Pierre Fournier, Granby president, added, “Wolverine Canada represents an excellent buyer for this division and the sale will allow Granby to focus on its core products and customers.”

Following the closing, the companies planned on an approximately one-month transition period during which the equipment was moved and order entry transferred to Wolverine Canada's headquarters in London, Ont.

Wolverine is a leading manufacturer of copper tube products for the industrial, wholesale and refrigerated markets. The company has been in operation for more than 50 years.

Granby is a leading North American manufacturer of high-quality tanks for residential and light commercial storage of heating and other petroleum-based products, and is also a leading manufacturer of coated copper tubing, the business being sold. Granby has been operating

in the heating and oil storage tank industry for more than 50 years and its primary business is manufacturing replacement residential tanks. Granby has operations in Granby, Que., and Oakville, Ont.

APR Supply

(Continued from APR, page 1.)

facilities,” Weaver said. “APR is now 23 branches strong. There is a lot of opportunity with expanding our presence into south central Pennsylvania. Because of the efficiency of our 250,000-square-foot distribution center in Lebanon, Pa., we are able to conveniently supply our branches and contractor customers with next day deliveries. Our customers have easy access to the supplies and equipment they'll need to work each day.”

Founded in 1922, APR Supply is a leading wholesale distributor of HVAC, air conditioning, plumbing and heating products and supplies. Serving central and eastern Pennsylvania for more than 76 years, this award-winning, family-run business now brings its commitment to superior customer service and quality to the web at www.aprsupply.com.

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SOFTWARE NEWS

LAWSON

Precise, industry-specific software

Lawson believes this is an ideal time to invest

BY MARY JO MARTIN
Editorial director

To battle the current tough economic conditions and residential construction slump, many distributors in this industry have understandably tightened their belts and are



Ian Wahlers

Bob Peterson

limiting any non-essential expenses. And while that is an excellent — and necessary — strategy, there are some business tools that actually might be a wise investment right now.

A good distribution software system is at the top of that list. It goes without saying that these systems allow distributors to operate more efficiently and accurately — definitely a plus when streamlining operations. But a downtime like this is also an ideal opportunity to look into and implement such an investment because the slower business pace allows more time to really investigate options. And once a system is selected, it allows a more manageable implementation and training pace to ensure that all employees are on board and all systems are go before going live.

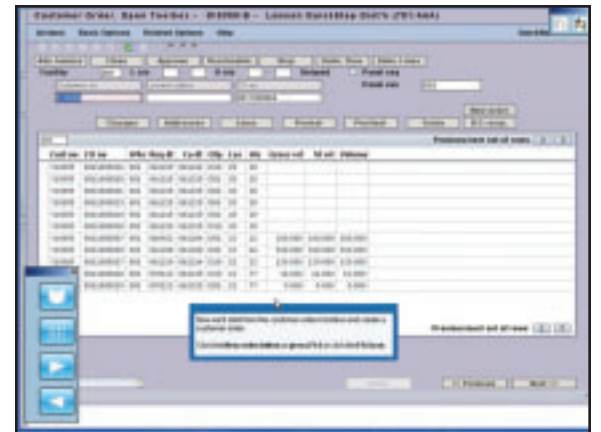
“This is just a cycle. We all know that. Distributors that are best positioned for the upswing that will come are those that are making investments in tools to make them more efficient.”

— Bob Peterson

“The companies that are going to get ahead are going to be the ones that take a long view on the current economic environment and weather this storm,” said Bob Peterson, global marketing director for distribution with Lawson. “This is just a cycle. We all know that. Distributors that are best positioned for the upswing that will come are those that are making investments in tools to make them more efficient. They are looking at where they can save cash by cutting out extraneous spending. That will make them a much more streamlined operation when the economy goes into recovery. Projects like this take some time, and this is an ideal opportunity to invest in and install a new system.”

affiliate ourselves with associations that can help us raise our profile in each of these subsectors.

“Lawson’s heritage has been in the mid to upper mid market. That is where we perform the best. We do have some very large companies and a few small ones, but distributors with \$100 million



Lawson’s QuickStep for Distribution pre-configured ERP application package for distribution companies helps cut traditional ERP implementation times by up to 50%.

but in recent years has been making a push into distribution and manufacturing. Currently, Lawson has about 4,000 active users, of which approximately 400 are involved in distribution.

According to Peterson, plumbing,

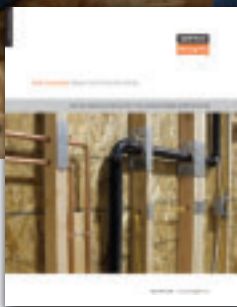
and up in annual sales is where we really fit well with our functionality.”

The company’s flagship product for distributors is the M3 Enterprise Management System, which represents companies that have “Make, Move and Maintain” processes. The suite is a full ERP solution that includes all core and supporting functionality from soup to nuts. Among its offerings are financial management, customer relationship management, supply chain planning and execution, and service and maintenance. This integrated, industry-specific software offers great flexibility and is designed for the easiest possible implementation, usage and maintenance. M3 7.1 is the latest release for this suite.

In addition, Lawson’s QuickStep for Distribution is a pre-configured ERP application package created for the needs of distribution companies. It is designed to help distribution companies cut traditional ERP implementation times by up to 50%, reducing the cost of implementation services and allowing firms to be up-and-running on their enterprise applications more quickly, which ultimately helps provide a

Lawson’s solutions for distributors expedite all business functions so users can replace older systems that have been cobbled together over the years.

PVF and HVAC wholesalers are a key target area for Lawson: “These distributors fit right in our wheel hub. We are very precise in our go-to-market strategy. Distribution is a very broad business; we have chosen to focus on construction materials, plumbing, HVAC and janitorial, and parts & equipment. Lawson tries to align itself with partners in these distribution sectors. We



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Circle 31 on Reader Reply Card

(Turn to Slow economy... page 38.)



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SOFTWARE NEWS

LAWSON

Slow economy is the right time to upgrade to integrated distribution-specific software

(Continued from page 36.)

faster return on investment.

The software — which was specially designed for targeted industries — packages Lawson's industry-specific knowledge of best practices and expertise in implementation with the client's knowledge and understanding of distribution. Among the functions QuickStep assists distributors with are:

- Managing a high velocity of transactions
- Handling the complexities associated with a diverse range of product types and units of measure
- Coordinating a variety of delivery methods
- Supporting flexible pricing, discounts, rebates and promotions
- Providing online sales statistics, including overall sales, margins and service analysis at both the organizational and product level
- Controlling specialized "buy to order" situations, particularly for goods outside of a firm's standard product offering.

"Our solutions for distributors can handle all the business functions they need," noted Peterson. "Previous to implementing Lawson, many of our customers had been using systems that have been cobbled together over the years or have been merged with other systems through acquisitions. Distributors often get to a point that they can't really grow without making the

move to an integrated system.

"I can't emphasize enough that our distribution customers have unique needs, and we understand that. Every company has a slightly different business model. The value of Lawson might mean something different to each company. Until the recent economic crisis, we had been positioning ourselves as the platform for growth for distributors of all sizes for the next 10 to 20 years. In the last few months and going forward in the immediate future, that strategy has been slightly redefined. Distributors are being forced to concentrate on efficiency and lean operations for their survival."

Peterson, based in St. Paul, Minn., is one of the key Lawson executives most in touch with North American wholesalers. As global marketing director for distribution, he has responsibility for the advancement of all of the company's distribution products from a marketing perspective. Organizationally, he works hand-in-glove with industry strategy director Ian Wahlers, who is based in London but spends a great deal of time in North America. Peterson describes him as "the voice of Lawson distribution strategy."

In addition, Rich West serves as managing director of distribution sales for the Americas.

"We see the Americas as a great opportunity for us in the distribution sector," Peterson explained. "We are really

staffing up and bringing on board some high-profile distribution customers. A benefit of our vertical go-to-market strategy is that we are able to apportion a great amount of resources to our verticals. We offer a comprehensive set of product training and marketing programs to our regional teams throughout the globe. Ian and I also do a lot of field enablement sessions and training programs.

"In the near future, Lawson will be offering more and more product enhancements and getting more precise as we delve deeper into our verticalization. We'll be offering more specific options and greater functionality for distributors."

In looking at the overall market — from both a customer and software

provider point of view — Peterson believes that Lawson is in a very unique position right now.

"I think the market needs a nimble, much more efficient option like Lawson," he said. "We are able to quickly adapt to the changing marketplace. I think that proves itself out by our simplicity message. That, more than anything else, is why our customers say they choose Lawson. Our total cost of ownership is quite favorable, but it certainly doesn't compromise the functionality that our customers deserve. They get a very robust product that can be rolled out in an efficient fashion. And a product that will make a big difference in their operations." ■

For additional information, visit www.lawson.com.

F.W. Webb hosts vendor day

BEDFORD, MASS. — On September 30, F.W. Webb held a product vendor day in Gloucester, Mass., featuring six of their major heating product players — Bradford White, Carlin Burner, Watts Radiant, Rinnai Heater, Trio Boiler, Honeywell and Milwaukee Tool. Hot food, live fire demonstrations and raffles resulted in a great turnout for the four-hour event.

A highlight of the event was the presentation of a Milwaukee ATV to raffle winner Tim Lane of Tim Lane Plumbing & Heating in Essex, Mass.



From left: Andy Plowman of Milwaukee Tool, Dave DiPirro, Bob Matvichuk, raffle winner Tim Lane, Karl Bertelman of Milwaukee Tool and Bob Quarterone.

Charlotte Pipe website logs more than one million visitors

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Charlotte Pipe and Foundry's website, www.charlottepipe.com, was redesigned in June 2005 to provide easier access to product information and customer service, including adding links on the home page for the most popular requests, such as list prices, technical and installation data and drawings. In the last three years, the redesigned site has attracted more than one million unique visitors.

"By avoiding the need for multiple clicks, our customers have been able to find information quickly," said Bradford Muller, vice president-marketing. "There is also a customer service link at the top of each page, and we have a link where customers can order literature."

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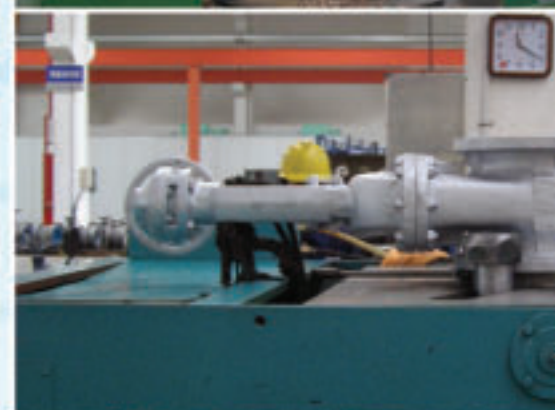
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MOVING UP

CONGRATS!

Anvil® International announced the following personnel changes:

- **Matt Lux** joined Anvil as its U.S. director of commodity account sales. Lux will focus on domestic iron fitting and pipe nipple products with existing accounts and work with the company's regional sales teams to identify and develop new business opportunities. He brings 22 years of industry experience to his new position.

- **Mitch Bevill** was promoted to director of sales-Eastern U.S. for the AnvilStar™ Fire Products Division. Bevill was formerly Anvil's territory manager for the Southeastern U.S. He worked for Star Pipe before it was acquired by Anvil in 2004 and was instrumental in the transition.

- **Bobby Brown** joined Anvil's mechanical/industrial sales team for the Southwest region, focusing on sales within the Greater Houston area. Brown brings 13 years of industrial and mechanical sales experience.

In a new position for **Dornbracht Americas**, **James Manu** has been appointed Rocky Mountain area representative, responsible for presenting the brand message and products of Dornbracht, Alape and Czech & Speake. He will oversee all Rocky Mountain area activities, including showroom and specification sales, luxury project management and trade association functions. Manu has a background in outside sales within the luxury furniture industry, selling to high-end retail showrooms and to architects and designers for residential and commercial projects.

Emerson Climate Technologies announced the following appointments:

- **John Schneider** is vice president-marketing, Air Conditioning. He joined the company in 2000 as residential market manager for the Air Conditioning division and was promoted to director of residential marketing in 2004. Prior to joining Emerson, Schneider held positions in the consumer products industry with Procter & Gamble and Kao Corporation.

- **Randy Rose** was appointed senior vice president-scroll operations, Air Conditioning. The advanced manufacturing engineering group will now report to Rose, who has more than 42 years of experience with Emerson Climate Technologies and Copeland® brand compressor manufacturing operations. During his career, Rose has managed each of the six North American scroll plants during his career, along with several other key roles.

- **Jim Mozer** is now vice president-Refrigeration marketing and general manager, Integrated Products Division. Mozer has been with Emerson Climate Technologies 15 years, most recently as vice president-OEM marketing. He had also served as an integral leader within

the company's sales organization.

Gamewell-FCI announces **Michael Zittle** as its new North Atlantic regional sales manager, serving the Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware and Upstate New York area. While supporting distributors' fire/life safety projects, Zittle will host "Lunch-n-Learn" meetings with local A&Es. He previously managed the East Coast sales territory for NS Microwave and spent 25 years as a detective and police officer with the Baltimore City Police Department.

Ronald Rice, the immediate past president of IAPMO, has been appointed to the **Green Mechanical Council** board of directors. Rice started as an apprentice pipefitter more than 30 years ago. Over the years, he has developed an experienced understanding of the "hands on" aspects and keen strategic eye of the plumbing and mechanical industries.

GROHE named **Jeffrey C. Ackerberg** president and chief executive officer for GROHE America, a subsidiary of GROHE Water Technology AG & Co. Ackerberg



Jeffrey Ackerberg Peter Tomczyk

is responsible for overall growth of the GROHE brand in the U.S., Canada, Central and South America. He succeeds **Andrew Stearns**, who was recently appointed global chief supply officer for GROHE AG. An industry veteran with more than 20 years experience, Ackerberg most recently served as president of Global Workspace Tools for ACCO Brands Inc. Ackerberg also held senior roles in marketing and business unit management at Kohler, and sales and marketing leadership roles with Eveready-Energizer, Emerson Electric and Robert Bosch Corporation.

Industrial Controls Distributors LLC welcomed **Peter Tomczyk** as branch sales manager for their Milwaukee office. Tomczyk has more than 25 years of experience in systems sales through mechanical contractors and is well known in the region for his extensive field experience in controls systems used in commercial buildings and industrial plants.

Johnson Controls presented **Ken Webb**, Johnstone Supply brand manager, with the company's Distinguished Technical Service Lifetime Achievement Award, which recognizes individuals who have provided an exemplary level of technical support to customers



Matt Lux



Mitch Bevill



John Schneider



Michael Zittle

within the HVAC industry. Webb's career in the industry began in 1961, when he joined American Furnace Company as a stockroom clerk and mailroom employee. After holding positions of increasing responsibility at AFCO, Webb became branch service manager for York International in 1992, before joining Johnstone Supply in 2003 as brand manager, with responsibility for Coleman service, marketing assistance and training. Webb, who plans to retire January 31, 2009, sees the award as one of the highlights of his career.

M. Cooper Supply promoted **Janet Pace** to vice president-purchasing. Pace, who was purchasing manager for M. Cooper since April 2007, has more than 30 years of experience in the wholesale plumbing business. She will have responsibility for the company's purchasing operations for all product lines and will continue to work to improve the company market share by forming strong solid relationships with all industry manufacturers and will coordinate the company's Embassy Buying Group activities.

Randy Tice, chairman of **APR Supply Co.**, received the 2008 Ted Rees Leadership Award from the NATE board of trustees as special recognition for his leadership in technician excellence. The award is named for the former president of the Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute and honors individuals who have demonstrated exemplary leadership in the pursuit of technician excel-

lence. After spending several years as a professional engineer in the HVAC industry, Tice decided to work for a plumbing and heating supply house his father owned. In 1981, he bought the company, and in 1991 he became president of American Supply Association. In 2005, he became president of Heating, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Distributors International.

Rheem Heating & Cooling appointed **Mike Eberlein** engineering manager

for heating products. Eberlein will be responsible for the design, construction and quality assurance of the company's heating products. Known for his innovation, Eberlein developed the first line of 95% energy-efficient furnaces for Amana and has been involved in the design of furnaces for Carrier/International Comfort Products and York International.

Rinnai Corporation appointed **Phil Weeks** general manager of its North American operations. In this newly created position, Weeks will oversee the company's sales, marketing and operations functions in the U.S. and Canada. During his 27-year career at Jacuzzi Whirlpool Bath, he demonstrated his



Mike Eberlein



Ken Webb, Johnstone Supply manager for the Coleman brand (right), holds the Distinguished Technical Service Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by David Negrey (left), director of technical services and application engineering, Johnson Controls-Unitary Products.

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Johnstone Supply holds annual meeting; reports strong sales, growth

PORTLAND, ORE. — Johnstone Supply Inc., a national leader in HVACR distribution, has announced the successful completion of its recent 2008 Annual Meeting held in Atlanta September 15-20. The meeting theme was “Full Steam Ahead,” in part reflecting the cooperative’s strong moves forward in implementing strategic initiatives to achieve its goal of reaching \$2 billion in total sales by 2010. This year’s Annual Meeting took note of the continuing strong growth of the cooperative in adding new stores and new members, the completion of its robust national distribution network, and sales figures that for yet another consecutive year were over twice the industry average.

Nearly 1,200 people attended this year’s event, and the week’s highlights included the popular vendor trade show with 150 vendor booths, Johnstone

awards banquet, and business-focused seminars for cooperative members focusing on products, marketing and operations.

Recapping achievements from the past year, Johnstone noted many accomplishments including the completion of its five-facility regional Distribution Center network. This means the company now provides approximately 87% of its stores with the ability to receive orders next day — greatly enhancing customer service and responsiveness, along with stocking more localized products fitting regional weather and contractor needs.

The cooperative reported strong sales in spite of rough national economic indicators, with sales figures again far outstripping the industry. It also marked the 7th consecutive year that Johnstone has at least doubled the sales growth of the industry overall. Johnstone also continues to expand its national store network, with the addition of 22 new stores opening since just January of this year for a total of 338 to date.

Presentations made at the Annual Meeting included a range of Member awards, Store awards and Vendor awards, all of which reflected the com-

pany’s record sales and expanding market share. The John M. Shank Award is given to an owner who has been a Member for less than five years and best demonstrates the entrepreneurial spirit of cooperative founder John Shank. It was presented to Bruce Eckenberg, owner of the Paducah, Ky., store.

Another prestigious and rarely presented honor, Johnstone’s “Leadership Award,” recognizes the unselfish dedication, guidance and cooperative service of remarkable members of the Johnstone family. It was presented to long-time store group owner, board member and six-year board chairman Greg Popma, who after 16 years total serving on the board stepped down in 2008. The Leadership Award has been presented only nine other times in the cooperative’s history.

Vendor awards paid tribute to the manufacturing partners who play such a vital role in Johnstone’s success. Awards were handed out honoring excellence in areas such as Customer Service (Jessie Spence, Coleman Heating and Air Conditioning) and Marketing (Rinnai). Johnstone’s most prestigious vendor honor, the “Supplier of the Year Award,” was presented to



Johnstone Supply president/CEO Gary Daniels talks with vendors at Annual Meeting Tradeshow.

Arkema, which has partnered with Johnstone for over 35 years. This award recognizes the highest level of partnership and excellence in logistics, product development, marketing programs and store support.

Johnstone Supply is a leading cooperative wholesale distributor in the HVACR industry, with over \$1 billion in annual sales and more than 335 independently owned store locations across America. Johnstone Supply offers superior customer service, technical advice and training seminars, and prints an annual catalog featuring nearly 30,000 HVACR parts, supplies and equipment. A searchable online catalog with over 45,000 products is also available, with the ability to order directly from local stores at www.JohnstoneSupply.com.

CONGRATS!

(Continued from page 40.)

ability to build a category-leading business with outstanding brand awareness. Weeks joined Jacuzzi in 1975 as a district sales representative and rose through the sales management ranks to become vice president-sales and marketing and, later, president. He was instrumental in establishing Jacuzzi as the exclusive whirlpool bath brand carried by major home improvement retailers, which led to the doubling of Jacuzzi’s sales over a three-year period. In addition, Weeks expanded the company’s manufacturing operations and implemented processes that increased operating efficiencies and overall profitability. He left Jacuzzi in 2003 and created Zenith Enterprise where, with Clarke Products, he developed private label products for major wholesale plumbing companies. In 2005, Weeks was recruited back to his post as president of Jacuzzi and returned the company to profitability after three years of operating losses and declining margins.

Steril-Aire Inc. appointed **Robert O’Farrell** Southeastern regional manager. O’Farrell will cover Virginia, Florida, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. He has nearly 20 years of related sales experience in the HVAC, energy management and commercial lighting fields, most recently as a regional sales executive for Re-



Robert O’Farrell

Blanco named **P.F. Valente & Associates Inc.**, a Bridgeton, N.J.-based firm, its sales representative for New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania and the Western boundary including Adams, Perry, Juniata, Snyder, Clinton, Lycoming and Tioga counties; and New Castle County, Del.

Century Bathworks Inc. has expanded its distribution channels across most of the U.S. With the recent addition of **M.L. Sales Inc.**, **Bauhaus Design Sales**, **RG Marketing Group**, **B&B Marketing**, **Toole and Co**, **Stover Sales Co.** and **Pan American Sales**, Century is on target to have all areas of the U.S. represented by the end of 2008.

Emerson Swan has acquired **Stratford Associates**, premier commercial plumbing representatives in eastern New England. Stratford represents Chicago Faucets, Aquabath Acrylic Bath Products, Precision Plumbing Products, Lab Enterprises, Japco Hose Stations, Broen Valves, Orion Plastic Piping Systems, Alsident Extraction Arms, Powers Valves and Raychem electronic component products in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Current owner **Bob Pink Jr.** and Stratford employees **Thom Julian**, a key inside technical plumbing salesman, and

Dan Corrigan, outside sales in New Hampshire and southeastern Massachusetts, will join Emerson Swan. Stratford founder **Bob Pink Sr.** will serve as a consultant and will continue to call on a select group of engineers, contractors and wholesalers. This acquisition is part of Emerson Swan’s Plumbing Department’s strategic plan to strengthen their commercial plumbing sector, while creating more focus in the three plumbing segments — shelf, showroom and commercial.

K-Flex USA announced that the **S. Williston Sales Company LLC** would be representing its Insul-Tube® and Insul-Sheet® brands to the HVACR market. Their territory will include Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New York State (except for New York City). Based in East Greenwich, R.I., and with more than 14 years of experience in the HVACR business, **Steve Williston** is well known in the Northeast. **Chris Williston** is responsible for account management and inside sales. In addition to the Insul-Tube/Sheet brands, S. Williston Sales will be introducing new K-Flex USA products such as K-Flex Solar™, K-Flex Clad™ AL and WT, and K-Flex® 360 Insulated Pipe Supports.

Midland Metal has appointed **Allison Sales and Marketing** of Kernersville, N.C., as its manufacturer’s representative for the North and South Carolina territory. Allison Sales and Marketing will continue promoting Midland Metal’s full line of yellow brass compression and flare fittings, black, galvanized, stainless, bronze, red brass, wrot copper, and PVC fittings, as well as its plumbing specialties and valve lines.

Prier Products Inc. appointed **Jim Benton & Associates** as their exclusive representative for the Alabama and Florida Panhandle region. Benton & Associates is headquartered in the Birmingham area and has a satellite office in the Florida Panhandle. According to Prier, they received tremendous referrals for Benton & Associates from customers, other manufacturers and even other rep agencies within their territory.

Tasman Sinkware North America has chosen **McGregor & Associates** to represent the Oliveri line of kitchen sinks in Utah and Idaho. McGregor & Associates is headquartered in Salt Lake City, with a branch office in Boise, Idaho. Founded 20 years ago, the agency has 10 employees and is headed by **Ken McGregor**, a 35-year industry veteran. ■

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BY TERRY BROCK
Technology/marketing specialist

Those of us who use Apple's iPhone find it increasingly useful for many applications. I use mine for phone calls (of course) along with checking the Net for messages on a regular basis and more. I can get a lot done from just about anywhere I am using it.

Initially, my objection to the iPhone was its battery life. If I use it for listening to music, surfing the Net, reading books, etc., etc., that is going to drain the battery. Then making those late-in-the-day phone calls when I can't get near a charger (think airplane rides and walking around a new city) won't happen.

Get juice

Well, that problem is in the past. Mophie has released a simple, easy-to-apply and fun-to-use battery charger for the iPhone. I'm using it now on my first-generation iPhone, and it works like a charm. Their spec sheet gives a standby time of up to 250 hours, audio playback of up to 24 hours (nice when listening to educational podcasts on those long days), talk time up to eight hours (that

I love to watch educational video material and produce a lot of it. When I first saw eyewear available for watching a DVD or other video from your personal eyeshades I knew it was going to be good.

should take you through the midnight hour on those extra-long business days), video playback of up to seven hours (for training videos) and internet use of up to six hours (I like it!).

What the spec sheet doesn't include is the intangible, business benefit. If you think your battery is going to go out, you will naturally refrain from making calls. You tend to ration your remaining battery life. For an aggressive, successful salesperson, this could mean not making those important calls because you don't want the call cut off in the middle of the conversation. With the Mophie Juice Pack (love that name!) you just slide your iPhone into the pack and Voila! You're back, ready to go with up to eight hours of talking time remaining. If it produces one extra sale in a year, you've probably paid for the \$99 unit. Be sure to watch the video I produced of this feature (available at www.terrybrock.com), so you can see it in action.

This illustrates an important technology for iPhone users. Even more important, what Mophie has done is vital for successful business today. Find a real

Extend your iPhone with new technology

need in the marketplace, make it easy (important!), fun (very important!) and cool (welcome to the 21st century!) to use. Make your product affordable and something that your target market can embrace easily.

If you use an iPhone (first generation or new 3G), you need to check out their

site and see what all this Juice can do for you. I'm certainly juiced about it! (Juice Pack, www.mophie.com, \$99.00)

Portable, personal home theater

I love learning. I love to watch educational video material and produce a lot of it. When I first saw eyewear available

for watching a DVD or other video from your personal eyeshades I knew it was going to be good. But I had not yet seen the Vuzix AV920. (AV920, \$349.95 retail, www.vuzix.com)

To describe this device as incredible, awesome and outstanding would be an
(Turn to ... page 00.)



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TECHNOLOGY TODAY

iPhone opens up an entire universe of technological marketing possibilities

(Continued from page 45.)

understatement. I recently got the Vuzix AV920 and got it hooked up to my iPod classic 80GB player. I was able to watch several video sales podcasts on a recent

cross-country flight. Unfortunately, the flight only lasted about two minutes (at least it seemed that short!).

When you get the AV920, you might want to do what I did and that is to remove

the earbuds that are attached to the unit. They have poor sound quality and can even hurt as they poke you in the ears. Instead, use your regular earbuds. I use my Able Planet headphones (luxurious!)

and drift into my own relaxed, cushioned world of enjoyment with the help of the AV920. To call it merely an “enjoyable experience” would be like a stark raving thirsty man in the desert saying that the refreshing, clear bottle of water was “adequate.” You’ve got to try the AV920 yourself with one of your favorite videos to understand the dazzling experience.

Recently, I demonstrated this to an audience and asked one of the participants to try it out. Yes, he loved it, and those around were amazed at how he was also engulfed into his own world of relaxation

You’ve got to try the AV920 yourself with one of your favorite videos to understand the dazzling experience... Recently, I demonstrated this to an audience and asked one of the participants to try it out. Yes, he loved it, and those around were amazed at how he was also engulfed into his own world of relaxation and amazement, somewhere in the heavens, watching video.

and amazement, somewhere in the heavens, watching video. When he finally came back to Earth (we had to drag him back!), he was delighted. He talked about the business benefit this would have. You can show a video of your product or service to a client. They will be totally immersed in your message on video, and you will have their undivided attention. It would make good business sense for a company to have several of these, with accompanying video players, to allow all key customers the thrill of the new video of your product or service. Better than a stand-alone video, it engulfs the prospect into your pre-designed message.

The business benefits of this technology are outstanding. You capture attention in an age of ever-expanding attention grabbers. You have your prospect’s complete attention. This creative, unique approach can generate more sales.

And who said you can’t have fun while selling and making money? ■

Terry Brock is a marketing coach who helps business owners market more effectively leveraging technology. He shows busy professionals how to squeeze more out of their busy days using the right rules and tools. He can be reached at 407/363-0505, by e-mail at terry@terrybrock.com or through his website at www.terrybrock.com.

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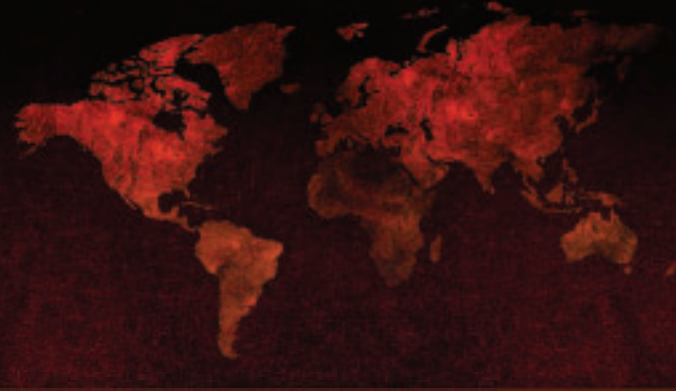
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INDUSTRY NEWS

Swan announces partnership with HADCO

ST. LOUIS — The Swan Corp. announced on October 1 that HADCO will now serve as its company sales agency and master Swanstone distributor for the state of Florida.

“HADCO’s plumbing division will serve as both a master distributor and a sales representative for Swan’s products in the Florida region,” said Arnie

Cohen, vice president-plumbing division with HADCO.

Cohen continues: “Swan has a reputation for delivering affordable, high-performance bath and kitchen products, and we’re looking forward to now offering them to our customers.”

HADCO’s plumbing division is headquartered in Miami, Fla.

“As a master distributor, HADCO will provide customers with the benefit of placing fill-in or quick ship orders at their convenience, making Swanstone products more available than ever,” said John Scott, vice president-distribution sales at the Swan Corp.

For additional information, visit www.swanstone.com.

Letters to the editor

Another great article in the October issue by Rick Schmitt.

Keep his articles coming on continued useful information to our business.

Joe Vaal
CFO

Superior Distribution

I want to tell you that your magazine is the most useful publication that I receive with regards to plumbing wholesale distribution. The column that I look forward to reading the most each month is Rich Schmitt’s. His writings have been particularly helpful for my business and I consider him an expert in the field of wholesale distribution. His insight has not only helped me grow my business, but has also lead to some cost-cutting measures that have helped profitability without sacrificing service.

Keep up the good work.

Thank you,

Chris Schmidt
Executive VP

Schmidt’s Wholesale Inc.

Regarding Dan Holohan’s “Supply House Extortion?” column in the October 2008 issue: Supply house people that joke and abuse the customer over what he uses (or doesn’t) are, in my opinion, simply not taking any responsibility for selling themselves, their company, its products and its services to the customer. Despite which words are used in the contractor’s answer about why he is buying whatever elsewhere, I think the message should be received as “because you and your company have not persuaded me that your overall offering of products and services are better.”

In my experience, the hardest customers to get are also the most loyal, if the supply house lives up to their side of the bargain. If they are abusive, I would go elsewhere also. For those supply houses that can and do sell and provide great products and services, the “abusers” as competitors equals opportunity.

Stan Reznicek
WinWholesale

I just wanted to drop you a quick note to let you know how much I enjoy the column by Rich Schmitt. Please continue to publish his articles; I always find helpful and insightful tips that I use in my daily business. Thanks!

Sue Kingery

Customer service coordinator
MTI Whirlpools Inc.

Just wanted to take a minute to let you know that I read Rich [Schmitt]’s column with great interest in each issue. I am employing many of his suggestions in my own company and hope you will continue to feature his column.

Bob Novak
President
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TALKIN' RADIANT



One man's ceiling is another man's floor

BY DAN HOLOHAN
Wet head

I think that within every problem there is a new business. For instance, the John Wesley AME Zion Church in Pittsburgh, Pa., had a big problem, caused by a nearby abandoned mine. Now, this mine has been flooded and seemingly useless since the late 1800s and the runoff from it was driving the congregation nuts. It kept flooding the church and causing structural damage. The congregation complained enough and Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection spent \$106,000 in 2004 to install a pipe so the water would flow into the storm drain rather than the church. That was good, but then someone had an idea, which led to a nice piece of business.

The idea was to divert the constant 100-gpm flow of 55° water through a heat exchanger and use it to cool the church during the summer, and then use the same water through a heat pump to heat the place during the winter. The project cost \$80,000 and the church received a state grant to fund it. The congregation expects to cut their heating costs by 80%, and their cooling costs by half, and isn't that a wonderful American story?

There are no problems, only opportunities

The town of Heerlen in the Netherlands also has an abandoned coal mine. This one provided thousands of jobs until it shut down in the 1970s. It's sad to lose all those jobs, and that presented a big problem, but 30 years later, some smart person looked at this mine and realized that it reaches thousands of feet into the earth, and the water temperature down there is a constant 95°. So why not pump the water out of the mine and use it to heat 350 nearby homes? And after the water has done its job, they can just pump it back into the mine so that it can get warm again. So that's what they did, and someone got a nice order out of it.

Other smart people are talking about doing a similar thing in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., where there's another abandoned and flooded coal mine. The water in that mine is a constant temperature, so they're going to get some heat-pump technology working in there. And to make it even nicer, Wilkes-Barre once had a district-steam system. All the pipes are still under the city's streets. So how about using those pipes to distribute the

hot water from the mine's new heat pump to the homes and offices of the town? No problem! This is American ingenuity at its best.

You don't have to participate in the recession

Which brings me to this: I'm reading in the papers that America is in a recession right now. You may have heard about it. Well, The Lovely Marianne and I have decided not to participate in this particular recession. We just can't afford it. And I know we can pull this off because TLM and I have done this before, and successfully. We'll have no problem doing it again.

We started our business in 1989, just in time for the last big recession. We had no savings and our four daughters were very young. They were also the reason

Even when the economy was slow and people were turning their backs on preventive maintenance, that stuff kept breaking down. You know why? Because Mother Nature doesn't make allowance for budgets or ignorance.

we were starting this business. We knew that if all went well, the four of them were going to be in college at the same time in 2000 (and they were), so we simply couldn't afford to participate in that recession. And we didn't.

Instead, we set out to look for problems. I wrote 14 books about heating problems and how to solve them. I traveled the country, doing seminars on the same subject. There were plenty of people with heating problems, so we sold a lot of books and did a lot of seminar. We left that recession to others.

But I will admit we were lucky. We had a couple of things going for us. First, we knew that it was going to get cold during the winter. Winter's pretty reliable that way. You can always count on it. Second, we knew that just about everything involved in a heating system is mechanical or electrical, and mechanical and electrical things break. People were going to want to know what to do when that happened, so that was like money in the bank.

The more we thought about it, the better we felt about things. Even when the economy was slow and people were turning their backs on preventive maintenance, that stuff kept breaking down. You know why? Because Mother Nature doesn't make allowance for budgets or ignorance.

A few years ago, we had a string of winters that were warmer than normal (Turn to Heating equipment... page 52.)

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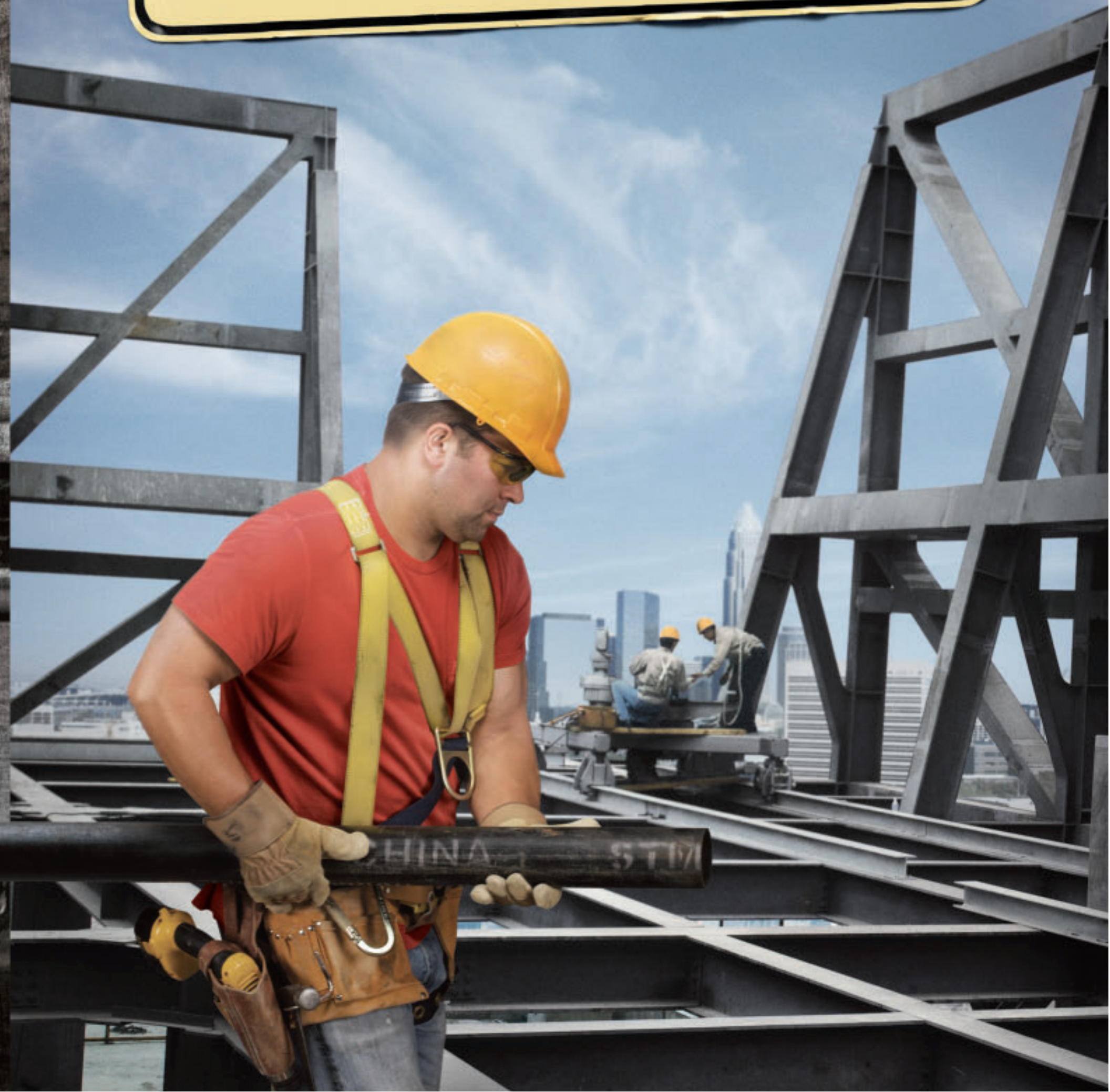
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TALKIN' RADIANT

Heating equipment breaks down recession or no, and customers need heat

(Continued from page 49.)

here in the East. Lots of people put off replacing their old heating equipment.

service. People are always going to need us, especially in the winter, so make a conscious decision not to participate in

There are no problems. It's all perception. I hope you'll embrace that truth. Spend time each week thinking about who your customers are, what's going on in their lives, what's troubling them, and then focus on how you can help.

They just let it limp along and the heating contractors were crying the blues. But then we got hit with that one wicked cold winter, and all the neglected equipment dropped dead at the same time. The contractors were deliriously happy.

Mother Nature will always be on our side when it comes to this. She's wonderful that way. She loves the heating business.

My father used to say that the heating business is the next best thing to civil

this recession. Leave that to others. Get out there and look for the problems because within every problem, you will find a new business.

Make it your business to solve problems

Think about all the products you sell today that came from someone else's problem. Toilets came from outhouses. Boilers came from fireplaces. In the 1970s, the price of fuel soared and along came high-efficiency boilers. You did

okay with those, didn't you? And because high-efficiency boilers often don't get along with old chimneys, you got to sell chimney liners. There's gold in those chimney liners. And when people balked at the price of the liners, the modulating-condensing boilers showed up. No need for a chimney with those beauties. Business follows problems like lunch follows breakfast.

And how about the circulators? Oiling circulators was a chore, so along came water-lubricated circulators to make life easier for everyone. And what came next? Why the three-speed circulators. How come? Because you were carrying too much inventory, and so was your contractor customer. You folks had a problem and the manufacturers had the solution.

Air will always be a challenge with any hydronic system, so the manufacturers built a better trap — the microbubble separator. You made lots of money with those as well because air isn't really a

problem; it's an opportunity.

Fuel prices rising? No problem! Here comes solar, and wind and geothermal — all these exciting technologies that are about to change our industry. Isn't it grand?

How you look at problems determines how you'll do in business. Marianne and I love it when the price of fuel goes up because lots of building owners want to know how they can save money on their heating bills. So they come to our website and they buy lots of books from us. They also come to our seminars. The contractors get busy and our business booms when the price of fuel rises.

And when the price of fuel creeps down a bit from its peak, as it usually does, building owners get complacent and they stop coming to our site. They put things off and the contractors get slow. We sell fewer books, but this is when we see even larger crowds at our seminars. Contractors don't go to seminars when they're busy, but they sure do sign up when things are slow. They're looking to get sharper, to get an edge over the other guy.

Slow times are great times for wholesalers to offer contractor training. And that's a fine way to add value to what you do for your customers. And fast times are great times to reach through to the building owners. Show them what's possible, how they can save fuel, and how you can help.

One man's ceiling is another man's floor. There are no problems. It's all perception. I hope you'll embrace that truth. Spend time each week thinking about who your customers are, what's going on in their lives, what's troubling them, and then focus on how you can help.

Just because America is throwing a recession, doesn't mean you have to attend. ■

Dan Holohan began his love affair with heating systems in 1970 by going to work for a New York-based manufacturers representative that was deeply involved in the steam and hot-water heating business. He studied hard, prowled many basements and attics with seasoned old-timers, and paid close attention to what they had to say. Today, Holohan operates the popular website, www.HeatingHelp.com. He has written hundreds of columns for a number of trade magazines, as well as 15 books on subjects ranging from steam and hot water heating, to teaching technicians. His degree is in Sociology, which Holohan believes is the perfect preparation for a career in heating. Holohan has taught over 200,000 people at his seminars. He is well known for his entertaining, anecdotal style of speaking. Holohan lives on Long Island with his wife, The Lovely Marianne. They have four incredible daughters, all out in the world and doing wonderful things.

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INDUSTRY NEWS

All Caroma floor-mount dual flush toilets now WaterSense labeled

HILLSBORO, ORE. — Caroma, a leader in dual flush toilets, urinals and stylish bathroom sinks, announced that all 41 floor-mount high efficiency dual flush toilets are now WaterSense labeled. WaterSense is a partnership program

sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to make it easy for Americans to save water while protecting the environment.

The WaterSense program is designed to identify high-performance water effi-

cient toilets that can reduce water use in the home while preserving precious water resources. Being WaterSense labeled means a toilet saves at least 20% more water than the current federal standard of 1.6 gallons per flush.

All of Caroma's floor-mount toilets have passed testing, including the



recently introduced Sydney Smart and Sydney Low Profile. The Sydney Smart, one of the most water efficient dual flush toilets on the market, introduced advanced technology to use 1.28 gallons for a full flush (solid waste)



All of Caroma's floor-mount toilets, such as the Adelaide Cube, are WaterSense labeled and save at least 20% more water than the current federal standard of 1.6 gallons per flush.

and 0.8 gpf for liquid and paper waste, averaging just 0.9 gpf. Caroma's other high efficiency toilets use only 0.96 gpf. This saves the average family of four nearly 30,000 gallons of water every year.

Headquartered in drought-stricken Australia, Caroma has been a leader in



water conservation for more than 20 years and continues to develop innovative technologies that conserve water without sacrificing performance. The new Caroma Smart™ technology was introduced in the Sydney Smart and is also used in the recently introduced high efficiency urinals: Cube3 Ultra one pint urinal and the H2Zero waterless urinal (introduced in October 2008).

E-mail info@caromausa.com or visit www.caromausa.com to learn more.

DDi invites distributors to join in online demo

SANDY HOOK, CONN. — Join other progressive PHCP distributors on Tuesday, December 16, at 11:00 a.m. EST for an interactive web demonstration of DDi System's inform 2008 features and highlights. Find out more about inform's exclusive price import capabilities, streamlining Special Pricing allowances and rebate reporting, plus see inform's advanced Lot Billing functionality.

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Body Glove is taking it to the (filtered) water

REDONDO BEACH, CALIF. — Body Glove International is launching a brand new product category. The Body Glove under-sink water filtration system is now available at kitchen and bath and plumbing wholesale supply stores.

Company founders Bob and the late Bill Meistrell instilled in Body Glove a respect for the world around them and a

“Each under-sink water filter represents the annual replacement of 2,000 to 9,000 plastic water bottles, depending on the size of filter used.”

drive to create environmentally sensitive products. Since the early 1950s, these two men were involved with environmental issues. They initiated the first South Bay, Calif., beach cleanups in the '50s, instituted re-usable grocery bags in the 1980s, and were pivotal players in

the Exxon Valdez oil spill cleanup in 1989. It is this bond with the environment and clean water that inspires Body Glove to continually find new and environmentally friendly ways to keep water clean and healthy.

Body Glove water filters are the latest addition to the growing family of ECO products for eco-friendly consumers. “Each under-sink water filter represents the annual replacement of 2,000 to 9,000 plastic water bottles, depending on the size of filter used,” said Russ Lesser, Body Glove CEO.

The Body Glove filtration system removes harmful and unpleasant substances found in tap water. The system filters the same tap water that leading bottlers use and sell back to consumers at a huge markup. The point is simple: Body Glove wants to do everything it can to help reduce our dependence on oil and to clean up the waterways we enjoy.

In 2005, two million tons of water

bottles ended up in landfills. But what about all the plastic that does not make it into a trashcan or a recycle bin? Each year, plastic waste in water and coastal areas kills 100,000 marine animals, one million sea birds and countless fish. By installing a Body Glove water filter in your home you can put a significant dent in the number of plastic bottles piled into landfills every year, reducing the plastic waste that crowds our oceans and kills marine life.

Surfrider Foundation and Body Glove are partnering up to spread the word that filtered water means healthier and cleaner water for drinking and enjoying, while helping the environment. The goal is to promote a responsible water-use campaign in the U.S. and developed countries and healthy drinking water for everyone.

“Clean water is essential, not just for surfing, but for the health of the planet,” said Surfrider’s Matt McClain, “The

Surfrider Foundation is proud to partner with Body Glove to help keep our oceans, waves and beaches clean and plastic free.”

Body Glove plans on expanding the water filtration line with a revolutionary water bottle that is perfect to fill and take on the go. It will be available soon. Body Glove water filtration systems and water filter bottles are distributed by Water Inc. of Carson, Calif., a wholesale distributor with more than 2,500 dealers throughout the U.S. and Canada.

For more information, visit www.bodyglove.com/filter.



Body Glove president Russ Lesser and Water Inc. president Major Avignon.

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Charlotte Pipe, local plumbing contractor make makeover happen

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — In August, a deserving Charlotte, N.C., family was chosen to receive a new home as part of the hit ABC TV show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*. Curtis and Alisha King

and their two children departed for a show-sponsored trip to Puerto Rico on July 29 while their one-story, 1,900-square-foot brick home was demolished to make way for a makeover — a

brand new 5,100-square-foot, two-story dream house.

More than 6,000 volunteers worked on the project, which took 106 hours from demolition on a Wednesday to the

last inspection on the following Sunday. Among the volunteers were plumbers from Charlotte-based Price Brothers Inc., a residential contractor specializing in high-quality single-family and multi-family plumbing systems and a loyal Charlotte Pipe and Foundry customer.

The Kings were living in their three-bedroom, two-bath house, originally



A small contingent of the total Price Brothers plumbing crew shows up on the job site, ready to help build an entire 5,100-square-foot home in 4½ days.

built in 1961, and running a day care service for local families in their refinished garage. The house was beginning to show wear and tear, including an emerging mold problem. The Kings ran their Step By Step Home Daycare service at a loss to help out families in the Windsor Park neighborhood of Charlotte who were trying to make ends meet. Parents working a night shift or on weekends could always rely on the Kings' daycare, even if they could not always pay.

Normal houses can take up to four to six months to build. The *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* house took just about 4½ days, with crews working around the clock. The Price Brothers crew of 25 plumbers was standing by on Thursday, waiting for their chance to get into the house. They finally got on the job at 8 p.m. and worked straight through until 4 a.m. Friday, completing the rough-in work in just eight hours. It was the same story on Saturday, with a crew of 17 that finished the trim work - setting fixtures and hooking up connections - starting at 5 p.m. and completing the job at 3 a.m. on Sunday. Charlotte Pipe PVC DWV pipe and fittings were used exclusively on the new home.

"Our crews have a lot of experience with these types of time-compressed projects, having worked on numerous Habitat for Humanity building blitzes over the years," said Bob Price, owner of Price Brothers Inc. "However, this was a tougher challenge. There were some delays with the framing, so our guys had to wait in the staging area for

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Moen helps to support affordable housing

NEW YORK, N.Y. — Moen, a leading bath and kitchen fixtures brand in North America, and Southside United Housing Development Fund Corporation (Los Sures) are joining forces in support of more affordable housing and home ownership in the Hispanic community. Moen is committed to helping Hispanic families achieve the dream of owning their home and providing access to affordable housing through its national program, *Alcanzando Suenos con Moen*.

Los Sures is the oldest Latino-operated housing organization in New York City, dedicated to the creation and preservation of affordable housing for predominately low-income residents. Los Sures has evolved into a multi-faceted nonprofit

organization aimed at creating and managing low-income housing, aiding tenants in the purchase and maintenance of their buildings and serving the social needs of the Hispanic community.

On November 12, Los Sures executive director David Pagan and Moen hosted an event to kick off their partner-

ship, which will result in the donation of bath and kitchen fixtures at two sites — 210 Roebling Street and 258 Grand Street in Brooklyn. These fixtures will help to reduce operating expenses and will lower the cost of construction.

For more information, visit www.moen.com and www.lossures.org.

Moen is committed to helping Hispanic families achieve the dream of owning their home and providing access to affordable housing through its national program, *Alcanzando Suenos con Moen*.

Makeover

(Continued from facing page.)

several hours, champing at the bit to get on the job. The construction of the house is carefully coordinated, so we had to wait our turn. Once they set us loose, our guys went to work with a lot of energy and enthusiasm.”

According to Price, the Charlotte home is the largest and most complex the show has attempted to date. Every one of the trade sub-contractors had to

“Our crews have a lot of experience with these types of time-compressed projects, having worked on numerous Habitat for Humanity building blitzes over the years.”

know exactly what they were doing and when to do it. “All the subs were working around each other,” said Price. “Electrical contractors, HVAC contractors, framers, dry wall installers — we all had a job to do and very little time to do it. From the plumbing standpoint, the house was full of high-end fixtures that can be complicated to install. At one point, we had 14 of our guys working in the master bath at one time.”

The episode, which aired in October, showed the King family arriving back at their address to find a brand new, fully furnished home waiting for them, complete with a new day care facility filled with toys and educational materials.

“I’m very proud of our crews,” Price said. “I was impressed with their preparation and their professionalism, but most of all with their enthusiasm. They worked their tails off to do their part to get the home built on time without complaint.” When asked if they had the chance, whether would they volunteer to work on an *Extreme Makeover* home again, Price didn’t hesitate. “Absolutely,” he said.



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SHOWROOM STYLE

Make 2009 your best year ever

In this column, I will refer to articles in *The Wholesaler* showroom column archives (found at www.thewholesaler.com) that I wrote from 2006 to the present. The articles are just a click away and can be printed out.

Do you believe that “some” people in the bath/plumbing industry are still making a ton of money in these tough economic times? *They are, and so can you.*

What is your belief system for your showrooms and yourself going into 2009? Is the glass half empty or half full? For a good attitude adjustment, read *The Wholesaler* showroom column from September 2006 on “Adjusting your attitude toward success.” Also, in that issue, please read about the opportunities to utilize “Showrooms, webinars and teleclassing.” Each program is customized to your company’s wants or needs, with lots of tools to increase your sales, gross profits and market share in 2009. You know the farmer’s creed: You plant corn, you get corn; you plant tomatoes, you get tomatoes; you plant nothing and you will surely get weeds.

What will you do differently in 2009? Fear is not an option. Remember, FEAR is False Evidence Appearing Real — the universal law of attraction. Do you know what fear attracts? Go back and read the November 2008 showroom column.

In the January 2008 showroom column, I gave you “33 ways to make 2008 your best year ever.” It started with No. 1, identifying the green products you have in your showroom. No. 2 described the outcall service for resale homes. This is a way of generating income in the current residential economic conditions. It is easy: Create a service charging \$100 per hour to go to the customer’s house to determine what will fit their applications. The cost is refunded against the purchase of the goods by the consumer or by the recommended trades. I received a bunch of e-mails from wholesaler showrooms that followed this information and took it all the way to the bank. There are 31 other goodies in this column.

In March 2008 the article was on “Mastering professional trade group partnerships.” As you know, there can be only one buyer of the products from you, yet all of the trade can influence the decision making process. For the newer showroom people, the three keys to plumbing wholesaler or DPH showroom success are as follows:

- Qualify the client who comes into your showroom.
- Who sent the client in? Shouldn’t you acknowledge the person that thinks highly of recommending your showroom with a personal call or a thank you card?
- Who is buying the materials? When was the last time you attended a monthly meeting of the following trade groups in your area? I put them in order of relevance to you, based on a high-end luxu-

ry showroom: ASID IIDA, NKBA, PHCC, NAHB, NARI, Remodelers Council, AIA and NEWH.

The October 2008 showroom column was titled, “Creating ‘the Experience’ in your showroom.” Did everyone understand how important it is to sell “the Experience” to the clients in your showroom? While I have written about this many times over the years, please e-mail me if you want a deeper explanation in an upcoming article.

“The Experience” is what “value-added” was some years ago. Today, value-added is expected in the middle- to high-end markets. Selling the experience of various lifestyle products is what some great luxury branded manufacturers do. Pictures of their products in settings say that if you use those products you will feel rich, successful, handsome or prettier, safer, happier, more relaxed, sexier and more. Some exceptional brand names that come to mind when selling the experience are Kohler, Waterworks, Dornbracht, KWC, BainUltra, Palazzo Baths and Duravit. In appliances Subzero, Wolff and

Half of the projects were very extensive and had a plumbing and remodeling contractor involved. This is what I call win-win partnering with your contractors. Where do you think the contractors buy their own fixtures or appliances? From showrooms that refer business to them.

Viking lead the way in lifestyle products. Take a good look at the October showroom column picture of The Palazzo bathtub in The Four Seasons Private Residences, Denver, Colo. The picture tells you everything.

In the August 2007 and September 2007 showroom columns, I gave explicit instructions on how to attract high traffic to your showroom. The August issue was more for “consumer” traffic and September dealt with the professional trades. I received a lot of e-mails from showrooms that shared their successes with me.

One showroom wholesaler in a market area of 200,000 people was blown away to realize that there were about 309 total tradespeople in their marketplace:

- Interior designers (64)
- Plumbing contractors (60)
- Architects (24)
- Remodeling contractors (111)
- Home builders (38)
- Bath remodeling (12).

They were also able to get information that identified the major “players” in the marketplace: decision makers, sales volume, number of employees, etc. Then the company started a series of targeted market postcards and events. The last e-mail said that they have now tapped into new categories such as real estate people who sell dream baths to consumers through their showroom.

On the consumer side, a plumbing wholesaler with two branches and show-

rooms shared their success in targeting resale homebuyers in a higher-end range of homes within a 30-mile radius. They were first offered a visit to the showroom and then received a free outcall service to come to the house and measure sizes, length and all dimensions to make sure that the products selected would fit. Half of the projects were very extensive and had a plumbing and remodeling contractor involved. This is what I call win-win partnering with your contractors. Where do you think the contractors buy their own fixtures or appliances? From showrooms that refer business to them.

Go back to all of *The Wholesaler* showroom archives from 2006 to 2008 and cash in on some gold for 2009.

I want to leave you with something this month that I received in seven languages last year from a friend who passed away a few months ago.

A Paradox of Our Times

Today we have bigger houses and smaller families; more conveniences, but less time.

We have more degrees, but less com-

mon sense; more knowledge, but less judgment.

We have more experts, but more problems; more medicines, but less wellness.

We spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry too quickly, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too often and pray too seldom!

We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too little and lie too often.

We’ve learned how to make a living, but not a life; we’ve added years to life, not life to years.

We have taller buildings, but shorter tempers; wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints.

We spend more, but have less; we buy more, but enjoy it less.

We’ve been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet our new neighbor.

We’ve conquered outer space but not inner space. We’ve split the atom, but not our prejudice.

We write more, but learn less; plan more, accomplish less.

We’ve learned to rush, but not to wait; we have higher incomes, but lower morals.

We build more computers to hold more information, to produce fewer copies, but have less communication. We are long on quantity, but short on quality.

These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion; tall men and short charac-



BY PETER SCHOR
Showroom specialist

ter; steep profits and shallow relationships.

More leisure and less fun; more kinds of food but less nutrition; two incomes, but more divorce; fancier houses, but broken homes.

That’s why I propose, that, as of today, you do not keep anything for a special occasion, because every day that you live is a special occasion.

Search for knowledge, read more, sit on the front porch and admire the view without paying attention to your needs.

Spend more time with your family and friends, eat your favorite foods and visit the place you love.

Life is a chain of moments of enjoyment, not only about survival.

Remove from your vocabulary phrases like “one of these days” and “some-day.” Let’s write that letter we thought of writing, “one of these days.”

Let’s tell our families and friends how much we love them. Don’t delay anything that adds laughter and joy to your life.

Every day, every hour and every minute is special. And you don’t know if it will be your last.

If you’re too busy to take the time to share this message with someone you care about, and you tell yourself you will send it “one of these days,” just think ... “one of these days” you may not be here to share it!

I thank you for reading my column each month and for allowing me to serve our industry through the years. Let us all make December 2008 a time to think about our goals and plans of new actions for 2009. Let us all live in abundance within the universal laws of attraction. Don’t buy into fear in these challenging economic times. We Americans are resilient and will persevere! I wish you and your family what I wish for my family and myself: Great health, peace, prosperity, joy and much love. Let us pray for the safety of all those serving in our Armed Forces.

God bless all of you! ■

Peter Schor, president of Dynamic Results Inc., is an educator, motivational speaker, consultant, coach and writer in our industry and many diverse others. For the past 17 years, he has conducted 100 educational programs yearly, including 34 industry conventions. Schor has great expertise in the field of showrooms and has won many industry awards. He also works with manufacturers in the fields of sales, marketing and public relations. Schor can be reached at 1491 Ivy Arbor, Lincoln, CA 95648, phone 916/408-5346, fax 916/408-5899, by e-mail at pschor@dynamicresultsinc.com or through his website www.dynamicresultsonline.com.

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ON THE PVF PULSE

PVF sector should weather economic, political storms

While America's overall economy braces for the worsening of an already deteriorating recession, the PVF sector will almost certainly continue the unprecedented surge that was ignited almost two years ago.

Barring the unexpected impact of a one-sided restriction of anti-business, anti-trade legislation by a one-sided Democrat majority, the PVF industrial juggernaut will continue its steamroller throughout 2009 for a few reasons:

- A \$2-trillion U.S. export sector, the biggest surprise in an otherwise sagging economy, will continue to maintain its momentum. Although a stronger dollar and a temporary slowing of the developing nations' growth may act as an inhibitor for now, there will be no appreciable downturn in the demand for the PVF sector's products for 2009 as a whole. Two-thirds of exports are comprised of industrial products of all types.

- Mechanical contractor-related commercial and industrial construction has been adversely affected for months by the credit strangulation of businesses large and small.

Although government intervention in commercial paper availability and direct access to the Federal Reserve Board's discount window has begun to help, the building of hotels and motels, high rise apartment buildings, and planned shopping centers has suffered. However, institutional buildings, such as healthcare and religious edifices are proceeding apace. Industrial construction is also on schedule. The need for housing technological upgrading, despite reduction in personnel, also calls for expanded facilities:

- Water and wastewater facility development is on the verge of its greatest year ever; however, federal, regional and local funding may put a cap on the extent of the growth.

- The crescendo of growth in power generation is certain to hit an all-time high, as both nuclear and conventional electrical power undergo a catch-up to close the growing gap between supply and demand. Although environmental obstacles continue to be manifested, the danger of brownouts and blackouts should pressure the relevant authorities to be more amenable, even in the area of coal-powered generating facilities.

- Alternative energy development is still in an embryonic stage. But solar and wind power, as well as greater natural gas utilization and expansion of ethanol by utilizing corn husks, feedstock and switchgrass for ethanol conversion should reverse the recent downturn of that questionable gasoline blend.

- Drilling may be the biggest boon to the expansion of PVF product usage.

Although it's doubtful that the new administration will get behind offshore drilling, shale oil development or drilling in the Alaska National Wildlife Reserve just yet, there is more conventional drilling in the lower 48 than in the past 20 years. The only holdback could be the further drop of already low prices that may make the current spate of drilling non-profitable.

All in all, there are only a few clouds on the horizon preventing the continuation of the PVF surge. Even the credit crunch that has inhibited the inventory development of the sector's distribution system is thawing out as greater access to loans, as well as commercial paper availability, are facilitating the optimizing of requisite inventory levels.

\$360 billion per annum needed to keep world's energy demands satisfied

The International Energy Agency, the world's oil watchdog, has unveiled both good news and bad news. Focusing their targets on 2030, the Paris-based global research agency believes that there will be enough oil available 20-some years from now to accommodate the world's overall demand of approximately 100 million oil barrels a day, compared to the current 85.5 bpd. Discarding the peak oil theory, which posits a rapid supply reduction, the IEA has disseminated the good news.

The bad news is that it will take a \$360-billion-a-year investment to extract additional oil supplies, as mature fields are imploding faster than first anticipated. While oilfields in Norway, the United Kingdom, Russia, Mexico, India and the U.S. are headed for eventual extinction, the satisfaction of conventional demand will be met by Kuwait, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Eurasia (former Soviet States) and the Caspian Sea. To meet demand growth for alternative energy sources, investments are expected to be met by Canada, Saudi Arabia, China, the U.S., India and Iran.

Barring the investment of huge amounts necessary to keep both conventional and alternative energy sources afloat, the demand/supply balance will quickly fall out of kilter, instigating the quick return of exorbitant pricing.

Investment outlook turns bullish despite lingering economic pessimism

I usually spend a good part of my weekends devouring *Barron's Weekly*, the *Financial Times* and *The Economist* to unearth nuggets that may lead to interesting analyses for my expanding blog readership.

Perhaps it's the fire sale stock prices, lowest equivalents since the 1970s, or

the 11% comeback of the Dow Jones Industrial Average the last week of "Black October."

According to *Barron's* semi-annual big money poll, 50% of the responding pros consider the forthcoming stock market outlook bullish or very bullish through mid-year 2009. One major aspect of this renewed optimism is the expectation that governments around the world are mounting a coordinated effort to end the financial crisis and get lending back on track. The first step was a meeting of the G-20 (major world nations) in Washington, D.C. during November.

The big money bulls see the Dow Jones Industrial Average ending the year at 10,642, which implies a 14% gain from the current levels. Even so, this would still leave the Blue Chips down

...Institutional buildings, such as healthcare and religious edifices, are proceeding apace. Industrial construction is also on schedule. The need for housing technological upgrading, despite reduction in personnel, also calls for expanded facilities.

20% for all of 2008. This cross-section of the nation's top institutional investors sees similar moves for the Standard & Poor's 500, and the technology laden NASDAQ.

An increasing number (62%) of these big-money pundits call today's stock market considerably undervalued, compared to only 55% last spring. However, half of this group still describes their industrial stance as defensive, while only 20% say they're aggressive at this time. Thirty-seven percent claim that improved credit conditions, now occurring, would induce them to become more bullish about stocks in the next six months, while 25% are awaiting a better outlook for corporate profits.

However, there seems to be a new wave of optimism developing, primarily due to the almost ridiculously low prices of many seemingly solid equities. Many cite the buildup of cash on the sidelines, which is measured in the trillions. Money market assets alone accounted for \$3.4 trillion on September 30, versus a \$13.3 trillion of outstanding stock market evaluations. This ratio is comparable to the early 1980s, when money funds yielded returns in double digits.

Barring unforeseen developments, such as another major terrorist attack or confiscatory tax increases by a newly constituted White House, 2009 may turn out to be a much better year for the global stock markets, preceding the petering out of the current recession, a trend con-



BY MORRIS R. BESCHLOSS
PVF and economic analyst

sistent with previous recessions, when stock market recovery preceded an economic rebound.

Global commodities endure record implosion

Global commodities, which had become the shining light of worldwide demand inspired by the unprecedented rise of the emerging nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, etc.), experienced their worst month ever in October.

Although most of the investment community's focus was fixated on the freefall of equities, as well as fixed income investments, the fall of the one-time darlings of hedge funds and other speculators became investment pariahs during "Black October."

The Commodity Research Bureau index, which comprises a composite of

19 commodities, experienced its worst decline since its formation in 1961, tumbling more than 21% for the month. Only a late October rally saved the commodity index from an even worse performance.

Oil, which had reached nearly \$150 per barrel in mid-July, experienced its worst month ever, sinking precipitously to the low \$60s during the past month. Even gold, which experienced an 18% loss, ignored its "safe haven" reputation, with its worst monthly performance since 1980.

This commodity vertigo showed no partiality, embracing such disparate entities as wheat, copper, aluminum, sugar, coffee and cotton.

The implosion of hundreds of hedge funds, which was still in process as October ended, joined margin calls and the termination of credit lines as the main cause for this commodity depression. The dumping of their holdings flooded commodity, as well as stock market exchanges, bringing prices down to fire sale levels. With global demand and skyrocketing prices having previously spurred this bubble ever upward, the October investment disaster took no prisoners.

In the deleveraged future now facing investments as a whole, it's almost a given that pricing of commodities, as well as stocks and bonds, will become a function of the supply/demand equation, (Turn to PVF segment... page 70.)

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Circle 49 on Reader Reply Card

TOP PRODUCTS OF 2008

Every December we at THE WHOLESALER present the products from our Product News pages that you, the readers, most wanted to learn more about. Here you'll find the most popular products based on the amount of reader reply card responses they garnered.



Faucet nut removal tool

Invented by a plumber, the Basin Buddy is the ultimate faucet nut removal tool. Loosens the most stubborn nuts with ease, and makes new installations a breeze. Users don't need a basin wrench, a plastic nut wrench and a nutcracker in their toolbox anymore — the Basin Buddy is all they need. **Wal-Rich.**

Circle 100 on Reader Reply Card

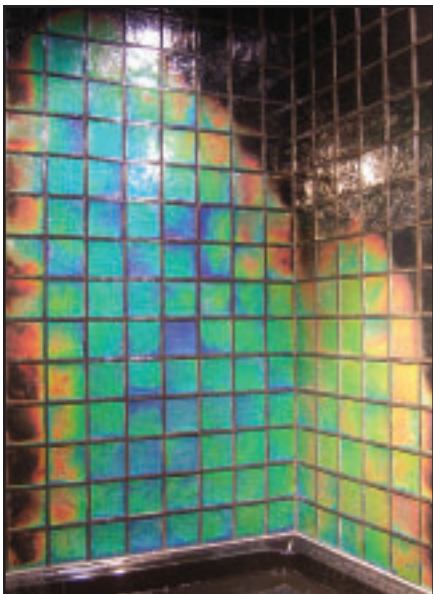
Compact drill

This 18-volt compact drill/driver is lightweight and powerful with a 1.4 amp-hour, 18-volt lithium-ion battery, the 2601-22 delivers 0-1,400 rpm and 400-in/lbs of torque for drilling holes and driving screws faster. Patented power management system and exclusive lithium-ion manganese battery chemistry provide fade-free power until the end of charge. Weighs 4 pounds. **Milwaukee Electric Tool Corporation.**

Circle 101 on Reader Reply Card

Bath color spectrum

This is a dynamic concept that has recently been released; heat-sensitive tile color changes constantly in response



to temperature changes. Excellent in showers; provides a truly unique experience. Available in three exclusive lines: Northern Lights™, Watercolors™, and Tye Dye™. Requires no special application procedures. **Moving Color.**

Circle 102 on Reader Reply Card

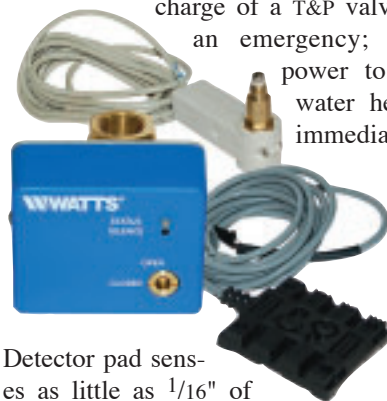
Flushing system

Intelli-Flush retrofit sensor technology for Sloan FLUSHMATE pressure-assist systems permits touchless, sensor operation for increased hygiene in any application and is the only sensor-operated pressure-assist system available. The easy-to-install system operates with alkaline batteries, and includes an over-ride button that replaces the flush handle. Two different sensor designs: On-wall and in-wall sensor. Trim is available in chrome or white. **Sloan Flushmate.**

Circle 103 on Reader Reply Card

Water detector shutoff

The FloodSafe Series water detector shutoff protects against property damage caused by a leaking water heater or discharge of a T&P valve in an emergency; cuts power to the water heater immediately.

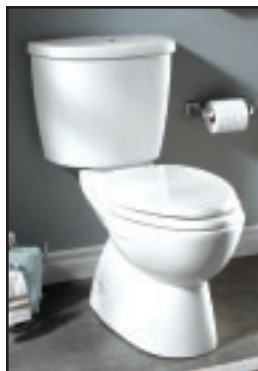


Detector pad senses as little as 1/16" of standing water to initiate the shutoff and alarm sequence. Resettable. Installs on new or existing water heaters; requires no special piping. Models for gas, oil and electric water heaters and sized for 3/4" and 1" water supply lines. **Watts Regulator Co.**

Circle 104 on Reader Reply Card

High-efficiency toilet offers style

The Dual-Flush FloWise™ two-piece high-efficiency toilet reduces water usage in a sleek striking profile that attractively conceals the snaking trapway under the bowl. The WaterSense®-labeled model allows users to decide whether to use 1.6 or 0.8 gpf, potentially saving 30% more water than 1.6-gpf toilets. Available in an elongated bowl, the transitionally-styled HET may be purchased in either right-height or standard height. **American Standard.**



Circle 105 on Reader Reply Card

Preventing limescale

Just 0.11" of limescale wastes 18% in energy costs. Physical water conditioners are a realistic non-chemical alterna-



tive to protect against limescale in domestic water systems. Not dependent on chemicals or water flow; the signal is transmitted directly into the water 24/7 up and down the system. All the water is treated all the time. Compact; maintenance-free, non-intrusive (no plumbing required). works on all types of pipes. Residential HC-38 unit provides whole house protection. **HydroCare USA.**

Circle 106 on Reader Reply Card

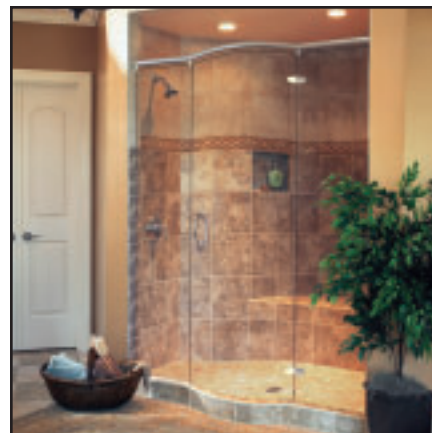
Adjustable wrench



The WideAzz™ 6" adjustable wrench is the latest addition to the Code Blue® product line. The 6WCB is extremely durable and offers reliable performance. Tapered jaw profile and shorter handle length for greater access in tight spaces. Wider jaw span supports larger nuts, bolts, pipes, etc.; longer individual jaws grip better, avoiding slippage or round-off. Made with chrome vanadium steel for strength and corrosion resistance. **Channellock.**

Stylish shower doors

The Preceria shower door is a sensual, sleek, "curved" model. Features a slight-



ly curved door and a solid, elliptical-shaped header that suspends 1 1/2" over the door. The 75" tall doors are 5/16" thick and the door offers the flexibility of swinging both in and out. Homeowners can choose from either a curved door or a straight door, and can select from silver, brushed nickel and 14 powdered-coated finishes. **Basco.**

Circle 108 on Reader Reply Card

Wall-mount boiler

The KNIGHT boiler is available in 5 new wall-mounted models. Compact units enhance installation flexibility. Fully modulating 5:1 turndown burner keeps fuel use to an absolute minimum by adjusting heat output according to demand. A 93% AFUE efficiency rating on the 80 to 285 models; 95% thermal efficiency rating on the 399 and 500 models. In low-temperature radiant applications, efficiency is high as 98%. Sealed-combustion direct-vent design offers installation flexibility. **Lochinvar Corporation.**

Circle 109 on Reader Reply Card

Decorative toilet seats

This decorative line of clear toilet seats from China ships from a California



warehouse. Closed front in both round and elongated styles with numerous artistic themed pictures. The company can run custom production for hotel, restaurant and other applications. **T&L International Group.**

Circle 110 on Reader Reply Card



Skin rejuvenation shower

Sunshower's near-infrared light penetrates the skin to reduce the appearance of aging, fine lines, wrinkles, enlarged pores, and crow's feet. The units include chromatherapy and a proven "anti-aging" cycle. **ProSun International.**

Circle 111 on Reader Reply Card

TOP PRODUCTS OF 2008



Filtration system

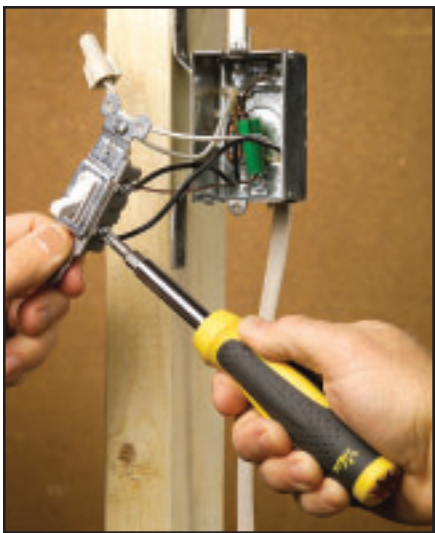
The new HousePure whole house water filtration system filters water for the entire home. Safe to drink and bathe in and is better for use when it comes to laundry and dishes. System does all of this without the use of salt or caustic chemicals. Offers a green/eco-friendly solution to whole house water filtration.

One of the hottest products for upscale housing. **Water Inc.**

Circle 112 on Reader Reply Card

Professional screwdrivers

Twist-a-Nut Pro screwdrivers offer fixed steel shanks for improved control and torque, along with a patent-pending



Accu-Loop wire looping system to significantly speed up installation of wired devices. The Santoprene comfort grip handle features the universal connector wrench formed into the bottom that accepts twist-on wire connectors from every major connector manufacturer. Comes in three styles: 1/4" x 4" keystone tip, 1/4" x 4" #2 Phillips tip, and 1/4" x 6" cabinet tip. **IDEAL.**

Circle 113 on Reader Reply Card

Condensing boilers

The Bimini series of high-efficiency, gas-fired, hot water condensing boilers feature a cast aluminum alloy heat exchanger. Currently available in 5 sizes with inputs from 70 MBH to 225 MBH; 3 larger sizes with inputs from 300 MBH to 425 MBH will be introduced in early 2008. All models feature a premix burner with full modulation and low NO_x emissions and efficiencies up to 95.4% AFUE. Microprocessor-based control system manages all boiler functions. **Crown Boiler Co.**

Circle 114 on Reader Reply Card

Tankless heater connection kits

A new family of tankless water heater water and gas connection kits provide all the components needed to easily and economically install gas or electric tankless



water heaters. Each kit consists of service valves designed specifically for tankless water heaters, a high Btu gas connector (for gas applications) and 2 water connectors. The service valves, with dual 3/4" NPT union connections, are easy to install and connect. Valve handles are color-coded for hot and cold. When valve handles are closed, the heater is isolated from the home plumbing for routine maintenance. **Dormont, a subsidiary of Watts Water Technologies.**

Circle 115 on Reader Reply Card

Relaxing fountains

Adagio water features provide relaxation and help to clean and humidify the air. Water features are "works of art" from nature and present a unique departure from traditional wall accents and décor. The units have built-in lighting to illuminate the flowing waters over the textures and colors of 100% natural stone. Adagio water features offer slate color selections of multi-color rajah, green or black; finishes in copper or stainless steel; and frame corners that are square or round. **Adagio Fountains.**



Circle 116 on Reader Reply Card

Electric radiant heating

This cable system offers on-site versatility; combines a patented guide system with proven heating technology in an



easy-to-install system. Extends the reach into areas that have previously not been able to be warmed. Use beneath tile, stone and laminate/engineered floors, as well as saunas, showers and shower benches. Low 3/16" profile means minimal increases in floor height. **Nuheat.**

Circle 117 on Reader Reply Card

Hot water circulator

Just Right® is a low-cost hot water circulating device that is the right choice for those who want to save water and energy without sacrificing hot water convenience. This non-

mechanical circulating device requires no electricity and extends the life of a water heater. Uses convection to keep hot water rising and cold water falling within the plumbing loop. Eliminates waiting for hot water, saving the average household 7,000 to 14,000 gal of water per year. For use in both residential and light-commercial applications. **NIBCO Inc.**

Circle 118 on Reader Reply Card

Indirect water heaters

Indirect water heaters designed with the installer in mind have all connections on top for neat, clean installation. Smooth-wall all-stainless coil collects less lime and sediment, delivers full output for years. Factory installed brass drain and relief valves. Honeywell L4006 is included. Thermoplastic jacket, R-12 insulation. Available in 30, 40, 50, 60, 80 and 115 gallons. Some models available with double coils for solar and other applications. **Heat-Flo Inc.**

Circle 119 on Reader Reply Card



Towel warmers

Towel warmers are high quality, affordable and designed in multiple metal finishes. The 100% stainless steel construction is available in a variety of styles and sizes. The towel warmer brands — Jeeves, Goldry and Ellory — are appearing in America's bathrooms, pool houses, yachts, spas, saunas and mud rooms. Gone forever are the days of damp, cold, smelly towels. These easy-to-install towel warmers are an energy efficient, attractive and practical bathroom essential feature for every modern bath. All models are electric and are UL certified. Include an internal thermostat and thermal cutout, and come with a five-year manufacturer's warranty. **Amba.**

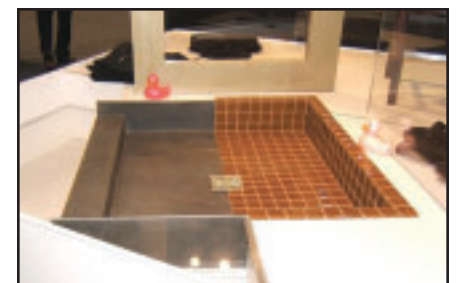
Circle 120 on Reader Reply Card



Hole enlarger kit

The Hole Enlarger Kit is an ideal solution when a hole is cut too small or larger materials need to fit in an existing hole. Cuts a precise enlarged hole without using a pilot bit; attach a hole saw matching the desired size hole to the enlarger nut and then attach the cup that corresponds to the original hole size. The inner cup guides the outer cup for a clean, accurate hole. With two thread profiles, 1/2" and 5/8", to accommodate any size cup from 9/16" to 6" in any configuration. **Bosch Power Tools and Accessories.**

Circle 121 on Reader Reply Card



Shower pans

Leakproof, mold-free shower pans are ready to accept tile, marble or stone of your choice. Each shower pan has an integrated floor drain with a built-in 1/4" pitch to the drain. Has an integrated threshold with ribbing underneath to sustain weight of the design. UL listed with a lifetime leakproof warranty. Never have to worry again about water intrusion and mold build up. An ideal way to build a tile, marble or stone shower today. **Tile Redi.**

Circle 122 on Reader Reply Card

Home spa

The Home Spa Collection offers two models, a round and a rectangular spa. The HSR6555 is a 78" x 66" x 28" fill and



drain bath with three bathing depths, two therapy zones, and room for three or more bathers. It features two 240V, 3-speed, 1 1/2 hp pumps, each with a 1.5 kW heater; one 240V, 1 hp, variable speed blower with integral air heater, rapid fill jet system, two LED chromatherapy mood lights, two jetted neck pillows, dual digital controls, aromatherapy dispensing system, automatic ozone system, sound immersion system and floating universal remote control. The combination air-whirlpool includes 25 therapy jets and 34 air jets. **Jason.**

Circle 123 on Reader Reply Card

TOP PRODUCTS OF 2008



Composite stone tubs

Multiple award-winning composite stone tubs and basins garnered the Gold Key International Award in hospitality design for "the most beautiful bathroom in the world" in 2003. Other awards include best Latin American Hotel and best African Safari Lodge (pictured). Inspired by Italian design, these luxury tubs and basins are made in South Africa and have sales worldwide, including the U.S., Europe, Mauritius, Africa and Dubai. Wide selection of colors: Limestone White, Kalahari Sands, Balinese Brown, Terra Red, Zen Black and more; or in metallic finishes such as bronze, copper and aluminum. **Palazzo Baths.**

Circle 124 on Reader Reply Card



Shower column

The Smart Panel™ shower column provides choices of an overhead 8" showerhead, hand-held sprayer or eight adjustable body sprays, all chrome over brass. A tub fill spout is available. All UPC models come with a "safety first" pressure balance valve to prevent scalding or cold water shock. Smart Panel comes in tempered glass and/or 18/10 surgical-quality stainless steel.

Smart Showers.

Circle 125 on Reader Reply Card

Canopy shower head

Imagine a shower experience in perfect harmony with nature. The beauty, performance and craftsmanship of a Rain Canopy shower head will delight the senses. The Rain Canopy is suitable for both private and commercial spas without any special plumbing requirements. Available in round, oval, square and rectangular from 12" to 20." **JACLO.**

Circle 126 on Reader Reply Card

Condensing tankless water heater

The newly launched N-0841MC is a super-efficient hybrid condensing unit.

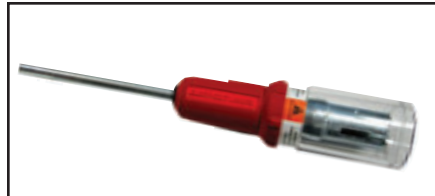


The unit's technology yields an astounding 93% energy efficiency. This residential unit will dramatically decrease the production of carbon dioxide, which will help reduce the emission of greenhouse gases and help contribute to the reversal of global warming. The main component is the new Hybrid Super Heat Exchanger. Two heat exchangers are fused into one, with the primary heat exchanger comprised of copper and the secondary of stainless steel. **Noritz America.**

Circle 127 on Reader Reply Card

Faucet installation tool

The Easy-Cut Jaws™ faucet removal tool (Part #08-0800) quickly and safely cuts through all faucet mounting hard-



ware. Fits 3/8" and larger standard size drill chucks. Works on most faucets with 1/2" NPT mounting shanks. Durable, high-quality bi-metal cutter easily drills away old jam nuts, zinc, brass and plastic. Patented clear chip-guard collects chips for safety and easy clean-up. Made in the USA. Counter display program available. **Kissler & Co. Inc.**

Circle 128 on Reader Reply Card

Toilet/bidet

This patent-pending all-ceramic toilet and bidet washes front and rear with blow dry features, eliminating toilet



paper. With the optional front entry seating, wheelchair users no longer have to pivot 180° to mount, meaning less reliance on caregivers; also helps caregivers aid outsized patents. Restores confidence, dignity and independence, and helps the aging remain independent. 12" rough-in. IAPMO code approval pending. **AquaCleana.**

Circle 129 on Reader Reply Card

Solar water heating

SuperStor Contender Solar glass-lined indirect water heaters for solar thermal applications store hot water from one or more solar collectors; provide electric or boiler backup when the available solar power can't meet hot water demand. Solar-powered, enamel heat exchanger at the bottom of storage tank provides maximum heat transfer from collector fluid into domestic hot water. Backup heat source inside the tank is available in two different series: SB Series indirect water heaters and SE Series indirect water heaters. Both series are available in 50-, 80- and 119-gallon sizes. **Heat Transfer Products.**

Circle 130 on Reader Reply Card

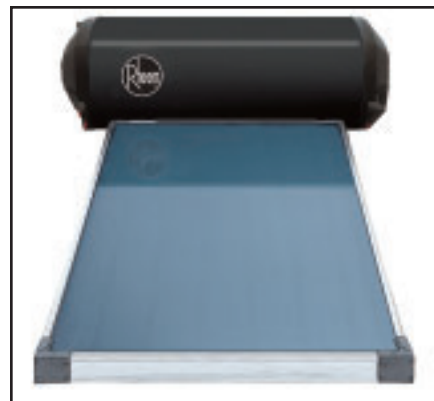
Sink trap

The Gleco Trap is a patented, UPC-approved sink trap that is easy to install and easy for the end user to maintain. Replaces the P-trap to trap sediment or small parts in a translucent plastic bottle. Bottles can be replaced when sediment hardens (plasters, resins, latexes, etc.). Use in art studios, kitchen sinks (with or without a disposer — even dump food waste in the compost bin), mechanic wash-up sinks, or anywhere material can clog waste lines. **Liquid Assets Inc.**

Circle 131 on Reader Reply Card

Solar water heating

Solaraide solar water heating systems combine a storage tank with 1 or 2 collector panels. Operate without pumps or



controllers; rely on the natural process of convection — also called indirect thermosiphoning — to circulate the heat-transfer fluid. Use a specially developed, freeze-proof heat transfer fluid to absorb and deliver heat energy even on cold and overcast days. Offered in two configurations, each carrying a five-year warranty: 47-gal system (RS47-21BP) and 80-gal system (RS80-42BP). **Rheem.**

Circle 132 on Reader Reply Card

Tankless electric water heaters

Tempra™ tankless on-demand electric water heaters' micro-processor control allows the exact water temperature to be set via a knob and digital display, so water temperature won't deviate from the set point. Compact, energy-saving units provide unlimited hot water and reduce water heating bills by 15% to 20%. All-copper piping and heating elements. **Stiebel Eltron.**

Circle 133 on Reader Reply Card



Commercial geothermal heat pumps

The Envision commercial product line offers unit sizes from 3/4 to 25 tons, allowing home and building owners alike to enjoy substantial energy cost savings, improved comfort, whisper-quiet operation and enhanced serviceability. System taps into the free energy found beneath the earth in a ground loop application, or uses a building's internal heat energy by means of a boiler and a cooling tower water loop. Two-speed compressor units reach a 5.0 Coefficient of Performance in heating and a 30 EER in cooling in ground loop applications, saving building owners up to 70% on their utility bills. Two-speed compressor technology improves indoor air quality by allowing extended run-times. The vertical and horizontal residential units range from 2 to 6 tons. **WaterFurnace International.**

Circle 134 on Reader Reply Card

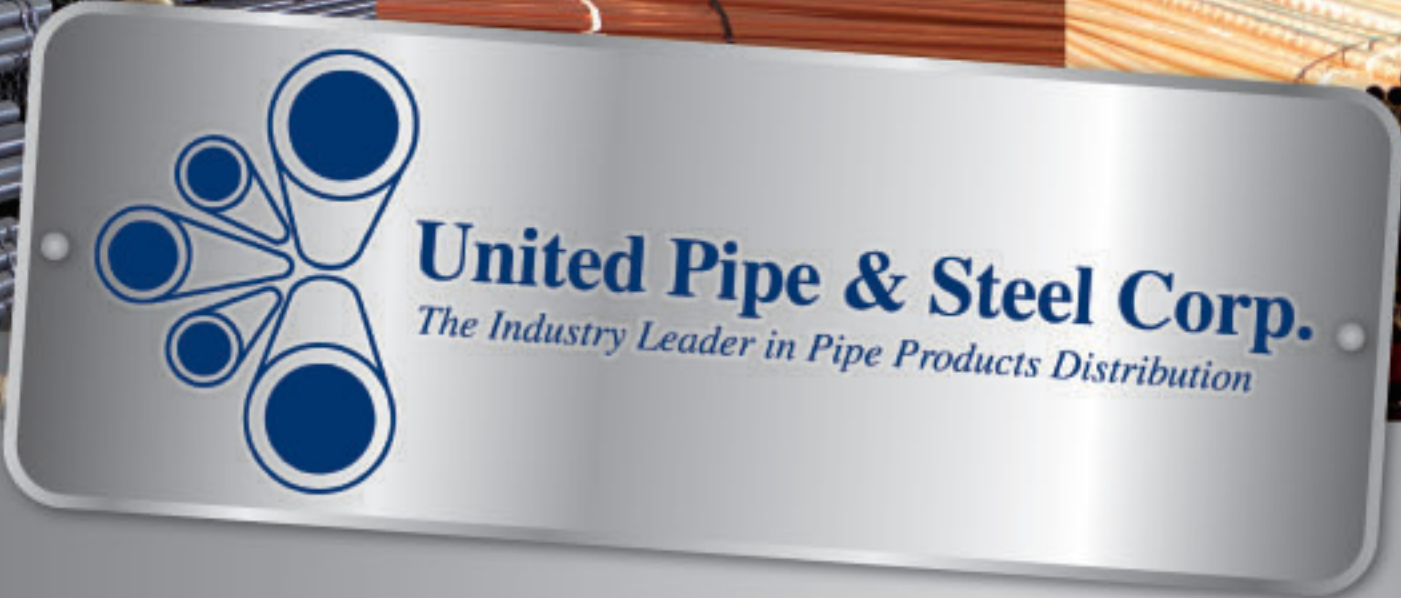


Space-saving water heaters

High Performance Series™ water heaters provide top hot water delivery from a space-saving package. In standard residential first-hour tests, the 25-gallon model (GX2-25S) can provide 155 gallons and the 55-gallon model (GX1-55S) will deliver 200 gallons. The inputs are 78,000 Btuh and 80,000 Btuh. Flue design helps achieve thermal efficiency ratings of 82%. Optimizer™ temperature control system allows water in the tank to be stored at higher temperatures (up to 180°F) while controlling the hot water outlet temperature to a safe and comfortable level. **Bradford White.**

Circle 135 on Reader Reply Card





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Circle 50 on Reader Reply Card

PRICING STRATEGIES

Price increases

The good, the bad and the ugly

BY JANET PACE

Special to THE WHOLESALER

2008 will go down in the wholesale plumbing industry as one of the most prolific with regard to price increases. Our vendors have experienced unprecedented increases in raw material and fuel costs that have ultimately been passed on to us. Other than the hassle involved in updating our system to accommodate these increases, wholesalers do not necessarily view them as a bad thing. Decreases are another matter and my fear is this scenario may be on the horizon. Decreases devalue our inventory and erode our profit margins. Increases — if handled correctly — provide us with an opportunity to temporarily increase our margins.

Vendors handle price increases to their wholesale customers in three basic ways. I call them the *good*, the *bad* and the *ugly*:

- The *good* way is to give wholesalers a grace period to purchase at the old price. This is customarily 30 days. The vendor announces the increase and puts it into effect so wholesalers can load the new prices into their systems. We are then allowed to purchase at the old price for the grace period, but we are able to sell the product at the new price.

- The *bad* way is to announce the increase and put it into effect with no grace period. Wholesalers will usually do a buyout at the old price a few days before the increase so the merchandise will be delivered after the new price is in effect. While we do enjoy a bump in margins from this approach, it can be problematic for us.

The better vendors have made prepa-

rations for the increased demand and can handle the buy out orders without service interruptions to wholesalers. The rest of the vendors have not planned sufficiently for the influx of orders. Their lead times will stretch out and fill rates will suffer. Wholesalers are forced to compensate by ordering

more inventory to carry them through the now-extended lead time. This creates an artificially inflated demand for the vendor's product, which will perpetuate their service problems.

Some manufacturers have realized that artificially increasing their demand in this way is counterproductive to both sides of this industry and they have instituted allocation amounts to help them better plan production during this period of time.

No matter what approach wholesalers may have used to determine how much and what to buy before the increase, we will inevitably run out of something in that vendor's line due to unusual demand or a bad inventory count. When we order again, we usually encounter difficulty in buying at our normal vendor concession target negatively impacting service to our customers and our inventory turnover.

- The *ugly* way is the approach taken by a few vendors in our industry that expect us to bring in the additional inventory well before the effective date of their new price sheet. We are notified that the vendor will continue to accept

orders at current price levels until a date that is one month prior to the date of their increase. These orders must be for immediate shipment and have to ship out before the date of the increase in order to be billed the old price.

Wholesalers have to sell this additional inventory at the old price until the date

The *good* way is to give wholesalers a grace period to purchase at the old price. This is customarily 30 days. The vendor announces the increase and puts it into effect so wholesalers can load the new prices into their systems.

the vendor's new prices become effective in the marketplace. We are, therefore, forced to inflate our inventory and decrease our turns with no dividend on this added investment available to us until the price increase takes effect. This method is the most destructive to our profitability.

We realize that the manufacturers

need these increases and need to get the new pricing into the marketplace so they can maintain their profits. With the exception of commodities that fluctuate often and with little notice, it would seem that some vendor partners could do a better job of working with us on the implementation of price increases. If they need an increase by January 1, it would be far better to announce it as effective December 1 and give us 30 days to purchase at the old price. We would reap the benefit that a grace period offers — and because we would have 30 days to bring in our allocation, the vendor could better manage production requirements. ■

Janet Pace has over 30 years of experience in the wholesale plumbing industry working as the purchasing manager for LCR-M, division of Hajoca; and purchasing manager for Your Other Warehouse when Hajoca owned it and for a time after Home Depot purchased the business. Pace is currently employed by M. Cooper Supply in Mokena, Ill. She can be reached by e-mail at janetp@mcoopermail.com or by calling 708/444-1600.

Cifial moves to larger facility

International plumbing and hardware manufacturer and distributor Cifial USA has moved to a new warehouse and office center in Norcross, Ga., increasing its current space by more than 19,000 square feet. Allowing for improved service, the facility includes a 5,000-square-foot office and 36,000-square-foot warehouse space. The relocation illustrates Cifial's growth and commitment to the greater Atlanta area,



where the company has been based for more than 12 years.

KSD's Neil Kessler completes NYC Marathon



Neil Kessler, president of Woodbridge, N.J.-based KSD, (shown here in brown t-shirt and knit cap) once again competed in — and completed — the New York City Marathon this fall. Kessler's time was a brisk 4 hours, 16 minutes and 32 seconds. Great job, Neil!



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Industry consultant opens doors to booming hotel biz

LINCOLN, CALIF. — Since 1989, Peter Schor has been working in the hotel industry as a bath/plumbing educator, speaker, panelist and columnist. In addition to his column for *The Wholesaler* Schor has a monthly column on baths in *Hotel Design* and is a freelance writer for many hotel publications. He has been an educator or speaker at more than 23 conventions, conferences and events nationally and globally each year. Schor has also conducted more than 19 “Lunch and Learn” sessions for architectural design firms and hotel brands on bathroom products and design trends in 2008. He consults with bath/plumbing manufacturers in taking their products to the national and global hotel markets.

The hotel industry consists of many segments:

- Hotels
- Boutique hotels
- Resorts
- Time shares
- Condo/hotels
- High-rise luxury condominiums
- Residential homes built by hoteliers and many other niches.

Within the hotel industry, there are architectural design firms, architects, designers, management companies (who operate many brands), hoteliers, hotel brands, purchasing companies, procurement companies, hotel REITs, hotel brokers, construction companies, owners and developers and more. Many of these segments work very closely together.

Several years ago, Schor received an award for his work in helping the Hospitality Design Convention in Las Vegas, have its own Bath and Spa Pavilion. Since that time, the middle to high-end bath/plumbing and architectural products segments have become so big that they have added on one complete additional floor and discontinued having bath and plumbing products in just one location. Last year, The DPHA Association brought 15-plus manufacturers to the convention.

Schor said, “While Hospitality Design, Las Vegas, and the HD Boutique Convention, Miami Beach, are still very vibrant conventions, there are many other, smarter ways to penetrate the four-to-five-star hotel industry.” He has been working the five-star hotel industry in The Middle East (Dubai and else-

where), Western Europe, China, Central and South America, Mexico, the Caribbean, and the entire U.S. He just came back from Bali, Indonesia, from a Five-Star Asia Hotel Conference.

Some headlines in the hotel industry trade news since the \$800-billion federal bailout include the following:

- From The Lodging Conference, (September 26, Arizona): “Forced Optimism Replacing Stunting Shock” contends that the shock at the Wall Street meltdown is being replaced by a boomeranging sense of resurging optimism that all will be okay
- From Hotel Interactive (October 23): “Robust and Healthy Pipeline Belies Industry Fear” — a headline from the BITAC WEST hotel conference held recently.

Particularly in light of this country’s current economic situation, the U.S. is a bargain as a travel destination for most of the world — along with being fun and safe. In fact, 1.3 million Chinese will be visiting the U.S. in 2009 and tons of Western European will vacation here.

Schor’s message to the plumbing industry collectively in these tough economic residential times is to learn how to work the hotel industry correctly and effectively. His suggestions for this industry are:

- Manufacturers — The demand for U.S. “Western culture” bath/plumbing products in four- and five-star hotels in places such as China and the Middle East is booming. Come on, guys, it’s time for us to think and act globally. We can compete. Yes, you will have to find distribution channels and representation in each area. There is gold out there in many places for our products.
- Plumbing wholesalers (with and without showrooms) — Take a good look at your local cities, towns and market areas for upcoming projects. Look for all of the industry types of projects and hotel industry players.
- Plumbing/bath showrooms — There is a ton of business out there in your local market area. There are high-end boutique hotels, hotels, resorts, time-shares, condo/hotels, bed and breakfasts, concierge floors, presidential suites and much more.

Schor encourages all of these supply chain members to contact him for a con-

ECi named a DFW Top 100 private company

FORT WORTH, TEXAS — eCommerce Industries Inc. (ECi), a leader in industry-specific information technology solutions, was recently named one of the Top 100 private companies in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. This annual list is compiled by the *Fort Worth Business Press*, a weekly periodical that is a staple of the local business community. ECi ranked No. 47 in the overall standings.

“This honor reaffirms our approach to

enterprise technology,” said Dan Pritchard, president and CEO of ECi. “In recent years, ECi has strategically invested in new resources and new markets, as well as in new and innovative technology for our traditional base. And thanks to our highly talented workforce, we are beginning to realize the benefits of these positions.”

For more information, e-mail info@eci2.com, go to www.eci2.com or call 800/959-3367.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Conbraco receives accreditation



Conbraco Engineering Laboratory received a Certificate of Accreditation (Number L2185) from the Laboratory Accreditation Bureau. Conbraco “has been accredited for technical competence in the major fields and related disciplines on the approved scope of accreditation. They have met the requirements set forth in L-A-B’s policies and procedures, and all requirements of ISO/IEC 17025:2005, General Requirements for the competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories.” This is effective September 18, 2008 through September 18, 2011.

sultation. Currently, he is screening bath/plumbing finished goods manufacturers of low- to middle-end products for the hotel market for an event of 1,100 hotel owners who have, collectively, 4,200-plus properties in the U.S. For those interested,

contact Schor as soon as possible, as the event is being held in March 2009.

Schor can be reached at e-mail pschor@dynamicresultsinc.com, on the web www.dynamicresultsonline.com or by calling 916/408-5346.

Val-Fit migrates to Prophet 21

STONE MOUNTAIN, GA. — Val-Fit, a leading national master distributor of butt-weld fittings, flanges and forged steel, has “gone live” on Activant Prophet 21 ERP software. The new system was installed in both Los Angeles and Atlanta and will allow Val-Fit to continue growing, while improving efficiencies and controls.

“Val-Fit’s growth in the last five years has been amazing,” said Val-Fit presi-

dent Gyl Grinberg. “Not only do we need a robust platform to deal with the size of company we have become but it will also accommodate our future planned expansion. I am extremely proud of how our employees dealt with such a difficult change, and I truly believe we will improve our customer service once we iron out all the kinks.”

For additional information, visit www.valfit.com.

OBITUARY

Andrew Vanti, former NAOHSM president

EAST PETERSBURG, PA. — The National Association of Oil Heating Service Managers recently lost a former leader of its organization, Andrew “Andy” Vanti, at the age of 77. Vanti served as the national secretary and then as president of NAOHSM from 1986 to 1996. He was retired from Dupuis Oil of Pawtucket, R.I. and Marvel-DeBross Oil of Taunton, Mass., and he was an Army veteran of the Korean conflict.

As a testament to his contributions and respect in the industry, in 1999 Vanti was the recipient of the Hugh McKee Award, the highest recognition of achievement from NAOHSM. In addition

to being an active member of NAOHSM, both nationally and in the Rhode Island Chapter, Vanti was also a member of the American Legion for more than 56 years. He served the Legion as state finance chairman and was president of the Convention Corp. of the R.I. American Legion at the time of his death.

Surviving are Vanti’s two sons Andrew and Anthony, his partner Gail, two grandsons, two granddaughters and his treasured Himalayan cat Alexander.



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INDUSTRY NEWS

Banner showroom opens to the public; garners raves

BUFFALO GROVE, ILL. — The long-anticipated opening of Banner Plumbing & Heating Supplies' showroom at 1020 E. Lake Cook Road here has finally arrived. The 15,000-square-foot space filled with opulent displays allows customers to see and interact with an abundance of state-of-the-art products in the industry.

The showroom was designed to create a comfortable environment for guests to peruse a broad array of the finest product lines available on the market for kitchens and baths. To enhance the experience, Banner staff is on hand to greet guests and guide them to specific areas targeted to meet their unique needs. Designers will also be available to work with customers to help them plan unique kitchens and baths for their homes.

"We built this showroom in response to a need expressed by our customers to see and experience fixtures before making selections," said Gene Hara, the vice president of the company, who is on-site in Buffalo Grove.

The new showroom boasts 61 decorative lines, 38 of which are new to Banner Plumbing. Popular products by TOTO, Hansgrohe, Porcher, Elkay and Franke will be featured in many of the displays. Twenty-three of the newer luxury lines to Banner, including Bear Creek Glass custom blown vessels, HP Austin handmade copper sinks with intricate basketweave front designs, Quiescence hand carved granite and marble sinks and vessels, Vanity Flair custom-crafted vanities with more than 40 designs and finishes, Zoli Loft & Bath contemporary bathroom furniture with glass tops and leather fronts and the Roborn cold storage medicine cabinet that is the size of a standard medi-

cine cabinet but houses a mini fridge, will be showcased as well.

"We tried to provide a unique opportunity for customers by installing a host of interactive areas," explained Michelle Henderson, showroom manager and head of the design team responsible for the showroom. "Guests can turn faucets on and off, flush toilets, schedule private after-hours appointments to use the tubs and showers (private dressing rooms and towels will be supplied) and can experience the Neorest by TOTO in one of our guest bathrooms. We want our customers to feel good about their purchases."

The showroom has eight working tubs, 16 working lavatory faucets, 18 working kitchen faucets and many toilets that demonstrate different flushing technologies. Guests can pause to see their favorite TV shows when the Séura mirror is set for the television function. Touch screen kiosks throughout describe many of the products. There's even a working doggie wash on the floor.

The displays were created with clean lines so as not to distract customers from focusing on the products. Henderson and her team were very aware that people would be making purchases that they would be living with for many years. To further enhance the shopping experience, specialty coffees and other beverages are available to shoppers.

"It was our strong desire to set the standard for excellence in the industry by providing our customers, wholesale and retail alike, with the highest quality and broadest selection of products available on the marketplace," noted Lee Greenspon, CEO of Banner. "Throughout the history and growth of this company, I have always prided myself on our abil-



Banner Plumbing & Heating Supplies' showroom in Buffalo Grove, Ill., features 61 decorative lines and has eight working tubs, 16 working lavatory faucets, 18 working kitchen faucets and many toilets that demonstrate different flushing technologies.

ity to meet all of the plumbing product needs of our broad customer base. The showroom at Banner in Buffalo Grove is another step in that direction."

The new showroom will be open to the public Monday through Friday, 9

a.m. until 4:30 p.m., or by special appointment. The Buffalo Grove warehouse is open from 6 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Visit www.bannerplumbing.com or call 847/520-6100 to learn more.

ABCO Refrigeration hosts 28th annual EXPO

LONG ISLAND CITY, N.Y. — ABCO Refrigeration Supply Corp., a leading wholesale distributor of HVACR products in the Northeast, hosted its 28th annual ABCO EXPO on November 5 in Queens, N.Y. The EXPO is one of the largest independent HVACR trade shows in the country and has grown to become one of the industry's most trusted sources of up-to-date industry information and product education. The show attracts more than 4,000 attendees.

In excess of 200 manufacturers of

HVACR equipment and supplies, including Mitsubishi Electric, Johnson Controls/Luxaire, Emerson/Copeland, Nordyne/Maytag, DuPont, Scotsman, Heatcraft, Reznor and Tecumseh showcased their new products at this premier industry event.

Additionally, the Maytag Repairman was on hand at the Maytag booth to represent the quality, reliability and dependability of the Maytag brand, as well as to promote and highlight the benefits of becoming a Maytag dealer.

Ward Manufacturing selects Datalliance VMI

CINCINNATI — Datalliance, a leading independent provider of Vendor Managed Inventory and other e-commerce services, announced that Ward Manufacturing has selected the Datalliance VMI service. Ward Manufacturing, a leading manufacturer of pipefittings, maintains offices in Canada and the U.S., and sells its products to a network of more than 600 wholesalers throughout North America.

Matt Weigle, manager-information technology at Ward Manufacturing, explained, "By selecting Datalliance, we will be able to eliminate the time consuming elements of the VMI process and rely on their expertise. Their software-as-a-service architecture and extensive VMI experience allows Datalliance to assume a majority of the effort required to effectively maintain our VMI environment and also provides greater agility in implementing new customers. Through this partnership with Datalliance we will realize a reduction in IT resources need-

ed to manage VMI, thereby lowering our costs and allowing us to focus on our core business and other value-added opportunities."

Tibor Egervary, vice president-marketing and sales with Ward Manufacturing, added, "From a sales and marketing perspective, we are anticipating traditional VMI benefits, including increased sales, reduced order errors, improved turns for our customers and expanded product penetration. Just as importantly, I expect our sales staff to use Datalliance VMI as a strategic tool to build partnerships with customers who value not only our products but our support services as well. These are the customers who see VMI as a tool to help grow sales and improve their profitability. Datalliance's reporting capabilities are flexible, accurate and user friendly, making it easier for our customers to take full advantage of VMI."

For more information, visit www.datalliance.com.



Jaclo offers upgrade kit for older model showerheads

Upgrading your client's shower is easy with JACLO! The Renovator allows for the replacement of an old showerhead with a unique new shower system, using the shower's existing valves and outlets. Using one shower outlet, a slide bar replaces the showerhead, to which a handshower and/or showerhead can be attached. 800/852-3906.

INDUSTRY NEWS

PVF segment holding strong despite faltering economy

(Continued from page 60.)

with speculation only a shadow of its former self.

Expect a steady recovery of such overdone downsizing as occurred in October to exhibit a steady climb in the months ahead. But this will reflect a muted increase, due to the limitations of a global recession.

Unemployment casts shadow over expanding recession

With a longer, deeper recession casting its shadow over America's immediate economic future, unemployment is

now expected to be as bad as in the two previous downturns — 2003 and 1992. Most economic observers, including myself, had expected the unemployment rate to avoid the severe (8% to 9 1/2%) rates reached during the last jobless peaks. However, the global scope of the current gathering recession storms will affect exports, America's No. 1 pillar of strength during the past year of financial deleveraging.

Statistics indicate that those unemployed for more than 27 weeks have already reached nearly 23% of those registered out of a job. This approaches

the peak of the 1992 and 2003 troughs. Also ominous is the number of people looking for jobs or now working part-time, which is estimated to be the highest in 15 years.

If this trend continues, expect the unemployment percentage to rise well above the 6.5% mark originally forecast. How much the Baby Boomer generation retirement will cut into the available employment pool will depend on the intensity of the global recession on America's businesses. With 401k's and other retirement plans severely truncated, many potential retirees will likely

have to extend their working life, if the jobs are available.

Metals implosion hit by global recession

The natural resource surge that was powered by the unprecedented demand of such major emerging nations as China, India, Brazil and Russia is in the midst of a veritable freefall. Much of this reversal of fortune is due to the sharp slowdown in exports and international trade, which has been the spark-plug in generating the stupendous growth of previously agrarian-based economies.

Chief of these nations is China, where consumption of steel, copper, zinc, nickel scrap and aluminum has led to the seemingly insatiable demand for and the soaring prices of such critical resources, basic to industrial production as well as to the expanding construction sector in developing economies.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, China is the primary progenitor of the downward slide, as well as having caused the previous price inflation. The financial publication claims that China has been mainly responsible for almost all of this outsized demand expansion. This includes 87% in zinc, 79% in nickel, 60% in aluminum and 59% in steel.

The abrupt halt in China's post-Olympic purchases, as well as a government-directed restraint on real estate development, has reversed both the demand as well as the pricing of global base metals. This combination of circumstances may have instigated the resultant crunch, but it's certainly in tandem with the global recession that most of the world's nations are now experiencing. ■

To all my industry friends

IN ADDITION to my columns and Q&As in *The Wholesaler* and *PHC News*, you can now get to my daily economic and business development reports by logging on: www.theworldreport.org, which gets to a masterpage. In the middle is a band which suggests that you "click here to get to Morrie's page."

This daily activity is sponsored by the greater *Palm Springs Desert Sun*, which has been designated by the parent Gannett Publishing Company to develop ongoing blogging programs to prove that this method can become an ongoing analysis of what "makes the world go round." On major subject matter, my blog has proved the most popular of all; primarily because of the critical elements in which everyone is currently very interested.

I would greatly appreciate your support and that of anyone you know that has computer access. When they do get into "Morrie's Page" please have everyone recommend the blog, since it's the only way that interest can be gauged.

Your support is appreciated. Thank you.

Morris R. Beschloss, a 48-year veteran of the pipe, valves and fittings industry, serves as PVF and economic analyst for THE WHOLESALER.

Marketing is marketing, no matter what the medium

(Continued from page 8.)

tion from the customer's perspective. Gimmicks like movies, music, page-turn style web catalogs lose their appeal in a matter of seconds. For example, our rule of thumb for any introductory movie or slide show is that it must last no more than 3/4 of a second. I know that sounds very short but remember, you want customers to use your site several times a day and that cool movie or cute little song gets real old, real fast. You can make it a little longer if you change it often, like weekly, but I think short and sweet is still the best idea.

- Don't create more clicks than necessary to get to the heart of your site. I have seen way too many sites that have an opening that shows "loading" for what seems to be forever, then shows a pretty company logo then says "Click here" to enter the site. Why else would I have come to the site. I am certainly not visiting the site to view the company logo. Again, these things get old fast. I think most sites have these annoying features because nobody at the wholesaler uses the site on a regular basis. If the head of marketing had to endure the movie or "click here to enter" every day the way the customer does, he would understand the problem. (Another reminder from last month, your site should be the "home page" for every PC in your company so your people see and experience the good, bad and ugly of your site every day.)

- Streamline the most used features of your site. Getting to order entry, location information and other frequently visited pages should be easy and highly visible. This is one area that the site analytics software (that I discussed last month) can help you to adjust. These packages will tell you where your visitors go on your site so you won't have to guess which pages are important to your users. The only caveat is that some hard-to-find pages might be important but never visited because they are too hard to find.

- Some white-space is good. Some sites are so crowded and chock full of pictures, buttons and menus that a normal person might struggle to find the area they want. Remember that many contractors got into that business because they were good with their hands but maybe not the strongest readers. The idea is to have a clean look, limited number of choices on each page and to have consistency of operation throughout the site.

- Use good design principles. Regular web users expect your site to follow the rules like: If text is underlined, it's a clickable link to something. When there is a link that is shown as a picture with text beside it, you ought to be able to click on the text or on the picture to follow the link.

- Don't link to manufacturer sites if they help a visitor find a competitor. Many wholesalers' sites link to a manufacturer's site. When your customer gets to that site there might be a handy, "Find a distributor in your area" button on that site. They came through your site and now your manufacturer "partner" is showing them other options. You may think these are harmless but I don't. Also manufacturers often change their sites in ways that "break" the link that you set up on your site. Many of the wholesaler sites that I visited recently had broken links to internal pages and external pages.

- If you use a map company, make sure that their map is correct. You cannot assume that the map company accurately designates your company's location or that their driving directions are correct. Not a big deal, but you should check it.

- Get rid of your "Under Construction" pages. These serve no purpose and aggravate customers when they click down into nothing. Further, that "under construction" page with a 2005 date on it tells a visitor that your site is neglected and not a candidate for another

visit. Having no page is better than under construction.

- Test your site using all the common browsers. Good sites can accommodate all browsers and don't use browser specific features.

- Consider registering your company with Google Local Business, www.google.com/local/add. It is free and it helps local surfers to find you on the web, then provides information about you and where you are located.

- Don't use free maps or free hosting that include advertising for someone else. Most sites are congested enough without adding a third party's distracting ads. Plus there are very cost effective ways to get maps and web hosting without the junk advertising.

- Always copyright your material. Sure some people might steal your good work anyhow, but it puts everyone on notice that you value the work on your site. This is especially important when you create or purchase product information and a competitor steals it for his web site.

I know I have ranged into a lot of topics in this column. To summarize:

- You need a web presence
- Create a professional looking site for each type of customer you want to serve

- Use common sense marketing principles in low-tech and high-tech marketing

- Measure your performance and return on investment.

Lastly, have a great holiday season and great 2009. ■

Rich Schmitt is president of Schmitt Consulting Group Inc., a management consulting firm focused on improving the profitability of distribution and manufacturing clients.
www.go-scg.com

Rich is also the co-owner of Schmitt ProfitTools Inc. (SPI), a business producing print, CD-ROM, web and palm-based catalogs as well as pricing management and analysis software for wholesalers.
www.go-spi.com

CLASSIFIED ADS

Heart

(Continued from page 74.)

learned was a great need — housing.

Homes For Our Troops — and others designed to assist our veterans — holds a particularly special place in my heart. As many of you know, my cousin Matt, who is like a little brother to me, served with the Army's 3rd Infantry Division during the initial stages of the war. He was in one of the first convoys that initiated in Kuwait and stormed across Iraq, neutralizing the Republican Guard and later capturing one of the presidential palaces. During that early stage, he went over 30 days without a shower, sleeping in trenches they dug in the sand under their Humvees and, as you can imagine, never knowing what might lie in wait.

Matt was highly decorated during his basic and specialized training as well as for his bravery on the battlefield. When he returned home from his tour a year later, our family held a big bash in his honor to celebrate. On the outside he seemed happy to be home and see all of us. But little did we know just how dramatically he had been affected by this experience. Today, he has battled his way back, and now is almost his old self again. I know that in reality he is so fortunate, as there are thousands of service members who have had a much tougher road. I am so humbled by their strength.

Organizations such as Homes For Our Troops are providing a much-deserved new start for these brave men and women who are struggling to rebuild their lives. While we can never repay these veterans for their sacrifices, there are ways we can positively impact their lives. Homes For Our Troops and the veterans it serves would be so grateful for any support you can offer — product donations, volunteering your time and/or services, financial assistance or just spreading the word.

You might also want to share this information with all of your employees and customers. Perhaps some would like to participate on a personal level. Or maybe you'll consider matching employees' personal contributions to a certain level.

Truly, I am sure that anything you could share would be much appreciated. Several companies in our industry are already actively supporting Homes For Our Troops with product, services and donations. Obviously, with even greater participation, more veterans can be aided.

I encourage you to check out their website at www.homesforourtroops.org. In giving to others, we often receive so much more in return. ■

Mary Jo Martin is editorial director of THE WHOLESALER. She can be reached at 972/964-0825 or editor@thewholesaler.com.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

(More classified ads on page 72.)

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(Classified ads begin on page 71)

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VIEWPOINT

Is there room in your heart?



BY MARY JO MARTIN
Editorial director

Every so often, we have an opportunity to make a major difference in someone else's life. Choosing what to do in those situations is, of course, not always easy. However, when the need is great and the beneficiary so deserving, it can be one of the most rewarding decisions we'll ever make.

Mike Adelizzi, ASA executive vice president, used the platform of the Convention's Annual Member Luncheon to introduce just such a worthy cause to our industry. I encourage you to learn more about this inspirational

group, called Homes For Our Troops.

ASA has identified Homes For Our Troops as a select charitable partner. At the luncheon, Adelizzi introduced its president and founder John Gonsalves, who spent a few moments explaining the group's mission. He then shared a short video presentation that really tugged at my heart — and left quite a few moist eyes in the room.

The video featured a veteran from the war in Iraq who shared his experience of being severely injured, coming back home and realizing that he couldn't support his family anymore in the trade in which he had previously worked. As a multiple amputee, he and his wife were struggling to make ends meet and provide a home for their family. Enter Homes For Our Troops. Thanks to the commitment of Gonsalves and the generosity of donors and volunteers, this veteran, along with numerous others, now have homes adapted specially for their needs — with no mortgage.

Founded in 2004, this non-profit, non-partisan 501(c)(3) organization was designed to assist severely injured service members and their immediate families by raising donations of money, building materials and professional labor, and coordinating the process of building them new homes or adapting their existing homes for handicapped accessibility. All services provided by Homes For Our Troops are at no cost to the veterans.

As of presstime, the organization has completed 33 homes and has a number of others in varying phases of development. Their goal is to build 100 more over the next few years. Of course, with your help that goal will be much more attainable — and could even be surpassed. In total, the average cost for each of these homes is more than \$250,000.

Gonsalves is a true visionary. A construction supervisor, he was touched by the many news stories he heard about service members who had suffered severe brain trauma, amputation or other serious injuries.

He went on a mission to find a way of improving their quality of life. After meeting with some of these veterans and visiting hospitals like Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Gonsalves began to formulate a plan based on what he

(Turn forward to Heart ... page 71.)

From the publisher's desk

As 2008 comes to a close, it's only fitting that I take this opportunity to extend holiday greetings to all of our readers and advertisers.

We appreciate the loyalty you continue to show us, and we pledge to maintain the same high-quality editorial content and columnists that you have come to expect. We also will continue to provide our advertisers with an outstanding vehicle in which to promote their companies, along with existing and new value-added opportunities.

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On behalf of everyone at TMB Publishing Co., our very best to you for 2009.



Tom M. Brown Jr.
Publisher, The Wholesaler
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