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# WHOLESALER®

News of Plumbing • Heating • Cooling • Industrial Piping Distribution



Fort Worth, Texas-based Morrison Supply Co. has built a highly diversified distribution business, with 80 locations and 30 showrooms across Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Kansas and Louisiana. Last year, Morrison significantly expanded its appliance offering by acquiring Builders Discount Appliance Mart in San Antonio. Read much more about Morrison and the Appliance Mart on page 32.

## Allied Group buys Specialty Piping Products

HOUSTON — The Allied Group acquired Specialty Piping Products, located in St. Charles, Ill. Now known as Allied Chrome, the company joins Allied Fitting, Warren Alloy Valve and Fitting, Tectubi Raccordi S.p.A. and TRILAD Fittings and Flanges as part of the Allied Group of Companies. (Turn to Allied Chrome... page 47.)

## Modern Supply promotes water conservation

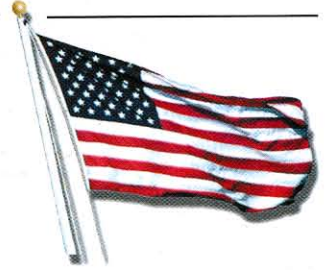
KNOXVILLE, TENN. — Modern Supply Company has teamed up with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense program to offer consumers water-efficient product choices. Products are available in their Knoxville, Chattanooga and Johnson City, Tenn., showrooms and at branch locations in Sevierville and Crossville, Tenn., and Bristol, Va. (Turn to WaterSense... page 47.)

Some changes could be in store —

## NKBA survey reveals 11 top kitchen and bath trends for 2011

HACKETTSTOWN, N.J. — More than 100 designers, who are members of the National

Kitchen & Bath Association and have designed kitchens or bathrooms during the last three months of 2010, participated in an NKBA survey to reveal design trends in the marketplace for 2011. The results of this survey suggest that there will be some changes in the direction that kitchen and bath styles will take this year.



Following are seven kitchen and four bathroom trends poised to take hold in 2011. These are overall trends across the U.S. and Canada — although they won't necessarily appear in all geographic areas.

### Kitchens

- **Shake it up** — The Shaker style began a rise in popularity in 2009 and gained momentum in 2010. By the end of the year, Shaker had supplanted Contemporary as the second most popular style used by NKBA (Turn to Changing... page 78.)

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APRIL 2011

# THE WHOLESALER

## The Front Page

More distributors are entering the appliance business as a way to gain a more diversified market base. Morrison Supply Co., based in Texas and with branches throughout the U.S., began selling appliances five years ago and recently bought the Appliance Mart to provide a ready customer base for its lines of high-end kitchen and laundry appliances, plus lighting and cabinet door/hardware products. Story begins on page 32.



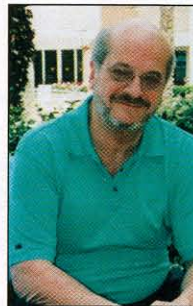
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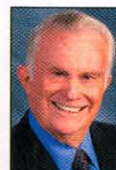
## Martin's Corner

### American Supply Association



John Martin is an enthusiastic booster of industry associations in general and the ASA in particular. Here he provides compelling reasons to join the ASA, along with insights from ASA executive vice president Michael Adelizzi, along with several industry insiders' thoughts on the ASA.....72

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## Next Month

Watch to see who will be inducted into THE WHOLESALER's PVF Hall of Fame!

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[info@andersonmetals.com](mailto:info@andersonmetals.com)

See contact information on page 82

## REHAU forms strategic alliance with Climate Automation Systems

LEESBURG, VA. — REHAU has established a strategic alliance with Climate Automation Systems (CAS) to market the new, web-enabled REHAU Smart Controls system. This advanced interior comfort control system will facilitate the integrated operation of residential building technologies, including radiant heating and cooling systems and solar and renewable energy sources, to promote an optimal balance of comfort and energy efficiency.

“Our alliance with CAS will facilitate the next-generation operation of building technology solutions, providing homeowners with greater control over interior comfort as it relates to achieving more energy efficient systems operation,” said Bill Johansen, director of construction services at REHAU. “This is in alignment with our strategic focus toward providing customers with sustainable

building technology solutions on an integrated, whole-systems level, and helping them to meet more aggressive energy saving goals both today and in the future.”

The strategic alliance unites the foundational engineering capabilities of REHAU with the climate automation software development competence of CAS, particularly with the company’s ENV system.

“The ENV system is the first of its kind to bring intelligent climate control technologies, previously exclusive to large-scale commercial buildings, into the residential and mid-range commercial market,” said Ron Antinori, CEO and founder of CAS. “It balances all aspects of the home environment — from forced-air to radiant systems — and incorporates real-time weather data, a statistical database and established

rules that create a better home climate, while also reducing the impact on our earth’s environment.”

The new REHAU Smart Controls system will enable real-time onsite or remote management and optimization of HVAC system functioning, including hot water heater, forced air and radiant systems, from any Web-enabled device. Working to achieve maximum energy efficiency, it will facilitate the ability to set distinct comfort settings for each controlled zone, while recording and reporting critical system information through an Internet-accessible database.

The system is designed to interface with weather service data and to automatically adjust settings in anticipation of predicted weather condition changes. It will also provide immediate system troubleshooting data to the homeowner and designated service contractors, accessed through an easy-to-use online dashboard that enables quick, efficient diagnosis of potential issues.

Visit [www.na.rehau.com/controls](http://www.na.rehau.com/controls).

## Victoria + Albert is ASID partner

MOUNT PLEASANT, S.C. — Victoria + Albert announced their professional membership in the ASID (American Society of Interior Designers) as Industry Partner. Victoria + Albert will

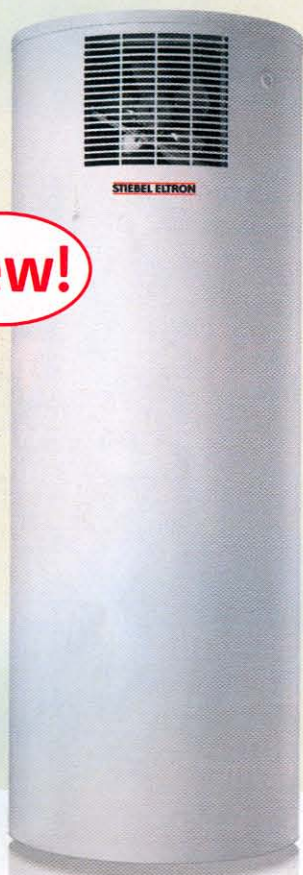
**victoria+albert®**

play an active role in supporting the ASID community through regional and national events and by developing Continuing Education programs.

“We are excited to partner with the design community and to offer support and service through educational programs,” said Javier Korneluk, vice president-sales for Victoria + Albert. “Our company is committed to providing products of the highest quality design, and we look forward to working with the ASID to educate and collaborate on relevant issues of bath design.”

Visit [www.vandabaths.com](http://www.vandabaths.com).

## INTRODUCING THE ACCELERA® 300 HEAT PUMP WATER HEATER: ACCELERATE YOUR SAVINGS!



### Energy from nature.

The new Accelera® 300 can extract up to 80% of its energy requirements from the air around it. Heat pumps have been around for decades, but a heat pump water heater is a brand new concept. The Accelera® 300 works like an air conditioner - but instead of dumping the heat outdoors, it puts it into the water.

- 10 YEAR WARRANTY
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- 80 GALLON STORAGE CAPACITY
- REDUCES HOT WATER COSTS BY UP TO 80 %
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The Accelera’s compressor and fan consume only 1 kWh of electricity to generate the heat equivalent of 3 - 5 kWh. The efficiency of the unit goes up with increasing ambient air temperatures. This ground breaking efficiency redefines what a water heater is capable of, and what savings can really mean !

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Simply the Best

See contact information on page 82



### Stainless steel countertops

**Rigidized Metals, Stainless Living Division** custom metal countertops, Booth C-4036, are made from textured and plain stainless steel and copper. A hard-working countertop supplements a busy kitchen lifestyle, and stainless steel blends well with almost any décor. Heat-resistant, anti-bacterial surface requires minimal maintenance. Copper provides rustic kitchen styling, bringing warmth to kitchen spaces. There is a wide offering of edge profiles, backsplash styles and corner options. For commercial and residential applications; available with integral sinks.

[www.stainlessliving.com](http://www.stainlessliving.com)

### Efficient faucets

**La Torre Faucets** offers its "ECO Cartridge" in many single control faucet series. This unique cartridge has a tiered step with a "bump" or stop when lifting the handle about 1/2 way up, limiting the amount of water flow by 20%-40%. With an additional lift of the handle, it will go to the full flow of water when needed.

[www.latorre-spa.it](http://www.latorre-spa.it)

### Towel warmer

All **Mr. Steam Series 200** towel warmers offer quality, design and performance. Electric heated models have an energy-efficient stainless-steel heater for controlled, quiet heat



and durable all-welded steel construction. Each unit comes standard with an aromatherapy oil well. Available in polished chrome, white or oil-rubbed bronze finish. 5-year limited warranty. Electric models are UL/CUL listed and operate on 120VAC household current.

[www.mrsteam.com](http://www.mrsteam.com)

### Quick-connect shower panels

**Jet-Pro Shower Spas**, Booth C-4480, turn the shower into a "spa retreat quickly and easily. Shower columns (panels) are pending IAPMO approval and use the bathroom's existing shower valve; to install the panel, remove the shower arm, quick-connect to the 1/2" I.P.S connection and fasten to the wall, all in 15 minutes or so. Units tested under normal water pressure and engineered to work effectively. Panels come in a wide variety of colors and finishes.

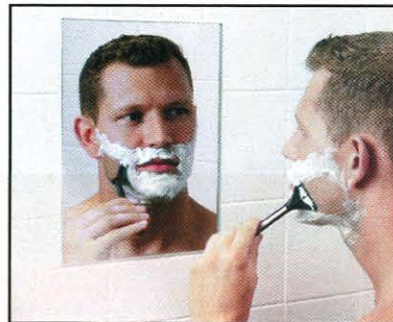
[www.jetproshower spas.com](http://www.jetproshower spas.com)



### Shower mirror

The innovative, fogless **ClearMirror** for the bathroom and shower helps set customers apart and allows them to make an elegant statement to overnight guests. Energy efficient, permanent, safe, easy to install and UL/C-UL listed.

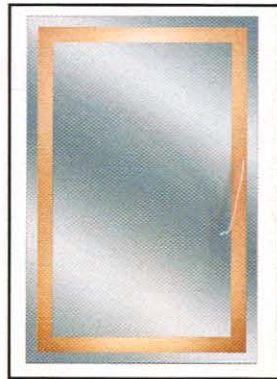
[www.aprtations.com](http://www.aprtations.com)



### Back-lit mirrors

Back-lit mirrors provide innovative bathroom lighting. **Aptations'** Sergent brand of large wall-mounted bathroom vanity mirrors are "x" and can be mounted horizontally or vertical. Bright fluorescent bulbs cast a warm halo of light through the frosted glass on the edge of the mirror. The units come in three decorative designs. The Sergena brand is adding a large side-lighted wall mirror and a mirror that pivots, which is ideal for small bathrooms.

[www.aprtations.com](http://www.aprtations.com)



### Elegant bath faucets

The **Berwick Collection** from **American Standard** combines elegance and precision to complete this full line of bathroom faucets. With ribbon-like style, this collection is clas-



sic, yet sleek in design. Brings a renewed look to any bathroom. The manufacturer offers a full selection of body sprays, rain heads, hand showers and diverter valves.

[www.americanstandard-us.com](http://www.americanstandard-us.com)



### Stainless steel tubs

**Diamond Spas'** stainless steel elliptical tub features gentle curves and elegant design. These luxury tubs deliver the ultimate bathing experience with a deep-set design for full-body immersion. Stainless steel delivers top quality and durability with flexible design possibilities. All Diamond Spas products are fabricated from recycled sheet metal and are 100% recyclable.

[www.diamondspas.com](http://www.diamondspas.com)

### Grab bars

**Great Grabz** Unique Touch line of acrylic decorative grab bars and bathroom accessories. Beautifully crafted bathroom "jewelry" pieces provide a



high level of clarity and depth of color. A coordinated series of accessories and cabinetry hardware is offered in more than 14 translucent color selections, 13 Opaque colors and Glow in the Dark bar that will stay illuminated for up to 10 hours. Grab bars and towel bars come in a full variety of sizes and offer a lifetime warranty.

[www.greatgrabz.com](http://www.greatgrabz.com)

### Magnification mirrors

No showroom should be without a bathroom magnification mirror! The minimalist rectangular LED vanity mirror, the traditionally styled, round LED wall mounted mirror and the minimalist rectangular LED wall mounted mirror from **Kimball and Young** are all being upgraded with this new technology which casts a bright, warm light to aid in grooming. Even with significantly brighter lighting levels, these new LED mirrors remain very energy efficient, and since an LED diode will last up to 50,000 hours, these mirrors are virtually maintenance free.

[www.kimballyoung.com](http://www.kimballyoung.com)





### Undercounter basins

The Marquee™ collection of undercounter lavatories made of premium vitreous china come in three sizes, four shapes and six different surfaces, creating an astonishing 96 choices. Choose from four basin shapes: round, oval, square and rectangular. Every style in the collection is available in three sizes: grande, medium and petite. EverClean® permanent glaze inhibits the growth of stains, mold and mildew; available on all fully glazed models. ADA compliant. Mounting kit included. **Porcher.**

[www.porcher-us.com](http://www.porcher-us.com)

### Indoor kitchen collection

The 2011 DCS line of kitchen appliances offers durable and luxurious products. The collection includes a



dual fuel range with convection cooking and a full extension telescopic racking system; a cooktop with Dual Flow Burners™ that create high heat and precision for the lowest constant simmer temperature in the category; the stylish 24" DishDrawer® with Energy Star rating and ultra quiet operation, and a wall oven with 10 cooking modes. **Fisher & Paykel.**

[www.dcsappliances.com](http://www.dcsappliances.com)

### Shower product line

A newly released product line includes aesthetic updates to some popular showerheads as well as the introduction of 30+ new showerheads and accessories. Prominently featured is the innovative Anystream 360™ spray technology, which allows Anystream showerheads to achieve a 360° rotation to the spray adjusting mechanism (handle or faceplate). The user can make small incremental adjustments to the spray of the showerhead and transition effortlessly through an infinite number of sprays. **Speakman Company.**

[www.speakmancompany.com](http://www.speakmancompany.com)



### Automatic faucet system

FixedFlo™ automatic faucet system features non-adjustable water flow technology for ultimate water savings. The FixedFlo™ comes in non-adjustable 0.4gpm, 0.5gpm and 1.0gpm water flow models. The FixedFlo mechanism uses no diaphragm eliminating maintenance. The

faucet works with any aerator or with no aerator. Designed to work in hard water environments using a reliable motor drive with a 5-year warranty. Low lead compliant. Mul-



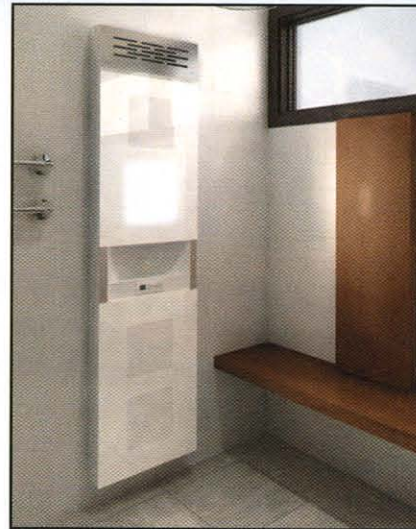
tiple power sources (with back-up power). Various spout models are available.

**Advanced Modern Technologies**  
[www.fixedflo.com](http://www.fixedflo.com)

### Therapy tower

The Vedana is not a shower but a wall-mounted therapy tower that enhances the bath environment and provides five unique therapies. The combination of therapies — aromatherapy, chromatherapy, light therapy, sound therapy and heat therapy — benefits the user's overall well-being. Vedana can help users do the following: unwind by surrounding them in soothing blue light; relax by enveloping them in warmth; dispel negative thoughts as they are transported by inspiring music; recharge their batteries through the regenerative properties of light; feel revitalized from the stimulating aroma of a favorite essential oil. **BainUltra.**

[www.bainultra.com](http://www.bainultra.com)



### Faucet line

The European aesthetic of refined balance and respect for the space were part of the inspiration for the Targa line of faucets. Smooth, slightly curved handles frame the spout in the widespread version. The single lever faucet keeps the slightly curved handle close to its side, in perfect alignment with the base and the faucet. Contemporary and elegant, the Targa is available in polished chrome or Steelnox® satin nickel. The lavatory faucets are also available with a water-saving aerator that reduces water-flow to 1.5 gpm. Currently pending WaterSense approval. **GRAFF.**

[www.graff-faucets.com](http://www.graff-faucets.com)

### Multi-functional shower panel

The Glamm shower panel delivers an exhilarating shower experience, with a full complement of amenities de-

signed for comfort and ease of use. The panel features an oversized showerhead that creates a soothing rain shower effect, as well as a convenient handshower. Adjustable vertical hydro-massage jets produce a customizable shower experience, while a thermostatic mixer perfectly maintains a pre-selected water temperature. Glamm panels have been thoroughly tested to meet government safety standards and are available in two models. **Novellini.**

[www.novellini.com](http://www.novellini.com)



### Faucet collection

The Reef™ Collection styling is architectural and simple, with a square motif. WaterSense™ certified lavatory faucets feature a crystal clear, laminar flow column of water that looks and feels like no other. Collection includes single-handle, two-handle center-set, two-handle widespread, Roman tub and tub/shower faucets in chrome and brushed nickel finishes. The collection features ceramic disc valves and hand-finished metal construction. **Danze.**

[www.danze.com](http://www.danze.com)

### Shampoo faucet

The versatile, 4" to 6" wide-

spread single lever shampoo faucet Model No. 1130 comes in a PVD polished chrome finish. Includes a 5 ft side hose and spray, a ceramic disc cartridge for smooth operation with temperature limit stops, braided supply tubes and a durable zinc diecast lever handle. Easy to install and maintain. ADA compliant; complies with ASME A112.18.1.

**Central Brass Company.**

[www.centralbrass.com](http://www.centralbrass.com)

### Thermostatic shower system

The StyleTherm thermostatic shower system delivers superior technology, high flow rate, independent volume control and ultimate safety. Advanced thermostatic technology is now available at pressure balance pricing. Besides the ability to dial in exact temperatures, StyleTherm requires no diverter valve to toggle between shower applications. Includes anti-scald temperature protection with a safety temperature override button. Higher flow rate easily supplies a variety of shower options. **California Faucets.**

[www.calfaucets.com](http://www.calfaucets.com)





### Faucet collection

The Chelsea H125 faucet collection matches two other pieces from the New York Collection (the Chelsea vanity and tub) making it a fully complemented suite of bath fixtures and plumbing. Lead-free brass in multiple finishes. A flush stream-shaper aerator tilts to control the direction of the water. Flow rate 1.5 gpm; pending WaterSense approval. A unique feature is the height of the faucet; it stands 7½" high, and the handles are 4½" high. **Hastings Tile & Bath.**  
[www.hastingsstilebath.com](http://www.hastingsstilebath.com)

### Sink drain system

A kitchen sink with the PermaClean Drain System has no disposer and drain seams, so there are no unsightly crevices to harbor stains or harmful bacteria. Features a removable, dishwasher-safe splash guard and a strainer basket that can seal to both the drain fitting and the disposer, significantly reducing odor and germs.



Five commercial-style zero radius sinks and six conventional sinks in single, double and 1¾ bowl configurations available. Made of 16-gauge 304 stainless steel. **Lenova.**  
[www.lenovasinks.com](http://www.lenovasinks.com)

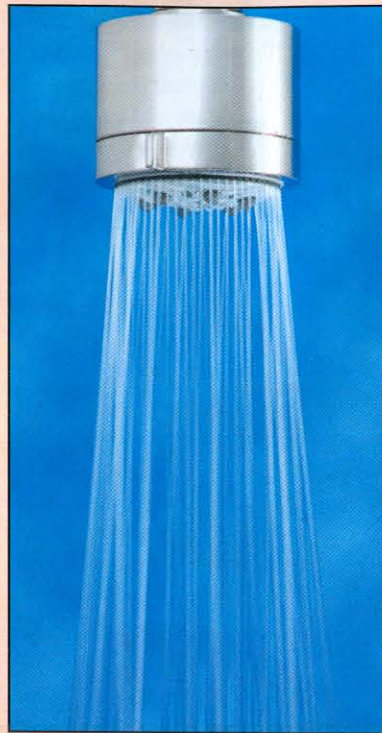
[www.lenovasinks.com](http://www.lenovasinks.com)

### Proximity faucet

The Sense27 collection, designed by the international designer Clodagh, has clean shapes accented with unique hammered accents and a sleek, modern look. A proximity faucet recently introduced to the collection features capacitive sensing capabilities for hands-free control.

Available as a widespread with handles for temperature control while water flow is activated, or a single-lever option with a preset water temperature. **Watermark Designs.**  
[www.watermark-designs.com](http://www.watermark-designs.com)

[www.watermark-designs.com](http://www.watermark-designs.com)



### Innovative showerhead

Featuring a sleek and stylish round head, the Cylindrico 5 showerhead is the best of both worlds, with a modern design and five spray patterns to please the most selective aesthetic and performance requirements. Its 3" spray head features easy-to-clean dark nibs, comes in a plethora of high-quality finishes and is available with innovative low-flow regulators that lower the average flow rate from the standard 2.5 gpm down to an impressive 1.75 gpm. The regulators are engineered to operate effectively with less water consumption, while keeping the pressure and flow of the water feeling strong, as opposed to restrictors, which significantly limit water flow and deliver an unsatisfying shower experience. Is currently pending WaterSense approval. **JACLO.**  
[www.jaclo.com](http://www.jaclo.com)

[www.jaclo.com](http://www.jaclo.com)



The initial series lineup includes a 15"×16" single bowl, a 21"×16" single bowl, a 30"×16" single and a 32"×18" double bowl. Bottom grids are available for each model. **Ukinox.**  
[www.ukinoxusa.com](http://www.ukinoxusa.com)

[www.ukinoxusa.com](http://www.ukinoxusa.com)

### Undermount sinks

The Micro Series undermount sink line offers sharp, professional styling with the hygienic benefit of the new, slightly curved "Micro" radius corner, which allows for easier cleaning. The sinks are 10" deep and hand-fabricated from heavy duty 18-gauge stainless steel. They include basket strainers, mounting hardware and countertop template for easy install.

### Rising wall bath

For the growing number of aging Americans renovating their homes to maintain their independence, the Elevance rising wall bath offers a stylish alternative to walk-in and institutional-looking baths. Multiple design and functionality enhance-



ments give users greater control over bathing. Among the many features that contribute to comfort and accessibility is the extra-wide door opening that allows maximum clearance to lift legs in and out of the bath and allows a user to transfer from a wheelchair. The no-fuss acrylic surface is easy to clean and maintain. The 60"×32"×38" bath fits into the standard 60" bath footprint. **Kohler.**  
[www.kohler.com](http://www.kohler.com)

[www.kohler.com](http://www.kohler.com)



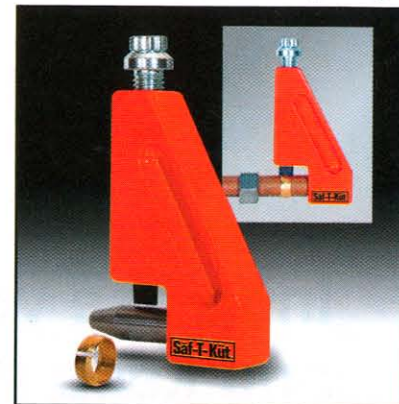
### Shower tray

The Conoflat steel enamel shower tray is available in 17 dimensions from 31.5"×35.4" to 39.4"×55.1". Accessible floor-level installation prevents the user from stumbling; has anti-slip enameling for maximum safety and comfort. An easy-clean finish is an optional extra to promote better hygiene; water, dirt and particles of limescale simply run off the surface. **Kaldewei.**  
[www.kaldewei.com](http://www.kaldewei.com)

[www.kaldewei.com](http://www.kaldewei.com)

### Brass compression ring remover

There's now a fast and easy way of removing brass compression rings and ferrules when removing old, existing water shut-offs and angle stops.



The brass compression ring remover simply "splits" the brass ring or ferrule, saving time and frustration. The concern of getting stuck or "mushrooming" and damaging the copper pipe is finally eliminated. Works on all ½" copper stub-outs. **Saf-T-Kut.**  
[www.saf-t-kut.com](http://www.saf-t-kut.com)

[www.saf-t-kut.com](http://www.saf-t-kut.com)

### Drain cleaner

Unique ClogChopper™ multi-function cutting tools rip through tough stoppages. Six self-sharpening blades dig into encrusted debris and root masses, easily grinding up stoppages, scale and crystallized urine, without risking pipe damage. Spherical design goes around tight bends and traps, thoroughly and safely cleaning metal, plastic and clay pipes. Available in 1", 1½", 2", 2½", 3" and 4" sizes, great for clearing stacks, downspouts and mains and for drain lining jobs as well. **General Pipe Cleaners.**  
[www.drainbrain.com](http://www.drainbrain.com)

[www.drainbrain.com](http://www.drainbrain.com)



## A K&amp;B garden of delights

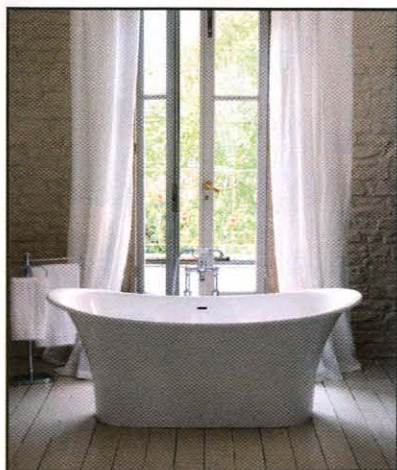
## Leading kitchen and bath trends for 2011

With the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show approaching later this month, now is a good time to think about new sources of design inspiration and the latest trends in these products. The rules have changed somewhat from years past, when consumers were eager to outfit their homes in the latest “must have” look of the moment. In today’s economy, savvy homeowners are thinking carefully before spending their dollars, and they are looking for fresh — yet smart — ideas that will enhance the value, beauty and enjoyment of their homes. As an industry professional, you know that staying abreast of the hottest design trends is crucial in positioning your business to take advantage of rising consumer demand. You also understand the importance of presenting these trends to your customers in a way that highlights their value and longevity. Let’s take a look at the cutting-edge trends that are sure to make 2011 a year to remember.

**Out with the old; in with the new**

Trends come and go as old standbys are replaced with exciting new options. In the bathroom, built-in tubs have seen their day. Freestanding tubs are the new standard, as consumers rediscover the elegance and comfort of these vintage-inspired tubs. Modern manufacturers create freestanding tubs in a wide variety of sizes and styles, some paying homage to the traditional claw-foot design, while others are decidedly contemporary.

For example, the Toulouse tub by Victoria & Albert was inspired by the French double-ended bateau baths from the 1860s and offers a classic elegance that can easily accommodate two bathers. The Deauville tub, also by Victoria & Albert, has a more modern sensibility, with chunky wooden feet and European flair. Both are crafted from the company’s signature volcanic limestone mix that is easy to care for and warm to the touch.



Victoria + Albert Toulouse

Traditional showers have undergone a metamorphosis, with a major movement towards frameless shower enclosures. Metal-framed showers tend to be clunky in design and difficult to clean. Frameless showers look significantly sleeker and offer greater design flexibility. The Giada collection from Novellini comes in a variety of configurations to suit any bathroom space plan, including corner cubicles, freestanding panels, neo-angles or recessed designs. Another trend in shower design is the new classics, reminiscent of fine European hotels and timeless, vintage-inspired design. Sunrise Specialty leads this trend with a complete line of showers, faucets and tub fillers that feature the added



Victoria + Albert Deauville Dwell

safety of temperature control.

Standard sinks are also on the “out” list for both kitchens and baths. Trendy consumers are taking full advantage of fashion-forward options offered by manufacturers such as Diamond Spas. Its copper trough skirted sink is surprisingly durable, adds warmth and style to the kitchen and is generously sized to keep up with the largest of modern families. For the bathroom, Diamond Spas offers a contemporary oval sink in sustainable stainless steel with a bowed front that mimics the design of a coordinating tub.

**Glass — a rising star**

Textured glass is appearing everywhere, from countertops to tabletops.



Sunrise Specialty 633 Deck Mounted Tub Filler

from backsplashes to floor tiles. It offers a fresh, shimmering glimpse into a new wave of sophisticated design possibilities. Heavy granites and dark finishes are being replaced with products that are more transparent and re-



ThinkGlass counter top

flective. The trend here is towards light — clear finishes, whites, metallics — all coming together to create a sparkle that is airy and refreshing. Surprisingly durable and maintenance-free, glass is one of the most in-demand materials for kitchen countertops. ThinkGlass uses eco-friendly, 100% recyclable glass to create its custom pieces, including an amazing variety of textures and colors that ensures that each glass creation is a true work of art.

**Sustainable stainless**

Another timeless trend in 2011 is stainless steel; consumers are looking for sustainable options that will add lasting value to their homes.

Lasertron is ahead of this trend with their artist-designed etched stainless



Lasertron Painter Door

steel cabinet doors. The innovative collection provides a new creative outlet for artists and designers alike, taking art off the wall and blending it into cabinetry for interest and intrigue. Send in a favorite painting or graphic, and the company will custom-etch the signature work of art onto any selection of stainless steel cabinetry door fronts. The exciting new series has made its debut featuring the talents of renowned abstract artist Sharon West-

BY LINDA JENNINGS  
Special to THE WHOLESALER

brook, recognized and collected worldwide, featured on PBS and in Florida Architecture magazine.

**Haute hardware**

In 2011 it’s all about the details, and decorative hardware continues to evolve with collections that add instant style and classic good looks for

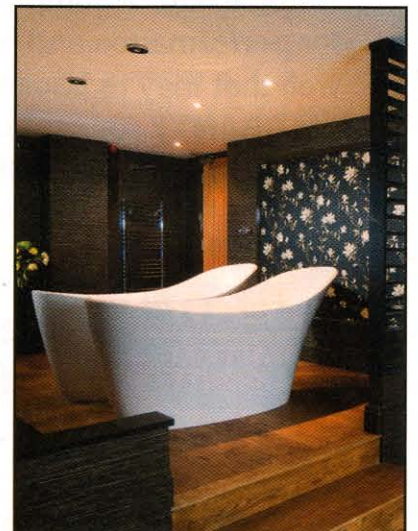


Reveal Designs FLW

you to enjoy, such as Atlas Home-ware’s new Browning and Shelley collections, both named after England’s most famous poets. They feature three pieces — a knob and two sizes of pulls — and are available in brushed or polished nickel and Venetian bronze.

Ashley Norton has unveiled new pocket door hardware that is easy to operate. Crafted of solid bronze, it is available in dark bronze, light bronze, matte black or white bronze finishes.

Reveal Designs has a new hardware collection honoring the architectural legacy of legendary architect



Victoria + Albert Double Amalfi

Frank Lloyd Wright. Born out of a partnership between Reveal Designs and the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation (Turn to Wellness... page 79.)

## Prepare for professional renovation

(Continued from page 8.)

It is often just that simple and happens with a click of the mouse. You get disqualified from the game due to a lack of technicality. For a reprint on e-marketing, e-mail me at Rich@go-spi.com

• **Stop thinking that you have a first-rate website and web storefront if it is more than a year old** – Yours may be good but might not be. The bar is being raised on a monthly basis so unless you have updated it recently, you are probably falling behind. If you are hearing complaints like, “Customers can’t find products. The data sucks. There are no pictures. It’s slow.” It is time for a professional renovation.

• **Stop forcing your Information Technology (IT) team to direct your website and web storefront** – Marketing should be responsible for your website and web storefront. With the evolution toward all sorts of “E-based” marketing activities, the marketing team needs to step up and direct the company’s efforts. Of course, the IT team will be involved in all the technical aspects of the “E-based” marketing but the rest of it is marketing. To their credit, many companies’ IT teams have sincerely worked to fill the void abdicated by the too-busy, non-techie marketing folks. Many IT

folks have done an amazing job given their limited customer contact, minimal product knowledge and lack of any marketing training. That does not change the fact that your company needs a marketing team that understands “E-stuff” and puts your company at the forefront of “E-marketing” for your target markets.

Recently, our software company was conducting a web demonstration of our Web storefront software to an IT person who had been given the directive, “Get us on the internet.” He did a great job on the technical side but I felt sorry for him as we asked marketing questions relating to the company’s operation and marketing objectives. He had no authority over those areas and was embarrassed that the marketing team didn’t even show up because it involved computer terminology that was complicated.

• **Stop assuming that you understand what your customers need and want** – I am not a big fan of surveys since even the very best written surveys seldom get to the heart of a customer’s heart. The best way to get information from a customer about what they need and want is to ask them. This is tough since you have to ask sincerely, not be defensive, listen carefully and clarify the heck out of each complaint or suggestion to in-

sure that you really understand what the customer is saying. With this clarity, you can adjust how you operate to improve your company in ways that the customers will appreciate.

• **Stop thinking that pricing management is completed when your costs are updated in the computer** – Of course, getting the costs right is part of price management but centrally managed market-based pricing is the goal. Most wholesalers aren’t even close to the goal of providing competitive pricing and making fair profit for themselves. That’s what pricing is all about. And as I have said before, if you have sales of \$20M or more, you need a good full time pricing manager. They are hard to find and hard to create but after you have one in place, you will ask yourself why it took you so long to get it done. For a reprint on price management, e-mail me at Rich@go-spi.com

• **Stop kidding yourself, your people don’t understand the realities of your business** – They probably don’t know that they are routinely taking orders at profit levels that are below the break-even point for the company. They don’t understand the difference between gross margin and markup. They don’t understand that a 10% discount gives away 10 points of margin. They think that somewhere between 20% and 25% is the right gross margin for normal sales.

However, they have no problem selling at 12% to 15% when pressed. (So far I have not encountered an industry wholesaler who is profitable in that range.) You have two options: Train them, measure performance, hold them accountable or stop allowing them to do stupid things...remove the authority that allows them to hurt the company. I like option one the best but it takes a fair amount of work initially followed by continuous, relentless, ongoing review and coaching. In our experience, the minute you stop reviewing and coaching how people price, is the same minute that your profits start to ratchet downward.

As always, I know that you cannot stop doing all these things but take time to pick a couple that will have the biggest impact on your performance. ■

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[www.go-scg.com](http://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](http://www.go-spi.com)

## Bathrooms devoted to well-being

(Continued from page 62.)

tion, the new Taliesin Design™ hardware collection fuses wood in metal in bold geometric shapes.

### Seeing double

Why have just one when you can have two? Consumers are expanding their expectation for double sinks in the master bath to include double

vanities as well as matching free-standing tubs. The idea of two vanities just makes sense — twice the storage, twice the personal space — but the concept of double baths is a new idea that is rapidly gaining ground. Victoria & Albert set the stage with its side-by-side Amalfi bathtubs. Having two tubs in a single bathroom is both luxurious and practical. Not only does it make a striking visual statement and add symmetry to the space, it also creates a private retreat where couples can bathe together in comfort without having to take turns or compromise.

### Be well

One unhappy trend of our times is our tendency to work harder and longer without concern for our health or stress levels. Fortunately, a growing awareness of wellness is counteracting this with a line of products for the bathroom that creates a spa-like retreat using personalized therapies. From soaking tubs and air baths to aromatherapy and steam showers, consumers are appreciating the technology that allows them to bring re-

juvenating treatments into the privacy of their own homes. Bain Ultra’s Vedana system is the first product of its kind to focus on wellness. It doesn’t dispense water in any form but instead is a care center that provides five unique therapies designed to help people release stress and find their inner calm. More and more companies are joining this exciting trend to re-think the bathroom from a grooming center to a space devoted to peace and well-being. ■

*Linda Jennings is president of Jennings & Company — a public relations, advertising and marketing agency, specializing exclusively in the decorative plumbing and luxury hardware industry. Throughout a 20-year tenure, she has worked with the most significant editors and journalists in the consumer home market, identifying trends and providing newsworthy products. Based in Sarasota, Fla., her agency represents the most progressive manufacturers in the kitchen & bath industry. Jennings is a member of the DPHA (Decorative Plumbing & Hardware Association) and was recently appointed to their Editorial Advisory Committee.*



BainUltra Vedana

## Get the look!

For more information on the trends mentioned here, go to:

**Ashley Norton**  
800/393-1097  
[www.ashleynorton.com](http://www.ashleynorton.com)

**Atlas Homewares**  
800/799-6755  
[www.atlashomewares.com](http://www.atlashomewares.com)

**BainUltra**  
800/463-2187  
[www.bainultra.com](http://www.bainultra.com)

**Diamond Spas**  
720/864-9115  
[www.diamondspas.com](http://www.diamondspas.com)

**Lasertron**  
954/846-8600  
[www.lasertrondirect.com](http://www.lasertrondirect.com)

**Novellini**  
877/273-8816  
[www.novellini.com](http://www.novellini.com)

**Reveal Designs**  
914/220-0277  
[www.reveal-designs.com](http://www.reveal-designs.com)

**Sunrise Specialty**  
510/729-7277  
[www.sunrisespecialty.com](http://www.sunrisespecialty.com)

**ThinkGlass**  
877/410-GLASS (4527)  
[www.thinkglass.com](http://www.thinkglass.com)  
Victoria + Albert  
800/421-7189  
[www.vandabaths.com](http://www.vandabaths.com)