

the official e-newsletter for the decorative plumbing & hardware association

# CONNECTIONS

## Association News

### Here's What We've Done for You Lately - Help Your Business Grow!



Here's our holiday gift to members: the most cost-effective tool to make your business grow. DPHA will soon be issuing dues notices to all members. The cost to be a DPHA member is less than \$60 a month or about the price of going out for dinner at a decent restaurant (or in cities such as New York, Chicago, Washington DC, Miami, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Boston, etc., this is the cost of lunch at a decent restaurant).

What do you receive as a DPHA Member?

- DPHA published *Lighting* in 2015, the twenty-second volume in the heralded DPHA Education Program. The DPHA Education Program is the nation's only educational tool developed for the DPH industry and available only to DPHA members.
- The number one reason good employees leave is lack of recognition or appreciation. That's why DPHA created the industry's first showroom sales



**December 11, 2015**

### DPHA Sponsors

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professional recognition program. It recognizes and rewards showroom professionals for their product knowledge and sales skills while making a statement that those who sell decorative plumbing and hardware are involved in a dynamic and rewarding profession.

- DPHA continues to provide compelling content weekly through its electronic eletter, *Connections*. Testimony to Connections effectiveness is the fact that the open rate runs roughly 35% weekly.
- The DPHA Awards Program offers the industry the only national opportunity to recognize and honor outstanding showrooms, products, representatives, manufactures and professionals.
- The DPHA Product Showcase is the industry's most meaningful venue for showrooms, manufacturers and representatives to interact in productive settings, and eliminates the need for many manufacturers to attend more costly events that do not provide the same return on their investment.
- The DPHA Annual Conference and Product Showcase attendance increased by more than 20% in 2015. More than 350 people participated representing more than 50% of DPHA's members.
- The DPHA Annual Conference is one of the most important and largest events that bring together the three principal players in decorative plumbing and hardware: dealers, manufacturers and representatives.
- DPHA published quarterly columns in *Kitchen & Bath Design News*, presenting ideas and management practices to improve bottom-line performance while serving as the voice of the industry.
- DPHA regional meetings provide opportunities for showroom staff to experience the networking, educational content and DPH community on their own turf at very little expense.
- DPHA offers a bottom line benefit to help screen and match prospective employees by providing discounts on employee evaluation programs.
- DPHA posts on its [LinkedIn group](#) and [Facebook page](#) offer practical guidance, industry trends and sales tips to help expand your business.
- DPHA is providing extraordinary value for its membership, evidenced by the fact that more than 90% of 2014 members rejoined in 2015.

DPHA has tangible, productive, viable and valuable deliverables that help with your daily operations. DPHA will continue to build upon its solid foundation to create even more value and competitive advantages for our members in the future.

To do this, we need your support and your participation in order to move forward and develop the products, services and the association that the industry and your business deserve and expect.

Members that are interested in helping to develop the proposed programs identified above should email Jim Babbitt at [jbabbitt@dpha.net](mailto:jbabbitt@dpha.net).



**Bronze Sponsors:**



## Lessons from Southwest Airlines to Attract and Retain Best-In-Class Talent



A defining competitive differentiator for Southwest Airlines is its staff. On every Southwest flight I have ever flown (which is more than a couple of dozen trips), everyone, from the gate agents to the flight attendants, seems to love their jobs. They are friendly, professional and most often funny. At the end of a recent flight, the attendant said over the plane's intercom system to be careful when opening the overhead racks because "shift happens."

The attitude and professionalism of Southwest team members are not accidents. According to Southwest's Director of People, the company receives a job application every two seconds. To date in 2015, the company has received nearly 290,000 applications, interviewed more than 100,000 of those applicants and hired 6,582 people (less than 2%).

Southwest's secret is the value system that it uses to screen and hire applicants. Southwest's hiring criteria is based on the following three attributes:

- Warrior spirit: the desire to excel and to act with courage, perseverance and innovation.
- A servant's heart: ability to put others first, treat everyone with respect and proactively serve customers.
- Fun-loving attitude: passion, joy and aversion to taking oneself too seriously.

These expectations are clearly defined in job descriptions and incorporated into the interviewing process. The company asks its applicants questions that will reveal whether they have the attributes that match the Southwest culture. To determine if someone can be a team player the question posed is, "Please describe a time when you went above and beyond to help a coworker succeed." The airline also conducts career motivation interviews to determine if applicants truly understand the job they are applying for and if the position is aligned with the applicant's career goals.

Performance reviews not only consider what employees have accomplished, but how they get results. They are rated on the three attributes of warrior spirit,



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servant's heart and fun-loving attitude. Those who rise thorough the ranks excel in those three attributes. The Southwest senior team leads by example demonstrating their commitment to the company's attributes. At a time when talent is becoming increasingly difficult to attract and retain, Southwest's commitment to hiring and promoting based on values may work equally well for your showroom.

## DPHA Shines Its Spotlight on Kate Simpson of Mountain Supply

*The following profile continues a series of Connections articles authored by the DPHA Education Committee to spotlight extraordinary individuals who are on the front lines of decorative plumbing and hardware.*

Although Kate Simpson of Mountain Supply in Bozeman, Montana is new to working in a showroom, having only started at Mountain Supply in January of 2015, she has more than twenty years of experience selling kitchens, baths, flooring and countertops in the Seattle, WA area.



Kate has recreated her life since moving to Montana. "When I left Seattle after being widowed, I couldn't even imagine driving in snow! I've had lots of amazing first experiences and have overcome many fears. These include flying a plane and hunting, along with getting my first elk. I even began eating meat after more than 30 years as a vegetarian."

When Kate greets a showroom customer, she likes to share a cup of coffee or cocoa with them. She feels it's important to build trust with every sale, no matter the size, so that she will hopefully see that customer again along with their friends and associates. Kate is also in the middle of building a home herself and recently chose to upgrade basic equipment such as round front builder-grade toilets and a kitchen faucet with a side spray for her kitchen. "It's important to make sure buyers who may be looking at aging-in-place are informed about why they might choose ADA height toilets etc., and not just assume they want to go the least expensive route."

"People need help!" she said. "I try to help them through the entire process so they get the best possible product. It's important to present customers with all the options they may be interested in. They have to understand they will have these items for many years. And when I find a product I really like, it's easy to sell. I ask customers to hold products and to compare how they're made." Part of her DPH education has also come through the DPHA Recognition Testing Program. "After completing all of my testing, I'm proud of the achievement. It gives me a lot of confidence when I know the answers to many of the questions that come up." she said.

When asked about selling toilets, she believes that no one should have to put up with poor performance, improper fit or products that aren't good for the environment.

Kate likes to travel to warm places. "Aruba is probably the happiest place in the world. My daughter and I traveled there our first Christmas alone and found Aruba to be a safe, breathtaking place filled with friendly people." Kate enjoys seafood, and in fact, the first trout she caught at Hauser Lake was incredibly delicious right off the grill! Kate also hopes to buy a baby grand piano and start taking lessons. She looks forward to making music and watching the snow fall.

Kate feels lucky to have found a home at Mountain Supply. All team members work together and the ownership is involved. Kate hopes to enjoy a long career with the company. Now, newly engaged and building a new home, she is excited to be getting a new lease on life in the beautiful small town of Bozeman. We know she'll do great. Bravo Kate!

## Improve Your Leadership Abilities



IDEO is one of the world's outstanding design and innovation consultants. Recently, one of the company's principals described three things that the most creative leaders do.

First, they create raving fans and tribes inside and outside of their organization that not only serve as brand advocates, but also provide valuable input into improving the company. An example is 3D Robotics. The company created a website before the first employee was hired to help identify and engage aficionados of drones. The company's open source approaches reward those who engage and contribute with everything from free T-shirts to plane tickets to visit the company headquarters. What could decorative plumbing and hardware showrooms do to better create tribes and engage their community to be brand advocates? Consider a constant flow of new products, new applications, and new technology to the design community that show how you make their jobs easier, and ask questions to engage such as is this a new tub and what type of project do you believe it is best suited for? Most professionals are honored when you ask for their expertise and opinions, because it is a sign of respect.

Creative leaders also take small steps to initiate major change. If you want to switch from paper catalogs to iPads in your showroom, it is likely that you will get pushback from your team as was described by Kymberly Weiner (Best Plumbing & Tile) and Mindy Sevinor Feinberg (Salem Plumbing) at the workshop they led for a DPHA Conference. A small step approach may be to ask a small portion of your staff to take the iPad plunge or make an offer to

experiment for six months to see if the change works. When a respected principal or manager of the firm asks the team to experiment, it's hard to say no.

Finally, creative leaders tell compelling stories. How do you tell compelling stories in a showroom? There's lots of ways because of the great products that showrooms sell. For example, new drain technology enables bathrooms the same flexibility as kitchens for open floor plan design. A good lighting plans helps to make your customers look their best and places products that you specify in an ideal environment that brings pleasure to the users every time they look at them. Selling steam is not about how fast a bath enclosure fills, but how it affects the users' lives. The story: You work hard. You deserve a place where you can wash away the stresses of the day, recover from that hard workout or just take a few minutes exclusively for yourself. Meet with your team and discuss how you can tell more compelling stories.

## Missed the 2015 Conference? Don't Miss the Content



Many DPHA members were so impressed with the quality of content presented at the 2015 Annual Conference, they wanted us to share the experience and knowledge with their coworkers. Here's there chance. DPHA has now posted the following videos on the DPHA web site:

- Steve Brazell: *The Hitman's Guide to Competition Removal* - How to Win in an Overcrowded World
- Dana Borowka: *Never Settle for the Tallest Pygmy* - Cracking the Personality Code to Hire Right the First Time
- Lee and Terry Resnick (just added): *Show Me the Money* - How to Determine What Your Business is Worth

To view the videos, log on to the membership only side of [www.dpha.net](http://www.dpha.net), click on the *2015 Conference Videos* menu tab and then click on the link of the video you wish to view. If you need your login information and/or the password for the videos. please email Jim Babbitt at [jbabbitt@dpha.net](mailto:jbabbitt@dpha.net).

## Vendor News, Updates and Cool New Stuff

[Newport Brass®](#) and [GINGER®](#) have each won the prestigious 2015 Product Innovation Award from Architectural Products magazine. The new, stunning Secant single hole faucet by Newport Brass (pictured) and GINGER's innovative Cayden valet hook wowed the judges in the Restroom Plumbing category.



The Secant single hole faucet exemplifies geometric form by merging a rectangular square column with a dramatic arching, flat-curved spout. The mixing lever rises from the back as a thin cylinder, which allows precise control over water flow and temperature while adding an alluring touch to this visually striking

design. GINGER's Cayden valet hook lies unobtrusively dormant in non-use, taking up minimal space. However, when snapped up into action, the hook is designed to hold multiple garments for drying or hanging purposes. Both products are made using solid brass construction and available in a variety of finishes.



The crisp and contemporary new FIABA Vanity Series from [Topex Design](#) conveys a modern simplicity and refinement paired with comfort and usability. The satin bronze mirror finish radiates a feeling of glamour and gives the FIABA an artistic style all its own. Each FIABA vanity features a European manufactured glass finish cabinet with no assembly required. The vanities are made of solid aluminum and are completely waterproof. Sizes are 32", 48", 63", and 79" with a 20" depth. The FIABA comes standard in black, burgundy, delmar silver or white glass along with matching solid glass countertops. Silver, black, burgundy, gold, delmar silver or crocodile pattern acrylic

vessel bowls are the standard palette. Topex can also create custom colors to match your decor for the vanity cabinet, countertop and sinks.

[Artisan Manufacturing](#) new ArtiStone composite sink line comes in six designs, and is made from a high polymer resin mold that delivers exceptional quality and consistency. They are tested against thermal shock resistance to ensure the sink's longevity and performance. ArtiStone's dual mount composite sinks are available in multiple sizes, both in single-bowl and double-bowl styles and currently come in black or brown with more colors expected. They are also impact, scratch, and chemical resistant, and impervious to staining. Its materials are screened by world-renowned color laboratories, ensuring that ArtiStone sinks will not discolor in direct sunlight or water, or lighten over time.



Artisan Manufacturing is also introducing new single and double-bowl fireclay farmhouse sinks (pictured). These handcrafted, timeless soapstone kitchen sinks complement any décor and offer a durable and easy-to-maintain solution for both contemporary and traditional designs alike. Comfortable and rustic, the matte finish and sleek styling is sure to be the focal point of any kitchen. These sinks are stronger and thicker than most farmhouse styles because of the company's unique high-pressure casting technology and have the ability to withstand drastic temperature changes.

[Blu Bathworks](#) Vision Wheel and ultra-low blu\*stone™ shower base (pictured) were honored by Architectural Record for their innovation, usefulness and aesthetics. The Vision Wheel is a thermostatic digital shower control, featuring easy menu navigation, three customizable presets and an LCD screen showing water use and temperature. It was compared aesthetically to "a music device from a certain California-based tech company." Judges were impressed by its the ability to be operated via an iPhone or iPad app.





The ultra-low blu\*stone™ shower base is an eco-friendly seamless one-piece shower receptor, made primarily from quartzite. It was applauded for its extremely thin 1¼" threshold that can be recessed for universal design applications. The durable shower base is available in a slip-resistant white

matte finish. Sizes range from 31½" to 35½" wide and 31½" to 98½" long.

[LAUFEN](#) won a 2015 Interior Design Best of Year Award for its INO bathroom collection. The new INO bathroom collection, designed by the French designer Toan Nguyen, is a reinterpretation of the classic washbasin shape. The innovative collection skillfully uses the design possibilities offered by Laufen's SaphirKeramik: The objects with their simple lines and delicate yet extremely stable walls appear elegant, inviting and almost weightless. The collection includes wall-mounted washbasins, washbasin bowls, as well as semi-recessed basins, high-quality bathroom furniture and a bathtub available in two versions.



Sincerely,

Jim Babbitt  
Decorative Plumbing and Hardware Association (DPHA)