

Mulberry's Marcus Burwood is made of stern stuff – you have to be, to survive the collapse of your kitchen supplier – page 27



It's not every day Brenda Gibson is asked to design a bathroom around a tree, but she was up for the task all the same – page 37



After a tumultuous year, Alternative Plans' co-founder Laurence Pidgeon is just happy to be back doing what he loves – page 66



# The Essential kitchen & bathroom BUSINESS

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## How kbb industry stepped up to BCG charity challenge



The kbb industry came out in force in November to support BCG's Big Challenge – a fundraising drive in support of children's charity Action for Children. The kbb distributor called for monetary and product donations to help over 650 children in 16 projects – including the refurbishment of children's homes.

The challenge – which ran alongside its travelling Big Tour exhibition – culminated in The Essential Night Out, pictured below left, a charity gala dinner and auction sponsored by **ek&bbusiness**. It was hosted by celebrity Ulrika Jonsson and BBC newsreader Nicholas Owen at Mercedes-Benz World in Weybridge, pictured middle left, and above left with BCG md Chris Honer.

"Action for Children is a remarkable organisation and I am so proud that BCG has been instrumental in doing something truly good for these children," said Honer, welcoming guests to the dinner. "I am extremely proud to work with and know so many compassionate people."

Alongside manufacturers such as Baumatic, GDHA,

Twyford Bathrooms and Ideal Standard which all donated products, independent retailers pledged their services and, in some cases, complete kitchens.

Sue Fieldhouse of Cadbury Kitchens in Yatton has been supporting the Avalon project in Yatton by designing a kitchen for the project.

Retailers Adrian and Dawn Wittering of Wittering West in Kettering also donated a complete kitchen for the John Waterhouse Project in Kenilworth which supports disabled children and their families.

"If we can help to improve the lives of a handful of children here in the UK then I am honoured to be involved. This challenge is making a quantifiable difference and I can't believe that BCG has achieved so much in such a short space of time," says Adrian Wittering.

Others going the extra mile to help included Bill and Marilyn Pnaisier of Junction 2 Interiors in Oldbury and William Fox of Cymru Kitchens in Newport who each donated complete kitchens.

### Pensioner blows fuse over Hotpoint cooker

A Hotpoint delivery driver was taken hostage when dissatisfied customer Ivan Langley, 72, from Norwich, saw red after his first two cookers blew up and the third was delivered damaged.

The pensioner reportedly locked female delivery driver Anna Hawes in his bungalow for over two hours after discovering the replacement cooker she was trying to deliver was dented. It was his third replacement

cooker after the first two blew up and short circuited his home.

The incident came to a peaceful conclusion after police were called and an agreement reached between Mr Langley and Hotpoint owners Indesit. A spokesperson says: "Our customer complaints are well below the industry average. However, we recognise on this occasion our standards fell short and we are sorry. It is now our priority to put it right."

### Lec's big screen debut

There aren't many fridges that have been surfing or blessed by nuns while hitchhiking round Ireland – but one that has is now officially a Guinness world record holder. The Lec R5009 table-top fridge accompanied comedian and author Tony Hawks on his 1025-mile hitchhike round Ireland in 1997. Now, as the film, *Round Ireland with a Fridge*, is released, Tony has been awarded the record for the longest distance travelled with a fridge. The cool pair are seen here at the black tie launch of the film.





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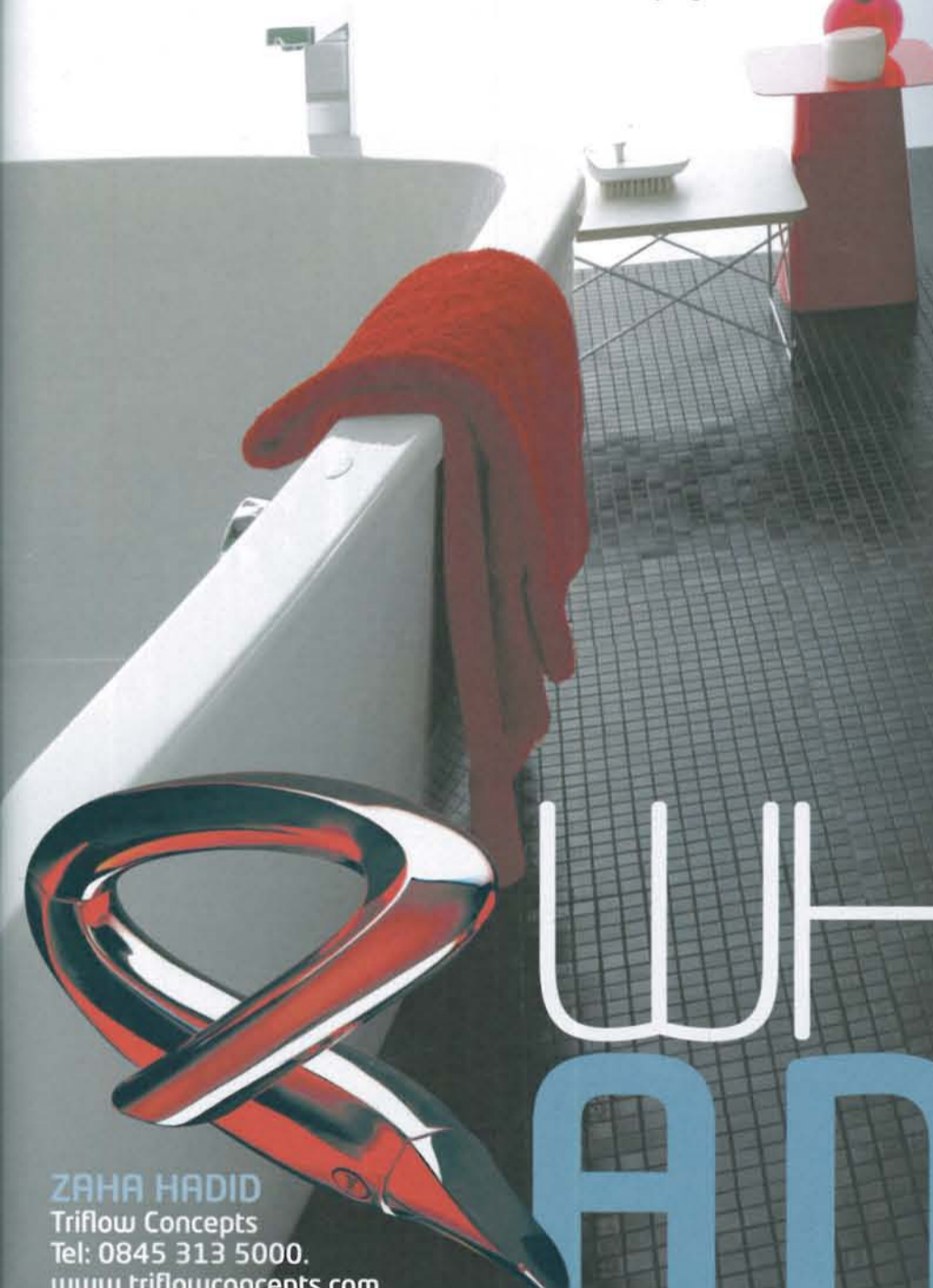
Rosso Monza

There's no doubt that designer labels are big business. As celebrity culture permeates deeper into the consumer's consciousness, having a famous name behind a product – be it clothing, perfume or even a car – has become invaluable. And bathroom manufacturers haven't been slow to tap into this designer trend. Even fashion designers – take Ben de Lisi – and TV presenters like Kevin McCloud are getting in on the act, joining renowned product designers such as Robin Levien and the Palombas in creating covetable bathroom products.

"Having a designer's name behind a product makes it aspirational and attracts customers like bees to a honey pot," says Paul Tanner, head of sales and marketing at brassware manufacturer Waterfront Bathrooms, which lists Kelly Hoppen and Mark Humphrey as just two of its signature designer collaborators. "Manufacturers may be well-known, well-respected brands within their industry, but sadly, if this isn't reflected in the awareness of the wider public, their brand and sales figures can suffer," he says.

Jacuzzi UK's marketing controller Nick Richards agrees: "Teaming up with a renowned designer brings a certain prestige to the brand and helps to generate interest, and hopefully an element of excitement," he says. Having joined forces with design icon Pininfarina to create its Morphosis range over four years ago, Jacuzzi has just collaborated with Italian designer Marco Piva with its Moove range.

According to manufacturers, the effects of collaborating with a signature designer can be felt throughout the company. "It often invigorates the resident design team and NPD department, injecting it with fresh ideas in a very focussed, creative way," says Russell Barnes, Laufen's marketing manager. Jacuzzi's Richards is in no doubt: "By collaborating with a third party, a new approach to design and fresh ideas can be brought to the table." Jayne Reilly-Fountaine, director at distributor J'N'J Bathrooms, echoes these sentiments, saying:



**PALOMBA COLLECTION**

Laufen

Tel: 01530 510 007. [www.laufen.co.uk](http://www.laufen.co.uk)

Launched in 2005, the Palomba Collection of WCs, bidets, baths, shower trays, brassware, furniture and accessories was designed for Swiss manufacturer Laufen by Ludovica+Roberto Palomba. The range was updated in 2009 with new washbasins, and also recategorised into Pure, Organic and Soft styles. Pictured is the Pure washbasin which is available in three sizes and with a pedestal or ceramic siphon cover, pictured

# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

**ZAHA HADID**

Triflow Concepts

Tel: 0845 313 5000.

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

Launched last year, the Triflow by Zaha Hadid collection of kitchen and bathroom taps was the internationally-renowned London-based architect's first brassware range. Looking to "generate the fluid geometries of water in motion," the taps feature instantly recognisable curves and shapes. Featuring a softer form than the kitchen tap, the bathroom version is available in chrome, nickel and pewter

Manufacturers are increasingly turning to celeb culture to woo the consumer, commissioning famous names to dream up signature label bathrooms. So just how much value do these names really bring to the table?

Words **Nicola Hanley**

picture this

REG gets festive

REG is heading to London's Excel from 3-5 December as the main sponsor of the Taste of Christmas food festival. REG appliances will be used exclusively throughout the festival and there will be prominent REG branding in all Taste communications.



Christmas spirit

Mereway has been showing off its new English Revival Shaker kitchens with its first Christmas photography. Snapped up for use on consumer title *Utopia's*

front cover, the festive picture has also been used in *K&B Update* and as an ad in *Ideal Home*.

Northern stars

Shower enclosure manufacturer Roman has been celebrating after winning a Northern Design Award. Readers of *Concept For Living* magazine voted the Sculptures range Product of the Year. Commercial director Julian Pearson, pictured, collected the award at a ceremony at the Chester Grosvenor and Spa. Others picking up trophies included Metris dealer Earle & Ginger, which was crowned Best Kitchen Retailer.



Branching out

Nearly 400 trade visitors headed to Teko/Küppersbusch's UK HQ in Oxfordshire to mark the opening of its newly extended and refurbished

showroom and training facilities. Part of a six figure investment by the appliance manufacturer, the ground floor showroom has been extended by 70% and houses a best of brands section featuring some of its most popular products, alongside furniture from Keller Kitchens and worksurfaces from Lechner.

Essential reading

The PJH Group has published a bumper 264-page 'Essential Guide' for autumn and winter. The catalogue includes the latest kitchen and appliance collections from its own brands Prima and K Kitchens and an extended section on sinks and taps. To promote the guide, an 8% reduction is being offered on all Neff and Bosch collections until February 2011. In addition, a 20-page 'Trade Saver' leaflet, packed full of promotional deals, has been launched, offering up to 50% off selected ranges.



Munich moment

Bathroom retailer Ripples' top 10 designers have been

rewarded with a two-day VIP trip to Munich to visit German bathroom furniture manufacturer Burgbad's factory and showroom. Pictured from left to right is: Richard Fox, Solihull; Reinhard Adolphs, group area manager, Burgbad; Kerri Andrews, Winchester; Liam Biggs, Chichester; Juliet Harris, brand manager, Marco Ali, Bournemouth; Kirsten Wain, Canterbury; Helen Head, Brighton; Diane Garnett, Newbury; Brian Jones, Burgbad; Alex Walmsley, Brighton and Louise Elliott, Chichester.

Settling in

Danish bathroom furniture manufacturer Dansani is gearing up to start the new year in its new UK HQ. Located in the Octagon Building in Brighton's Marina Village, the 952 sq ft training showroom and product marketing facility will house over 25 bathroom furniture displays when it opens in January.



Appliances make their Kitemark

The British Standards Institution Kitemark is to appear on domestic electrical and gas appliances for the first time.

The familiar and trusted certification symbol will be available to manufacturers of cooking, refrigeration and heating appliances whose products pass BSI tests. The organisation is already one of the top three evaluators of domestic and commercial gas appliances in Europe.

BSI says surveys it has carried out in the past show the Kitemark has a strong reputation, claiming that 93% of adults believe a Kitemarked product is safer, with 75% saying that it helps them choose between products.

More partners for Apollo

The successful launch of Sheridan's Apollo solid surface, quartz, granite and wood worktop range earlier this year has led to the appointment of several new distribution partners.

The latest is RA Dickinson, which will be covering Scotland, joining Hibberd Distribution in the north, Laminate South West in the south-west, AC Distribution for south Wales, SDA and Wenban-Smith along the south coast and Gardiners in the south-east.

"We've created a support scheme which ensures our partners have full installation training, that sales teams know the Apollo range inside out and that a POS package allows the product to be visible on the shop floor," says John



Blackburn of Normanton-based Sheridan.

Our picture shows, left to right: Jim Wier, Sheridan's area sales manager for Scotland; Tommy Drew, Dickinson's sales manager; John Shiers, Sheridan's senior sales manager and Tony Dickinson, Dickinson's sales director.



Responding to the trend for a seamless look on kitchen worktops, German manufacturer Westag & Getalit has produced a high pressure laminate which has dyed edges. Unicolor is made from papers impregnated with clear melamine resin, giving it a homogenous colour throughout. Shades of grey and white are available now, with more on the way next year

Loss makers heading for extinction, says report

Close to a fifth of 547 UK kbb manufacturers will end 2010 as they began it – by making a loss, according to a new report.

Market analyst Plimsoll says some of these 105 "serial loss makers", who may be in the red for the third consecutive year, are running out of time and will fail in the new year. "While the rest have taken painful but necessary decisions to refocus on the bottom line, these reckless companies have continued to chase sales regardless," says report author David Pattison. "These companies have to cut their cloth accordingly or face the consequences."

Pattison says that, in all, 199 companies are finishing the year in financial difficulty. "Having clung on through the bad times, many of these struggling companies

are running out of time and will fail unless a sustained recovery takes hold," he says. "Sadly, some of them are just too weak to carry on and there will be a spike of failures in the new year. On the flipside, their demise will bring a welcome reduction in competitive pressure for those left."

However, the report says there are 195 strong companies which have succeeded despite the slowdown. "They prove that bad companies fail in a recession; good companies simply do not," says Pattison. "These companies will lead the industry out of recession with some smart acquisitions to help maintain their recent success."

The report, which names 58 companies ripe for acquisition, is available from Plimsoll on 01642 626 400.

Best of British



Stoves has unveiled a new collection of ovens and hobs, all of which will be made at its Merseyside factory.

Production of the nine single or double ovens and 13 hobs has been switched from Europe to Stoves' Prescott base. The move means that around 85% of the company's cooking products can now carry a 'Made in Britain' label.

The oven range features 600mm, 700mm and 900mm heights in fanned

and multifunction variants, with all electric ovens A-rated for energy efficiency and all gas appliances fully FSD compliant. Features include telescopic shelves and low-energy, high-output lighting. The 600mm- and 700mm-wide hobs include gas, electric sealed plate, ceramic and ceramic induction models – including the touch control SEH600iL 3AMP, which plugs into a standard 13A socket.

next up...

Body language diary dates

Former KBSA chief executive Graham Hayden has launched two new training courses for the kbb industry. 'Understanding and using body language to your advantage' is set to take place on 19 January and 'Presentation skills' is on 16 March. To book visit [www.grahamhaydentraining.com](http://www.grahamhaydentraining.com)

New look site

Tuscan Flooring has given its website a fresh new look to make it more user-friendly. Along with a new 24-hour sample ordering service, the updated site allows visitors to find their three nearest Tuscan retailers.

Nurturing talent

Triflow Concepts is sponsoring the 2010 Architectural Review Awards for Emerging Architecture. Following the awards ceremony on 24 November, commended entries will be exhibited at RIBA for three months.

Hot hues

Predicting what shades are going to be hot in 2011, paint and wallpaper manufacturer Farrow & Ball has added nine

new colours to its pallet for next year. New additions include chic greys, purples and a fiery orange.

Cataloguing products

Split into six sections, LDL Components' glossy 2011 brochure features its complete stock range of over 3,500 products.

Fitting partnership

Hettich's complete range of furniture fittings is now available via Lawcris Panel Products after the Leeds-based company was made an official UK distribution partner.

Spare parts shop

Brassware manufacturer Hansgrohe has launched an online spare parts shop for its Hansgrohe, Axor and Pharo brands.