

kbbreview

The KBB industry's *leading* business magazine for over 25 years



All change
Is diversifying the way to grow your business?

Page 16



Righting wrongs
"Kohler has made mistakes in the UK, but that's behind us."

Leigh Leather

Page 48

Bathstore Sale now on



Rumours rife as Wolseley lines up buyers for high street bathroom retail chain

Bathstore, the 160-strong chain of high street bathroom stores is up for sale by parent company Wolseley.

It is understood the plumbing giant has identified the business it only bought in 2003 as under-performing and incongruous to its portfolio of trade-supply brands such as BuildCenter, PlumbCenter and distributor BCG.

As kbbreview went to press, there was no official announcement from Wolseley, but rumours were

spreading that city advisors had been appointed to find a buyer. The company recently confirmed that it had identified 19 businesses within the group that could be sold unless their finances showed marked improvement and it has already sold tool and equipment hire business Brandon Hire for £43 million.

Who the possible buyers might be and how much they might pay remains the subject of growing industry debate. Several national newspapers have suggested £150m,

but senior bathroom industry sources suggest the figure could be nearer £50m to £60m.

And speculation on the buyer is focusing in on Patrick Riley, who founded the original business in the early 1990s with Nico de Beer. It is thought that he wants to add the brand to his increasing portfolio that includes Clearwater Revival, Burlington and Zamori. De Beer is still a Bathstore director.

One source told kbbreview that three buyers had already been

identified and shortlisted.

Specific figures for Bathstore's most recent financial year have not been released, but in the 12 months to the end of July 2009, it closed 19 branches, and sales fell by 26% to £106.7m. It made a pre-tax loss of £12.3m, compared with a profit of £10m the year before. It is thought that it will return to a modest profit this year.

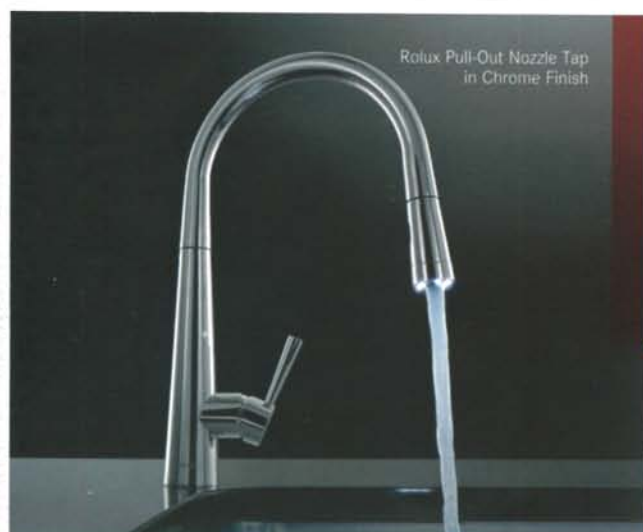
Wolseley's final results for the year to the end of July 2010 are available however, and reveal a 9% drop in turnover for the UK, but a jump in trading profit of £91m from £55m for 2009. The company said the fall in turnover related to the impact of disposals and branch closures and like-for-like revenue was broadly flat.

The company said it expected the overall recovery to remain weak as activity levels are held back by fragile consumer confidence and low availability of credit.

Government cuts in public spending announced last month are also likely to increase pressure. The RMI sector, which represents 65% of its UK revenue, has seen a more gradual recovery.

kbbreview

Editor's comment page 14



Rolux Pull-Out Nozzle Tap
in Chrome Finish

ROLUX PULL-OUT NOZZLE TAP

With innovation, practicality and style in abundance, the Franke Rolux Pull-Out Nozzle tap emits bright LED light, bringing an atmospheric and dramatic air to any kitchen. The tap, now also available in Black finish, creates a stunning visual effect by illuminating flowing water.

www.franke.co.uk

KITCHEN
SYSTEMS

FRANKE

READER ENQUIRY NUMBER 0038

to respond to any of these advertisements please go to www.enquire.to/kbbreview



Cosentino △

Cosentino showcased the Campanas for eCosentino concept - an interpretation of its Eco recycled decorative surface.

Layers of the recycled decorative surface are built up to create the look of rock sediment.

Eco can be used for a variety of applications, including, work surfaces, interior cladding and flooring. Available in an array of colours, the surfaces are said to be durable with a high stain-, scratch- and scorch-resistance.



◁ **Triflow Concepts**

Triflow Concepts launched two new ranges of products at the show. The Triflow Quadro System is a 'revolutionary' four-way water delivery system, while the Triflask is a portable water flask. With the introduction of the Quadro System, Triflow Concepts has expanded on its patented Triflow technology - known for delivering hot, cold and filtered water through a dedicated waterway within one spout - and adds instant hot, filtered water heated to 98°C.

Through the use of a segregated waterway for filtered water, the Quadro System aims to address all safety concerns.

100%
DESIGN



This year's 100% Design showcased all the latest innovations and emerging talent from the world of contemporary interiors. Kbbreview trawled the stands for the top contenders



Jacuzzi △

Bathroom giant Jacuzzi UK launched a range of new products at 100% Design, including the Nova whirlpool bath and some coloured counter-top basins.

The new basins are offered in a selection of Pantone colours to ensure a unique and personal specification. The picture shows the Nexus45 in black.

The Nova Whirlpool freestanding bath features four Jacuzzi jets and six rotating back-massage jets. Offering four very different hydro-massage experiences, all are operated by remote control. Nova also features three movable headrests, and a complementary four-piece brassware set.

Available in chrome and white, Nova measures 1,800mm in diameter x 660mm high (including the cover). The surround is available in teak, wenge, Carrara white marble, Medea stone marble and Absolute black marble.



UK Quartz △

Exhibiting at 100% Design for the first time, UK Quartz is the exclusive distributor for Samsung Radianz quartz.

Manufactured by Samsung's Chemical Division, Radianz is a new product that the company says is ideally suited to the aesthetic and practical demands of the contemporary kitchen and bathroom as well as hotel and contract use.

A blend of natural quartz and polymers, Radianz surfaces are around 93% quartz. Said to be significantly harder than granite, Samsung claims it is virtually impossible to scratch and does not require periodic sealing to maintain its scratch-resistance.

Radianz is available in 30 colours including five 'Noble' colours. These are characterised by random three-dimensional mirror chips. All Radianz products are available in 12, 20 and 30mm thicknesses and have a lifetime warranty.



Compac △

Compac's engineered stone technology has enabled the company to harness the natural colours and beauty of quartz, to offer a range of work surfaces.

Compac launched two new work surface colours at the show - Botticini (pictured) and Pierre Bleue. The company says all its surfaces combine the natural beauty of stone with the unique characteristics of quartz to provide consistency of colour, low porosity, high resistance to impact, heat and abrasion and natural antibacterial protection.



◁ **Veritas UK**

Veritas UK showcased a variety of applications including shower panels, framed kitchen doors and ceiling panels. This versatile resin panel, the company claims, enables designers and architects to customise the material to suit any environment, style or colour scheme.

Veritas comprises four key elements: a textured or plain front panel, a decorative inlay that can be an original or taken from any digital image, a choice of any colour and a backing sheet.