

# Kitchen & Bath Design News

## OPENINGS

Spotlight on new & innovative showrooms

### Michigan Design Center Gets 'Extraordinary' Showroom

By Anita Shaw

TROY, MI—

The heart of the Detroit design area has welcomed a new member to its fold. Extraordinary Works, a 2,000-sq.-ft. upscale kitchen and bath showroom, has taken its place among the 40-plus showrooms that comprise the Michigan Design Center, located in Troy about seven miles north of Detroit.

"We selected this location primarily because it is the center of the Michigan design community," comments Jim Eathorne, president, EW Kitchens/Extraordinary Works. "Many interior designers [have] offices at the MDC, and more than 1,000 designers are registered and using the center to help their clients make selections."

Eathorne also owns EW Kitchens in Wixom — a family firm started in 1947 that originally focused on high-end homebuilders and designers who were buying for multiple projects. He added the Troy-based showroom to attract interior designers, architectural specifiers and custom builders.

Extraordinary Works celebrated its opening in the fall with a preview party that included wine tasting festivities for major vendors, suppliers, custom builders, remodeling contractors, architects,

interior designers and their clients and other tenants of the Michigan Design Center. At the time, six of the current 10 showroom displays were complete.

"There is a kitchen-themed trade/consumer event at the Michigan Design Center this month, where [renowned kitchen designer and *KBDN* writer] Ellen Cheever will serve as the guest speaker," comments Eathorne. "That will serve more as our official grand opening."

#### LUXURY EXPERIENCE

The showroom currently features 10 displays, with plans for two more on the drawing board, according to Eathorne. "We plan to introduce new products on a rotating basis to keep the showroom fresh and stay current with industry trends," he offers.

While the initial space planning for the showroom was done by Carol Hansen of Sebastian, FL, the overall design of the project was created and supervised by Dennis Palazzolo, CKD, v.p. of EW Kitchens, and Robert Zebrowski, CKD, ASID, director of design for EW Kitchens.

In designing the Troy showroom, no expense was spared, Eathorne reports. As opposed to EW's two other showrooms in the metropolitan Detroit area where customers can see, touch and feel products



from all over the price scale, "Extraordinary Works only features luxury products," he comments. High-end cabinetry from Quality Custom Cabinetry, Irpinia Kitchens and Mouser Custom Cabinetry are joined by Sub-Zero and Wolf appliances. Countertops and surfaces featured are primarily natural stone, concrete and wood.

"We visited Luxe Home at the Chicago Merchandise Mart, and what we tried to do was attempt to design a showroom that would be memorable — even in a location like Luxe Home," explains Eathorne.

#### CUSTOMER ATTRACTIONS

To improve consumer awareness of the firm's luxury kitchens, Extraordinary Works has committed over \$250,000 to a print advertising campaign in the local shelter and lifestyle magazines, according to Eathorne.

The company is also working with "the entire design community and ASID, sponsoring roundtables, guest speakers and educational seminars," reports Eathorne. The firm is also working with the local educational community and the design programs, including the National Kitchen & Bath Association-endorsed college program at Baker College and Lansing Community College in the area.

Working with customers exclusively at this location — in addition to Palazzolo

Joining the 40+ showrooms that comprise the Michigan Design Center, the recently opened Extraordinary Works showroom targets the upscale kitchen and bath market.

and Zebrowski — are Vita Buffa, ASID, CKD, who is a design consultant, and Todd Rowe, who is the technical support advisor. Additional design and installation support services come from other employees located in one of the company's three other locations, Eathorne reports.

To begin, the staff does hand-drawn preliminary designs or uses one of several different CAD systems. "Once we reach the ordering stage, all drawings are done on AutoCad, with the express purpose of presenting the most precise images for the manufacturing process," comments Eathorne.

Also assisting with overall service is the company's informational Web site. "We recently committed to a major investment in a large databank to house hundreds of images of different kitchens, bathrooms, home entertainment systems and offices," states Eathorne. "Every member of our sales and design staff carries laptops and blackberries, and they correspond with their clients with the highest level of technology that the client is comfortable with."



The 2,000 sq.-ft. Extraordinary Works showroom features 10 displays, with plans for two more currently on the drawing board, according to president Jim Eathorne.