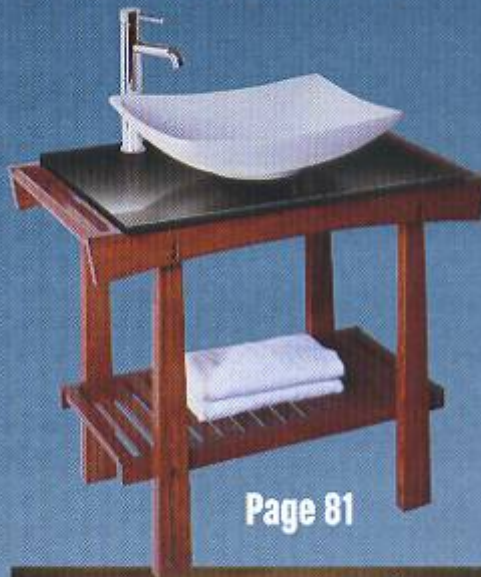


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Product Watch



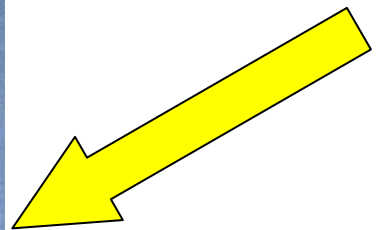
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Sinks Fashioned from Recycled Copper

Elkay Manufacturing's Antique Copper Hammered finish is now available on 11 sink designs from the company. Made from 100 percent recycled copper and hand finished by artisans, the sinks feature an ever-changing patina.

Shown is the Mystic River Shaped Sink in the Antique Copper Hammered finish.

**Elkay Manufacturing, 2222 Camden Ct., Oak
Brook, IL 60523**

Circle No. 156 on Product Card



Kitchen & Bath design news



JAHNKE

PA-based
**C.H. Briggs
Company** has
appointed
**Michael
Strauss** as
v.p./supply chain
management.



GRAU

**Timothy
Jahnke** has
been named
president and
chief executive
officer for Oak
Brook, IL-
based **Elkay
Manufacturing
Co.** Jahnke
replaces former
CEO **Ronald
Katz**, who
retired recently
but assumed
the position
of executive
chairman of
the Board of
Directors.





Industry Profile

Closeup on successful kitchen and bath professionals

Design Firm Provides Service, Speed and Stealth

By Denise D. Vermeulen

"SPEED and "stealth" are two words not typically heard at meetings between designers and clients. When designing a kitchen, a carefully planned and detailed schedule is the norm. Clients understand that the dozens of details required to complete a kitchen project will take time — a lot of time. And, of course, open communication between all parties is essential.

But, now and then, you hit a curve on the road to success.

When approached by one client with an outrageous idea, the Sorensen Design Group decided to think outside the box.

Could the firm help Clyde Lowstater give his wife, Carolyn, a brand new kitchen for their anniversary? Could they do it in the five-day period when she'd be away visiting her daughter? Could they keep it all a secret? Speed and stealth would be required, and everyone involved was absolutely unwilling to sacrifice quality.

While some might have balked at the idea of a five-day kitchen makeover, they decided they could pull it off.

The Sorensen Design Group was entering into new territory. Executive v.p. Steve Sorensen explains that he and his wife, Anna, president and chief designer of the company, had known Lowstater for years. Their relationship with him boosted their confidence, believing he would be 100% committed to the schedule they would need to establish. They also were convinced that it would be acceptable for Lowstater to make all of the design decisions himself — and that his wife would be happy with them.

TAKING ON THE CHALLENGE

The Sorensens, who do not have a showroom, were approached about doing the job about a month before work would begin. "The client was

totally on board for the timeline," says Steve Sorensen. "The key," he adds, "was that the client was ready to be decisive and do what it takes. That was his top priority." Lowstater was given "homework" and he jumped on it, visiting showrooms, choosing products and making final design decisions. There was no wiggle room, no wavering and no time to change his mind. According to Sorensen, this

kind of commitment to helping the client achieve his dream is indicative of the commitment the firm strives to take into every job. He explains that the firm "rarely parts company with a client," and this has helped to establish the firm's "client for life" philosophy.

The firm, which Anna established in 1997, has annual sales of \$1 million and handles 30 to 40 jobs each year, including both

commercial and residential projects. While the company previously did its greatest share of business in the custom home building market, the recent downward trend in the industry led Sorensen to redirect its efforts. Remodeling projects, along with model home merchandising projects, have made up the bulk of the firm's business during the past year, with about 25% of those projects being kitchens and baths.

Working with this client made good marketing sense for the firm, according to Sorensen. Lowstater frequently entertains a demographic Sorensen wants to reach. Lowstater's kitchen would be a showcase for Sorensen, with Lowstater the firm's biggest cheerleader. With a five-year goal of growing the business two to three times its current size, creative marketing would be helpful.



Anna and Steve Sorensen of Sorensen Design Group did this kitchen makeover in just five days.

New cabinet hardware, sinks, faucets and granite countertops were all part of the update.

Sorensen Design Group, Inc.

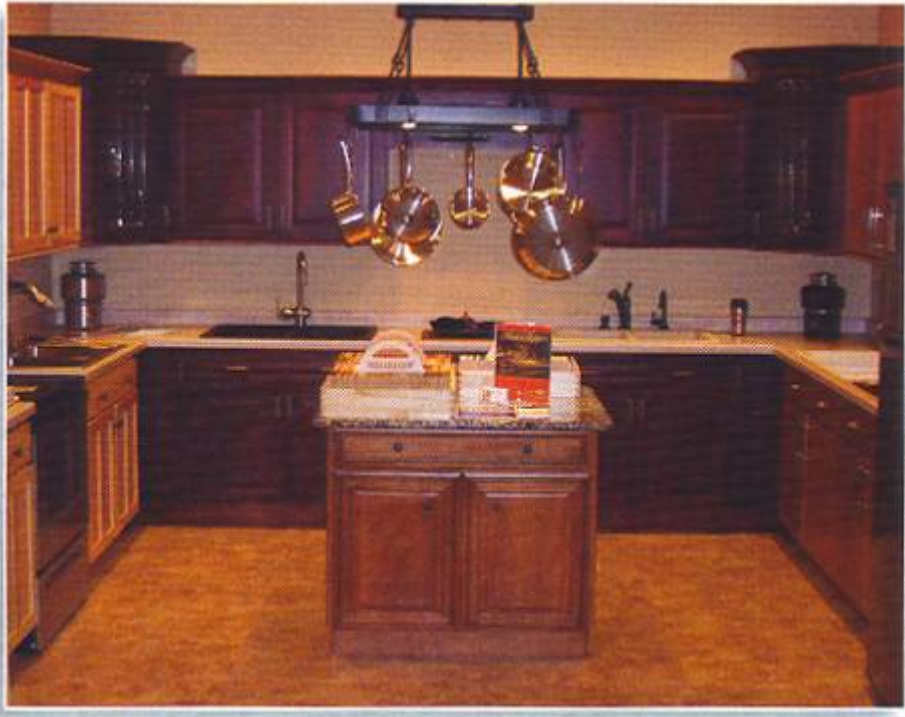
AT A GLANCE

Location: Deerfield, IL
Principals: Anna Sorensen, president, Allied Member, ASID and Steve Sorensen, executive v.p.
Showroom: None
Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and by appointment
Number of Employees: 5
Major Product Lines Specified: Sub-Zero, Wolf, Dornbracht, Elkay, Kohler, KWC, ShowHouse by Moen, Toto, Hafele, Valli & Valli, Medallion, Woodharbor, Wood-Mode, Ann Sacks, Virginia Tile, Fine Art Lamps, Kalco, Maxim and Minka.
Design Software: AutoCAD
Business Philosophy: "Our business is built around design excellence and customer loyalty. We embrace the philosophy of 'Client for Life' as we enjoy the benefits of recurring projects."

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Courtesy of Paul's Kitchen & Bath Collection