

## From Babylonians to Baby Boomers, tile endures

Ceramic tile and stone have a rich tradition as surfaces that are artistic, functional and enduring. Tile and stone go back more than 4,000 years, to the Babylonians and beyond. For all customers, be they Babylonians or Baby Boomers, the primary challenge in selling and designing with tile and stone is balancing aesthetics and function.

The biggest challenge consumers face when shopping for ceramic tile or stone is visualizing how it will look in their homes. So a well-designed showroom is critical to successful tile and stone transactions. Showrooms should help both consumers and novice salespeople visualize how the products are used via vignettes, grouted sample boards, quality lighting and clear labels.

Ceramic tile and stone are only as

more on the same amount of floor covering than their parents did," he says. This is the same group driving your kitchen and bath sales, and for many, the preferred choice is ceramic tile and stone.

Baby Boomers want more choices, and they have the discretionary income to pay for them. They are better educated, they want larger selections, and they want information to help them compare and make intelligent decisions.

Providing choices for customers—and information about those choices—adds value to your services and can increase your upgrade sales. Whether you offer a good-better-best approach or simply a choice between styles and price, consumers want to know the difference and will often pay a higher price for the added value.

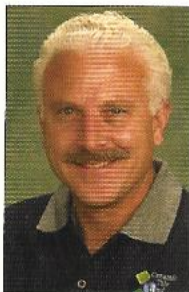
## Providing choices for customers and information about those choices adds value to your services.

good as their installers and their intended use. All products have limitations, and false expectations can infect the entire sales process, ultimately passing on to the end user. For this reason, product-use information should be readily available for both your staff and customers.

Floor-covering guru Jonathan Trivers reports that the Baby Boomers are by far the driving force behind an increase in floor-covering sales. Baby Boomer households "are spending 30%

The Internet offers several resources to assist in visualizing the use of ceramic tile and stone. One example is Dancik's Image Builder. Customers can see and adjust how their tile, design or grout selection will actually look. ([www.dancik.com](http://www.dancik.com))

Be prepared to capitalize on the demand for ceramic tile and stone. Give your staff easy access to sales tools and education, and have a well-designed showroom with a broad product mix to allow them to effectively serve these key customers. *kbb*



about the author: Donato Pompo is the founder of Ceramic Tile and Stone Consultants. He has more than 25 years experience in the ceramic tile and stone industry, from installation to distribution to manufacturing of installation products. His firm provides services in job problem investigations, quality control, training (online or onsite), market research, outsourcing and business planning. You can reach Pompo on the Web at [www.CTaSC.com](http://www.CTaSC.com), via e-mail at [dvpompo@CTaSC.com](mailto:dvpompo@CTaSC.com) or by calling 619-669-2967.

# KITCHEN & BATH Business

The International Magazine of the Kitchen & Bath Industry  
and Official Publication of the Kitchen/Bath Industry Show

## ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES

### SOUTHWEST

**Joy Williams**, MIDWEST REGIONAL MANAGER  
1717 MAIN STREET  
SUITE 3300, DALLAS, TX 75201  
(800) 527-0207; FAX: (214) 290-9980

### MIDWEST/WEST

**Melani Beattie**, MIDEAST REGIONAL MANAGER  
(312) 583-5618; FAX: (312) 583-5602

### SOUTHEAST

**Paul Bienkowski**, SOUTHEAST REGIONAL MANAGER  
(860) 644-3861; FAX: (860) 644-0700

### NORTHEAST

**Phyllis Viscidi**, NORTHEAST REGIONAL MANAGER  
(781) 431-1320; FAX: (781) 431-1968

## GALLERY & CLASSIFIEDS

**Robyn Graney**, GALLERY AND CLASSIFIED SALES  
VNU BUSINESS MEDIA, 770 BROADWAY, NY, NY 10003  
(646) 654-4492; FAX: (646) 654-4417



## BUSINESS PUBLICATIONS USA

### Real Estate and Design Group

**Real Estate:** COMMERCIAL PROPERTY NEWS, MULTI-HOUSING NEWS

**Design:** ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING, ARCHITECTURE, CONTRACT DESIGN, FACILITIES DESIGN & MANAGEMENT, HOSPITALITY DESIGN, KITCHEN & BATH BUSINESS

### Other VNU Groups

MARKETING/MEDIA, RETAIL, TRAVEL, PERFORMANCE, FOOD SERVICE, ENTERTAINMENT

### CORPORATE OFFICERS

**President, CEO:** Michael Marchesano  
**Chief Operating Officer:** Howard Lander

**Group Presidents:** John Failla,  
Karen Schaffner

**Executive Vice Presidents:** Mark Dacey (Marketing/Media, Retail), Richard O'Connor (Travel/ Performance, Real Estate/Design, Food Service), Toni Nevitt (E-Media & Marketing Information)

**Vice Presidents:** Joellen Sommer (Business Management), Joanne Wheatley (Circulation), Barbara Devlin (Manufacturing, Production & Distribution)



## BUSINESS MEDIA

PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER **Michael Marchesano**

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER **Howard Lander**

VICE PRESIDENT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT **John van der Valk**

VICE PRESIDENT HUMAN RESOURCES **Sharon Sheer**

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER **Joseph Furey**

PRESIDENT, VNU EXPOSITIONS **Greg Farrar**

VICE PRESIDENT, VNU EXPOSITIONS **Douglas Hope**

PRESIDENT, VNU E MEDIA **Jeremy Grayzel**