



Makers of NuCrete™
The World's Only Stainless Concrete



SONOMA CAST STONE

A Periodic Periodical

The KBIS 2006 Edition / Booth #1567



Some guy down the street is cheaper!

The guy down the street is cheaper! We often hear this from our dealers. What's more, we believe it. Some guy, who used to pour concrete sidewalks, is now making cast-in-place countertops and he is much cheaper. We simply can't compete with that (except for CounterTiles™) and don't.

How can you sell against this kind of a price difference? It's easy - all you need is a little ammunition. Here it is:

- First of all it's a frame of mind. Most of our dealers are selling luxury products to high end design homes. Most of these homes are in excess of a million dollars. The kitchen is the very center of every house. It's the center of family gatherings and like it or not the center of almost every party. Nothing is used more in the kitchen than the countertops. Nothing takes up so much space. Nothing gets more abuse. This is the center of the home. This is not the place for an owner, an architect, a designer and most of all a contractor to use an inferior product?

- Is it really an "inferior product"?
- This is the time to ask your buyer about the competition:

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New, National Sales Manager

Erik Ambjor Joins Sonoma

The advent of NuCrete™ is taking our sales to a new level. It was time to "bite the bullet" and hire someone with the kind of skills that serve this rapidly expanding demand. After months of "head hunting" and interviews, we are very excited with the results. It is with great pleasure that we would like to introduce you to our new National Sales Manager - Erik Ambjor.

Having to make the difficult choice of moving to Toledo, Ohio (alone) or remaining in San Francisco (with wife and nearby family), Erik decided to leave his



long-held position as International Sales Manager for Owens Corning's Cultured Stone division and help guide this catapulting train - Sonoma Cast Stone. Erik brings years of dealer/rep experience, a good knowledge of the concrete world and a keen understanding

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NuCrete™

Exclusively from Sonoma Cast Stone



Architects and designers love concrete so much that they have talked clients into using it, despite the staining and cracking historically associated with this warm, colorful and sculptural material. After years of research, Sonoma Cast Stone has finally removed this hurdle and achieved a truly

stainless concrete with a 30-year warranty against structural cracking in our countertops.

Hard to believe?

Some people think so. Go ahead, give it a try. Limes, lemons, wine and oil have long been the enemy of concrete...

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IN GOOD COMPANY

We hope the expression "you will be known by the company you keep," is true.

FIVE ELEMENTS

Bronze - Glass - Steel - Stone - Concrete

We have joined together in a very informal group of the five most exciting manufacturers in the Kitchen and Bath Business. Anxious to maintain their own

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ADVISORY BOARD

To gain a perspective and good business advice we have formed an extremely talented and widely diverse group that has offered to serve on our board of advisors. We are pleased to announce the

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SONOMA CAST STONE NATIONAL DEALER NEWS

1 Picture is Worth 1000 Words

Next to touching and feeling our concrete a good photo does a pretty good job. Two new products now show hundreds of photos to your showroom visitors. The first is a new shelf video display. This 6" x 8" display shows a continuous loop of colorful concrete products. Every few months the memory can be refreshed by a standard card, provided by Sonoma Cast Stone. This small video unit is a powerful marketing tool. The first unit will be introduced in our KBIS booth (1567). The video display will be automatically included in the dealer kit for all new dealers and can be ordered by our existing dealers for \$150. The second photo wonder is a pocket-sized catalog showing 128 pages of products. This clever "flip book" is designed for trade show and showroom giveaways. Take a pocket full at the show.

New, Faster FastForms The TechBinder is Coming Soon

By now, you have received the new 2006 Price List for Standard Products. The effective date is April 1, 2006, but if you have been working on a sale that is about to go, we will honor the old prices. You will notice there have been a number of enhancements that hopefully the Price List easier to read. We want the ordering process to be as simplified and user-friendly as possible.

The newly revised Fast Forms binder that will be sent to you shortly as well. We have redesigned it to make ordering as simple as 1,2,3 (and sometimes 4). The new Fast Forms also present each product in a more logical fashion, allowing you to tally up a quote with

selected options, to give to your customer for their consideration.

In a few months, you'll also receive the new Technical Binder, a great sales tool. These will be made available to architects and designers so they will become more familiar with Sonoma Cast Stone products and specify us on their projects.

These two tools, will be combined together into a Training module presentation that you can use to refresh, enhance and expand your knowledge of our products. We are planning a CD to take you step by step through the product line and ordering process.

Stay tuned.

NuCrete™ Stainless Concrete, a Sonoma Exclusive

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countertops. No longer. You'll be amazed... It really does work!

A stainless, crack-free concrete is exactly what people in the Kitchen and Bath Industry have wanted for years. Now it's here. With this industry innovation, Sonoma Cast Stone products made with NuCrete will retain a "like new" finish for years to come.

To account for the number of household products that leave a "memory" on standard concrete surfaces, a series of exhaustive tests (including direct exposure to streams of alkaline, acid and oils) were run in developing the NuCrete mixture. After nearly three years and hundreds of experiments, the Sonoma Cast Stone Research and Development department achieved a product that is

totally unique. By changing our basic mixes and greatly modifying production methods and surfaces, Sonoma Cast Stone achieved a one-of-a-kind, trademarked, stainless formula.

Sonoma Cast Stone has perfected the formulas and the manufacturing techniques to produce products that are almost four times stronger than building code requirements.

SONOMA PRESS MESS KIT

Last month we sent a fun "Mess Kit" to about 250 home style editors and writers. The kit said that we realize they get daily press kits, but that this was their first Mess Kit. In the box was a sample of our NuCrete™ together with a lemon, a bottle of Tabasco, ketchup, olive oil and a bottle of wine and a "make my day" note. What does this mean to our dealers? Do the numbers - of the 250 writers, 22 will actually print the earth shattering news about this incredible discovery. These 22 publications reach 14,539,032 readers, 5392 of whom are now in the building process. Each of them goes into our dealer showroom and 382 of them buy. You make profit and we have fun. What more can we ask. If you have a local editor that needs convincing, let us know.



The Messy Components of Sonoma's New NuCrete™ Mess Kit

New(s) in the Sonoma Websites...

As you read this newsletter, you are a few months away from 2007, and it is no longer realistic to shrug-off the WorldWideWeb.

The day that you could smile and say, "oh, I'm just not computer-savvy" and have people smile back may not be completely gone, but night is falling fast. The web becomes a more important marketing tool almost by the hour. It shows no real signs of replacing the printed word, but clearly no one can expect to thrive in sales without being comfortable in the web environment. Printed advertising is not going away, but it has lost ground to web advertising, and that trend is increasing.

Printed brochures and catalogs will always be necessary, but now they must function in partnership with websites.

Residential & Commercial

The SONOMA websites have become much more dynamic and now evolve, literally, by the day. The sites remain simple and "friendly", but the information available there is fresher, and there's more of it.

The sites are still sonomastone.com and sonomaforge.com. However, sonomastone.com has effectively become two sites. You have likely noticed that there is now an introductory, gateway page, like a fork in the road. In one direction, the site is primarily targeted at residential sales while the other targets commercial interests.

Now that this new architecture is in place, there will be a flurry of activity on each side to optimize it toward its intended audience.

Improved Photography

Functioning hand-in-glove with this increased attention to web development is the quantum leap we have taken in terms of professional photography. In the last six months, our library of product photos has increased ten-fold. This is thanks to both in-house photography and our roving photographer cum laude, Victoria Webb. We have developed the nimble capacity for capturing professional product shots in the plant, while the material is pristine.

We are in the planning phase of developing a photo-set that could be made to resemble either a kitchen or bathroom to better stage these photos. Meanwhile, Victoria is traveling far and wide for us, bringing home invaluable photos from both residential and commercial installations. It's like Christmas morning around here when she stops by, and these beautiful images are streaming into our website and printed materials.

FactSheets

In the general access area of the sites, there will be a FactSheet made available for viewing and/or downloading. There will be a FactSheet for each product we offer, and each FactSheet will include a front page geared toward sales and a second sheet that is more technical in nature. These FactSheets will be a handy source of product

information for dealers, potential buyers and even architects. Many are in place now.

Dealer Section

Also under development in sonomastone.com is the Dealer Section. This will be a resource dedicated to our national dealers, providing you with indexed access to replacement fast-order forms, downloadable brochure and catalog information as well as technical cutsheets. You will see a KBIS product gallery there now, and we will continue to post advance notice of SONOMA trade show appearances, press releases and any other information we think you could use.

New Catalog

A new, general catalog is also under development and will be laid-out to complement the website. Both the site and the catalog will carry the same visual theme, and the catalog will trumpet a number of specific references to areas of interest in the website.

We feel strongly that devoting resources to website development will translate directly into increased sales activity and that our sites should be a great asset to our dealers. We encourage you to set aside some time to explore the sites thoroughly. We also encourage you to communicate your feelings about the sites to our resident webmonkey. That would be me, and I respond well to both suggestions and criticism.



All it takes is a banana.

travis@samsdadgraphics.com

Sonoma Cast Stone & NuCrete™ In The News

Press interest in Sonoma Cast Stone products and in NuCrete™ in particular has increased substantially in the last year. Subsequently, our exposure in the media has become widespread, reaching from local, bay area outlets to the New York Times and Wall Street Journal.

While it is impossible to precisely measure our exposure, we have monitored appearance is over 73 print publications in the last year. Interest in our website has been increasing, as well. The web audience may even be dwarfing readership in the press. Website statistics indicate that all aspects of web activity have increased exponentially, both in terms of new visitors and those who come back. Search engine rankings for www.sonomastone.com have skyrocketed.

As dealers, please be alert to any media opportunities, and contact Travis at x116 for any media requests, images or text.

New Sales Manager.

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of the requirements needed to serve this complex industry. Already, Erik has implemented some major changes in the Sales Support Department. And yes! he has impressed us with the importance of actually printing and distributing a new technical products binder (within two months). In general, sales and production have been growing out of control here at Sonoma Cast Stone and it is Erik that is helping to guide this new level and bring it all back into control. We look forward to you meeting Erik at our KBIS breakfast we think you will love him too.

SONOMA CAST STONE NATIONAL DEALER NEWS

The Other Guy...

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- How long has he been in business?
- How long will he be around to cover his warranties?
- Does he offer a 30 year warranties against cracking?
- Does he offer a stainless concrete?
- Does he have a technical support department?
- Does he understand complex drawings?
- Does he vary the batch formula required every project?
- Does he have a concrete engineer on staff?
- Does he deliver on time?
- Does he have concrete color consistency?
- Does he have exciting products to include in their design?

In case you were wondering - the answer to the all of the above is yes for Sonoma Cast Stone. It's this simple - There is always someone cheaper. Fine concrete or NuCrete™ countertops should never be sold as a commodity.

There is no other manufacturer of concrete kitchen and bath products in the country that can provide the quality, the reliability and now a stainless concrete (NuCrete™).

That's a bold statement but it is all true. You can feel justified in charging more for a vastly different and better product. Come wrap your arms around any of our pieces at KBIS and you will agree.

KBIS Booth #1567



NuCrete™ CounterTiles™ and Stainless Steel Sink on a stand-alone, Stainless Steel Cabinet

COUNTERTILES & CABINETS

ONE GOOD IDEA DESERVES ANOTHER...

Sonoma Cast Stone manufactures stand-alone cabinets to carry our surfaces and sinks. These cabinets are solid hardwood, strong enough to support our materials and beautiful enough to accompany our award-winning designs.

The cabinets come in a variety of styles and finishes, some with faux drawers to conceal a dishwasher. And now we're offering Stainless Steel sinks in addition to the Stainless Concrete ones...



Sonoma Cast Stone now offers Stainless Steel in addition to Stainless Concrete.

Five Elements...

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identity and yet also anxious to work together, this group has found many similarities.

This year **Rocky Mountain Hardware, Vitraform Glass, Neo-Metro, Stone Forest** and **Sonoma Cast Stone** will exhibit together at KBIS for the first time.

Future joint efforts are in the planning. We think of this group as being in the forefront of new designs and each being the best names in their own fields. We are proud to be associated with them all. Watch for more!

Advisory Board...

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formation of our new advisory board consisting of:

Ann Sacks

Founder of Ann Sacks Tile and Stone

Lara Hedberg Deam

Owner and Founder Dwell Magazine

David Kotowsky

Owner Advantage Kitchen & Bath Gallery

Kent Larson (Retired)

President, Williams-Sonoma, Pottery Barn

We are grateful that such a talented group of experienced leaders believe in our future and are willing to guide our rapid growth.