

EuroShop 2008: Inspirational Innovations

Unique material showcase demonstrates how inspiration easily crosses cultural and international boundaries. Among our "Best of Show" favourites are examples of lighting, systems, craftsmanship and technology that are a small sampling, not only within these categories, but also in the variety of other categories displayed at EuroShop.

In short, EuroShop 2008 was a WOW! Retail, exhibit and brand marketers found a wide variety of practical solutions to meet their communication and environmental needs, complemented with a great dose of inspiration coming from the unique vision of the exhibits and companies that participated.

While there were certainly a number of overarching trends, there was also a great deal of diversity with experiences that replicated space ships, Zen gardens and dungeons from the "dark side," sprinkled with an interesting resurgence of retro inspired by the 50's and 60's, Op Art or Googie styles. Trends focused on areas of eco-responsibility, modularity of systems and integration of multi-media and technologies; with a combination of print and digital integrated onto/into a variety of physical shapes and formats.

Many of the world's leading companies in technology, shopfitting and visual merchandising impressed their audience. Many of these companies have been in the industry for generations; joining them were a number of new start-ups, representing the entrepreneurial spirit of retail in the development of new shop concepts and in the welcoming of new shopfitters. Who knows, they just may be that infusion of "new blood" that develops the next new trends we see in Dusseldorf at EuroShop three years from now.

One of the most interesting developments was in the area of LED-based technologies. This technology, which is eco-friendly and highly versatile and stylistic, was adapted to meet pragmatic needs in the areas of emergency lighting and wayfinding, and was devised to bring lighting into volumes, spaces and configurations where traditional lighting sources are not adaptable. On the other hand, LED itself became the show. Taking advantage of the medium's flexibility and programmability, many exhibits showcased the ability to colour space with light and to blend traditional lighting sources with LED sources in the development of innovative lighting fixtures, architectural treatments and decorative elements. Beyond the traditional plasma or LCD screen, these LED "curtains" create landscape-sized installations that, from

a distance, have the acuity and crispness of an image we expect out of traditional digital formats. They have the added benefit of transparency and flexibility through their expanded pixel density, taking on curvilinear configurations; even being mounted on a moving track system that shifts the image from one part of the environment to the other.



**Kenneth Nisch, Chairman
JGA, Inc.,**



This system incorporates tracks, circles and panels with multi-media and technology to create impact.

Alu



Insta

New LED technology focuses on how it can be integrated in a way that is pointed versus ambient.



Mink-Bürsten

Incorporates organic and natural fibers to create unique graphics with flexible topography and pattern.



Targetti

Unique multi-tasking products provide unique approaches to lighting, wayfinding and design.

Streamlined, minimal and engineered systems (whose interchangeability and precision became inherently elegant) were also highlighted at the show. From Japanese polycarbonate systems that provide virtually transparent structures, to the precision and engineering we know and admire from the Northern European vendors, these resources differed from the one-of-a-kind and artisanal quality that another group of equally talented and passionate vendors provided. The more artistic and crafted ranged from unique one-of-a-kind light fixtures to the use of stone and wood in their primal form, playing off the texture and tactile nature of these materials, even adding sound through guest interaction. It is clear that both the artist and the machine can not only live together, but even compliment each other within the retail environment.



Traxon

Uses animation and motion to create a digital environment.



Ueberholz

Underscores the primitive nature and texture of organic materials such as stone.

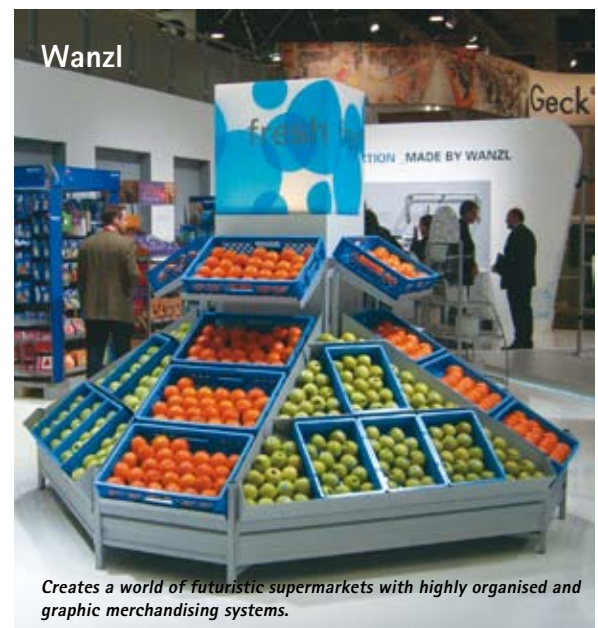
Beyond the show, the ability to tour retail installations in a number of the German retail-rich cities including Cologne, Düsseldorf, Hamburg and others, provided additional inspiration. Seeing the world of retail through a colleague's eyes, particularly one with different cultural references, always provides a fresh perspective in your own thinking. Combining that trip with additional cities visited as part of the EuroShop experience (Istanbul, Madrid, etc.) leaves one a bit humbled, but highly motivated.

As we return to our normal workday and familiar environment, we do so with a tinge of a "creative hangover." We now go back to our drawing boards filled with inspiration, higher standards and a new set of resources and suppliers who are willing and able to support our next creative dream. We cannot wait to see what we will find at their next event, EuroShop 2011! ●



Visplay

Post-traditional architecture celebrates the deconstruction of form.



Wanzl

Creates a world of futuristic supermarkets with highly organised and graphic merchandising systems.



Xiamen Nanyang
Adds a twist to the traditional with innovative forms made of unique materials.

*Kenneth Nisch is an architect and chairman of JGA, Inc., a retail design, architecture and brand strategy firm in Southfield, Michigan. Named one of the industry's "Most Influential," Nisch applies his knowledge and entrepreneurial insight into consumer markets to create concept and prototype development, brand image positioning and architectural direction. JGA's clients include **Godiva Chocolatier, Brookstone, Verizon Wireless, Borders, Kira Plastinina, Springfield, Hershey's, Hickey Freeman, Jaguar and The North Face.** Ken may be reached at 1.248.355.0890, www.jga.com or info@jga.com.*



Zumtobel

High touch and high tech environments focus on texture, colour, details and boldness.