

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Profile Update

VT to announce new laminate colors for *Valencia* and *Barcelona*. Page 3

In the News

VT Industries earns 2007 Semi-Annual Innovation Award. Page 3

CounterTopics Trivia

Take this challenge for a chance to win a VT prize. Page 3

The Green Scene

EQcountertops make their debut at recent tradeshows. Page 4

Fabricator's Forum

The pie cut corner opens up design possibilities. Page 4

PERSPECTIVES



By **Amanda Paulsen**
Communications Coordinator

VT Industries recently published a white paper called "A Professional Fit" to provide fabrication and installation guidelines for postformed decorative laminate countertops.

This new piece is an educational tool for fabricators and installers. It includes step-by-step guidelines for ensuring a professional fit in any residential or commercial setting.



We have also made this available on our Web site at www.vtindustries.com/countertops/WhitePaper.shtml for quick and easy access at any time.

Contact your customer service representative for copies of this new piece. ↔

Millennial Hearing: Featuring Countertops For the Next Millennium

When Millennial Hearing's brand-new store was getting ready to open in a newly constructed building in the Phoenix, Ariz., area, they contacted Holly Antibus, Laminate Division Manager at West Coast Countertops, for assistance with getting their new office set up.

'THEY WERE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING NEW AND UNIQUE, SO WE INTRODUCED THEM TO VT'S NEW EDGE PROFILES.'
— ANTIBUS

"As a small business owner, Millennial Hearing contacted us wanting laminate countertops because that is what they were familiar with," shares Antibus.

Millennial Hearing needed countertops in the front area of their office. "They were looking for something new and unique, so we introduced them to VT's new edge profiles," adds Antibus.

NEW AND UNIQUE

Millennial Hearing needed countertop space at their work stations, front counter and desk, as well as their consultation areas. Millennial Hearing picked out VT's *Valencia* countertop profile, which features a dramatic, graceful contoured slope with a full-wrap ogee design for classic sophistication. The color they selected was Wilsonart's premium Milano Glen (4727-52) in the Quarry finish.

"We are seeing trends that customers are leaning toward the new laminate finishes and are upgrading to premium laminates," adds Antibus.

West Coast Countertops was also glad to be able to complete a project with one of VT's new edge profiles combined with a premium laminate. "We are getting the new profiles displayed in our show rooms and are hoping to continue to see more growth with this new product," adds Antibus.

West Coast Countertops has been in business in the Phoenix, Ariz., area over the last 18 years. They primarily work on residential projects including servicing local Lowe's and Home Depot stores, in addition to working with large contractors on multi-family housing properties and homes.

This location services the metropolitan Phoenix area, and the company has a total of seven locations across the West Coast. The company employs nearly 200 employees across all of their locations, with over 25 in Phoenix. ↔



Front desk in Wilsonart's Milano Glen featuring the Valencia edge.

DESIGNS AND TRENDS

Wilsonart Introduces New Trend-Inspired Laminate Designs



Wilsonart's Jeweled Coral featuring the Caprice edge.

Inspiration from modern design trends and natural beauty has led Wilsonart® to introduce a wide selection of new laminate designs and extended choices for existing series. Set for launch in summer 2007, easy maintenance and wear-resistance capabilities, along with outstanding aesthetics, make these new laminates ideal for countertops throughout the home and commercial applications.

Among the additions are four new Wilsonart® HD™ High Definition™ Laminate series: Metallic, Passage, Crystalline, and Gemstone. The new HD laminate's intricate textures and array of color options, paired with HD's striking reflective technology, make a perfect match for VT's newest contoured edge profiles, *Valencia* and *Barcelona*.

THE NEW HD COLOR OPTIONS INCLUDE:

Metallic Bronze – A classic, elegant bronze with black that provides an aged quality.

continued on page 2

Wilsonart Introduces New Trend-Inspired Laminate Designs continued from page 1

Metallic Steel – A deep, steel blue with a blackened, aged quality.

Metallic Silver – A glitzy silver over black.



Metallic Series

“Metal remains an extensively used design trend in a number of settings — especially retail and hospitality, where it is combined with other mediums such as wood and leather, providing a rich, yet refined style,” explains Ron Gagnon, vice president of design and marketing for Wilsonart.

Desert Passage – Light appearance and soft sand tones complement all wood types.

Canyon Passage – Mid-clay tones inspired by weathered canyon walls.

Mountain Passage – Mountain shadows in deep sienna brown color blends, which echo dark wood tones.

Alpine Passage – Deep green tones with aged bronze coloring that reflects colorations found in stone, with a Mediterranean influence.

Night Passage – Features colors of the night: plum and blue-gray that overlaps into brown.



Canyon Passage featuring the Regal profile.

“There’s a natural antiquity that we feel when we’re beside millenniums-old rock layers,” says Gagnon. “Our eyes, minds and fingers often feast on the story behind the creation of these layers.”

Crystalline Onyx – Warm gray tones and faceted onyx inlays, intermixed with subtle areas of amber marbling.

Crystalline Braun – Rich chocolate tone combined with clay marbling.

Crystalline Dune – Soft brown tone with clay marbling that pairs nicely with natural maple and cherry woods.

Crystalline Shell – Tan tones and clay marbling provide a neutral appeal.

Crystalline Pearl – A marbled quartz combined with subtle sand accents.

Crystalline Ice – An aquamarine marbled quartz combined with subtle sand accents.

Crystalline Iris – A leafy green marbled quartz that includes amber accents in the veining.

“Crystalline is a unique interpretation of engineered quartz that provides affordable luxury and high performance to homeowners,” commented

Gagnon. “The new collection features a sea of colors that are sure to bring a new design aesthetic to kitchens and bathrooms.”

Mystic Gemstone – A mystical blend of colors in clay, embedded with larger gems of brown and aggregate pieces of smoky-blue.

River Gemstone – A riverbend treasury consisting of red-brown, embedded with larger gems of deep brown and smaller pieces of blue-gray.

Raven Gemstone – Features gemstones in dark shades of brown, lifted black and midnight blue.



Raven Gemstone featuring the Regal profile.

“Gemstone and Jeweled provide a bulls-eye of color for the kitchen or bathroom,” says Gagnon.

NEW DESIGNS TO BE RELEASED IN SUMMER 2007 ALSO INCLUDE:

Jeweled Sapphire – A dark green jade embellished with rubies and blue sapphires.

Jeweled Opal – A soft jade embellished with garnet and turquoise in opalescent colors.

Jeweled Mica – Soft shades of cocoa with dark brown, coral and cameos of light blue mica.

Jeweled Ivory – Ivory clay with coral and light blue mica.

Jeweled Coral – Clay embellished with mica and dark coral insets.

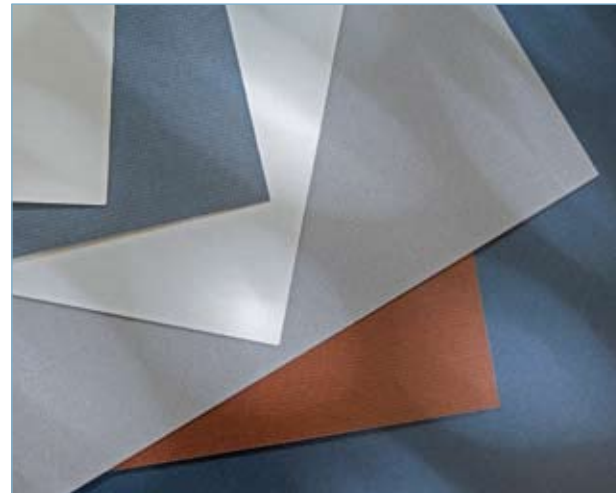
Sheer Mesh – A weave of soft, warm white.

Grey Mesh – A soft and light gray.

Pewter Mesh – An aged, warm gray.

Carbon Mesh – A deep carbon gray.

Copper Mesh – A deep, aged copper.



Mesh Series

Mission Glaze – A kiln-glazed red, inspired by the peppers found in the southwestern region, can be used to add depth & emphasis.

Mission Stone – An aged look inspired by the natural colors found in clays, rock and stone.



Mission Stone and Mission Glaze

Western White – A warm white with a complex combination of warm taupe tones to add depth.

Western Tan – A brilliant chamois with gentle brown and taupe accents.

Western Suede – A mature taupe with subtle brown tone and added depth.

Western Storm – A classic umber further realized with warm brown accents.

Western Bronze – Luminescent bronze brought to greater heights with rich brown detailing.

Western Hills – The warmth of sienna brown combined expertly with deep brown accents.

Western Iron – A rich, deep gray that blends in beautiful black and brown tones.



Western Series

Cloud Zephyr – A light, cool gray with soft blue overtones — this year’s version of the purest skies and seas.

Shadow Zephyr – A light, warm gray with symbolic hints of red that gets its inspiration from tones found in both rock and stone.

Crisp Zephyr – Light and crisp yellow-green with subtle hints of taupe, this design offers a new look at botanical green.

Spiced Zephyr – A warm, cinnamon brown that reflects the warmth found in the environment, mirroring the natural fabrics of the earth.

Antique Topaz – Antique gold with rich, dark brown and sienna chips.

Sandy Topaz – Sand and dark brown combine with sienna chips.

Milano Baltic – Baltic green and black with brown in motion throughout.

Milano Blaze – Sienna glow combines with chocolate brown and light gray quartz.

Milano Rosso – A deep red garnet and black with smoky gray quartz.

Oiled Soapstone – Similar to natural soapstone that is oiled to maintain its darkness, this soapstone is dark, grayish-blue.

Sable Soapstone – A reddish-brown, this rich coloration complements chocolate-glazed cabinetry.



Soapstone Series

Flame Soapstone – A rich sienna interpretation that is rarely found in natural soapstone.

Green Soapstone – As in nature, this blackened-green coloration combines well with stainless steel appliances and mid-tone wood cabinetry.

Pearl Soapstone – A warm gray that provides the perfect neutral for woods and metals.

Tan Soapstone – Light and tan coloration that provides a versatile neutral with timeless quality. ➔

Announcing New Colors for Valencia and Barcelona

VT Industries introduced *Valencia* and *Barcelona* nearly a year ago to provide postformed laminate countertops with unique edge profiles with the look and feel of granite, natural stone or solid surface. Beginning in August, *Valencia* and *Barcelona* will be available in additional laminate colors and patterns.



Valencia edge featuring Formica's Realcrete.

"The feedback we have been receiving on *Valencia* and *Barcelona* has been outstanding and we are excited about expanding our product offerings," shares Trisha Clausen, marketing communications manager.

'WE ARE EXCITED ABOUT EXPANDING OUR PRODUCT OFFERINGS.'
— CLAUSEN

The *Valencia* and *Barcelona* edge profiles will be offered in all Wilsonart® and Formica® standard and non-standard colors, including premium laminates, with the exception of glossy finishes. This will make them similar to all of the postformed laminate edge profiles available from VT.

SETTING TRENDS

"Our goal is to be a trend-setter and compete with the natural and stone products with additional laminate colors available on *Valencia* and *Barcelona*," shares Clausen.

The leading laminate manufacturers continue to introduce new laminate colors and patterns each year to keep up with the current design trends.

"We are supporting the laminate manufacturers' new colors with our contoured edge profiles as we are seeing trends toward stone and natural products at a fraction of the cost," adds Clausen.

Valencia offers a gracefully contoured full-wrap ogee profile and *Barcelona* features a double-waterfall edge design. The patent-pending edge profiles were designed by VT design engineers using sophisticated postforming technology, and are available with or without a backsplash.

All of VT's postformed countertops are formed as a single piece of laminate wrapped around the custom core material to form a seamless surface with no seams to collect dirt or bacteria, for easy cleaning and appearance.

MOVING FORWARD

VT will continue to expand its laminate stock color options throughout 2007. "We are currently gathering recommendations, and will be making changes later this year," adds Clausen.



Barcelona edge featuring Formica's Sand Crystal.

Trends continue to change throughout the marketplace as well as the various geographic areas. VT wants to continue to move forward and keep up with the current trends. ↔



Valencia edge featuring Wilsonart's Milano Quartz.

IN THE NEWS

VT Industries Earns 2007 Semi-Annual Innovation Award

VT Industries has been recognized again as an Innovation Award winner in the Laminate Surfaces category by *Home Builder Executive* magazine. VT shared the recognition with Wilsonart® International and the Formica® Corporation in the April 30, 2007 issue of the magazine.

"We are pleased to receive this outstanding recognition," shares Trisha Clausen, marketing communications manager. VT also placed an advertisement in this issue featuring the new *Valencia* and *Barcelona* countertop edge profiles.

"In selecting the winners of *Home Builder Executive's* Annual Innovation Awards, the magazine's research staff reviewed company Web sites, press releases and promotional materials, along with articles and interviews published over the past year," Doug Vander Schauw of *Home Builder Executive* noted.

ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

Home Builder Executive is the only bi-weekly publication in the residential home building industry. Each issue incorporates timely news articles, in-depth executive profile interviews and special category features.



2007 Innovation Awards issue

The magazine's readers include the purchasing managers at leading builder organizations, including D.R. Horton, Lennar, Pulte Homes, Centex, KB Home, Hovnanian, Beazer Homes, NVT, Standard Pacific, Meritage Homes and Toll Brothers. ↔

COUNTERTOPICS TRIVIA QUESTION

Congratulations to Jeremy Berntzen of Tacoma Countertops, Inc., for the correct answer to the question: "True or False? All VT commercial grade countertops come with a .020" phenolic backer on the underside of the substrate." Jeremy won a VT prize for coming up with the correct answer, which was True.

QUESTION: True or False? VT Industries *Valencia* and *Barcelona* profiles will soon be available in additional laminate colors and patterns.

Answer this question based on this issue of *CounterTopics* for a chance to win a VT prize. View the newsletter on VT's Web site at www.vtindustries.com/trivia and submit the correct answer by filling in your contact information electronically by September 15, 2007. Limit one entry per person, and one winning per year.

VT employees and sales representatives are excluded from this promotion.

EQcountertops On The Move

VT Industries' EQcountertops have continued to make their debut at several recent tradeshows this year, including International Builders', the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show and Conference (KBIS), ECObuild, American Institute of Architects (AIA), Construction Specifications Institute (CSI) and Greenbuild, and they continue to be a part of the green industry building trends.

"We have showed our EQcountertops at all of the major shows and the response was overwhelmingly positive," shares Chris Schlabach, national sales manager.

VT's EQcountertops were recently featured at the AIA show for a few days in May in San Antonio, TX. "We generated hundreds of leads at AIA. The response was unbelievable. There were always multiple people standing around the EQcountertop at the show," adds Schlabach.

Also during May at KBIS in Las Vegas, Nev., VT's EQcountertops were featured at the Green Products Pavilion in addition to VT's tradeshow booth.

The ECObuild show in Anaheim, Calif., was also held during May and featured VT's EQcountertops in addition to VT Architectural Wood Doors.

At the CSI show June 20-22 in Baltimore, Md., VT's EQcountertops shared booth space with VT Architectural Wood Doors again. "This was another good show for us. Our EQcountertops

were a new thing, the specifiers hadn't heard of them before," adds Schlabach.

Later this year at the Greenbuild Show in Chicago, Ill., November 6-8. VT's EQcountertops will share booth space with Architectural Wood Doors and we look forward to an outstanding response similar to last year's.

"What we have been sharing with architects and specifiers at these shows is educating them on postformed laminate countertops after they are initially interested in the EQcountertops. Many of them ask, 'What else do you have?'," adds Schlabach. Not every project can afford granite or stone, and our postformed laminate countertops are an excellent alternative, since they are also available as an environmental quality product.

GREEN INDUSTRY TRENDS

A recent document regarding the impact of the Environmental movement in the construction industry became available: the *Greening of Corporate America Report*, published by McGraw Hill Construction.

According to the *Greening of Corporate America Report*, most U.S. companies are interested in sustainable growth and see green activities and green building as part of their future growth. Most industry leaders feel there is definitely room for more education pertaining to what sustainability truly means.

Industry leaders see an opportunity to differentiate themselves by offering greener buildings, according to this report. They also see operating cost benefits by building more environmentally sound buildings.



VT's booth at the 2007 ECObuild show.

Many see bottom line opportunities but really can't identify them yet, therefore leaving open the opportunity for more education.

The top reasons for business leaders to be interested in environmental direction are:

- Increasing energy costs.
- Government regulations/tax incentives.
- Global influences.

The biggest hurdles caused by NOT building green are:

- Green is too multi-disciplinary; it doesn't fit with the way corporate activities are currently structured.
- Business leaders need education on the advantages they will see with ROI.
- They need more education about overall benefits, as well.

In short, the environmental direction in the construction industry is becoming mainstream and will continue to grow. The opportunity now is for us all to learn as much about it as possible and to approach it from a value added perspective. ♦♦

FABRICATOR'S FORUM

Pies — Not Only in the Kitchen



Valencia countertop with a pie corner shown on Wilsonart's Deepstar Agate (1815-35).

Jim and Sherry Johnson, owners of Countertops Unlimited in Omaha, Neb., recently updated their showroom to feature VT's new Valencia profile on a lazy Susan corner with a pie cut.

The lazy Susan corner with a pie cut, or otherwise known as a diagonal corner with a pie cut, is applied the same way with Valencia and Barcelona as it is with VT's other countertop profiles.

"Just make sure the cuts are accurate and the profile edge matches up," adds Jim.

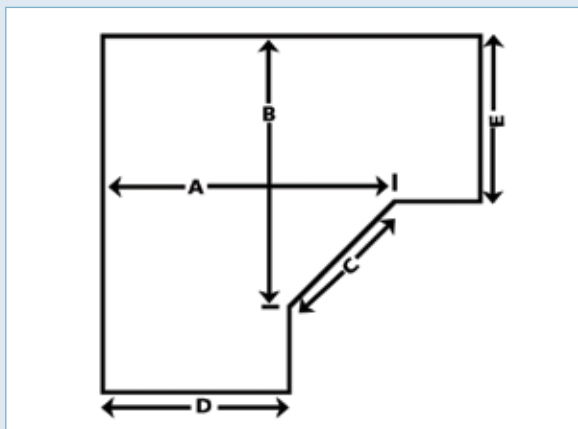
SWEET SUCCESS

To begin with, the corner has to be a standard 90 degree square corner with a normal miter cut.

For a successful pie cut corner, you start by gathering accurate measurements.

"The key to a successful pie cut corner is accurate measurements for consistent overhang on all pieces," shares Sherry Johnson, co-owner of Countertops Unlimited.

The five measurements Countertops Unlimited requires for the pie cut corners are: the crisscross of the cabinets (A and B below), the cabinet depth (D and E) and the width of the pie piece (C). With these five measurements, the countertop pieces can be accurately cut for a successful pie installation.



There can be several design options with a pie cut corner because they can be done on countertops with or without a backsplash. The cut can also be used on a combination with an island top and a standard depth countertop.

This cutting method can be used anywhere a deeper corner is desired.

PIES — NOT ONLY IN THE KITCHEN

"These can be used for a desk area or work station with the pie cut area for a computer keyboard," adds Jim.

"They work well for a home office or desk area with more leg room in the angled area," says Sherry.

Another tip from Countertops Unlimited when cutting and installing a pie cut corner for a desk area without cabinets underneath is to use solid filler board underneath. "This prevents any sagging from occurring on the seams, especially with heavy computers on top," adds Sherry.

The maintenance with a pie cut corner is the same as any other miter corner. "We recommend no standing water on the seams," shares Sherry.

Countertops Unlimited has been in the Omaha area for quite some time. The Johnsons have been owners since 1994. They provide countertops for both residential and commercial applications, as well as servicing the local home centers. ♦♦



VT INDUSTRIES INC.
1000 INDUSTRIAL PARK
P.O. BOX 490
HOLSTEIN, IA 51025

1.800.827.1615 EXT. 210
F 712.368.4111
WWW.VTINDUSTRIES.COM/COUNTERTOPS