

# COUNTERTOPICS

A Marketing/Communications Publication

## Perspectives

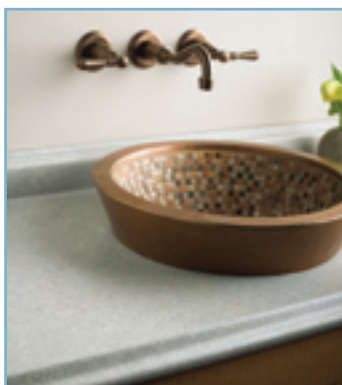
By Amanda Paulsen  
Communications Coordinator



**VT** Industries' corporate marketing department has been busy with lots of new marketing materials to introduce the new contoured edge

profiles, Valencia and Barcelona. Some of these materials include a brochure, chip chain tags, a table easel, posters, spec sheets and samples.

### Excitement is High Over Introduction of New Premium Contoured Edge Profiles



Valencia edge featuring Formica Realcrete.

**T**wo new contoured edge profiles that provide postformed laminate countertops with the look and feel of granite, natural stone or solid surface at a fraction of the cost are creating "buzz" within the industry, according to Rick Liddell, senior vice president, sales and marketing.

Since the introduction this fall of the Valencia contoured full-wrap ogee profile and the Barcelona double-waterfall edge, the reaction from laminate manufacturers and fabricators has been "phenomenal," Liddell reported.

Available with or without a backsplash, the Valencia and Barcelona edge profiles are being offered in 23 premium laminate designs from major manufacturers.

#### 'AN UPSCALE LOOK'

"The tops are beautiful, and offer an upscale look to the postforming category," according to Gwen Petter, manager of surface design, Wilsonart International. "With the pairing of

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### VT Countertops Are 'Suite' Addition to Staybridge Hotel in Heart of Fargo, N.D.



Postformed countertops feature Wilsonart DeepStar Bronze laminate design and Nova edge profile.

**A**mong the guest amenities offered by Staybridge Suites in Fargo, N.D., are postformed countertops from VT Industries made with Wilsonart's new DeepStar Bronze laminate design.

Specifications for the extended-stay hotel originally called for one-piece, square-edged laminate countertops with a generic color, according to Lester Herner, commercial sales manager for Fabricators Unlimited in Fargo. "They ended up choosing the Wilsonart High Definition (HD) laminate with the Nova edge profile for its looks and durability," he noted.

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The new 6" by 8" premium contoured edge brochure features VT Industries' new profiles.

The chip chains are available in both Formica® and Wilsonart® featuring the colors available in Valencia and Barcelona.

The table easel board shows the Valencia and Barcelona profiles and is designed to be placed in showrooms.

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# Perspectives

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There are two posters available featuring both Formica and Wilsonart laminate on 24" by 30" posters.

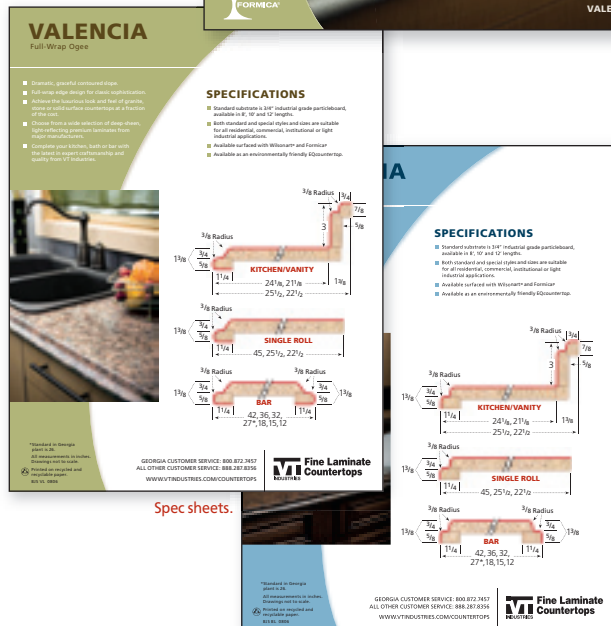
The spec sheets are available in both Valencia and Barcelona, and are designed for use by VT fabricators and distributors when providing submittals on commercial work relaying specifications to contractors, builders and homeowners.

We have also updated the Product Offering and Consumer brochure to include the new profiles.

The form to order any of these new materials is available on VT's Web site at [http://www.vtindustries.com/countertops/Contoured\\_Profiles.shtml](http://www.vtindustries.com/countertops/Contoured_Profiles.shtml).



24" by 30" posters.



Spec sheets.

## FAST FACTS

As postformed countertops, both the Valencia contoured full-wrap ogee profile and Barcelona double-waterfall edge are formed as a single piece of laminate wrapped around the custom core material to form a surface with no seams to collect dirt or bacteria for easy cleaning and appearance.

## WILSONART LAMINATE PATTERNS

Bella Noche, Bella Capri, Deepstar Bronze, Deepstar Glaze, Deepstar Agate, Deepstar Fossil, Milano Mahogany, Milano Glen, Sedona Trail and Sedona Spirit.

## FORMICA LAMINATE PATTERNS

Iron Rust, RealCrete, ClayCrete, Travertine, Madras Indian Slate, Giallo Granite, Labrador Granite, Butterum Granite, Jamocha Granite, Rosso Granite, Black Faux Marble and Sand Crystal.

## HOW TO ORDER

The Barcelona and Valencia profiles are available from VT Industries' national network of highly skilled fabricators and installers, located across the country. Call 1-800-872-7457 for customer service in Georgia and for all other areas call 1-888-287-8356, or visit the company's Web site at [www.vtindustries.com/countertops](http://www.vtindustries.com/countertops) for information.



# Excitement is High Over Introduction of New Premium Contoured Edge Profiles

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Barcelona edge featuring Wilsonart Milano Mahogany.



Barcelona edge featuring Formica Madras Indian Slate.



Valencia edge featuring Wilsonart Bella Capri.

Wilsonart's HD visuals and VT's new edge profiles, postformed tops offer a more valuable look to the category."

The Valencia and Barcelona edge profiles will appeal to consumers who are looking to laminate countertops as "aspirational, reasonably priced and easy to maintain," noted Renee Hytry, senior vice president of global design for Formica Corporation.

"Laminates have become premium in their appearance due to better printing techniques and realistic textures," Hytry said. "Now VT has worked with their technology to 'push the manufacturing-design envelope' to create very complex edge details that enhance real stone, concrete and solid surface looks. This is a great design!"

VT and Formica are co-sponsoring the Valencia contoured edge

profile countertop as part of the "Show Village" featured kitchen design at the 2007 International Builders' Show in Orlando, Fla.



## A RALLYING POINT

"This introduction is a big rallying point for our sales force and customer service center representatives because it gives them something exciting and upscale to talk to their customers about," Liddell said.

"They see these new edge profiles as an opportunity to generate interest and excitement in postformed laminate countertops among builders, kitchen and bath dealers and consumers who use their products," Liddell said.

"And when you combine these edge profiles with our environmentally friendly EQcounter<sup>top</sup> option, you create a win-win situation for homebuilders and homeowners across the country," he affirmed.

Liddell's excitement is echoed by Duane Tucker, president of VSS Countertops in Sacramento, who has been involved in the countertop industry for more than 23 years. "These two edge profiles are something we've needed to revitalize the laminate countertop market for some time," Tucker noted.

"We're very much looking forward to going out and showing people these new edge designs," Tucker said.

"The maintenance will be a lot less with these profiles than your regular waterfall and square edges, or wood and double edges," said Rick Rodriguez, owner of New Age Kitchen & Bath, LLC, in Phoenix. "These edge profiles are more visually appealing and I'm looking forward to selling them. It's going to be really big."

## PATENT PENDING

The patent-pending edge profiles were designed by VT design engineers using sophisticated postforming technology. "It's been many years since anything new had been introduced in postformed edge profiles," Liddell acknowledged.

"All of our market research indicates that creating postformed laminate countertop designs that offer the look and feel of granite, stone or solid surface at a fraction of the cost is going to be a home run for our industry," Liddell added.

# VT Countertops Are 'Suite' Addition to Staybridge Hotel in Heart of Fargo, N.D.

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## SUITE SUCCESS

The Staybridge offers 77 suites that feature four different floor plans. Each unit includes an L-shaped kitchenette with 25-inch deep countertops set on cabinets and a 27-inch wide island desk area set against a framed stud wall covered by sheet rock. Each countertop was made with a moisture-resistant particle-board substrate.

**'Everybody, from the corporate office to the local developers, loves the way these countertops look.'**

Getting the hotel's developers to make the switch from custom countertops took some persuasion, Herner acknowledged.

"Once I showed them the HD and explained how it is the most durable laminate on the market today, we were able to get them to switch," he recalled.

"Everybody, from the corporate office to the local developers, loves the way these countertops look," Herner said.

The cost of the postformed countertop with HD laminate and Nova edge profile was very similar to the custom, square-edge countertop, Herner reported. "Within that cost was our labor to assemble the miters. These were small miters, so they were easy to assemble and ship to the job site," he said.

## MAKING A 'SPLASH'

Herner sees strong potential for postformed countertops featuring HD patterns in Fargo's downtown area, which is experiencing major redevelopment.



Rooms include a 27-inch wide island desk area set against a framed stud wall.

"In this market, custom, one-piece countertops have been the standard design profile," Herner affirmed. "I've been trying to get developers here to switch to the Nova edge profile and HD laminate, and I'm starting to see some success."

In one remodeling project involving 30 apartment units, Herner provided postformed countertops with Nova edge profiles and Wilsonart HD Agate laminate. "I have another developer who was doing custom wood edge countertops and we were successful in getting him to switch to the postformed Nova edge profile."

Together with Wilsonart, Herner is planning a magazine campaign in the Fargo area featuring the Staybridge Suites countertops. "We're looking at making a splash with photographs of these countertops in consumer magazines that hit our market so people can know that postformed countertops are definitely worth looking into," he added.



Each unit includes an L-shaped kitchenette with 25-inch deep countertops.



Staybridge Suites offers 77 units.

# Employees, Work Ethic Are Key Reasons for Half Century of Success at VT Industries

When it comes to running a business, VT Industries President Doug Clausen and company founder Roger Clausen point to good employees and a strong work ethic as key to the company's success over the past 50 years.



VT employees arrive by trolley to the 50th anniversary gala in Holstein.

a great group of people working for us and all of our success is really due to the great job they do."

Echoing this view, Roger Clausen noted, "Whenever I'm asked to describe the key to our company's success, I point immediately to the dedication and loyalty of our employees, our salespeople, to Doug and his managers.

"I believe their work ethic and the fact that everyone in the company takes pride in what they do is the reason for our success."

## 'A TEAM EFFORT'

Citing employee longevity at VT Industries, Roger Clausen emphasized, "Experienced employees are really what make a company tick. It isn't one person, it's a team effort."

That team effort is evident throughout all of the VT manufacturing plants where the company's Lean Management initiative has generated new ideas at a rate of 100 per month at some plants.



VT employees wore 50th anniversary golf shirts for their celebration at the plant in Holstein last summer.

"What is especially encouraging is the continued high level of participation we're seeing within this program," Doug Clausen affirmed. "Often there's a big flurry of activity in the beginning and then it drops off. But everyone continues to participate and contribute actively in this process because they understand that continual improvement is key to our continued success."

## THE EARLY YEARS

Among the company's early employees were Wendell Sorenson and Ewald Brodersen, who together with Roger Clausen were the nucleus for the "grand opening" of Van Top, Inc., in 1956. In 1958, the trio was joined by Mary Rohlk, who ran the office and handled accounting for the fledgling company.

**'I'm amazed at how far we've come since 1956.'**

**Roger Clausen**

"Looking back at those early years in our crackerbox shop, if it were not for Mary, Wendell and Ewald, I mean it sincerely when I say we would not have celebrated our 50th anniversary this year," Roger Clausen said. "I'm gratified that so many of our employees like Wendell, Ewald, Mary and Eugene Schuett, who managed our door operation, have been with the company for so many, many years. Several people have been with the company for 30 or 40 years."



Doug Carlson and Rex Reisdorph stand by the original VT logo sign.

The experience of VT's employees has been a major asset in the company's ability to exceed customer expectations over the years, according to Doug Clausen. "Every individual in our company works with this attitude, so we can stay ahead of the changes occurring within our industry," he said.

## BEATING THE ODDS

Reflecting over the past 50 years, Roger Clausen pointed with pride to the company's growth into a leading manufacturer with eight plant locations throughout North America. "Today, I'm amazed at how far we've come since 1956," he reported.

"None of this growth would have been possible without the managers and employees setting such a high standard for the products and services they provide our customers," Roger Clausen said. "Their work over the years has established our reputation for quality craftsmanship and on-time delivery."

"Only one in three family businesses succeeds in making it from the first to the second generation," Roger Clausen added. "I couldn't be prouder of what this company has achieved under Doug, his management team and all the employees who have enabled VT Industries to beat the odds and make this business a success."

## Rick Liddell to Serve on Boards of National Industry Organizations



Rick Liddell

**R**ick Liddell, Senior Vice President of Sales & Marketing for VT Industries, a leading manufacturer of fine laminate countertops and architectural wood doors, has been elected to two industries' Board of Directors positions.

In October, Liddell was elected to the board of the Door & Hardware Institute Educational Foundation. The Foundation promotes life safety and security in regards to the door opening, including proper combined

applications, fire ratings and proper egress of the doors, frames and hardware in commercial buildings.

In November, Liddell was elected to the Board of Directors for the North American Building Materials Distributors Association. The Association represents the building materials industry and is focused on member education to specialty distributors and cabinet industry suppliers and distributors.

Liddell is responsible for sales and marketing for the Architectural Door Division and the Fine Laminate Countertop Division at VT Industries. He has been with VT Industries for twelve years and has held other Industry positions including Chairman of the Board for the Window & Door Manufacturers Association in 1999 and member of the Door & Hardware Institute Board of Governors from 2003 to 2006.

## Wayne Stuczynski is Named to Territory Sales Manager Position



Wayne Stuczynski

**VT** Industries, a leading manufacturer of fine laminate countertops, welcomes Wayne Stuczynski as a new territory sales manager.

Stuczynski has more than 20 years experience in the buildings industry. "He comes to us with considerable laminate, distribution and related product experience in several disciplines including sales, customer

service, purchasing and product management," shares Chris Schlabach, Northern Regional Sales Manager.

Stuczynski's territory includes Northern Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Southern New Jersey and Delaware.

## COUNTERTOPICS TRIVIA

Congratulations to Marcie Antidel, Bierl Carpet One in Carroll, Iowa, who won 50th anniversary items for the correct answer to the question, "What is the brand name of the environmentally friendly countertops from VT Industries that can help building owners meet the U.S. Green Building Council's standards for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification?"

### QUESTION:

### What are the names of the new contoured edge profiles from VT Industries?

Answer this question based on this issue of *CounterTopics* for a chance to win a VT prize. Place your answer on an index card with your complete contact information, or the back of your business card, and mail to the address listed. Entries must be postmarked by January 5, 2007. Limit one entry per person, and one winning per year.

CounterTopics Trivia • Attn: Amanda Paulsen • VT Industries, Inc. • P.O. Box 490 • Holstein, IA 51025

VT employees and sales representatives are excluded from this promotion.



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