

Essential kitchen & bathroom business

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NEW PRODUCTS!

Our unmissable monthly round ups of everything that's new in kitchens and bathrooms

KBB BIRMINGHAM: THE SHOW MUST GO ON



2020's biennial kbb Birmingham show has been rocked by concerns relating to the spread of the COVID-19 Coronavirus, forcing show organisers to issue a statement outlining

the measures they're taking to ensure the show's success and the safety of attendees.

With the show well attended by exhibitors from the Far East, show organiser Informa has announced that exhibitors from China will be represented by a 'digital pavilion' rather than attending in person. "The kbb Birmingham team is continuing to closely monitor the developments of the Novel Coronavirus, COVID-19, through the advice of public health authorities. We wish to reassure our visitors, customers and colleagues that their health and safety is always the top priority," the release reads.

"For those few companies based in China, we are working with them to close their physical stand and instead create an exclusively online digital pavilion. This is due to the travel restrictions currently in place brought about by COVID-19. Our attendees and exhibitors can all be reassured the rest of kbb Birmingham is going ahead as planned. Registrations are tracking significantly ahead year on year with the highest recorded registrations received this week, and it's entirely business as usual for this amazing event."

However, the announcement came too late for major exhibitor Frontline Bathrooms, which has pulled its attendance. Sales & marketing director, Michael Sammon stated: "This has been a difficult decision, but the wellbeing of our staff must be our number one priority. Other companies in the industry plan to take the same precaution."

At the time of going to press it is unclear whether any other big names will follow suit.

THE RUMOURS... THE FACTS... THE STORY SO FAR...



2020's show is bigger than ever

The Chinese Pavilion has traditionally been a major fixture at kbb Birmingham, allowing Far East exhibitors access to European manufacturers seeking to place orders with them. It remains to be seen how

its digital replacement will function; likewise it's very much a waiting game as to which big names could follow Frontline's lead and pull their attendance, or if Informa Market's announcement on the morning of 17 February was enough to reassure those committed to stands.

The show is traditionally one of the biggest events on the kbb calendar, taking place every two years. The 2020 show is set to be the biggest yet, although this has now been thrust into uncertainty.

At the time of writing rumours are swirling but big names such as Blum, Hafele, Blanco, Franke, CDA, RAK, Caesarstone, uform, Cosentino, Bushboard, Nolte and Abode remain firm, occupying the largest stands at the show alongside a list that really is the Who's Who of the industry.

Immediate Media – the media brand behind **ek&bbusiness** – WILL be in attendance and looking forward to meeting attendees and offering free subscriptions on its stand at **K133**. See you there!

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Adopting a vision of a project that extends beyond the kitchen is key when designing an open-plan cooking, dining and living space

Words Emma Hedges



VANQUISH 100

Kesseler

Tel: 01623 720 900 www.kesseler.co.uk

An open-plan setting is an opportunity to get creative, as with this scheme that incorporates two contrasting door styles. Pictured on the island is Kesseler's Vanquish 100 range with its distinctive 100mm plinth line in pearlescent matt metallic paint on Serenta 22mm silk matt doors, while the wall units have vertical handleless Deep Blue Shaker doors with brass rails

Planning a client's dream open-plan kitchen, which is light and spacious and has all the elements in harmony with one another, requires careful consideration and not simply as far as zoning the cooking, living and dining areas is concerned. It seems the ideal outcome can be achieved by focusing on the 'helicopter vision' of a project, as well as keeping a firm eye on the detail, to create cohesion.

"When working on an open-plan kitchen and living project, you need to make sure that the client chooses the colour palette for the entire room and not just for the separate spaces, as they should all flow seamlessly into each other," says Simon Taylor, managing director of Simon Taylor Furniture. "Avoid bright colours in one corner without introducing them as accents in a different part of the room, otherwise the eye will always be drawn to that corner."

Simon Bodsworth, managing director of Daval Furniture, agrees that taking an overall approach to designing the whole scheme is the best strategy. "Our research shows that consumers are attracted to blended living, rather than differentiating the kitchen area from the rest of the living space, and we see a trend in which multi-form

furniture can adapt to the home and kitchen. Fitted furniture is helping to deliver the heightened consumer desire for whole-house co-ordination, optimised storage potential and increased synchronisation between living areas," he says. Daval has worked to address this need by producing ranges that work across both the kitchen and living spaces, for example its Finsbury collection can be extended to other areas of the home like a living room, utility room or adjoining hallway.

Vittorio Naldi, branch manager for Scavolini UK, also thinks that taking an overarching approach to designing a scheme works best. "While the different areas of an open-plan space must function independently, it is equally important that they work together," he says. "There are various ways to achieve this, but by far the best is with furniture for living areas in the same style as kitchen cabinetry." Scavolini has incorporated luxe elements and finishes that create a 'living-room feel' and, added to that, its Box Life kitchen has been created specifically

for open-plan scenarios, as the whole kitchen can be hidden from view of the living area when it's not in use.

Remembering and respecting the needs of the different zones requires excellent storage to hide clutter from the view of the other areas, but it's easy to forget that an open-plan space is going to have to be seriously multifunctional.

"You need to think about the many scenarios that the space needs to work for, whether it's breakfast for two, homework with children, or large family gatherings," says Graham Robinson from Halcyon Interiors, making a point that's echoed by Andy Barette, creative services director

"While the different areas of an open-plan space must function independently, it is equally important that they work together"

Vittorio Naldi, branch manager for Scavolini UK

of McCarron & Co. "Open-plan kitchens work well with modern family lives as everyone can be in the same room but not feel as though they are on top of one another," he says. "Probably the biggest advantage is the sense of space that open-plan living can afford, and I believe this is the critical thing that the consumer is looking for." ■



LOFT LIVING

Schmidt

Tel: 07904 275 601 www.home-design.schmidt/en-gb

Schmidt's Loft kitchen in dark Caneo and bright Madras is shown here with the brand's Living range, which is specially designed for open-plan settings, with open shelving, a table, chairs and TV unit all created to complement the finishes of the kitchens. The island unit has functional elements on the side facing the kitchen, and shelving for ornaments on the living area side



ALNOSTAR CERA AND ALNOSTAR FINE

Alno by Halcyon

Tel: 02084 201 124 www.alno.co.uk

This stunning scheme designed by Halcyon Interiors features Alnostar Cera Concretto – a ceramic finish – on the multifunctional island, which here acts as a casual dining area, central cooking and food-prep zone and also a storage space. Alnostar Fine Light Grey matt lacquer is used on the wall cabinets so they recede visually and don't impose on the room



Caple

Tel: 01179 381 900 www.caple.co.uk

The handleless Verse Zeta kitchen comes in a variety of shades, as well as textured, matt and gloss doors for maximum flexibility. It's pictured here in a two-tone scheme in Yale and Light Grey, with an ultra-gloss, highly reflective finish for a luxe look, and the blue element creating a stylish corner hub



METEOR NERO

Crown Imperial

Tel: 01227 742 424 www.crown-imperial.co.uk

Creating a scheme with dramatic contrasts is a way to pull the space together. Here Crown Imperial's Zeluso Grey Silk makes a striking central hub out of the kitchen island, while the Nero doors on the main wall and floor-to-ceiling units add a bold backdrop. Crown's Frameworks shelving system helps to keep clutter out of sight

FORM AND FUNCTION

► Hettich marketing manager **Colin Patterson** offers tips for maximising storage in an open-plan design

- » **Less is more** The more pared back the kitchen, the better it will blend with the living space, so have fewer drawers and doors, but divide the space behind them with larder systems and drawer dividers. This approach also makes better use of space and enables a more compact design
- » **Join the fold** A folding door intrudes less when open than a standard cabinet door – an advantage when the shared space is at a premium. They are also a great way to put entire sections out of sight – ideal for kitchens that are part of open-plan living areas
- » **Now you see it, now you don't** Try just using a single sliding door on a cabinet, which only covers half the opening. This way kitchen storage can be revealed when
- » **Blend is best** In a multifunctional space, functional is not a good look. Consider drawer side and hinge finishes that sit more comfortably with living room furniture
- » **Keep it in reach** For wall cabinets be mindful of the height range of potential users. A flap system might be tempting in a living space for its aesthetic appeal, but can everyone reach it when it's open?
- » **Hide it if you can** A statement gadget might look good on *Bake Off*, but out of place in an open-plan living space. Check out options for actuator-driven solutions, which can hide the appliance beneath the surface when it's out of use. The same technology can make the contents of out-of-reach wall cabinets more accessible by lowering the

