

# kitchen & bath DESIGN NEWS<sup>®</sup>

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## MandiCasa Opens Flagship NY Showroom

**NEW YORK** — MandiCasa, a new brand by Dario Snaidero and his corporate team, has opened a New York showroom, the first of four flagship showrooms in North America, the company announced.

Located in Manhattan's A&D Building, the 4,700-sq.-ft. showroom is home to a curated selection of bathrooms, kitchens, closets and interior doors designed by premium Italian suppliers for luxury homes and the multi-family market, according to the company.

"With Dario's 45+ years at the helm of bringing the best of Italian design to the U.S., the establishment of this new footprint in the heart of Manhattan marks a major milestone for Dario and the MandiCasa brand," the company said.

MandiCasa flagship showrooms are scheduled to open in Los Angeles and Miami, according to the company, which also has plans to open showrooms in Hollywood, FL, Toronto and San Jose, CA.

## Fourth Event Added to 2023 DCW

**LAS VEGAS** — A fourth co-located wholesale buying event has been added to the 2023 Design & Construction Week, an event that features the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show (KBIS) and the International Builders' Show (IBS).

Added to Design & Construction Week will be Las Vegas Market, the leading home furnishings and gift market in the western U.S., show officials said.

The news comes on the heels of the announcement earlier this year that the National Hardware Show (NHS) will also co-date with DCW in 2023. Collectively, the four trade events will take place Jan. 29 through Feb. 2, 2023, at two Las Vegas venues.

"We think having the Las Vegas Market co-date with us in Las Vegas is a great opportunity to expand Design & Construction Week even further," said Bill Darcy, CEO for the Bethlehem, PA-based NKBA, owner of KBIS. "Kitchen and bath industry professionals can benefit from more value and opportunities during their time in Las Vegas by aligning with the Las Vegas Market and the other industry leading events."

"By co-dating Las Vegas Market's thousands of exhibitors in permanent showrooms and temporary exhibits showcasing the latest furniture, bedding, casual/outdoor, home décor and gift products, Design & Construction Week now presents the full spectrum of resources not just for building a house, but also for making it a home," added Bob Maricich, CEO of International Market Centers (IMC), which produces Las Vegas Market.

## MSI Opens PA Distribution Center

**ORANGE, CA** — MSI, the Orange, CA-based supplier of flooring, countertops, wall tile and hardscaping products, has opened a new showroom and distribution center in a Pittsburgh, PA suburb, the company announced.

The 73,000-sq.-ft. space will serve residential and commercial contractors, architects and designers, as well as homeowners, MSI officials reported. The showroom is located at 3115 Washington Pike, Bridgeville, PA, and will be open six days a week.

## Independent Workers Denounce Proposed Change in Status by Labor Dept.

**WASHINGTON, DC** — Independent contractors, including those with ties to the kitchen and bath industry, are criticizing a move by the U.S. Labor Dept. to advance a proposed rule that changes the process for classifying workers as employees rather than as independents.

The proposed rule change, issued this week by the Labor Dept., seeks to determine whether a worker is economically dependent on an employer or truly in business for his or herself. The DOL said the proposed rule would "combat employee misclassification," which occurs when an employer incorrectly defines a worker as an independent contractor rather than an employee. As part of the proposed rule, the DOL would formally rescind the independent contractor rule that is currently in place.

The proposed rule change, however, flies in the face of independent workers' best interests, according to critics who have been opposing the proposed change in hearings before Labor Dept. officials.

"The Labor Dept. proposal has the potential to misclassify millions of legitimate independent contractors in a way that threatens their income and livelihoods," said Jen Singer, co-founder of the ad hoc coalition Fight For Freelancers, USA.

According to Singer and others, the DOL's proposed rule "is just the latest salvo in three years of continuous attempts to redefine independent contractor classification at the state and federal levels, in ways that could reduce the number of self-employed Americans while increasing the number of employees eligible for unionization."

"The executive branch is picking up where (state) legislators left off, with career-killing regulations related to a bill that Congress couldn't pass," said Singer. "This is the kind of bad policy you get when regulators make a rule about independent contractors while refusing to listen to them."

According to Karon Warren, co-leader of Fight For Freelancers USA, the Labor Dept.'s position is at odds with studies that demonstrate that most independent contractors are satisfied with their work arrangements, and that more Americans than ever prefer to be their own bosses.

"The majority of independent contractors want to remain self-employed," Warren said. "And yet, the attacks on our chosen careers continue from lawmakers and regulators doing the bidding of union bosses."

"In the three years since the current anti-independent contractor push began, its primary results have been the destruction of freelance careers and widespread backlash against lawmakers and regulators who continue to champion the idea," Warren said.

"I've been concerned about this rule change since I saw so many colleagues devastated by its equivalent in California," said *Kitchen & Bath Design News* contributor and wellness design consultant Jamie Gold, CKD, CAPS, MCCWC.

"It has the potential to destroy the livelihoods of independent designers, project managers, writers, marketers and even some tradespeople, and make completing projects much harder, more expensive and stressful for the businesses that contract with us," Gold added.

## Cabinetworks Group to Expand PA Factory

**ANN ARBOR, MI** — Cabinetworks Group, the nation's largest independently owned manufacturer and distributor of kitchen and bath cabinetry, will expand its Mount Union, PA factory in collaboration with the State of Pennsylvania, the company announced.

The Ann Arbor, MI-based Cabinetworks said it is investing \$23 million to transform its 206,000-sq.-ft. Mount Union facility from a component plant into an advanced manufacturing and assembly operation that can build and ship fully assembled cabinets.

"Cabinetworks will revamp the facility layout and implement a highly efficient, high-speed cabinet production model with state-of-the-art equipment to meet a production goal of 5,000 or more cabinets per day by the end of 2025," the company said, adding that it has received state grants to assist with construction costs and has pledged to retain 1,694 manufacturing jobs, including an additional 300 new positions.

Cabinetworks is the parent company of 17 cabinet brands, including KraftMaid, Medallion, Yorktowne, Cardell, QualityCabinets and Merillat.