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design services, ltd.

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Welcome to "AT YOUR SERVICE" the Design Services, Ltd. E-Newsletter



"Next Home"... What Homeowners Will Want

A recent survey of consumer buying trends suggests that the weakness in the economy and its distinct impact on consumers has also led to changing priorities when it comes to the purchase of their

"next home".

The top 6 priorities for buyers purchasing their next home:

- ▶ No-Space-Wasted design
- ▶ Family Gathering Areas
- ▶ Energy Efficient Construction and HVAC System
- ▶ Ample Storage
- ▶ Affordable Price
- ▶ Natural Light

Other interesting statistics:

- ▶ 69% expect **no-space-wasted** design with ample storage

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and more function

- ▶ 63% consider family gathering area top priority that accommodates a variety of activities from board games, video games and fitness systems
- ▶ 90% require an energy efficient home
- ▶ 56% prefer combined kitchen, family room and breakfast room and that they are family focused
- ▶ 32% expect their next home to be "somewhat smaller" or "much smaller"



Living Large... in Smaller Space

Making the most of smaller spaces can be a challenge, but it is also an opportunity to be creative. So what are some designer secrets of how to "live large in a smaller space"?

1. Create A Plan-

- ▶ Decide what you need and want
 - o "A" list=need
 - o "B" list=want (may have to edit)
 - o "C" list=do not need or want
- ▶ Measure space and inventory
- ▶ Less is more to avoid clutter

2. Think Multi-Functional

- ▶ Small spaces require furniture to serve more than one purpose
 - o (i.e. coffee tables and benches that also act as a storage piece)
- ▶ Rooms should also have multi purposes
 - o (i.e. library/office/sitting room)

3. Keep Color Palette Simple

- ▶ A neutral color scheme will create a soothing effect, using strong color or slightly darker shade for accent and impact (**will not close in the space**)

4. Strategic Use of Mirrors

- ▶ Reflecting light from mirrors helps to visually increase the size of the space and light

5. Keep Draperies High and Minimal

- ▶ By hanging draperies close to the ceiling it will give a visual impression of higher ceilings

6. Power of Lighting

- ▶ Use of various types of lighting will create ambience and accent (i.e. torchiere up lighting, sconces)

Be Social



Did you know...

If you have questions/concerns about your home or office design and just want an hourly consult...

*

...that we do Design Consulting by the hour?

*

...that we provide Space Planning services for work that you may want to do yourself?

*

...that we do small makeovers and refurbishments, not just large projects?

click here to schedule an appointment



Contemplating a Renovation? ...Here Are Some Money Saving Ideas

With the economy on everyone's mind the thought of spending money on a much needed renovation (i.e. kitchen or bath) can be overwhelming.

Yet, a consumer on a tight budget is one who may actually have the greatest need and benefit the most from services from a design professional who can assist with not just the design and planning, but also propose options that will achieve the best design on a limited budget.

A designer first assists the client in establishing priorities with regard to areas to be designed, understand their wants, needs and "wish list"...and budget. By revisiting this list as the design develops we can help provide options for selections at various price points to remain within budget.

These Are Just a Few of The Ways That You Can Help Minimize Costs In The Design Process:

- ▶ Work within existing space
- ▶ Minimize changes to plumbing and electrical systems
- ▶ Move doors and walls only when necessary to accomplish design intent
- ▶ Carefully allocate higher cost materials to priority areas (i.e. granite, specialty lighting)
- ▶ Provide options for material selections at various price points (i.e. stock cabinets vs. custom cabinets, solid surface counter tops vs. granite)
- ▶ Rebates for water or energy saving appliances
- ▶ Reuse/re-purpose of existing items as feasible
- ▶ Use of paint (color) can make big statement at minimal cost

Other Things To Think About Before You Renovate That Will Save Money Long Term:

- ▶ Storage-if the need for storage is a top priority-and it frequently is-it is important to start planning for storage at the beginning of the design process so that it is smart, accessible storage.
- ▶ Accessibility (universal design)-As Baby Boomers age, you might consider using universal design concepts that promote ease of use, accessibility, added safety and convenience. By



About Design Services, Ltd.

Rita Wilkins is the President of Design Services, Ltd., as well as principal designer and project manager. With over 35 years of experience in design and management, her approach to design is both aesthetic and business-like. She is known to be a highly effective "hands-on" designer with extensive knowledge and expertise in residential and commercial interiors.

integrating design now into the renovation you will save money by not having to modify at a later date.

- ▶ Green Design-consider the use of renewable materials that provide environmental sustainability.

While the slumping economy has clearly impacted consumers buying patterns and buying power, the fact remains that home sales are down so many homeowners are choosing to stay in their homes. The value of updating their existing home allows owners to remain where they are without having to move or build. Plus, the significant costs associated with moving to a new home can be avoided.

A well planned and implemented renovation using the experience and knowledge of a design professional will provide a smart return on your investment that can be enjoyed for years to come.

Getting Organized...A Proper Place for Everything

In a world where spaces are becoming increasingly smaller square footage, storage is a critical issue.

If renovating, start planning storage at the beginning of the design process. Note that smart accessible storage is paramount. It must be easy to use or it will never reach optimum usage. This is particularly true in the kitchen.

Getting organized is one of our top priorities. By reducing clutter and getting organized we save time which helps us stay on top of our busy lives.



Colors That Cook

Manufacturers of big-ticket appliances feed the desires of consumers who want to customize color in every aspect of their lives.

Customization has quickly become the calling card of consumerism. Cell phones, iPods, cars, briefcases, laptops and bikes all come in hues that allow users to express their personalities.

Predictably, the expectation of on-demand color has moved into the home. But it's about more than simply a backsplash or a few bold dish towels - homeowners are making the color leap with large-ticket appliances.

~click here for full article~



The Plant Cafe Organic

The green-thumb ethos of this San Francisco eatery is perfectly reflected in its rigorously green interior design.

The first thing you notice when you walk into the Plant Cafe Organic at Pier 3, on San Francisco's Embarcadero, is the stunning view of the Bay. But the experience is all of a piece: the modern, Scandinavian-influenced interior with slatted-wood tabletops and unfinished Brazilian-walnut flooring; sleek zinc and stainless-steel equipment in the bar and open kitchens; the homey atmosphere created by the slate-gray schoolhouse-style chairs and the open fire from the pizza oven; and the sunlight streaming through the large windows and floor-to-ceiling glass entrance.

~click here for full article~

Sincerely,

Rita S. Wilkins
President
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