

NRA Kitchen Innovation Pavilion Summary

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For those of you who weren't able to attend this year's National Restaurant Association (NRA) show, held May 21 - 24 at McCormick Place in Chicago, you missed a spectacular event that was chock full of new and innovative products that are certain to make each foodservice operation more efficient and profitable! Technology receives its place in the pavilion based on its uniqueness and the significance of its benefit to operators. GFEN was there to review and evaluate many of the newest commercial cooking products and innovations from restaurant equipment manufacturers. This year, many of the awardees had a focus on green.

GFEN's Favorite Winners...

- **Hobart's Advansys CleR Energy Recovery** - This Energy Star-qualified conveyor-type warewasher captures heat from exhaust air to preheat inlet water for energy savings of up to \$11,000 a year. The equipment was released in February as a "natural progression" for the company, according to Hobart's Joel Hipp, and is used across all foodservice segments. Though these types of dishwashers are becoming more common, the difference for the Advansys system is that it monitors the temperature of the water, assuring optimum effectiveness. Hobart boasts the return-on-investment is less than two years.
- **Cleveland Convotherm Mini** - The Convotherm® by Cleveland mini 2 in1 combi oven comes equipped with two separate cooking chambers placed on top of each other allowing foods to be prepared simultaneously using different cooking methods. Both chambers are easily controlled with just a few simple entries on the key pad using Convotherm by Cleveland's easyTOUCH technology. The small footprint, the ease of operation, and the wide range of cooking options delivers maximum performance within a limited amount of floor space. The technology manages the location of the cold zone, so operators can perfectly cook a grilled cheese sandwich in the oven, despite the difference in the foods' densities.
- **Halton Proximity Heat Reclaim Hood** - This reclaim hood positions a flue bypass to capture the highest clean combustion heat from a gas appliance with an integrated heat exchanger to supply hot water and reduce energy consumption. According to Halton, a 60-percent reduction in the amount of natural gas required for water heating is possible, resulting in a potential annual average savings of \$1,220 and a reduction of 10,200 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Kitchen Innovations (KI) Pavilion showcases the most innovative and productive commercial kitchen equipment available today. Here you will see and interact with the latest kitchen equipment designed to lower energy costs, reduce footprint size, increase productivity for your operation and be user-friendly to your kitchen staff. This year's KI Award recipients were selected from many applications based on their uniqueness and most significant benefits they deliver to foodservice operators. The next NRA Show will be held in May 2012 with more products highlighted. Make plans now to attend.