

# PRO REMODELER

PROFESSIONAL REMODELER

LICENSED TO **SELL**  
(AND A BUNCH OF OTHER STUFF)



THE REMODELING INDUSTRY'S TWO NEWEST  
ROCKSTARS ARE FLYING AT 35,000 FEET

# INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS

NEW AND UNIQUE PRODUCTS AND THE STORIES BEHIND THEM

BY PRO REMODELER STAFF

## Thermador Connected Kitchen Through Home Connect

### A KITCHEN BUILT FOR EFFICIENCY, ENTERTAINMENT, AND EDUCATION

Thermador is taking full advantage of the Internet of Things with its connected kitchen, showcased at this year's International Builders' Show. The appliances are all beneficiaries of the Home Connect platform—joined by appliances from brands including Bosch, Gaggenau, Neff, and Siemens—run via an app.

"Thermador's coffee maker, fridge, freezer, wine cabinet, range hood—all connected," says Ruth Prentice, a connected experience manager for BSH Home Appliances, which owns Thermador. "Even our ovens and ranges are connected."

Through Home Connect, the company has created a kitchen environment that emphasizes ease and fluidity of use, particularly as it relates to maintenance and customer service.

"When you call customer service, the app will automatically give your model number and everything else they might need to know," Prentice says. "From there, they can run remote diagnostics, which are available for every product category except for the ventilation. But you can find instructions for that in the app." And in fact, in the app you'll find a wealth of content explaining additional appliance functionality, such as the "Coffee Playlist," which allows homeowners to remotely make consecutive cups of coffee for guests.

The app also gives users access to loads of other helpful information, aimed at improving the homeowner's entertaining and culinary capabilities as well as the overall convenience of life in the kitchen.

Home Connect is open platform, which means outside developers—"partners," as

Prentice describes them—can add features to the app. Already the partners number in the dozens, including household names Nest, Fitbit, and Amazon, and each brings a unique feature to the homeowner's connected kitchen.

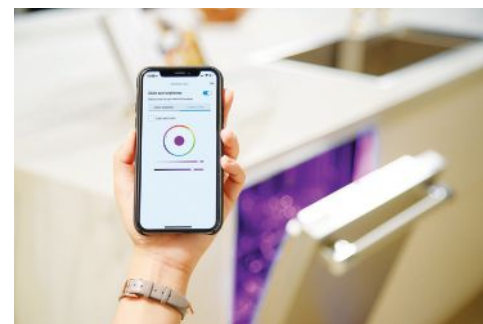
"With Amazon Dash, you can have your dishwasher setup so that when the detergent reservoir is nearing empty, the appliance will register it, send that information to Amazon, and you can have more detergent sent to your home without having to go through the trouble of ordering it," she says, careful to note that the automated purchase would have to be setup by the homeowner. "The appliances won't just start buying stuff on their own."

Through the partnerships, Thermador's connected kitchen is essentially being dummy-proofed. Features through partners

like Innit and Kitchen Stories provide access to countless easy-to-understand recipes and culinary insights, so homeowners are never without ideas for meals. Through partner SMA, appliance operations can be better managed to save on energy consumption (and ultimately money). For instance, a homeowner could set their dishwasher to start at a time that's cheapest for them. And speculating on the future, Prentice describes a scenario where Home Connect's partner EVE, the interface for Tesla vehicles, could be geofenced to turn on, say, the dishwasher as the homeowner pulls away from the garage.

Thermador's decisions to invest in connected appliances reflects a broader trend of expectations in customers. Ninety percent of homeowners currently have a connected home device, and of those who don't, 30% plan on purchasing one within the year, according to a survey from software development company Metova. Accounting for all consumers, three-quarters believe connected home devices are "the wave of the future."

**Thermador.com** / FOR MORE INFORMATION, CIRCLE NO. 851 ON THE READER SERVICE CARD



Through Home Connect, Thermador has expanded functionality. Homeowners can send recipes to their cooktops, change their dishwasher's hood lighting, and more—all from their smartphones.

## QuickDrain USA WallDrain

### A DRAIN FOR CREATING SEAMLESS, SINGLE-SLOPE SHOWER DESIGNS

With bathroom designs continuing to trend toward sleek but functional, linear shower drains are having a moment.

In keeping with this trend, shower drain manufacturer QuickDrain USA has introduced WallDrain, a shower drain system that provides the sleek design of traditional linear shower drains, but without the decorative metal components. Water leaves the shower via a subtle, single-direction slope leading to a small gap at the shower wall base and into a drain channel hidden behind that wall.

Linear shower drains provide myriad benefits: sleek looks, easy cleaning, and single-direction sloping, to name a few. Top of mind for remodelers is the single-direction

sloping: Easier to construct than the four-direction sloping required for traditional shower drains, linear shower drains save contractors time and effort during installation and can ultimately lower labor costs.

On top of that, linear drains expand shower design possibilities to include large format tiles. “The single-direction slope permits the use of larger tiles, which are aesthetically pleasing and reduce grout lines for easier cleaning,” says Darryl Jones, QuickDrain USA’s national showroom manager. (Four-direction slopes are compatible only with small floor tiles.)

Unlike many linear drains, WallDrain is designed to extend the entire length of the shower floor, allowing for more complete water drainage. Depending on the model used,



WallDrain can accommodate shower lengths of 26-72 inches with the use of one drain, and 56-96 inches by linking two drains together.

Some users note that using contrasting tile colors on the walls and the floor (black and white) hides the opening better than same-colored tiles. List pricing starts at \$1,500. [quickdrainusa.com](http://quickdrainusa.com) / CIRCLE NO. 852

## Leviton Smart Load Center

### AN INDUSTRY-FIRST CIRCUIT BREAKER BRINGING SMART TECH TO ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Smart home technology has made its way into nearly all parts of the home: locks, thermostats, electrical outlets and switches, and more. Now, circuit breakers join the family, thanks to the Leviton Smart Load Center released earlier this year at the International Builders’ Show.

The Smart Load Center—the first circuit breaker system of its kind, according to Leviton—brings smart, trackable tech to the electrical panel. Previously, users could add individual smart plugs to a load center; Leviton’s system eliminates that need and connects the full energy infrastructure to the internet, the cloud, and ultimately the user.

The system can be monitored via the My Leviton app on smartphone, tablet, or desktop, and, as a result, can lessen the amount of time users spend standing at the panel, troubleshooting breaker issues.

Users can monitor circuit status through the app and determine which individual



breaker may need attention. Alerts can be customized so if a breaker trips or other issue arises, the user will know immediately, even if he or she is not home. Data and insights are provided on all individual breakers, and users can turn any breaker off with just a tap (although they must be manually turned back on).

Another great feature? The app breaks down a home’s average energy costs and consumption patterns into detailed insights. Users can see a break down per year, month, or day, or per individual circuit. That data can then be used to modify home energy usage habits, saving money and power.

Smart capabilities can be added to existing Leviton Load Centers (by a licensed electrician) with the addition of the company’s Data Hub kit and smart circuit breakers. Pricing depends on the load center configuration as well as the number of smart circuit breakers, their rating, and type: In a typical 2,500 sf home, for a full smart system, the installed cost can range between \$2,500 and \$4,000. [leviton.com](http://leviton.com) / CIRCLE NO. 853