

In Brief

Clarke at BRC dinner

FORMER Conservative Party Chancellor and current Shadow Business Secretary Kenneth Clarke will be the keynote speaker at the British Retail Consortium's annual retail industry dinner. The dinner, held in partnership with MasterCard Europe, will be held on September 11 at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London's Park Lane. "Whatever the election result, 2010 will be the most significant year in British politics for a long time," said BRC director-general Stephen Robertson.

New MD at Indesit

INDESIT Company UK has promoted commercial director John Matthews to the post of managing director for the UK and Irish markets.

The move follows the appointment of previous UK managing director Enrico Vita to the post of chief commercial officer for Indesit Company in Milan. Marketing director James Goldsmith has been appointed to the role of commercial director.

New chair at DRUK

ADAM Singer has been appointed chairman of Digital Radio UK, the organisation that will spearhead digital radio switchover in the UK.

A former chairman and chief executive of Flextech, which merged with cable TV company Telewest (of which he was also chief executive) in 2000, Mr Singer has worked at senior levels in broadcasting and telecoms in the UK, USA and Japan. He is currently deputy chairman of the Ofcom Content Board and is, among other things, chairman of the British Screen Advisory Council.

Greener whites from Pana

By Penny Williams

PANASONIC is expanding its UK white goods listings by adding two side-by-side fridge-freezers and five washing machines.

With the new products, which will be rolling out across Europe this spring, the company is concentrating on the energy-saving features that have made it a major white goods player in its Japanese home market.

"Our deep-rooted commitment to the environment runs through the entire product range," said UK product manager for major domestic appliances Subodha Bhatt.

"The energy-saving technologies we have incorporated have struck a particular chord with the UK's environmentally-conscious consumers."

He added that Panasonic's philosophy was simple: put the consumer first with innovative products and features that make a genuine difference.



And those, he added, ranged from "prolonging the life of fresh fruit and vegetables with our unique Vitamin-Safe compartment, to tilting our washer drum by 10 degrees to reduce water consumption".

Two of the new introductions are side-by-side fridge-freezers claimed to be among the most energy-efficient in the industry, thanks, said Panasonic, to three major features.

The first is inverter technology, which uses sensors and microprocessors to select automatically from multiple power

levels, allowing the machine to run on minimal power.

The second is the company's vacuum insulation panel, which is featured on one of the new models (the NR-B53V1). This uses an ultra-thin sheet of fibreglass processed in a vacuum and said to insulate 20 times more effectively than traditional materials.

Third is the Twin-Eco cooling system, featured on both the NR-B53V1 and NR-B54X1, which uses an EcoValve to close off the cooling circuit for the refrigerator when not needed.

Together, these technologies have earned the NR-B53V1 an A++ rating in the EU energy-efficiency standard, which Panasonic claims as a world first among plumbed-in US style side-by-side fridge-freezers.

Of the five washing machines being introduced to the UK by Panasonic, four have achieved EU energy efficiency ratings 30 per cent lower than the A standard. With load capacities of 8kg, the company calls them some of the most efficient washing machines on the market.

And two of the models (the NA-168VX2 and NA-168VG2) are part of the Energy Saving Trust Endorsement Scheme. Both models have achieved Energy Efficiency Recommended status.

All five models carry Panasonic's inverter (which changes the motor's rotation and output), tilted drum and 3D sensor technologies, which combine to cut cycle length and lower water consumption.



Buying group gives EPE the thumbs-up

PREMIUM small appliance distributor EPE has been named Supplier of the Year for the second year running by buying group Associated Independent Stores (AIS).

Our picture shows EPE managing director Noel Pamment receiving a certificate and trophy from AIS housewares and gifts controller David Parkes.

"We would like to thank all the members who voted for us and for all staff members at EPE. Let's continue to give the best level of service to all our customers," said Mr Pamment.

"We will continue to carry out a great service - from ordering to delivering and offer a consistent level of professionalism."

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