



PSA News

The Association for Service Professionals

Haier Purchases GE Appliance Unit to Boost Presence in US Market

Haier Group said it would buy General Electric Co's appliance business for \$5.4 billion, the Chinese company's latest attempt to boost its presence in the lucrative United States market.

Haier, which made an abortive attempt in 2008 to buy the business, has a negligible presence in the U.S. white goods market, dominated by Whirlpool Corp, Sweden's Electrolux AB and GE.

The news comes weeks after GE walked away from a deal to sell the business to Electrolux for \$3.3 billion, following months of opposition from U.S. antitrust regulators.

The deal with Haier is unlikely to draw intense antitrust scrutiny, according to some antitrust experts, but may get a hard look from the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS).

"Given the number of industry participants, a merger which combines a 5-percent market share participant doesn't seem to me to raise significant antitrust concerns," said Seth Bloom, a veteran of the Justice Department who now heads Bloom Strategic Counsel, a firm specializing in public policy, government relations, and antitrust analysis.

GE said the deal values the appliance business at 10 times last 12 months earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA). Whirlpool Corp is valued at 7.7 times.

"This is the chance of a life-time for Haier to become big outside China and specifically US, hence they are willing to pay this very high price tag," Kepler Cheuvreux analyst Johan Eliason told Reuters.

The deal will give Haier ownership of a century-old business that makes refrigerators, freezers, clothes washers and dryers under brands such as Monogram, Café, Profile and Artistry. The business reported revenue of \$5.9 billion last year.

Haier has been mostly present in the highly competitive, so-called "value segment" of the U.S. market and analysts expressed concern about the impact its bigger presence would have on the pricing dynamics.

"... over time I'd expect them to use GE's excellent distribution network in the U.S. to source in more of their own Chinese low-priced products which will change the dynamics to some extent," said Eliason, who is based in Stockholm.

Haier will continue to use the GE Appliances brand and retain the business's headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky and its current management team, the companies said.

The deal is another step in GE's push to prune its non-core assets as it transforms itself into what it calls a digital industrial company - hiring more people to write complex software codes to efficiently run its jet engines, power turbines and medical equipment.

The latest move in that direction will be moving its headquarters from Fairfield, Connecticut, to Boston, which will give it access to the talent pool in a city that is quickly becoming a leading U.S. technology hub.

GE is also selling most of its finance arm, or about \$200 billion in assets. It has closed deals on about \$100 billion so far and announced sales of another \$50 billion.

The deal will also be subject to customary regulatory filings in China and antitrust approvals in other countries, said a person authorized to speak on behalf of Qingdao Haier Co Ltd, the Haier unit making the purchase. Haier owns 41 percent of Qingdao Haier.

Thoughts from the Executive Director

By Randy Carney, PSA Executive Director

The New Year is here! I hope that you are off to a great start, but that might be hard for our members and friends in the Mid-Atlantic region that just got nailed with 3' of snow. We have all been thinking of you, and while the Weather Channel seems to have turned into an arm of *The National Enquirer* with their endless exaggeration of storms (not to mention naming winter storms- that drives me nuts), it looks like they pretty much got this one right.



Well, January is over so hopefully things will be getting better. Pretty soon, we'll have forgotten about the blizzards and get ready to start ducking tornados. Fun times.

On to this month's thoughts...

- There has been a lot of chatter recently about R600a and flammable refrigerants. The EPA is likely moving to restrict the use of R134a and moving toward refrigerants that are judged to less of an environmental impact. R600a, already used in most European applications and an increasing number of refrigerators here in the US, is one of the most common substitutes being mentioned.

Jim Campbell has a great summary on handling R600a in a tech service article elsewhere in this issue, and the points made are good ones- there is little danger as long as you respect the properties of the refrigerant and handle them properly. PSA will have additional information and training available on R600a, and we plan to hold classes this September at NASC 2016 in Dallas, TX. Keep an eye on *PSA News* and the psaworld.com website for additional details.

- Randy Westra of Cornerstone Appliance had a fun little contest running on PSANet prior to the holidays, and ended up by awarding Eldon Bender of Peachy's ½ of his annual membership as the winner. I'm wondering if our members would like to see more of this type of contest? We all know we have a lot of chatter on PSANet just with the various service and parts issues that come up, and as we bring in more PSA members, the volume is going to increase. I liked Randy's contest, and have been kicking around ideas on how we could do some things like this throughout the year. If you have any ideas or would like to weigh in with your point of view, drop me a line at rcarney@psaworld.com. I'd like to hear what you have to say.
- We are continuing to work on our membership benefits in PSA, and also improve our abilities to communicate with our membership on a more consistent basis. We hope to have an updated benefits plan out very soon- it will include discounts on NASC registrations, PSA training events, and also a service warranty sales option available only to PSA members. Additional benefits are expected as we move forward, and will be announced on PSANet.
- Do you have additional ideas? Do you have suggestions on how we can better stay in touch with you, our members? What benefits would you like to see? We want to hear from you- drop me a note at the email noted above, or give me a call and we can discuss. We need to hear from you in order to meet your expectations, so don't be shy!

PSANet

**Is the Industry's most important source
for
Technical information and Troubleshooting Assistance**

Whirlpool, IBM Collaborate on Cognitive Solutions for Connected Appliances

BENTON HARBOR, Mich. /PRNewswire/ -- [Whirlpool Corporation](#), the world's leading manufacturer of major home appliances, and IBM announced a new collaboration to connect Whirlpool connected home appliances with [IBM Watson](#) services, including cognitive analytics, to provide more personalized services to consumers.

"IBM's cognitive analytics is a strong fit for Whirlpool Corporation," said Laurent Borne, General Manager, Connected Appliances, Whirlpool Corporation. "Saving energy and water, caring for their families through mobile efficiencies – these are the benefits we're hoping to bring to consumers. IBM's expertise in data storage, and cloud computing ensures we'll continue to bring our consumers relevant technologies in the future, as well as deliver new, innovative, and distinctive experiences for the consumer."

In step with its position as an industry leader, Whirlpool is gearing up for a market on the cusp of increased demand for intuitive, connected home appliances. Through IBM Watson services, including cognitive analytics, data management and protection, Whirlpool Corporation can better serve the consumer as connected home appliances continue to evolve. The collaboration will also focus, in part, on the importance and intricacies of big data; Whirlpool Corporation is using IBM Cloud Business Solutions to harness real-time data and insights from appliances to drive product optimization or enhance and introduce new benefits customized/tailored to consumers' unique needs.

"Working with IBM, Whirlpool Corporation can now further improve performance, optimize supply chain and enhance service delivery," said Bruce Anderson, General Manager, Global Electronics Industry, IBM. "Cognitive computing systems sense, reason and learn to provide enterprises the ability to access and analyze most data quickly and efficiently to create meaningful insights that benefit business and society alike."

Whirlpool displayed its connected appliance [offering](#) to CES in Las Vegas. The brand introduced the Whirlpool® Smart Kitchen Suite with CareSync™ system—a three-piece suite of connected appliances that blends consumers' home cooking with sleek design. The suite is one of the latest innovations from Whirlpool that allows families to control select features of their kitchen appliances remotely—refrigerator, oven and dishwasher using the Whirlpool(R) Smart App.

BAT's All Over the Country!

PSA's Basic Appliance Training (BAT) initiative is continuing to sweep the country in 2016!

The BAT program focuses on basic principles and repair functions related to electricity, gas and refrigeration, the core basis of a successful appliance service technician. The BAT training provides a solid foundation for new technicians, along with a strong refresher course for more experienced techs that will make the product specific training offered by manufacturers more understandable and also help to make your technicians more efficient and effective.

There are more BAT classes confirmed in early 2016- please keep your eye on PSA News and our web site www.psaworld.com, for the complete 2016 BAT and PSA training schedule...

March-	Pending
April-	Atlanta, GA- dates TBD
May-	Denver, CO- dates TBD
June-	Pending
July-	Pending
August-	Pending
September-	NASC 2016 in Dallas, TX- September, 26-29
October-	Nashville, TN- dates TBD
November-	New Orleans, LA dates TBD
December-	Pending

Coming Soon!!!

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Are You a Good Negotiator?

By Ralph Wolff, PSA Industry Relations

To become an effective negotiator requires constant practice in “negotiation thinking”. It is a daily discipline, not an ability that can be left dormant in normal times and tapped at will in an emergency. Nor is there such a thing as a line of ready-made, packaged negotiation strategies waiting to be picked off the supermarket shelf.

Negotiation is simply the logical extension of one's usual communication process. Done well, it derives from long-term philosophy, not short-term expediencies. In a very real sense, it represents the expression of an attitude about one's life.

____ Paraphrased from *The Mind of the Strategist* (1982) by Kenichi Ohmae

If you think about it, we use negotiation in various ways almost every day, from conflict resolution and dealing with customers or vendors, to attempting lower your cable bill or buying a house. Just remember that basic principles of negotiation are the same and that even the most skilled and experienced negotiators will feel discomfort when negotiating. The only difference is a skilled negotiator has learned to recognize, and suppress, the outward signs of these feelings.

The first thing you need to ask yourself is what are you worth? What do you bring to the table? Is what you have hard to come by, or is it a dime a dozen? Does the other side need you more than you need them? If what you have is rare or noteworthy, you have the better bargaining position. That's called leverage. If, however, you need the other side more than they need you, ask yourself how can you give yourself an edge?

Prepare, prepare, prepare! I cannot emphasize this step enough. Work the process. There are often many possible deals. Do not be too satisfied just because you found one of them. Look to find all the possible scenarios in case the first one cannot be negotiated.

Understanding the people you are negotiating with is also a big part of the process. Personality and ethics matter. A lot depends on who is negotiating. If you can, get beyond positions and think about interests to help frame your argument. Before going into a negotiation, research the other party and try to have an understanding about what is important to them and why they are interested in making the deal. Also try to discover what is important to the negotiator outside the realm of the topic being negotiated. Where do they live? Does the other party have a family? Do they like sports? Find some commonality.

Research is the key. Before beginning negotiations, do your homework. Be ready to justify your numbers- know the historic or current values and be ready to quantify your numbers and explain how you arrived at them. Conversely, when you receive an offer, ask your opponent to justify their numbers in return.

Listening is a fairly underrated skill in today's world. I stress the importance of listening because it will do two things: it will cause the other party to feel respected and it will build trust between the two parties. Listening entails making sure what you've heard is actually correct.

“Pigs get fat, hogs get eaten.”

Negotiations should be a win-win for both sides. When one party is unreasonable the negotiation process becomes stalled and with a good chance that it will end with a no-deal. A wise negotiator will always strive to convince his opponent that he understands their position and is working to make a fair deal for both sides.

Leverage: *“Every reason that the other side wants or needs an agreement is your leverage—provided you know those reasons.* ____
Bob Woolf, *Friendly Persuasion* (1990)

Leverage is your ability to get things on your own terms. The party who thinks they have the most to lose from a “no deal” has the least leverage. The party who thinks they have the least to lose from a “no deal” has the most leverage. Leverage is all about perception- it depends on what people think and believe, not on what is. Leverage is very dynamic and changes moment to moment as new information comes to light. Remember that there is a time to say nothing and a time to say something, but there is never a time to say everything.

Lastly, a good negotiator will not be afraid to walk away. If you want to win you must have three levels set in advance. Your opening offer, your target price and your lowest price you can live with. Not knowing your break-even point can leave you accepting a deal that is not in your best interest.

While there is so much more to learning the skill of negotiations I believe I have touched on some of the key points. If you practice negotiation, thinking the outcomes of your negotiations will be in your favor.

J.C. Penney is diving deep into its past to help secure its future.

For the first time in 33 years, the department store will be selling home appliances like refrigerators and washing machines by General Electric, Hotpoint, LG and Samsung, at 22 of its roughly 1,000 stores. If all goes well with the pilot, which begins Feb. 1 in stores in the San Antonio, San Diego and Tampa metro areas, Penney could roll out the home appliance offerings to hundreds more stores by October.

The return to home appliances is the first major new initiative by former Home Depot executive Marvin Ellison since he took the reins as chief executive officer last August, and one he is betting will help Penney build on its promising recent comeback. Penney's comparable sales during the 2015 holiday season rose 3.9%, putting it on track for its ninth straight quarter of growth. Notably, Penney's holiday results were a clear outperformance of department store rival Macy's, which saw a big drop in sales.

Penney is gradually clawing back after a disastrous reinvention in 2012 that alienated its frugal core customers and cost it a third of its revenues. But for all of Penney's progress, Wall Street only expects the retailer to clock in sales of \$12.6 billion for the fiscal year ending this month. That is still more than \$4 billion below their level four years ago.

Enter "Silver," Penney's internal code name for its appliance project. Penney sold appliances from 1963 to 1983 under its own brand, Penncrest, before abandoning the category to double down on its apparel business. In an exclusive interview at Penney headquarters in Plano, Texas in early January, Ellison explained the decision to focus home appliances, a category he oversaw during his 12-year stint at Home Depot. In a third-party analysis of items that Penney customers searched for on jcp.com but were unable to buy there, appliances ranked number one.

"Over one-third of our customers buy appliances in the mall," Ellison told *Fortune*, surrounded in a mock-up showroom by dozens of LG dishwashers, GE fridges and other such items. "But not from us." Instead, those shoppers are buying appliances at Sears, a department store with which Penney co-anchors 456 malls, according to Green Street Advisors. Though Sears Holdings, the parent company, remains the top retailer of home appliances in the United States, with sales of more than \$4 billion last fiscal year, helped by leading brands including its own Kenmore line, Sears has been bleeding sales for years and has closed hundreds of stores.

So Penney sees a big opening in a home appliance industry Euromonitor International estimates had \$29 billion in revenue in 2015, on the way to \$38 billion by 2020. Ellison also wants to take advantage of the recovering housing market, which has led many people to shift spending away from department store staples like apparel and toward home improvement. The appliances will range in price from \$349 to \$3,499, while the dedicated appliance sections on the sales floor will be between 1,500 square feet and 3,700 square feet. Penney plans to offer a much bigger assortment online once it makes appliances available for sale on jcp.com in May, said chief merchant John Tighe.

The "Silver" project will be closely watched by Penney investors because it will be the first major test of Ellison's strategy, which eschews major makeovers in favor of Penney striving to be the best version of itself.

"We're accepting the reality that we're a mall retailer. It's who we are," he says. "Because of that, we're going to try to win in the mall."

And in those malls, one retailer in particular (read, Sears) has been "dominating" market share, Ellison said. He made a point of saying Penney is not taking on his alma mater, Home Depot, saying that the two retailers have very different customers and stores. While J.C. Penney's apparel business is largely back on track, and its e-commerce has begun to recover, one area is still lagging badly: its home goods department.

Penney was for eons the go-to retailer for its window treatments and blinds and household items like towels. But in 2014, Penney's sales per square foot storewide were \$155, compared to \$212 before the failed reinvention. Most of that shortfall can be pegged to the home goods section, which in 2014 generated 12% of sales, down from 21% seven years earlier. Ellison is betting that big ticket items will be a relatively easy way to get a lot more out of those sections. (By some estimates, sales per square foot in stores that sell appliances reach \$1,000 in that part of the store.)

"The bar is really low," he says. Still, the sales hemorrhage of a few years ago, along with an enormous \$5.2 billion long-term debt load, have left Penney handcuffed in terms of big capital projects. To make sure the new appliance business does not tie up what limited cash it has (\$638 million as of October 31), Penney has arranged with GE, Samsung and LG not to hold any inventory beyond what it has on its sales floors. That approach, which departs from industry practices, is key to making this work for Penney, Ellison said. (GE just agreed to sell its appliance unit to China's Haier for \$5.4 billion, though the GE brand will continue.)

Another benefit of the appliance foray? Penney is hoping having more big-ticket items will prompt a greater number of customers to sign up for store credit. Currently, some 36% of Penney's sales are completed on a store card, way under the 60% rate at Kohl's. That is depriving Penney of a lot of the data it wants on customer's shopping habits, which helps with marketing and inventory planning. Penney faces a number of challenges. For starters, it hasn't sold appliances in such a long time that it shouldn't expect customers to come instantly rushing back. What's more, Amazon.com, Home Depot and Lowe's are formidable rivals. Penney also won't be

offering smart home products initially, potentially putting it at a disadvantage to rivals like Best Buy , Lowe's and others, which have redoubled their efforts.

And stealing customers from Sears will be no slam dunk. Last year, Sears opened a new technology center in Seattle that (among other things) will mine data gleaned from the tens of millions of appliance service calls made by Sears technicians over the years; that move is intended to boost appliance sales by improving customer service.

Ellison is proceeding cautiously in how quickly and how far he'll take the appliance business, given the fiasco that took place the last time Penney made major changes to its merchandise offerings.

"We're not going to make a blind march to force something into the stores that is not working," he says. "We're going to listen to the customers. We're going to read the data."

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The PSA Technician Evaluation program can be ordered through the PSA website at psaworld.com/member_tools. The cost is \$39.95.

Introduction to R-600a Refrigerant

By Jim Campbell, Mcap

As our service opportunities evolve, so must our skills. Since many OEMs have begun using this new refrigerant, we should embrace the opportunity to add it to our service menu. The cost of equipment is fairly inexpensive, compared to the years of service calls these products will generate. In reality, it is easier to work around than standard refrigerants.

R-600a is a hydrocarbon refrigerant.

Q: *What are hydrocarbons (HC)?*

Hydrocarbon refrigerants are environmentally friendly, nontoxic, and a non-ozone-depleting replacement for chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

From a chemical point of view, a hydrocarbon is the simplest organic compound, consisting entirely of hydrogen and carbon. Hydrocarbons (HC) are naturally occurring substances. The majority can be found in crude oil, where decomposed organic matter provides an abundance of carbon and hydrogen.

Hydrocarbons are one of the most climate-friendly and cost-efficient refrigerants to heat, cool, and freeze.

- Not ozone depleting: Ozone depletion potential = 0
- Not climate damaging: Global Warming Potential = for most HCs below 3 (HFC 134a = 14)
- Nontoxic
- Safe: with proper handling
- Energy efficient: usually better energy efficiency than CFC or HFC systems
- Cost-efficient: lower refrigerant purchase price, as well as lower system running costs

Q: *Are hydrocarbons safe?*

Yes, with proper handling. Since hydrocarbons are flammable (See **R-600a Introduction, WARNING**), some basic safety rules need to be respected by manufacturers, installers, and users, which may differ slightly, depending on the application. As long as these rules are respected, it is perfectly safe to use hydrocarbons as refrigerants. Propane, for example, is used universally for heating and cooking. As a result, its safe handling is widely understood and practiced by the general global population. This makes it an appropriate alternative to climate-damaging chemical refrigerants in developing countries.

Q: *Are hydrocarbons flammable?*

Yes. However, keeping to the safety guidelines existing for any application using flammable refrigerants, the risks of using hydrocarbons can be kept to a minimum, avoiding any threat to human health and safety. Many components for commercial refrigerated appliances using hydrocarbons already meet safety standard requirements.

Q: *Are HCs toxic?*

No. Hydrocarbons are not toxic for human beings and other living organisms. They could cause asphyxiation at high concentrations.

Q: *How does an HC system work?*

A system using hydrocarbons works in exactly the same way as systems currently using synthetic refrigerants. The basic refrigeration cycle remains the same, and only the charge of the system (exact amount of refrigerant) varies.

WARNING: It is very unlikely that combustion will occur inside a sealed system, as there will be insufficient air. However, if the hydrocarbon refrigerant leaks out of the system, combustion will occur if the correct mixture exists and there is an ignition source. This is dangerous and must be avoided.

WARNING: Servicing and repair of R-600a refrigerators should only be performed by skilled and well-trained service technicians. R-600a requires very careful handling because of the flammability of the gas, which is a potential danger during work on the refrigeration system. A well-ventilated room is necessary and there should be no open flame or combustion source within 6 feet of the work area,

in case of accidental discharge.

Note: The first big difference between R-600a and R-134a or R-12 is found in the system pressures, which operate at lower levels. This leads to operating pressures being very much lower than previous refrigerators utilizing R-12 or R-134a. Evaporators of R-600a refrigerators will operate well below normal atmospheric pressure, typically in a 5-to-18-inch vacuum.

All R-600a leak-checking must be performed in open-air or a well-ventilated room, or the technicians could risk injury to themselves or others. Leak checking should be performed on a powered-off (equalized), sealed system. Bubble solution (WX05X10507) or equivalent is the approved leak detection method. Open-flame leak detectors are not recommended with hydrocarbon products. Some sniffer-type leak detectors work with hydrocarbons. Special detection equipment is available for use with hydrocarbon products. If in doubt, check with the leak detector manufacturer.

Conversion of an R-12 or R-134a refrigerator to R-600a is not recommended because R-12 and R-134a appliances are not approved for flammable refrigerant use. Electrical safety in these units are not proven to acceptable safety standards. The normal risks a CFC or other toxic refrigerant would have when it escapes are mainly related to depletion of breathable air and frosting at the point of escape. Hydrocarbons have an explosion risk associated also, (in addition to depletion of breathable air and frosting). Explosion risk is more dangerous directly to anyone in the vicinity, should it accumulate and come into contact with any ignition source. Basically treat it as you would an LP gas or any other flammable vapor.

Relative Refrigerant Pressures (PSIG)				
Temp. in °F	R-12	R-600a	R-134a	Temp. in °C
-40	-5.2	-10.5	-6.9	-40
-22	0.1	-7.9	-2.1	-30
-4	7.4	-4.1	4.9	-20
14	17.2	1.1	14.6	-10
32	30.2	8.1	27.9	0
50	46.8	17.2	45.4	10
68	67.7	28.9	68.2	20
86	93.5	43.6	97.0	30
104	124.7	61.5	132.8	40
122	162.1	83.2	176.6	50

Here is about all the additional equipment needed to perform R-600a sealed system repairs. (You already have torches, etc.)

R-600a Service Tool Kit - WR86X10072



**Piercing Valves (2)
WR86X10086**



Charging Hose



Vacuum Gauge



Pressure Gauge



Nitrogen Regulator Assembly



Recovery/Sweep Hose

More on this exciting new avenue for revenue is forthcoming in our Service Library and will also be added to our PSA Service Training Programs, such as Basic and Advanced Refrigeration. Once you have familiarized yourself with R-600a, you will be surprised how easy it can be to service. Classes will be held at our annual service convention in Dallas this year, so plan to attend!

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