

Moore Supply and Grand Hall Leveraging their strengths creates a winning partnership

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Jeff Joyner of Moore Supply's Mesquite, Texas, Profit Center has been in the plumbing wholesale business a long time. And he knows that contractor acceptance plays a huge role in whether a wholesaler has success with any product line.

About 10 years ago, Moore added to their water heater offering with a tankless line, and then in 2007, began partnering with Grand Hall. Profit center manager Joyner was intrigued by the unique design of the Eternal Hybrid Classic models, which he initially learned about from one of his contractor customers.

"Evan Ford of The Plumbing Connection has been a loyal customer of ours for years," Joyner noted. "Evan really sold me on the idea of the Eternal Hybrid line, emphasizing what a great product it was, and how easy it was to install. Soon, another customer started talking about the product, and I met with Marc Platten, who, I had previously worked with and is now a regional sales manager for Grand Hall. He really validated who Grand Hall is as a company. Marc invited us to bring customers to tour their facility and become more familiar with the uniqueness and benefits of their products. Once I saw their demonstration of the product, its performance and output, it was a 'wow' for me. I felt like it had great potential for Moore Supply and our

customers in this market.

The Eternal Hybrid water heater is a uniquely patented product that Grand Hall vice president-product and marketing Paul Home often describes as a "best of both worlds blend" between traditional tankless and tank-type units. With super high 98% thermal efficiency, a typical family of four can expect to save between \$25 and \$55 a month over an inefficient unit, Home noted.

The units can be wall- or floor-mounted with standard water connectors on top to save installation time. Easily vented with 2" Schedule 40

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PVC pipe up to 35 feet or 3-inch Schedule 40 PVC pipe up to 100 feet, and flexible indoor, outdoor, direct vent or power vent conversions on the same unit. Thanks to thermostat and flow dual activation design, no minimum GPM is required to trigger the unit's ignition, the unit's built-in 2-gallon reserve tank means no start-up lag or "cold water sandwich." The Eternal Hybrid is fully compatible with WaterSense low-flow fixtures, and can be



The counter area of Moore Supply's Mesquite, Texas, profit center is a hub of activity throughout the day. Its trained and experienced professionals are dedicated to serving their contractor customers.



Moore's Jeff Joyner and Grand Hall's Paul Home flank a cutaway display in the Mesquite profit center's counter area that illustrates how the Eternal Hybrid tankless water heater operates.

easily integrated with recirculation, hydronic heating and even solar applications. It is also environmentally friendly, with ultra low emissions that leave almost no carbon footprint.

Its recirculation system compatibility is one of the Eternal's biggest selling points, ensuring nearly instant and endless hot water, and saving the average family of four up to 13,500 gallons of water usage a year. Also, some metropolitan areas — including Dallas — are offering incentives to residents and businesses to conserve their water usage. The Eternal Hybrid recirculation-capable design is ideal for this, because not having to wait to get hot water means added convenience, and cost savings, for users.

Home added that California "is considering adapting a standard requiring water-saving technologies such as recirculation, in fact some California municipalities are already doing that."

A key contractor benefit is the way the Eternal Hybrids are vented.

"Tankless units rely on very special venting that is usually proprietary for those specific heaters," Home explained. "This venting is expensive, so that adds additional cost to the purchase and installation. Because the venting is not interchangeable, wholesalers and often contractors must carry extra inventory. And some recommend having an installation kit, which also adds cost.

"While the Eternal Hybrid is a very technical product, it is very easy install, service and maintain. It has multiple installation options; uses simple and inexpensive PVC venting, which most wholesalers already carry in stock; and because we offer a limited product line, wholesalers don't have to make a huge investment in money or warehouse space to stock our product."

To that end, Grand Hall offers just three models — the 145,000-Btu GU145(S) and 199,000-Btu GU195(S) models are designed to be used inde-

pendently, while the 199,000-Btu GU195(M) model can be used in a network system where multiple heaters are connected with a network cable so they can "talk" to each other.

Joyner believed that first-hand experience would be a key selling point for the Eternal Hybrid units, so Moore Supply concentrated on encouraging the primaries from contracting firms to install one in their homes.

"Through the Conquest program, Grand Hall gives wholesalers credit for free units to offer our contractors," he said. "We found that once someone installed and lived with the product,



The Eternal Hybrid tankless water heater represents a successful high-ticket residential water heating product for Moore Supply.

they bought in — the units really sell themselves," Joyner explained. "Once that happens, they become a team member in the effort to promote the product. It's virtually like expanding the size of your sales force. You can't beat word-of-mouth referrals.

"It has given us our customers something to offer consumers that is unique, performs to the promised levels and does what it says it will do. And it works in virtually any application."

Joyner went on to note that one of (Turn to Hybrid... page 60.)

Hybrid tankless water heater a proven winner for Moore Supply

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the key concerns he heard from contractors early on was about service. They wanted to know what needed to be done to keep the units running

smooth, and what was involved in servicing the units.

“The simple answer we give them is that it is easy,” Joyner explained. “That’s one of our selling points. Be-



Jeff Joyner of Moore Supply (left) and Grand Hall's Paul Home check out a shipment of Eternal Hybrid water heaters on Moore Supply's shipping dock.

A long list of benefits

Grand Hall likes to categorize the benefits of the Eternal Hybrid as it relates to wholesalers, contractors and consumers.

First, the benefits to wholesalers:

- Grand Hall offers limited SKUs, which means that wholesalers do not have to stock a large amount of product to carry the product
- There is a 20-year residential/10-year commercial no-leak heat exchanger warranty, which gives wholesalers a great confidence-building selling tool.
- The fact that the Eternal Hybrid uses PVC venting also reduces the amount of SKUs a wholesaler must stock.
- FAST — Factory Authorized Service Technician — training is offered by Grand Hall through its wholesalers
- Product fast ships the same day if in stock and orders are received before 3:00 p.m.

Benefits to contractors include:

- Ease and speed of installation, which means contractors can complete more jobs in less time

- 24/7 U.S.-based technical support
- No special tools are needed for servicing the units; error codes help contractors diagnose any problems.
- Once they have earned the FAST (Factory Authorized Service Tech) certification, contractors are listed as factory service providers on Grand Hall's website, and are guaranteed payment on service calls and payment on a standard labor rate

Benefits to consumers include:

- Endless and consistent hot water, thanks to the exclusive heat exchanger design that is recirculation capable
- 98% efficiency, which drives down operating costs
- Thanks to a patented self-cleaning design that flushes out the sediment, annual maintenance simply requires cleaning the condensate trap, along with checking filters and aerators
- A low total cost of ownership when considering lower gas, electric, water and annual maintenance costs, as well as the durable warranty mentioned above.

cause the unit is self-cleaning, there is very little maintenance involved. From an accessibility standpoint, there are just five screws that have to be taken out to get in. It's kind of like working on a 1950 Chevy with plenty of room in the engine bay versus a 2010 Chevy that is cramped with all the extra components. Contractors don't have to worry about hooking the heater up to a computer to diagnose and service it. The brains of the unit are on one card on a swing door and all the other connections are right there, very accessible. “

Joyner and Home went on to discuss the ease of doing business if there is a failure with the heat exchanger.

“The most troublesome failure on a tankless unit is the heat exchanger,” said Joyner. “In traditional units, it's the first thing in, so if it has to be replaced, a contractor has to take everything else out of the heater to get to the heat exchanger. With the Eternal Hybrid, there are just five screws, you open the door and its right there.”

Home went further, adding, “During the development phase, we put our engineers in an attic for an extended period of time, where they studied all kinds of different water heater models. They realized just how difficult it was to access parts. So they were determined to do things differently. As a result, Grand Hall really designed these units with the trade in mind.”

As Moore Supply and Grand Hall both realize, the way you do business is just as important as the products you sell. It's about being agile, savvy, aware of market conditions and building relationships. These two partners work together to offer unique solutions and leverage the strengths of each of their companies.

“Moore Supply is part of one of the largest wholesaling organizations in the country that still operates independently,” said Home. “Each of their branches is allowed to manage their own inventory and operate with a great deal of autonomy, which facilitates the manufacturer and wholesaler relationship at the branch level.

“Here in Mesquite, Jeff Joyner is very knowledgeable about the tankless market and has been a strong supporter of our hybrid solution. Jeff is open to new ideas, heavily involved in residential and commercial projects, and understands the importance of marketing and maintaining a solid reputation.”

And Joyner was equally as complimentary about Grand Hall's practices. “One of the best moves they made



Jeff Joyner inspects stock in Moore Supply's Mesquite, Texas, warehouse.

was hiring a rep agency that had a good rapport with Moore Supply and our customers,” he noted. “They have also done a good job at advertising in trade magazines and getting exposure for us in the market. Grand Hall made sure the units were qualified for the tax incentive, which made for a great selling point, and they also provided us with some nice display units for the counter. We've also found that their website is very functional and user friendly, and overall, they just have great customer support.

“I never thought we'd be successful selling a high-ticket residential water heater, because I didn't think the public would go for it,” Joyner concluded. “But the buy in at the trade level has been so significant, that they are really pushing the product in the marketplace. And that makes all the difference.” ■

For additional information, visit www.eternalwaterheater.com or www.mooreSupply.com.



The Eternal Hybrid tankless unit cutaway helps Moore Supply show consumers why it's a superior product.