

TOTAL STORAGE SOLUTIONS

\$10 JUNE 2013

# Closets

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Contur 'Steels' Garage Storage

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Cover and above: Milan Furniture Fair 2013

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# Curvy Steel Sparks A Sale

**A CUSTOMER WALKS INTO A GARAGE SHOWROOM** to pay off the balance on the garage flooring he just had installed. While there, he notices a new display of metal garage cabinets in bright, vivid colors. Immediately, he signs off on a brand new order for \$20,000 worth of cabinetry.

Jason Johnson, vice president of Garage Innovations in Tulsa, OK, with showrooms in Oklahoma City, recounts this anecdote, which happened approximately two days after he installed a Contur Cabinet line in his showroom.

If that display had not been up, Johnson says, the customer would have chosen someone else to do the cabinets. Previously, "We had a guy walk in and hire us for garage flooring, but he wanted a trim guy to do the base and upper cabinets."

Similar scenarios have happened over the years where a customer selected Garage Innovations to do the flooring, but they had something in mind for the cabinetry other than the melamine cabinets Johnson manufactures and the RedLine Garagegear powder-coated wood cabinets or Hercke's stainless steel garage cabinets.

## CURVED STEEL CABINET NICHE MARKET

Although it is only a small portion of the market, instances of customers searching for alternative, luxury garage cabinet options were enough to make Johnson aware that there was a niche that was being under served.

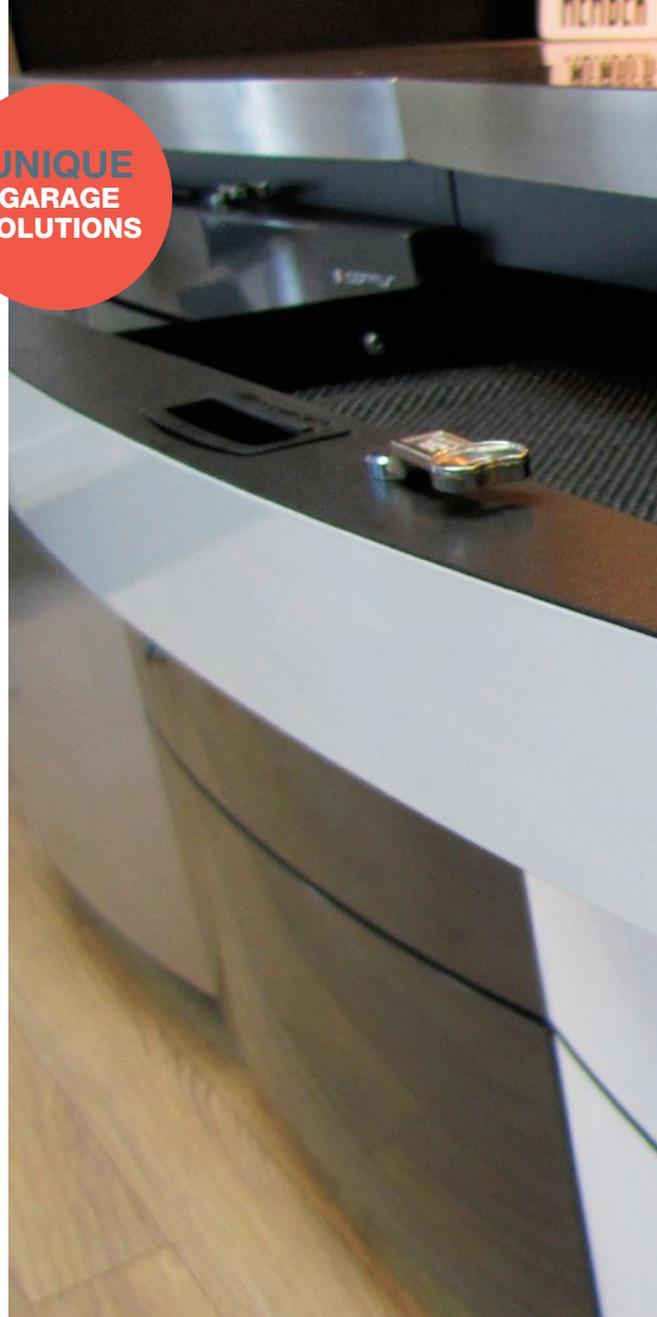
Garage Innovation's market primarily consists of female decision makers with beautiful homes and unorganized garages, Johnson says, and 95% of the garage cabinets installed are melamine. But there is a small percentage of customers who are seeking more, namely guys who want a unique, luxury, steel product for the garage.

To capture that niche market, Johnson decided to order Contur cabinets (a relatively new line that *Closets* reported on last June) and set up a showroom display.

Having received multiple e-mails and marketing material about the new cabinet line, Johnson says that he always considered the possibility of becoming a dealer. "As soon as I saw it I was interested," he says, "because it is a unique, high-end steel cabinet."

The brightly, colored, curved Contur cabinets clearly piqued the interest of other potential dealers as well.

Jacque Yeager, owner of Closet Trends in Tucson, AZ, says an e-mail blast from Contur caught her eye a few months ago because the product was very different. She said the construction appealed to her as well as the opportunity to offer





Contur's product line features curved components and bold colors.



## Colorful, Curved Garage Cabinets

Contur Cabinet launched its line of all-metal, modular garage storage cabinets in June 2012.

The company officially opened in February of 2010 and showcased its new cabinet prototypes at the 2011 Specialty Equipment Manufacturers Association show (SEMA).

The new line of modular cabinets features European styling and all-metal construction with a patent-pending feature on its doors allowing for a front panel to "float" on a foam core, reducing dings and dents. Additional features include cabinet doors that swing up.





Contur cabinets open a new niche market in garage storage.

a contemporary, designer look in garage cabinetry. Plus, there is a potential market for it in the Tucson area, she adds.

Closet Trends manufactures its own products, but it also has a relationship with a garage door company that manufactures a steel garage cabinet line. However, Yeager says that line has more of an industrial look while Contur is "chic," bright and available in a variety of colors.

Closet Trends currently does not have a display of the Contur line, but it does have the company's literature and sample colors in its showroom.

Yeager also says that she is considering advertising the line in a local high-end publication, *Luxe Magazine*.

"We are thinking of putting a picture of Contur in there because people might be interested using it in other rooms like laundry rooms, craft rooms or bathrooms because of its sleek look," she says.

Perry Tiemann, owner of Garage Decor & More in Waterloo, IL, also expressed an interest in the Contur line.

Tiemann currently sells the powder-

coated garage cabinet line from RedLine. And he says he is also considering Contur.

"When they were developing the line, it looked like a good, steel alternative," he notes. But for him selling the cabinets will be on a case-by-case basis depending on the client's needs.

Garage Decor & More, which offers not only garage products but closet systems, wall organization, flooring and storage racks as well, doesn't have a physical showroom.

Dave Moltz, owner of Pro-Garages, located in Irvine, CA, also finds the Contur line very unique, and he is looking for the opportunity, perhaps at a tradeshow like Specialty Equipment Manufacturers Association Show (SEMA), not only to get a look at the cabinets but to touch and feel them as well.

One concern for Moltz is the lead time because all product is shipped from Contur's manufacturing facility in Canada. Most of the other products he offers ship in a day. A potential solution would be to simply note in the product description on

his web site that the lead time would be longer, he says.

For Johnson the lead time is not a problem. He says it generally takes 10 to 14 working days, which is typical for what he offers.

Johnson says he originally thought Garage Innovations would only sell one to two Contur cabinet systems a year but he is already halfway to that goal.

"We may sell more than what we thought," he says. "I had it shipped to the showroom and when I opened it I was very impressed."

Johnson says he considers his investment in the new product line worthwhile because having the actual product in the showroom seems to be a strong selling point.

"That product sells itself once you can touch it," he adds. "As soon as I opened the box for our display I was sold." **contur-cabinet.com**

Visit **ClosetsDaily.com** to find out more about the launch of Contur Cabinet's curved cabinetry in 2012.

