



HASTINGS
bath collection

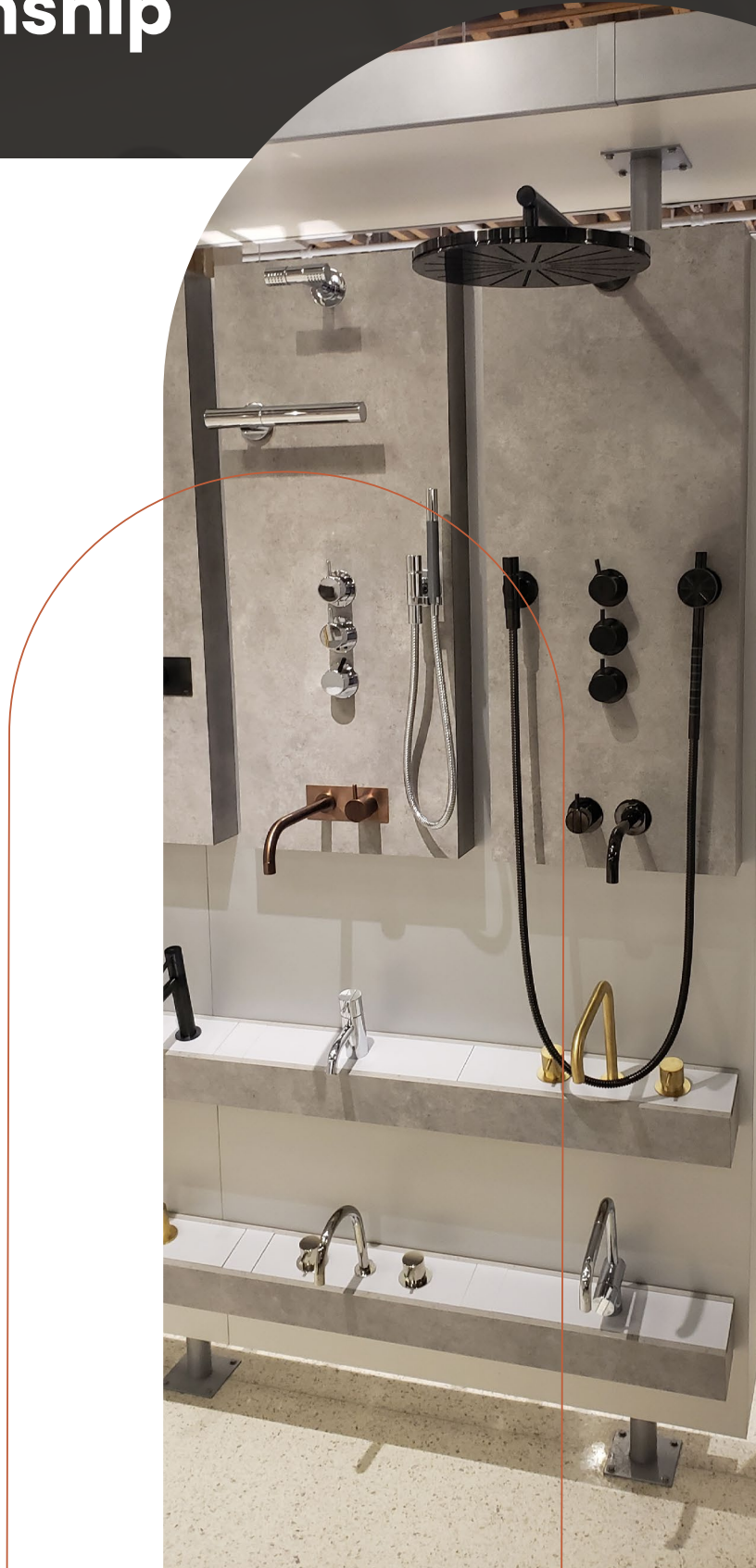
Case Study: **Exclusive Products Lead to a Long-Term Relationship**

Background

A High-End Kitchen and Bath Dealer Seeking Exclusive Products

David Kotowsky, a dealer with two high-end bath and kitchen showrooms in the Chicago area, knows what makes his business stand out: exclusive design solutions. Hydrology, a showroom in the downtown River North Design District, caters to professional interior designers, architects, developers, and homeowners. Advantage Gallery, a suburban showroom, has a wider and deeper product offering geared toward custom home builders and homeowners.

For David, evolving with the market—whether for professional designers or savvy homeowners—requires not only being aware of current trends but also offering products that can't be found anywhere else.



Challenges

Standing Out in a Sea of Competitors

Many companies offer similar, off-the-shelf products that can't be personalized. Before David found Hastings, it was hard to stand out in the marketplace because competitors offered the same types of conventional, mass-marketed products. The challenge was finding a way to differentiate his business from other showrooms.

David also found that larger companies don't build lasting relationships with their dealer partners. He sought a more personal connection and a like-minded supplier with an entrepreneurial spirit.

Solutions

Building a Relationship with Hastings

As luck would have it, David learned about Hastings at a trade show in the 1990s. He was immediately impressed by the innovative and distinguishing solutions Hastings offers dealer clients and was eager to build a partnership. However, David's initial luck had run out. Hastings was so selective about its dealer partnerships that it initially rejected Advantage Gallery.

David was persistent because he wanted access to Hastings' unique and niche product line. What started as a "no" eventually became a "yes," and the relationship blossomed to the extent that David was asked to be the sales manager's best man at his wedding.

Decades later, what Hastings offers remains unparalleled in the market. David and his team marketed many Hastings products over the years with great success. His current focus is on the VOLA collection, modular furniture collections, and mirror solutions.



Results

Achieving Long-Term Showroom Success with a Strong Relationship

David continues to work with Hastings for many reasons. He has access to unique, high-quality solutions that can be personalized to offer infinite possibilities. Hastings helps Advantage Gallery differentiate its brand and offers profitable product lines that serve its high-end clients.

Access to the VOLA collection has been one of the keys to differentiation. David says of the iconic Danish brand, **“VOLA is probably the greatest faucet brand, design, producer on the planet. There’s nothing close. They have no rival or peer, in my opinion.”**

Top-tier support is also an important factor in David’s business. He says of Hastings, “We’re in a very technical business, and their technical expertise and support has always been a cut above the rest. They really know their stuff, and that’s important in this high-end, custom business.”

The relationship with Bob Gifford and the entire team has been essential. He notes, “Bob Gifford is a big part of why our relationship, or partnership, has lasted this long. He’s got integrity, he’s very passionate about his business, he knows his stuff. He does the right thing, keeps his word. He’s a business partner that I trust.”

Finally, because Hastings operates its own showroom in Manhattan, David has observed that the company has a more insightful perspective on what dealers want and need in terms of products, installation, and delivery.



The Future

Looking Ahead with Optimism for Continued Success

David is confident that the future with Hastings is bright and the sky is the limit with VOLA. Hastings has always allowed Advantage Gallery to bring an innovative element to the market and will continue to do so with exclusive product lines. Having something unique, custom, and easily accessible is an asset to David's showrooms.

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