

Eclipse Stainless

made with the fabricator in mind

“The days of the stone fabricator sitting around waiting for a customer to bring him a sink are pretty much over,” says Brent Cohn of Eclipse Stainless.

Brent Cohn and partner Dave Spicher have gone a long way toward changing the industry’s sink paradigm, selling 100,000 sinks to more than 2,500 different fabricators since Eclipse Stainless first unveiled its line of 18-gauge sinks at the 2003 StonExpo show.

Probably 60 percent of these customers had never sold a sink before because they didn’t want the hassle. Then, Eclipse Stainless came along and offered an alternative. Eclipse has put the fabricator in a position where he can buy a sink economically, use it as a marketing tool and make a profit. At the same time Eclipse protects fabricators by not selling sinks to big-box warehouses or plumbing houses.

The two men understand just

how important the ability to sell, or even give away, a sink can be in the countertop sales process. Cohn, after being in the importing business for twenty years, and Spicher, a solid surface manufacturer and fabricator, teamed up 10 years ago.

The proliferation of granite and engineered stone into the kitchen and bathroom market and the expense of the name-brand undermount stainless steel sinks for those projects was creating a real need for a well-priced, top-quality stainless steel sink for fabricators.

Moving to fill that void, Cohn began looking at sink manufacturers in Turkey, Russia, Taiwan and China. His focus was – and remains — on quality.

“My philosophy in importing is that too many people try to import based strictly on price,” Cohn says. “When designing the Eclipse sink line, my focus was to import the highest quality sink I could possibly purchase. I want the Eclipse products to hold their own against sinks manufactured anywhere else in the world.”

Because of that desire for quality, Cohn says he realized from the beginning that Eclipse couldn’t just buy from a trading company or a factory. Instead, the company has control over the entire manufacturing process from the importation of its own steel to the inspection of the final product. With its own offices overseas, Eclipse has final say over every single sink coming off the production line.

The use of imported steel is

Rick Sullivan, Owner of California Stoneworks (Santee, CA): “This business is sink or swim. Having Eclipse sinks in stock has allowed me to complete my jobs on time and my profit margins have increased significantly. It’s a win-win situation. My client wins with savings and I win because I’m not wasting time chasing after a sink. Eclipse has done a great job for the stone industry and a great job for us.”

important because China has limited availability of 18-10 stainless steel. The stainless steel Eclipse utilizes is imported from Japan and Korea. Additionally, it’s tested and certified by United States testing labs for quality assurance.

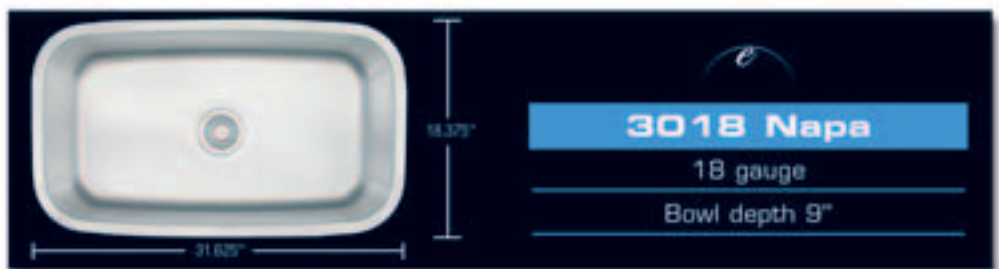
Eclipse wants fabricators to be able to have confidence in the substantiated quality of the product they purchase.

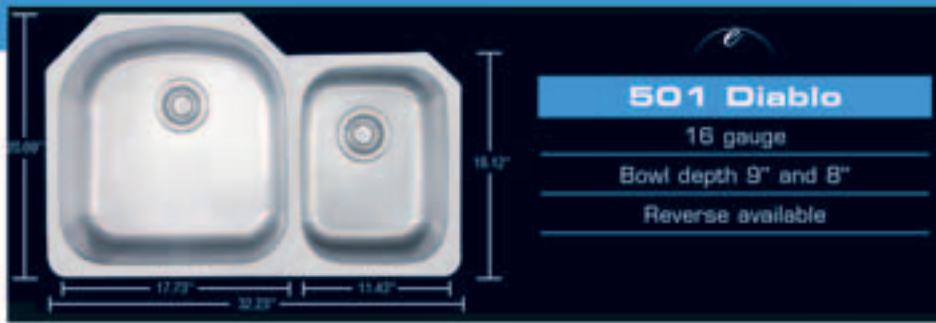
Recently, the factory that manufactures Eclipse sinks has finished construction of a new facility that combines the swelling plant, washing plant, finishing plant and packaging plant under one roof. Not only does it have all new equipment to produce the finest quality products available, but to guarantee our on-going success, Eclipse has hired additional quality control people to keep up with the increased volume.

Even with that safeguard, Eclipse offers a 100-percent satisfaction guarantee. If, for some reason, a fabricator is not satisfied with an Eclipse sink, the company will pay to have it returned and replaced.

“Our goal from the beginning was tight quality control,” says Spicher. “We want a sink that gives the fabrica-

Carlton Marks, Operations Manager of Marbleworks (Henegar, AL): “We began offering Eclipse Sinks to our customers about 1 year ago and have been very pleased with the quality and service offered. Sink sales add to our bottom line every month and improve our production because we can avoid delays caused by not having sinks when we need them. Customers love it too because of the convenience of not having to shop for and deliver their sink to us.”





Mike Weldon, Owner of Stone Fuzion (Clermont, FL) says, "In the past year using Eclipse sinks I've grown my business 25%! Best value sink in the business!"

tor peace of mind with the product he's distributing and installing."

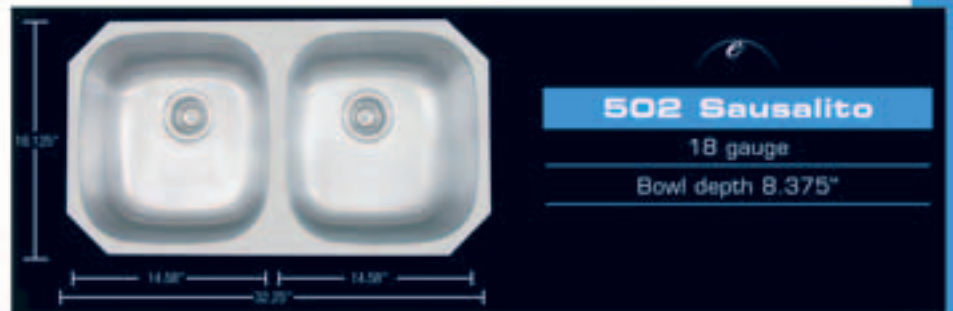
Eclipse began by offering what are basically "meat-and-potatoes" sinks – double sinks in both even and uneven basin styles in 18-gauge steel. More recently, the company has moved to separate itself from its competitors by adding a 30" wide single basin along with several bar sinks – all in 18-gauge – as well as a line of higher-quality 16-gauge sinks.

Many fabricators are finding that the 16-gauge sink is an incredible up-sell. They are offering the 18-gauge sink as part of a promotion and if the customer would like an upgrade they can offer the 16-gauge. The 18-gauge, 18-10 chromium nickel content stainless steel sink is the industry standard for the finest quality sink available. Now, with the introduction of the thicker 16-gauge sink, Eclipse has raised the bar on sink standards. Eclipse has given the fabricator the opportunity to offer an even better sink to their customers than offered by other name brand companies.

Customers can view an Eclipse sink and see noticeable differences from its competition in the finished product. Another area where Eclipse excels is the dimensional consistency of the finished goods.

Imported sinks have a reputation for a notorious lack of consistency on the finished dimensions. This can make it very difficult for fabricators using computer-assisted design (CAD) systems because it's not possible to create one template and one .DXF file and have confidence it will work every time. If you bill your shop time at \$100 an hour, those additional templates can really cut into the bottom line.

"We've worked very hard to develop our process where we have consistency in sizing our sinks," says Spicher. "We have templates made from the same .DXF files that CNC fabricators use to cut their holes. Our quality control people check for that consistency, and if it matches our template in China,



it's going to match our template here."

In fact, Eclipse is so confident its sinks are consistently sized that it offers phenolic plastic templates (at-cost) to its fabricator-customers.

Research that Eclipse Stainless has done since its first sinks came on the market shows the number of shops offering sinks is quickly growing. And, if convenience isn't enough reason to get fabricators thinking about adding the product, the company is continuing to try to make sinks an attractive part of a kitchen countertop sale.

Later this year, Eclipse is launching a line of solid stainless steel faucets to match its brush-finished sinks. These are cast in 100-percent-pure stainless steel with no other metals added and feature a ceramic valve system and pullout sprayer.

The company is also finalizing plans for a volume rebate program that will provide rebates to fabricators of up to five percent of their total purchases in the form of Eclipse merchandise of their choosing.

With distribution in all 50 states, same- or next-day shipping on 90 percent of orders, and Eclipse's commitment to sell only to stone fabricators,

it's possible for even smaller shops to begin offering sinks with only a minimal investment.

"If a fabricator gets a couple boxes of our side-by-side and large-small basins in 18-gauge and a single box of our 16-gauge sinks – just to show customers the upgrade – they've tied up less than \$1,300 and they're in the sink business," Spicher says.

Cohn concludes, "We'll constantly strive to find the balance between selling the highest quality possible and the most economic product, with an eye on competing only with the name-brand sinks to provide the fabricator the best possible price for the best value."

For more information on Eclipse Stainless, call the company's corporate offices at (800) 477-2217, or the main U.S. distribution center at (828) 452-4727; or, visit the Website at www.eclipsestainless.com

