

# Kitchens and Kitchen Furniture - UK - September 2013

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'People expect a lot from their kitchens. They want the kitchen to be an organised space that can accommodate a lot of possessions, and be a place to eat and entertain. But modern homes are getting smaller and a lot of people are combining kitchens into open-plan living. So kitchen designs are highly visible and need to blend into dining and living spaces.'

— Jane Westgarth, Senior Market Analyst

This report looks at the following areas:

- What are people prepared to pay a little extra for when they refit their kitchens?
- Will anything happen in the UK economy to stimulate demand?
- Is open-plan living changing the way people view their kitchens?
- What proportion of kitchen refits are DIY?
- What are the key factors shaping choice of retailer?

Demand for kitchens has been weak since the credit crunch of 2008. Although it could be assumed that people who opt not to move to a new home, will make home improvements instead, the 'improve not move' trend has not compensated for the effects of the slump in terms of the numbers of people buying houses. The slow kitchen market has created both problems and opportunities for retailers. The market leader, MFI failed in 2008, then Focus DIY and Moben (part of Homeform Group) closed in 2011 in response to over-capacity in the sector. MFI's demise created openings for two new chains; Howdens Joinery and Wren.

In 2012-13 there has been a revival in housing sales. This has been helped by the government's help to buy scheme as well as by a general improvement in consumer confidence. This will help to fuel demand for refurbishment activity around the home including kitchen revamps.

This report looks at the consumer base who have opted for DIY or fitters and asks who uses the services provided by the retailers themselves.

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