

According to NKBA polling, shifting consumer preferences for cabinetry in North America put transitional styling ahead of the traditional aesthetic. Contemporary design is also making significant gains. Consider this trend from the inside out. Both transitional and contemporary designs favor frameless cabinet box construction, which is standard in Europe. One benefit is that there are minimal reveals between door and drawer fronts, allowing for sleek, uninterrupted surfaces. Most functional hardware is initially developed for frameless boxes (then adapted for framed cabinetry), giving kitchen designers who work with frameless cabinets access to the most cutting-edge innovations – and when it comes to kitchen and bath cabinets, hardware technology truly drives design.



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1 With the advent of emboss-in-register (EIR) and rich textures in thermally fused laminate, TFL is becoming the dominant material used to make cabinet doors and drawer fronts, as well as cabinet box interiors. In this kitchen, the architect used TFL on the ceiling to give the kitchen a secluded, intimate feel. 2 High pressure laminate (HPL) has been the number one choice for kitchen counters for more than 50 years. It is available in a multitude of colors, patterns and textures and is affordable and durable. It continues to be the preferred material in today's kitchen. 3 High-gloss surfaces are gaining in popularity in solid colors and patterns. New materials have been developed in high gloss, including three-dimensional laminate (3DL), acrylic laminate, HPL, polyurethane reactive coatings (PUR) and lacquer 5. In nearly all cases, high-gloss surfaces require an extremely smooth substrate for both coating and laminating. Medium density fiberboard (MDF) is the unanimous material of choice 4.



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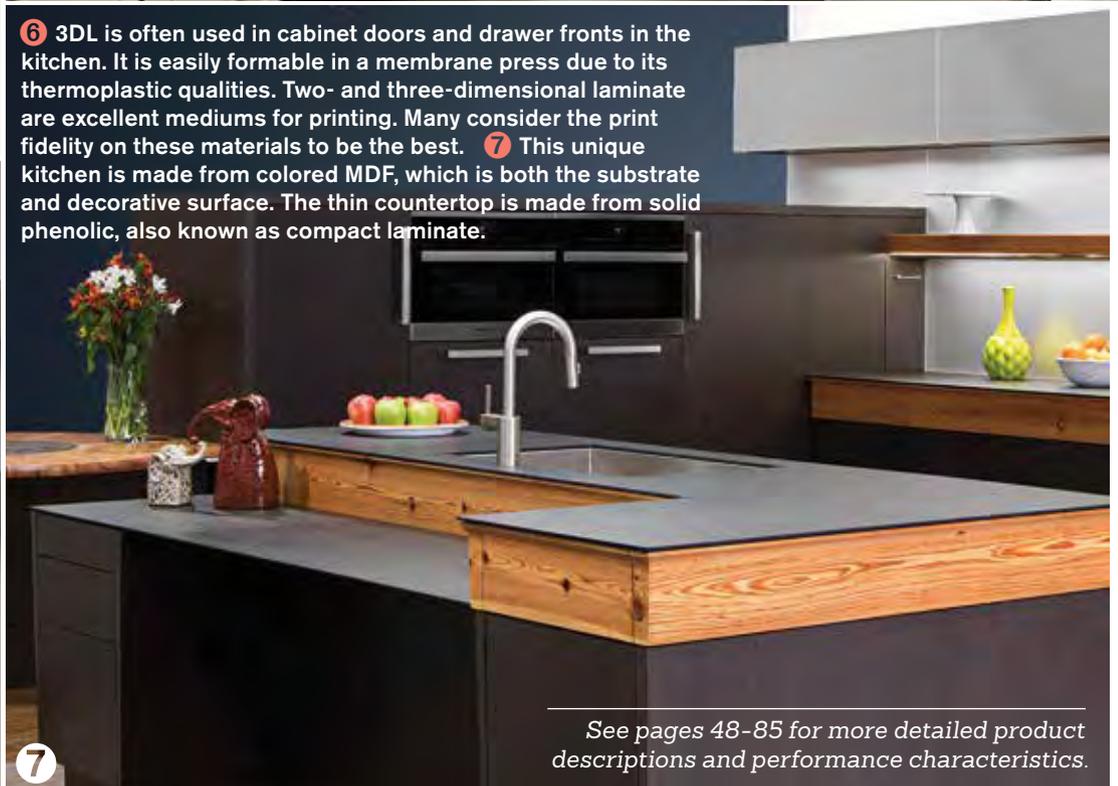


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6 3DL is often used in cabinet doors and drawer fronts in the kitchen. It is easily formable in a membrane press due to its thermoplastic qualities. Two- and three-dimensional laminate are excellent mediums for printing. Many consider the print fidelity on these materials to be the best. 7 This unique kitchen is made from colored MDF, which is both the substrate and decorative surface. The thin countertop is made from solid phenolic, also known as compact laminate.



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See pages 48-85 for more detailed product descriptions and performance characteristics.