

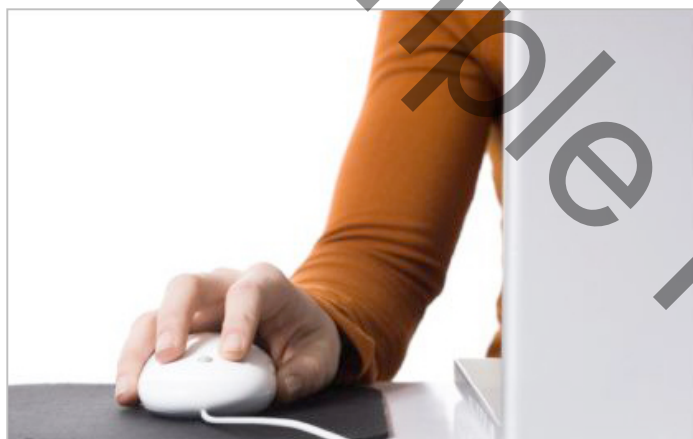


**LOOK  
INSIDE!**

Take a look at the  
first few pages of  
the full report.

## KITCHEN CONVERSATIONS

*Exploring Online Discussions about Kitchens*



Research Institute for Cooking & Kitchen Intelligence:  
*Helping kitchen-related businesses make smarter decisions  
and better products by delivering actionable insights.*

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## INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

## INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

### Kitchen Conversations Overview

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Millions of people are talking. Sharing their thoughts, experiences, likes and dislikes on forums, blogs, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and other user-generated content networks. **The online media channel is a critical driver of offline purchase behavior** with user-generated content and social networking driving much of the innovation and collaboration occurring around the Internet today. Consumed by increasingly complex, fast-paced lives, people are constantly bombarded by news, information and marketing messages. **In today's attention economy and the era of the social web, the name of the game is trust and the new ROI is Return on Influence.**

The goals of this study are to offer some preliminary insight to online attitudes and emerging themes related to kitchens.

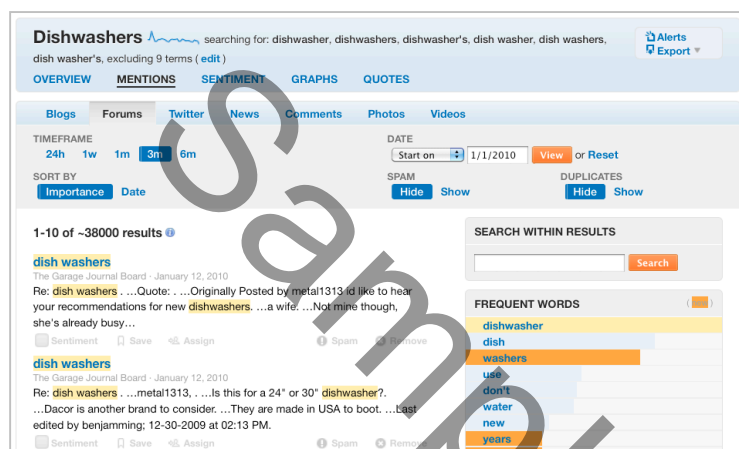
The report focuses on six major kitchen categories:

1. Faucets
2. Refrigerators
3. Dishwashers
4. Cooking appliances (ovens, stoves, ranges, cooktops)
5. Cabinets
6. Ventilation/Hoods

## Methodology

The research was conducted in three key phases using a combination of: 1) the latest social media monitoring technologies, 2) detailed contextual theme analysis (completed manually by the RICKI research team), and Google search trends.

### Step I – Social Media Research:



For the purposes of this study, RICKI analyzed **1,800 online conversations** taking place on forums and message boards during Q1 2010 (January 1, 2010 – March 31, 2010). Forums operate on a premise of open and free discussion and typically feature questions, comparisons, polls of opinion as well as debates on various topics. Compared to forums, blogs, which were excluded in this analysis, are more likely to be used for commercial or publicity purposes, including back-links for establishing higher organic search engine rankings. **Forums, in our opinion, provided a**

**better sample for unbiased, deeper online consumer discussions.**

**A key component of this phase of the social media research included building accurate search and monitoring profiles.** In order to eliminate irrelevant results, it was necessary to exclude certain terms from the search profiles. For example, when analyzing the category term “dishwashers”, we needed to exclude terms like “job” or “jobs”, “restaurant” or “hiring”, in order to eliminate any results related to dishwasher job opportunities.

### Step II – Contextual Theme Analysis:

**The initial data set across all categories encompassed an estimated 6,000 forum posts.**

Approximately 1,000 posts were exported for each category. RICKI then completed a comprehensive contextual theme analysis of 300 discussion posts for each of the six kitchen categories (1,800 total) to establish the most popular conversation topics.

**In our opinion, the contextual theme analysis phase is a critical step in social media monitoring required to uncover the most popular themes.** This manual, labor-intensive process is critical for identifying pertinent themes. Current automated processes offered by social media analysis packages on the market cannot provide this type of targeted analysis.

In many cases, a single forum post by one person encompasses a number of topics so it is imperative to conduct a detailed manual review of all posts to make sense of the massive amount of text found online. Themes representing less than 5% of the conversations for each category are not shown.

The report includes select verbatim quotes. These comments are generally left 'as is' with grammar unchanged, however misspellings were corrected, including brand names.

### **Step III – Google Search Trends:**

In addition to thoroughly examining online conversations, we also explored Google search engine activity to uncover keyword search trends related to kitchens. Google 'Insights for Search' feature analyzes web searches among Google's multiple search domains and databases.

For the purposes of this report, we analyzed kitchen category keywords within the Google web search database. All searches were filtered within the Home & Garden category.

Here is an overview of what's included (or how to read the data presented):

<b>Keyword:</b>	Category keyword (for example: kitchen faucet)
<b>Timeframe:</b>	January 2008 – May 2010
<b>Database:</b>	Google Web Search
<b>Category:</b>	Home & Garden (and related sub-categories when appropriate)
<b>Interest:</b>	Graph with trend line showing keyword activity and interest over time
<b>Top Searches:</b>	Related search terms with the highest level of interest (The data is displayed on a scale of 0 to 100, with 100 indicating the most frequently used search terms)
<b>Rising Searches:</b>	Related search terms that have experienced significant growth (If the word "Breakout" is used instead of a percentage, the search term experienced a change in growth greater than 5,000% with respect to the preceding time period of January 2006 to May 2008).

*NOTE: Results from Google keyword research is intended for exploratory and informational purposes only.*

The word cloud enables you to quickly uncover themes based on keyword density or how frequently different terms appear. Each kitchen category conversation analysis includes a word

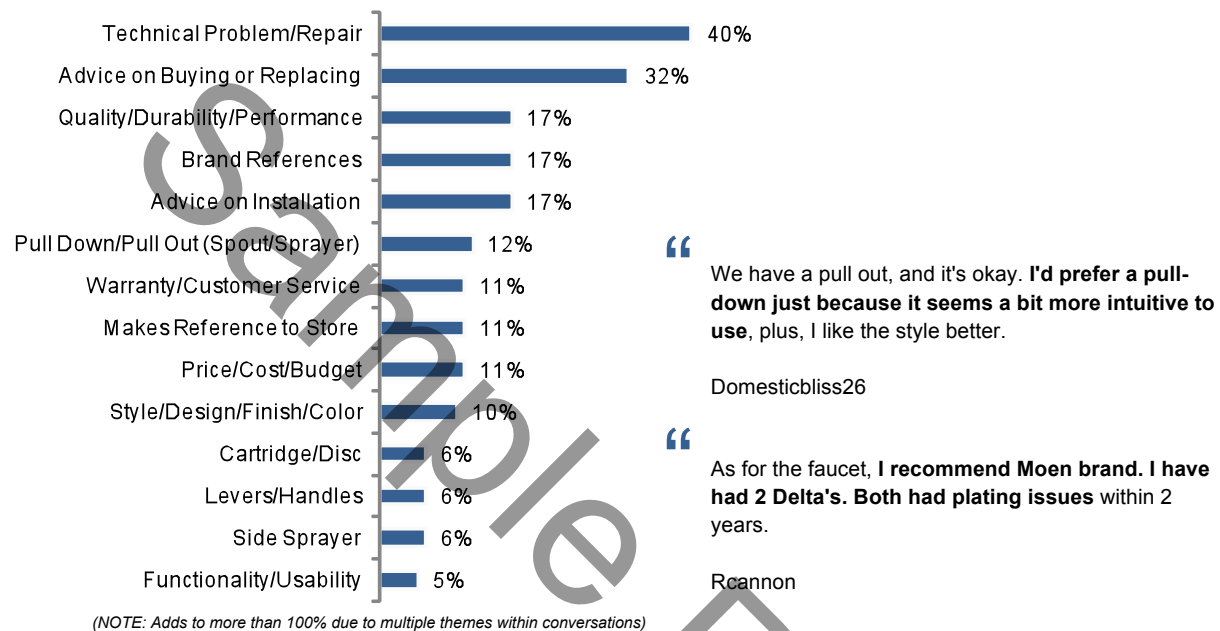
## Internet Shorthand

**BTW** – By The Way  
**DD** – Dear Daughter or Due Diligence  
**DH or DUH** – Dear Husband, Darling Husband or Duh Hubby  
**HD** – Home Depot  
**IL** – In Laws  
**IMHO** – In My Honest Opinion, In My Humble Opinion  
**IMO** – In My Opinion  
**IOW** – In Other Words  
**LOL** – Laughing Out Loud  
**MIL** – Mother In Law  
**MW** - Microwave  
**OTOH** – On The Other Hand  
**PITA** – Pain In The A\*\*  
**S-B-S** – Side by Side  
**SS** – Stainless Steel  
**TIA** – Thanks In Advance  
**YMMV** – Your Mileage May Vary

## Faucet Conversations – Popular Topics

### Overview

The following chart details the most popular online conversation themes related to kitchen faucets. The results are based on an analysis of 300 Internet forum/message board conversations over a three-month period from January 1, 2010 to March 31, 2010.



- Plumbing and faucet problems were the most popular discussion topics related to kitchen faucets. Forty percent of conversations centered around a technical problem or repair issue.
  - ▶ Comments regarding water pressure/temperature, water smell, taste or appearance and leaks were the most common problems being discussed in online forums.
  - ▶ A number of the conversations around repair issues seemed to involve plumbers. Professionals can be powerful influencers on brands and purchasing decisions if online users are looking to them for advice.
- Nearly a third of all conversations related to advice on buying or replacing a faucet.
  - ▶ Approximately one out of six discussions mentioned a specific brand or model references.
  - ▶ Faucet installation help or advice, from peers as well as professionals – mostly plumbers – appeared in roughly one out of six discussions.
- Product quality and durability represented approximately one in six online discussions, correlating to the high percentage of conversations relating to plumbing and faucet repairs, again the number one topic of online forum conversations.
- Pull-down sprayers were discussed in more than one out of 10 conversations.



## Faucet Conversations – Select Verbatim Quotes

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“ **Take a look at Moen, they are still the best around** and the cartridge is guaranteed for life. We have installed Moen, Delta and even Kohler, but the **‘bang for the buck’ is still Moen.**

GregC

“ I had good luck with Moen faucets in my house. I **have a Kohler in the kitchen now. I miss the Moen - mostly because it had a much higher profile.** I could get a 5 gallon bucket under it with room to spare. Came in real handy when I had my 55 gallon aquarium. **With the Kohler, we can just barely get our largest stockpot under it.** What I **do like is the pull-out sprayer** (pulls right out of the spout) other than that it's just a faucet to me. **So far I replaced 2 cartridges and 3 spray heads. Good thing it's a lifetime warranty. Call to Kohler and my parts are at the door in 3 to 5 days.**

Use2beanyone

“ **Has anyone tried the ‘new’ technology from Delta?** We are in the market for a new kitchen faucet and I'm looking for reviews. It seems like it would be a great addition to a kitchen, but I wonder if you still have to use a handle to change the temperature setting... **is it really that helpful to have a faucet that you can tap to turn on water?** TIA

Shelley

“ **A kitchen faucet that turns on simply by tapping it?** Honestly I **love the idea.** It's pretty awesome.

Nettieruru05

“ **Just want you all to be aware of my good customer service experience with Kohler plumbing products.** Specifically, we replaced a kitchen faucet in July '06 with a Kohler single control faucet. Within the last few months, it started leaking. **I'm usually skeptical of so-called lifetime limited warranties.** I called the customer service helpline, expecting to get some kind of excuse as to why our faucet was too old to meet the criteria. **Much to my surprise, they immediately sent us replacement parts at no cost to us,** and they didn't even ask that we send them a copy of our receipt. **No hassle customer service, and most importantly, they stood behind the product. You bet I'll buy Kohler products again.**

InconclusiveFool

“ **We have a pull down and we prefer it over our pull out. My only concern is that a friend also has a pull down and, after a few years, it seems not to hold in place as tight as when she first got it.**

Melozia

“ **Good thing about Kohler is that repairing them was a breeze.**

Wiredvx

## Overview

The refrigerator conversations word cloud offers additional insight. The words appearing more frequently in the discussions are represented by the larger font sizes. The different colors do not carry any weight or value, but rather serve as a way to add visual interest and make the word cloud easier to read.



- The most common word emerging from online conversations around refrigerators is “repair”. Additional words such as “problem”, “replace”, “help” and “parts” also surfaced, suggesting a connection to people seeking or giving advice on making refrigerator repairs.
- Also a big part of the refrigerator conversation cloud is the word “new”, likely tied to people seeking guidance on purchasing a *new* refrigerator or *new* parts for their old fridge.
- The word “years” appears as one of the more popular terms, mostly related to people discussing the age or lifespan of their refrigerator.
- The words “compressor”, “defrost”, “thermostat” and “evaporator” also appear frequently, indicators of the types of technical problems people are experiencing.
- Refrigerator brands appearing most frequently in the refrigerator word cloud include GE, Whirlpool, Samsung and Kenmore. Sears also showed up as part of the word cloud, sometimes in reference to Kenmore appliances, but also with other lines carried at the retailer.

(NOTE: These results in this section are based on a different time period and based on search terms only rather than full conversations so results are not comparable to those in the previous section.)

## Google Web Search Trends – Dishwashers

### Overview

In addition to the online kitchen conversations research, RICKI analyzed Google search engine activity to see what people are searching for as it relates to dishwashers. The following charts show Google search activity in the United States from January 2008 to May 2010.

- Search Interest:** Graph with trend line showing keyword activity and interest over time
- Top Searches:** Related search terms with the highest level of interest (with 100 indicating the most frequently used search terms)
- Rising Searches:** Related search terms that have experienced significant growth compared to the preceding time period (January 2006 to May 2008)

### Google Search Interest: January 2008 – May 2010 (United States)



#### Top searches

1.	<a href="#">ge</a>	100
2.	<a href="#">ge dishwasher</a>	100
3.	<a href="#">bosch dishwasher</a>	95
4.	<a href="#">bosch</a>	90
5.	<a href="#">dishwasher parts</a>	90
6.	<a href="#">kenmore</a>	80
7.	<a href="#">kenmore dishwasher</a>	80
8.	<a href="#">whirlpool</a>	75
9.	<a href="#">whirlpool dishwasher</a>	75
10.	<a href="#">maytag</a>	70

#### Rising searches

1.	<a href="#">bosch dishwasher reviews</a>	+180%
2.	<a href="#">dishwasher detergent</a>	+120%
3.	<a href="#">dishwasher troubleshooting</a>	+110%
4.	<a href="#">dishwasher ratings</a>	+60%
5.	<a href="#">dishwasher reviews</a>	+60%
6.	<a href="#">frigidaire</a>	+60%
7.	<a href="#">the dishwasher</a>	+60%
8.	<a href="#">frigidaire dishwasher</a>	+50%
9.	<a href="#">best dishwasher</a>	+40%
10.	<a href="#">dishwasher problems</a>	+40%

- Search engine activity for dishwasher-related keywords remained relatively constant during the specified time period, with clear spikes occurring at years' end. There was also a spike in search activity during the second half of May 2010, perhaps a result of appliance rebates.
- Searches for dishwasher reviews and ratings experienced a sizeable increase in activity as did 'detergent' and 'troubleshooting'. The phrase 'best dishwasher' also rose.
- GE and Bosch are the top brand names being searched on in connection with dishwasher keywords, followed closely by Kenmore, Whirlpool and Maytag.
  - The Frigidaire brand has experienced the most growth, with a rise in search activity of 60%.

## **ABOUT RICKI**

America's leading authority for kitchen research and intelligence.

The research conducted by RICKI goes beyond traditional research methodologies to help companies gain a better understanding of the mindset of today's consumers by delving deeper into motivations and emotional drivers to pinpoint trends that will impact companies into the future.

RICKI was founded by a group of professional market researchers. The Executive Director of RICKI spent 18 years in the home improvement industry and was a former president and board member of one of the leading associations for the overall home improvement sector, the Home Improvement Research Institute (HIRI).

To find out more about RICKI, visit: [www.kitchenintelligence.org](http://www.kitchenintelligence.org)

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