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## ABOUT DESIGN IDEAS

Founded in 1984 from the back of a blue Ford Maverick, Design Ideas began with humble roots and devoted vision. Through exploring new ways, new forms, new methods, and new materials, Design Ideas creates new items to express timeless sentiments, to celebrate time-honored seasons, and to organize an office or home.

Taking cues from everyday items, Design Ideas was started by a brother-sister duo who developed what has become a must have for college graduates across the country – a wire basket for toting toiletries from the bedroom to the bathroom in college dorms.

After experiencing shower tote success, Design Ideas listened carefully to the needs of consumers and branched out of the bathroom and into the lives of millions of consumers across the U.S.

Design Ideas' passion of exploring ideas and inspired designs has led to the development of a full range of functional, fashion-forward, and moderately priced home and office accessories that appeal to a broad range of design-conscious consumers. Leading the way with innovative materials and remarkable design, Design Ideas has successfully brought one-of-a-kind products such as MeshWorks, Doodles, Lumenae and GelGems to homes across the country.

Today, Design Ideas creates, manufactures and globally markets more than 1,500 innovative and affordable accessories for the home.

To learn more, visit [www.designideas.net](http://www.designideas.net).

Design Ideas. We make *things* interesting.

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## ABOUT HANS MAIER-AICHEN

Born in 1940 in Stuttgart, Germany, Design Ideas Product Designer Hans Maier-Aichen studied product design, architecture and the fine arts in Wuppertal and in Munich before receiving a Fulbright Fellowship to study fine arts at the Art Institute of Chicago in the United States. Upon receiving his master's degree, Hans went on to teach at the Institute as well as at various universities throughout Europe.

### Hans Maier-Aichen Key Achievements

- 1965 - 71      Studied Product Design and Architecture at the University of Applied Arts, Wuppertal, Germany  
Studied Fine Art (painting) at the University of Fine Arts, Munich, Germany  
Received various scholarships in Europe  
Received Fulbright fellowship in USA
- 1965 - 66      Studied at the Art Institute of Chicago, USA
- 1970            Received MFA degree, Art Institute of Chicago, USA.
- 1967 - 74      Held various teaching positions:  
Art Institute of Chicago  
University of Applied Arts Muenster, Westfalia  
University of Fine Arts, Karlsruhe  
Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, London  
University of Fine Arts, Stuttgart
- Since 1968    Received National and International Art Awards:  
Deutscher Kunstpreis für Bildhauerei (German art award for Sculpture) (1968)  
Bremer Kunstpreis (National art award, Bremen) (1969)  
Villa Romana Prize, Florence, Italy (1972)  
"Romeprice" Villa Massimo, Rome, Italy (1973)
- 1974            Served as Managing Director of Artipresent GmbH, Germany.  
Created various design collections  
Developed product in Japan, China and other Asian countries for the European market and USA
- 1978 - 85      Performed consulting for design and marketing activities for the European Community
- 1980            Founded of the AUTHENTICS trademark.

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- Since 1986 Performed design development and technology research for mass market items within the field of the material PLASTIC (new surfaces and material approaches in connection with economical and ecological objectives).  
Researched materials and technologies for a new and innovative revaluation of plastic.  
The "poetry of the material" defined a new dignity of plastic.  
Developed young international designer teams.  
Developed product with a high claim for "unmistakeability" and identification within a growing global market.
- Since 1990 Gave lectures and workshops at various Universities, Design Institutes, Museums and other Institutions in Europe, Asia and USA.  
Had various design products selected for the permanent collection of the Modern Art Museum in New York, San Francisco, Tokyo, Paris, Koeln, and Munich.
- 1997 Received European Design Award (1997-98) in Paris.  
Participated in various design exhibitions at European art and design museums.
- Since 1997 Served as Member of the Board of Directors of the German Design Council
- 1998 Received title of Professor from The London Institute, Central Saint Martins College of Art&Design, London.
- 1999 Member of the Board of Directors of the Design Labor Bremen, Germany.
- Since 2001 Design consultant for various European and American companies.  
Jury member of various Design Awards within Europe.
- 2002 Professor for Product Design at the  
Staatliche Hochschule für Gestaltung Karlsruhe  
(State University for Arts and Media Karlsruhe).  
  
Curator of SPOON,  
100 international designers 10 curators, 10 design classics, Phaidon Press,  
London.
- 2003 "Ideafactory" - inauguration lecture for the academic year 2003/04 at EINA,  
Escola de Disseny i Art Barcelona, Spain.
- 2004 "Masterclasses" lecture during the experimentadesign Biennial '03  
Lisboa, Portugal.
- 2004 -05 Design consultant for the Thai government.  
"Design and Industries" - various workshops and lectures in Thailand.

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## **ABOUT DR. JIM LUNT**

Dr. Jim Lunt has spent over 40 years in the plastic's industry in Europe, North America and Asia.

For the past 16 years he has been actively involved in the emerging biopolymers industry sector. He was a founder member of NatureWorks LLC., a Minnesota based company which developed and commercialized the first melt processable, renewable resource based polymer referred to as Polylactide or PLA. At NatureWorks LLC., he served in a variety of roles including, Director of Product Development, Global Director of Product and Applications Development for Fibers and Packaging and New Business Development Director Asia, before returning to the USA.

Dr. Lunt has co-authored numerous publications and has been an invited speaker at conferences worldwide. A recipient of the Presidential Green Chemistry Award in 2002, Dr. Lunt is also the co-inventor on more than 20 patents in various fields, all involving performance polymers and chemistry solutions in new and emerging applications.

Presently he is the acting Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Tianan Biologic, a company, headquartered in Ningbo China, which specializes in the commercialization of PHBV bioplastics. He is also the Managing Director of Jim Lunt & Associates LLC.

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## **FACT SHEET - EcoGen**

### ***What is EcoGen?***

The product of scientists, engineers and designers from around the globe, EcoGen is a revolutionary new polymer called PHBV (poly-3-hydroxy butyrate-co-valerate). First developed by British scientists in the late 1980s, recent patented improvements in the fermentation technology have allowed for the cost-effective production of PHBV.

### ***How is EcoGen created?***

To create EcoGen, naturally occurring bacteria are fed sugar obtained from corn starch. These bacteria or “bugs” digest the sugar and store the resulting PHBV much as a human body would store fat. Extracted from the “bug,” the stored PHBV can then be used as an injected-molded material.

### ***How is EcoGen used in the creation of product?***

After the PHBV, or Enmat®, is naturally extracted, it is then blended with other biodegradable compounds to enhance its ability to process efficiently in standard injection molding machines. Design Ideas is the first company to utilize EcoGen plastic in the production of homegoods – the EcoGen Bath Line.

### ***What is the EcoGen Bath Line?***

The new product line features all the essentials you need for accessorizing your bathroom, including a toothbrush holder, bath box, bath cup, pump dispenser, soap dish, and bath bin. The line is available in white, green, black and blue and provides a stylish and eco-friendly solution for eco-conscious consumers.

### ***How long will my EcoGen bath accessories last?***

Although EcoGen products are completely biodegradable, they will not lose shape or function in the average home environment. When you are prepared to throw away your bathroom accessories, you can rest assured you're adding no harm to the environment as EcoGen products will biodegrade in six to nine months when composted.

### ***How long do my average bath accessories last?***

When you dispose of your average plastic bath accessories, they will exist indefinitely in a landfill.

### ***Who buys green products such as EcoGen?***

According to Mintel Reports, 12 percent of consumers said they purchase green products all of the time, while another 66 percent said they might choose products that conserve the environment over others (Intellitrends 2007 poll). Beyond that, 46 percent of people say they would visit a retailer more if it was environmentally friendly and 47 percent would pay more for their products (Roper Reports and Maritz Research Poll).

### ***Where can I buy EcoGen products?***

The new EcoGen Bath Line is being launched exclusively at The Container Store in April and will be available at a variety of retailers in June. For a complete list of retailers that carry Design Ideas' product, please visit [www.designideas.net](http://www.designideas.net) or [www.EcoGenLife.com](http://www.EcoGenLife.com).

### ***How much do EcoGen products cost?***

EcoGen bath accessories are available from approximately \$7 to \$30.

Contact: Andrea Bartels  
Design Ideas  
800-426-6394  
abartels@designideas.net

Joan Cetera  
Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide  
312-397-6058  
joan.cetera@ogilvypr.com

## **DESIGN IDEAS ANNOUNCES FIRST-EVER BIODEGRADABLE PLASTIC HOMEGOODS PRODUCTS**

*EcoGen Homewares to Transform Industry's Use of Plastic Goods*

**SPRINGFIELD, ILL. (February 4, 2008)** – The average plastic container purchased today will live more than 10,000 times longer than its original owner, but consumers who today purchase the latest bath accessories from design experts Design Ideas can take comfort that these plastic goods, with proper disposal, will safely decompose within a matter of months.

From hybrid cars to clothes and architecture, today's consumers are looking for eco-friendly choices that fit their lifestyles. According to Roper Reports, leading universities are now offering MBAs that focus on social and environmental stewardship, organic classes are on the rise and politicians are noticing an increase in the demand for highly skilled laborers in the environmental sector.

"Design Ideas is the first design company to utilize EcoGen plastic in the production of decorative home goods," said Andy Van Meter, Design Ideas president. "We've listened to our consumers and, more and more, they are conscious of their purchase decisions' impact on the environment. We are happy to provide them a new choice they can feel good about."

EcoGen plastic is a PHBV (poly-3-hydroxy butyrate-co-valerate) created when naturally occurring bacteria are fed sugar obtained from corn starch, making it completely sustainable. According to Forbes Magazine, PHBV is "one of the five molecules that will change the world." To create practical household applications using this biodegradable material, Design Ideas enlisted the expertise of Professor Hans Maier-Aichen, a design teacher at the Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design in Germany and an award winning plastics designer. Professor Maier-Aichen leads a team of engineers in Europe, China and America.

"EcoGen's natural decomposition requires exposure to bacteria commonly found in compost and many soils. These "bugs" store PHBV polymer much as the human body would store fat and, when extracted, the stored "fat" becomes an injection moldable material. However, consumers can rest assured the plastic will not deteriorate in the open air or with ordinary use, so it can be used for all types of household uses. EcoGen can withstand temperatures of 110 degrees Centigrade / 230 degrees Fahrenheit and will last indefinitely under normal conditions," said Dr. Jim Lunt, vice president of Sales and Marketing at Tianan, the enterprise partnering with Design Ideas to produce the raw PHBV material.

### **About Design Ideas EcoGen Bath Items**

Design Ideas will be launching its first EcoGen line of bath products in April 2008. The bath items feature a bath cup, pump bottle, soap dish, toothbrush holder and waste can. The items range in price from approximately \$7 to \$30. They will be initially available at the Container Store.

EcoGen joins a growing family of products made from innovative materials first introduced by Design Ideas including EVA foam, Window Gel, expanded metal mesh and, most recently, Ecotwine. For more than 20 years, Design Ideas has developed fun, functional and affordable items for every room in the home.

### **About Design Ideas**

Design Ideas® creates innovative, fun and functional accessories for home and office. Its more than 1,400 decorative accents, tabletop accessories and storage and organization aids are marketed and sold around the world under the slogan "We make *things* interesting." For more information on EcoGen, please visit [www.EcoGenLife.com](http://www.EcoGenLife.com).

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