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Regardless of the room, cabinetry today must take universal design into account and offer a certain amount of personalization to suit the needs of individual users.

“We research trends to understand, and then provide exactly what our customers want and should expect from us.”

The company’s recently upgraded M-Series bathroom cabinets, for example, contain an automatic interior light for illumination and a mounted magnetic strip that keeps metal grooming tools neatly arranged. A dedicated razor holder and adjustable shelves ensure contacts, glasses, and other daily-use items stay close at hand.

Consumers also can program the external LED nightlight in 12-hour increments or control it with a wall switch and—for added personalization—select a right- or left-handed cabinet door.

“We start and end every day in the bathroom at our styling space,” Lippmann says. “Shouldn’t that experience be a graceful one?”

The new standard

Customer expectations ultimately dictate the user experience and, as a result, custom designs and features have become more commonplace in the cabinet industry. Many aspects that consumers once regarded as convenient or extraordinary have proven to be



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necessary and normal in today’s marketplace, says Tom Zak, operating officer for Wine Logic, a maker of wine racks. The company’s home storage system presents wine and liquor bottles in clear view, but the horizontal design also can accommodate canned goods for easy accessibility.

“Our universal design allows the product to be used in anybody’s cabinetry,” Zak says. “By staying in touch with customers and design professionals, we can adjust our product line as necessary to continue to exceed expectations.”

Before the economic recession, new kitchens accounted for more than 75 percent of business for Reborn Cabinets, a remodeling firm based in Anaheim, Calif. Since then the company’s subsidiary, Vianvi Signature Cabinet Refacing, has seen that trend reverse as more clients want to update their cabinets without the major investment of a complete kitchen tear-out, says Vince Nardo, president. “From an investment standpoint, cabinet refacing has the highest return when selling the home,” he adds.