



## A Better Fit

The FIT System by Whirlpool Corporation addresses some of the kitchen's trickiest building and installation challenges.



## CASE STUDY

**The new FIT System ranges can accommodate any cutout thanks to their full-depth design, even when replacing a freestanding range.**

"Installation is as simple as taking out the old and sliding in the new," Woodbury said. "Builders and remodelers can confidently tackle any job knowing Whirlpool Corporation is providing a product for their customers that's going to fit. It's one less thing for them to concern themselves with."

### Jon Woodbury

Merchandising Manager,  
Whirlpool Corporation

## Changing the Landscape

For builders and remodelers, a traditional range hood is one of the kitchen's biggest headaches – literally. Installation is slow and cumbersome, requiring intricate measuring, annoying filler strips and multiple visits. And, as Whirlpool Corporation representatives discovered when they researched the segment, putting in a vent can turn into a wrestling match. Some installers go as far as balancing hoods on their heads while they struggle with the unwieldy units.

**"Whirlpool Corporation is taking the responsibility of creating innovative and functional products that make the job a little easier."**

Jon Woodbury, Merchandising Manager,  
Whirlpool Corporation

In March 2014, Whirlpool Corporation debuted a hood that changed the landscape. Part of the company's innovative Flex Install System – or FIT System – the hood boasts a simple, user-friendly and cost-effective installation. No measuring or cutting is required, and on average, it professionally installs in 10 minutes.\* The streamlined three-step process drives down costs and eliminates scheduling challenges long associated with traditional models, which typically take 30 or more minutes and require two people to install.

"The FIT System is real easy to install," said Mike Rohweder, a delivery and installation specialist with J.B. Hunt Final Mile Services. "It's real intuitive."

Range hoods aren't the only kitchen category that the FIT System is shaking up. The line of appliances also includes ovens and full-depth slide-in ranges. And all of the products help building professionals reduce labor costs while also offering consumer-pleasing designs and features.

"A key focus is easy installation. Our goal is to find solutions that remove installation burdens for builders and remodelers," said Jon Woodbury, the Whirlpool Corporation merchandising manager for premium ranges and kitchen suites. "Whirlpool Corporation is taking the responsibility of creating innovative and functional products that make the job a little easier."

## Listening to customers

The first FIT System product – built-in ovens – debuted in 2012. Like all the other appliances in the line, these were inspired in part by the needs from the field.

Traditional wall ovens present a challenge to builders and remodelers. Wall ovens lack standardized cutout heights, which means carpenters need to wait for the actual arrival of the product before they can finalize the opening for the oven. If they don't wait, they might end up with the wrong dimensions, forcing last-minute modifications.

"What that starts to get into is a scheduling conflict," said Rich Howard, the Whirlpool Corporation product manager for built-in ovens. "Scheduling can be a pain point for builders and remodelers. We understand that."

\*Based on circular vertical duct installation.

# CASE STUDY

## A Better Fit

The FIT System by Whirlpool Corporation addresses some of the kitchen's trickiest building and installation challenges.



The FIT System's simplified installation – a combination of internal “feet” and trim design – addresses those issues. It also makes replacing a built-in oven easier – which is important to a significant part of the market.

“Installers have had great success with the FIT System on the ovens,” said Brian Quiriconi, general manager of delivery services for J.B. Hunt Final Mile Services. “It gives them the flexibility to complete the installation, where in the past if the cutout was not the correct size, the unit would have to be dropped off and a carpenter called to adjust the opening.”

FIT System wall ovens are available in the Whirlpool®, Maytag® and KitchenAid® brands, offering a variety of innovative products.

“They've really hit home with consumers,” Howard said, “whether it's KitchenAid consumers looking at the strong performance or the Whirlpool consumers looking to simplify or streamline their lives or Maytag consumers looking for durability and power.”

Whirlpool Corporation offers a limited guarantee on the FIT System. If the oven doesn't fit the customer's existing cabinet cutout, the company will provide up to \$250 toward the cost of modifying the opening.

“The FIT System allows builders and remodelers to focus on other things that are more pertinent to creating value in their business,” Howard said.

## Revolutionary products

Whirlpool Corporation energized a somewhat stagnant segment when it introduced its FIT System range hood in early 2014. Kitchen ventilation is a big business, but innovation has been rare in recent years. FIT System hoods offer hidden venting and a sleek, modern look. They're also powerful and quiet – ventilation up to 350 cubic feet per minute on select models and sound levels as low as 4.5 sones at the hood's highest speed on select models.

---

**“It really revolutionizes the marketplace for hoods.”**

**Rob Byrd**, *The Whirlpool Corporation Category Merchandising Manager for built-in cooking*

---

“It really revolutionizes the marketplace for hoods,” said Rob Byrd, the Whirlpool Corporation category merchandising manager for built-in cooking.

The latest FIT System products are the slide-in ranges, which became available in September 2014. “Installation of our previous slide-in ranges required extra steps, which we aimed to remove, such as bull nosing countertops,” said Woodbury, Whirlpool's merchandising manager for premium ranges and kitchen suites. “By removing the overlapping cooktop and extending the depth of the new slide-in ranges, builders and remodelers are no longer required to carry out those additional installation steps.”

The new FIT System ranges can accommodate any cutout thanks to their full-depth design, even when replacing a freestanding range. And as with the built-in ovens, Whirlpool Corporation offers a limited guarantee: For customers not satisfied with the fit of the new range, Whirlpool Corporation will provide up to \$100 to modify the depth of the countertop cutout.

“Installation is as simple as taking out the old and sliding in the new,” Woodbury said. “Builders and remodelers can confidently tackle any job knowing Whirlpool Corporation is providing a product for their customers that's going to fit. It's one less thing for them to concern themselves with.”

Whirlpool Corporation isn't through innovating. Company designers and engineers are looking at adding new appliances to the FIT System line to address more kitchen installation challenges. “It's a matter of making sure that we have the right value being delivered for our customers to enhance what FIT means in the marketplace,” Howard said.

Backed by its depth of consumer insights and research, Whirlpool Corporation will continue to focus on creating solutions that reduce labor and time and help building and remodeling partners move on to the next job.



For more information about the FIT System by Whirlpool Corporation or to learn how Whirlpool Corporation delivers and inside advantage to its building industry customers, visit [www.OutsideAdvantage.com](http://www.OutsideAdvantage.com).