

LETTERFROMRUSSIA



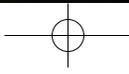
All the beauties of British conservatories are being plugged by Ivan Kruglov in the Moscow region in places like Rublovski Shosse which leads to the wealthy enclave of Rublovka – the equivalent of the Ascot of Russia and the centre of Moscow.

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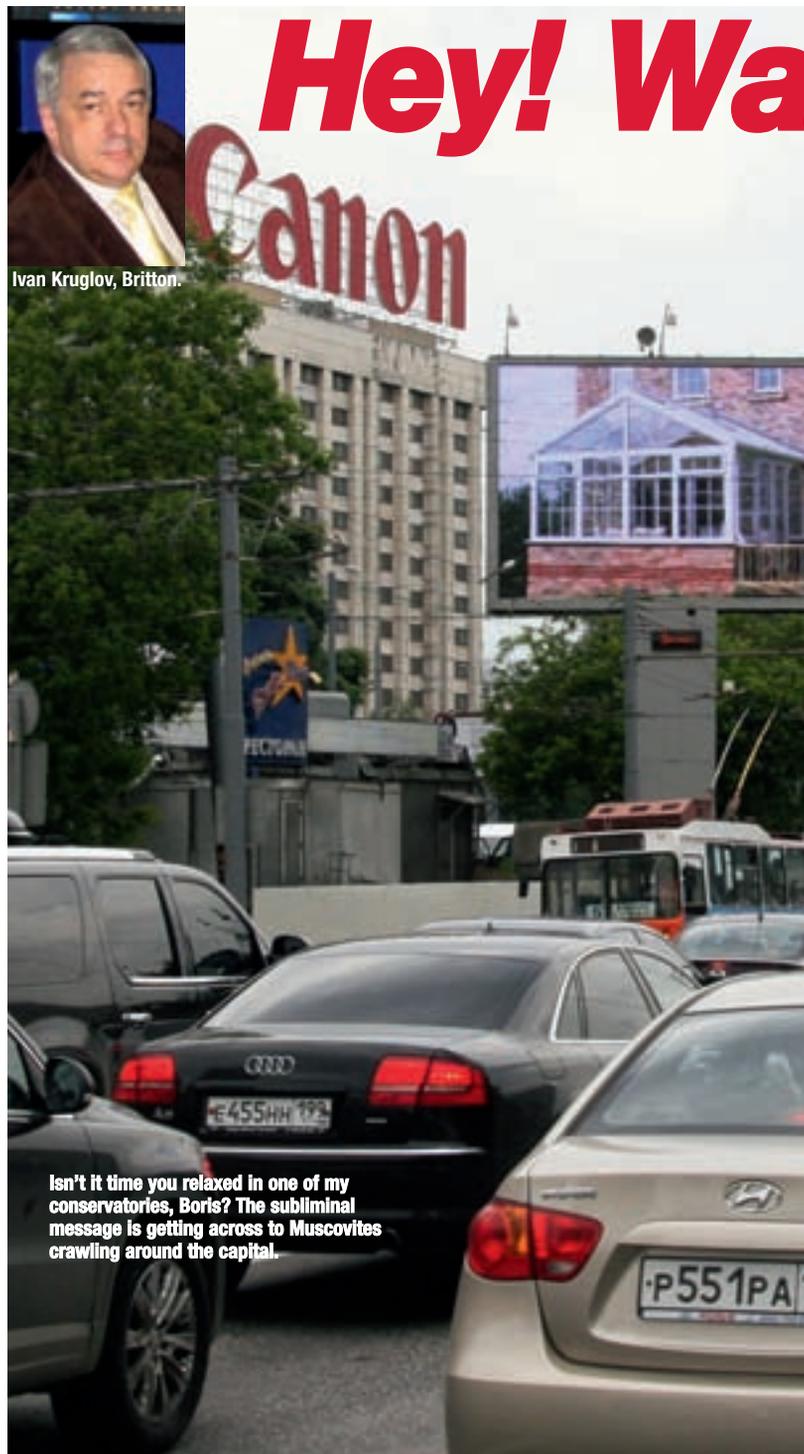


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LETTER FROM RUSSIA



Hey! Wa

Ivan Kruglov, Britton.

Isn't it time you relaxed in one of my conservatories, Boris? The subliminal message is getting across to Muscovites crawling around the capital.

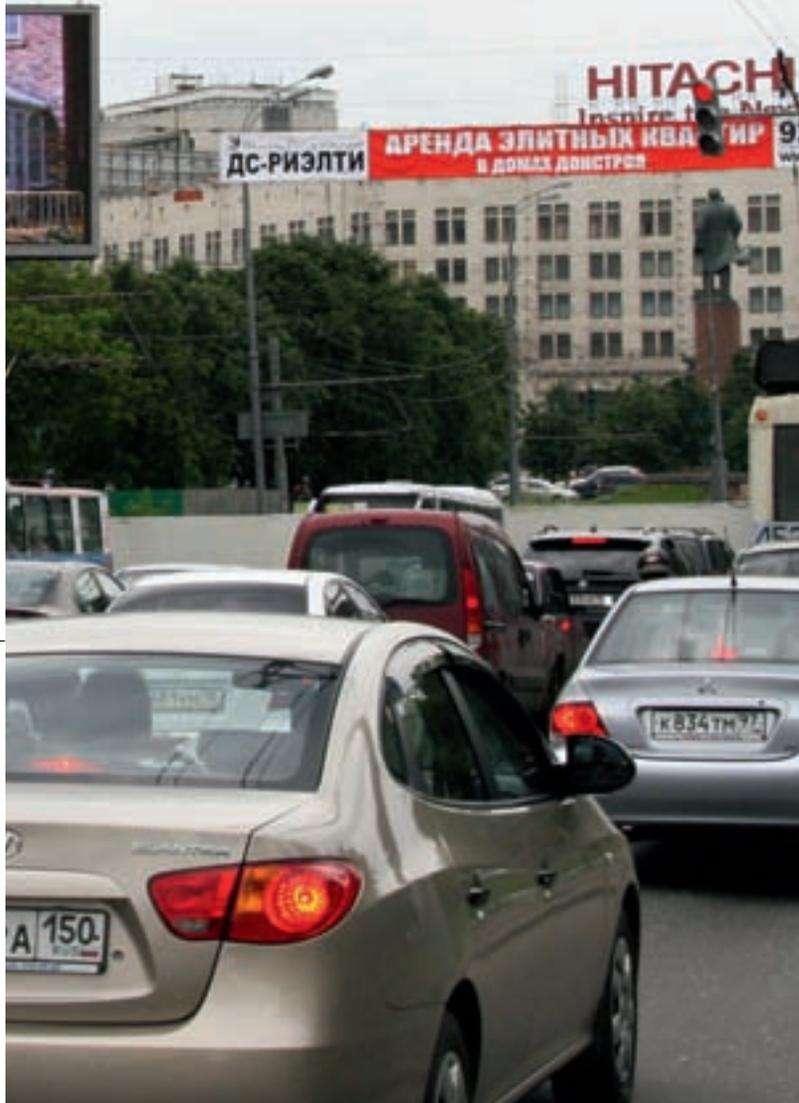
If you are in the Russian conservatory business you have to continually think how to make potential customers aware of all aspects of the industry, such as styles, materials and design features. In order to do this, as a minimum, you have to interact with them by e-mail and telephone but most preferably, by meeting them in person.

A key problem in Russia is that conservatories are not as yet an established and in demand product in the way that they are in the UK. This means that potential clients' background knowledge about the product and how it will and can be tailored to their needs and desires, is fairly low.

As a rule we have to start dealing with a client from the very beginning – we teach them about the myriad of conservatory styles, construction methods, materials and systems, etc. Once the Russian public is informed about these aspects, they are much more likely to commission a design. In the UK conservatories are so popular that most people are not only familiar with their wide range of styles and materials used to make them but have also been inside them.

This contrasts with the Russian market where conservatories are still considered exotic and even those Russians who can afford to build a

anna know a secret?



Russia, like other countries, has experienced the horrors of the recession but as **Ivan Kruglov**, owner of conservatory installation company, Britton, points out, a little bit of imagination can attract customers, even when they are in a traffic jam in Moscow.

conservatory, doubt that such a glass house can be warm, strong and durable. When a customer calls me, or visits my office, this is when my work begins in earnest as I work with them to create a project that is bespoke, exciting and therefore with a high uptake level.

Continued on page 60

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The key to all of this is, of course, how to make the customer call us or, better still, visit our office.

We have two important and effective tools; the internet and outdoor advertising. The internet is very important for me and I put up a lot of useful information there, such as a gallery of conservatories built in the UK and in Russia, views on different roof and window systems, stained glass and different architectural styles etc.

But who uses the net for researching detailed information about conservatories? Only a person who is sufficiently committed to the idea of having a conservatory and is now interested enough to find a builder. That is why it is important to attract potential customers and make them call your company, or look at your website. In order to target such customers, I started a new advertising campaign on outdoor billboards in Moscow.

My previous long term management experience was with advertising companies in Moscow and I even spent some time in the UK working for Maiden Outdoor, one of the largest UK billboard contractors. In the 1990s I started an outdoor advertising business in Moscow and therefore, I still have many friends within this industry and I decided to use my contacts in the best way possible.

With one billboard company I have made a deal and placed two large format boards on trunk roads positioned on Moscow's outskirts. They are placed on Rublovski Shosse which leads



to the wealthy enclave of Rublovka – the equivalent of the Ascot of Russia. This is obviously to target the well heeled as they drive, or are driven to their *dachas* there.

With another company I have made another deal. The company has several LED, large format television signs in the centre of Moscow in prestigious high visibility locations facing Moscow's notoriously heavy and in many places, eight lane traffic. I have made a few short custom

made videos for these screens and now every two minutes we have a 10 second video depicting quality British conservatories with our contacts.

I believe this will bring us a wide range of new customers who will call me, meet me and then find it hard to resist a proposal made just for them.

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