

Builder

2016
OUTLOOK
ISSUE

SHOW TIME!

WE ASKED AND MILLENNIALS
HAVE SPOKEN. **HERE ARE
THEIR RESPONSIVE HOMES.**





UNITED WE BUILD

Innovation has its place.

We believe you should have the freedom to build without limitations. Now you can with the purposeful innovation of our ventless Whirlpool® HybridCare™ clothes dryer with Hybrid Heat Pump technology. Enjoy greater design flexibility, reduced labor and material costs and the perfect opportunity to impress your homebuyers. Finally, installation and innovation can live together under one roof. Just another way Whirlpool Corporation helps everyone Build United.



DISCOVER WHAT PURPOSEFUL INNOVATION CAN DO FOR YOU
BY VISITING INSIDEADVANTAGE.COM/VENTLESSINNOVATION.

Amana

Whirlpool
CORPORATION

MAYTAG

KitchenAid

JENN-AIR

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FOUNDING SPONSOR

Whirlpool: The Right Choice For The Millennial Market



The Responsive Home project encompasses two demonstration houses that target both the first-time and move-up millennial buyer. The homes' blend of contemporary and traditional styling is a driving design theme for each. Both houses showcase important features for attracting millennial customers, namely, living arrangements that can adapt to changes in lifestyle and energy-efficient products and features.

ENERGY EFFICIENT NO MATTER THE STYLE

"We have been actively engaged in sustainable initiatives since we first opened an office of environmental control in 1970," said Ron Voglewede, global sustainability director, Whirlpool Corporation. "By creating a number of products that offer great performance and

energy efficiency, we're able to give our trade customers more choice, not compromises, for their homebuyers."

Today, on average our refrigerators have a 22 percent larger capacity, and use 60% less energy than the refrigerators built in 1980.

THE OBVIOUS CHOICE FOR THE RESPONSIVE HOME PROJECT

A combination of JENN-AIR brand kitchen appliances (larger home) and KitchenAid brand appliances (smaller home) were chosen (see inset for full list).

When it came to the laundry room, Whirlpool was chosen for both homes due to the technological and energy-efficient advances

the brand offers. The ventless Whirlpool® HybridCare™ Duet clothes dryer with Heat Pump technology (found in larger home), uses a refrigeration system to dry and recycle the same air rather than venting hot, moist air like typical dryers. The dryer uses three active built-in sensors to read incoming and outgoing air temperatures while monitoring moisture levels inside the dryer. The ventless technology also gives builders the freedom to place laundry areas virtually anywhere in the home, significantly reducing installation costs. Most importantly, the HybridCare™ ENERGY STAR® Certified electric dryer with the Eco Dry setting uses up to 73 percent less energy while still drying loads within normal dry times¹.

For more information on how our products can help sell this important millennial market, visit whirlpool.com.

A LIST OF CHOSEN APPLIANCES INCLUDES:

Large Home: JENN-AIR® Brand

6-Burner Gas Cooktop
Low Profile Canopy Island Hood, 36"
30" Double Wall Oven with V2™ Vertical Dual-Fan Convection System
TriFecta™ Dishwasher with 46 dBA
Cabinet Depth French Door Refrigerator with External Dispenser, 69" (h)

Small Home: KitchenAid® Brand

30" 5-Burner Gas Cooktop with Griddle
44 dBA Dishwasher with Panel-Ready Design
25.8 Cu. Ft. 36" Multi-Door Freestanding Refrigerator with Platinum Interior Design
30" Single Wall Oven with Even-Heat™ Thermal Bake/Broil

Whirlpool® Brand Laundry Appliances

Large
4.5 cu. ft. Duet® Steam Front Load Washer with Load & Go™ System
7.3 cu. ft. HybridCare™ Ventless Duet® Dryer with Heat Pump Technology
Small
5.3 cu. ft. Smart Cabrio® Top Load Washer with Laundry App
8.8 cu. ft. Smart Cabrio® Large Capacity Dryer with Laundry App

¹ Compared to pre-2004 traditional dryers, when paired with a matching washer, normal cycle, electric only.



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TOWEL RING



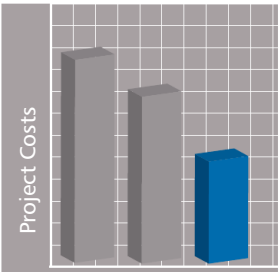
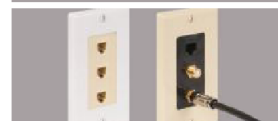
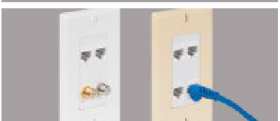
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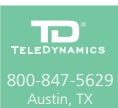
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WISH YOU COULD FRAME IN FEWER HOURS?

MAKING BETTER USE OF THE AVAILABLE LABOR POOL:

Having trouble finding available labor to get your homes framed? You're not alone. The 11/24/15 "Builder Business Update" cited NAHB research findings that "The greatest shortages are for framers and carpenters." How do you plan to frame your homes in 2016?

FRAME FASTER WITH BOISE CASCADE ENGINEERED WOOD PRODUCTS.

Cut framing time and effort by switching to Boise Cascade EWP (typical 2,000 sq ft floor):

- Install **1,502** pieces of EWP vs. **2,078** pieces of 2x10 dimension lumber;
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- Drive **936** nails with EWP vs. **2,289** with 2x10;
- Carry **3,029** lbs. with EWP vs. **5,406** lbs. with 2x10.

PROBLEMS WITH SOME DIMENSION LUMBER:

- Differing depths and shrinkage can cause floor squeaks;
- Often has deep checks, knots and other imperfections;
- Often milled at 18-20% moisture, can warp and shrink as it dries;
- No warranty or field support.



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WHAT'S TRENDING ONLINE



As the housing market rebounds, many builders consider the role of model homes in their marketing plans. go.hw.net/BD0116-model



Ideal for baby boomers who want a more accessible home, these layouts provide room for kids, grandkids, and visitors. go.hw.net/BD0116-boomers



What the Pulte-John Wieland deal means for the industry. go.hw.net/BD0116-pulte

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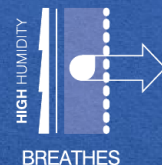
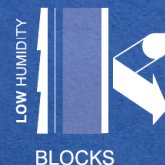
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EXECUTIVE VIEWPOINT

JIM SHELTON, PANASONIC

Top 5 Risks Builders Face Due to Poor Indoor Air Quality



Jim Shelton,
Director of Sales
and Marketing

Jim Shelton is driving the next generation of Panasonic solutions to meet builders' ever-changing ventilation needs. Jim is Director of Sales and Marketing for the Eco Products Division, which markets Panasonic's line of Advanced Ventilation and IAQ Solutions. Based in Florida, Jim has worked for Panasonic since 2001 and has been in his current position since 2012. He is also on the board of the Energy and Environmental Building Alliance.

Poor indoor air quality is a real problem. As an industry, we've gotten away from why we install ventilation fans—to get moist, polluted air out of the home.

The first thing builders want to do is to comply with the local code. But you should start thinking about the risks associated with poor ventilation, not just about meeting code. You should also be concerned about the cost of increased callbacks, health issues and potential litigation.

Raters often don't test ENERGY STAR® rated exhaust fans; they say, "They're ENERGY STAR®, so they should work." But many don't move air at the rate they're supposed to.

A lot of builders aren't fully aware of the risks associated with poor ventilation. Panasonic's Director of Sales and Marketing Jim Shelton offers five risks you should consider:

1. Reputation. The number one concern of most builders is protecting their reputation. Recent studies conducted by Houzz, NAHB, Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies, and the Shelton Group have confirmed that indoor air quality (IAQ) is one of the top concerns of homebuyers.

And if their new home's IAQ does not meet their expectations, homebuyers are quick to report through social media.

2. Code compliance problems. Indoor air is typically two to five times more polluted than outdoor air, according to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). With people spending 90 percent of their time indoors, indoor air quality ranks in the top five environmental risks to human health. Many states have adopted ASHRAE 62.2, which requires a new home's bathroom exhaust fan's intermittent air flow rate be at ≥50 cubic feet per minute (CFM) or more, and that you measure the air flow and verify that it is moving at the required rate.

An 80 CFM fan may only move air at 18 or 20 CFMs when it's installed. In fact, a recent Lawrence Berkeley Lab study found that 48 percent of bathroom exhaust fans evaluated failed to meet ASHRAE 62.2's required air flow.

3. Increased callbacks. Once the buyers move in, you could receive complaints about moisture in the bathroom that causes foggy mirrors, foul odors and potentially dangerous mold and mildew growth if the fans are not moving the necessary amount of air.

4. Warranty issues. Many builders offer three-year warranties instead of one-year guarantees. If a new house isn't properly ventilated, it could experience mold and mildew or be damaged by moisture over time, triggering the warranty. The fix might be easy, such as replacing the bathroom fan, but it could involve replacing sheetrock and other costly repairs.

5. Liability concerns. Poor ventilation can lead to problems throughout the home. Expensive and lengthy litigation can be associated with mold and mildew remediation, especially if black mold is found throughout the structure. A house filled with mold and mildew could also have a devastating impact on the occupants' health. If you build a sick home and the homeowners

develop health problems, it could cost you millions of dollars. Now it's not just about repairing a bathroom; it could mean bulldozing down the house and costly litigation.

Panasonic has a low-cost, high-performance solution that helps minimize these risks.

Panasonic's new SelectCycler™ whole-house ventilation system was exclusively designed to work with our WhisperGreen Select™ exhaust fans that perform as promised to move air to meet these ASHRAE 62.2 and ENERGY STAR® Certified Homes 3.0 requirements.

Plus, SelectCycler™ offers the lowest cost-per-HERS point for either supply-only or balanced ventilation strategies, according to modeling conducted by third-party RESNET provider EnergyLogic, an energy-efficiency services firm, and EPX, an exclusive membership-only organization of the highest-performing HERS organizations. EnergyLogic is an EPX member.

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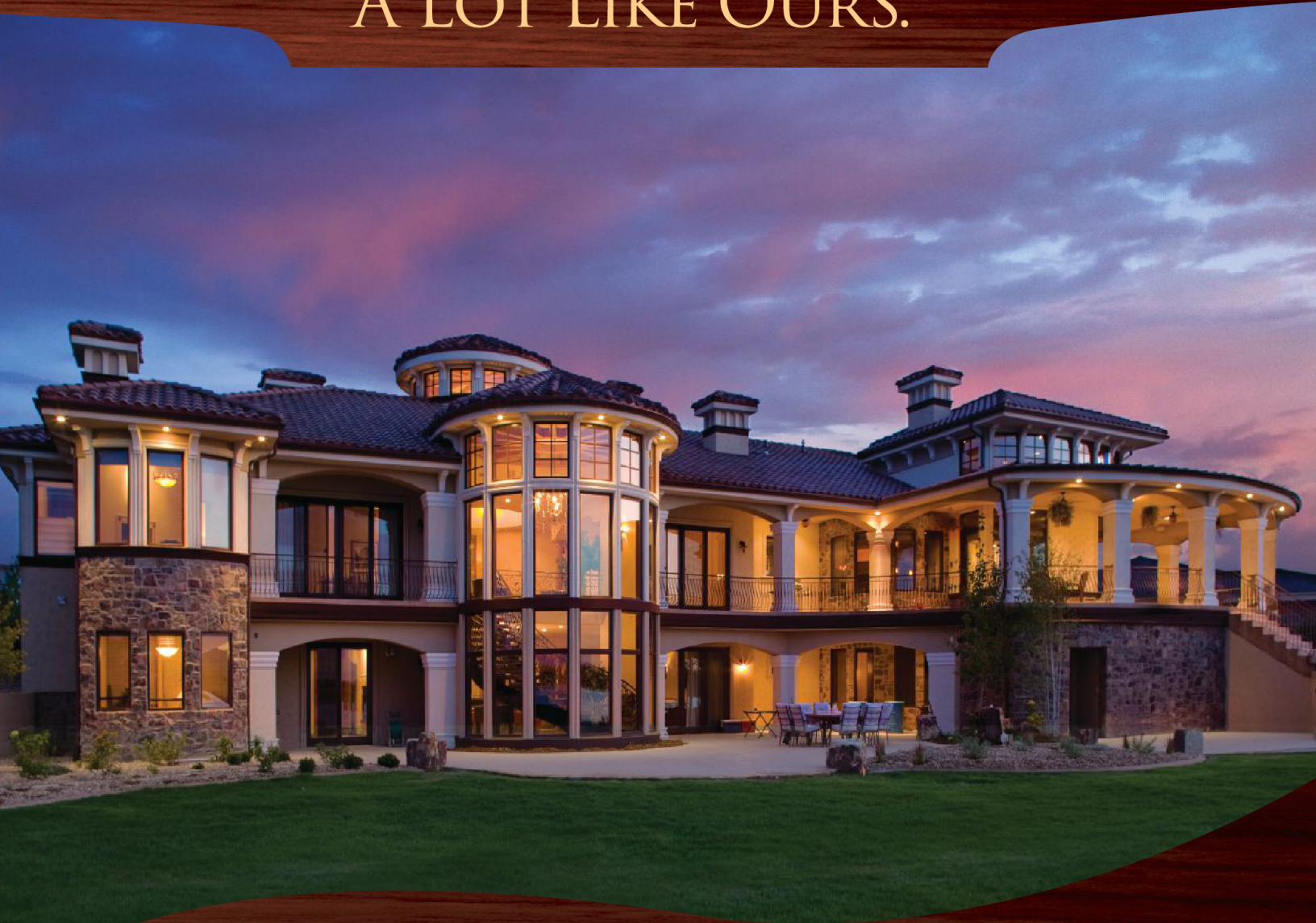
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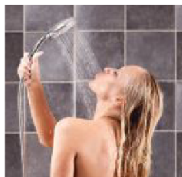


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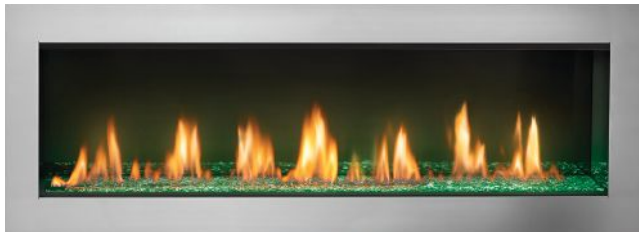
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PROOF OF CONCEPT

Ideas are all good, but how do they execute?

The Contemporary Farmhouse, one of whose really well-imagined and rendered indoor-outdoor living zones you see pictured on page 124, is a “concept home” developed specifically by TRI Pointe Group’s Las Vegas Pardee Homes team to stretch the present bounds of design, engineering, and economics.

It’s also buildable today, at about \$55 to \$60 a square foot. As a matter of fact, it’s a model option now being geared for production in several of Pardee’s Las Vegas Valley communities. Its companion idea house, the Transitional home, supplies the bones and everyday-exotic, urban-meets-master-planned-community sensibility of a new home whose boldly modern elevation will etch itself into the view from the living/dining area of the Valley’s bowl of beautiful ridges to the West.

The Farmhouse and the Transitional are two new demonstration home designs from architects Bassenian Lagoni that team an all-star cast of creative design, engineers, manufacturers, and construction managers for our Responsive Homes reveal on Jan. 18, 2016, at Henderson, Nev.’s, Inspirada, during the NAHB International Builders’ Show.

Their target is millennial buyers—not just today’s but those over the next decade or more. Their mission? To be responsive—from a design, engineering, social, and economic standpoint—to the current and moving-target needs of that now largest of generational cohorts, born between the years 1981 and 1997.

Proof of one of the greatest lessons learned in the 12-month process, from the time these two homesites were a holy mess of desert rubble to now, is in Pardee Homes Nevada president Klif Andrews’ tidings that these homes are ready to move from “concept to reality” now.

Fact is, Andrews says, more big home builders might do well to re-envision their invest-

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MOVES IDEAS
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ment commitment to model home development programs, to instead develop demonstration and idea houses as a strategic practice that “stretches the bounds” and get the respective design, manufacturing, planning, and construction people into an innovation mind-set.

Each January, amid reminders that Detroit’s winters have teeth, car companies fill the Cobo Center with “concept” cars—vehicles that stretch the bounds of design, engineering, and economics, like the Acura NSX, which 25 years ago turned the “exotic-car world on its nose” with a midengine sports car that was fast, sexy, and stylish, and yet boasted everyday drivability, friendly ergonomics, and reliability to boot. And like GM’s Chevrolet Bolt electric vehicle, due to arrive in two years but already generating seismic vibes of anticipation, fear, and excitement among car enthusiasts.

Home building at the production level does research and development like this mostly on the run. So, we’re particularly excited and grateful to have been part of an R&D project we believe meaningfully moves ideas of the near future into the present, just as Pardee’s two Responsive Homes appear ready for prime time.

They can’t come a moment too soon.

Industry analysts, pundits, and observers may be ready to label 2015 the great “failure to launch” year, as they look back and say the year’s claim to fame was supposed to be young home buyers rejoining the party in droves.

No droves, of course. But that’s OK; it would still be a big mistake to write off the year as a clunker. Those who lead smart companies as well as the conversation about how to “activate” this critical mass of young adult consumers know that success doesn’t come in the form of a flip of the switch.

A tech industry CEO recently said his organization’s strong financial performance and sanguine outlook for the near term owed to decisions, disciplines, and processes his team had done and put in place 24 to 36 months earlier.

Whether 2015 is ultimately regarded as the “tipping point” year for millennial buyers isn’t meaningful. That it was a 12-month period used by designers, engineers, and finance pros to model and develop homes that will inspire young adults to aspire to homeownership is the more important inflection point.

That’s what Responsive Homes are all about. **B**



John McManus

GROUP EDITORIAL
DIRECTOR

THE MARVIN CONTEMPORARY STUDIO

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A LETTER FROM THE NAHB

Corrections and clarifications

BUILDER's November issue article "Playing with Fire" (page 94) grossly distorts the facts surrounding fire safety, sprinkler mandates, and the relative safety of new homes versus those built a generation ago. The article further presents a disingenuous narrative by making no attempt to differentiate between single-family and multifamily structures when assessing fire risks.

We are also disappointed that the story not only misrepresents our industry stance on fire safety, but that **BUILDER** also erred when it said that NAHB declined to comment for the article. In fact, we suggested the magazine speak with Robert Raymer from the California Building Industry Association about wildfires, and Mr. Raymer was quoted in the article.

Regarding residential sprinklers, **BUILDER** cited numerous references in support of these systems from groups that promote mandatory sprinkler installation. As a result, the article led readers to believe that mandating residential sprinkler systems is the only viable means of building a safe residential structure.

This is patently false. Here are reasons why code officials and elected leaders have overwhelmingly rejected fire sprinkler mandates:

- Smoke alarms work, and they save lives. Ensuring that every home had at least one working smoke alarm would save about 890 lives every year in our country. This would benefit everyone—not just those who can afford a new home. Sprinkler proponents say they have the numbers to prove their products work better—but those numbers are based largely on multi-family buildings.

- Fires are more likely in older homes. Home fires are tragic. But building codes apply only to new homes. And in states where we can match the age of affected homes with standard national fire data, the evidence clearly shows that fatalities are heavily concentrated in older homes. To reduce fatalities, we need to make older homes safer: Working smoke alarms make a lifesaving difference.

- Newer homes are built to safer standards. According to the National Fire Protection

THE TRUTH IS THAT FATALITIES
DECREASE WHEN OLDER,
LESS-SAFE HOMES ARE REPLACED
WITH NEW HOMES THAT INCLUDE
SAFER CONSTRUCTION BASED
ON BUILDING CODES.

Association's U.S. Homes Fires Fact Sheet, the leading causes of unintentional home fires are cooking equipment, heating equipment, and electrical distribution and lighting equipment. Newer homes are constructed to building codes explicitly designed to make homes safer and reduce the need for makeshift lighting and heating solutions.

- Sprinklers are not cost effective. The Fire Protection Research Foundation puts the average cost of a residential sprinkler system at \$6,000. That's not affordable to many families, and the cost could be significantly higher for those who live in single-family homes in rural areas without public water systems who must rely on private water wells. In fact, just a \$1,000 increase in home prices keeps more than 200,000 households out of the market nationwide.

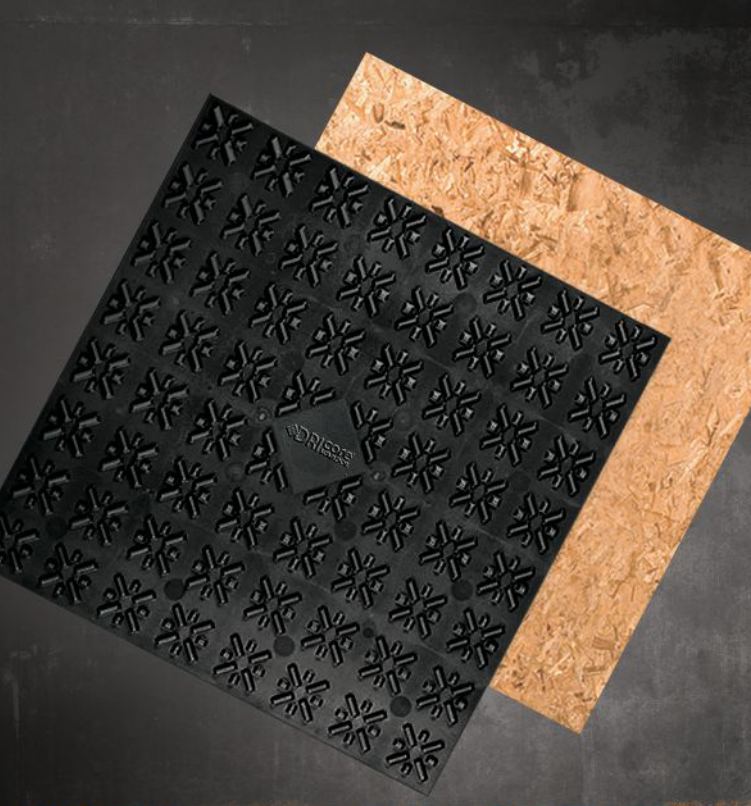
While acknowledging that fire deaths fell 26% from 2002 to 2011, the article nevertheless implies that new homes are more dangerous than older, existing homes. "As fatalities fall, evidence exists that a new threat lurks—in the form of new, modern homes and furnishings that present dangers not found in homes built a generation ago," the article stated.

This statement is inherently misleading. In order to determine whether newer homes or older homes are safer, they have to be taken as a whole with all their attributes, rather than cherry-picking individual characteristics. Even if one were to assume that modern furniture made out of synthetics such as chairs and drapes could catch fire faster than furnishings from yesteryear, what's to prevent homeowners in older homes from purchasing such items?

The article also contends, without providing proof, that open floor plans, which the vast majority of Americans prefer, are more prone to fires compared with designs from a generation ago. If one wants to see how open floor plans affect fire behavior, two houses would need to be compared where everything else was the same.

The truth is that fatalities decrease when older, less-safe homes are replaced with new homes that include safer construction based on building codes. These improvements include draft stopping in concealed spaces, safer appliances, changes to the electrical code, and requiring hardwired, interconnected smoke alarms.

Fire safety is an important issue that should concern everyone in the home building industry. The next time **BUILDER** addresses this topic, NAHB stands ready to assist in the effort. **B**



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¹Bosch received the highest numerical score for dishwashers and cooktops in the proprietary J.D. Power 2015 Kitchen Appliance StudySM. Study based on 19,778 total responses measuring 17 dishwasher brands and eight cooktop brands and measures opinions of consumers about their new appliance purchased in the past 24 months. Proprietary study results are based on experiences and perceptions of consumers surveyed in January-February 2015. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com. ²Based on an average of sound ratings of 24" Full Size Stainless Steel Tub dishwashers contained in major brands websites. Major brands defined as TraQline Top 5 Market Share December 2014. ³Compared to a Bosch dishwasher with two racks. 15BK08-04-129528-1

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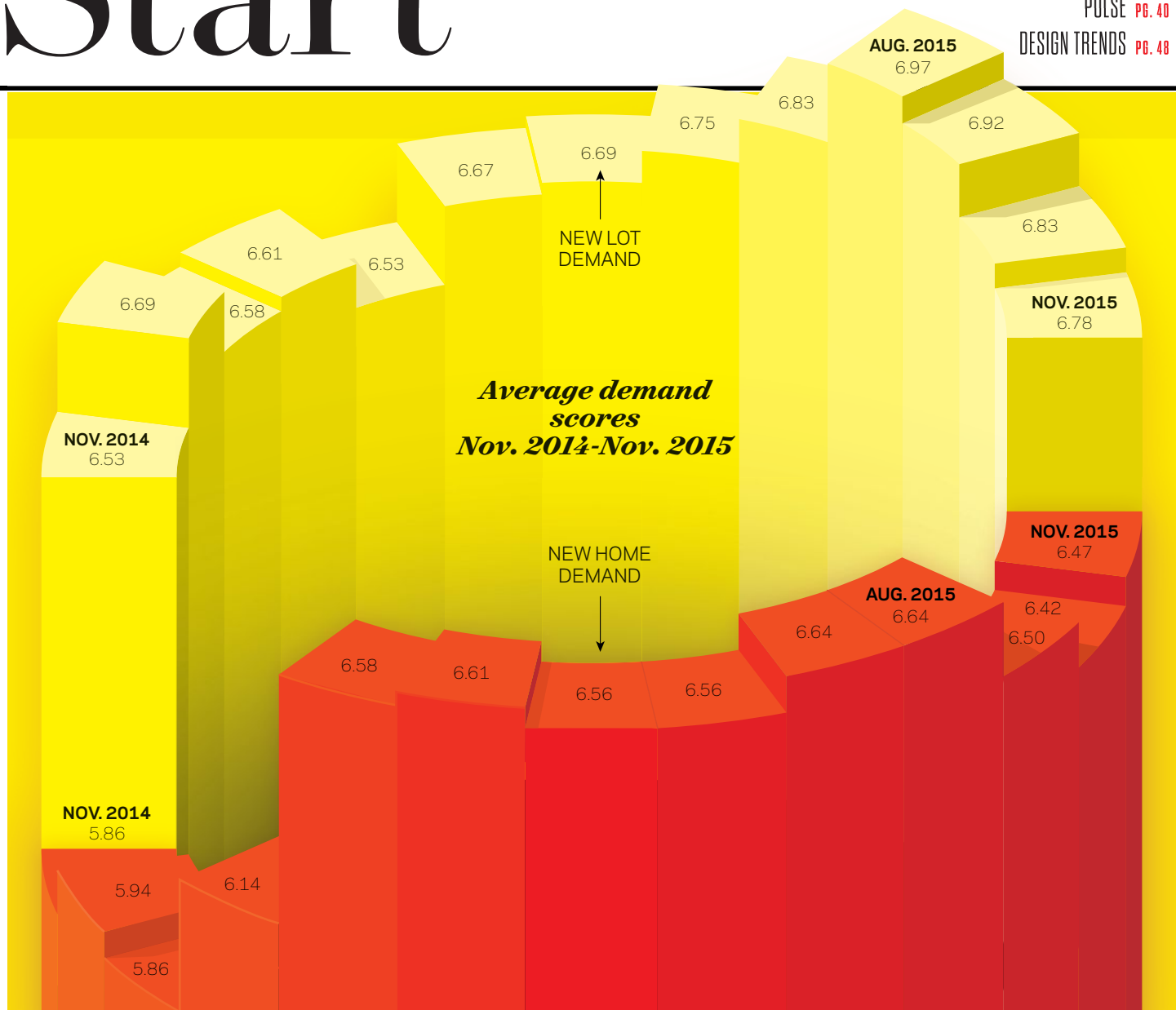
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2015: ENTRY-LEVEL HEAD FAKE

Nicolas Rapp

The lack of affordable new-home product continues to plague entry-level and first-time buyers

Last year, many economists predicted that 2015 would be a turnaround year for first-time buyers, who would be encouraged to enter the market due to stable job growth and the return of mortgage options that allow buyers to put as little as 3% down on a home. However, that prediction has largely fallen flat: First-time buyers accounted for 31% of all existing home purchases in October 2015, up only slightly

from 29% in October 2014, according to the National Association of Realtors. It's an ongoing sluggishness among both first-time buyers and a portion of entry-level buyers that can be largely attributed to one key factor: affordability.

Demand for new homes is strong across all buyer segments, and demand scores from Metrostudy regional directors show positive

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gains year over year. The average score for new-home demand across all markets increased more than 10% in November to a score of 6.47, compared with 5.86 in November 2014. However, while higher demand increases production, builders are still missing the mark for potential buyers who would like to purchase a home but cannot afford the product that builders are selling.

Familiar Challenges

The reasons for the lack of lower-priced housing vary by region, but are mostly due to the usual suspects.

In Chicago, construction costs are the biggest impediment, while tight lot inventory and high property values continue to plague markets like Seattle, Denver, Northern California, Salt Lake City, and South Florida. According to regional director David Cobb, “New-home prices remain well out of reach for many buyers, with the median new single-family detached home sales price [in South Florida] now at \$517,000.”

Inclement weather during the second quarter has had an ongoing impact on construction times in markets including Atlanta, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, Phoenix-Tucson, and Raleigh-Durham, N.C. “Builders have moved away from entry-level product for two reasons: they can’t find land that will support the pricing, and home construction times have increased so quickly that builders can’t get the quick turn times they need to make [lower-priced] entry-level work,” reports Phoenix-Tucson regional director Rachel Cantor. Due to these constraints, most builders are concentrating on the development of homes in the second and third move-up space.

Differing Solutions

D.R. Horton’s Express and Ryan Home’s new “Simply Ryan” brand are two primary examples of how some builders are trying to serve entry-level and first-time buyers with lower budgets. Both recently expanded their lines to Northern Virginia, which is known for high home prices due to the proximity to jobs. “Each of these [brands is] designed to accommodate the first-time buyer by implementing such strategies as marketing by monthly payment and minimizing option choices,” says Northern Virginia regional director Ben Sage.

Low-budget buyers can afford to purchase

detached homes in lower-demand markets like Indianapolis, but townhomes or condos are the most viable option elsewhere. “Density has been the historical solution to accommodate buyers [with lower price points],” notes Sage. But even townhomes have become too expensive for some buyers in markets like Charlotte, N.C., where townhome prices have increased by double-digit percentage points year over year. This is likely also the case in the New Jersey-New York suburbs, where condo and townhome projects are receiving increased interest from first-time buyers, but traffic isn’t converting into sales.

Many Texas markets are seeing a move to smaller lots and increased density. The sales pace is slow for price points above \$400,000 in Austin, so builders are relying on condo regime platting to develop a volume of new “skinny” products (25 feet to 35 feet) that stay closer to lower price points. Builders in Dallas-Fort Worth also are contemplating higher-density lots and product, although this is more of a self-serving attempt to ease their own affordability issues in the face of “exorbitant” land prices. Still, regional director Paige Shipp says builders will need to cut through red tape in that market: “Municipalities object to density as it is perceived as a burden to infrastructure and schools, rather than a solution for the entry-level and first-time buyer.”

“Dream” Still Out of Reach

In higher-value markets, only first-time and entry-level buyers with high budgets are able to buy. According to Philadelphia regional director Quita Syhapanya, “Builders can’t find the margins they need marketing to [first-time and entry-level buyers with low price points], so they continue to market, sell, and build for the move-up buyers.”

And while high-density projects might be able to meet the budget of some buyers, townhomes and condos still do not provide the American dream-style home reinforced by popular media. In this vein, D.R. Horton and Ryan are providing a real solution for the many buyers who want a traditional, detached home within their means. If builders try to create a new narrative for townhomes and employ the same strategies of master planned communities to high-density projects, they might find the golden ticket for renters to stop the standoff and enter the market. — CHARLOTTE O’MALLEY



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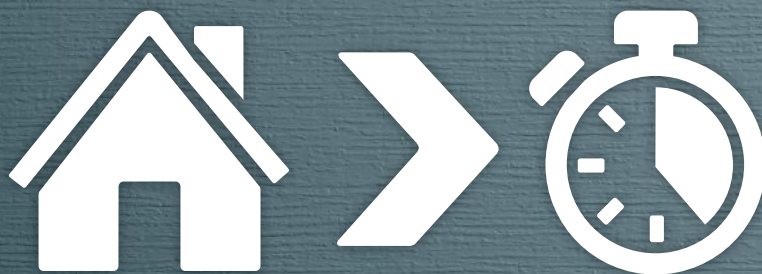
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San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Boston Top the Bubble-Watch List

Experts believe that the San Francisco housing market has entered a bubble, according to data published in a news release from Zillow this morning. One-third of experts surveyed for the most recent Zillow Home Price Expectations Survey believe that the Bay Area metro is currently experiencing bubble conditions, while another 20% of respondents think the San Francisco market is at risk and will see the consequences of over-priced housing within the next year.

Of the 108 expert panelists surveyed about their housing market predictions, 66 expect that there might be bubble conditions coming in 20 local housing markets, and many are concerned about the growing over-valuation in markets across the nation, especially in hot housing areas such as San Francisco, L.A., and Boston. As home prices soar—with no sign of decline—housing bubbles appear.

However, survey respondents are not in agreement about the impact that rapid home-value growth in these markets will have on consumers, or even if the over-valuation will eventually impact some of these hot spots.

Experts are also in disagreement about which markets are most at risk. Some think worrisome conditions are already present in Miami, Los Angeles, New York, Houston, San Diego, and Seattle, but there's no consensus on Boston's fate. A quarter of the experts surveyed believe that there is significant risk of a housing bubble in the next three years in the market, but the same number of panelists think there is no risk in Boston within the next five years. Panelists also believe there could be risk in Dallas; Phoenix; Washington, D.C.; and San Diego within the next three to five years. The conflicting opinions show that it's hard to predict where the markets will be even a year from now.

The over-valuation fears are prevalent even amidst a gradual slowing of home values overall. Zillow projects an annual growth rate for home values of 3.9% through the end of 2015. Among all 108 experts surveyed, the expected average annual home-value appreciation rate for the next few years is just over 3%. With those projections, the national median home value would be more than \$215,000 by the end of 2020.

"Without 20/20 hindsight, it's difficult to identify bubbles as they're happening, but it is very clear that nationally we are not seeing a return of the conditions that caused the last national bubble," said Zillow chief economist Svenja Gudell in the news release. "It's significant that some experts are starting to worry about bubble conditions, but in my opinion, there's no real danger of a severe crash like the one we all remember from the last decade." — LAUREN SHANESY

Modular Builder Uses Video Series to Explain Benefits of Modular Building to Buyers

Clayton, one of the country's largest producers of factory-built housing, is working hard to woo millennial buyers at a time when the market for prefabricated houses is growing.

Last month it released its first-ever mobile app to help first-time buyers in their search for a manufactured home, and its 1,200-square-foot Concept House, which opened last summer, responds to the special demands of this demographic. It is based on extensive research and insight into what young buyers want in a home. Its small floor plan was designed to provide a feeling of roominess with flexible spaces, built-in storage, and practical touches such as a recharging station for electronics and space-saving sliding barn doors.

Now, the Tennessee-based company has completed a series of educational videos designed to guide consumers through the sometimes confusing process of purchasing a new home.

The cartoon series takes consumers on a step-by-step journey beginning at ClaytonHomes.com and continues to guide potential buyers through the process, concluding with the buyers' selection of a lender in the financing stage. First-time home buyers in particular may benefit from the video series, which simplifies the stages of the home buying process with helpful tips and step-by-step guidance.

"We know families shopping for a home want to feel empowered," says Kevin Clayton, CEO. "They want to do their own research before ever stepping foot onto a home center. These videos are an entertaining way to help home buyers learn what to expect ahead of time."

builderonline.com

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Top growing construction jobs over the next 10 years include solar photovoltaic installers (24.3% total growth) and iron/rebar workers (23.4% total growth)



The construction sector is expected to add 790,400 jobs by 2024

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

FROM THE BLOG

Fletcher Groves III, VP, SAI Consulting

Does the world really need one more average home building company? Prior to 2006, during the roughly 10-year period I describe as The Age of Home Builder Entitlement, the answer was not a resounding 'yes,' but there was acquiescence to that fact. There was a sense of entitlement to volumes and margins that were too easy to achieve; builders did not have to be good, they just had to be there.

It is a sense of entitlement now characterized by an obsession with maintaining government support of homeownership and the home building industry.

At its core, it is an unreliable dependency. As an industry, we can do better than this.

The home building industry should collectively say we don't want the modern builder welfare state. Any of it. Get rid of it.

There is a natural, sustainable demand for what we do, if there is a viable, growing economy in which to do it. Our government needs to get out of the way. It needs to give us an economy that will grow and be globally competitive. It needs to give us back market forces. It needs to let the secondary mortgage market correct, heal, and restore itself.

We will figure the rest out on our own.

If we don't do it, we continue to be at risk of losing far more than our entitled existence.

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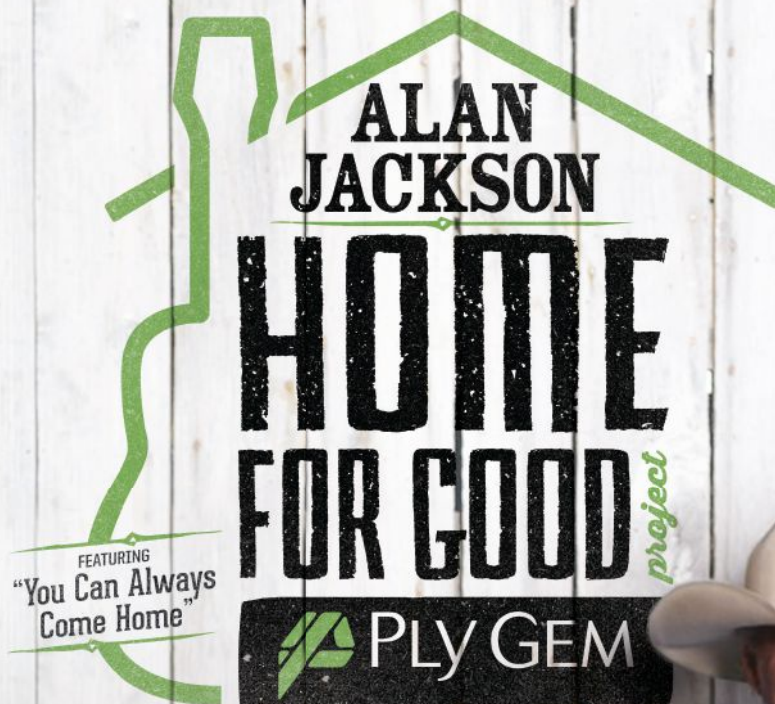


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The video series provides helpful information, including:

- An explanation of how Clayton builds homes
- The customer experience when visiting a home center
- What to expect from a local home consultant
- Tips to prepare for home financing

"Purchasing a new home is one of the most exciting times in a person's life," noted Clayton. "We want to help home buyers feel educated, confident, and prepared throughout the entire process so they can shift their focus to choosing the perfect dream home."

U.S. demand for prefabricated housing is forecast to expand 15% annually through 2017, according to the Freedonia Group, with the South continuing to be the leading market for these types of houses. — JENNIFER GOODMAN

Resilient Design Needed Now More Than Ever
Green building advocates have long been concerned about the built environment's impact on nature. Now, some of the industry's top thought leaders are raising an alarm about the ways that nature is impacting the built environment.

At the BUILDER Sustainability Summit held on the eve of the 2015 Greenbuild conference in Washington, D.C., green building expert Alex Wilson linked global warming to many of the disasters that recently have struck communities across the world. Threats from events like hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, and droughts can unite Americans on environmental issues in a way that global warming hasn't, he said.

"The concept of resilience can reach across those political divides," Wilson told the audience. "Even if someone doesn't believe in the science behind what's causing events like stormy weather, flooding, and wildfires, those people still want to keep their families safe."

Wilson, winner of the 2010 Hanley Award, founded the Resilient Design Institute four years ago to focus on the importance of safe and durable homes, buildings, and communities. Citing recent disasters such as Hurricane Sandy, flooding in Texas, and California's drought, Wilson and pioneering architect

Bob Berkebile called for better preparation during the Sustainability Summit.

For instance, residents of Greensburg, Kan., worked to rebuild their town with high-performance homes, hospitals, and offices after it was destroyed by an EF-5 tornado in 2007. In the wake of the catastrophe, Greensburg's leaders and many residents embraced the idea of rebuilding as a green community.

Berkebile, winner of last year's Hanley Award, said community leaders should be thinking about resiliency before a catastrophe takes place.

"The larger question for us is how do we have the same conversation in our communities before a disaster occurs?" Berkebile asked. A new report ranks each state in the U.S. for its disaster preparedness.

At Wilson's urging, resilient design principles are finding their way into the LEED certification program. Outlined at Greenbuild today, the USGBC approved three LEED pilot credits for resilient design to ensure that a project team addresses the risks. Designers would receive LEED credit if they perform a climate change assessment, design for hazards, or build back-up survivability systems to withstand power outages, water shortages, or the loss of heating fuel.

"In a nutshell, these three credits are designed to ensure that a design team is aware of vulnerabilities and addresses the most significant risks in the project design, including functionality of the building in the event of long-term interruptions in power or heating fuel," he said.

Berkebile said many in the building industry often avoid discussing the effects of climate change for fear of alienating clients or customers. "But this is the moment when we are surrounded by enough evidence that we have been playing Russian roulette with this planet," he said. "What I'd like for us to think about as we move on to Greenbuild is how do we create designs and environments and systems that create more insurance, create more disruption, and accelerate the pace of change?" — J.G.

M/I Homes Enters Twin Cities with Acquisition

Ohio-based M/I Homes officially moved into

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the Twin Cities on Dec. 1 with its acquisition of Hans Hagen Homes.

M/I announced in October that it was acquiring the Minnesota-based builder, which has been constructing new home communities across the Twin City metro area for 50 years. Hans Hagen Homes delivered 122 homes in 2014, with an average selling price of \$351,000, making it one of the top ten home builders in the market.

In this mergers-and-acquisitions cycle, M/I has been fairly quiet. "It's very important to us to have the right opportunity," senior vice president Kevin Hake says. "Whether that's a startup with an individual that we think is a good fit and has the right background, or through an acquisition. We made two acquisitions in Texas over the last four years, but we haven't made real big acquisitions in multiple markets."

But the Twin Cities have remained a target for the public builder. Hake says that M/I has been looking at Minneapolis and St. Paul for the last four years. The market's steady job growth in recent years appealed to the company, and "Minneapolis didn't fall as hard as other markets in the downturn," Hake adds.

Hake says M/I was attracted to Hans Hagen Homes because of a good reputation in the market and its quality homes. With the purchase, Hans Hagen, the leader of the company, is retiring, "But we think what he has in place underneath him is the right fit and allows us to hit the ground running," Hake says.

To make sure the transition goes smoothly, M/I has hired Gary White, a builder with 25 years' experience in the Chicago market, to oversee its Minneapolis/St. Paul endeavor. "We felt because of the team in place at Hans Hagen Homes," Hake says, "it allowed us to consider candidates from outside of Minneapolis."

Hake wouldn't project the number of homes M/I will build next year in Minneapolis and St. Paul, but is confident about the future there. M/I generally prefers to start small in a market and then invest further in operations once they're up and running. "We think it's a market we can compete in well against the competition that's there," he says.

— BRIAN CROCE



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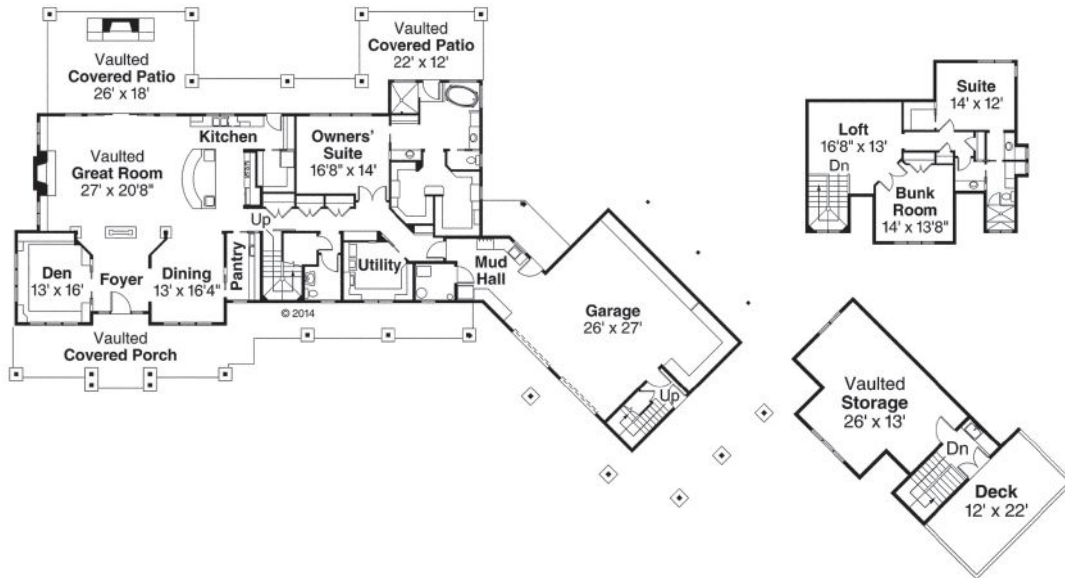


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That's exactly what this dazzling Craftsman home does. Covered walkways and patios create seamless indoor/outdoor living. In front, the vaulted porch offers an appealing outdoor sitting area that continues along the entire width of the house to finally merge with the side patio by the garage. Above it, a spacious deck connects with the bonus room, offering a great spot for stargazing or parties. In the back of the home, an-

other patio connects with the interior at several points (including the master suite's luxurious bathroom) for outstanding flow. The outdoor fireplace heats up chilly nights. Another nice indoor/outdoor touch is the small patio that sits just outside the mud hall, creating the perfect place to set muddy boots for later rinsing, out of the way of the high-traffic walkway leading into the house from the garage. Dog owners also will find this area convenient for stepping out for a walk—no need to open the garage door or trek to the front; just grab a leash and go.

See a slideshow of more plans with a variety of porches, patios, and decks at go.hw.net/BD0116-plans. — AURORA ZELEDON



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Here's a Craftsman home with tons of flexibility. Depending on the weather and time of year, people can congregate in the kitchen and vaulted great room, on the covered patio by the fireplace, or on the front porch. On the main level, the owners' suite boasts two large walk-in closets plus a spacious bathroom with a walk-in shower, deep soaking tub, private toilet, and access to the back patio. Don't miss the bright den, the huge laundry/utility room, and the ultra-organized mud hall. Upstairs, a bunk room and a bedroom suite provide comfy quarters for family or friends. A bonus room above the garage would make a handy home gym or studio.

2015'S TOP STYLE SEARCH TERMS ON HOUSEPLANS.COM

1	Craftsman house plans
2	Modern house plans
3	Farmhouse plans
4	Ranch house plans
5	Bungalow house plans
6	Low country house plans

Source: Houseplans.com data through November 2015

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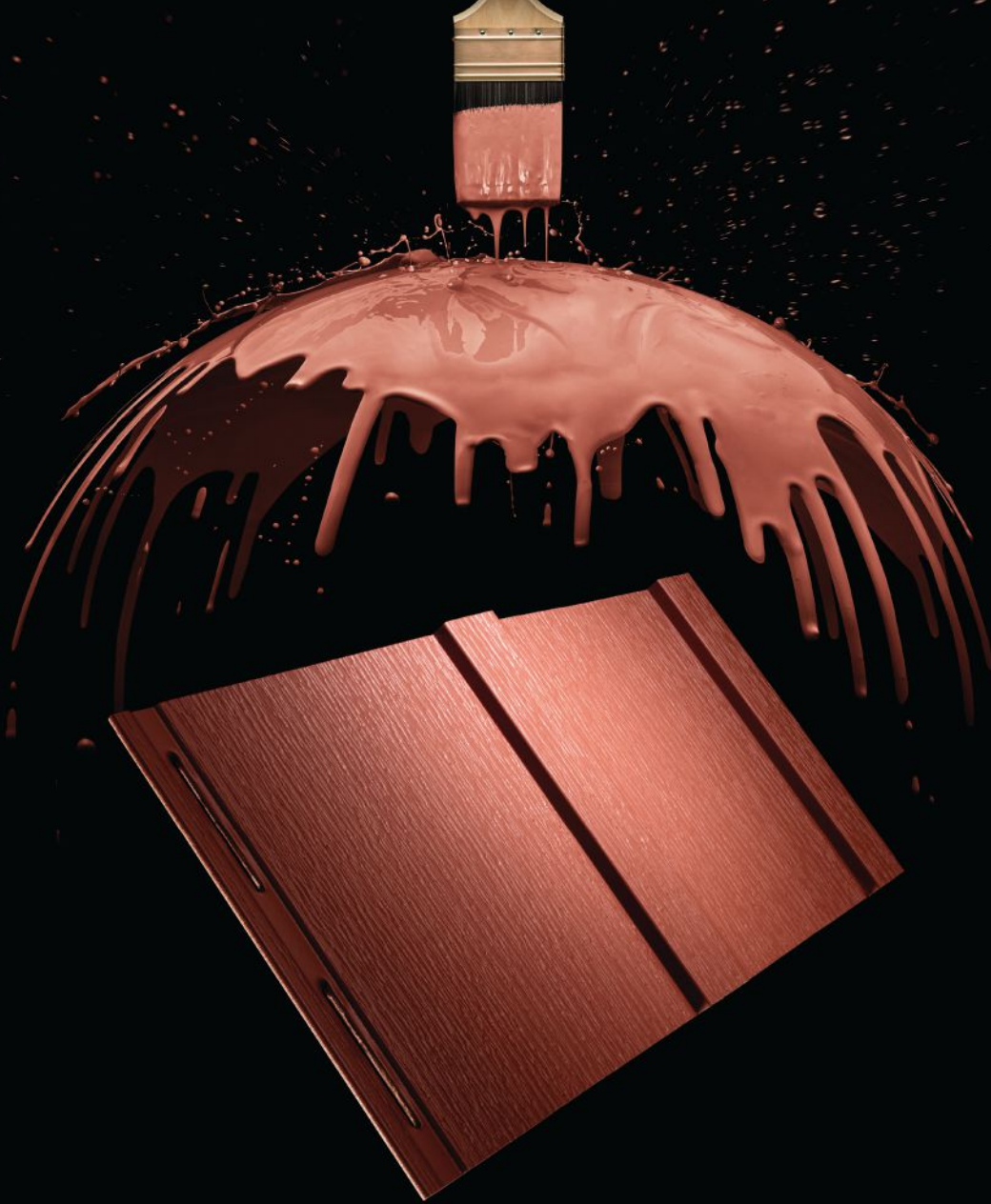
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Number:

Valid Through: 11/2014

Originally Issued: 11/2013

Revised: 08/22/2014

EVALUATION SUBJECT:

Ceiling Tiles

REPORT HOLDER:

Empire West, Inc.
1278 Green Road
PO Box 511
Garden, California 95444
(707) 823-1196
www.empirewest.com

CSI Division: 09 00 00—FIN
CSI Section: 09 54 00—Sp

1.0 SCOPE OF EVALUATION

1.1 Compliance to the following:
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1.2 Evaluated in accordance with:
• IAPMO UES EC 006-2014

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evaluated by IAPMO UES
the following shall apply:
• The product shall be
evaluated in accordance with
the IAPMO UES EC 006-2014

3.1.2 Premier Signature: Nominal thickness of 0.03 inch (0.76 mm) and weight of 381 grams (13.43 ounces) for a nominal 24-inch-by-24-inch panel, and a weight of 762 grams (26.86 ounces) for a nominally 24-inch-by-48-inch panel.

Than Tin/Faux Wood; Feather-Light: Nominal thickness of 0.013 inch (0.33 mm) and weight of 334 grams (11.78 ounces) for a nominal 24-inch-by-24-inch panel.

Tin/Faux Wood; Signature: Nominal thickness of 0.03 inch (0.76 mm) and weight of 381 grams (13.43 ounces) for a nominal 24-inch-by-24-inch panel, and a weight of 762 grams (26.86 ounces) for a nominally 24-inch-by-48-inch panel.

2.0 FINISH CLASSIFICATION

Ceiling Tiles, which have a minimum nominal thickness of 0.013 inch (0.25 mm) and a maximum nominal thickness of 0.03 inch (0.76 mm), have a Class A finish classification in accordance with Section 1 of the IBC, a flame-spread index of not more than 1 and a smoke-developed index of not more than 450, when tested in accordance with ASTM E84

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NOW WE'RE COOKING

From a streamlined condo to a sprawling family-friendly home, these five kitchens are as diverse as the needs of their owners

Paul Crosby



1

PROJECT Condo Kitchen

Location Des Moines, Iowa

Architect Substance Architecture, Des Moines

Builder M.D. Eggers Construction, Des Moines

Kitchen Size 180 square feet

Construction Cost \$550 per square foot

Some pantries are bigger than this 180-square-foot kitchen but its clever design makes it just right for an owner who likes to cook, bake, and entertain. Isolated in the middle of a 1980s Des Moines, Iowa, condo, the room had no windows and no real connection to the surrounding spaces. The challenge was fitting the owner's considerable wish list in the kitchen's existing footprint.

"The client is quite a cook and wanted access to daylight and the ability to interact

with her guests when she is making dinner," says Paul Mankins, principal of Substance Architecture. "She also wanted a separate baking area she could close off and easy access to the things she would use every day."

The architect first opened up and brightened the kitchen by removing the wall separating it from the dining room. The efficient rectangle is outfitted with light-reflective and budget-friendly white lacquer custom cabinets, including a wall of floor-to-ceiling stor-

age that incorporates the refrigerator. That move eliminated the need for upper cabinets, which can visually close in a kitchen.

To further capitalize on the new-found natural light, Mankins covered the backsplash behind the sink area in mildly reflective spandrel glass, back-painting it white to create the desired color effect. As he explains, the iron in the natural glass gives it its green tint. "We looked at samples of low-iron glass whose edges look clear, and as a result it takes

Paul Crosby



on the color you paint on the back," he says. "Our client wanted aqua green, which comes from back-painting natural glass white."

With the light-enhancing surfaces in place, Mankins still had to fit a lot of programming into the modestly sized kitchen. The room revolves around a commodious, 5-foot-square island that holds a dual-fuel oven and a 36-inch cooktop with plenty of space around it for food prep. "It's almost like having three countertops because you can

access it from three sides, and it's an easy way to hide a whole lot of storage," he says. A taller bookcase holding the owner's large cookbook collection flanks the island, defining the point between the kitchen and dining room while also screening cooktop clutter from the eating area.

Even in this compact space, Mankins carved out room for a dedicated baking center. It is tucked behind a section of wall cabinets and fitted with doors that open out and

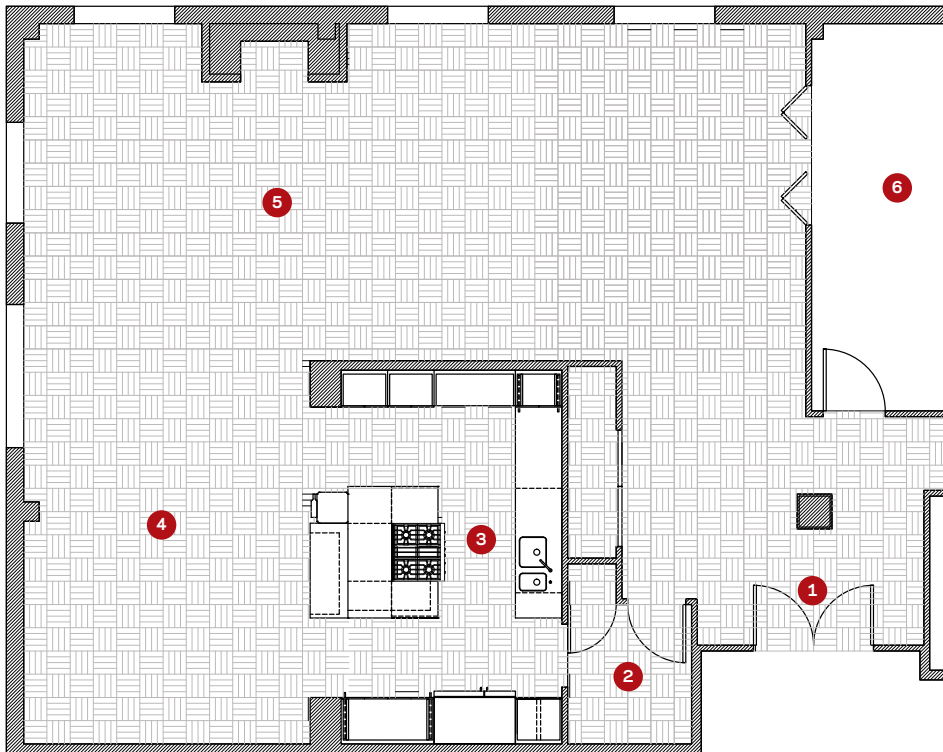
pocket back into the wall. Along the opposite storage wall, he developed a niche for the microwave, stainless steel shelving, and drawers that give the owner easy access to everyday cookware, dishes, and utensils. Next to the sink is a space-saving drawer dishwasher. "The owner lives by herself and can use just one drawer, or both when she has larger groups over for dinner," Mankins says.

The minimalist design paved the way for inventive details that are subtle but pack a

Frame

EASY ACCESS

FLOOR PLAN



- 1. ENTRY
- 2. PANTRY
- 3. KITCHEN
- 4. DINING ROOM
- 5. LIVING ROOM
- 6. OFFICE



functional punch. Dry-erase marker board was installed on the back wall of the baking center and on all four sides of a newly exposed structural column abutting the cooktop island. This magnetic material holds a neat grid of metal spice jars to the wall at each workstation, freeing up precious counter and cabinet space.

The sleek and practical board consists of

stock, porcelain-covered metal panels with an integral fiberboard backing. “The panels come in standard sizes up to 4x8 feet or so and are light-gauge enough that we could cut them on a table saw to the size we needed,” says builder Mark Eggers, president of MD Eggers Construction in West Des Moines. The panels were glued in place and their edges finished with a thin frame. “The material al-

lowed the client to use her magnetic spice containers, and she can write on the board as well,” he says.

Eggers also installed a wine rack on the dining-room side of the column. With its artful combination of custom and ready-made materials, the polished new kitchen reflects the casual way the owner likes to live and entertain. — CHERYL WEBER

Paul Crosby





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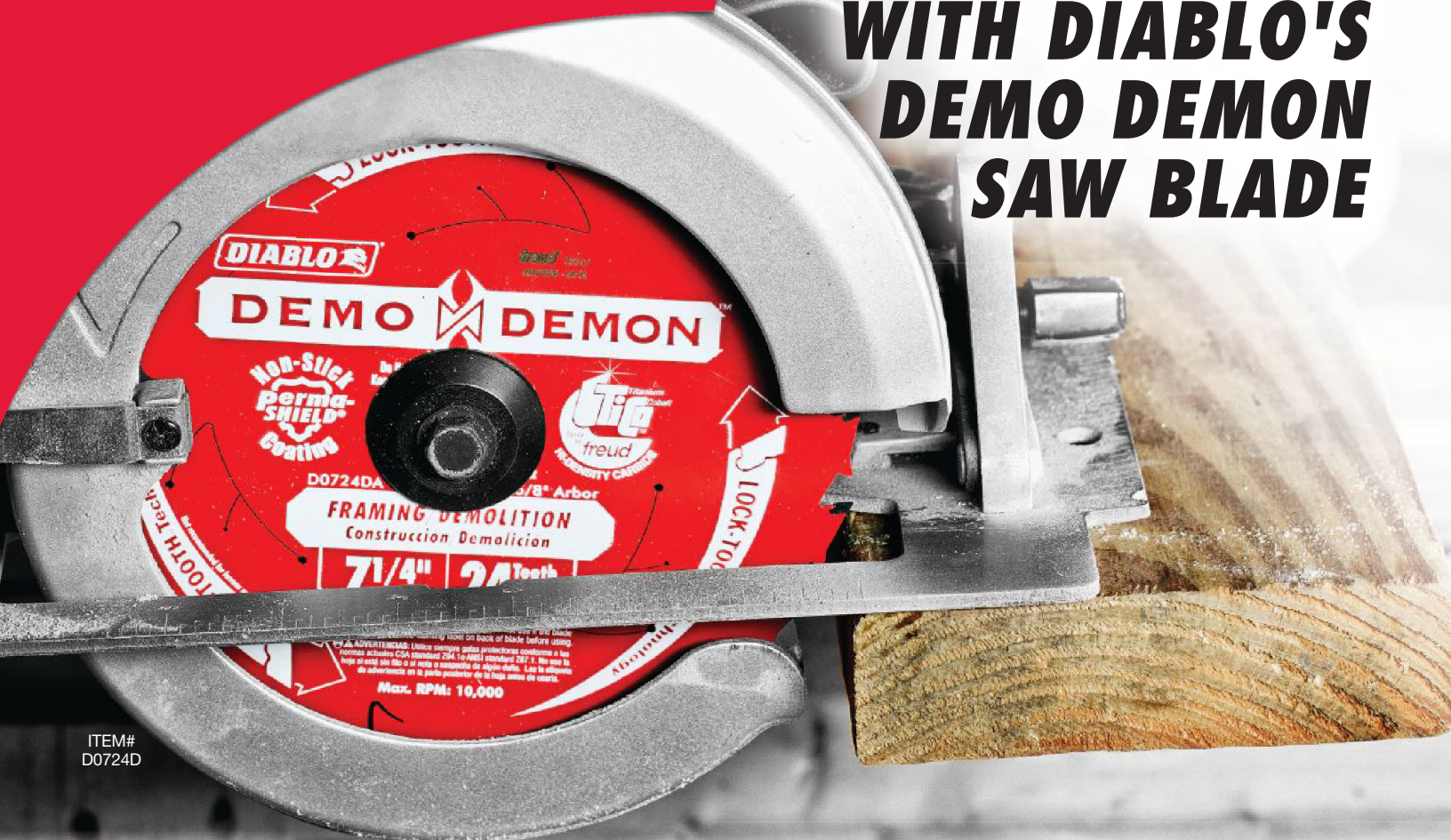


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2

PROJECT Modern Kitchen

Location Victoria,
British Columbia

Designer/Builder
Jason Good Custom
Cabinets, Victoria,
British Columbia

Kitchen Size
286 square feet

Home Size 2,450
square feet

Construction Cost
\$280 per square
foot





This spiffy culinary workspace also happens to have the best view in the house. Not that it was especially noticeable before contractor and owner Jason Good ripped out the interior partitions—some of them load-bearing—and installed a support beam in the attic. He then inserted a wall of windows, revealing an enviable vista of the city of Victoria, British Columbia, and setting the stage for a 26-by-11-foot room that marries contemporary craftsmanship with the indestructibility required for a family of five. Located on the second floor of a 1970s house, the kitchen's white cabinetry and wood accents frame views of the surrounding landscape.

While a large space like this is a luxury, the challenge is to create an efficient work triangle while also ensuring good traffic flow, says Claire Reimann, kitchen designer at locally based Jason Good Custom Cabinets. She positioned the refrigerator, range, and main sink along the outer wall facing the view and installed a prep sink in the large island, effectively establishing a work triangle between the prep sink, refrigerator, and range. This arrangement also separates the cooking and cleanup areas. "If more than one person is working in the kitchen, they're not tripping over each other," she says.

If the stunning outdoor view is the kitchen's main event, the 152-by-57-inch island is a close second. "We wanted an island with lots of counter space, and it made sense to put the range against the wall rather than on the island so we could vent the hood fan directly outside," Reimann says. "We didn't want a hood hanging in the middle of the space."

Light streams in through three skylights, eliminating the need to turn on the lights during the day and illuminating the island's white porcelain and American walnut top. Using two different materials was a handy way to eliminate the need for a seam on such

Frame

CANADIAN VISTAS



Joshua Lawrence Studios



a large expanse.

“The matte-finished porcelain comes in larger sizes than your average granite slab and it’s basically indestructible,” Reimann says. “You can hit it with a crowbar and it won’t scratch.”

Walnut with a flat-sliced grain match was used for the island’s eating bar and as an accent on storage areas. It also reappears on a countertop that holds two desktop computers at the far end of the kitchen.

Throughout, the materials blend striking good looks with practicality and durability,

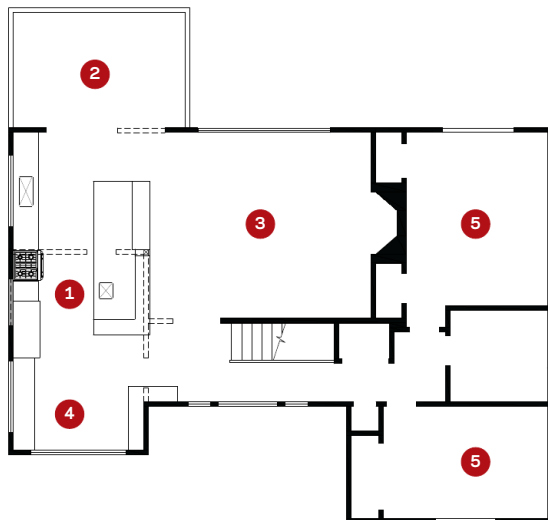
such as the engineered oak flooring and simple MDF cabinets—covered in white lacquer with a satin finish—that let the view dominate and can be easily touched up. Countertops along the wall are made of hygienic, 14-gauge, 2¼-inch-thick stainless steel welded to the sink for seamless cleaning. And a ceiling-height Calacatta marble backsplash behind the range supplies the wow factor. “It’s a great way to incorporate marble into a kitchen in a place where it won’t have a lot of wear and tear,” Reimann says.

With most of the outside wall freed up for

windows, storage needs are handled with a tall pantry next to the refrigerator, and drawers—some of them deep—wherever possible. There are even some tucked under the prep sink in the island which are cut in a U shape to accommodate the plumbing pipe. Beside the sink is a recycling center with pull-out bins.

The new kitchen gained space from the former dining room, and the former sunroom was converted to a dining room. These surgical cuts and carefully curated materials resulted in a room that is bright and airy, expansive and expressive.—CHERYL WEBER

SECOND-FLOOR PLAN



1. KITCHEN

2. DINING ROOM

3. LIVING ROOM

4. OFFICE

5. BEDROOM

0 10 20



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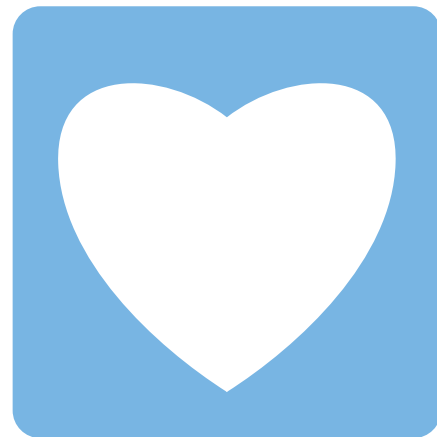
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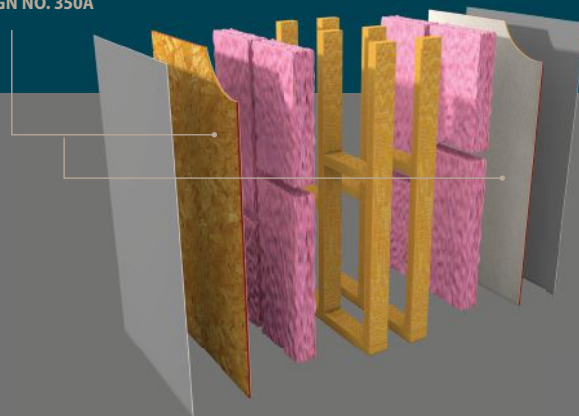
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3

PROJECT Glenwood
Residence

Location Chicago

Architect Vladimir
Radutny Architects,
Chicago

Builder Harder Brothers,
Chicago

Kitchen/Sitting Area Size
620 square feet

House Size 1,950 square
feet

Construction Cost
\$180,000



Architect Vladimir Radutny describes the functions required of this kitchen as basic, but the clean, light-filled space he designed looks and works well beyond ordinary.

The homeowners—a family with young children—wanted an open, modern area at the back of the house for daily living. The front rooms in their narrow, early 1900s Chicago greystone maintain an elegant feel that reflects the history of the surrounding neighborhood; however, for the kitchen, the clients sought a more livable and durable family area while keeping a visual tie to the formal spaces. “This space is the hinge for their lives,” Radutny says, “and they needed the kitchen to be as connected and open as possible to accommodate typical family activities. Plus, an open space also allows light more fully into the house.”

The kitchen enjoys southeast exposure, so including a lot of glass in the room made sense. In addition to sliding glass doors that open onto a terraced deck, a large picture

window illuminates a stairway that leads to upstairs bedrooms and a lower-level guest suite. A floor-to-ceiling panel of acid-etched, fixed glass filters light onto a floating desk that slips through the wall to the edge of the picture window. The same acid-etched glass fronts upper cabinets, while an operable window provides additional sunlight for whoever’s working at the sink.

The use of glass also goes beyond the basic with a mirrored backsplash, which bounces natural light around the room: A cantilevered glass dining table wraps the walnut-veneer island, producing a sculptural centerpiece for the space. Pale gray granite countertops complete the palette and, although not made of glass, a highly polished finish enhances the room’s reflective qualities.

“The intent is for the back of the house to feel built for today’s living,” explains Radutny about the choice of contemporary materials in contrast to the brick and wood found

throughout the rest of the home. “We wanted to introduce glass and steel but also to select a material to transition between these different areas, so we used walnut flooring as the primary consistency of the material palette.”

The walnut, steel, and glass island separating the food prep area from the desk station creates a clear circulation path for scurrying kids and rushing grown-ups. A blond brick column also acts as a circulation element and recalls the home’s traditional exterior. “It hints at the building’s history,” Radutny says.

Open shelves offer more than the opportunity for artful presentation, according to the architect, who says the ability to see objects on the shelves forces more strategic organization. “It actually changes the occupants’ lifestyle into a more free and clean way of living,” Radutny says. “You’re intentionally creating this way of living that’s lighter and less conducive to clutter.” — SHELLEY D. HUTCHINS



Mike Schwartz

CRAFTY SOLUTIONS

Large, open kitchens might seem easy to design, but often they need extra thought and consideration. They raise questions such as how to give homeowners a space to cook while the kids do their homework without placing them so far apart they can't talk, or how to lay out workstations so hosts can prep in peace and still chat with their guests on the other side of the island.

Architect Vladimir Radutny looks to fabricators to solve these challenging design issues, and the Glenwood Residence is full of examples of his work with local craftsmen.

- One of Chicago's oldest glass fabricators—Torstenson Glass—produced the mirrored glass backsplash, a fixed pane of acid-etched structural glass behind the floating desk, as well as the wraparound glass tabletop.

- WK Custom Cabinetry crafted the upper and lower cabinets and finished the side of the upper cabinets with a shallow set of glass shelves (shown on previous page).

- The island's wraparound floating glass table relies on a stainless steel framework for support. Metal made the most sense as long as the welds were flawless. Radutny looked to local metalsmith Crosstree to provide such detailed work.

"Even if you look closely, the welds are almost invisible," he raves. "You can appreciate the construction and execution of these parts you see beneath the table. And it creates conversation when people come over on how well this was crafted."

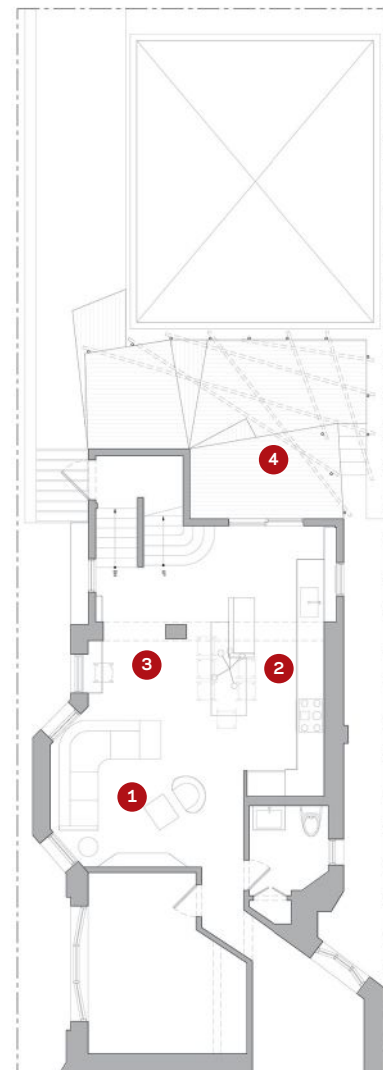




Frame

MODERN CLASSIC

FIRST-FLOOR PLAN



1. SITTING AREA

2. KITCHEN/DINING

3. OFFICE

4. DECK

0 10 20





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4

PROJECT Creekside Residence

Location Palo Alto, Calif.

Architect Feldman Architecture, San Francisco

Contractor Art of Construction, San Francisco

Kitchen Size 270 square feet

House Size 3,519 square feet

Construction Cost Withheld

When a pair of Silicon Valley entrepreneurs bought a ranch-style home in Palo Alto, Calif., they knew it would take some work to transform it into a space that better suits their contemporary tastes. When they approached San Francisco-based Feldman Architecture about the renovation, project manager Tai Ikegami and his design team sensed that the clients needed a kitchen that could accommodate their family of five's busy lifestyle. The husband and wife, who love to cook and entertain, were looking for a straightforward

layout with features that would speed food prep and clean-up so that they could spend more time with family and friends.

"As we began to learn more about how they worked, and how their lifestyle fills that public space, we quickly realized they weren't looking for a high-performance kitchen," says Ikegami. "This [project] was more about the family home and establishing the core of the house. We wanted to create one central living space that would keep family members from disappearing into their own quarters."

In response, Feldman Architecture's concept for the Creekside Residence and its kitchen centers on understatement, seamless transitions, and practicality. While preserving components of the home's original bones, the existing kitchen was reworked to accommodate an open, L-shaped workstation that connects the dining, living, and outdoor rooms and encourages socializing between the family and their guests. The dining room, which is enclosed by a steel-framed glass solarium, extends onto the back patio, creating

Paul Dyer



a place to eat, work, and enjoy the site's natural surroundings.

Floor-to-ceiling fold-back windows and collapsible doors along the rear façade blur the boundaries between inside and out and offer easy access to the back garden, which serves as a quiet, peaceful sanctuary. Because the front of the home is where the children often play, the architects outfitted the kitchen with a carefully angled window that allows the adults to keep an eye on the children, and approaching visitors, while cooking.

To produce a kitchen that appeals as well as it performs, the design team chose built-in, double-sided cabinets that keep cookware out of sight and house a fully integrated Thermador refrigerator and freezer unit, as well as a wall oven. The floor-to-ceiling custom panels, composed of gray-stained oak finished with a water-based top coat, serve as the kitchen's main organizational component.

"A challenge we often encounter with an integrated refrigerator and freezer system is that the actual capacity of a standard, 36-inch

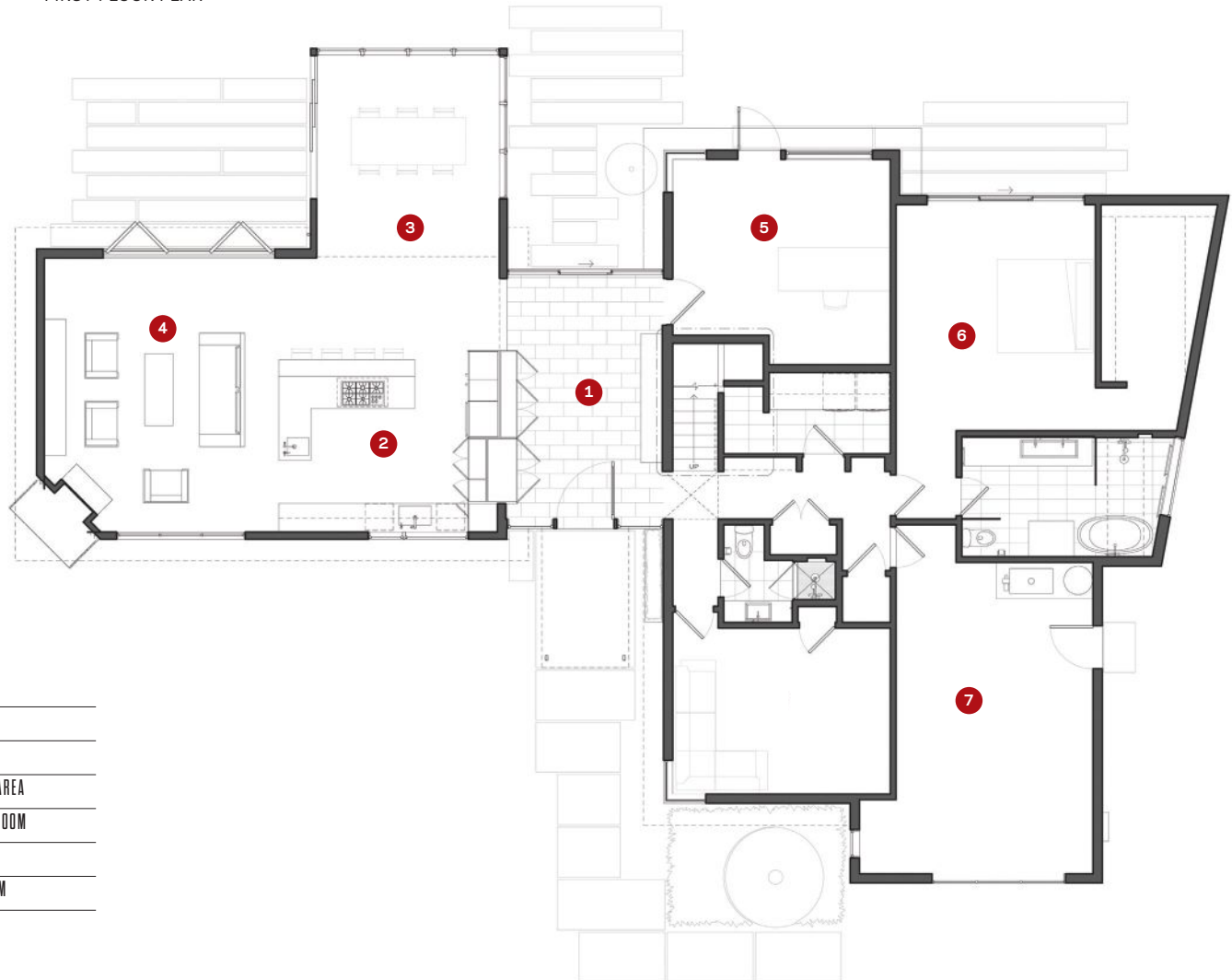
unit is fairly small—especially for a family of five," says Ikegami. "Here, we mixed and matched the unit's freezer and refrigerator cabinet columns to achieve the appropriate capacity."

The room's restrained white palette contrasted with light- and dark-wood accents continues into the rest of the home. The L-shaped island allows a number of people to comfortably congregate around the kitchen's two prep stations. Topped with white Caesars stone quartz to provide a durable surface that

Frame

DOUBLE DUTY

FIRST-FLOOR PLAN



- 1. ENTRY
- 2. KITCHEN
- 3. DINING AREA
- 4. LIVING ROOM
- 5. OFFICE
- 6. BEDROOM
- 7. GARAGE

0 7 14



can absorb the family's high-energy activities, the countertop also doubles as a breakfast bar and provides a more casual eating area than the adjacent dining room.

The Creekside Residence kitchen is a testament to a trend toward duplicate appliances that kitchen designers have seen with clients who entertain frequently. In its 2015 Kitchen & Bath Style Report, the National Kitchen and Bath Association reported that 45% of kitchen designers spec'd two dishwashers in their

projects last year, making it the most common appliance spec'd in pairs.

Here, two sinks maximize efficiency (and postpone the need for clean-ups). The first sits in a rear corner that is farther from sight of guests gathered in the living space, and is meant to conceal dishes, pots, and pans. The second sink, positioned closer to the dining area and designed for cleaning, washing, and prepping, can also be filled with ice and used as a cooler to chill refreshments when enter-

taining. Two Bosch dishwashers, concealed by cabinet-like panels, split the stack on especially busy days to keep the kitchen clean—and confirm that sometimes doubling up is the best way to get things done.

"There is always a struggle of choosing between a more compact, efficient layout, or extra floor space," says Ikegami. "This open design and its features offer a sense of balance to the family's dynamic lifestyle."

— LEAH DEMIRJIAN



Paul Dyer

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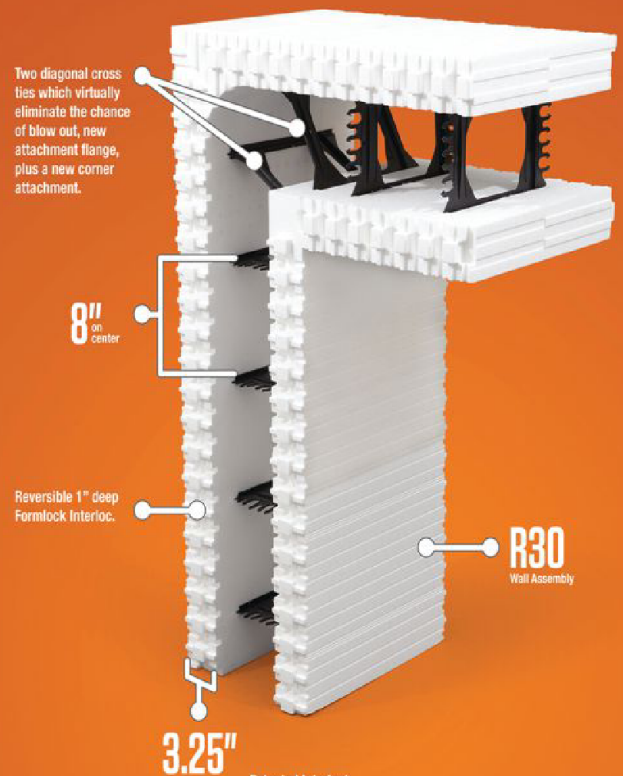
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5

PROJECT Hawthorne
Residence
Location Raleigh, N.C.

Architect/Builder
Tonic Design/Tonic
Construction, Raleigh
Kitchen/Dining Room
Size 600 square feet

House Size 3,400
square feet
Construction Cost
\$175 per square foot

This contemporary kitchen makes entertaining friends and family or even just cooking for the kids fun and easy. It was designed to allow the homeowners to prepare meals or socialize while keeping an eye on their children. The youngsters can play in the backyard just beyond the large sliding glass doors while mom and dad get dinner ready, hang out with friends, or do the dishes—all the while within sight of each other.

The plan, a remodel of a 1920s bungalow in Raleigh, N.C.'s walkable Cameron Park neigh-

borhood, was driven by the owners' desire for a connection to the outdoors. Architect Katherine Hogan, of local firm Tonic Design/Tonic Construction, carved out the light-filled kitchen and dining area by removing a crawl-space under the original house. This allowed her to lower the floor 4 feet while keeping to the existing footprint. The result is an open, 14-foot-tall space that flows seamlessly to the outdoor dining and garden area.

"We did not tear the house down, but used the existing conditions as the foundation and

inspiration for the new form," says Hogan. "We knew the house would function so much better if the clients could be in the kitchen or dining room and see the children outside and everything just felt connected."

An open steel-and-wood staircase connects all three levels of the home, so if the weather keeps the kids indoors, they are able to hang out in their bedrooms and still be within earshot of their parents downstairs.

The kitchen boasts several sustainable features, including Bosch Energy Star-rated ap-

Raymond Goodman



pliances and operable windows that allow for daylight and natural ventilation, greatly reducing the reliance on artificial lighting during the day.

The well-insulated house is kept warm by a geothermal ground source heat pump, resulting in a HERS rating of 51, making the home 50% more energy efficient than a standard new home and 80% more efficient than the average resale house.

With an eye on the budget of about \$175 per square foot, Hogan helped the homeowners

prioritize their product selections. For example, they splurged on stainless steel shelving and economized with 14-foot-tall, floor-to-ceiling Ikea cabinets. Accessed by a ladder, the cabinetry provides an inexpensive but striking focal point to the kitchen and adjoining dining room—and an amazing amount of storage space.

“We went back and forth on those because we felt having cabinets that tall was a really important part of the overall space and how it was going to look,” Hogan says. “In the end

we found that they really make the whole space.”

In addition, the large central island and clever mini bar nook with Whynter wine fridge upped the entertaining quotient without breaking the bank.

“For us, it’s about maximizing the design value—not everything has to be expensive, but it’s the way you make choices about putting things together and how you compose the elements of a room,” Hogan adds.

— JENNIFER GOODMAN

Frame

FAMILY FRIENDLY

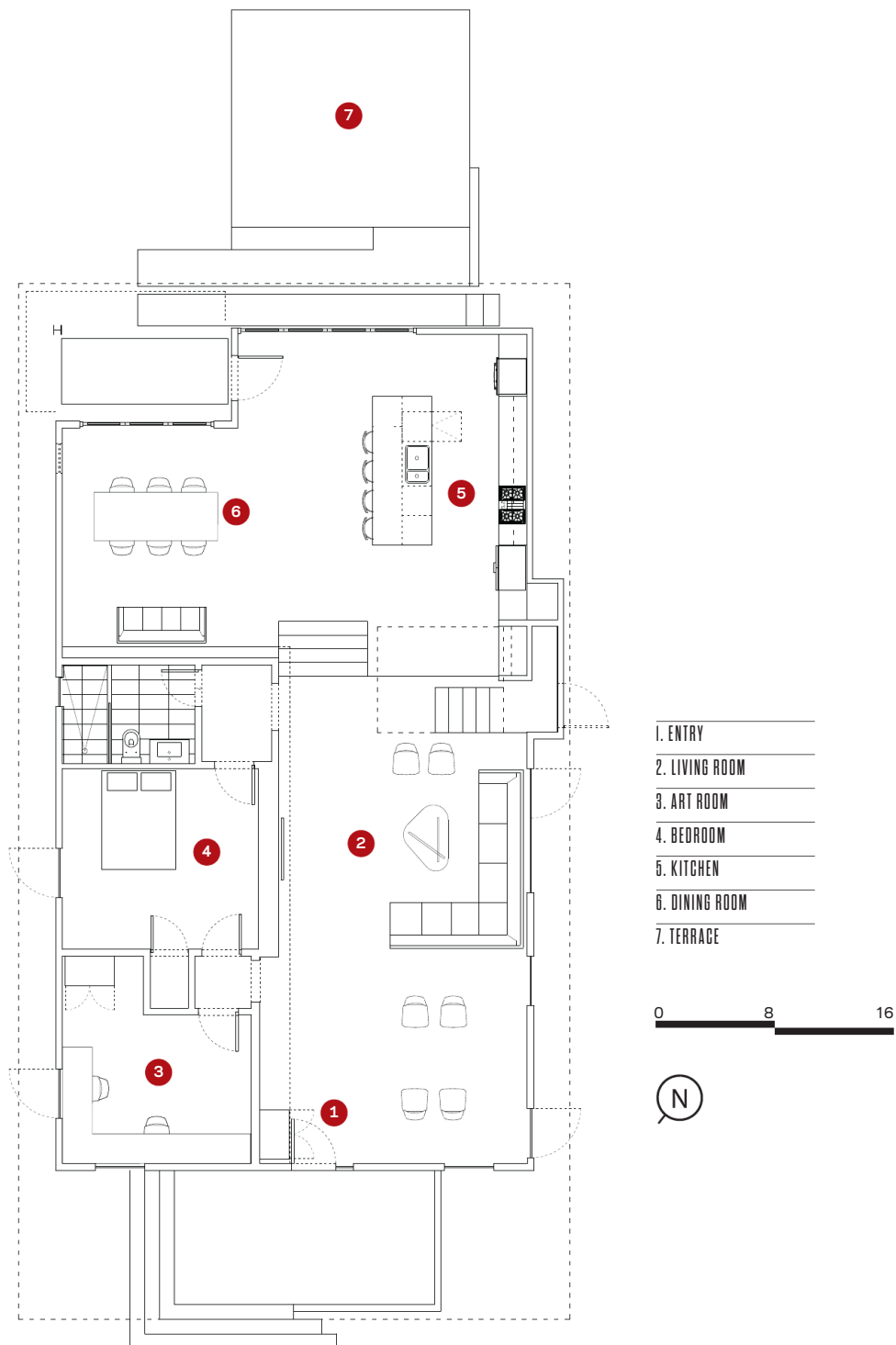
WHAT'S ON TOP?

For the first time, quartz has overtaken granite as the leading countertop material, according to the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA). Architect Katherine Hogan likes quartz because its monochromatic look gives off a modern vibe compared to the veins and color variations found in granite. She spec'd Caesarstone for the Raleigh kitchen.

Here are the most popular countertop materials as noted in the NKBA's 2015 Kitchen & Bath Style Report, based on the percentage of NKBA members who specified them in the past year:

Quartz	88%
Granite	83%
Solid surfacing	43%
Marble	43%
Laminate	40%
Butcher block	35%
Other wood	29%
Other stone	26%
Recycled counters	22%
Stainless steel	17%
Concrete	13%
Glass	11%
Tile	6%

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Andy DeLisle

DESIGN AS DRIVER

By revamping its design center process, Woodside enjoys benefits in cycle times, margins, and—most important—customer satisfaction
By Les Shaver

Less than a year into his tenure as division president for Woodside Homes of Arizona, Roger Gannon knew something had to change. The Salt Lake City-based builder had sold 211 homes in 2014, but the Pulte alum realized that with better design centers, its sales and margins could be even better.

"By the end of 2014, it was apparent that we needed to make a change to bring a world-class experience to our home buyers," he says.

With that, Gannon and his Arizona team developed an idea to customize the home buying experience with a 3,700-square-foot facility called the "Inspiration Gallery."

If Woodside could pull its design center off, Gannon thought it would improve not only customer service, but also grow the bottom line. "We felt that if we did it right, we could sell more and improve our margins," he says. "So, we sat back and asked, 'What's the right way to do this? What's the right thing to do by our customers and for our business?'"

Personal Touch

Gannon says Woodside's design center issues started with consistency.

"Before Inspiration Gallery, we had some design center partners that would serve our customers in a generic format—like they do for many builders," he notes. "A customer might go into a design center and have a certain area carved out for Woodside. It wasn't a great experience, and it wasn't a Woodside experience."

Efficiency was another issue. Woodside's customers visit a variety of partners to choose items like flooring, countertops, and lighting.

"We would have multiple vendors," says Dana Spencer, Woodside's director of sales and marketing. "One buyer would go to three or four different places."

Judging from feedback, Woodside's customers didn't like the setup either.

"We surveyed our customers about their experience, and they were clearly telling us that the experience could be better," says Gannon.

As Woodside considered a new approach, it created an "Inspiration Wall." The wall's purpose was to allow home shoppers to identify their style preferences as they moved onto the design process upon selection of a home plan.

"We took that concept to the next level, opened a design center, and branded it the Inspiration Gallery," Gannon says.

"THEY CAN PRE-SHOP WHAT THEY'RE GOING TO SEE IN THE INSPIRATION GALLERY AND SPEND MORE TIME UNDERSTANDING AND THINKING ABOUT HOW THEY CAN CONFIGURE THEIR HOME AND PERSONALIZE IT."

— Roger Gannon, division president, Woodside Homes of Arizona

Gearing Up

Deciding to launch the design center was only the first step. "Once that groundwork was laid, it was a matter of finding the right people and partners to pull it off," Gannon explains.

The bulk of the heavy lifting fell on his purchasing department, which established an infrastructure to manage all of Woodside's options, prepared the trades, and aligned its trade partners with those options. Spencer says the company learned one key lesson early on.

"You need to have a project manager," she says, noting that there was so much to keep track of with the construction of the gallery. Woodside turned to Interior Specialists for interior design. The firm visited Woodside's model homes, reviewed its concepts, and indoctrinated in its culture. Spencer says she spent a lot of time with Heritage's designer, "so she understood our languages."

Woodside created a design center equipped with two full kitchens and a bathroom vignette with a tub and shower, as well as style choices

and finishings including plumbing fixtures, banisters, doors, flooring, cabinets, and smart home technology options.

"The options are standard across all Woodside communities," Gannon says. "Regardless of which community you come from, you will have the full gamut of options and personalization at your fingertips."

And there's more on the way. "We're definitely adding new things to the mix," he adds. "We dramatically expanded what the customers can do inside their homes. For us, it brought it into one platform and one place where we could manage it. For the consumer, it broadened what they could do inside their home and made it easier."

A Streamlined Process

Once a customer decides to buy, they get a login that allows them to view everything they'd see at the Inspiration Gallery. They also can create wish lists, which are shared with Woodside's designers, prior to their visit.

"They can pre-shop what they're going to see in the Inspiration Gallery and spend more time understanding and thinking about how they can configure their home and personalize it," Gannon says. "They then come into their Inspiration Gallery appointment and it's taken to the next level where the designer already has access to what the customer has viewed online."

The back-end process also improved. Woodside was able to cut its sale-to-start cycle time by as much as 35 days, Spencer says. "It's gotten easier," she adds. "In the past we would get handwritten documents from our trades. Now the Inspiration Gallery [staff] enters it into the system and it goes directly to the office."

At press time, 31 Woodside customers had used the Inspiration Gallery. Those customers each have spent an average of \$10,000 each more than buyers going through other Woodside communities with similar floor plans and lot sizes in comparable submarkets.

"That's a nice uplift," Gannon says. "Additionally, there's a gross margin uptick of 400 basis points on the option sales."

The biggest benefit might be the goodwill the new design center creates with buyers. "We're in the business of building homes," Spencer says. "We want that to be as pleasurable and have as little stress as possible." **B**



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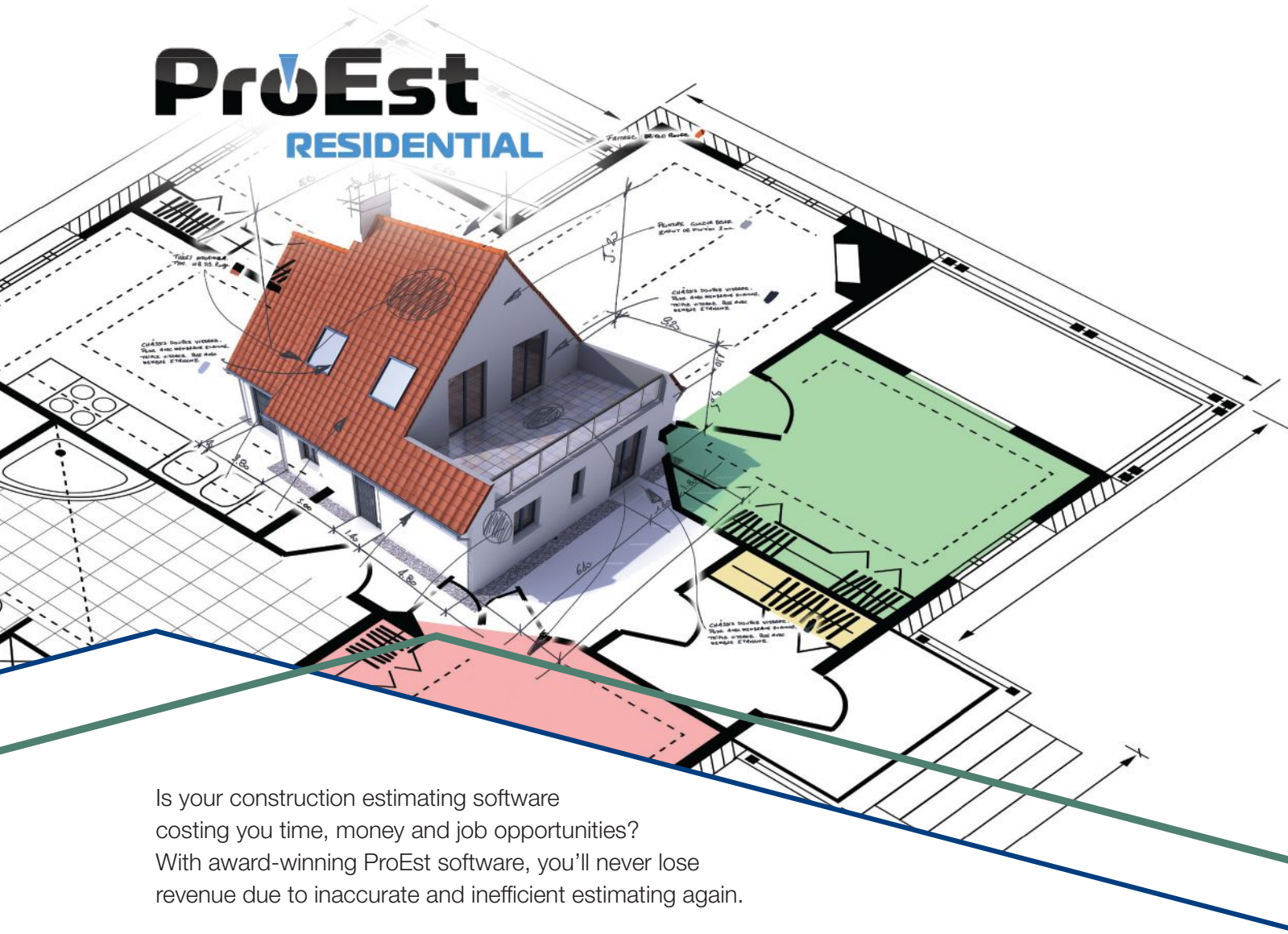


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THROWIN' IT DOWN

PulteGroup's Kellee Hansen brings 36 manufacturers together to design six kitchen vignettes in a friendly competition

By Brian Croce

Over the summer, Kellee Hansen was brainstorming ways to enhance Pulte's next product review. Her eventual idea came from the unlikelyst of places: a chili cookoff. "The first thing I thought about was having a kitchen throwdown," she says, adding jokingly, "I hope Bobby Flay doesn't sue me or anything."

This throwdown, though, was a bit different from the chef's Food Network show—and had nothing to do with making chili.

Through her contact list as PulteGroup's national purchasing director, Hansen brought together unaffiliated manufacturers to design kitchen vignettes and compete against one another in the process. The kitchen innovation project featured six teams—consisting of manufacturers of cabinets, counters, flooring, appliances, lighting, detailing, and plumbing—that

each built a kitchen vignette based on three consumer segments. The competition gave Pulte an inside look at the fresh ideas and product combinations that manufacturers like best.

"The kitchen is the absolute heart of the home," Hansen says, "and if we can get that part right, we can get a lot things right."

From Idea to Reality

After getting Pulte's marketing team on board, Hansen reached out to some of Pulte's key suppliers to gauge their interest and, much to her surprise, "Nobody hung up on me."

Kamlin Nedved, a strategic account manager for Moen, heard Hansen's pitch and liked the concept, but it took some further explanation before she signed on. "At first blush it seemed like an extensive undertaking," she

says, "but it was Kellee's vision, confidence, and encouragement that helped me see the possibility throughout the process."

Once commitments were secured, Hansen matched up the 36 manufacturers and assigned each team to build a vignette based on one of three "avatars": a multitasking family chef, a food enthusiast who likes to experiment in the kitchen and often cooks alone, and a homeowner who enjoys entertaining and wants space for guests. Participating manufacturers received their teams and assignments in July.

Design, Then Build

The teams did all of their coordinating by phone and email. "We pulled together and learned that the successful installation of our products would affect, and are affected by, the installation and timing of the others," says Nedved, who was a part of three projects. "Our individual and collective success was just as dependent on each other as it was on our individual solutions for the consumers' needs."

After weeks of back and forth and trading ideas, construction of the vignettes began on Oct. 12 at Pulte's warehouse in Norcross, Ga. On Oct. 19, each team presented their vignettes to an audience of roughly 100 consumers. Since the event coincided with a product review, it gave Pulte executives the chance to gather consumer input and seek internal opinions on the vignettes. The company is currently mulling over which concepts or designs it may adopt and build into its future homes.

"In our industry, I think we lack some collaboration, historically," Hansen says. "Listening to our suppliers just makes us better, and it makes us better as an industry. I think it raises the level for all our peers as well when we listen to our manufacturers."

Nedved is eager to hear the design feedback and says participating in the event was of great value for everyone. "Pulte proved that innovative ideas can be accomplished through collaboration," she says.

For Hansen, the endeavor was the largest undertaking of her career, and she's happy with how it turned out. "Any time we can get our manufacturers to collaborate and innovate, I think we'll take advantage of it," she says. "People are changing and homes are changing—how do we all keep up on where we should be today? I look forward to the next throwdown, whatever it may be." **B**

Craig Bennett

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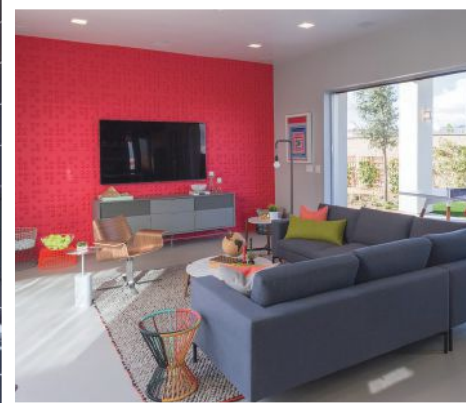
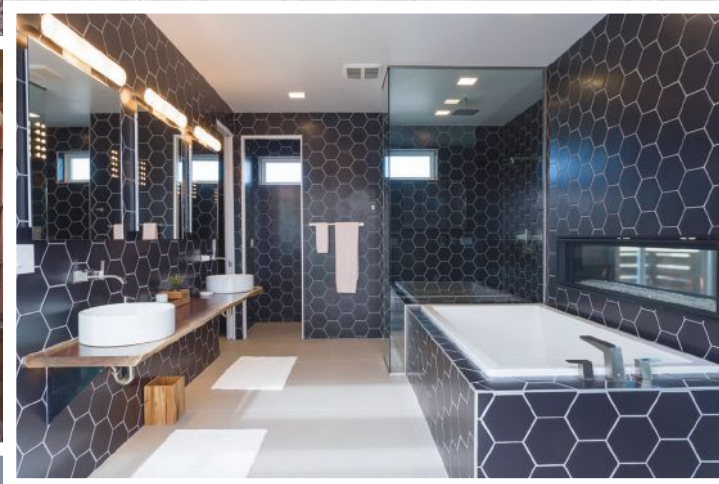
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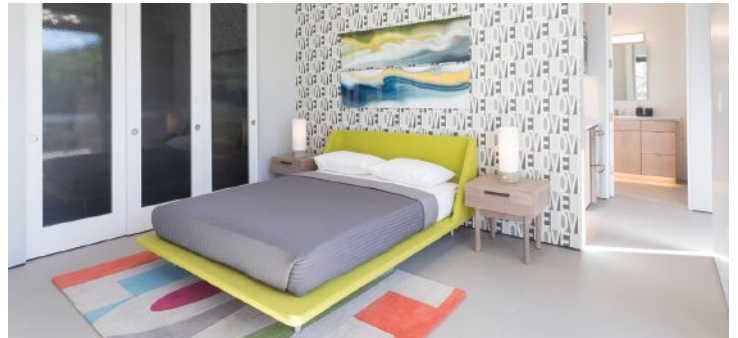
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There are 82 million millennials, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, and they represent a key customer base for U.S. home builders. The Responsive Home project encompasses two demonstration homes, each targeting a different type of millennial buyer: a 2,160-square-foot contemporary farmhouse and a 2,990-square-foot contemporary transitional concept home.

Built by Pardee Homes and designed by Bassenian Lagoni, the BUILDER Responsive Home project showcases what young buyers want: flexible spaces, adaptable floor plans, and other options that can accommodate shifting household composition, new family members, and changing work scenarios.

See for yourself what millennials want at the 2016 International Builders' Show and take a tour through BUILDER's two show homes. The Responsive Home virtual tour will be available in January as well

Learn more and pre-register for the virtual tour:
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As Housing Market Continues to Recover, Millennials Voice A Renewed Desire: More Indoor-Outdoor Space



Large sliding glass doors allow for a seamless transition from the indoors to the outside.

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To grow their businesses, builders not only must deal with the challenges of the current housing market (rising material costs, labor, lot availability), but they also must anticipate emerging trends, including the growing demand for indoor-outdoor living, especially among Millennials.

A recent quarterly survey of architecture firms conducted by the American Institute of Architects reported that as the housing market continues its path to recovery, homeowners

are exhibiting a renewed interest in upgrades, an increase in outdoor living, and spaces that blend the indoors with the outside.

In terms of indoor-outdoor living, 85 percent of 18- to 35-year-olds (now 25 percent of the U.S. population) rated outdoor rooms as “very important,” with activities such as cooking outdoors and transforming yards into relaxing getaways ranking high in popularity, according to the Garden Media Group’s annual garden trends report.

“Seamless indoor-outdoor living is key for this buyer group,” says Hans Anderle, vice

president and senior designer at architectural firm Bassenian Lagoni. “Expanding spaces visually and with door systems that open to create larger living spaces for entertaining helps meet the dual desires of [Millennials].”

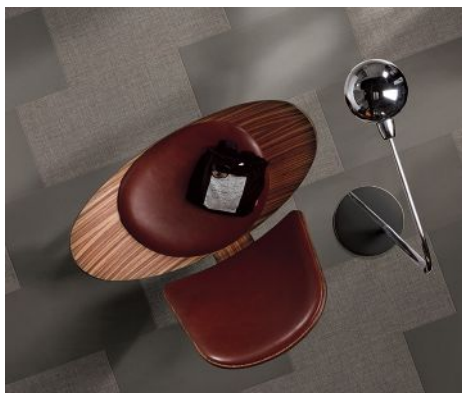
Builders can achieve a seamless transition through large sliding glass doors, the continuation of a color scheme, or the extension of an interior floor (weather-resistant, of course). Upgrades such as pavers, kitchens, fireplaces, outdoor TVs, and landscaping packages make it easy for builders to help homebuyers realize an expanded living room, outdoor cooking and dining area, or entertainment space.

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FOR THE 2016 BUILDER RESPONSIVE HOME AIMED AT MILLENNIALS



With 84% of Millennials financially prepared to buy homes, BUILDER focused this year's Responsive Home project on what Millennials want most in their homes—more space and personalization. Daltile is pleased to take part in the BUILDER Responsive Home project and take on the challenge of uniting an urban-Millennial sensibility with traditional home design.

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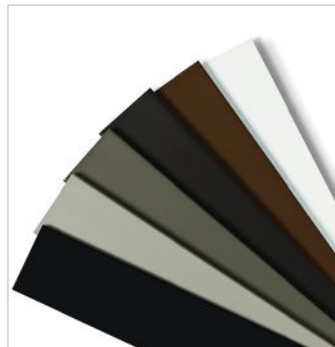
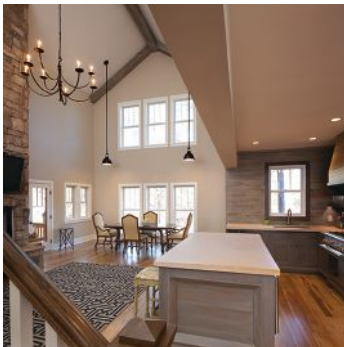
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Adding stone veneer to the exterior of the home elevates the design and adds value—two key areas of interest for Millennial homebuyers, who are the target demographic for the Responsive Home project. According to research, Millennial buyers do not follow many of the same patterns as the generations before them. They are not willing to sacrifice aesthetics for value, or sophistication for convenience. They want the best of both worlds.

This new generation of homebuyers views each home as an investment, and the first home is often a stepping stone to the next property. For this reason, Millennial buyers look for cost-effective ways to improve the value of the properties they purchase. Since stone veneer has one of the highest cost-to-value ratios for architectural building products, it is a clear choice for upgrades in a home designed by Millennials for Millennials.

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Danze And Gerber: The Value Of An Upgrade



If there's one thing that sister companies Danze, Inc. and Gerber Plumbing Fixtures understand when it comes to supporting builders, it's the value of providing exceptional products that can serve as an upgrade for homeowners. But let's be clear, an upgrade in design or quality doesn't always have to mean an upgrade in price (which can translate into better margins for you, the builder).

As proud sponsors of the Responsive Home, Danze and Gerber are both sharing some of their finest kitchen and bath products with visitors to IBS 2016. With its history built around faucets, shower systems and accessories, Danze is showcasing its bath and kitchen faucets. The popular Parma™ Collection will accent the bathroom with a single-handle wall mount faucet and the brand's best-selling kitchen faucet—the Parma Pre-Rinse. Also making an appearance in the kitchen is the traditional styling of the Prince™ Pull-Down Kitchen Faucet.



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For more information on JELD-WEN's full line of interior and exterior doors visit jeld-wen.com.

SAVANT PRO

RESPONSIVE
HOME

ALLIANCE SPONSOR

There's No Place Like A Savant Home



Savant Pro is the premier experience in customizable, whole-home automation. With the unparalleled convenience of controlling a home's lighting, climate, entertainment, and security from a single, intuitive app, Savant Pro offers homeowners and builders a solution unlike anything else on the market.

The experience begins with the elegant Savant Pro App, which gives homeowners more control and personalization options than any other home automation app. With Savant scenes, they can schedule a "Good Morning" scene in which the home wakes before they do—raising the temperature, fading up the lights, and gradually increasing the volume on a favorite playlist—or at the end of the day, tap "Goodnight" to set the alarm and turn everything off with a touch.

There's even the ability to capture scenes. When the lights are low, shades are drawn, and the Sonos is streaming softly, homeowners can simply capture the scene, name it "Relax," and recall it anytime they like.



The Savant Remote lets homeowners switch easily between Sonos, cable, Apple TV, game consoles, and more—as well as control their lights and thermostat without getting up—while Savant Music's whole-home audio distribution offers luxury listening at its best. A Savant Pro system can even be customized for the most distinctive spaces, with controls for amenities such as pools, home theaters, and more.

For homeowners on the go, Savant offers secure remote access and real-time notifications, so they can always feel connected, even when life takes them somewhere else.

With state-of-the-art products and services, Savant Pro continues to re-define the experience of luxury home automation—giving builders the tools to create distinctive, customizable systems for today's most unique homes.

Learn more at www.savant.com.

ALLIANCE SPONSOR

Solar Solutions Homebuyers Want

TRANSFORM HOMES INTO POWERHOUSES



Founded in 2011, the SolarCity Homebuilder Program works with builders across the nation to offer homebuyers the opportunity to go solar and pay less for solar electricity than they would otherwise pay for utility power.

We make it easy for homebuilders to integrate solar solutions into their new home communities...

- We simplify the entire solar process and handle everything from financing, engineering, design and installation to monitoring and maintenance.
- We understand each of your communities are unique, with different needs and different types of buyers. That is why we have developed flexible and innovative financing solutions to meet your and your homebuyers' needs.

- Solar power is one of the only new home upgrades that can actually save your homebuyers money each month—all without the typical upfront investment that other add-ons or improvements require.

Just like you, SolarCity never stops innovating...

- We're continuously investing to power the future of homebuilding, from our proprietary solar mounting systems to our affordable solar energy storage services that also protect homeowners from unpredictable power outages and rising costs.
- As the demand for sustainable offerings like solar energy continues to grow, SolarCity enables builders to simply and easily offer a clean, money-saving alternative to their customers.

Homebuilders who would like to partner with us to build powerhouses for their homeowners complete with energy storage options can contact the company through our interest form at solarcity.com/homebuilder.

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Building Disclaimer: A solar power system is customized by SolarCity for your home. Pricing and savings vary upon system location, system orientation, system size, government rebates, if any, and local utility rates. SolarCity financing, incentives, estimated savings and other terms may vary and are not available in all locations. Savings on electricity costs are not guaranteed. SolarCity will repair or replace broken warranted components for the term of the SolarLease. Please carefully review the terms and conditions of the SolarLease, the SolarCity Production Guarantee, SolarCity's Limited Warranty, and the Solar Operation and Maintenance Guide for complete details or visit us www.solarcity.com. All representations, warranties and statements herein are made solely by and on behalf of SolarCity and Builder has no ability to independently verify and is not responsible for any statements, estimated or projections from SolarCity.

FOUNDING SPONSOR

The Responsive Home Showcases Built By Service Advantages



"The Responsive Home is all about rethinking the homebuilding business in light of the changing market, specifically Millennials," says Duane Hart, Timberlake Marketing Director. "At Timberlake, we're already taking on those challenges with our Built By Service platform."

Perry Campbell, SVP and General Manager, explains. "Our platform integrates a full range of complex operational components: kitchen and bath design, pricing, manufacturing, logistics, installation, and follow-up service."

DESIGN AS SERVICE: ON-TARGET RELEVANCY

Timberlake's design staff is among the industry's largest. For the Responsive Home project, the team translated specific research insights into the designs and features to attract Millennials.

PROFESSIONALS AND TECHNOLOGY: TURNKEY SERVICE

Timberlake uses proprietary systems for virtually every process. "We drive continuous excellence by measuring multiple facets of every project," notes Russ Waters, Timberlake Director of Operational Excellence. "We've also developed over a half-dozen technology-based systems that tie together customer activity with our service elements."

INSTALLATION: SERVICE ABOVE AND BEYOND

One-of-a-kind showhomes on accelerated timelines are the ultimate test. "Not only did we meet our deadlines, we were ahead of schedule," says Rob Trickett, District Sales and Operations Manager, who led the build. The keys? "We plan carefully—from the first design drawings to the final measurements. The installers get a scorecard after each project, so they understand our craftsmanship standards." Still, every job comes with surprises. "Timberlake's service culture is to go above and beyond. We were ready to adapt and find a way."

For more information on what Timberlake contributed to the Responsive Home project, as well as their full product line, visit timberlake.com or call 1-800-967-9674.



SUPPORTING SPONSOR

The Beauty Behind Your Walls And Beneath Your Floors



For more than 40 years, Uponor has been providing high-quality, high-performance PEX plumbing, fire safety and radiant floor heating systems for homes and businesses around the world.

The core of Uponor systems feature flexible, durable and cost-effective crosslinked polyethylene (PEX) tubing and ProPEX® expansion fittings that are ideal for use in new construction, remodel and retrofit applications.

Uponor PEX plumbing systems provide reliable, durable solutions that give homeowners peace of mind when they turn



on the faucet. Uponor plumbing systems are the smart alternative to copper and CPVC due to the flexibility of PEX along with its corrosion resistance and protection from freeze damage. And the best part about an Uponor PEX plumbing system is you can couple it with an Uponor integrated fire sprinkler system for a life-safety upgrade that also helps meet fire sprinkler mandates.

Uponor AquaSAFE™ is the industry's first non-stagnant, multipurpose, residential fire safety system that combines the home's potable cold-water plumbing system with the



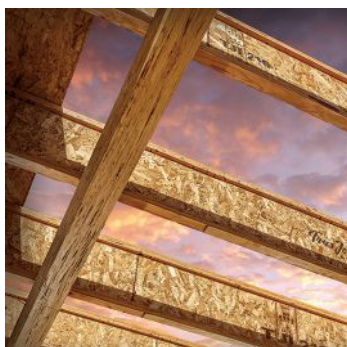
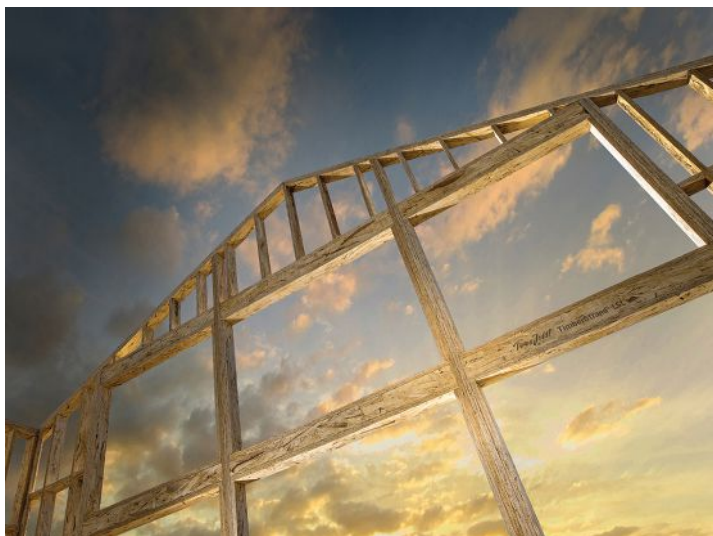
fire sprinkler system. This integrated design provides added peace of mind for homeowners as well as a business-building opportunity for plumbing contractors looking to expand their offering.

And for anyone who has heard of (or experienced) radiant floor heating, Uponor (formerly Wirsbo) was the first to bring the technology to North America in the early 1970s. Radiant systems circulate warm water through PEX tubing embedded under the floor for superior comfort with the greatest energy efficiency and indoor air quality available.

To learn more about how Uponor systems can improve your homes, visit uponor-usa.com.

FOUNDING SPONSOR

Structural Frame Solutions From Weyerhaeuser



Weyerhaeuser, one of the world's largest forest products companies, began operations in 1900. The company's wood products business offers leading structural frame materials and OSB products, software, and technical support for residential, multi-family, and light commercial construction under the Weyerhaeuser and Trus Joist® brand names.

Weyerhaeuser is a proud sponsor of the Responsive Home project, providing Trus Joist Engineered Wood and OSB structural frame solutions. Trus Joist products include TJI® Joists, TimberStrand® LSL, Parllam® PSL, Microllam® LVL and OSB products featuring Edge Gold®.

Engineered to provide strength and consistency, our TJI® Joist offers dimensional stability to resist warping, twisting and shrinking that can lead to squeaky floors. TimberStrand® LSL one is of the most versatile building products available, used for beams, headers, rim board, wall framing, sill plates and stair stringers. Parallam® PSL beams, headers and columns are engineered to support heavy loads and span long distances. Microllam® LVL headers and beams can be built-up on site, reducing heavy lifting and making installation quick with little or no waste. Thanks to our innovative Down Pore® self-draining technology and a proprietary edge seal, our Weyerhaeuser Edge Gold™ panels withstand the elements so well that they can allow framers to extend their building season.

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Builder

builderonline.com

serves the information needs of residential construction professionals with breaking industry news, local housing data, provocative Web-first lists, industry blogs, product reviews, house plans, education & training and so much more.

The screenshot displays the Builder website homepage. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the 'Builder' logo and links for DESIGN, MONEY, BUILDING, LAND, BUILDER 100, PRODUCTS, VIDEOS, and RESOURCES. Below the navigation bar, there are several featured articles and reports. On the left, a large blue banner for the '2015 Builder 100' report is prominent. Below it, a section titled 'THE BUILDER 100 IS HERE' provides a brief overview of the report. To the right of the banner, there's a section titled 'The Pulse' with a date of May 12, 2015. This section contains several articles, including one about Zillow's housing experts and another about a building's operations. Below 'The Pulse', there's a section titled 'TOP 10 INSIGHTS FROM THE PUBLIC BUILDER REPORT CARD' which includes a list of insights. On the right side of the page, there's a section titled 'The Builder Network' featuring profiles of industry professionals like John McManis and Jennifer Goodman. The page also includes various advertisements and a search bar at the top right.

BY JENNIFER GOODMAN / PRODUCTS COVERAGE BY LAUREN HUNTER
/ PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRETT BEYER

CRACKING THE CODE

Our Responsive Home project breaks new ground in meeting the needs of young buyers



American home builders face a huge challenge: to engage and captivate one of the country's most influential yet least understood generations of home buyers. Millennials—broadly defined as those in the 25- to 34-year-old age range—represent the biggest share of new-home buyers in the U.S., but they are a hard sell. Sidelined by high unemployment, student loan debt, and tight credit, many young buyers have been slow to enter the market. In fact, the percentage of people under the age of 35 who own their home is just 36%—the lowest level on record, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The question for U.S. home buyers is how to catalyze the members of this demographic, who are a diverse and demanding group. Early

last year, BUILDER and one of the country's largest home builders set out to crack the code on what this cohort wants in a new home. What we found might surprise you.

Working with TRI Pointe Group and Ketchum Global Research & Analytics, we took an in-depth look at the needs and wants of young buyers. Our findings reject many preconceived notions about millennials, debunking the myths that they are terrified of home buying and want to live only in urban locations. "We had a lot of misconceptions and stereotypes come up in our research," says Sarah Unger, Ketchum's vice president of insights and strategic planning.

The study found that millennials gravitate toward homes with urban conveniences in suburban settings, plentiful outdoor space, and customizable floor plans. Living within walking distance to parks



and schools and a sense of community also are high priorities. “Being able to have the American dream and buy a home but not have it fall into the cookie-cutter version of a home is really, really important to millennials,” Unger says.

Born of this research, the BUILDER Responsive Home project at the Inspirada master planned community in Henderson, Nev., has immense implications for builders nationwide as they endeavor to woo this huge group, estimated at 75 million people. Designed by Basenian Lagoni and built by TRI Pointe’s Pardee Homes unit, the pair of homes will be open to the public during the 2016 International Builders’ Show. Regardless of whether you make it to Henderson, read on for an in-depth look at how the homes provide inspiration, guidance, and insight for today’s home builders.

Data Driven Based on detailed market research by Ketchum Global Research & Analytics, the Responsive Home dwellings incorporate the features and designs most in demand with millennials. Ketchum’s survey of 503 people ages 25 to 34 included 203 current homeowners and 300 individuals who plan to buy a house within 12 months. Among the chief findings were the age group’s interest in maximizing space and customizing and personalizing their homes.





RESPONSIVE HOME / CONTEMPORARY FARMHOUSE

The smaller of the two Responsive Homes, the 2,130-square-foot Contemporary Farmhouse breaks down several barriers that prevent first-time buyers from entering the housing market. Its \$320,000 price tag is attainable for a single young professional or a newly married couple just starting their careers. With a 5% down payment, the monthly mortgage would be \$1,950, making it a comfortable purchase for owners with an annual household income as low as \$75,000.

In addition, the home's flexible design provides several ways to lessen the financial and emotional burdens of owning a home. Buyers will rest easy knowing that the house can adapt as their living needs change. For example, an upper-level loft area can be converted into a bedroom, and a 384-square-foot optional flat over the garage—which was built here, bringing the total size of this home to 2,514 square feet—makes room for elderly parents, a nanny, or guests. In addition, a first-floor bedroom with full bath, kitchenette, and separate entrance can be used as rental space to help the owners offset their monthly mortgage payments.

Despite the project team's focus on affordability, it squeezed in plenty of high-style, high-tech amenities that are rarely found in an entry-level product. Multiple connections to the outdoors, a huge patio, nearly net-zero solar power, and a combination of modern and rustic finishes were chosen to entice young buyers.

This fresh approach to design is based on extensive input from the team's young architects and designers, most notably Responsive Home creative director Bobby Berk of Bobby Berk Home.

"At this price range you find a lot of cookie-cutter homes in Vegas, but a millennial doesn't want a cookie-cutter home," Berk says. "They want something customized and unique, and I think that's what we're really bringing to the table here."

Many of the Bassenian Lagoni associates who worked on the house are millennials who are recent or soon-to-be homeowners, and their perspective helped shape the entire project, says lead architect Hans Anderle.

"They're looking at things with a certain fresh eye," he explains. "They have an attitude that a lot of things are possible and I think to capture that and hone that into this process is something that we've all benefitted from."

Fresh Approach With a price tag that's affordable to young buyers, the Contemporary Farmhouse is a far cry from multimillion-dollar show homes of recent years but doesn't skimp on modern style, which is important to millennials.



Tile Flooring

Daltile

▶ pg 146

Cabinetry

Timberlake Cabinetry

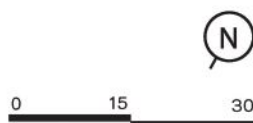
▶ pg 146

RESPONSIVE HOME / CONTEMPORARY FARMHOUSE

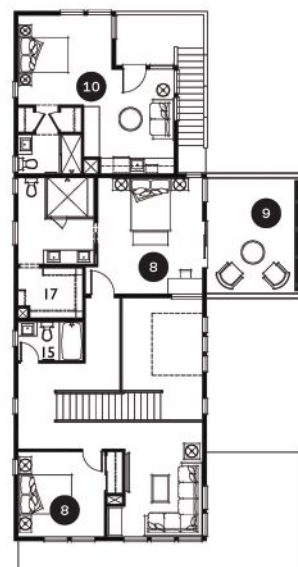
Coming Soon Pardee Homes is reviewing possible locations to offer homes in the style of the Contemporary Farmhouse.

Bright and Light The two-story open kitchen (left) pulls in daylight from two levels. Although the rustic farmhouse design features plentiful glazing, low-E glass helps keep the home cooler in the summer months and warmer in the winter months.

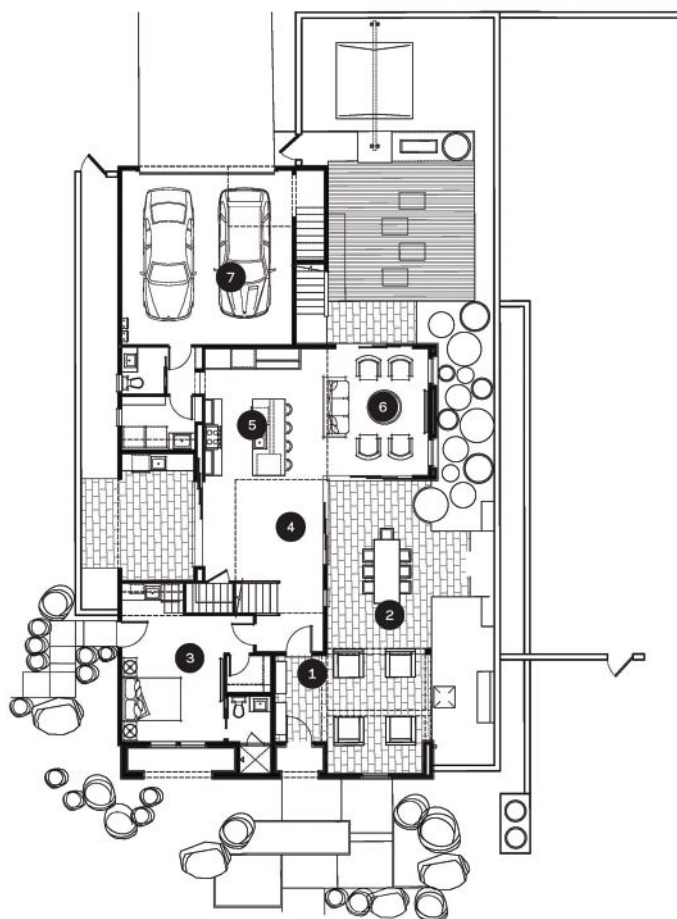
- 1. ENTRY
- 2. COURTYARD
- 3. CASITA
- 4. DINING ROOM
- 5. KITCHEN
- 6. GREAT ROOM
- 7. GARAGE
- 8. BEDROOM
- 9. DECK
- 10. OPTIONAL STUDIO



Second-Floor Plan



First-Floor Plan



"Millennials are all about entertaining and having people over. We tried to think about all of that and the way design helps makes a home livable."

Bobby Berk, Responsive Home creative director



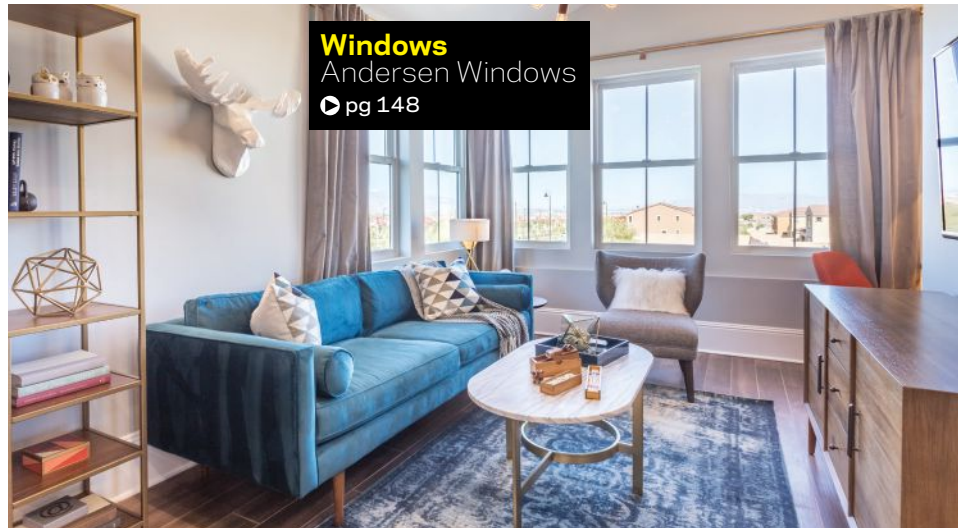
Pendant Lighting
Kichler Lighting
▶ pg 148

Faucets
Danze
▶ pg 148

RESPONSIVE HOME / CONTEMPORARY FARMHOUSE

Great Indoors Each room in the home has multiple ventilation points, allowing for fresh air intake whenever the outside temperature allows. Other health-related measures include low-VOC paint, hard surface flooring to help minimize dust, and a central vacuum system. Shown here are the master bedroom (top right) and second-floor loft (middle right).

Extra Space With its own separate entrance, the optional studio over the garage (bottom right) is ideal for guests, a nanny, or an aging parent.



Windows
Andersen Windows
pg 148

"We're seeing new finishes, new styles, and even a kind of new ethos around how you want a house to look and feel overall. I think everybody will enjoy the freshness that you get in these houses."

Klif Andrews, Pardee Homes' Las Vegas division president





Board & Batten Siding

James Hardie

pg 146

"Outdoor living is something that attracts millennials to home buying and it's often something they don't get enough of in a rental situation."

Linda Mamet, TRI Pointe Group's vice president of corporate marketing

RESPONSIVE HOME / CONTEMPORARY FARMHOUSE

Stone Siding
Eldorado Stone
▶ pg 146

StuccoWrap Moisture Barrier
DuPont Building Innovations
▶ pg 146

Back to Nature Wood-look plank tiles bring the warmth and style of hardwood flooring to indoor spaces and are durable enough to extend to the outdoor deck area.





RESPONSIVE HOME / TRANSITIONAL

The show stopper of the Responsive Home project is the 3,194-square-foot Transitional residence, a model of forward-thinking design with the intent to wow young move-up buyers. It's targeted toward a professional couple who want more space but don't want to give up a walkable location, style, or amenities.

These types of consumers want lots of space—83% of millennials in Ketchum's survey said more space is the biggest motivator to buy a home. Nevertheless, they still want to be in a walkable community with recreation, trails, and shopping nearby, says Claudia Sieb, head of community marketing for Inspirada. "What the research is telling us is that they want the best of both worlds," she says.

This \$450,000 home boasts a spacious casita behind the garage that provides full privacy for owners or their guests and includes a covered private patio, small kitchen, and full bath. Buyers have an option to expand the casita or add a separate adjoining fitness room.

Outdoor activities are a huge selling point for this demographic, so the project team included myriad ways for homeowners to interact with nature. For example, sightlines from the entry of both homes lead all the way to the backyard. "The dining room, great room, and kitchen all have access to a front courtyard, rear courtyard, or covered outdoor living space on the side of each home," says lead architect Hans Anderle.

Electronic controls for temperature, lighting, and home automation will appeal to tech-savvy millennials who will enjoy being able to easily manage the home's energy use and comfort from anywhere via tablet or personal device. And, the home's green credentials are sure to impress environmentally conscious young buyers: With a well insulated building envelope, advanced framing, and 9.6 KW south-facing PV system, the HERS 11 home will produce about as much electricity as the house requires.

In Las Vegas, Pardee Homes often has pushed the envelope on contemporary architecture, and the Responsive Home project takes this boldness even further, says division president Klif Andrews. "I think a new modern feel is really what the home buyers of Las Vegas are looking for," he says. "We know right now that the market is very interested in contemporary furniture, so if people are that intrigued by contemporary furniture why wouldn't they like to have a great home with a contemporary style to put it in?"

The Responsive Home project is a test case for the company. "We want to learn more about the potential for contemporary architecture in a new-home builder environment," Andrews says.

Move Up The larger of the two Responsive Homes was designed for buyers who are further along in their careers than a typical entry-level customer. Pardee Homes is using it to test how contemporary design is received in the Las Vegas market.



responsive

Bi-Fold Doors

Western Window Systems

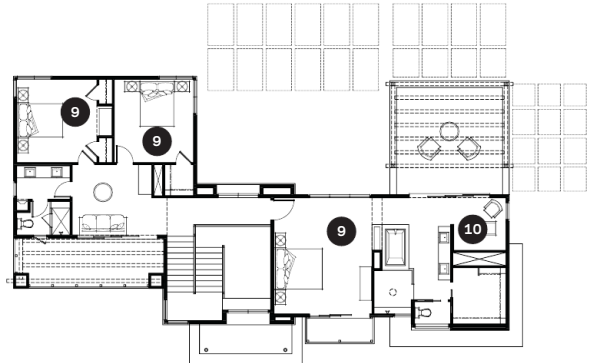
pg 150

Inspired Design The expansive age range of the millennial generation necessitated the need for two demonstration homes, each targeting a different type of buyer. "While we might want to think that millennials are one homogeneous group, they're really not," says Linda Mamet, TRI Pointe vice president of corporate marketing.

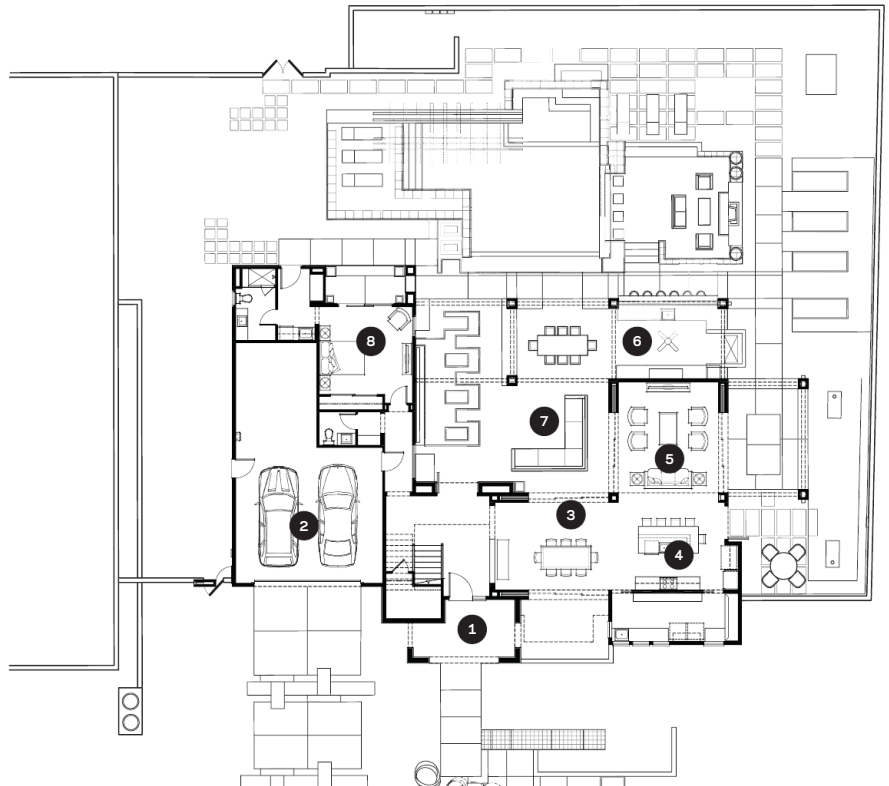
- 1. ENTRY COURTYARD
- 2. GARAGE
- 3. DINING ROOM
- 4. KITCHEN
- 5. GREAT ROOM
- 6. OUTDOOR LIVING
- 7. COURTYARD
- 8. CASITA
- 9. BEDROOM
- 10. OFFICE



Second-Floor Plan



First-Floor Plan



"In our research we see a new word that's really important to the younger generation: 'customize.' They've grown up in a world where they can sort of curate their lives on demand and they want that in a home."

Sarah Unger, Ketchum vice president of insights and strategic planning



"Take a few steps into either of the homes and you've got multiple points of interacting with the outdoors."

Hans Anderle, Bassenian Lagoni principal



Appliances
Whirlpool Corp.
pg 150

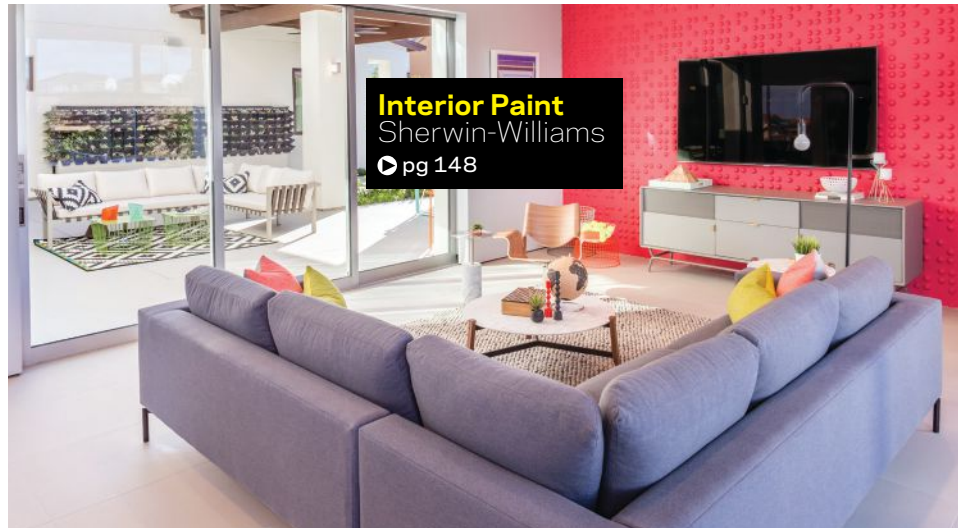
Open Wide Sliding glass doors in the dining room and great room open up the first floor to stylish outdoor spaces, encouraging flexible use of the space for entertaining and bringing fresh air into the home.



Plumbing
Uponor
▶ pg 150

Mad for Mod The master bathroom is a striking example of the type of unique designs that millennials prefer.

Product Hub From framing to finishes, products selected for the home reflect young buyers' desire for design and performance at a price point they can afford. Shown at right are the kitchen, great room, and guest bedroom.



Interior Paint
Sherwin-Williams
▶ pg 148

"We have to understand the millennial generation's nuances such as the different price points and different age groups—from just starting out to having young families."

Linda Mamet, TRI Pointe Group's vice president of corporate marketing



RESPONSIVE HOME / TRANSITIONAL



Ready for Rays The covered patio at the rear of the home was designed to accept a large solar array while also providing shade and comfort.

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RESPONSIVE HOME / TRANSITIONAL



Water Smart An irrigation controller waters the drought-tolerant landscaping only when needed, thanks to sensors on the roof that turn off the system during a rain event.

We're upping the bar on service.

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RESPONSIVE HOME / TEAM



Back row, left to right: Klif Andrews, Pardee Homes; Linda Mamet, TRI Pointe Group; Hans Anderle, Bassenian Lagoni; John McManus, BUILDER. Front row: Ken Niemerski, Bassenian Lagoni; Bobby Berk, Bobby Berk Home; Andy Baron, AndersonBaron Landscape Architecture; Doug Bauer, TRI Pointe Group.

PROJECT The BUILDER Responsive Home

LOCATION Henderson, Nev.

SIZE 2,514 square feet (Contemporary Farmhouse, including optional 384 square-foot studio); 3,194 square feet (Transitional)

BUILDER Pardee Homes, a member of the TRI Pointe Group, Las Vegas

ARCHITECT Bassenian Lagoni, Newport Beach, Calif.

CREATIVE DIRECTOR Bobby Berk/Bobby Berk Home, New York City and Los Angeles

LANDSCAPE DESIGNER AndersonBaron Landscape Architecture, Chandler, Ariz.

PR FIRM AND RESEARCH Ketchum Public Relations/Ketchum Global Research & Analytics, New York City

MEDIA PARTNER BUILDER, Washington, D.C.

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RESPONSIVE HOME / PRODUCTS



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2. SCHLAGE

The Touchscreen Deadbolt with Schlage Connect brings keyless

entry to home automation. In addition to manual codes, Z-Wave technology lets users operate the lock from anywhere. Built-in alarms alert homeowners to potential intrusions. schlage.com

3. BROAN-NUTONE

One SmartSense Ventilation System can accommodate up to 10 vent fans on this efficient whole-house system. SmartSense fans are wired the same way as standard vent fans. LinkLogic control adjusts the

system's run time based on the square footage and number of bedrooms. broan.com

4. SAVANT

Savant's Smart Host solution is an affordable entry point for home automation. The hub and controller in one lets users control lighting, climate, entertainment, and security in up to 12 rooms using existing in-home wi-fi. Users can also create their own their own room scenes and schedules with the Savant app. savant.com.

DALTILE (PG 126)

The Forest Park collection brings the warmth and style of hardwood to indoor and outdoor spaces, thanks to its durable design. The ColorBody porcelain tiles are available in two plank sizes, and wood, gray, or white tones to suit a range of design styles. daltile.com

TIMBERLAKE CABINETRY

(PG 126) A fresh take on Mission style comes from New Haven Painted Stone cabinetry. The simple lines work with numerous décor styles. New Haven doors are solid wood and full-overlay with a recessed panel and 3-inch stiles and rails. Choose from cherry, maple, and painted finishes. timberlake.com

KICHLER LIGHTING (PG 128)

Don't be afraid to mix metals in the kitchen. Light fixtures like the Cobson one-light convertible pendant make tones like natural brass, olde bronze, and polished nickel work effortlessly, even when stainless steel appliances abound. The Cobson pendant features a paddle switch that adds to its retro aesthetic. kichler.com

DANZE (PG 128)

A traditional design grounds the Prince single-handle pull-out kitchen faucet. The two-function head switches between an aerated stream for regular use and a spray for tougher cleaning. The single-handle lever with a ceramic disc valve ensures smooth temperature control and a drip-free faucet. danze.com

ANDERSEN WINDOWS (PG 129)

With energy-efficient construction and Low-E glass options, many Andersen 100 Series windows are Energy Star version 6.0 certified in all 50 states. The Fibrex frames are designed to be twice as strong and more rigid than vinyl; won't fade, chalk, or peel; and never need painting. Available in six exterior colors and two interior finishes. andersenwindows.com

Cont. page 148



Who really cares about door details no one might ever see?



Jeremiah Miller of our Walnut Creek, OH facility does.

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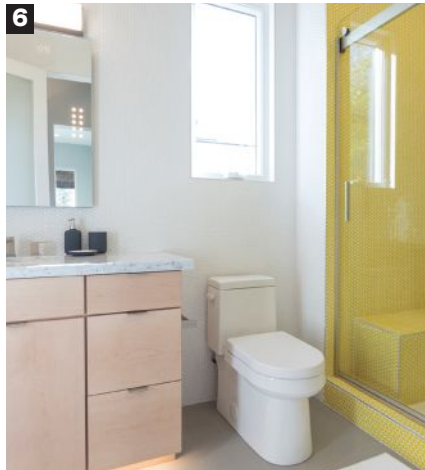
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RESPONSIVE HOME / PRODUCTS



5. LIFTMASTER

The 8550W wi-fi garage door opener lets homeowners operate and monitor their garage door from their smartphones. With Security+ 2.0, MyQ technology, battery back-up, and a timer-to-close feature, the opener offers ease of access, and works with some home automation platforms. liftmaster.com

6. GERBER PLUMBING FIXTURES

The Wicker Park contemporary one-piece toilet has a powerful,

clean gravity flush thanks to the Fluidmaster flush valve. A Fluidmaster 400a fill valve refills the tank quietly. Wicker Park's sleek lines lend a modern aesthetic to baths and powder rooms. gerber.com

7. JELD-WEN

Available in a variety of styles, panel and glass configurations, wood species, and finishes, use Aurora custom fiberglass doors to create statement entries. The authentic wood grain texture is protected by a UV-protective

stain to create a fade-resistant finish. jeld-wen.com

8. CARRIER CORP.

In addition to adjusting HVAC settings from a smart phone, the smart wireless Cor thermostat gives users a Web-based dashboard for a wealth of information. Homeowners can compare their heating and cooling energy usage to non-programmable thermostats, previous months' usage, and even the energy use of other Cor users. carrier.com

JAMES HARDIE (PG 130)

HardiePanel fiber cement vertical siding lets designers incorporate board-and-batten for added curb appeal. The Select Cedarmill profile offers both warm wood grain texture and clean, straight lines, allowing the siding to work effortlessly in modern or traditional. Choose from 14 ColorPlus finishes that work in combination for coordinated exterior color palettes, or opt for primed boards ready for paint. jameshardie.com

ELDORADO STONE (PG 131)

Modular stone sizes and a clean, dry-stack installation give Cut Coarse Stone the look and feel of authentic Turkish limestone. The profile brings together a muted color palette and linear-style installation with a highly textural edge that brings movement and depth to the home. Suitable for both exterior and interior projects. eldoradostone.com

DUPONT BUILDING INNOVATIONS (PG 131)

Multifunctional Tyvek StuccoWrap features a specially engineered surface texture designed for use with traditional and synthetic stucco. When used in a two-layer system with Tyvek HomeWrap, StuccoWrap offers benefits of water and moisture management, as well as air barrier functionality, and helps reduce cracking in the scratch coat. Used on its own as a drainage plane, StuccoWrap helps channel moisture out of the wall assembly. dupont.com

WESTERN WINDOW SYSTEMS

(PG 134) Engineered to stack against side walls, Series 9500 Bi-Fold doors can be used to create openings up to 30 feet wide to take advantage of indoor/outdoor living. The panels measure up to 12 feet tall and feature narrow stiles and a concealed locking system to maximize glass expanse. westernws.com

Cont. page 150

Retirement party.



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Coming Spring 2016



Walls, reimagined.

CertainTeed
SAINT-GOBAIN
Gypsum

RESPONSIVE HOME / PRODUCTS



9. PAVESTONE CO.

The Panorama Combo Series from Pavestone brings the look and texture of vintage slate to patios, driveways, and elsewhere. The pavers are made from a no-slump concrete mix with an average compressive strength of 8,000 psi and only 5% absorption or less to minimize the effects of damaging freeze-thaw cycles. Available in three DemiCombo and three SupraCombo sizes and a variety of natural colorways. pavestone.com

10. SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC / SQUARE D

The HEPD 80 Home Electronics Protective Device provides whole-house surge protection in a compact, affordable package. Installed in a home's load center, the HEPD 80 protects devices that can't be plugged into surge protectors, such as large appliances and HVAC systems. It also provides a first line of defense for sensitive electronics that are already plugged into surge protectors. schneider-electric.us

11. RINNAI

With an energy factor up to 0.96, Ultra Series tankless water heaters deliver the maker's most energy-efficient performance. The condensing design uses two heat exchangers to maximize heating value and enhance reliability while reducing maintenance issues. An integrated recirculation pump and internal bypass line in RUR models provide fast hot water with or without a dedicated return line. Available in five sizes and two installation options. rinnai.us

WEYERHAEUSER (PG 136)

Microllam LVL is a versatile solution for a variety of applications. Headers and beams can be built up on site, reducing heavy lifting and improving installation speed with little to no waste. Part of the Trus Joist product line, Microllam LVL is dimensionally stable and resists warping, splitting, and shrinking. weyerhaeuser.com

WHIRLPOOL CORP. (PG 137)

Offering a combined 10 cubic feet of capacity, the 30-inch double wall oven features the V2 vertical dual-fan convection system and Jenn-Air Culinary Center. A soft, auto-close door, halogen lighting, a telescoping glide rack, and three trim options make this oven a distinctive choice. whirlpool.com

UPONOR (PG 138)

Uponor's PEX plumbing brings hot and cold water to all wet areas of both Responsive Homes. The maker's system uses flexible crosslinked polyethylene (PEX) tubing and ProPEX expansion fittings that make installation smooth in new construction, remodel, and retrofit applications. uponor.com

SHERWIN-WILLIAMS (PG 139)

Emerald interior paint is durable and eco-friendly. The formulation prevents stains from penetrating, and resists blistering, peeling, chalking, and fading. ColorCast Eco Toners won't change the thickness or consistency of the paint or add VOCs to the lines of 1,500 colors. Custom color-matching is also available. sherwin-williams.com

GO TOUR BY AVID RATINGS

Avid Ratings uses data to help builders create loyal customers with surveys, training, and now the new GoTour platform. Using iBeacon technology, customers can use the GoTour app to interact with model homes, view videos of the home's construction, learn about finish and upgrade options, and more. avidratings.com



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SOUND OF INDUSTRY EXPERTS WE IN ON 2016'S QUESTIONS

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...

As the calendar turns to 2016, the industry faces a number of important questions about the best ways to build, the best products to use, and the best plan of attack for this part of the economic cycle.

BUILDER talked to a host of home building experts about how builders should evaluate these important questions.

BY LES SHAVER

What is the most important step builders can take, given economic restraints, to build resilient homes?

“The roof is your home’s first line of defense against many natural disasters, including windstorms, hail, wildfire, and severe winter weather. Post-event research has shown the cost of interior damage can be three to nine times greater than the cost of repairing the roof. Your roof system has to work together to help protect your home from the ravages of Mother Nature.”

Tim Reinhold

Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety

“Assess the vulnerabilities that may exist at the building site, including flooding, earthquake, wildfire, winter storms. Develop a mitigation plan for the greatest threats and design homes to keep homeowners safe in the event of an extended power outage.”

Alex Wilson

Resilient Design Institute

What is the biggest step politicians or the industry could take to ease the labor burden?

“Increase the focus on efficiency gains that allow us to get more done with the same number of people. Too many resources are lost waiting for something to be done or fixing something. Some examples include poor design, jobsite readiness, and jobsite damage.”

Tony Callahan

Callahan Consulting Group

“People want to work for managers they respect and admire. The main reason people leave jobs is because of their manager. Successful builders must have an inordinate share of the best workers. Money will play a role, but the manager will play a greater role.”

Martin Freedland

Berke Consulting

WHAT'S THE KEY FOR UNLOCKING MILLENNIAL DEMAND?

“Companies have to understand that there are new touch points. This generation spends money wisely; they don’t have a lot and also have many tools for smart shopping. They want a connection that makes products and services relevant to their lifestyle.”

Susan Yashinsky

Sphere Trending

WHAT IS THE ONE STEP THE INDUSTRY NEEDS TO TAKE TO GET PRODUCTS TO THE JOBSITE MORE EFFICIENTLY?

“Gaining visibility to your house costs at the SKU level enables myriad cost management strategies that are impossible if you only focus on managing contracts, and it requires a high level of trust among each entity of the supply chain. This trust brings to light some of the things we do that cost others money.”

Ken Pinto
Kenzai USA

“The biggest impediment to the efficient delivery of products to the jobsite is the lack of product-level detail of what actually needs to be delivered. The biggest step that could be taken would be to adopt a process that includes product specificity and systems integration from the onset of activity.”

Felix Vasquez
Hyphen Solutions

What is the N
step builders
take to weath
the next rece
whether it co
next year or in
five years?

No. 1 can er ssion, mes

“The most important thing home builders can do is spread out their debt maturities and refinance, where possible, through longer-term fixed rate debt at these current attractive low rates. Historically, if you look at home builders who got in trouble, it was typically due to the right side of the balance sheet. There were a lot of impairments on land and there was a significant price correction. Also, the duration of the land extended because the market slowed so significantly. With going out of business risk, the liability structure is really the key. So managing liabilities prudently by spreading them out is important. That is what I would focus on as priority No. 1. So you look at the maturity schedule and you identify the near-term costs of debt repurchase if that’s needed.”

Jade Rahmani

Keefe, Bruyette & Woods

“The primary action builders can take is to reduce land exposure. This action can take several forms and should likely include all of the following: less outright land buying, shorter land deals, less raw land and more finished lot buying, utilizing land bankers to off-load risk, and greater use of options on friendly terms and non-recourse joint ventures. All this demands the builder become a much more efficient vertical builder, which is the biggest impediment to builders implementing all of the above.”

Stephen East

Evercore ISI

WILL THE MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS PACE OF THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS CONTINUE INTO 2016?

“As we enter 2016, factors that drove the last few years of M&A are still relevant, but they are beginning to play a smaller role. At the same time other drivers are beginning to play a bigger role: Markets with limited land availability may best be expanded in or entered through an acquisition whereby both a land pipeline and management team can be brought on board. Newly minted publics and some larger regionals are using acquisitions to grow and expand their geographic footprints. Builders who survived the downturn do not want to go through another one. And this is especially true for many survivors who are in the later stages of their careers. They recognize that selling the business is probably their best, and perhaps only viable, exit strategy. It's a lot easier for estate planning to split cash than split a home building entity, and not all children are equally able. And the best time to sell is when there are potentially multiple interested buyers. Ultimately, we feel that there will still be an active M&A market in 2016, albeit perhaps not as active as the last several years and perhaps limited to fewer markets. After 2016, our crystal ball is a bit fuzzy.”

Michael Kahn

Michael P. Kahn & Associates

As builders look to unlock the entry-level market, will they venture farther out to C and D land positions in the next year?

“The answer is dependent upon each market and submarket. That being said, I personally believe the size of the millennials’ buying contingent, as well as the less-than-wealthy boomers’ appetite for new homes, is nearly overwhelming when compared to the past 10 years of housing activity. I believe those price-conscious buying groups will go to both urban/suburban infill attached homes and detached homes in C and D locations. The key for success in the C and D locations will be identifying which municipalities have the least expensive fees, so the builder can keep its fixed costs low and operate in a regulatory environment conducive to its high-volume business model.”

Jeff Handlin

Oread Capital & Development

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP BUILDERS CAN TAKE TO ENSURE THAT THE PRODUCTS THEY SPEC ARE HEALTHY, MEET CODE, AND WON'T GET THEM SUED?

“Become as knowledgeable as possible and don’t stick your head in the sand claiming ignorance.

Making informed decisions about product selection can help keep you out of court and out of expensive callback situations. Start by putting at least one person in charge of tracking information on the materials incorporated into your homes and make them responsible for communicating key information to team members. Prioritize the most common building products that could create health consequences for your customers and conduct research on potential hazards. Where possible, use independent, third-party product certification services. Ask your product distributor to take an active role in screening building products they offer. Finally, subscribe to membership services offered by BuildingGreen, Green Building Advisor, and the Healthy Building Network.”

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BUILDER PREDICTS

Bold prognostications to help you see around the next corner on land, labor, lending, and leading

BY WILLIAM GLOEDE
ILLUSTRATION BY SEBASTIEN THIBAUT

Terrorism. Civil unrest. A sharply divided nation in a presidential election year. Mediocre jobs and income growth. Record debt. Higher interest rates. All of this sounds like bad news for home building in 2016. Except that it isn't.

Based on a sampling of forecasts from, among others, the NAHB, the National Association of Realtors (NAR), Fannie Mae, and Metrostudy (owned by Hanley Wood, BUILDER's parent company), 2016 will shape up as a modestly good year for home building, continuing a trend of improvement from the market depths of 2009 that began in 2012.

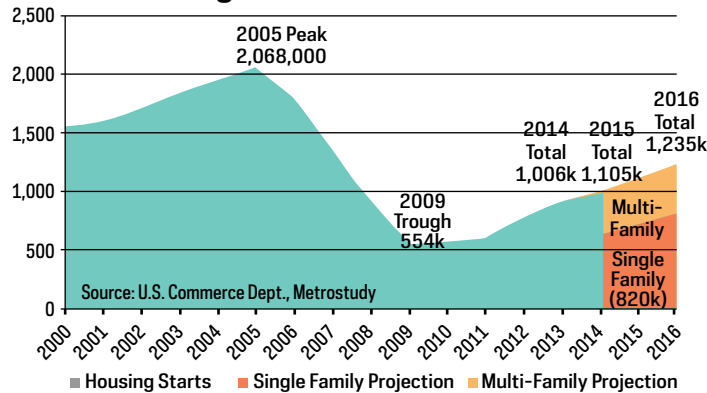
The state of the economy will have much to do with that. As 2015 entered its final month, the U.S. economy was "not doing too badly," according to economist Paul Krugman in the Dec. 7 edition of *The New York Times*. In fact, according to NAR, 2015 was "the best year since the recession."

The consensus among most economists, including Krugman, was that the Federal Reserve would raise its key overnight funds rate—the first rate hike since December 2008—possibly followed by additional increases during 2016. (Krugman argued against raising rates, citing the risk that doing so could "end the run of good economic news.")

In the days before Krugman's column was published, researchers at both Citigroup and J.P. Morgan warned of recession. Citigroup predicted a 65% chance of recession in 2016, while J.P. Morgan cited a 76% chance within the next three years. These two forecasts were at odds with most others, particularly among those that focus on housing. David Crowe, chief economist for the NAHB, predicted growth in gross domestic product (GDP) of 2.8% in 2016 and 2.7% in 2017. Crowe's counterpart at the NAR, Lawrence Yun, expected 2015 GDP to come in at a tepid 2% then rise to 2.7% in 2016.



Housing Starts 2000-2016 (in 000s)



Likewise, Fannie Mae projected GDP growth at 2.4% for 2016 in its November 2015 economic forecast. And Bill McBride, founder of the well-regarded Calculated Risk housing and finance blog, wrote of the forecasts, “Looking at the economic data, the odds of a recession in 2016 are very low (extremely unlikely in my view).”

The Fed appeared to be in agreement with the housing sector and, at press time, it was expected to act. Consequently, near the end of the year, the housing sector was bracing for an increase in mortgage rates. Ordinarily, that’s not good news for home builders and sellers, but a gradual increase could benefit the housing sector, at least in the short term, as prospective buyers enter the market to lock in lower rates before they increase further.

“It certainly will matter,” says NAHB’s Crowe. But not so much for mortgages as for other types of loans since fixed mortgage rates are tied more to yields on 10-year and 30-year Treasuries, which are more affected by inflationary expectations than they are the Federal Funds rate (the rate the Fed charges banks for overnight loans and the rate they are expected to increase). Those expectations, in Crowe’s view, are very low. He sees the Consumer Price Index (CPI) logging a 1.6% gain in 2016, rising to 1.7% in 2017.

The Fannie Mae forecast sees the Federal Funds rate rising from 0.1% at year’s end to 0.3% in the first quarter of 2016, 0.5% in the second, 0.6% percent in the third, and 0.8% in the fourth. It also projects that rate rising from 1.1% to 1.5% in 2017. It expects the CPI to log in at 2.1% in both 2016 and 2017.

Where will rates go? Fannie projects that 30-year fixed-rate mortgages that meet its guidelines will average 4% percent in 2016, up from 3.8% in 2015. NAHB comes in at 4.5% in 2016 and 5.5% in 2017 for all fixed-rate mortgages, while NAR expects rates to climb to 4.5% by the end of 2016. Adjustable rate mortgages, which are a sharply lower percentage of originations than they were during the bubble years, will average roughly a percentage point less, with five-year adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs) at 3.2% and one-year ARMs at 2.8% in 2016, according to Fannie Mae. Mort-

gage originations, meantime, are expected to drop from 1.71 million in 2015 to 1.40 million in 2016, almost entirely due to a decline in refinance loans. Purchase-only loans are expected to rise from 923,000 in 2015 to 953,000 in 2016, according to Fannie.

There should be plenty of money looking for a home, meaning mortgages should become easier to obtain for many. With much of the global economy in slowdown if not outright recession, and the dollar strong versus other currencies, money is flowing from overseas to the relative safety of the U.S. economy. “We are benefitting from foreign investment,” Crowe says. “I don’t think that is going to change regardless of what the Fed does.” Beyond that, higher rates mean more potential profit for lenders, which helps mitigate fear of risk.

Climbing Starts

NAHB sees housing starts rising from 1.109 million in 2015 to 1.258 million in 2016, with new-home sales rising from 508,000 to 641,000. That is just about half what sales were in the peak year of 2005, but edging ever closer to what the group sees as a normal annual sales volume of 800,000 to 850,000. Single-family starts, Crowe says, should come in around 713,000 for 2015 and rise to 875,000 in 2016. (The difference in starts and sales is attributable to homes built to order on land belonging to the owner.)

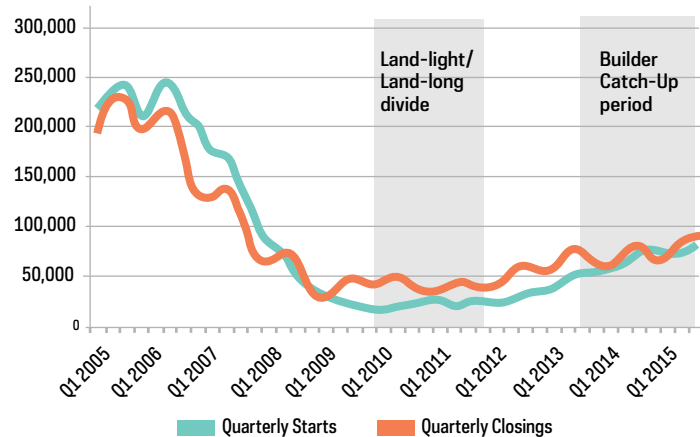
Fannie numbers differ a bit, with the projection for total starts to end 2015 at 1.116 million (710,000 of them single-family), rising to 1.232 million and 827,000, respectively, in 2016. NAR’s predictions are in the same ballpark at roughly 1.1 million total starts in 2015, rising to 1.3 million in 2016. However, NAR puts new-home sales at 505,000 in 2015 and 590,000 in 2016.

Metrostudy’s outlook is closer to Fannie Mae, calling for total starts of 1.235 million in 2016, with single-family up 11% to 820,000, according to chief economist Bradley Hunter. Prices, on the other hand, will encounter headwinds: “The pace of increase in new-home prices has been extremely strong, but will slow in the next couple of years,”

“Entry-level demand will finally increase. The only difference is that entry-level will no longer be synonymous with ‘first-time’ home buyers.”

— **Bradley Hunter**,
chief economist, Metrostudy

Quarterly Lot Deliveries & Starts



Hunter says. “The spread between new and resale home prices has become quite large, and higher mortgage rates are in our future. Both of these factors will create a drag on home price increases going forward.”

There could be other challenges. NAHB’s Crowe says he is wary of “black swans,” or unforeseen events that could act to disrupt the global and/or domestic economies. Moreover, he adds, “What scares me the most is inconsistent expansion of employment.” In its annual housing forecast, issued in late October, the NAHB noted that total U.S. employment of 142 million in 2015 exceeded the previous peak of 138 million in 2008; however, that job growth has been heavily concentrated in the service sector, which lags goods-producing enterprise in wages.

On that note, Mark Boud, senior vice president at Metrostudy, believes improvement is ahead. “Household income growth, which has been relatively stagnant for years, will finally begin to rise fairly dramatically during the next 12 to 36 months,” he says. “Whereas household income growth has been far below 2% for the past few years, income growth will surge to at or near 3% annually during the next few years. This improvement correlates with a tightening labor pool, stronger economic growth, and higher productivity.”

Turning Trends

As home building enters 2016, it appears that the “new normal” that established itself in the aftermath of the housing crash is going to start looking more like the old normal in some ways but continue rapid, perhaps even radical, change

in others. In its annual forecast, the NAHB devoted considerable attention to survey results from Trulia housing economist Ralph McLaughlin that indicate half of all Americans prefer suburban and rural areas to urban living.

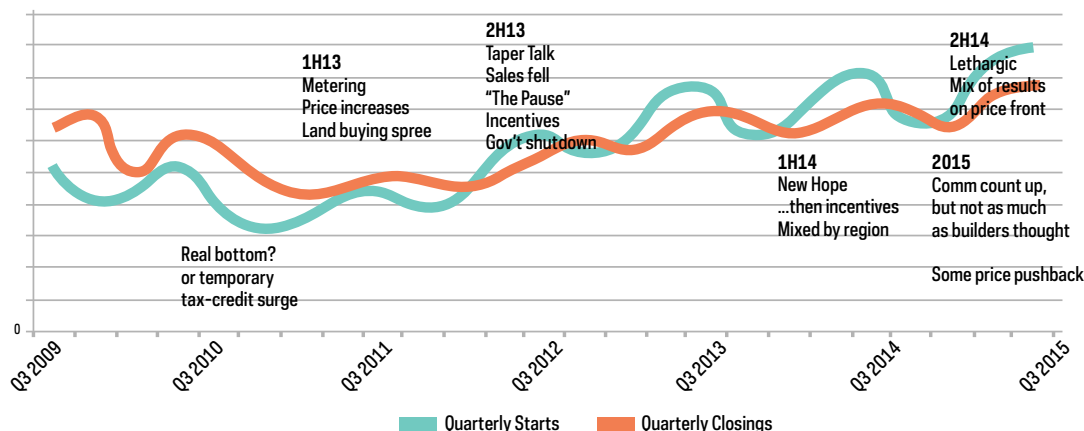
“The return to the urban area was a momentary excitement,” says Crowe of the Trulia data. “The idea of living in suburbs will return, both for affordability reasons ... and [the fact that] job locations are spread out everywhere.”

There is a problem with that, however, and it is land. Builders are running low on finished lots, owing to the time-lag between land entitlement and breaking ground. As Crowe explains, it takes four years or more to complete that process, and four years ago, lot acquisition was still mired in the downturn. He says he does see a gradual improvement in supply in 2016 and beyond.

Regarding available land, Metrostudy’s Hunter sees a big change on the horizon. “‘C’ is the new ‘B’ for builder project locations,” he says. “In the next two or three years, I expect that locations in markets all around the country that used to be considered subpar will now be in the running, and some of them will actually become the ‘B’ or even ‘A’ locations of the future.”

Still, according to Trulia research, 25% of those surveyed said they prefer urban living. Metrostudy’s Boud sees a trend toward smaller, more efficient housing options to serve that demographic. “Micro housing will be increasingly explored in urban areas of the country, both in rental and for-sale formats,” he says. “Extreme price levels in many urban areas will push many major cities to ease restrictions on unit sizes, allowing for condominiums to be built down to 225

Housing Starts versus Absorption



square feet. Demand is high from foreign-born purchasers who come from areas, mainly Asian markets, that are acclimated to such living conditions. But demand will grow from younger 'techies' drawn to the urban core. These young workers are well paid and are increasingly drawn to real estate investments, partly due to the poor return in other investments. Though this trend will be more of a 'fad' in many markets, some urban markets will increasingly employ this type of housing to bring workers to jobs, ease traffic congestion, and enhance affordability."

A bright note for builders will be a continued easing of the logjam that occurred in the materials sector as housing began its recovery in 2012. "The world economy continues to be weak," Crowe says. "The U.S. is not going to have to compete with other countries for building materials."

The materials sector is still in transition. Tobias Morrison, Metrostudy's national sales manager for the building products manufacturers' channel, says, "Labor continues to be the biggest challenge on the supply side of the equation. While most manufacturers are desperate to get back to 1.5 million housing starts, the truth is that many of them do not have enough skilled labor to meet that demand."

Manufacturers also are shifting focus. "More and more, the supply chain is realizing that the old way of selling product through builder rebates and personal relationships is not proving to be effective in the new now," says Morrison. "Instead, they are shifting gears from simply offering a view of products and rebates to helping the builders understand their consumer targets and how the products going into the home can help them attract their ideal consumer."

Labor will continue to challenge builders as well. "Labor capacity dislocations, disruptions, mismatches, and asynchrony have not gone away, nor are they likely to recede," says John McManus, editorial director of the Residential Content Group at Hanley Wood. "What we'd actually predict for 2016 is a decisive beginning of new disciplines, expertise, and practice that gets more to the heart of the labor capacity constraint issue. What that all comes down to is what price needs to be fairly paid for the accomplishment of a job."

Regarding product, big changes loom in what is likely the fastest growing segment in home building as millennials finally enter the home-buying market. "Entry-level demand will finally increase," says Metrostudy's Hunter. "The only difference is that entry-level will no longer be synonymous with 'first-time' home buyers. Many of the buyers buying entry-level new homes will have owned existing homes previously."

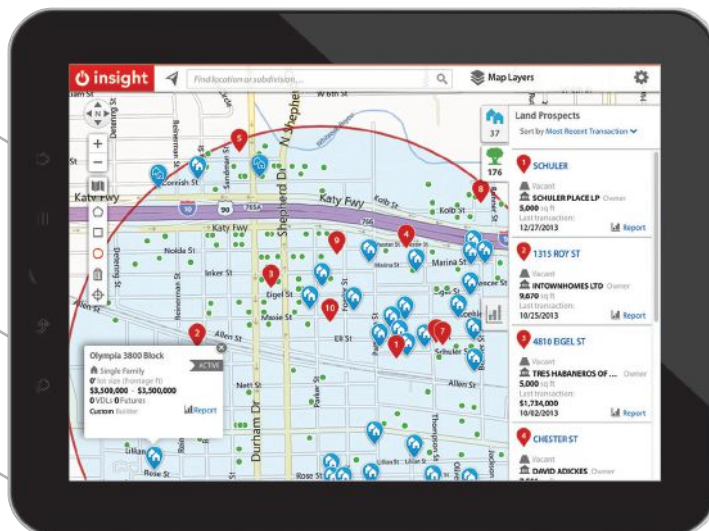
McManus sees other beneficiaries in the segment: "Our 2016 prediction is that we're going to see smaller-volume custom home builders emerge as powerful, scaled lower-price, higher-quality builders, which syncs with our sense that younger adult buyers' demands are not only for relative affordability, but 'personalization' and quality at a level that not many typical big builders find to be their comfort zone."

"Opportunity will come to companies that have processes that can scale one-offs, accommodations, variations, and flexibility," McManus continues. "Custom builders have that in their DNA, so it will be no surprise to see the volume and pace of some of those organizations looking mighty surprising." **B**

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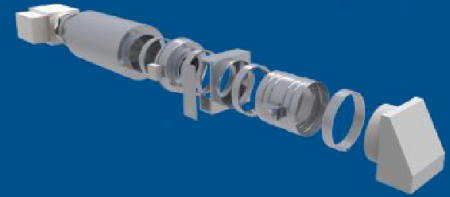
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NAHB NOTES

NAHB Chairman's Letter

Much to Celebrate

Outgoing chairman reflects on NAHB's internal and external successes in 2015



As I near the end of my term as NAHB chairman, I'm pleased to report that we scored major legislative, regulatory, and legal victories in 2015 that will keep the industry moving ahead. These wins were a team effort and demonstrate our power when we work together.

In mid-December, Congress rolled out the 2016 tax extenders and omnibus bills, which included important spending, labor, and tax provisions that will help our industry. (For more on this news, visit nahbnow.com and search for "tax extenders" and "omnibus bill.")

We also secured many wins throughout the year. For instance, we made major progress in our fight against the ill-advised "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS) rule issued by the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers. The rule went into effect on Aug. 28, but the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit enacted a nationwide stay on Oct. 9.

On the legislative side, the House of Representatives passed a bill that would require the EPA to withdraw the burdensome, confusing rule. The Senate decided against taking up similar legislation, but passed the Congressional Review Act resolution that also would require the agency to abandon the regulation.

NAHB achieved another important victory when it convinced the Army Corps of Engi-

neers to back off on sweeping new floodplain standards that could have had a dramatic impact on home building and development.

In January 2015, President Barack Obama issued an executive order to expand federal floodplain management requirements far beyond the 100-year floodplain. In response, NAHB members voiced concerns about the order's potential impact on federal permits and programs that builders and developers use. As a result of our efforts, the Army Corps will not be applying the floodplain requirements to Clean Water Act wetland permits. Similarly, FEMA will not apply the requirements to the National Flood Insurance Program, and HUD has indicated that the standard will not apply to FHA insurance of single-family mortgages.

NAHB also introduced or improved upon many programs and services in 2015. We unveiled a new website, which contains the most current and relevant content on housing and the association. We also launched the Field Representative Program, which placed staff experts in five regions across the country to help HBAs and members better leverage the federation's offerings. We're now bringing on seven more staff members—five in the field and two at NAHB headquarters.

Last year, we co-located the International Builders' Show (IBS) with other shows for the second annual Design & Construction Week. Building on this success, in 2016 we'll partner with three shows: the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show, the International Surface Event, and the International Window Coverings Expo.

We achieved all this—and more—by joining forces at the local, state, and national levels. Thanks to these efforts, NAHB members are informed, connected, and saving big while providing homes for families across the country.

I've enjoyed leading the NAHB through such a productive, successful year. I'm inspired by your commitment to this association and to our industry. Thank you for the opportunity to have served as chairman. — TOM WOODS, NAHB CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

NAHB BRIEFS

WARRANTY ADVICE

Warranty services protect customers against poor-quality construction, but how can builders protect themselves from excessive liability? The following seven tips can help.

PUT IT IN WRITING

To minimize variation in statutes and code requirements, create your own written warranty. A clearly defined warranty allows you to control warranty costs, limit liability exposure, and outline the process for dealing with warranty service issues.

HAVE AN ATTORNEY REVIEW YOUR WARRANTY

Your warranty is a contractual agreement between you and the homeowner. Even if the document was provided by a third-party warranty company, an attorney should still look it over.

ESTABLISH A FORMAL PROCESS FOR SERVICE REQUEST SUBMISSIONS

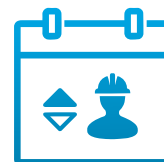
Don't accept verbal-only requests for warranty services. Require the homeowner to submit a service request form. The record should include general details of the request, as well as the date and time received.

LABOR BY THE NUMBERS



42

is the median age of a worker in the overall construction sector, according to data from the 2013 American Community Survey



9

states report a two-year higher median age for construction than the overall median age for all workers in the state: Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, New York, and Pennsylvania

Source: NAHB's Eye on Housing

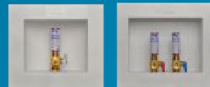


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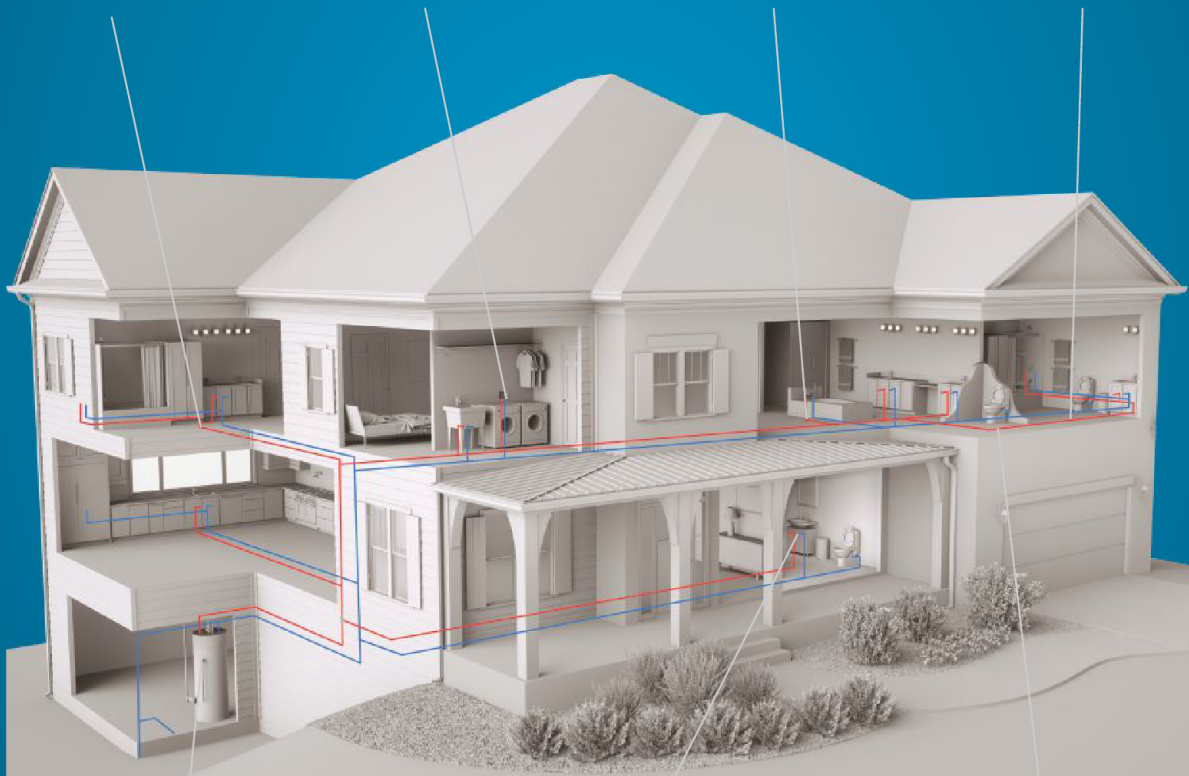
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New Year, New Site

NGBS.com provides consumers with a direct link to green builders

Home Innovation Research Labs is excited to announce the debut of NGBS.com, a new online portal that allows consumers looking for green homes to connect directly with builders of NGBS Green Certified homes.

Since the NGBS Green certification program launched in 2009, it has become the residential green certification program of choice for single- and multifamily builders and developers across the U.S.—to date, well over 10,000 single-family homes, 55,000 apartments, and 1,500 residential lots have been NGBS Green Certified. Home Innovation has always provided a diverse array of customizable materials for builders to market their NGBS Green Certified homes directly to prospective buyers and renters. Now, NGBS.com will allow Home Innovation to reach consumers more directly to connect them to NGBS Green Partners building in the neighborhoods where they want to live. The site provides a way for consumers to learn the benefits of third-party certification and NGBS green practices, and to see the beauty and diversity of NGBS Green Certified homes.

The site has paths for those who are looking to buy, rent, or remodel green. It provides details on what makes an NGBS Green Certified home different and better than comparable non-certified homes. It provides search results at the state and city level, allowing consumers to browse photos of certified homes and apartment buildings and connect directly with builders, sales offices, or remodelers. The site also allows NGBS Green Partners an independent resource where they can point prospective buyers to validate green building claims. This will help overcome the skepticism and confusion many consumers feel when they are inundated with green marketing messages that often are difficult to substantiate. It also helps buyers find homes that are truly green, in all respects, and independently verified to a consensus-based national green building rating system.

NGBS.com is sure to become the go-to site for consumers looking for a truly green living experience. Builders who are interested in getting their homes NGBS Green Certified can visit NGBS.com and click on the builder link in the upper right corner.

OBTAIN A SIGNATURE ONCE THE WORK IS COMPLETED

The technician should obtain a signature certifying that the job is done and the customer is satisfied. If they are not satisfied, that should be documented, along with explicit details for follow-up.

RESOLVE DISPUTES THROUGH A THIRD PARTY

Establish a process for settling disputes that involves an impartial third party. Many third-party warranty companies offer mediation and binding arbitration services prior to litigation.

KNOW YOUR STATE LAWS

Warranty terms vary by state. In Florida, for example, a one-year warranty is 13 months, which gives the homeowner a one-month grace period to make a claim on a warranty issue that occurs on the 365th day of ownership.

RELY ON EXPERTS

To remain impartial and above the fray, refer customer questions on material or system performance to the Residential Construction Performance Guidelines, or have a manufacturer's representative examine the problem and talk to your customer.

Defining liability limits and establishing warranty processes will save you and your business time and resources. Visit nahb.org for more tips on how to safeguard yourself and properly address liability and other legal issues.





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WHERE DO BUILDERS SHOP FOR PRODUCTS?

The NAHB recently polled builders about where they purchase home building products and whether they—or someone else—make the final decision

Home builders must find, evaluate, and purchase a long list of products and services to construct a home. Not only must they choose among different versions, prices, quantities, and qualities of the same product, but also across various providers. The builder also must decide when to allow the customer into the decision. How does anything get done?

NAHB recently asked builders where they purchase the products to build a home and whether they make the decision or leave the choice to the customer, the subcontractor, the architect, or the supplier. The findings tell a lot about the market for home building products.

Lumberyards and wholesale distributors are the primary suppliers to builders, but the products provided differ. Lumberyards provide about three-quarters of builders with dimension and engineered lumber, plywood, OSB, and housewrap. Lumberyards also supply over half of builders with trusses, trim, and millwork. About half as many builders get their trim and millwork from a wholesale distributor, although wholesale leads as the source for plumbing fixtures (42%), roofing (37%), gypsum board and electrical (38%), and roofing (37%).

Specialty retailers are the prime source for appliances and carpets (45% of builders), with wholesale distributors as the second most popular source (29% and 28%, respectively). Specialty retailers also are sourced for ceramic tile and other flooring materials (42%), with wholesale distributors close behind at 31%. Paint and countertops are obtained from specialty retailers by 40% of builders while whole-

sale distributors supply 25% of countertop orders, and manufacturers' distribution centers fulfill 19% of paint orders.

A few items have several primary sources. Nearly one-third of builders buy cabinets from a specialty retailer, but nearly a quarter buy from a wholesale distributor and over one-fifth buy direct from the factory. Builders purchase insulation from both wholesale distributors (29%) and specialty retailers (19%); 27% of builders let their subs buy the material and don't know where it comes from. Builders source tools most often from home improvement centers (43%), while 31% of builders buy tools from either a lumberyard or specialty retailer.

The more homes built, the more likely it is that the builder buys directly from the factory, from a manufacturers' distribution center, or from a wholesale distributor compared to smaller building companies. The smaller the builder, the more likely purchases come from lumberyards and specialty retailers.

The choice on where to buy tends to lie with the builder. They make over 80% of the decisions on basic construction materials such as lumber and plywood, trusses, siding, housewrap, windows, and doors. About half of builders turn to their subs for electrical supplies and HVAC equipment, and roughly one-third of builders depend on subs for the purchase of gypsum wallboard, insulation, and paint. The highest frequencies for customer selections are appliances (36% of the builders), lighting (34%), and flooring (32%). Architects are allowed choices in very few situations and at most are used by 5% of builders for engineered lumber and trusses. The supplier is allowed to choose the product for builders in 10% of the cases for engineered lumber, trusses, and plywood.

NAHB asked the same questions in 2012, but the trends have not changed significantly. Appliances are more likely to come from specialty retailers in the latest survey, and direct factory buying is slightly less likely.

Builders make most of the basic material choices and the prime providers are lumberyards. If the builder does not shift responsibility to subs in specialties like electrical, HVAC, drywall, insulation, and paint, then the builder buys from wholesale distributors. The customer gets to pick on finishing items like appliances, lighting, and flooring, but when builders choose, they buy from specialty retailers. **B**

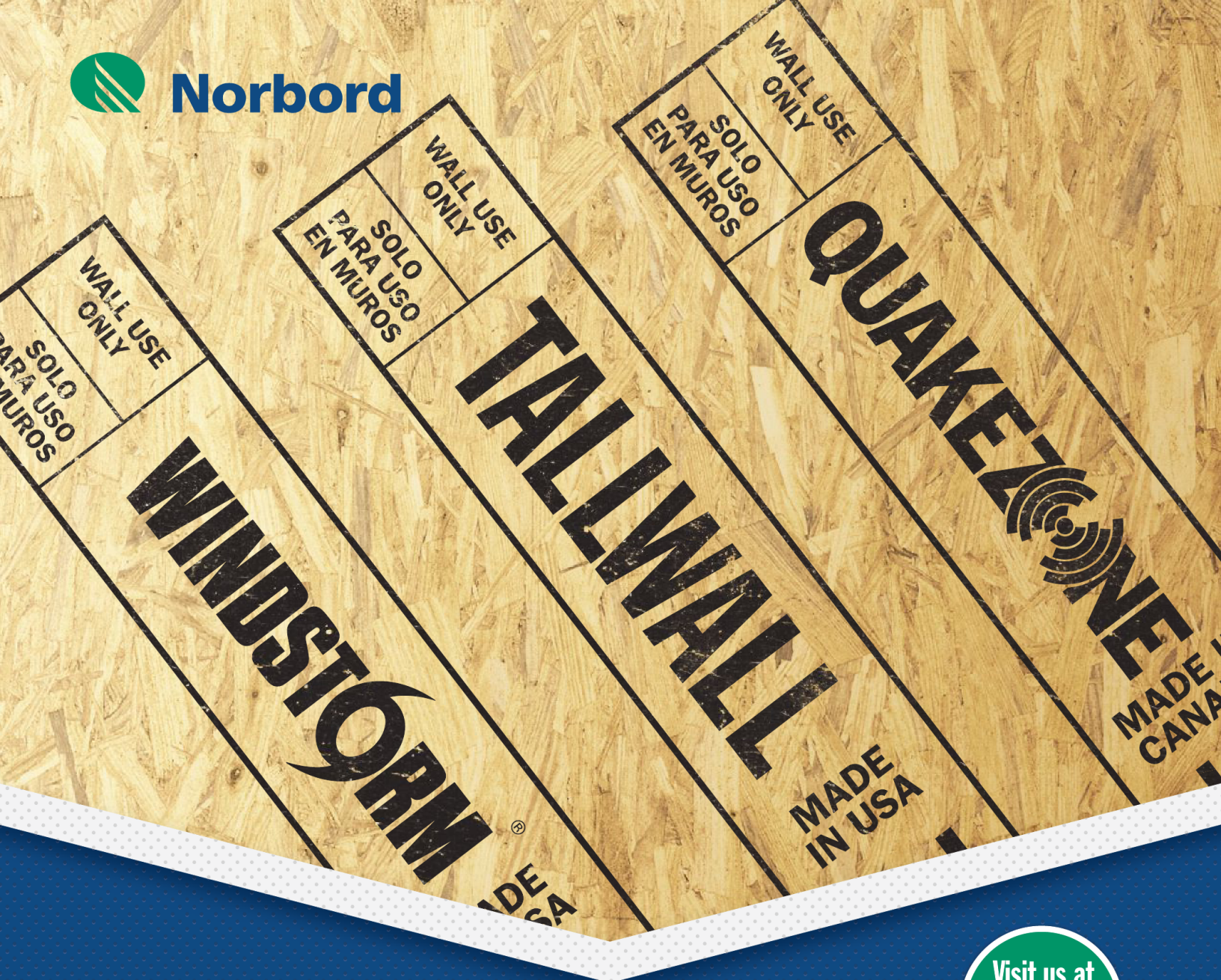


David Crowe

CHIEF ECONOMIST,
NAHB

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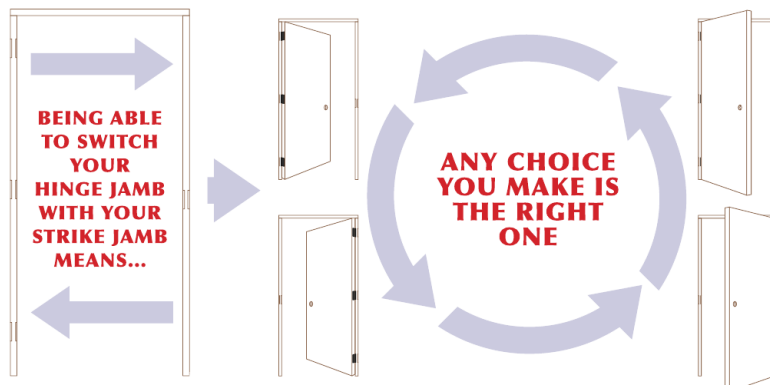
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Predictions

16 FOR '16 INSIGHTS



Housing starts increase to 1.235 million in 2016. Single-family rises 11%.

“C” lots are the new “B” lots for builder project locations. Path of growth is back.



New-home price increase pace slows. Spread between new and resale homes narrows.

Entry-level demand increases, but it isn't synonymous with first-time home buyers. Many entry-level new-home buyers will have owned resales.

With recovered equities, stable incomes, low rates, and wealthier baby boomers, the second-home/seasonal-home market grows quickly.

Micro housing gains a footing in more urban areas—rental and for-sale. Micro units bring workers to jobs, ease traffic, and enhance affordability.



Household income growth, which had been stuck below 2%, surges to 3% annually.

Labor continues to be the biggest challenge on the supply side of the equation. It will take beyond 2016 to get back to a normalized skilled-labor force.

2016 is all about the consumer from a supply chain perspective. Sell-through value to the consumer is the focus.



Consolidation heats up among manufacturers. The goal: revenues and purchasing power.

Data continue to become a way of life for building product manufacturers. The industry has passed a tipping point.



Progress occurs around information asymmetry and mutable costs as a solvable challenge.



Expect a quieter M&A deal flow—maybe 20 deals in 2016. Maybe a blockbuster, though.

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