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The welcome center at The Cannery introduces prospects to its farm-to-table lifestyle. Developed by The New Home Company, in Davis, Calif., it won the 2016 National Sales & Marketing Award for Community of the Year. PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER MAYER

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Forecasting for 2016

This is the time of the year when predictions and forecasts for the housing industry are all over the news. This year is no different in that respect, but the tenor of this year's forecasts is a little unusual.

The NAHB outlook, for example, may be the most conservative one I received. Chief economist David Crowe sees only a gradual upward trend in 2016, based on employment and economic growth, pent-up demand, affordable prices, and reasonable mortgage rates. He warns that lot, labor, and material shortages could impede the recovery, but if job growth is good, housing will continue to move forward.

Using the same positive factors and impediments as the NAHB, Fitch Ratings draws a slightly more bullish conclusion, and expects home sales to increase by 20 percent and single-family starts to improve by 14 percent. Dodge Data sees a 20 percent jump in starts this year and PNC simply calls single-family home building "a key driver of economic growth in 2016." Goldman Sachs' forecast may be the most positive of the lot, saying: "We expect that 2016 will mark the end of the post-crisis housing market in several respects," citing slowing housing prices, a rising share of single-family housing starts, and stabilization of the homeownership rate.

So, who is right and what can we expect? A repeat of last year's incremental growth or the end of the post-crisis housing market? Perhaps we should look within our own industry for answers.

Last May, in a story on industry consolidation in our Housing Giants issue, Jody Kahn, senior vice president, John Burns Real Estate Consulting, said regarding recent IPOs, "newly minted [publics] are very much in an aggressive growth mode because they have to demonstrate that they are in fact national or at least multiregional and that they can manage growth across geography." This certainly rings true for newer publics such as Houston-based LGI, which has acquired whole companies as well as large portfolios of land in far-flung

locations such as Charlotte, Nashville, and Denver.

But established publics are in acquisition mode as well: Last month, Taylor Morrison announced its purchase of Atlanta-based Acadia Homes, just eight months after buying another Atlanta-area builder, JEH Homes. The company also took on three divisions of Bensalem, Pa.-based Orleans Homes—in Charlotte, Raleigh, and Chicago—last July. PulteGroup will close its deal to acquire Atlanta's John Wieland Homes and Neighborhoods in the first quarter of this year. Columbus, Ohio's M/I Homes expanded into Minneapolis when it closed on Hans Hagen Homes in December. And the largest M&A play in the last six months was, of course, the merger of Ryland Homes and Standard Pacific, giving the combined company, CalAtlantic, a reach into 41 major markets in 17 states.

Add to that the infusion of cash from Sumitomo Forestry America into a large private company, Mid-Atlantic-based Dan Ryan Builders, following similar moves by Sumitomo, which has taken a stake in two other regional powerhouses, Texas-based Gehan Homes and Bloomfield Homes, and you begin to see an industry gearing up for expansion. A recent M&A report by PriceWaterhouseCoopers

that looks at all industries seems to confirm that supposition. PWC partners Martyn Curragh and Neil Dhar note that "Long-standing competitors are now combining for increased scale and domination," adding, "In an era where growth is challenged and competition is relentless, there is a heightened recognition that if you don't transform, scale, and evolve, growth will be non-existent."

And growth is, without a doubt, the name of the game for these companies. If I had to bet on who has a better shot at knowing what will happen in the housing market this year, my money's on them.

Denise Dersin, Editorial Director
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Is this the end of the post-crisis housing market?

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Talk of the Town

This month we profile winners of the 2016 Nationals, a competition sponsored by the NAHB's National Sales & Marketing Council, which salutes excellence in sales and marketing in home building. Winners were announced last month at a gala in Las Vegas held during the International Builders' Show. As you'll see starting on page 36, the top entries are a varied mix. A master planned community in Northern California that capitalizes on its hometown's status as a world-renowned agricultural hub. A luxury home builder in Atlanta that uses compelling imagery to speak to buyers' highest aspirations. An appealing welcome center near Dallas that packs a soft sell irresistible to buyers.

Fashion and home building are unlikely bedfellows, but we profile one development in which the combination worked magic. Art Shoppe Lofts + Condos, in Toronto, partnered with couturier Karl Lagerfeld to crack that city's competitive condo market with a social media campaign that hit a bullseye with target buyers and raised the building's profile. Lagerfeld is nothing if not a quirky presence (his Siamese cat, Choupette, has her own Wikipedia page, plus 49,000 followers on Twitter and 77,000 followers on Instagram @ChoupettesDiary). The Lagerfeld alliance was leveraged with an invitation-only opening bash for which the designer made his first-ever visit to Canada. Art Shoppe Lofts + Condos became a trending topic on Twitter (#lobbiesbykarl), generating more than 1,000 tagged photos, 1.5 million impressions, and buzz that persisted long after the last selfies were snapped. In other words, it was the talk of the town.

Whether you follow fashion or don't give a fig about it doesn't matter. More important is this: Whether you use social media or find it a nuisance, it's the modern mode of hearing it through the grapevine. Like it or not, the pass-it-on nature of Tweets, Instagram shots, and Facebook posts is a testament to the enduring power of word of mouth.

While reaching some markets demands hip and trendy, touching others calls for maximizing warm and friendly. As winners of the 2016 Nationals Sales and Marketing Awards show, it's a matter of knowing your audience, refining your message, getting it out there—and delivering homes that buyers crave.

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WHETHER VIA SOCIAL MEDIA OR IN-PERSON
CONVERSATION, THERE'S UNDENIABLE
POWER IN WORD OF MOUTH

By Michael Chamernik, Associate Editor

KITCHEN & BATH

New Certification Process for NKBA

In an effort to improve industry standards while simplifying the certification process, the National Kitchen & Bath Association has altered its design certification program. The group introduced the new Certified Kitchen & Bath Designer (CKBD) certification, which calls for more rigorous continuing education unit (CEU) requirements and more convenient access to testing. All changes will go into effect on July 1, 2016.

The CKBD is a combination of two of the association's existing certifications: Certified Kitchen Designer (CKD) and Certified Bath Designer (CBD). The new certification will identify a CKBD expert through a single, consolidated exam.

Individuals who already hold CKD and CBD certifications will get to keep them, but those exams will no longer be offered. Instead, to earn the new certification, professionals who already have a CKD need only take the bath portion of the CKBD, and those who have a CBD need only take the kitchen component.

"The NKBA recognizes the importance of maintaining professional development and design certifications, and we want to strengthen these standards and, at the same time, allow students and non-certified members better access to these training resources," Bill Darcy, NKBA CEO, said in a statement.

Another change is that NKBA members will now be required to earn 20 CEU hours for every two-year cycle, up from 12 hours. The increase was recommended by the association's Certification Task Force.

Candidates who want to apply for NKBA certifications can now do it

year-round at more than 300 testing facilities in the U.S. and Canada. Also, students participating in an NKBA college program can now take the Associate Kitchen & Bath Designer (AKBD) exam before they graduate, provided they have completed at least 85 percent of their kitchen and bath coursework.

TECHNOLOGY

Tight Tech Budgets Stifle Industry



According to "The 4th Annual Construction Technology Report," undersized technology budgets are affecting the construction industry. Published by JBKnowledge, a firm that develops technology solutions for the construction, risk management, and insurance industries, with input from two Texas A&M construction science faculty members, Ben Bigelow and James Benham, the report says that the reduced funding has led to a host of issues, including lack of industry innovation and poor cloud security.

The survey reveals how well builders integrate data across construction software, which software products they use, and how they are adapting to new technology such as drones, 3-D scanners and printers, and augmented reality devices.

One theme uncovered by the report is understaffing. A little more than 63 percent of construction companies have an IT staff of five employees or fewer, in part because existing employees are absorbing IT functions as part of their current jobs. The report also

found that 67 percent of companies lack an R&D department.

But the research results are not all bleak. There are companies already taking strides. "Some progressive companies are looking into drones, virtual reality, 3-D scanning, and more," Benham said in a statement. "A minority of companies are actually investing in R&D departments and have turned their technology departments into revenue generators."

Along with raising budgets, the report recommends that builders stop using spreadsheets and start integrating technology-based research into their work culture. The survey, which consisted of responses from 2,044 construction professionals who manage risk, projects, and building information modeling, can be a useful resource for students who are assuming leadership roles.

"As the industry adopts new technology and learns the advantages it can provide, students increasingly need to have an understanding of and exposure to these tools to be prepared to contribute when they go to work," Bigelow said in a statement. "Our department's involvement in the survey helps us know what technology students need to learn."

LABOR FORCE

Survey: Construction Workers Aging

Data from the United States Census Bureau's 2013 American Community Survey (ACS) reveals that the average age for U.S. workers in the construction sector is 42—one year older than the average age of the overall workforce.

The 2013 survey even breaks down median ages and differences in age between construction workers and the overall workforce by state. Median ages in construction are higher in the Northeast and Midwest, while Maine,

Connecticut, and New Hampshire skew oldest, with an average age of 45. In Connecticut, Illinois, Florida, and six other states, construction workers are two years older than the median age of the states' entire workforce.

The states with the youngest median ages are Utah, at 36, and North Dakota, at 38. North and South Dakota are the only states where construction workers are two years younger than the median workforce age.

The survey also includes median ages for workers employed in different jobs in the construction sector.

Management positions and highly-skilled jobs, such as carpenters and boilermakers, typically have median ages above 40, while those employed as helpers and laborers (roofers, fence erectors, insulation workers) are younger than 40.

Paperhangers and construction and building inspectors were found to be the oldest. The median age for paperhangers is 53, and is 52 for inspectors. Next oldest is first-line construction supervisors and managers (47), construction managers (47), construction equipment operators (46), and highway maintenance workers (46). Explosives workers are the youngest subcategory, at 31, along with helpers in construction trades, also at 31.

These figures could be considered a concern for an industry already facing labor shortages. "Given ongoing labor access issues in the industry, attracting the next generation of construction workers will be a challenge the sector will face in the coming years," Na Zhao, a housing policy economist at the NAHB, wrote in a blog post.

SUSTAINABILITY

DOE Rules Change

Along with regulations on vending machines, pre-rinse spray valves used

in commercial kitchens, and commercial rooftop heating and cooling, the Department of Energy has finalized new rules for ceiling fan light kits (CFLKs) and boilers.

The rule changes, issued in the last week of 2015, finalize a list of 13 total rule changes for the year. Every six years, the DOE is required by the National Appliance Energy Conservation

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[MARKET UPDATE]

Act to review and update appliance and equipment energy-efficiency standards. The goal is to create standards that lead to energy savings in a cost-effective way.

The DOE said in a report that changing

the conservation standards for CFLs will cost manufacturers \$6.4 million, but that it will save consumers \$500 million to \$660 million on CFLs purchased from 2019 to 2048. Light kits will be required



to meet a minimum efficacy determined by their lumen output.

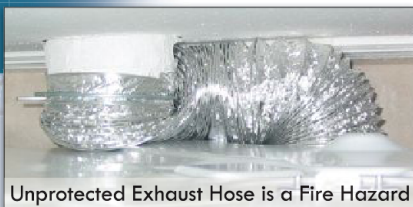
The new standards will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, saving 3.4 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, 2.6 thousand tons of sulfur dioxide, 5.2 tons of nitrogen oxides, and 11.2 thousand tons of methane over the same time frame. For CO₂ emissions, a 3.1 million metric ton reduction through 2030 would be the equivalent of the emissions from electricity use by 400,000 homes, according to the DOE.

As for boilers and furnaces, the DOE said that revisions include clarifying the components of the burner electrical power input term, clarifying the testing of units intended to be installed without a return duct, and adopting a verification standard for determining whether a boiler uses an automatic means of adjusting water temperature.

"While many households would benefit from condensing technology, many would be worse off due to difficult and costly installations or [because they are] in relatively warm climates," wrote Lauren Urbanek, senior energy policy advocate at Natural Resources Defense Council, in a blog post for NRDC Switchboard. "This rule comes with relatively modest energy savings for those homeowners (0.16 quads over the next 30 years, which is equivalent to the total annual energy use of about a million homes). Homeowners collectively will save between \$350 million and \$1.2 billion in energy costs over that same time frame." **PB**

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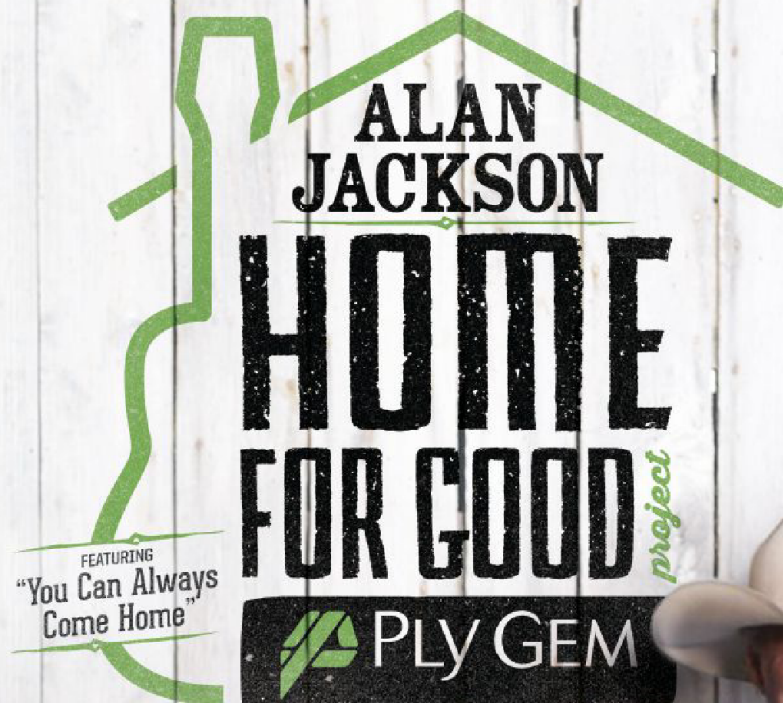
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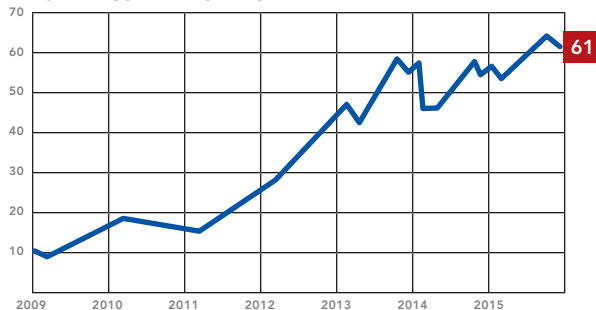
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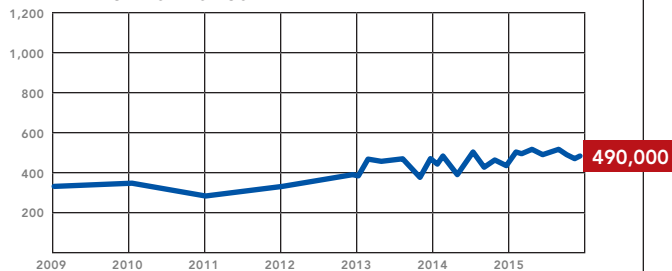
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HOUSING MARKET SNAPSHOT

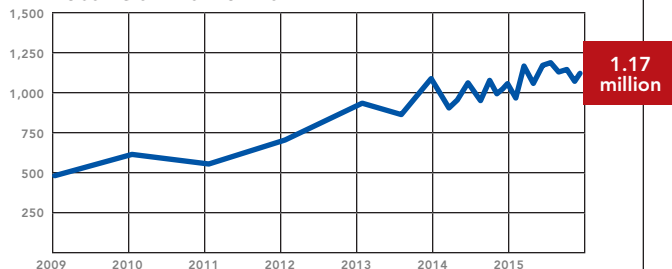
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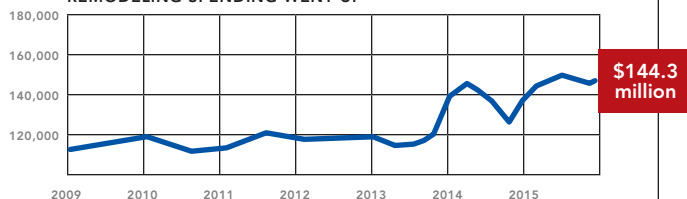
NEW-HOME SALES ROSE



HOUSING STARTS INCREASED



REMODELING SPENDING WENT UP



According to the NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Index, builder confidence declined in December, falling to 61. November new-home sales rose 4.3 percent from October to an annual rate of 490,000, and housing starts increased 10.5 percent during the same period to an annual rate of 1.17 million. Remodeling spending in November rose to \$144.3 million.

CONGRESS CLOSES 2015 WITH HOUSING TAX PROVISIONS

President Obama has signed into law a \$622 billion tax package that permanently renews certain housing tax priorities while providing a two-year retroactive renewal for others through the end of tax year 2016.

Congress regularly acts to extend scores of temporary tax provisions known as tax extenders, which are often renewed for just one or two years at a time. This legislation would make many of those temporary provisions permanent.

The National Association of Home Builders pushed for a number of key tax provisions that have now been signed into law, including:

Low Income Housing Tax Credit. The bill permanently sets the credit rate at 9 percent for housing credits used for financing new construction and substantial rehabilitation. When credit rates decline, less equity is available for developments, so keeping a permanent minimum 9 percent floor on federal housing credits is a victory for affordable housing. This will provide all developers with much-needed certainty when planning future projects.

Section 179 Expensing. The tax package permanently extends the small-business expensing limitation and phase-out amounts for Section 179. Current law allows small businesses to immediately write off \$25,000 of qualifying property, which is phased out for total investments above \$200,000. The bill increases this limit to \$500,000 for qualified property with a \$2 million phase-out and indexes both for inflation.

Residential Energy Efficiency Tax Credit (25D). This program offers a 30 percent tax credit for the installation of solar panels, wind turbines, geothermal heat pumps, and fuel cells in new or existing homes. The credit is also uncapped, so all qualifying expenses may be claimed. The bill will extend but phase out just the credit for solar starting in 2020, when the credit will fall to 26 percent, dropping to 22 percent in 2021, before expiring in 2022.

Credit for Energy-Efficient New Homes (45L). This provides builders a \$2,000 tax credit for exceeding energy standards by 50 percent. The base energy code is the 2006 International Energy Conservation Code plus supplements. The 45L tax credit is extended through 2016 and can be claimed by both for-sale and for-rent homes of three stories or less. Section 45L is expected to save home builders \$361 million for tax year 2015. **PB**

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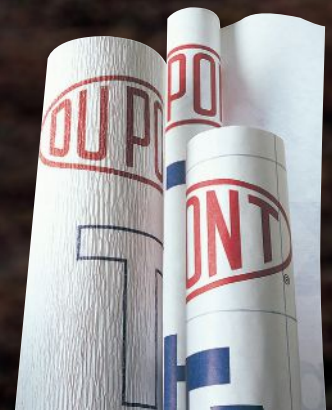
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Circle 761



CLIENT BUDGETS, HOUSE SIZE, AND COST CONTINUE TO GROW

Home builders and architects share their observations on house statistics and buyer demographics

By Mike Beirne, Senior Editor

It's little surprise in a post-recession housing market that builders, architects, and designers in *Professional Builder's* House/Buyer survey would cite rising labor and materials expenses as factors pushing up their cost per square foot. Now that residential construction is about three years into recovery, survey participants noted in open text comments that they are more recently contending with increases across the board for all their materials and labor.

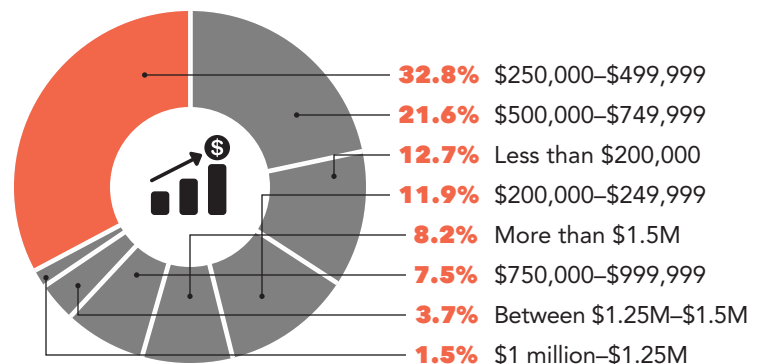
Survey participants also responded that they are building more high-performance homes and that the high-end material and labor for those projects is more expensive. Builders frequently mentioned that there is a shortage of skilled trades in their markets, so subs are bidding higher prices. Among the trades mentioned where cost increases have been acute are drywallers, electricians, concrete and site-prep workers, finish carpenters, and painters.

Some builders and architects also added that house designs are more complex and require specialized labor, associated materials, and additional structural engineering. Another common observation about rising cost is that buyers expect more amenities in their homes. Additional information about cost, house size, and buyer profiles is in the charts that follow.

METHODOLOGY & RESPONDENT INFORMATION

THIS SURVEY WAS DISTRIBUTED BETWEEN DEC. 23, 2015, AND JAN. 5, 2016, TO A RANDOM SAMPLE OF PROFESSIONAL BUILDER'S PRINT AND DIGITAL READERS. NO INCENTIVE WAS OFFERED. BY CLOSING DATE, A TOTAL OF 135 ELIGIBLE READERS RETURNED COMPLETED SURVEYS. RESPONDENT BREAKDOWN BY DISCIPLINE: 37 PERCENT CUSTOM HOME BUILDER; 20.7 PERCENT ARCHITECT/DESIGNER ENGAGED IN HOME BUILDING; 14.8 PERCENT DIVERSIFIED BUILDER/REMODELER; 10.4 PERCENT PRODUCTION BUILDER FOR MOVE-UP/MOVE-DOWN BUYERS; 8.1 PERCENT PRODUCTION BUILDER FOR FIRST-TIME BUYERS; 2.2 PERCENT LUXURY PRODUCTION BUILDER; 1.5 PERCENT MANUFACTURED, MODULAR, LOG HOME, OR SYSTEMS BUILDER; AND 5.2 PERCENT OTHER. APPROXIMATELY 48.1 PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS SOLD ONE TO FIVE HOMES IN 2015, AND 13.5 PERCENT SOLD MORE THAN 50 HOMES.

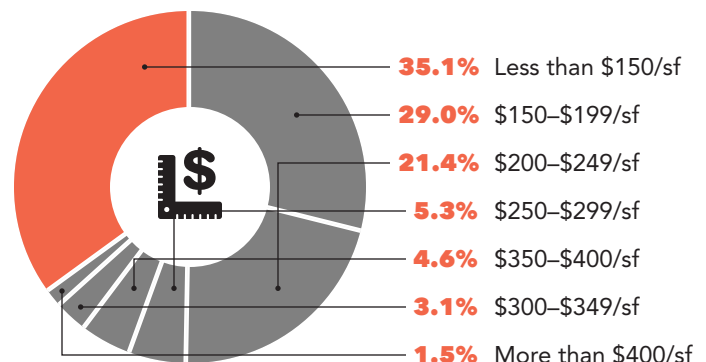
WHAT IS THE AVERAGE PRICE RANGE FOR THE TYPICAL HOMES YOU BUILD (OR DESIGN IF YOU ARE AN ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER)?



BASE: 134; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2016 HOUSE/BUYER SURVEY

Most of the respondents building/designing starter homes hailed from the Great Lakes states (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin) and the Southern Plains (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas).

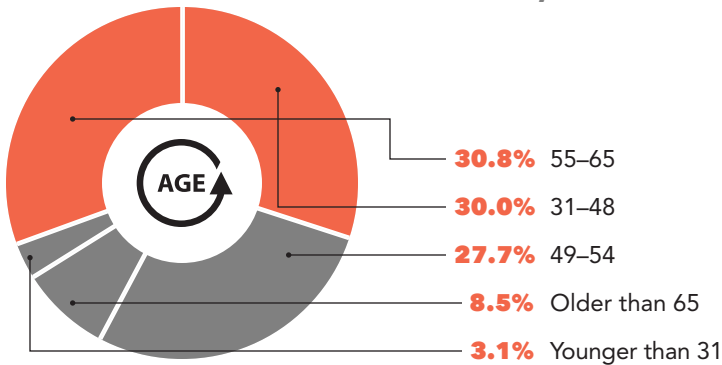
EXCLUDING THE COST OF LAND, WHAT IS THE COST PER SQUARE FOOT OF YOUR AVERAGE HOME?



BASE: 131; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2016 HOUSE/BUYER SURVEY

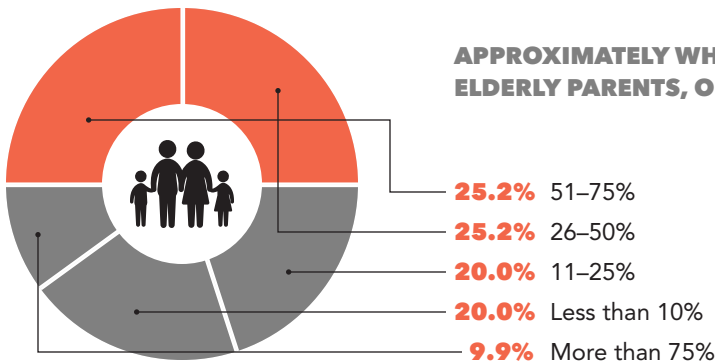
Almost 37 percent of survey participants said cost per square foot increased 1 to 9 percent during the past three years; 30 percent said that expenses jumped by 10 percent or more. In addition to rising costs of labor and materials, respondents noted other factors: building in more amenities, higher-end finishes, and more complex designs. The handful of builders whose costs declined cited weak local demand, improved construction and controls, and making more features optional.

PLEASE RANK FROM 1 TO 5 THE AGE RANGE OF YOUR TYPICAL NEW-HOME CLIENT, WITH 1 BEING YOUR PREDOMINANT GROUP



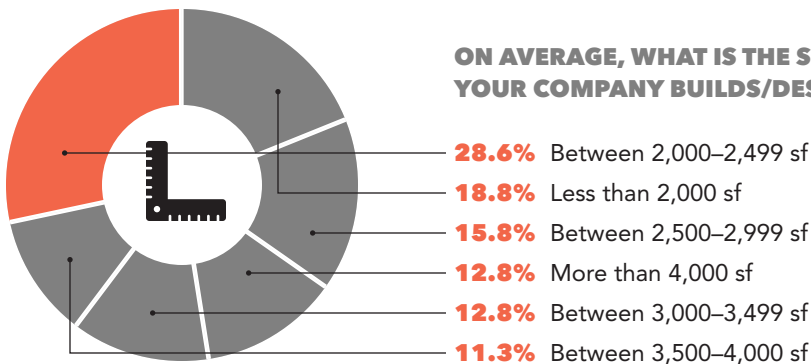
BASE: 135; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2016 HOUSE/BUYER SURVEY

Generation X and Baby Boomers continue to be the leading buyer groups in a survey of builders, architects, and designers in which the majority work on custom-built homes and projects for mostly move-up clients. Approximately 82 percent of respondents indicated that the age range of their leading customer group hasn't changed in three years compared with 12.2 percent who said that their leading customers today are younger and 6.1 percent who said that their top buyers are mostly younger.



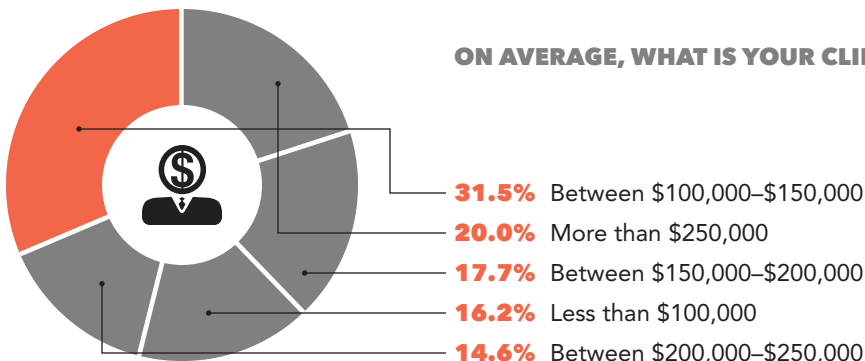
BASE: 131; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2016 HOUSE/BUYER SURVEY

Empty-nest and move-down buyers appear to be fueling demand, as 40 percent of survey participants noted that most of their clients do not have an extended family.



BASE: 133; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2016 HOUSE/BUYER SURVEY

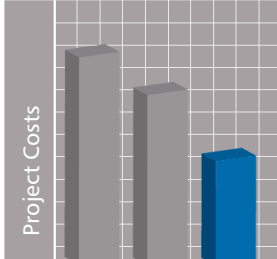
Half of survey participants said that the size of their houses stayed about the same during the past three years, while 28 percent indicated that square footage increased by 9 percent or less. More than 14 percent noted that the size of their projects decreased by 9 percent or less.



BASE: 130; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2016 HOUSE/BUYER SURVEY

Starter-home buyers, typically clients with less than \$100,000 in annual income, fell to the second-to-last income group after being the second largest household group in last year's survey.

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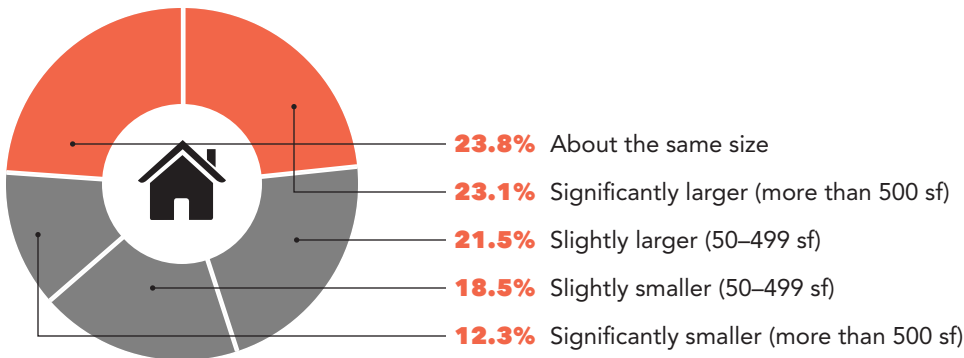
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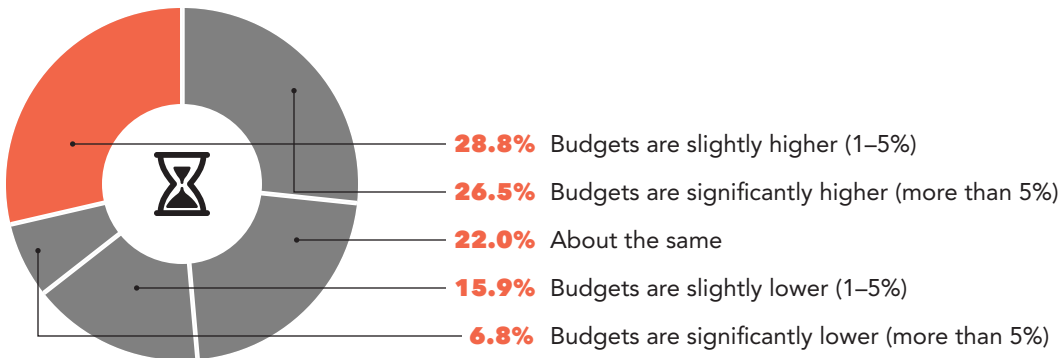
ARE THE HOMES THAT YOU BUILD/DESIGN FOR CLIENTS WHO ARE NOT FIRST-TIME BUYERS SMALLER OR LARGER THAN THEIR CURRENT HOME?



BASE: 131; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER
2016 HOUSE/BUYER SURVEY

Forty-four percent of projects were for move-up clients.

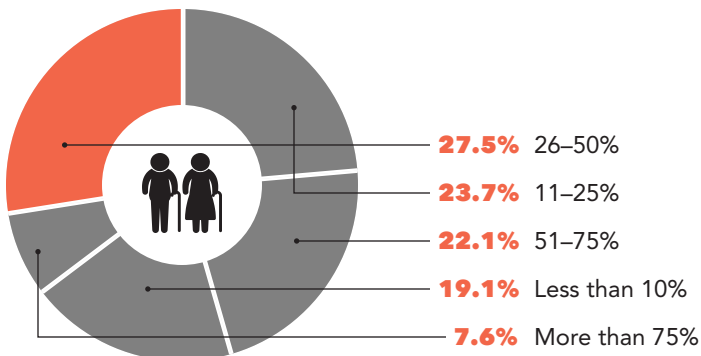
HOW DO CLIENT BUDGETS TODAY COMPARE WITH THOSE OF THREE YEARS AGO?



BASE: 132; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER
2016 HOUSE/BUYER SURVEY

More than half of the builders, architects, and designers polled said that their clients' budgets are higher compared with what they were working with three years ago during nascent stages of the economy's recovery.

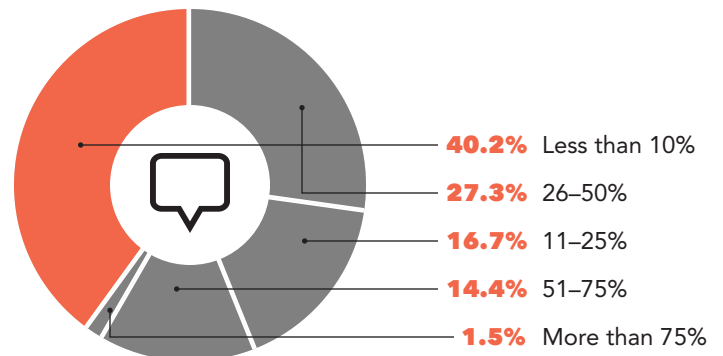
WHAT PERCENTAGE OF CLIENTS ARE LOOKING FOR A HOME WHERE THEY CAN AGE IN PLACE AND ALSO PROVIDE LIVING SPACE FOR ELDERLY RELATIVES OR BOOMERANG KIDS?



BASE: 131; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2016 HOUSE/BUYER SURVEY

Less than 30 percent of survey participants indicated that the majority of their customers were seeking designs to accommodate multigenerational living, and most clients have specific purposes assigned for all the spaces in their new homes upon moving in.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF CLIENTS PREFER FLEXIBLE SPACE THAT CAN LATER BE FINISHED INTO FULLY FURNISHED ROOMS WITH SPECIFIC PURPOSES?



BASE: 132; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2016 HOUSE/BUYER SURVEY

From here,



To here,



To here,



To here.

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GOING THE DISTANCE WITH

For more effective follow-up with long-term prospects, email is the tool of choice—if you use it properly

By Mike Lyon, Contributing Editor



How do you handle a prospect when nothing happens after 45 days? After 90 days? Do you just chalk it up to someone who wasn't really serious? Sales motivator Nicki Joy got it right. She says, "Follow-up is your first customer-service test."

NEWSLETTERS ARE GOOD, BUT THEY'RE NOT ENOUGH

A recent voicemail that was forwarded to me is worth sharing. The customer was returning a call to a new-home salesperson and said, "I wanted to give you a call to say thanks for that message. ... Quite honestly, we were juggling between [Builder With Awesome Follow-Up] and [Other Builder], and the customer service I have received from you completely changed our minds and made us focus strictly on you. ... We really do appreciate the hard work you have put in so far."

Let that soak in for a second. This call was prompted by consistent and persistent email follow-up. It changed the game for this prospect—changed their perception and the builder's outcome. Then ask yourself, "Which builder are we?"

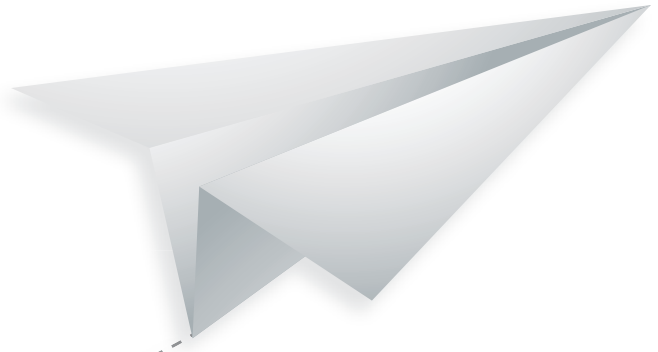
Here's another question that needs an answer: "Do we give up too quickly?"

We need to come to terms with the fact that 60 percent or more of our leads provide only an email address. We would love to get a phone number, but for a variety of reasons, many prospects just aren't ready to give that out. In our business, most sales and marketing teams default to email newsletters for long-term follow-up and call it sufficient. This may sound harsh, but using email newsletters with the objective of cultivating a lead is no big deal. It's average follow-up at best. I would suggest a different approach; something with more layers.

5 STEPS TO BETTER ENGAGEMENT

There are many reasons why a homebuyer chooses not to buy, but if you give up your personal follow-up too easily, you've essentially wasted the time you've already spent in nurturing

S@LES LEADS



the lead. Email does work when done right. You can leverage its positive impact to keep nurturing the prospect for as long as it takes to make the sale or be certain it's not going to happen. Follow these five steps to use email follow-up to increase long-term engagement with prospects.

1. Keep it personal. Create a portfolio of email messages that are personalized enough that they don't sound like a form letter. Use messaging like, "I wanted to reach out and check in with you on your new-home search. How is it going? I'm here if you want to explore your options, including a few new ones."

So many other new-home sales professionals have given up on their prospects that you may be the only one who stays in touch, which means you will be the standout—especially when you send "human" emails.

2. Sharpen your aim. Improve your targeting: What is the status of the lead? Have they responded to previous communication? Is it someone you've met with face to face?

Target your message based on past history. Segment the list by your ratings and email those groups. You don't have to email one by one, but you also don't want to send the wrong type of email message just because you didn't pay attention to the status.

3. Harness the power of video. There's no rule that says email must be limited to a written message. There's power in video. Services such as BombBomb.com make sending a video email easy. It doesn't have to be a big production; a simple message is great. Think of it like voicemail, but with your face. You'll cut through all the clutter. What's more, video emails have been proven to increase response rates. (When was the last time you received a video email?)

Keep it short and friendly. "Hi Amy! It's Mike with Awesome Follow-Up Builder. I wanted to check in with you. How is your home search going? Is there any question I can answer for you? Just shoot me a quick reply to this email or call

me at 505.555.5555. Hope you're doing well, Amy, and I look forward to hearing from you."

The power is in the delivery method. Video goes a long way.

4. Ask for an opinion. A brief email survey is a valuable tool and allows recipients to provide feedback. The goal is to spark interaction that will keep them connected with you. Keep it short and simple. Ask four or five quick questions—no more—such as, "Was our website helpful in your home search?" "How would you rate our follow-up and communication?" and (here's the big one) "Are you still in the market for a new home?" Many buyers will be happy to offer their opinion on a quick survey, even when they don't respond to other communication. You can also offer the added incentive of a small prize, such as a gift card.

5. Bring in a heavy hitter. Recent email marketing trends with start-ups and big-name corporations include a "personal" note from the company's leader, CEO, founder, or president. The presence of the head honcho in your email marketing shows that you cared enough to bring in the top brass. While we all know that the executive didn't write or send the email, it still has an impact on the recipient. If you're worried that your high-level person is going to get inundated with calls and email as a result, set up a separate email account and phone number that's directed to someone who can respond and forward, if needed.

The successful new-home salesperson doesn't give up easily, but instead leverages all the tools that are available. If you set up a system for email follow-up with long-term prospects using these five methods, you'll ensure that no lead is left behind. **PB**

Mike Lyon is president of Do You Convert, a company exclusively focused on online sales and marketing for home builders and developers. Write him at mike@doyouconvert.com.

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GAINING AN EDGE

Three homes show how building net zero energy houses sets you apart from the competition

By Sam Rashkin
Chief Architect
Building Technologies Office
U.S. Department of Energy

Consumers know that sustainability, energy efficiency, and green building have tangible environmental, comfort, and financial benefits for both homeowners and their community. And for builders, while building net zero energy houses is doing the right thing, it also differentiates your product and your business.

Homes built to U.S. Department of Energy specs meet all of the program requirements of Energy Star Version 3.0 and Indoor airPLUS. They also meet WaterSense's hot water distribution requirements and conform to the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code's insulation standards. In addition, homes built in regions with a significant solar resource are required to have either an installed solar electric system or include details that allow a solar electric system to be installed in the future with minimal to no cost penalty. The following award-winning homes demonstrate the business and environmental opportunities that sustainable building affords.



PALO DURO HOMES **VIA DEL CIELO, SANTA FE, N.M.**

Albuquerque-based Palo Duro Homes has built more DOE Zero Energy Ready Homes (ZERH) than any builder in the nation. It has certified 186 homes as DOE Zero Energy Ready and another 235 to the DOE Builders Challenge, ZERH's precursor. Owner Tom Wade says Palo Duro's average sales price has increased by approximately \$30,000. "For homeowners, the benefits are lifelong energy efficiency and savings, better indoor air quality, and less impact on our environment overall," Wade says. Palo Duro continues to offer a net zero energy upgrade option: roof-mounted, grid-tied solar electric panels enabling the home to achieve a Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Index score of 0; a solar thermal hot water system, and a high-efficiency heat pump with a cooling efficiency of SEER 15 and a heating efficiency of HSPF 9.0 (exceeding the federal minimum requirements of SEER 13 and HSPF 7.7 for cooling and heating equipment, respectively). Palo Duro's net zero energy ready homes are 40 percent to 100 percent more energy efficient than a code-built home.

PROJECT DETAILS

- Layout: 4 bedrooms, 2½ baths, 2 floors
- Conditioned space: 2,215 sf
- Climate zone: IECC 4B, mixed-dry
- Completion: August 2014
- Category: Production

MODELED PERFORMANCE DATA

- HERS Index: without PV 48
- Projected annual utility costs: without PV \$1,483
- Projected annual energy cost savings (compared with a home built to the 2012 IECC): without PV \$833
- Annual energy savings: without PV 78,373 kWh, 114 therms



HIGH PERFORMANCE HOMES CHAMBERLAIN COURT, GETTYSBURG, PA.

Kiere DeGrandchamp considered several home labeling programs when he founded High Performance Homes, but chose the DOE's Zero Energy Ready Home program as his cornerstone. Key to high-performance home construction for DeGrandchamp is getting all the parts to work together. As he puts it, "If you do it wrong, you can mess it up. That's why I think the third-party verification that DOE requires is so important." DeGrandchamp reports that buyers now seek out his company's homes for their whole-house energy-efficiency approach. DeGrandchamp tells of a homebuyer in Colorado who read about a speech the builder gave to the 18th Annual Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Expo, and then called High Performance Homes, ready to buy a lot that day. "He told me 'I've been looking for years for a builder who could put it all together,'" DeGrandchamp says.

PROJECT DETAILS

- Layout: 4 bedrooms, 4½ baths, 2 floors, finished basement
- Conditioned space: 6,869 sf
- Climate zone: IECC 5A, cold
- Completion: February 2015
- Category: Production

MODELED PERFORMANCE DATA

- HERS Index: without PV 37, with PV 23
- Projected annual utility costs: without PV \$3,050, with PV \$1,956
- Projected annual energy cost savings (compared with a home built to the 2009 IECC): without PV \$2,801, with PV \$3,895
- Builder's added cost over 2009 IECC: without PV \$30,000, with PV \$55,000
- Annual energy savings: without PV 26,676 kWh, with PV 37,095 kWh



GREENHILL CONTRACTING PRESERVE IN ESOPUS, NEW PALTZ, N.Y.

New Yorkers may be nervous about extreme weather after Superstorm Sandy, but Anthony Aebi of Greenhill Contracting, north of New York City, believes his homeowners can rest easy. Aebi says his homes should be able to withstand 200-mile-per-hour winds, an F5 tornado, a Category 6 hurricane, or a Magnitude 9 earthquake. Starting in 2007, all Greenhill homes are built using insulated concrete forms (ICF), which offer improved disaster resistance—significant market differentiation in and of itself. Aebi takes it a step further with net zero. He built his first net zero energy home in 2008; it was one of the first in the Northeast. This year, three of his homes at Preserve in Esopus, a 25-home community, earned Housing Innovation Awards. Aebi contends that this level of performance can be built in the same price range as a code-built house. "Because of the energy savings," he says, "homeowners are not spending \$3,000 to \$6,000 in energy bills every year. These improvements will pay for themselves." **PB**

PROJECT DETAILS

- Layout: #20: 4 bdr, 3½ bath, 4 fl + bsmt; #26: 5 bdr, 3½ bath, 4 fl + bsmt; #28: 3 bdr, 3½ bath, 4 fl + bsmt
- Conditioned space: #20: 4,454 sf; #26: 4,208 sf; #28: 4,208 sf
- Climate zone: 6A, cold
- Completion: #20: October 2014; #26, #28: May 2015
- Category: Custom

MODELED PERFORMANCE DATA

- HERS Index: #20: w/o PV 26, w/PV -3.5; #26: w/o PV 28, w/PV -3; #28 w/o PV 26, w/PV -1
- Projected annual utility costs: #20: w/o PV \$2,024, w/PV \$136; #26 w/o PV \$2,061, w/PV \$137; #28 w/o PV \$1,918, w/PV \$270
- Projected annual energy cost savings (compared with a home built to the 2009 IECC): #20: w/o PV \$2,112, w/PV \$4,000; #26 w/o PV \$2,009, w/PV \$3,933; #28: w/o PV \$2,176, w/PV \$3,824
- Builder's added cost over 2009 IECC: #20, #26, #28: w/o PV \$45,000, w/PV \$73,000
- Annual energy savings: #20: w/o PV 72.9 MMBtu, w/PV 122.5 MMBtu; #26: w/o PV 70.2 MMBtu, w/PV 120.7 MMBtu; #28: w/o PV 73.9 MMBtu, w/PV 117.2 MMBtu

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Siding | Trim

By Katy Tomasulo

During the downturn, many builder marketers found themselves fighting hard for the few buyers who were in the market. Today, it's the opposite: With housing on more solid footing in some areas, competition is about grabbing the attention of the buyers in those markets rebounding with new development. Standing head and shoulders above the rest are the winners of the 2016 National Sales & Marketing Awards, with programs and campaigns that offer fresh approaches, new inspiration, clean designs, and modern takes on traditional ideas.

The 2016 Community of the Year, The Cannery, in Davis, Calif., sets a high bar. The farm-to-table master planned community focuses on all things local, with a branding campaign that resonates with potential buyers and hews to The Cannery's agriculturally oriented location. In Toronto, the Art Shoppe Lofts + Condos was equally in tune with its target audiences, tapping the fashion industry for design and marketing support. In Atlanta, Ashton Woods' global inspiration set the tone for an elegant, engaging advertising campaign.

The following collection of this year's winners presents an array of ideas from which every marketer—regardless of type or geography or budget—can draw inspiration.

PHOTO: PETER COOPER



BEST FOOT FORWARD

cannery

WINNERS OF THE 2016 NATIONAL SALES &
MARKETING AWARDS BLEND CREATIVITY,
INNOVATION, AND SOPHISTICATION

THE CANNERY IN DAVIS, CALIF., WAS
CHOSEN AS MASTER PLANNED COMMUNITY
OF THE YEAR. ITS FARM-TO-TABLE FOCUS IS
EVIDENT THROUGHOUT ITS MARKETING.

MASTER PLANNED COMMUNITY OF THE YEAR

SIGNATURE SUSTAINABILITY

The Cannery, in Davis, Calif., developed by The New Home Company, claims to be California's first true farm-to-table master planned community, reflecting a growing trend around the country toward more self-sustaining, locally attuned living. The project will feature 547 residences, a rec center, a welcome center, public parks, biking trails, and retail/office space. But the usual similarities to other MPCs end there. Highlights also include a 5,800-square-foot working barn and a 7.4-acre sustainable urban farm from which residents and nearby neighbors can buy community-grown fruits and vegetables.

The approach is well-suited to the agricultural hub of Davis, which leans toward the healthy and sustainable and is considered the most bicycle-friendly town in the U.S. The Cannery is situated on the former site of the Hunt-Wesson tomato canning plant, near downtown Davis. Its recreation center, pool, and outdoor amphitheater are centrally located for easy access from all neighborhoods, while a network of trails ensures that any destination within the community is no more than a 10-minute walk or 5-minute bike ride away.

A diversity of home options, built by The New Home Company, Shea Homes, and CalAtlantic Homes, includes flats, rowhouses, cottages, and bungalows. Each offers energy-efficient elements including pre-wiring for solar power, cool roof-rated roofing materials, and ducts enclosed in conditioned space or high-performance attics. Single-family options are prewired for electric vehicle charging; multifamily and mixed-use areas have charging stations. Turf reduction, smart irrigation controllers, and low-flow fixtures are part of the communitywide effort for water conservation. All houses include design that's flexible for different generations: stepless entries, ground-floor bedrooms and bathrooms, reinforced towel bars, wider doors, and multi-height work surfaces. Some incorporate multigen guest houses or private quarters.

Further fostering the community feel, many of the plans feature covered front porches, courtyards, or balconies. Every home is within 300 feet of a park or trail, and ample bike storage space can be found in homes and around communal amenities.

OLD IDEAS MADE NEW

Sustainability and agriculture are ever-present throughout The Cannery's marketing materials. "The overall objective of the branding materials for The Cannery was to honor the agricultural legacy of both the property and the City of Davis, which is recognized as an epicenter of agricultural innovation," says Daniel Martin, senior partner of Paolucci Salling & Martin Communication Arts. "At the heart of all efforts was the desire to maintain a focus on authenticity around the areas' agricultural roots, green and sustainable living, and commitment to biking and outdoor wellness." The Cannery's logo features a bike wheel accompanied by a stem and leaf, a nod to the high-wheel bike in the logo for Davis, as well as a reference to the community's farm-to-table ethos. "Although the logo is rooted in historic elements, the design used a palette that also provided a fresh and contemporary take on this classic Davis lifestyle," Martin notes. The font casing and a rotated "the" acknowledge The New Home Company's own branding.

SIMPLE SIGNAGE

Alluding to earthy origins, model and wayfinding signs are constructed of natural wood, and an entrance monument and barn logo are made of aged Cor-Ten steel. The overall effect is rustic-modern with a feel for the personality of the community. "What is old becomes new again," Martin says. "Living close to a farming community where the food is grown locally and the community encourages outdoor living has been the approach to planning some of the most admired communities in the world." The Cannery brand is also taking shape through events such as a pumpkin carving festival this past fall (using pumpkins harvested from the urban farm), and a 5K race that will take place this spring along the community's loop trail. These serve to draw prospective buyers in to a community that feels in sync with the land and with the City of Davis. As one of The Cannery's primary taglines puts it, "Life tastes better here."





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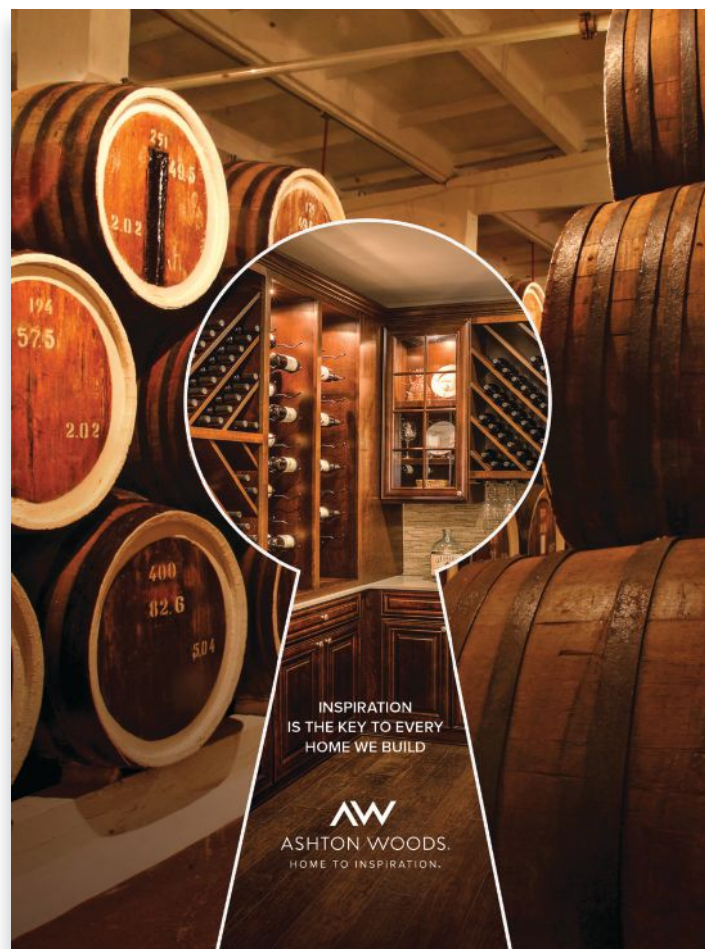
PHOTOS: TOP LEFT, PETER COOPER; TOP RIGHT, CHRISTOPHER MAYER

THE CANNERY CAPITALIZES ON THE AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE OF DAVIS AND ITS STATUS AS FOODIE EPICENTER.

BEST OVERALL AD CAMPAIGN



CONVEYING TO BUYERS THAT YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY'RE SEEKING—AND WHAT INSPIRES THEM TO SEEK IT—IS A TRICKY CHALLENGE THAT ASHTON WOODS CONQUERED.



OFFERING LUXURY— AND DIFFERENTIATING IT

While Ashton Woods makes its headquarters in Atlanta, the design inspiration for its luxury homes spans the globe, drawn from the spires of a French cathedral to the grand redwoods of Northern California, and beyond. The challenge: How to express that vast inspiration in a 2-D ad campaign? “The key to inspired homes can often come from outside the world of home building. It’s what enables us to go where no home builder has gone before,” says Michael Ianzito, director of marketing communications.

The builder devised a series of ads that give audiences a peek into the core of its design philosophy. Each depicts a source of Ashton Woods’ inspiration flowing into a keyhole

that reveals the resulting design: The sculpted ceiling of the iconic Arc de Triomphe, in Paris, gives way to the neoclassical interior it inspired; aged oak casks of a cellar turn into a wine room. A local ad shows how Atlanta’s High Museum inspired one of Ashton Woods’ kitchen designs. The accompanying message, “Inspiration is the key to every home we build,” ties the campaign together while summarizing its objectives. Online banner ads carry the same theme and artwork via animation. The campaign succeeds in stressing the builder’s focus on exceptional design, and it communicates the inspiration essential to its mission. “It’s visually arresting. It’s fun. It has longevity. And, like our homes themselves, the possibilities are endless,” Ianzito says.

BEST SALES / WELCOME CENTER



WINDSONG RANCH USES A RURAL-MODERN WELCOME CENTER TO TEMPT BUYERS AND GIVE THEM A TASTE OF WHAT LIFE IS LIKE THERE.



THE ART OF THE SOFT SELL

Like many master planned communities across Texas, Windsong Ranch pays homage to the roots of its land and location in its name. But when it came to designing the community's welcome center, Creative License International decided to eschew the typical ranch styling, rusted earth tones, and Lone Star themes, setting itself apart with more vibrant colors and a modern approach. The design team played off of the branding work of agency Anderson Hanson Blanton, taking cues from the colors and lines of the community's logo: The center's walls and pierce-cut metal display panels evoke the windswept fields of Texas. Locally harvested tree rounds, turf, and river rock, along with exposed wood ceilings, summon the outdoors while glass walls beckon visitors outside. The effect is compelling.

"The purpose of a welcome center is to sell the community, the location, the amenities," says Claudia Gerster, owner and

president of Creative License International, which designed the center. "Our goal is for a visitor to say, 'I want to live here.'" That mission is accomplished in the center's design vibe and in its complete integration with Windsong Ranch itself. The welcome center connects to the community's coffee and sandwich bar, which then spills over to the fitness center and pool. "When visitors come in, they're in the lifestyle because they're in the amenity," Gerster says.

The welcome center is designed for a soft sell. Potential buyers can relax with a drink and experience life as a homeowner. The sales agent, whose desk is pushed back from the entrance, acts more as a community rep. Visitors can take a guided or self-guided tour, starting at a community table with embedded monitors to explore the different builders, products, and locations. All of the models are within walking distance, allowing the visitor's desired pace to easily continue—and the true experience of life at Windsong Ranch to linger.

BEST GRAPHIC CONTINUITY



EAST UNITED CONDOS
PLAYS UP ITS URBAN
SETTING: A DIVERSE
AND ARTISTIC TORONTO
NEIGHBORHOOD.

LEVERAGING LOCAL PRIDE

One glance at the East United condo building in Toronto makes it clear that these are no ordinary living spaces. The metal-and-glass building is set on a historical brick structure, extending above it in a series of stair-stepping rectangular forms. Unique amenities within include a workshop, a pet spa, wellness zone, jam room, and rooftop terrace. It's a fitting mix for an East End neighborhood that prides itself on a diverse population and varied architecture. The project's extensive marketing programs emulate that diversity. "Everything was about being eclectic, artsy, and original," says Rob Galletta, managing partner of advertising agency Blackjet. "We wanted that to permeate all touchpoints and aspects of the branding." The approach can be seen in the logo, in which each letter uses a different font, designed to stand out in a variety of media, from a 10-foot iron sculpture outside the presentation center to the website to the collateral materials. A consistent color palette of black, cream, and orange earth tones is present across all platforms.

Elements of the marketing campaign tap into the East End's pride in its grittiness and artistic roots as compared to Toronto's trendy West End. Branded key chains, mugs, and T-shirts telegraph the community's anti-hipster attitude with slogans such as "I prefer independent coffee shops," "I ride a bike because it's smart, not popular," and "You drink craft beer because it's better, not trendy." Leveraging good-natured rivalry, an Instagram contest challenged community members to infiltrate the West End and plant East United flags.

In the presentation center, the model suite is partially constructed in wireframe and traced in light, helping buyers to envision a home. Finish options are organized by neighborhood personality—Artist, Foodie, and Sleek Business. The blending of historical and modern can be seen throughout, from an availability board mounted on antique doors to a pop-up shop. In graphical design and execution, the team evoked an exciting vibe without coming off as overwrought. Despite Toronto's overcrowded condo market, all 300 units sold out in five months prior to construction breaking ground.

PHOTOS: COURTESY SIGNATURE COMMUNITIES

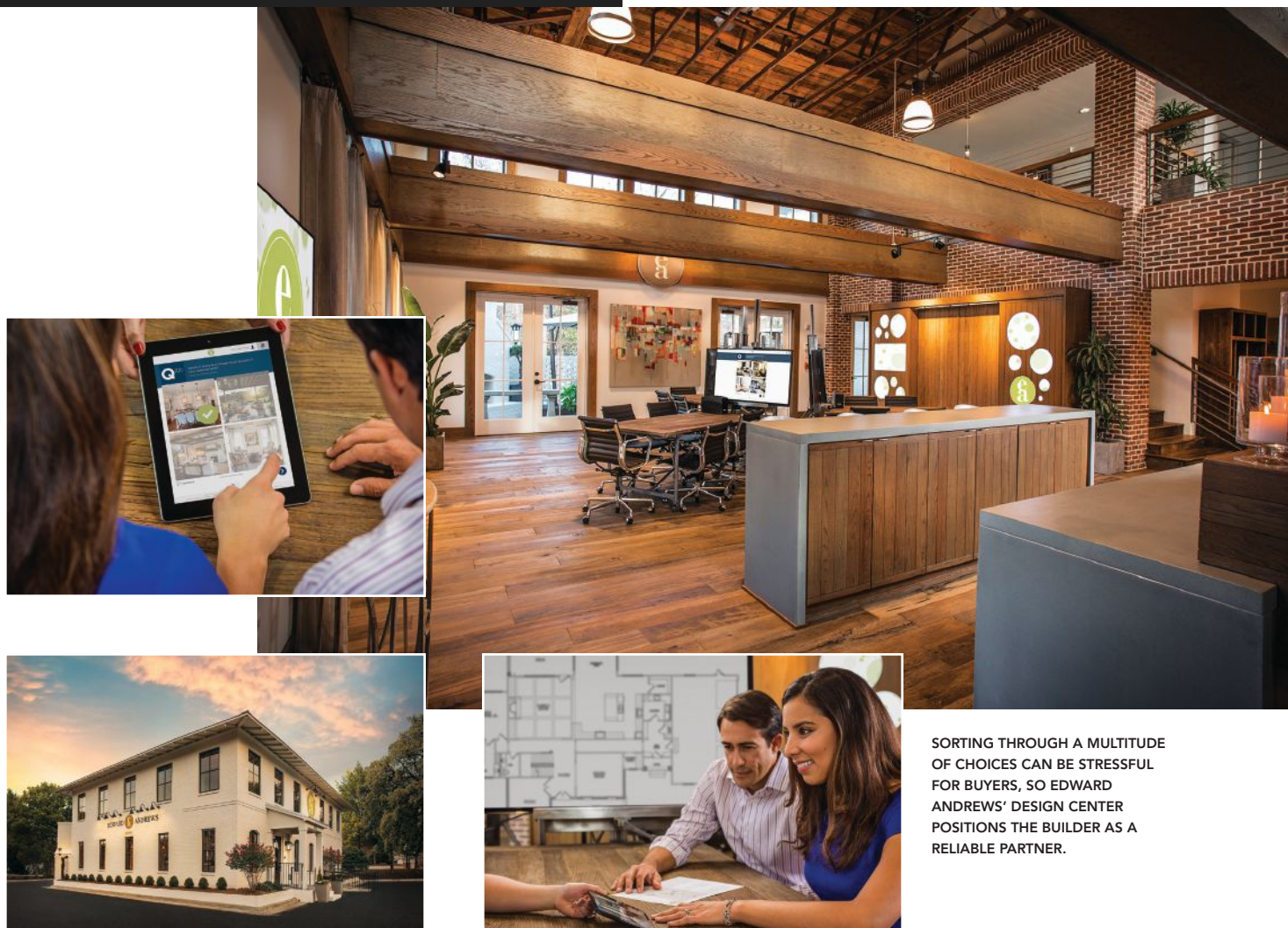
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*Ingersoll Rand Marketing Insights, Trane Claim Consumer Survey, September 2014.

BEST DESIGN CENTER



SORTING THROUGH A MULTITUDE OF CHOICES CAN BE STRESSFUL FOR BUYERS, SO EDWARD ANDREWS' DESIGN CENTER POSITIONS THE BUILDER AS A RELIABLE PARTNER.

TECH SUPPORT

For custom homebuyers, the design selection process can be overwhelming. Edward Andrews eases that burden from the get-go with a technology-driven experience that is approachable and in tune with buyers' individual preferences. Potential customers begin by completing a digital style quiz based on a matrix of algorithms and a lifestyle questionnaire. Using the results, Edward Andrews' designers assemble selections that align with the buyer's tastes, helping to narrow the number of options and ensuring they can more comfortably and confidently make decisions.

The design center is also beautiful to look at and naturally inviting, with a two-story ceiling and open beams soaring over rustic-elegant workstations. A neutral palette throughout ensures that the center itself doesn't interfere with decision-making. Technology again comes into play in the form of flat screens for viewing floor plans, renderings, and imagery. A serving bar and an outdoor patio further both the experience and the lasting impression that Edward Andrews is a builder partner with which buyers can feel completely at ease.

PHOTOS: AARON BOWDOIN, 45 STUDIOS

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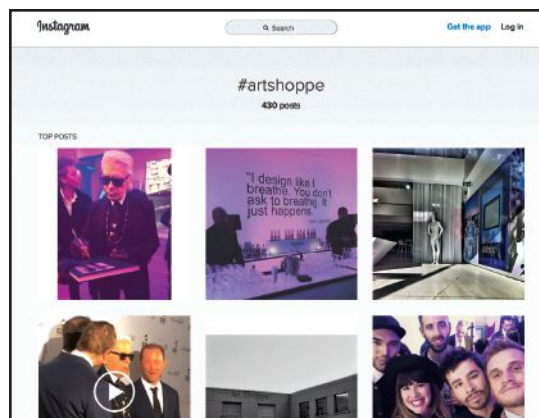
BEST SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

FASHION FORWARD

When the aim is to make new condos hip, why not join forces with a famous fashion designer? Art Shoppe Lofts + Condos had already set itself apart in Toronto's crowded condo market with amenities and a nontraditional building form—a 28-story tower stepping down to a loft-style 12-story podium. The finishing touch: partnering with Karl Lagerfeld to design the building's two lobbies. The collaboration kicked off with an elaborate event, an invitation-only soiree that marked the designer's first-ever visit to Canada.

The team at Art Shoppe Lofts + Condos and its agency, Montana Steele Strategic Marketing, launched a widespread campaign across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The team crafted a series of buzz-generating posts leading up to the event, including playing off of the project's overall tagline “the art of __” (change/living/nature/connecting) as well as Lagerfeld's own (often quirky) social media presence.

Social media lit up during the launch party. A hashtag,



INSTAGRAM POSTS USING THE HASHTAG #ARTSHOPPE REVEAL THE SOCIAL SUCCESS BEHIND A PARTNERSHIP WITH DESIGNER KARL LAGERFELD.

#lobbiesbykarl, tied the campaign together; in the final measure of social media success, it became a trending topic on Twitter. “Between our team creating content and engagement from guests and the general public who were following, there was a lot of excitement,” says Daniela DiStefano, digital marketing manager at Montana Steele. The impact lingered long after the champagne glasses were cleared away, helping position Art Shoppe Lofts + Condos as a trendsetter and boosting its reach with 1.5 million impressions, more than 1,000 tagged photos, and a 10 percent growth in Twitter followers.

BEST WEBSITE FOR A BUILDER

DESTINATION: INSPIRATION

Custom builder Schumacher Homes prides itself on a new motto, “Your Inspiration Has a Home.” “It all starts with the customer and what's important to them and their lifestyle and how their home reflects that,” says Mary Becker, vice president of sales and marketing for the Canton, Ohio-based builder. To bring the mantra to life online, Becker's team set out to make Schumacher's website a more useful customer tool for homebuying. The revamped site serves up information relevant to every step of the homebuying process. Those starting out can visit an extensive photo gallery, then create an account and start building inspiration boards where they can save images from the website or upload their own images.

The resulting site is easy to navigate. Multiple entry points offer design ideas, and built-in tools help organize options as



SCHUMACHER'S WEBSITE STREAMLINES THE ONLINE EXPERIENCE, USING ONLY INFORMATION DIRECTLY RELEVANT TO BUYER DECISION-MAKING.

customers visualize their dream home. The team intentionally implemented clear calls to action throughout, including a desktop chat option. “The biggest thing [we learned] is to keep the customer in mind,” Becker says. “What is their experience online and how can that translate to an in-person visit, and what are the tools they need every step of the way?” The efforts are paying off: Since relaunching the site last March, the builder has seen the number of sessions increase by 21 percent, unique users increase by 24 percent, and page views grow by 27 percent. **PB**

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ELEVATION

DESIGN PROS SHOW HOW TO CREATE CURB APPEAL THAT'S STYLISTICALLY SPOT-ON

By Susan Bady, Senior Contributing Editor

For production builders, it can be a riddle: How to make sure your most popular elevations are stylistically spot-on and appealing, but don't cost a fortune to execute? It comes down to understanding the elements of a particular style, then getting the scale and proportion correct, says Tony Crasi, owner and founder

of The Crasi Co., a design/build firm in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. "Once you overcome those challenges, in most cases you need to make sure it works within a reasonable budget," Crasi says. With that in mind, here are examples of properly-designed elevations, plus advice on how to accomplish them while keeping costs in check.



1. MATERIALS HELP DEFINE MODERN

Modern home design is challenging to reproduce in the context of production housing, admits Seth Hart, senior designer/project manager for DTJ Design, in Boulder, Colo. "Materials play a big role in the execution of this style." Using materials creatively or thinking of fresh ways to use traditional ones helps set modern apart from traditional, he says.

Flat roof forms in conjunction with hip or shed roof forms are the key to the design language of these homes. "Combining flat-roof elements either with hipped or even gabled/shed roofs is more cost-effective than doing an entirely flat roof. A parapet wall in front of a hip roof gives the impression of a flat roof, without the waterproofing concerns."

ILLUSTRATIONS: THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE, DTJ DESIGN

EDUCATION

AND BUDGET-FRIENDLY, TOO



2. TELLING COTTAGE FROM CRAFTSMAN

Too often, Hart says, builders switch from lap siding to shake and change a gable to a hip to create a different “style.” These two designs from DTJ demonstrate the importance of adjusting rooflines, proportions, and details to achieve a unique look for each style. Steep roof pitches, for example, characterize the cottage elevation on the left. Substituting shallower roof pitches to help save money in this type of house will result in an elevation that’s bland and lacks appeal, he says.

Hart notes that architects are often challenged by design guidelines when trying to execute classic elevation styles. “We

have encountered many design guidelines within neighborhoods that try to limit the minimum roof slopes to 6:12,” he says.

“Although that works well with some styles, it doesn’t allow for styles like Craftsman that rely on low-slung roof pitches that accentuate the horizontal rather than the vertical.”

With front-loaded, narrow-lot homes, garage doors can often be an unattractive, dominant element. DTJ softens the Craftsman elevation, above right, by bringing the entry porch roof across the home and over the garage. Rich detailing at the gable ends also adds visual interest.

DESIGN

"TOLL BROTHERS HAS BEEN PERFECTING THE ITALIANATE ELEVATION—A DISTINCT 19TH-CENTURY PHASE IN THE HISTORY OF CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE," SAYS SETH RING, PRESIDENT OF TOLL'S SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA DIVISION. HE MENTIONS FEATURES SUCH AS A CUT-STONE FAÇADE (1); DETAILED EAVES WITH DECORATIVE CORBELS (2); PRECAST COLUMNS (3); AND AN S-TILE ROOF (4). HE ADDS THAT THE FORMAL ITALIANATE ELEVATION IS A GOOD MATCH FOR THE COASTAL CALIFORNIA LANDSCAPING; TRAVERTINE-TILE DRIVEWAYS AND OUTDOOR SPACES; AND WOOD ACCENTS ON THE GARAGE DOORS. THE HOME WAS DESIGNED BY BASSENIAN LAGONI ARCHITECTS, IN NEWPORT BEACH, CALIF.

WITH ITS CASUAL, NO-RULES EXPRESSION, TUSCAN STYLE IS A CONTRAST TO ITALIANATE. WHAT MAKES IT SO POPULAR IS ITS RUSTIC AND EVEN HAPHAZARD AESTHETIC, SAYS ARCHITECT DERYL PATTERSON. THE HAPHAZARDNESS EVOLVED ORGANICALLY, PATTERSON EXPLAINS. FARMHOUSES IN TUSCANY WERE BUILT OUT OF INDIGENOUS MATERIALS, SUCH AS STONE PULLED FROM THE FIELDS. AS THE ORIGINAL FAMILY OUTGREW THE HOUSE, THEY ADDED A LEAN-TO SHED ON ONE SIDE. THE NEXT FAMILY, WHICH WAS EVEN BIGGER, PUT ON ANOTHER ADDITION WITHOUT ATTEMPTING TO BLEND IT INTO THE REST OF THE HOUSE.



3. ITALIAN INSPIRATION: A RANGE OF POSSIBILITY

A spectrum of style is possible with Italian-inspired homes. The Italianate elevation of the Toll Brothers home pictured above is more costly to execute than other elevation styles. But Seth Ring, president of Toll's Southern California division, in Orange, Calif., thinks the look justifies a higher sales price, which often offsets the extra expense. In contrast to that formality is Tuscan. "What started as a simple form now has a bunch of tacked-on forms," says architect Deryl Patterson,

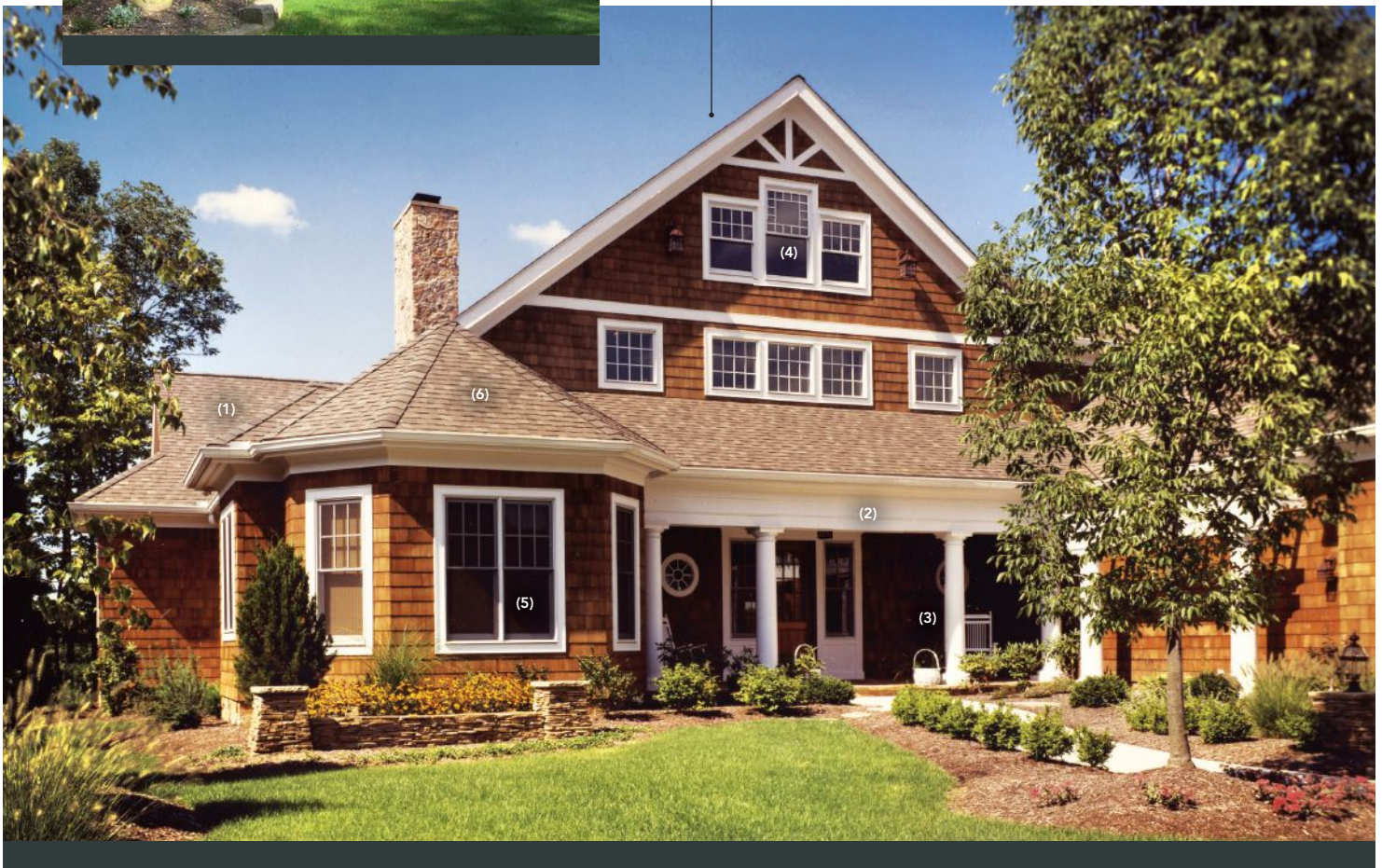
president of Housing Design Matters, in Jacksonville, Fla. Tuscan style utilizes warm, rustic materials such as stone, stucco, and rough-sawn timbers. Lower-pitch roofs and windows in darker colors, with a 4-over-1 mullion profile, are a good complement for those materials. If the budget allows, concrete tile is a great option—either a flat tile or a Spanish S-tile in a terra-cotta color similar to the brick headers. Fiberglass shingles also work well, she says.

PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER MAYER; ILLUSTRATION: HOUSING DESIGN MATTERS



THIS TUDOR REVIVAL HAS DETAILS TYPICAL OF THE STYLE, INCLUDING DECORATIVE HALF-TIMBERING (1); A CROSS-GABLED, STEEPLY PITCHED ROOF (2); AND AN OVER-SCALED CHIMNEY WITH DECORATIVE STONEWORK (3).

THIS SHINGLE-STYLE HOME, ALSO BUILT AND DESIGNED BY TONY CRASI, OF THE CRASI CO., CHECKS OFF MANY OF THE CLASSIC BOXES: AN IRREGULAR ROOFLINE WITH INTERSECTING CROSS GABLES (1); EXTENSIVE PORCHES AND VERANDAS (2); SIMPLE WOOD PORCH POSTS (3); LARGE, SIMPLY ADORNED WINDOWS WITH SMALL PANES (4); BAY WINDOWS (5); AND ROUNDED TURRETS (6).



4. NAILING SCALE AND DETAILS

Tony Crasi believes that scale is at the heart of all good design. He cites the Tudor Revival home shown here, which his company designed and built. "If you look at the half-timbering, you'll notice it's not 1-by-4 or even 1-by-6, but a much more expensive 1-by-8," Crasi says. "We chose real rough-sawn cedar 1-by-8 material because it's at the core of the style. To offset the cost, we used synthetic stone and stucco board; it saved us thousands of dollars and still allowed us to be stylistically correct."

Crasi also believes it's not one feature that makes an elevation feel

right, but rather a combination of features. "It starts with the shape of the building," he says. "A Georgian style home is very boxlike with the typical symmetrical arrangement of windows and doors, while both Shingle Style and Tudor Revival are asymmetrical in shape with varying rooflines and shapes. Once you get the shape correct, you add the pieces that correspond to the style—dormers, windows, materials, and details." He adds, "I've seen homes that I know were Colonial but were converted to Tudor by adding incorrectly sized half-timbering. The results were pretty unfortunate."



FRENCH COUNTRY



GEORGIAN



LOW COUNTRY

5. CLASSICS CRASH COURSE

Proportion is the key to the **French Country** elevation, says Housing Design Matters' Deryl Patterson, who likes to use a 3-by-6-foot window with a 2-over-2 window pattern. The single vertical mullion further reinforces the tall proportions; arches complement the windows. "This is a style that embraces asymmetry," Patterson says. "Think of a dress that exposes one shoulder; it's elegant, graceful, and a little sexy." David O'Sullivan, president of O'Sullivan Architects, in Reading, Mass., says, "French Country has a tall, narrow set of features with steeply pitched hip roofs and curved elements." Iron railing details or metal roof elements may also be used. Exterior materials can be stucco, brick, or stone, used alone or paired—but don't mix all three, Patterson cautions. French Country can support warm or cool color tones, but again, avoid mixing.

Georgian, a formal style firmly grounded in tradition, has a strong sense of order "that is a real draw for people, giving them a feeling of stability. It's often, but not always, symmetrical," Patterson says. In some parts of the country, the symmetrical two-story version of this style is called "five over four and a door," referring to five windows across the second floor, four windows below, and a door in the center. Windows play a dominant role because of their placement, proportion, and style. They are typically evenly spaced and line up from one floor to another. "The use of brick reinforces the sense of endurance and stability," she says. "The color of the brick can dramatically change the feeling of the style. Red brick signals ultra-traditional, while brown brick suggests a modern adaptation."

Low Country is a relaxed style that's popular in the Southeast. "Today, with the push for a return to the traditional, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods of the past, the porch has made this style popular with community planners and developers as well as buyers," Patterson says. Indeed, the front porch is what defines a Low Country elevation. It's often raised a few feet above the street to capture breezes—a throwback to the days before air conditioning when families would sit on the porch to escape the heat. Low Country style tends to be very traditional and often symmetrical. In the past, two-story homes had double stacked porches, a feature that has had a huge resurgence today as buyers crave more outdoor living space.

"There are so many color options that can intertwine this style with a buyer's personal preferences," Patterson says. "You can go classic with a yellow body and black trim or go bold with a red body color and taupe trim."



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[DESIGN]

SOMETIMES THE SIMPLEST CHANGES TO AN ELEVATION CAN CAUSE IT TO MISS THE MARK, SAYS ARCHITECT DAVID O'SULLIVAN. THIS HOME USES A TRADITIONAL COLONIAL-STYLE COLUMN FOR THE FRONT ENTRY PORCH, BUT IT DETRACTS FROM THE INTENDED CRAFTSMAN STYLE. "THIS, IN COMBINATION WITH RED BRICK FOR THE CHIMNEY, FURTHER COMPLICATES THE ISSUE," O'SULLIVAN SAYS. ALTHOUGH THE WINDOW PATTERN AND STYLE STAY TRUE TO THE INTENDED DESIGN, AS DOES THE PORCH RAIL AND STONE RETAINING WALL, THE HOME DOESN'T SAY "CRAFTSMAN."



THIS HOME MAINTAINS THE MATERIALS AND CRAFTSMAN STYLE AS ENVISIONED, RESULTING IN A MORE COHESIVE RESULT. "THE TAPERED COLUMNS WITH A STONE BASE, AS WELL AS THE CHOICE OF STONE OVER RED BRICK FOR THE CHIMNEY, GABLE END, AND WATER TABLE, GIVE THIS HOUSE A MUCH BETTER APPEARANCE AND FEEL," O'SULLIVAN SAYS. "IN ADDITION, THE USE OF BOARD-AND-BATTEN DETAIL AT THE GABLES AND THE SHAKE SIDING IN KEY LOCATIONS GIVES THE HOME ITS IDENTITY."



6. GETTING IT RIGHT VS. MISSING THE MARK

Scale, proportion, rooflines, spot-on use of materials, and correct specifying of window sizes, styles, and patterns are the basic elements of successful elevation design. Here's more advice on getting it right, from Seth Hart of DTJ Design.

- Sparingly apply materials such as brick, stone, stucco, metal, and panelized rainscreen to add flair to the façade. "With brick, instead of a running bond, use a stack bond coursing for a more modern look," Hart suggests, "or do a running bond that runs vertically rather than horizontally."
- Apply siding in varying depths. For example, a body of 8-inch lap siding with an accent of 4-inch siding. "I've also seen varying depths within one plane," he says.
- Use larger fixed windows strategically. Instead of three 3060 single-hung windows in a room, use one 3060 single-hung next to a 6060 fixed window. "This will modernize the window package but still keep the egress window affordable," Hart says.
- Find ways to incorporate unique materials, such as a standing-seam metal roof used in accent locations on the front of the home. This adds character while being mindful of cost.
- Corner window systems help create an elegant, contemporary look and don't need to be done with a true corner window or butt-glazed window assembly. Painting the corner jamb on the exterior to match the window trim will add definition.
- Add banding—either through color or relief—for a visual contrast within the field of brick.
- Alternatives to brick, such as CMU, can also create an interesting element on an elevation. **PB**

You really can have your cake and eat it too!

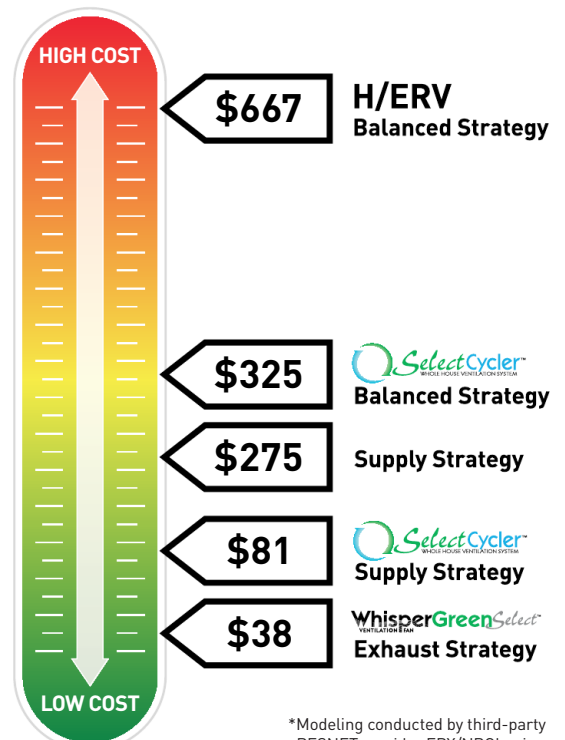
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[BUILDING PROCESS]

COULD YOUR LARGEST OBSTACLE BE ...



12 HOME BUILDING FALLACIES THAT GET IN OUR WAY

By Scott Sedam, Contributing Editor



Last month I introduced the notion of fallacies in home building—those beliefs we may be completely committed to yet which are errant and lead us astray. Such fallacies put up roadblocks to solving problems from the simple to the highly complex.

Importantly, these are not mere errors of fact, which are usually relatively easy to correct. These are errors in reason or logic, often based on underlying ideology. And these errors are typically quite personal—the product of our own brains—and as such can be difficult to resolve. For evidence, simply watch 20 minutes of one of the ongoing presidential debates from either party, which I suggest we title, “Reason Takes a Holiday.”

Michael LaBossiere, in his book *76 Fallacies*, gives an exhaustive and disturbing account of all 76 ways in which we are capable of fooling ourselves. Some macro, some micro, but all easily identified in our personal experiences and, taken as a whole, quite sobering. My reaction upon finishing the book was, “We haven’t got a prayer.” There are just too many ways to muck up any attempt to draw the right inference or conclusion because that requires carefully considered reason and intelligent thought.

So, after clearing my head by losing myself in more enjoyable things on the Internet such as vintage airplanes, ski area snow reports, and what TV celebrities from the ’70s look like today, I forced myself back to creating my list of fallacies encountered in our industry over the years.

As I often do, I sent my preliminary list to our four TrueNorth colleagues around the country as well as to a few favorite architects and engineers who help us on our Lean implementation processes. The list below is in no way exhaustive. I had to whittle it down from about 25 items gleaned from my list and those contributed by the FOTN (friends of TrueNorth). But here are the 12 fallacies that we have most often encountered in our combined 200-plus years working with more than 200 builders.

1 THE FALLACY OF THE CALENDAR

If you plot the closing dates of the production builders in America, you’ll find that more than 90 percent follow a similar pattern. Closings are heavily back-end loaded toward the end of the month, quarter, and year. It’s not unusual to see a pattern such as:

- Q1: 15 percent of closings
- Q2: 20 percent of closings
- Q3: 25 percent of closings
- Q4: 40 percent of closings

I’ve even seen it as bad as 40 percent of closings in the last month of the year. When you challenge builders on this they typically spin a story about buying and/or building “seasons.” Customers naturally want to buy in the spring and summer, for example, so of course inflated fourth-quarter closing schedules are expected. Yet we know this is wrong. You can easily verify that by looking at builders that have non-calendar fiscal years. I’ve personally worked with builders that have their year-end in May, June, September, or October, and guess what?

Their patterns are identical to those builders whose year ends Dec. 31. The year-end jam is nothing more than a self-fulfilling prophecy driven by finance and financial incentives, which has morphed into a cultural norm. We won't cover the negative consequences that result, but they're legion—all based on a fallacy.

2 TRADE LABOR IS A COMMODITY

This makes as much sense as saying NFL quarterbacks are a commodity and can be quickly swapped with no consequences. If a builder owned a sports team, he'd never accept that for his team, would he? Just think back to Super Bowl XLI, Bears vs. Colts. Would Colts owner Bob Irsay for one moment entertain an offer from Bears' CEO George Halas Jr. to trade QB Rex Grossman for Peyton Manning, even if he could have Rex for one-tenth the price? Absurd, right? Yet builders routinely change out trades and suppliers for a "nickel a square" as if a framer is a framer is a framer or all roofers are the same. If you still don't believe me, ask any field superintendent. They know. They deal with the consequences every day.

3 THE TRADE SHORTAGE IS KILLING ME

Yes, many trades left the industry during the downturn, and now business is up and we have a genuine shortage in the availability of trades. That's true for the industry. The fallacy is that it must also be true for you. If you're no different from and operate no better than anyone else, that is the case. Yet there are builders in severely trade-constrained markets that have no such shortage. In fact, the specific things they do to attract and keep trades create a distinct competitive advantage. Trade shortage as a strength? Check your reaction right there. Fallacies are powerful, aren't they?

4 LOW BID = LOW COST

The only thing that buying on low bid price alone guarantees is that you'll never operate under Lowest Total Cost ... and that's the only thing that matters. There is no builder on earth that hasn't been burned by low bids, and the reality is that most builders don't know how to measure total cost. Learn it, use it, make better decisions. The old adage "You get what you pay for" turns out to be true, but if—and only if—you are measuring total cost.

5 BUILDING BY THE IRC SAVES MONEY

Anyone who has employed a good, cost-conscious engineer (one who doesn't carry the CYA designation after his or her name), then told that engineer to have at it, no mercy, discovers that a plan specifically engineered to the International Building Code—rather than the one-size-fits-all International

Residential Code—always saves money. The intent of the IRC, to make sure engineering is done right, is admirable, yet it routinely overprescribes—at times to ridiculous levels. The labor and material costs of using the IRC far exceed the cost of engineering with the IBC, yet builders continue to stick with it. Yes, it's entirely possible for an engineer who believes more is better to overdesign with the IBC as well. So go find a new engineer—one who truly gets it—and engineer to the IBC. This will only add profit, not cost.

6 ADVANCED FRAMING DOESN'T APPLY HERE

You can find one or more of our TrueNorth Associates walking houses somewhere in the nation every week of the year, and we've never found a single plan that couldn't benefit from the application of advanced framing practices. Not one. Yet builders continue to build using the same costly, wasteful, energy-inefficient methods. Your framers won't cooperate? Then you don't fully understand advanced framing or know how to sell it. Besides, advanced framing saves labor as well. So if you kept the labor cost per square foot the same, your framers would profit, as you would, from saving on material. Add to that the customer savings on energy and you have a rare win-win-win that still goes largely untapped.

7 THE NEW BLACK BOX (SOFTWARE) WILL SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS

We've broached this subject before, and I assure my many friends in the software industry that I'm a big fan of their systems and frequently recommend them to builders. Having said that, we can never ignore the advice of W. Edwards Deming, Walter A. Shewhart, and others who say that before you can improve a process, you must stabilize it. As a corollary, we can add the well-known admonition: "Never automate a bad system." If your systems and processes are in disarray, a large investment in software won't straighten them out. First, measure and understand the consequences of your current systems. Second, map your processes as they are today. Third, design new processes that remedy the problems. Fourth, plan the route to get from here to there and then implement. Once you are stabilized, then OK, go buy the software.

8 BUILDING QUALITY TAKES MORE TIME

This sounds logical, but usually the exact opposite is true. When the build cycle drags out, the actual time that workers are in the house rarely increases except for rework. Longer build cycles mean more crew changes or sometimes even changes to trades and suppliers themselves, and that's a source for errors and confusion. What does increase is the number of days the house sits empty between tasks. Houses that take six months to

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a year or longer to complete experience more seasonal damage, time for things to go wrong, and opportunity for the customer to try to change specifications. You have to be good to build great homes on a tight schedule. But not all who are fast are good.

9 THE COST FOR EXTRA TRIPS IS BORNE BY SUPPLIERS AND TRADES AND DOESN'T AFFECT US

It's difficult to believe this fallacy still has legs, but it's not at all hard to find. Intellectually, many understand that the cost of extra trips must necessarily migrate into a builder's cost structure, but almost no one tracks or measures these costs, and little is done about it. With more than 150 Lean implementations under our belt and numbers from more than 3,500 suppliers and trades completing our "Trip Cost Calculator," we know for a fact that the minimum average cost of trips that should not be needed to build a home in the U.S. is \$10,000 and is even higher in Canada. If you don't think you, the builder, are paying ... well, that's just another symptom of this fallacy.

10 THE COST OF A LOST SCHEDULE DAY IS ADDITIONAL INTEREST AND TAXES

We've had more than 100 builders now complete our "Saved Day Calculator," and the true total cost of one lost schedule day ranges from a low of \$400 per house, per day, to as much as \$750. That's a large multiple of interest and taxes on the house and property. Many factors enter into the equation, but at the root is the absorption of fixed cost. Coming out of the downturn, 150 calendar days to build a production home is common and 180 is not unusual. You should consider 120 days an absolute minimum goal, and 90 days is where you start to really perform. But we know builders that consistently meet a 60-day schedule. Just try to imagine what six turns would do to your bottom line. Those builders understand the true, total cost of each day. Do you?

11 BUYING PLANS AND ENGINEERING BY THE SQUARE FOOT MAKES SENSE

Think about it ... would you buy a new car by the pound? That would suggest an equivalence between a Chevy Corvette and a Cavalier. How about clothing by the square inch? By that pricing, an Armani suit and the latest from Kmart would cost about the same. Yet my architect friends are continually plied by builders wanting the lowest price-per-square-foot deal. Same with engineers. There are vast differences in both the ability to design for visual appeal and for cost effectiveness and buildability that make the attempt to commoditize architecture and engineering laughable. Once again, the root of the fallacy is the failure to understand total cost or, in this case,

total value, where value is the relationship between benefit and cost. I'm not necessarily suggesting that you pay more, but I am suggesting that you fully understand what you're buying.

12 DESIGN CENTERS ARE ALWAYS A SOURCE OF PROFIT

Let's end this list with one that will surprise some, and if you still seek a good New Year's Resolution, how about: "This year we will perform a thorough, total-cost analysis of our design center and determine which items are profitable and which are not." Design centers can be a great thing, providing choice and convenience to the customer. They can also be a profit sinkhole as options and selections multiply and prices become out of date or simply fail to reflect the true cost of delivering each option. In their zeal to provide new and cool stuff to buyers, design centers are also frequently known for lack of discipline in paperwork and communication, causing errors, rework, and myriad administrative costs. Just ask purchasing, your field superintendents, suppliers, and trades. What you thought was profit is often just a fallacy.

It was hard to stop this list at just 12. We had many more, such as the fallacy that hiring experienced workers negates the need for training, and that years of experience equates to knowledge level. How about the delusion that cultures from two merged companies will effectively integrate on their own? Or let's get really practical and talk about central returns for HVAC. Though central returns were once the province of cheap builders, building scientists have taught us that done right, they're actually more efficient, quieter, and save money in equipment and utility bills. Another fallacy put to rest—for some, anyway.

I am never more gratified as a writer than when a builder stops me at a conference to relate something akin to, "My team reads your articles every month and we debate them as a group and use them to create improvement goals." That's my objective for this series on the fallacies of home building: to provoke your team to create its own list of fallacies—both individually and shared by the group—that just might be holding you back from a place where life and work can get a bit easier and profits are more forthcoming. Some say it can't be done, but that just could be one more fallacy. **PB**

Scott Sedam is president of TrueNorth Development, a consulting and training firm that works with builders to improve product, process, and profits. For free PDFs of this article series on Home Building Fallacies and last year's article series titled "Process & Profits" email info@truen.com. Reach Scott at scott@truen.com or 248.446.1275. Scott invites you to join TrueNorth's LeanBuilding Group at [LinkedIn.com](https://www.linkedin.com/company/leanbuildinggroup).



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By Jean Dimeo



THE NEW AMERICAN HOME 2016 TAKES ITS DESIGN CUES FROM THE SURROUNDING DESERT AND ITS INNOVATION CUES FROM THE VERY LATEST IN PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT.

Immediately obvious are the handsome, desert-rugged looks and design that manages to be modern yet warm. But what's most impressive about The New American Home 2016 is the innovation throughout. A triple-threat combo of smart building science, spanking-new products, and state-of-the-art systems make this Nevada show house cutting edge, says Josh Anderson, owner of Element Design | Build, the Henderson, Nev., company that designed and constructed the house. Here are some of the products that make this home as groundbreaking as it is gorgeous.

WINDOWS AND DOORS

For The New American Home 2016, Sierra Pacific Windows is debuting its Lift & Slide Door System. The doors' hardware lifts the panels so they roll easily, also lowering them so they lock into place for security, weather resistance, and greater energy efficiency, according to the manufacturer. The Elements Design | Build team hails the Lift & Slide's sleek design as a key feature in creating a seamless interior-exterior transition.

Sierra Pacific's new energy-efficient windows are also installed throughout the home. They boast superior glazing in the form of Lo-E 340, a new high-performance glass that registers an ultra-low 0.18 solar heat-gain coefficient, and blocks 98 percent of ultraviolet rays, according to Sierra Pacific. The stats are "astonishing," says Josh Moser, architectural designer at Element Design | Build and the project manager. "They helped get our interior heat-gain numbers down."

All Sierra Pacific doors and windows in The New American Home are aluminum clad, and their powder coatings emit near-zero volatile organic compounds (VOCs), the company says. Unlike a liquid-coating process, the powder-coating method virtually eliminates the generation of hazardous waste. The payoff is a durable exterior finish that can withstand intense desert sunlight without sacrificing color resilience.

BUILDING ENVELOPE

Anderson says that the Element Design | Build team was intent on developing the best envelope system possible using products



WITH ITS ULTRA-EFFICIENT ENVELOPE, THE NEW AMERICAN HOME SURPASSES NET ZERO, GENERATING MORE ENERGY THAN IT ACTUALLY NEEDS.

that builders are accustomed to working with. Owens Corning supplied the insulation products, and its building science approach helped the house surpass net-zero status. The company performed predictive modeling of heat and moisture interactions associated with the use of various building materials and assemblies in the foundations, walls, and roof.

The modeling took into account variables including desert climate; orientation; hours of sunlight during various times of the year; and the home's extensive use of windows and patio doors. Occupant comfort based on time of day; where the occupants are in the house; and even what each person is wearing (for example, long sleeves versus short) was also studied.

This is the first New American Home that includes insulation on the exterior: 2-inch-thick extruded polystyrene with an R-value

of 5 per inch of thickness was applied before cladding was installed, and rigid foam insulation was installed under the slab. Moser says that the insulation technique has proved so effective that his firm doesn't expect The New American Home to register much heat gain at all. Most heat gain sources will actually come from the interior of the home, he says, including body heat from its inhabitants.

MECHANICALS

HVAC in The New American Home 2016 is monitored by Trane's ComfortLink II XL950 Control, which can control up to eight zones using a 7-inch touchscreen. The home is heated and cooled by a quiet 4MXW27 Multi-Split Ductless system, which Trane says has up to a 27 SEER rating. And the HVAC can be controlled by any Web-enabled computer or smartphone.

Compared with conventional tank units, tankless water heaters offer a number of water-, energy-, and space-saving features, which is why five gas-powered units from Bosch Thermotechnology are used in The New American Home. Tankless technology works by heating water on demand instead of keeping it hot 24/7. According to Bosch Thermotechnology, this can save homeowners up to 50 percent on their monthly utility bills.

Tankless water heaters aren't new technology, of course; but because they still represent a small percentage of the overall market, Moser stresses the importance of underscoring their benefits in this showcase home.

HOME AUTOMATION

The New American Home is a smart home, enabled by state-of-the-art automation. The Savant Pro system, integrated with the home's security system, controls HVAC, lights, shades, and three fireplaces, as well as audio in 20 zones and video in eight zones. All products and features are controlled by an Apple Mac mini and accessed through a remote, a lamp control, or lighting keypads on walls, and from the Savant app for mobile devices and tablets.

Often lauded for being user-friendly, Savant Pro allows homeowners to reconfigure settings after initial installation. In the past, a call to the integrator would have been necessary, says Josh Blanken, a Savant area sales manager. "With the Savant app, you can change the scene from a [smart] phone or iPad." Savant Pro's capture feature allows the user to create a specific scene and recall it at a later time.

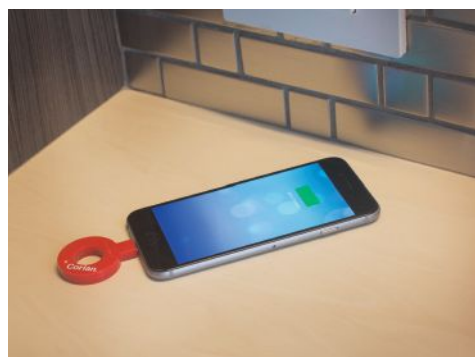
Another innovative, tech-friendly feature in The New American Home is DuPont's Charging Surface, which is installed in six different locations. Available as an option in DuPont's Corian and Zodiaq lines, the Charging Surface is currently being installed by DuPont fabricators nationwide.

"The idea around the surfacing is the elimination of clutter—it looks like your regular countertop," says Katie Congress, DuPont's residential marketing manager.

A dual-mode transmitter unit, which wirelessly transfers energy to a receiver within



HVAC, LIGHTING, SECURITY, AND ENTERTAINMENT ARE CONTROLLED BY SAVANT'S PRO SYSTEM.



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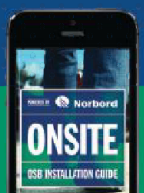
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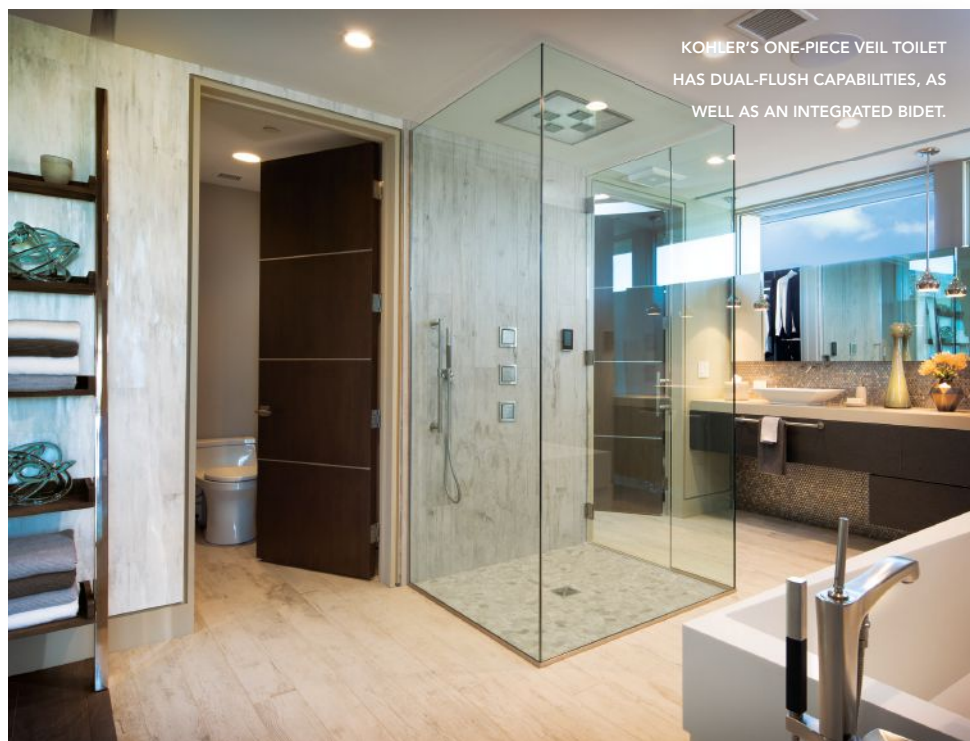
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KOHLER'S ONE-PIECE VEIL TOILET HAS DUAL-FLUSH CAPABILITIES, AS WELL AS AN INTEGRATED BIDET.



THERMADOR'S MASTERPIECE SERIES STEAM AND CONVECTION OVEN ALLOWS TWO MODES OF COOKING AT THE SAME TIME.

or attached to a smart device, is milled in underneath the countertop surfacing. Place a device on the spot, and DuPont's proprietary Powermatrix app begins tracking the charging process. When the device reaches maximum battery capacity, charging stops.

At \$200 per hot spot, the Charging Surface is an inexpensive option that has the potential to make life a bit easier and more orderly, says Congress, adding, "We want it to be a no-brainer."

KITCHEN AND BATH

The baths and kitchen in The New American Home are also rich in innovation. Kohler's DTV+, the company's most advanced showering system yet, combines controls for water, sound, light, and steam. The touchscreen lets users program and customize settings, which can be managed in several ways, including delivering two different water temperatures at the same time. Each experience is meant to deliver unique wellness benefits, says Les Petch, Kohler's senior product manager for performance showering. DTV+ includes three spa experiences—Relaxation, Well-Being, and Energy—that Petch says will be expanded in the future and available for homeowners to download.

Bathrooms feature Kohler's new Veil toilet, a one-piece, dual-flush model with integrated bidet. According to Kohler, the model not only offers sleek styling but optimum hygiene and ultimate comfort. The Veil toilet has a bevy of technological features, including:

- A self-cleaning function that uses UV

light and electrolyzed water systems to sanitize the bidet wand surfaces.

- A warm-air-drying system with adjustable temperature settings.
- A motion-activated, hands-free seat and cover open/close function.
- LED lighting that illuminates the bowl, serving as a night light.
- A touchscreen LCD remote control with two programmable presets.

Although induction cooktops aren't new, the technology has yet to become mainstream. But the benefits may soon change minds: Thermador's Masterpiece Series Freedom induction cooktop stays cooler to the touch than an electric cooktop, rivals gas in speed and responsiveness, and doesn't heat up the kitchen. A full-color touchscreen induction panel—an industry first, the manufacturer says—offers better control and faster access to settings. The cooktop also offers other features, such as:

- 48 induction elements that deliver 63 percent more usable cooking surface than competitors.
- Room for up to four pots or pans to be placed anywhere on the surface.
- The ability to transfer all programmed settings from one spot to another when a pot is moved from one place on the cooktop to another.
- A 4,600-watt PowerBoost element that boils water faster than any other cooking technology.
- The Anti-Overflow System, an exclusive feature that shuts off the relevant element and sounds an alarm when liquid is detected on the user interface.

The kitchen also has two Thermador Masterpiece Series Steam and Convection Ovens, which offer a combination of cooking modes. The ovens include 40 EasyCook food programs and pre-programmed modes that automatically set the oven temperature and humidity to ensure perfect cooking results. **PB**

Jean Dimeo has been reporting on building products and technologies for more than 20 years.



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JULY	Pool Houses and Cabanas
AUGUST	Revising Best-Selling Plans
SEPTEMBER	Master Baths
OCTOBER	Luxury Homes
NOVEMBER	On the Boards
DECEMBER	Kitchens

An old idea is new again, with designs that answer current buyer demands

By Larry W. Garnett, FAIBD, House Review Lead Designer

There's lots of talk these days about multigenerational housing, but it's actually an old idea. Before eldercare facilities took hold, aging parents and grandparents moved in with their kids. Young people, single or married, were expected to live with relatives.

The recent return to multigen living has been recession-driven: Boomers saw the return of boomerang kids and aging parents. But in addition, an influx of Asian and Latino immigrants, whose cultures emphasize multigenerational living, has fueled a trend toward family consolidation. While several generations living in one home present challenges, there are also benefits: child care, chore-

sharing, and the lost tradition of the young learning from their elders.

The term multigenerational refers to at least three generations under the same roof, though homes designed for two generations are often tagged that way. Regardless, the top concern for designs created for more than one family is privacy. Shared kitchens and living areas often work fine, but bedrooms and baths must be well-placed. The following designs present a range of solutions, from guest quarters to accommodating 12 people in seven bedrooms. As ever, we appreciate your comments and suggestions.



PHOTOS: ERIC FIGGE

Set on a small Newport Coast ridgeline that runs out to the water and through the hills, Fiano sits above the rest of the homes in a master planned community. While the home was designed with the classic exterior detailing of Northern Italy, interiors are modern and relevant to today's buyers. To make Fiano stand out in this affluent market, the first level features 12-foot ceilings. Ancillary use areas were added—a central court, wine room, second kitchen, large pantry, craft room, and an additional first-floor bedroom suite that can house a multigenerational family member. Plan 1's guest suite has a large, partly enclosed, private patio accessed through two sets of French doors that function as a separate entry.

FIANO AT PACIFIC RIDGE, PLAN 1

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Width: 65 feet
Depth: 130 feet
Living area: 4,715 sf



- A** Guest suite is accessible from landscaped forecourt, providing separation from the main home
- B** A decorative metal gate locks off the covered breezeway leading from the street to the private courtyard
- C** Across from the guest suite, the flex room can be customized to become a home theater, office, or additional guest suite with private bath and closet
- D** Covered outdoor room features a fireplace, enabling use in cooler weather
- E** Open to the sky, the courtyard is protected from strong winds
- F** Main entry leads into a vestibule, a transitional space to the great room, dining room, or bedroom wing
- G** With ample seating and light, the great room is ideal for gatherings
- H** Extending from the great room is the covered loggia, which is deep enough for large outdoor furniture
- I** Kitchen has ample space for preparation and entertaining, including a six-seat island. Butler's pantry offers convenient storage, and holding/prep area provides additional space for caterers
- J** The elegant dining room is airy, too, thanks to French doors that open to the courtyard
- K** 2-car garage flows into the home room, a drop-zone area for backpacks, umbrellas, and shoes
- L** First-floor master suite is generously sized and easily accessible, appealing to a range of buyers
- M** Super laundry room is generously sized, serving as a space for doing laundry, storing linens and luggage, and crafting

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[HOUSE REVIEW]



THE BRIGHTON

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Width: 37 feet
Depth: 69 feet, 4 inches
Living area: 3,241 sf



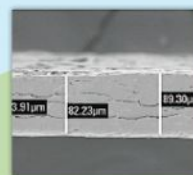
We partnered with D. Hall Construction, in Florence, S.C., to develop a series of homes for a new community. It includes this multigen plan that accommodates the needs of three generations in one home. At the project's onset, consultant Olin Wilson identified a gap in the market for flexible, multigenerational homes, leading the team to a courtyard drive design that could fit narrow lots and still hit a competitive, value-oriented target price point. The result is a plan with an expansive living area in the main house, a separate private space for an in-law suite, and a studio over the garage for an older child returning home from college.

- A Entry to main house
- B 2-car garage for main house
- C Entry to studio over garage
- D Entry foyer of main house
- E Entry to in-law suite
- F Main house living area
- G Bath and closet for in-law suite
- H Second-floor bedrooms for main house
- I Studio

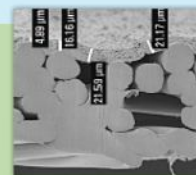


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LWG-3740

DESIGNER

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larrygarnettdesigns.com
254.205.2597

PLAN SIZE

Width: 92 feet, 2 inches
Depth: 89 feet, 6 inches
Living area: 3,740 sf

The secluded in-law suite features a small kitchen area and private courtyard. Although conveniently close, a covered walkway connecting to the main house ensures plenty of privacy. The optional home office has French doors opening to the main entry courtyard. With an adjacent bedroom, this portion of the home could also serve as a guest quarters or suite for boomerang kids.



- Ⓐ Secluded in-law suite has a small kitchen
- Ⓑ Covered walkway connecting suite to main house overlooks private courtyard
- Ⓒ Single garage is adjacent to in-law suite
- Ⓓ Home office with French doors opens to entry courtyard; suite can be used for guests or adult kids returning home
- Ⓔ Family entry features a drop zone and bench



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MULTIGENERATIONAL COMPOUND

ARCHITECT

The Evans Group
Donald F. Evans, AIA
devans@theevansgroup.com
theevansgroup.com
407.650.8770

PLAN SIZE

Width: 33 feet, 8 inches
Depth: 106 feet
Living area: 6,480 sf

This old-fashioned family compound is perfect for today's blended, extended families—grandparents, parents, and grown children with their own families. This home could work for everyday living, as a retirement home, or as a weekend retreat. There is plenty of together space and abundant private space, too. The ground floor is for the senior members of the family, with lots of additional bedroom space on the second floor. Seven bedrooms sleep 12 people, and the house has space enough to use pullout couches, making room for sleeping eight more people.

- A** Parking for six cars includes a 3-car garage and a 3-car driveway
- B** An elevator enables aging in place
- C** Between the dining room, kitchen, and cafe, there's comfortable seating for 21 people
- D** Among seven bedrooms, there's room enough to sleep 12 people
- E** Numerous flex options exist; the one featured has a spacious his-and-hers suite with a semi-shared bath
- F** Additional wing for another branch of the family includes an adult suite, lounge, study, and adjoining kids' suites
- G** On the third floor is a large private guest suite
- H** An additional third-floor entertainment zone features a summer kitchen, oasis room, and starlight deck

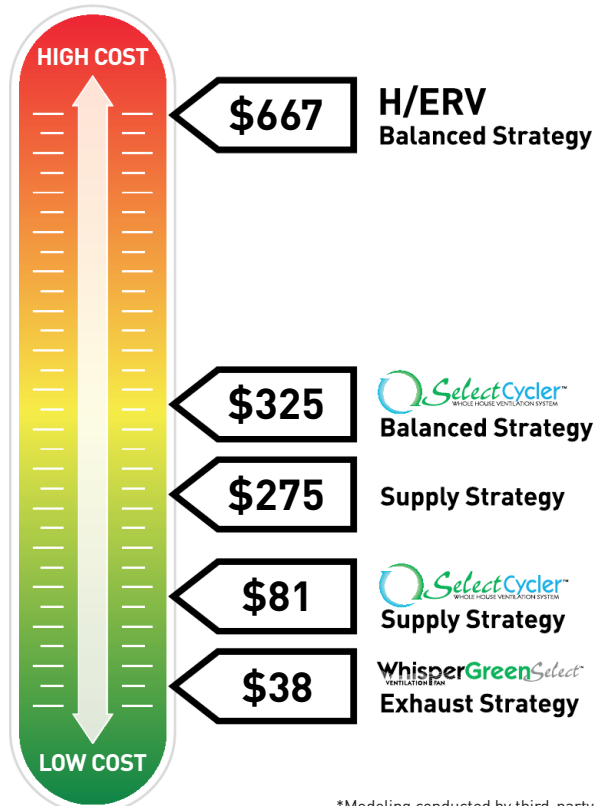


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[HOUSE REVIEW]

PAIGE

ARCHITECT

TK Design & Associates
Todd Hallett, AIA CAPS
thallett@tkhomedesigns.com
tkhomedesign.com
248.446.1960

PLAN SIZE

Width: 44 feet
Depth: 53 feet, 4 inches
Living area with multigen
option: 3,053 sf



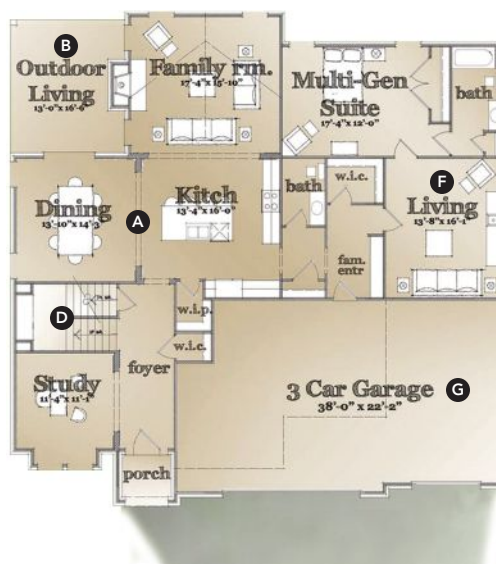
Multigen layouts are a great option to be able to offer, and it's an area where product continues to evolve. Time was, a builder's standard plan showed a powder room next to a first-floor den that could be converted to a bedroom by adding a closet, with the powder room converting to a full bath. But now, many builders are stepping out of their plan base, finding economies of scale by offering plans that transform into a complete multigenerational layout. This plan features common spaces that are airy and defined, with cost-effective outdoor space integrated into the design.

- Ⓐ Open-plan family room includes cased openings and ceiling treatments that delineate space
- Ⓑ Outdoor living space adds another room
- Ⓒ A home management center offers space to keep family bills and records organized
- Ⓓ The staircase is centrally located near the living triangle. A built-in niche provides a comfy reading spot
- Ⓔ A large, comfortable bedroom offers a calm retreat
- Ⓕ Separate living room offers additional living space for extended families
- Ⓖ A third garage space provides additional parking

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PENDANTS AND SCNCES

Progress Lighting has unveiled three new product lines. Pure LED pendants offer LED module features and designer-oriented details. Finishes include Brushed Nickel, White, or Antique Bronze, and Anodized Gold and Pistachio Green are color options for the inside.

Avant (shown) is a modern LED pendant with varied textures. The inside surface of the fixture is sandblasted glass, with a polished glass surface on the outside. Both Avant and Pure LED lights are 3,000K, 623 lumens, and have a 90+ color rendering index (CRI). Dash LED sconces have a design that directs light back on the wall for a dramatic effect. Perforated mesh on the sides serves as a diffuser. **For more info circle 800**



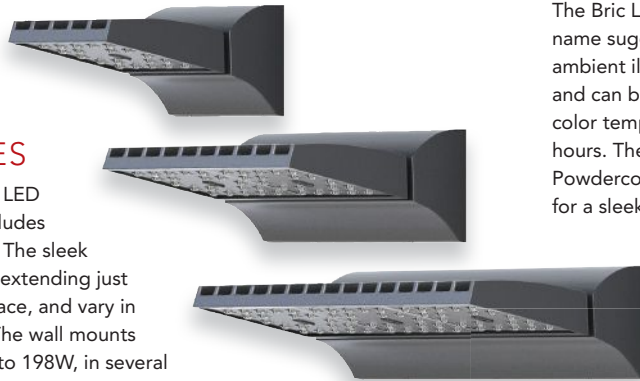
BRICK-SHAPED SCONCE

The Bric LED Wall Sconce from **WAC Lighting** looks like its name suggests: a brick. This interior pocket sconce emits warm, ambient illumination, can be mounted to cast light up or down, and can be arranged in geometric patterns. The lights have a color temperature of 3,000K, a CRI of 90, and a life of 80,000 hours. The LED luminaire dims, too. Finishes include White Powdercoat and Brushed Nickel. The design conceals hardware, for a sleek look. **For more info circle 801**

WALL-MOUNTED FIXTURES

U.S. Architectural Lighting's Razar LED Generation product line now includes three new wall-mounted fixtures. The sleek luminaires offer a low profile, extending just 12 inches from the mounting surface, and vary in width from 9 inches to 23 inches. The wall mounts are available in wattages from 23W to 198W, in several color temperatures—3,000K, 4,000K, and 5,000K—and with five distribution patterns that can be rotated in 90-degree increments. Standard finishes include black, gray, green, white, and bronze, and custom colors are available, too.

For more info circle 802



DOWNLIGHTS

NSpec, from **Nora Lighting**, introduces lolite, a new modular LED downlight. The fixture has one LED core module compatible with downlight housing that features different dimming options. The 1-inch, 12-watt downlight produces about

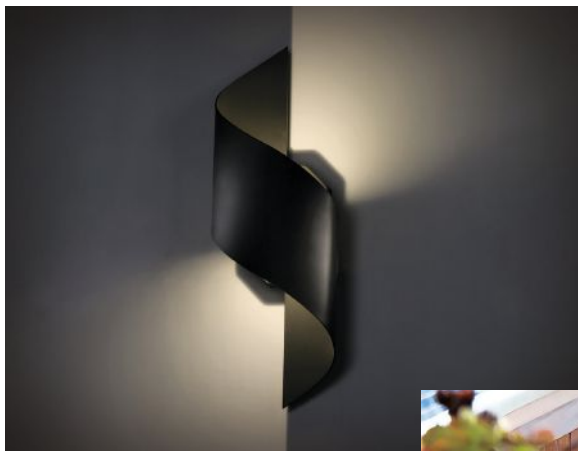
600 lumens, while the 2- and 4-inch, 14-watt gimbal and deep-regress adjustables produce 800 lumens. The light is available in 1-, 2-, and 4-inch apertures with a minimal appearance and more than 100 design and trim options. No tools are required to attach the trim or to adjust the four lolite beam spreads. **For more info circle 803**



HIGH BAYS

Columbia Lighting added three new higher-lumen packages to its LLHV VersaBay LED High Bay fixture for higher mounting heights. The fixture now comes in six lumen packages (12,000, 18,000, 24,000, 30,000, 36,000, and 48,000) and three color temperatures (3,500K, 4,000K, and 5,000K). LLHV is an ultra-efficient option for one-for-one replacements of older metal halide or fluorescent high bays. Hanging system selections include chain, tong, or aircraft cable mounting for ease of installation. **For more info circle 804**

LED LIGHTING



INDOOR-OUTDOOR SCONCE

The Helix LED wall sconce from **Modern Forms** has a curvy cylindrical design suitable for both indoor and outdoor use. The heavy-gauge aluminum sconce shines light both upward and downward. IP65 rated for wet locations, the 8-watt luminaire operates without the use of a transformer or driver and can be dimmed using an electronic low-voltage (ELV) dimmer. The sconce comes in a 3,000K color temperature with a CRI of 85 and is available in Graphite or Bronze finishes in two sizes: 17 inches tall by 6 inches wide and 4½ inches deep, and 24½ inches by 8½ inches and 6¾ inches deep.

For more info circle 805



RESILIENT LED TUBES

Espen Technology has created a 4-foot-long shatterproof LED tube. In addition to being tough, the ArmorCoat Retroflex High Efficiency T8 LED operates on instant start, program rapid-start, and dimming fluorescent ballasts. The lights are 16 watt, 2,200 lumens, and are offered in color temperatures of 3,500K, 4,000K, and 5,000K. The shatterproof lamps are both efficient and flexible, with a 325-degree beam angle.

For more info circle 806

RUSTIC LIGHTS

Barn Light Electric has a new cast guard-and-glass LED option for many of its small-town, Americana-style shades. The Rustic LED Collection includes different stem-mount lights, gooseneck lights, and cord-hung pendants. The LED drivers, from Cree, have 2-Step EasyWhite Technology, which provides an average of 50,000 hours of light, making it an energy-efficient option. The rustic LED fixtures can be customized, with a choice of powder coat or porcelain enamel finish colors, mounting options, glass and guard options, and three color temperatures. **For more info circle 807**



SMART LIGHT BULB

Sengled's new smart bulb product, the Element Touch, is an LED bulb that can be controlled remotely and wirelessly through an app or home controller. The A19 LED bulb provides 800 lumens of light and can last for 22 years. It emits both warm and cool color temperatures, depending on brightness. Ideal for an automated home, the light will not flicker when connected to most existing wall dimmers and switches. The Element Touch can also measure and display real-time electricity usage. **For more info circle 808**



DECORATIVE INDOOR LIGHTS

Modern Verve has launched two new decorative LED lighting design lines by architect Shea Bajaj. The lines include chandeliers with several light wands, as well as simpler pendants and mini pendants. The Flute Series (chandelier, shown) is characterized by LED tubes suspended at different angles, and the Spark Series resembles a mobile, with tiers of angled light wands tipped with angular porcelain shades. Both Flute and Spark are for use in dry, indoor locations and use 120-volt, 4-watt LED bulbs that have a 350-lumen output, color temperature of 2,700K, CRI of 80, and a 15,000-hour lifespan. A 240-volt version is available upon request. **For more info circle 809**



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[SEALANTS & ADHESIVES]

CONSTRUCTION ADHESIVE

Fuze It All Surface construction adhesive LN-200 is made with a hybrid polymer blend for maximum performance both indoors and out. The adhesive, from **Liquid Nails**, can bond to just about anything, including glass, marble, tile, wood, ceramics, and rubber (everything except polyethylene and polypropylene), the manufacturer says. It can also be used with permanent mechanical fasteners to hang mirrors. Low VOC and low odor, the adhesive holds up in hot, cold, wet, or dry conditions and is certified by UL Environment to meet the Greenguard Gold Standard. The tube has a detachable nozzle for easy cleaning and reuse. **For more info circle 810**



WINDOW AND DOOR SEALANT

Fomo Products launched two new sealants: Handi-Foam Window & Door and Handi-Foam Window & Door West. Both are low-pressure, one-component polyurethane foam (OCF) sealant products. Handi-Foam Window & Door resists moisture and prevents mold problems—it replaces

Fomo's Handi-Seal Window & Door OCF. The new version has 50 percent more theoretical yield per container than its predecessor and offers better low-temperature performance, with three extra months of shelf life.

Handi-Foam Window & Door West is formulated to cure in hot climates where low humidity affects standard one-component foam. **For more info circle 811**



CAULK GUNS

RM Lucas has introduced three new caulking guns: the Lucas B-12 professional caulk gun, Lucas B-12Q quart caulk gun, and Lucas B-26 cold weather caulk gun. Each tool has a steel frame and an ergonomic handle that increases comfort and production. The slotted frame makes it easy to load and unload the caulk. The B-12 is designed for 10-ounce cartridges; the B-26 has a lower ratio suited for cold-weather use; and the B-12Q is larger, intended for 28- and 30-ounce cartridges. **For more info circle 812**



SEALANT FOR WALLS

StoGuard RapidFill is a one-component air barrier and waterproof material that can seal seams, sheathing joints, and transitions in above-grade wall construction. It can fill gaps and cracks up to 1/2-inch wide, **Sto** says, and it can be used on most building materials, including brick, wood, galvanized metal, gypsum sheathing, and concrete. It dries quickly and can be applied in wet conditions, cold weather, and humid climates.

For more info circle 814

KITCHEN AND BATH SEALANT

Due to its formula, with hydrophobic technology, the new kitchen and bath sealant from **DAP**, Kwik Seal Ultra, resists mold, mildew, stains, and dirt, making it easy to clean, the company says. Kwik Seal Ultra is waterproof and crack proof and can be used with all surfaces, including granite and marble. Safe for water exposure in just 4 hours, the product is easy to apply, cleans up with soap and water, and is low odor. It is available in 10.1-fluid-ounce cartridges or 5.5-fluid-ounce squeeze tubes in white, clear, and biscuit colors. **For more info circle 813**





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LED LIGHTING 301: ABCs OF LED 2016 UPDATE



SPEAKER

Joseph A. Rey-Barreau, AIA, IES

Joseph A. Rey Barreau, AIA, IES, has worked as the principal lighting designer and/or architect on more than 1,000 residential or commercial projects. He is an Associate Professor with tenure at the University of Kentucky College of Design. He has developed hundreds of lighting education courses and has presented more than 500 continuing education programs.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6 • 2 P.M. ET

This free one-hour CEU course will provide an overview of LED and solid-state lighting fundamentals – how the technology works and how those unique properties provide both benefits and challenges when specified in various new construction and retrofit applications. Participants in this course will also learn what to look for in LED products to gauge quality and functionality. This is essential information for anyone curious about LED basics and the latest advancements influencing available options in the marketplace.

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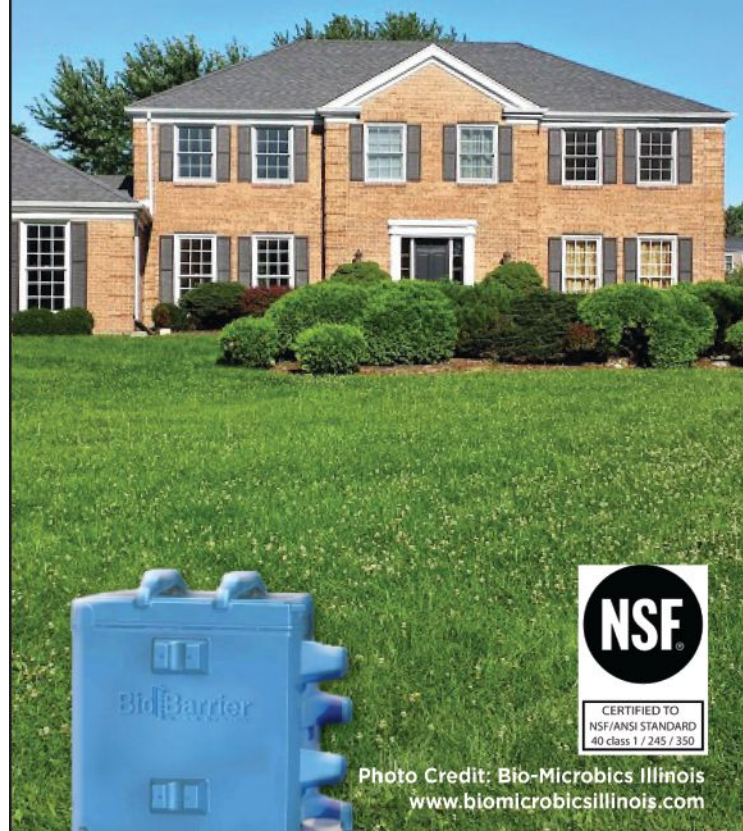


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Viny Panchal, of ProSight, sees more court cases coming to define employees and contract laborers



Viny Panchal
Program Manager of Construction
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Morristown, N.J.

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) in a 3-2 decision last August changed the standard for testing whether two independent companies are joint employers. The case involved Browning-Ferris Industries of California (BFI), which contracted with a separate company to provide workers at a recycling plant. While BFI did not directly supervise those workers, the NLRB deemed that it was a joint employer because the company reserved the right to control the scheduling, overtime, and work assignments of temporary workers. Proponents contend that the ruling can be a remedy for many workers misclassified as independent contractors. Others, such as the National Association of Home Builders, argue that the ruling could subject builders to potential liability for unfair labor practices, breaches of collective-bargaining agreements, and picket lines over issues involving their subcontractors. Viny Panchal has been underwriting construction insurance for eight years and shares his take on how the labor law could impact builders and liability concerns.

Q Did the Department of Labor change the rule or did it change the interpretation of what is an independent contractor?

A What the NLRB has said is that it wants to be front and center in guiding the discussion, but it stopped short of saying that any one area should take precedence. More so, the NLRB is saying that it wants to rely on the facts of each individual case. The idea of economic dependence would be the guiding factor when taking an overall look.

Q How does the definition of economic dependence come into play?

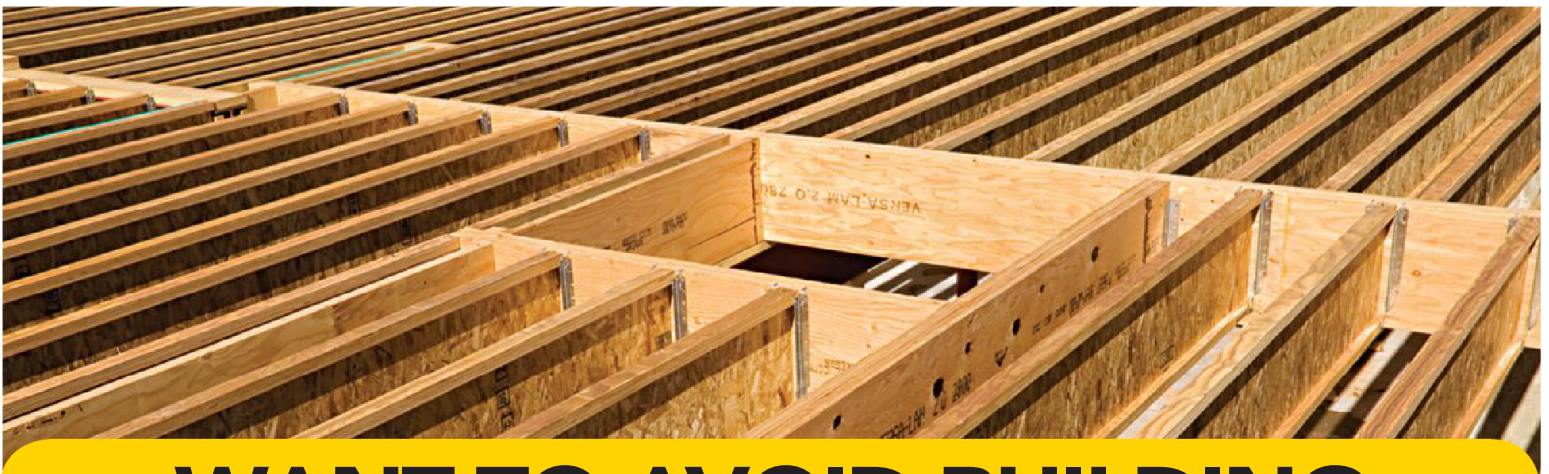
A The Department of Labor uses the economic realities test by applying the idea of economic dependence to see if the worker is truly operating a business of his or her own, in which case he could be deemed an independent contractor, or if he, as a worker, is economically dependent on the employer. The test is applied in a manner in which one is evaluating the realities of the working relationship, not solely on titles assigned by employers.

Some questions that have been highlighted by the Department of Labor and could be useful in determining the relationship would be: 1. How integral is the work performed to the employer's business? 2. How does the worker's relative investment compare with

the employer's investment? 3. Will the work require special skills or initiative? I think that as these and other questions are tested in the courts, we will start to be able to use a more definitive method of applying the economic realities test.

Q Does the decision have any impact on home builders' liability or relationship with their subcontractors—particularly for those builders that have trade councils or even fund training for their trades?

A We're probably going to be able to figure out the impact in the next couple of years as issues get tested in the courts. What this decision shows is the Labor Department effectively saying, "This is what we think, but let's see if it works." Builders who are already doing certain things, such as providing training and including their subs on trade councils, I think those builders are ahead of the game a little bit. In terms of what deems you to be an independent contractor or an employee, you'll have to look at the facts of every situation and at the broader scope of economic dependence. Contractors that focus on specifically outlining responsibilities and staying on top of signed contracts with proper indemnification agreements would be best prepared to deal with any potential legal action. No longer are you going to be an independent contractor because you bring your tools to the site. You have to have a skill and your mission is to say, "I'm thinking about things that are really going to affect how I do business in the future." **PB**



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