

REPELLING THE TALENT POACHERS

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L-SHAPED GREAT ROOMS

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Benchmark Roundtables 2013



In the fall of 1998, I attended my first Benchmark Conference as a new senior editor on *Professional Builder* magazine. What struck me about the gathering was the camaraderie among industry competitors. It was a large group, about 300 attendees, and yet it felt like a small reunion of old friends. And, as our columnist Scott Sedam told me when I met him there, not only was it a reunion of old friends, but it was also a continuation of the same conversation — how to sell more, build better, build faster and drop more money to the bottom line. In some cases the conversation had been ongoing for decades, predating Benchmark.

Benchmark began in the early '90s as collaboration between *Professional Builder* magazine and the NAHB Research Center, now the Home Innovation Research Labs. The conference was

its practices and principles are proven to build companies with sustainable profits. Versus their peers, home building companies that have won the National Housing Quality Award have stood the test of time. In an industry that lost almost 30 percent of its companies during the downturn, only a handful of the 120-plus NHQ Award winners are not in business today. They have stood the test of time. That is why, as the housing market recovers, we are seeing renewed interest in the NHQ Award program, as well as a renewed interest in Benchmark.

In January, in conjunction with the International Builders' Show, we hosted a one-day Benchmark conference to highlight the achievements of a new class of NHQ Award winners. This fall, we will do it again, at the Marriott Camelback Resort in Scottsdale, Ariz. This year we are trying a new format — roundtable discussion groups of no more than 15 builders each, moderated by a leading builder executive. Tackling problems associated with topics as diverse as how to correctly staff up to meet increased demand and designing and selling homes for today's younger buyers, Benchmark Roundtables 2013

Not only was it a reunion of old friends, but it was also a continuation of the same conversation — **how to sell more, build better, build faster and drop more money to the bottom line.**

conceived as a forum for builder-devotees of TQM, or Total Quality Management. Winners of the National Housing Quality Awards were featured speakers at the multi-day event. For nearly 20 years, without interruption, the long, ongoing conversation about how to sell more, build better, build faster and drop more money to the bottom line was recast in new terms and new business ideas that came directly out of the quality management playbook — mission, vision, values; continual improvement; customer satisfaction; best practices; and, of course, benchmarking.

Though quality management is not seen as being on the cutting edge of business thinking today,

is a unique, peer-to-peer way to get answers to your most pressing business questions. So I encourage you to join us in Scottsdale on Nov. 6 and 7. For more information feel free to reach out to Judy Brociek at jbrociek@sgcmail.com. Over the years, Benchmark has provided an opportunity for builders to take stock of their companies with an eye toward the future. And with demand for new homes set to grow dynamically in 2014, the time will be right to make final adjustments for the year ahead. We hope to see you there.

Patrick O'Toole, Publisher | Editorial Director
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Labor Shortages and the Metropolitan Angle



Politics are local; real estate obviously is local, and the rate of economic recovery varies by locale. Talk to builders in Orange County, Dallas-Fort Worth, and Florida, and they'll tell you their businesses are furiously busy. But then there's the builder from Aurora, Ill., who says his crews are still remodeling because he hasn't had a new house to build since 2010.

The unemployment rate just for the construction trades (residential and nonresidential) hovers near 10 percent, so not everyone is working. Yet plenty of builders in those boom markets say they could start more projects if only they could find more skilled labor.

The media is rife with stories about frame carpenters, plumbers, and other tradesmen who are driving trucks, installing telecommunications, or running their own business. Many apparently are making more money with less headaches, so they're not coming back to the trades. Neither are skilled undocumented immigrants any time soon, thanks to stricter E-verify rules for employers.

Inevitably, the labor shortage will call for equipping a new pool of hires with skills. That means training. Yet some circles blame employers for creating their own woes because they refuse to pay higher wages and for training. There are plenty of other targets for finger pointing: policies that prioritize college at the expense of vocational programs, scarce public funds for job training, and the notion that young people aren't drawn to construction jobs. Counting on help from the federal or state fronts to address any of those factors is a long shot because of partisan gridlock. But one possible approach could be local.

In their book "The Metropolitan Revolution," two Brookings Institution fellows write that rather than wait for Washington or the states to get their acts together, local networks of elected officials, philanthropists, universities, businesses, and community groups are taking on tough problems. For example, in Northeast Ohio coalitions from four cities combined resources to invent tooling and production innovations and revitalize manufacturing in that region. Houston used a settlement house as a gateway to integrate immigrants into the community and upgrade their job skills.

Perhaps builder associations, contractors, school districts, and others can band together to develop a local approach for bridging the skills gap in their markets. The Home Builders Association of Michigan is pushing for more flexibility in high school curriculums to boost participation in vocational programs. Such efforts won't fill the talent gap overnight, but it could yield a richer pool of candidates from which to hire. Either that, or figure out a way to build houses using low-skilled workers in the field.

Mike Beirne, Editor
mbeirne@sgcmail.com

Inevitably, the **labor shortage** will call for equipping a **new pool of hires with skills**.



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THE STATE OF HOUSING

Housing Revival is Real; Sustained Recovery Depends on Affordability and the Economy

The Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies put a confirmation stamp on the notion that the current housing market recovery is real with its “State of the Nation’s Housing 2013” report.

How long that recovery can be sustained, however, is open to debate as the Center also noted the share of U.S. households owning homes is at its lowest point since the Census Bureau began keeping such records in 1976. Even though low interest rates have rendered homeownership more affordable than at any time since the 1970s, the ownership rate during 2012 fell for the eighth consecutive year to 65.4 percent from 66.1 percent, representing a net loss of 161,000 homeowners.

Each 10-year age group between 25 and 54 is at its lowest point in home ownership, and minority ownership rates have been hardest hit. The rate for African-Americans was 43.9 percent, its lowest level since 1995, while ownership among Hispanic (46 percent) and white (73.5 percent) households are at their lowest levels in a decade.

Minorities, particularly young adults, will contribute significantly to household growth through 2023 and make up the bulk of potential first-time homebuyers. Yet their ability to purchase a house will be limited due to reduced income and access to wealth. Tight credit and reform proposals for housing finance, such as raising the down payment requirement, could further narrow the path toward home ownership for young adult and minority households.

While annual household growth should hit 1.2 million through the rest of the decade—similar to 1990 rates—the composition of household growth will be very different. Aging Baby Boomer households are projected to increase by 9.8 million through 2023, driving most of the increase in households. However, the report notes that growth in numbers reflects the aging of existing households rather than the creation of new ones. Also, this age group will bring a “significant shift” in the nature of demand for housing and home improvements.

“Meeting (seniors) needs will require modifications to existing homes, the expansion of transportation networks and supportive services, and additions to the housing stock aimed specifically at the senior population,” the report stated. “Many older Americans are also heading into their retirement years with little financial cushion and may find it difficult to find suitable housing that fits their budgets.”

Real incomes declined for all demographic groups during the past 10 years; so much so that households under age 35 are earning at 1990 levels, and households between ages 34 and 54 have incomes lower than what comparable-aged households earned in 1971. The age group that typically should be in its peak income years—45 to 54 year olds—earned 6 percent less than what they made when they were 35 to 44 years old.

Those figures do not bode well for Americans trying to find affordable housing. Already 42.3 million households, or 37 percent, paid more than 30 percent of their pre-tax income for housing in 2011, and 20.6 million paid more than half, according to the Center’s report. Even the number of low-income households with full-time jobs and deemed severely burdened by housing costs increased from 38.6 percent to 42.4 percent between 2007 and 2011.

Income was a factor behind more



households opting to rent. More Baby Boomers and married couples with children—typically a group with high home ownership rates—added to the net growth of renters. Overall, renter household growth since 2010 is on pace to surpass the 5.1-million gain seen in the early 2000s. The Center’s outlook for multifamily housing sees supply exceeding demand when new units under construction are ready for occupancy; but with a healthy level of demand, even those apartments could be absorbed without a substantial rise in vacancies.

“Given the depth of the housing market downturn, several challenges to a strong and sustainable recovery remain,” the report stated. “Demand is closely linked with jobs and incomes, which are taking longer to rebound than in any previous cycle. While trending downward, the numbers of underwater homeowners, seriously delinquent loans, and excess vacancies are still in the millions. It will take several years for market conditions to return to normal. Until then, the housing recovery is likely to unfold at a moderate pace.” **PB**

MORTGAGE BONDS

More Mortgage Misinformation

Lisa Epstein, the foreclosure fraud investigator who uncovered the bank robo-signing scandal, recently discovered

another example of improper document management by financial institutions that could produce more losses for mortgage bond investors.

Reuters reported that Epstein, through compiling property records and reports from mortgage servicers, found examples of mortgage servicers, such as Bank of America and Ocwen Financial Corp., incorrectly reporting houses still in foreclosure when they actually were sold to new buyers or the underlying mortgages were paid off. In some cases, the servicers charged bond trustees like Wells Fargo & Co., and Bank of New York Mellon monthly service fees for loans that had been paid off years before. The practice also disguised the need to write down the value of the loan.

If such errors are widespread, investors could be holding mortgage-backed securities with millions of dollars in unrecognized losses, which could lead to litigation. Already, Bank of America agreed to an \$8.5-billion settlement with 22 investors—including Investment Management Co., and Blackrock Inc.—to end a lawsuit holding the bank liable for Countrywide Financial loans that were marketed as low-risk securities despite containing home loans with poor borrower histories and bad credit quality. **PB**

RESEARCH

Vinyl Siding Institute Releases Insulated Siding Study

A study commissioned by the Vinyl Siding Institute attempted to measure the real-world performance of insulated siding on energy efficiency.

The “Insulated Siding Energy Performance Study” conducted by Newport Ventures, Scenectady, N.Y., took five different detached single-family

homes and installed five siding products from different manufacturers, with R-values ranging from R-2.0 to R-2.7, after removing existing siding and installing a water-resistive barrier.

The homes, located in Fort Collins, Colo., New Palestine, Ind., Severna Park, Md., Burnt Hills, N.Y., and New Paltz, N.Y., were measured for air tightness before the remodel and after the siding was installed. The test also used other energy-audit measures like infrared imagery and an analysis of utility bills, insulation levels, and equipment efficiency.

The study found that air leakage improvement across the five homes ranged from 3 percent to 24 percent, while declines in the consumption of natural gas or propane during heating season ranged from 1 percent to 11 percent. However, only the Colorado home showed statistically significant energy savings (11 percent).

“The amount of savings on future projects cannot be predicted with any large degree of confidence on this study alone,” the report concluded. “Primary reasons for lack of statistical significance may be the lack of granularity provided by utility bills alone, variability in occupant behavior, and inconsistency in outdoor weather conditions.”

The study identified other opportunities for further research such as measuring the thermal performance of insulated siding installed over existing siding, evaluating the effectiveness of advanced air-sealing techniques while sheathing is exposed, and a cost analysis and comparison of insulated siding to other options like insulated sheathing. **PB**



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SUPREME COURT RULES AGAINST AUTHORITIES THAT “EXTORT” LAND OWNERS SEEKING PERMITS

In a major victory for property rights advocates, the U.S. Supreme Court on June 25 issued an opinion that gives property owners a strong argument with which to fight certain concessions that are often required as a condition for approving a permit to develop a piece of land. The decision overturns a Florida Supreme Court ruling that would have given governments expanded power to force unreasonable exactions upon developers. The National Association of Home Builders’ (NAHB) involvement helped make it happen.

The case was *Koontz v. St. Johns River Water Management District*, a landmark case with major implications for land developers nationwide.

Since the late 1980s, a permit condition was not considered constitutional unless it has a “nexus” to a governmental purpose, and it was “roughly proportional” to the impacts of the project. This is known as the *Nollan/Dolan* test, named after two Supreme Court cases. The test protects property owners from overzealous land-use permitting officials, but until now there were two outstanding questions about it:

- 1) Does it apply even if the permit is denied?
- 2) Does it apply if the government’s condition is a payment of money?

THE COURT’S DECISION

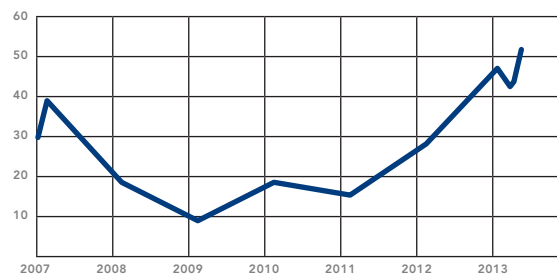
In both instances, the Supreme Court answered in the affirmative. In the first scenario, if a property owner refuses to agree to outrageous conditions in a permit and the government subsequently denies that permit, the government cannot later argue that because the permit was never granted, there was no constitutional violation. The Supreme Court also ruled that the *Nollan/Dolan* test applies equally whether the government demands the land owner give up real property or money as a condition of obtaining a permit. Tellingly, the court used a form of the word “extortion” five times to describe the manner in which governments demand property from developers before granting approvals.

This landmark decision effectively denies the government the ability to force unreasonable exactions upon developers in exchange for a permit approval, and it means that federal, state, and local regulators will need to exercise more caution to ensure that permitting demands—including monetary demands—are proportionate to the project at hand.

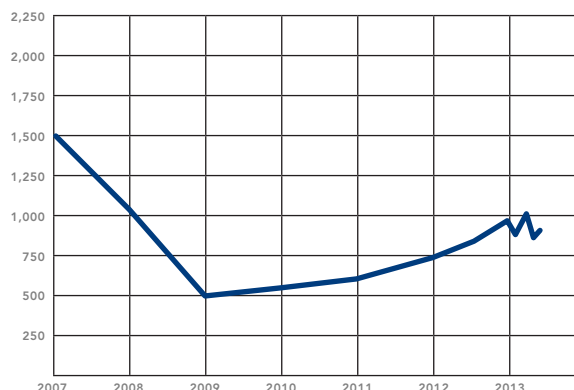
Leading the fight on behalf of property owners, NAHB headed a coalition of 16 prominent real estate and business organizations in filing an amicus brief that explained why it is neither necessary nor fair for governments to extort money from property owners who wish to use their land. **PB**

HOUSING MARKET SNAPSHOT

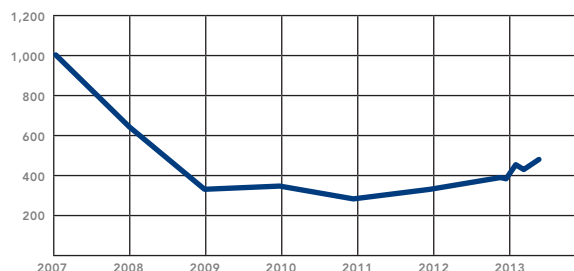
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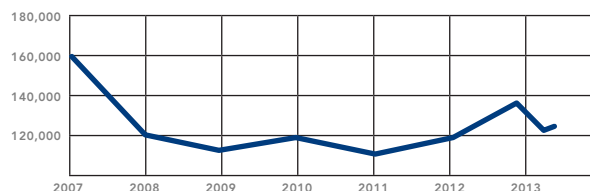
HOUSING STARTS INCREASE



NEW HOME SALES RISE



REMODELING SPENDING GAINS



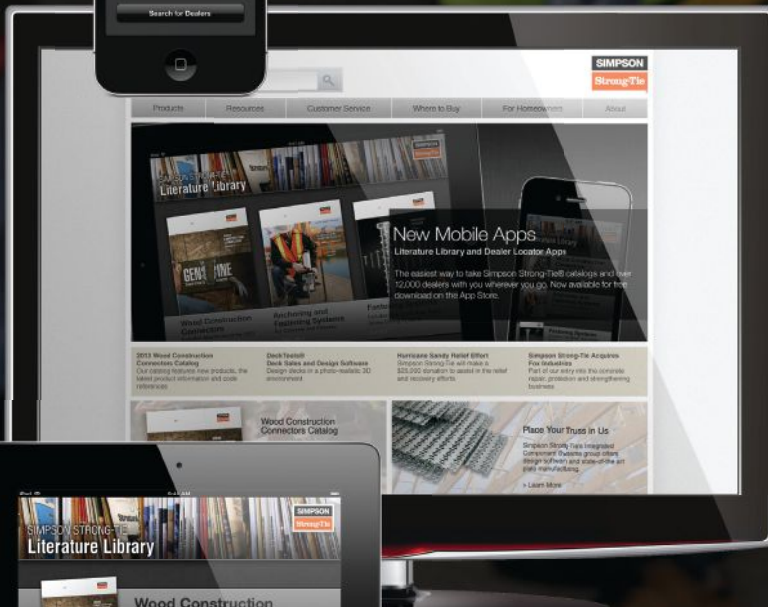
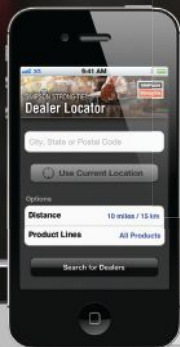
Housing indicators in May were upbeat as builder confidence, measured by the NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index, rose 8 points from the previous month to 52. Sales of new single-family homes increased 2.1 percent to an annualized rate of 476,000, and housing starts grew 6.8 percent to an annualized rate of 914,000. Remodeling spending gained 1.9 percent to \$124.2 million.

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By Scott Sedam, Contributing Editor



Last month I set out a model of leadership to help answer the persistent question, what does a great leader do? (See “Rank has its Responsibilities,” *Professional Builder*, August 2013 and HousingZone.com).

Note that my answer is not the typical attribute model that most books and articles on leadership offer. Those treatises describe what leaders are like with traits such as decisive, action-oriented, inspiring, entrepreneurial, among a host of others in the same vein. Yet all the evidence suggests the contrary. That is, you cannot define strong leadership by attribute. Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, and Thomas Edison were great friends and geniuses each in their own right, but a comparison of attributes shows they shared few traits beyond great vision for the application of new technology. In more modern times, Bill Gates and Steve Jobs were far more different than alike. Now throw in the mercenary-like Larry Ellison of Oracle and your ability to find common attributes among these giants of information technology is down to about one—they are all smart guys. But there are millions of smart folks who can hardly lead themselves, let alone others, so we’re back to square one.

You can run similar comparisons with presidents, football coaches, and auto industry executives and arrive at the same conclusion. So what about home building? I have known well the past five presidents of Pulte Homes from Bill Pulte to Richard Dugas, and I am hard-pressed to find a single common attribute among them. Outside of Pulte, compare well-known building executives Bob Toll to Don Tomnitz to Larry Webb, among others, and you’ll get no further. No, the attribute models do little for us other than show (perhaps unintentionally) that nearly any personality type, approach to analysis, or decision-making style can accompany strong leadership. It is much more productive and insightful to leave the attributes aside and understand instead what leaders are responsible for doing. The how they do these things is a seemingly limitless quagmire of variation that resists any reasonable effort to categorize.

Last month I detailed the seven responsibilities of leadership, suggesting that these are the areas with which the best leaders concern themselves. I know that the origin for these points have been influenced by a myriad of leaders I have read about, but more important, these responsibilities are inspired by many personal examples—leaders I either worked for or have been close to. As I relate my personal experience, think of examples from your own history on or off the job, because leaders often turn up in unexpected places.



1

RESPONSIBILITY TO SELF

Recently out of college and a new graduate of U.S. Steel’s management training program, my boss’s-boss’s-boss was a prince of a man named Walt Koehler. Walt was 6’5” and towered over the other senior managers, but his presence was not merely physical. Walt had alert, watchful eyes and walked very erect, in a purposeful manner that just projected leader. But those are merely traits and attributes. What did Walt do that showed he invested in his own well-being so that he could look after the well-being of others? In the mid-1970s, the only person admonishing us to eat right, stay fit, and get enough sleep was Jack LaLanne, that is, until I met Walt. Walt spoke about the work/life balance years before it became vogue and lectured us to always be reading and learning about subjects outside of work. He set an example by sharing stories and updates about his family, thus letting everyone else know that finding balance was not only okay, but expected. Walt was the rare leader with perfect congruency between what he said, and what he did.

responsibilities of leadership

LEADERSHIP EXAMPLES THAT WORK

2 RESPONSIBILITY FOR STRATEGY

I was a corporate vice president for Pulte Homes in the heady times of the early '90s when we grew from 15 divisions toward 40 on the way to becoming the nation's largest home builder. Hardly a week went by without an impressive entourage arriving with a big pitch about some fantastic opportunity that Pulte had to embark upon. These invitations ran the gamut from a massive steel-framing venture to teaching the Russians how to build single-family homes. But the most memorable was McDonald's. They told us that building a McDonald's restaurant was not much different than a single-family house and, of all the builders in America, their research said Pulte was the best at building systems. The fast-food giant was building thousands of new restaurants around the world and pitched Pulte on starting a division to focus exclusively on building restaurants for them.

To say we were excited and impressed is a gross understatement. Having your ego stroked mightily by the king of fast food made us almost giddy. After we worked ourselves into a fever pitch imagining the publicity and profit, not to mention limitless Big Macs and fries, Bob Burgess, then Pulte's CEO, smacked down hard on our big round conference table and—using language a bit more colorful than I can relate here—rhetorically asked, "We are not even in Columbus, Ohio! Why would we want to be in Beijing, China?" Just like that, Ronald McDonald walked out of our lives forever. Not long after, Bob engaged a big-time strategy consultant who led senior managers, both corporate and field operations, through a grueling exercise, forcing us to decide who we were, who our customers were, and what we wanted to be when we grew up. The discussions were often brutal with some relationships fractured beyond repair, but it was a necessary, watershed moment for the company and set the course for the next 10 years.

3 RESPONSIBILITY TO PEOPLE

I often joke that I had to go into business for myself 15 years ago because I could not work for anyone else. I did find it hard to work for the majority of my bosses over the years, but there were fortunate exceptions. The best of all was Jim Waldrop, now president of HomeSphere. Of the many people I know who have worked or are working for Jim, virtually all seem to agree with that assessment. Together we could make a long list of things Jim does very well in each of these seven areas of responsibility, but I think No. 1 is people. Delta Airlines currently touts the expression, "We have your back," and it absolutely infuriates me because nothing could be further from reality. Jim Waldrop, however, never had to say it, because you just knew Jim always had your back. As he pushed you to grow and become stronger and smarter, Jim was always there to remove obstacles. The first question he so often asked as your boss was, "What can I do to help you?" Because of that, I always wanted to do anything I could to help him. Biannual reviews with Jim were a nonevent in the assessment department because Jim gave me continuous feedback. Instead, those meetings became coaching and counseling sessions on how to help me reach my goals. At PCBC last June, I met two of Jim's newest people. Without him around, I asked, "Is Jim the best boss you ever worked for?" Both replied in unison, "Absolutely." There is no way to put a dollar value on having a leader that takes total responsibility for his or her people because in turn, that leader gets the unqualified best out of everyone around him. As the commercial says, priceless.

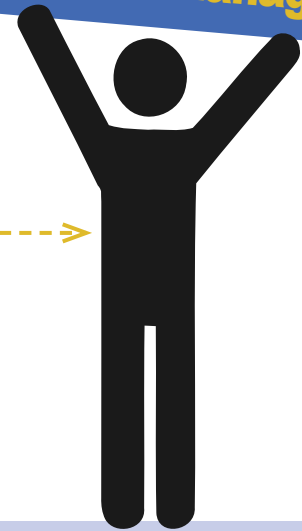
4

RESPONSIBILITY TO CUSTOMERS

Out of my innumerable positive experiences with exceptional customer care, I have been completely inspired by some people I recently met who have gone way beyond mere satisfaction to genuine customer delight. To set it up, however, let's review something basic and essential to enterprise. What is the purpose of a business? If you immediately thought to make money, congratulations on being a well-trained American, but you are wrong. The true purpose of a business is to solve or prevent problems, fulfill needs, and remove pain. Do those things well and you will make money. Money is the result but not the goal. Don't believe it? Ask any customer what they care about, their problem or your profit margin? Knowing this, how can we have any other attitude but to love, cherish, and adore customers?

I recently returned from more than three weeks in New Zealand with projects or presentations in four different cities. My trip worked out beautifully, allowing me to cover more than 2,000 miles by car in that stunningly beautiful country. The American hotel chain model has not taken hold there in this country of only 4 million people. As a result, 95 percent of hotels and motels are independently owned and operated by entrepreneurs, nearly all of them couples over 50. It is winter Down Under and decidedly not tourist season, so there was no need to book ahead in most places. On 10 different nights, we simply checked TripAdvisor.com the day before, picked a place highly rated by travelers, and booked online. The experience was astounding. In every single location, my wife and I were greeted as if we were long-lost friends. Whether in Christchurch, Greymouth, Nelson, Wellington, or Wanganui, the proprietors each went above and beyond our growing expectations, bringing a hot breakfast to our room, washing my laundry when the room machine went kaput, or moving our luggage from one room to another with a nicer view (no charge.) I could go on and on but understand my point. These business people feel totally responsible for us as customers, well beyond providing a comfortable and spotless room. They took responsibility for our contentment and well-being. What would happen if your leadership demonstrated that level of responsibility for your customers? Is there anything more important for a leader to do?

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RESPONSIBILITY FOR SYSTEMS AND PROCESS

As I stated last month, the job of a leader is to lead the creation of great systems and processes where solid everyday people can do a good job in the endeavor to provide exceptional products and services to delighted customers. Perhaps the best I ever met at this was Gary Grant, now retired from Pulte's Minneapolis division. Gary was so strong on process, scheduling, and building systems, that what I tell you will strain credibility, although I assure you it is all true. Twenty years ago, before the advent of sophisticated software, handheld computers, and intelligent scheduling models, Gary's schedule was always communicated to the trades and suppliers at least 60 days in advance, and he never missed. Remember this is Minneapolis, which during the winter months is actually colder than Calgary. Gary invited me to attend his monthly supplier/trade council meeting and two things resonate with me to this day. First, none of the 10 members could recall a single case in the past year when one of their crews had a wasted or even an extra trip to a building site. No one. They went on to describe a multitude of things Gary did better than anyone else in town, including having easily the best-trained superintendents and project managers. Finally the electrician looked at me and said, "Scott, you have to understand something. Gary pays me the least of any builder in Minneapolis/ St. Paul, and I make the most profit working for him rather than with any other builder. He is that good." Just imagine the results if you were so good at systems and processes that your suppliers and trades would say the same about you.



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by KYOCERA

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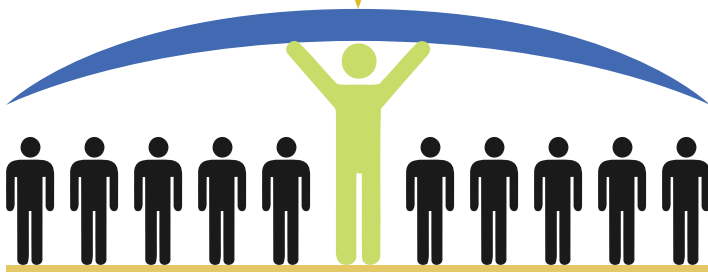


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6

RESPONSIBILITY TO COMMUNITY

I grew up in the small, mostly farming community of Rushville, Ind., about half-way between Indianapolis and Cincinnati. Barely famous for being the home of Wendell Willkie, the Republican candidate for president in 1940, and later NASCAR driver Tony Stewart, aka “The Rushville Rocket.” Not a whole lot happened there. Yet it was a fine place to raise a family where most everyone knew each other, and kids could wander without fear any time of the day or night. One of our closest family friends was Bob Waggener, the owner of The Sampler Cherry Furniture Factory in Homer, just outside of Rushville. Bob was a bright-eyed, larger-than-life character with a close resemblance to Popeye, and I never met anyone more generous and caring about his community. He planned festivals, held big parties, started a church, took in and raised children of friends who fell onto hard times, promoted Rushville to anyone who would listen, and was generally there to help anyone in need. All the while, he built a business known to furniture connoisseurs nationwide. He was a pilot, a joke-teller, a singer of ridiculous songs and rhymes, and a square dancing promoter. On my list of most unforgettable characters, Bob is right up there at the top. But the older I get the more I realize how he inspired me, setting a premier example of concern for things beyond himself. If Bob had been more selfish, he’d no doubt have accumulated a fair amount of wealth. Yet Bob was perhaps the richest man I have ever known. His, is an example of genuine leadership.

Those are the origins of the seven responsibilities of leadership model. I hope that while reviewing my experiences, you were able to recall some of your own. Next month I will present seven vignettes of American builders, one for each of the seven responsibilities, demonstrating what leadership looks like in our industry today. **PB**

7

RESPONSIBILITY TO INVESTORS

There is absolutely no shortage of leaders intensely focused on keeping investors happy. Yet the truly great ones do something that is exceedingly hard—keep the investors just as concerned about the long-term viability of the firm as they are for quarterly profit. There is a monumental difference between profit maximization and profit optimization. When I left graduate school in 1979, I landed at Motorola, a company in the throes of one of the greatest self-reinventions in industrial history. The firm was founded by Paul Galvin who with Bill Lear invented the car radio in the 1920s—hence the name, Motorola. The company became a consumer electronics giant, although not many under the age of 50 will recall their flagship TV brand, Quasar. By the mid-1970s the Japanese brands of Sony and Panasonic, among others, were in the process of burying the traditional American brands like RCA, Admiral, Zenith, and Quasar.

Paul’s son, Bob Galvin, succeeded him as Motorola’s chairman and CEO. Bob shocked investors and the public by announcing that the company would surrender the consumer electronics war, knowing that it could not be won. Through a company-wide realignment and focus on Six Sigma quality and manufacturing excellence, Motorola entered two decades of unprecedented growth, focusing on semiconductors, government electronics, public safety communication, and this new thing—the cellular phone. It was a gutsy move for which Bob took a lot of heat, but he saw the investors through the crisis and showed them greater profit on the other side. Long after Bob Galvin retired, his successors made some miscalculations that led to major losses, but that takes nothing away from Galvin’s leadership in the most difficult times.

It was my honor to have known the man just a bit, with our longest conversation coming at random while on a long bike ride. I accidentally crossed his path to help him free his tractor, which was stuck on the side of a road in Barrington Hills, Ill. After I told him I worked for him about six levels down, he engaged me in an hour-long conversation, sincerely wanting to know how I thought the Motorola transition was going. Here I was in the presence of a giant of a leader, yet he was genuinely interested in what I had to say.

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TODAY'S CHOICE:

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION OR THE POACHER

Headhunters, home builders, and other industries are looking for talent.
If you ignore employee satisfaction, your human capital will be hired away.

By Charlie Scott, Contributing Editor



Today's hot housing choice: employee satisfaction or the poacher?

Many experts say that expecting employees to take better care of customers than their employer

takes care of them is unreasonable. There is a lot of truth in this reasoning, but in addition to customer satisfaction implications there are other significant business operational threats to consider.

When the industry tanked in mid-2000, most home building company owners let employee satisfaction go to the back burner, feeling if an employee still had a job, then they had darn well be satisfied. The drastic market decline forced most builders to reduce staff, eliminate bonuses, trim benefits, and even reduce salaries. These adjustments were painful beyond imagination, yet necessary. How are the long term consequences of these actions manifested today? This article will examine several consequences, but first a little back story.

Many seasoned home building professionals know the industry spends little time in equilibrium and more time naturally cycling up and down. In prior articles and blogs, I accurately predicted six-plus months in advance the land/lot shortage, hard cost increases, and the pinch in skilled labor among trade partners. In each case, we encouraged our

readers and clients to proactively prepare for the next phase of a recovering market. Many did not and paid the price for ignoring these rebound cycle threats. As our industry cycles through recovery, it is time to prepare for the next major threat to your company's success—the poaching of your top employees.

Poaching has already begun in every functional area—sales, project management, finance, land development, estimating, purchasing, warranty, et al. In my last six home builder presentations, I asked for a show of hands by any employee that had received recruiting calls in the prior 45 days. The average show of hands was 35 percent—yikes! I didn't dare ask how many had cyber-trolled on LinkedIn and other social media sites, but I would guess more than half. One industry expert told me that LinkedIn is a prime source of two-way cyber-trolling, both inbound (recruiters) and outbound (employees).

HEADHUNTER HEADLINES

To set the stage, let me return to a conversation that I had one year ago with Veronica Ramirez, CEO of Joseph Chris Partners, one of the industry's leading employee recruitment and placement firms. Ramirez said, "At the height of the last housing cycle, Joseph Chris Partners averaged 250 home building job orders on any given day." An open order is basically a home builder client asking the headhunter to find a qualified individual,

TOP 10 WAYS TO INCREASE EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

By Charlie Scott

1 Identify the top employee dissatisfiers and company misbehaviors via third-party survey. Good surveys done by an outside company will gather information about employees' feelings and company improvement ideas. Many surveys will benchmark your employee satisfaction ratings against other builders. Gap analysis will help the company identify sources of potential future employee loss.

2 The 3 Cs: Communicate, Communicate, and Communicate. There is no such thing as overcommunicating company results, directions, challenges, trends, etc.

3 The 4th C: Celebrate. One of the lowest-scoring categories remains "lack of celebratory culture." Celebration does not have to be expensive trips, perks, etc., but rather showing appreciation and recognition for the work done in all functional areas. Hold staff and significant other celebration/information meetings to show your appreciation for the employee's family support during the past four years of increased hours, lower pay, and family stress.

4 Get your derriere out there. Get out of the ivory tower and out to the field and sales offices. Being on the playing field is the most supportive behavior management can demonstrate.

5 Gratitude. Thank employees who have done double- and triple-duty jobs to help pull the company through the housing depression. A sincere thank you or a thoughtful thank-you card can go a long way. Remember the old saying, "They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

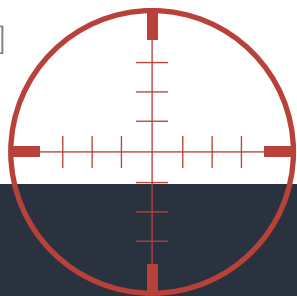
6 Tell them how they rate. Conduct employee reviews at least once per year and have ongoing and honest dialogue about their challenges, needs, and dreams.

7 Check the paycheck. Review and compare every employee's salary and benefits against the many online salary resources. Some of these sources may not be home building specific, but an estimator or purchasing agent for home building is a viable candidate for purchase and estimating in many other industries, too.

8 360-degree reviews via third-party survey. Find out which company managers rate highest and lowest in team communications, trustworthiness, team building, following company policy, fairness, and integrity.

9 Listen, acknowledge, and share the company shortcomings. Demonstrate that the voice of the employee has been heard.

10 It is no longer called human resources. It is now known as human capital—Treat the company's human capital with the same (if not better) respect and attention as your top equity sources, trade partners, etc.



HOW TO FIND GREAT CANDIDATES FROM OTHER BUILDERS

By Charlie Scott

- 1** Visit communities, attend home building association events, and develop a local network.
- 2** Talk to trade partners and Realtors. Between these two groups they often know more about your front-line staff's thoughts, feelings, and morale than you.
- 3** Ask your current employees to network and help in any new hire searches. Just like in new-home sales, the referral is the most potent and highest-converting source of success. Some companies offer referral fees as a preferred way to find talent. Don't forget about past employees who may have left for greener pastures. If you asked, 10 to 15 percent would likely come back.
- 4** Network with professional placement firms and, just as with other trade partners, emphasize total cost/quality, not just the initial price.
- 5** Develop a professional development/training program. Very few benefits are more cherished by a high-achieving new recruit than an organized and thoughtful onboarding program. This is an excellent opportunity to expose a new recruit to your culture.
- 6** Don't be afraid to look outside the home building industry for talent with transferable skills.

usually from a fellow builder. When the home building market collapsed, so did these open job orders—down to just two open job orders at any given time in 2011. Now that the market is back, Veronica reports that their job orders from home builders are up to an incredible 90 open job orders on any given day and still steeply climbing. They are successfully filling these positions with well-qualified, currently employed candidates.

The increased demand and competition for staff makes sense as builders in most markets report significantly improved sales, closings, and backlogs. A recent study of 25 geographically diverse builders by my company, Woodland, O'Brien & Scott, showed year-over-year closings up 47 percent and backlogs up an additional 67 percent—now that's significant improvement. The rebound has not only increased home builders' confidence, but also workloads and the desperate need for talented office and field staff to process this work.

A major problem is that many of yesteryear's most promising young field and office talent have left home building for greener and more stable industries, causing an unprecedented labor pool shortage. As such, builders are faced with two choices—the more time-consuming choice of hiring, training, and growing their own industry professionals, or the second, quicker and increasingly popular solution—search, solicit, and acquire aka professional searches (headhunting, poaching, etc.).

According to Roger Fiehn, owner of Roger Fiehn & Associates, a long-time human capital acquisition expert, "Many home building companies have turned to professional search services to fill important operational, mid-management, and C-level positions." Roger offers tips to employ these seeking services (see sidebar). While this news may be good for the searching goose, the losing gander can suffer significant capital loss of experienced employees.

That's right—headhunters on behalf of your direct competitors are cyber-trolling for and targeting your experienced salespeople, construction personnel, estimators, purchasing agents, customer service staff, and executives. The smart home building leaders are already ahead of this curve and are proactively seeking and resolving as many employee disatisfiers as possible before key employees leave.

IMPROVING EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

Proof for this proactive emphasis on improving employee satisfaction is that my company received more calls to administer our employee satisfaction survey in the past twelve months than in the past five years combined. Third-party surveys allow employees to provide honest, constructive criticism, benchmark the builder's employee satisfaction with other leading companies, and prepare strategies to improve employee satisfaction or pre-strategize new staffing plans. Such surveys also give employees the option to remain anonymous, and about 60 percent choose this option. Impressively, the completion rates for our employee surveys run between 75 to 85 percent and include many operational improvement ideas, too. Finally, a well-done survey should evaluate all the key financial, structural, emotional drivers, and work processes. It is not just about salary; we believe there are approximately 60 attributes that are related to employee satisfaction.

Our most recent employee satisfaction studies show a disturbing trend. Even though many home builders have experienced dramatic increases in sales, revenues, and profits, management's emotional hangover continues. In other words, management still mandates that their smaller staffs wear multiple hats to sell, process, build, and service significantly more customers. This extra work is generally met with little praise, recognition, celebration, or added compensation despite tremendous year-over-year growth. Many employees



TIPS FOR SELECTING A SEARCH FIRM

by Roger Fiehn

- 1** Do your due diligence—Evaluate multiple search providers.
- 2** Make sure search providers have experience with home building and have successfully placed similar positions.
- 3** Check with two to three past clients (hiring managers) of the search provider and with the individual placed.
- 4** Speak directly with the search firm representative that would be your point of contact. Discuss timeline, specific responsibilities, performance guarantees, and compensation details.

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listed “lack of a celebratory company culture” as one attribute that is nonexistent or barely present at their companies.

How can this be, when companies are experiencing growth and recovery? The answer is simple. Management continues to possess pre-market decline anxiety. They are sustained recovery skeptics and obviously out-of-sync with current reality as far as their employees are concerned.

What will it take for management to accept that today’s market recovery is real? When will they acknowledge that their reduced staffs are overworked and significantly strained to meet today’s increases in both unit volume and customer expectations? Maybe when they realize the perfect employee dissatisfaction storm—hard working employees faced with ever increasing work/time demands in a less than appreciative and stagnant compensation environment.

Those of us who have managed home building companies know that it is far better to identify what the company can do to improve satisfaction and morale before an employee resigns rather than afterwards. Once an employee tenders a resignation, any success in salvaging him or her is short lived. And why is it that many home builders seem to value their trade contractors more than their own people? I recently heard from an employee who was miffed that his boss offered a \$5,000 bonus to a framing contractor to frame one house, but rejected a \$1,500 raise to an employee for an entire year’s work. Think about that.

What can you do to get in front of this recovery cycle’s next threat? First, evaluate your workers’ contributions and thank them for their role in the recovery. Second, communicate the plan for continued growth and how this future workload is going to be processed and benefits shared. Third, consider hiring a firm to act as the third-party voice of the employee to see where your employees’ satisfaction (and dissatisfaction) ranks among the industry’s top performers. Fourth, determine salary and replacement costs for every key employee (approximations

are available via many websites). Put an emphasis on making sure your top performers are the most satisfied. Last but not least, do not try to rebuild four years of equity loss on the backs of an overtaxed and underpaid staff. Employee resignations could prove to be every bit as painful (financially and emotionally) as the employer-driven downsizing cycle of 2008 to 2010.

Human capital is a valuable asset that should be managed to the same degree (or better) as other company assets. Retaining the highest-performing talent and fostering employee satisfaction will help protect your human capital and maximize its return for everyone. Care for it and it will perform. Measure it and it will conform.

This week’s management-meeting questions of the week: Do we really know our current employee satisfaction ratings? What potential employee losses are looming? And, are we recognizing, celebrating, and equitably sharing our company success with our staff? **PB**

Charlie Scott is a principal at Woodland, O’Brien & Scott, a customer satisfaction research and consulting firm that specializes in Voice of the Customer and Voice of the Employee programs to help guide home building companies to higher levels of operational excellence. He can be reached at CharlieS@woodlandobrien.com.



TOP 4 REASONS AT-RISK EMPLOYEES STAYED WITH THEIR COMPANY THROUGH THE DOWNTURN

by Veronica Ramirez

- 1** “The devil they knew was better than the one they didn’t.” Some employees did not change jobs because they knew their current employer’s financial status and didn’t want to be in the dark with a new employer.
- 2** “LIFO – Last In, First Out”—Many feared being last hired and first fired at a new employer if the housing decline continued.
- 3** “They are Musketeers: All for one and one for all.” They genuinely wanted to help their employer survive the housing depression, even with lower wages, bonuses, benefits, etc.
- 4** “Sea sick averse”—They were concerned about handling the industry’s emotional ups and downs and re-starting a new career at the same time.

Among the hundreds of building products introduced by manufacturers during the past 12 months and featured on the pages of *Professional Builder*, the readers, through responses and inquiries, selected these standouts as the 101 Best New Products for this year's annual review. Products that could impact your business are grouped in the following categories for your convenience:

- Windows & Doors
- Exterior Products
- Interior Products
- Outdoor Living
- Structural/Insulation/Housewrap
- Mechanical/Electrical
- Construction Tools and Equipment



1 DECORATIVE DOORGLASS DESIGNS

ODL has added two new decorative doorglass designs to the nature-inspired Craftsman and traditional Classic collections. Inglenook (pictured), new to the Craftsman line, is a geometric design that features clear soft wave and micro-iced granite glass with clear bevels and ruby-red floral accents. Grace, an addition to the Classic line, features a combination of granite, micro-granite, micro-cubed, and clear bevels. **For more info circle No. 800**

2 ULTRA SERIES 90-DEGREE WALL UNIT

Kolbe's Ultra Series 90-degree wall unit allows builders and designers to create dramatic corner windows. Each side of the corner spans more than 10 ft. x10 ft. and integrates awnings that conveniently open with motorized operators. The interior is framed in maple and the exterior is clad in aluminum with a clear anodized finish for a sleek appearance. Because the glass unit being set directly into the frame without a sash, these windows maximize views and daylight. **For more info circle No. 801**

3 W-2500

This new clad-wood window from Jeld-Wen meets Energy Star criteria in all four U.S. climate zones without an upgrade to more expensive glass packages in the northern zone. Thermal breaks—

insulating barriers between the inside and outside of the frame—were intentionally designed to limit the transfer of hot and cold. Built with Jeld-Wen's proprietary AuraLast Wood, the W-2500 comes with a 20-year guarantee against wood rot. **For more info circle No. 802**

4 FACTORY STAIN AND CLEAR INTERIOR FINISHES

Factory stain and clean interior finishes from Marvin Windows and Doors involve a multi-step process that takes place before the door is assembled, saving homeowners time, trouble, and the mess of staining and finishing onsite. Six stain options are offered: Honey, Wheat, Hazelnut, Cabernet, Espresso, and Leather, in addition to the option for a clear coat. Interior stain and clear finishes are available on seven wood species: Pine, White Oak, Cherry, Douglas Fir, Cedro Macho, Mahogany, and Vertical Grain Douglas Fir. **For more info circle No. 803**

5 1500 VINYL COLLECTION

The development of this new line—with single hung, sliding, picture, and architectural shape styles—includes a consolidation of Ply Gem Windows' multiple vinyl window options into one platform, with a common sash and common sizing. Builders start by selecting from three frame options—brickmould, beveled, and flat. From



there, they can choose from three colors—white, beige, and clay—and multiple grille, simulated divided lite (SDL), and shape options to get the desired look. **For more info circle No. 804**

6 PULSE ENTRY DOOR

Accented with clean lines and crisp angles, Pulse entry doors from **Therma-Tru** cater to homeowners seeking to celebrate their own special sense of style. Pulse entry doors are available in oak-grained fiberglass, smooth (paintable) fiberglass, and steel, and come in both 6'8" and 8'0" heights. Therma-Tru offers the door line in four different styles—Ari, Solei, Echo, and Linea—with four privacy glass options, along with clear low-E and internal blinds. **For more info circle No. 805**

7 NANTUCKET COLLECTION

Simpson Door has expanded its Nantucket Collection exterior wood doors to include Douglas Fir and Sapele Mahogany, adding to the existing Black Locust and Nootka Cypress options. These doors are manufactured using two-piece laminated stile and rail construction with a modified mortise-and-tenon joinery technique. With a ribbon grain and reddish-brown color, the new Sapele Mahogany doors complement a variety of high-end traditional and modern looks. **For more info circle No. 806**

8 2600 SERIES WINDOWS AND DOORS

2600 Series wood/aluminum-clad multi-slide windows and doors from **Western Window Systems** are available with thermally broken frames, cutting-edge low-E glass, and can be built to virtually any size. These systems are popular for their ability to create sliding walls of glass that open up any home to the outdoors, and the stain-grade wood on the interior adds a touch of warmth. Available with massive glass sizes, 2600 Series windows and doors provide great views and let natural light into the home. **For more info circle No. 807**

9 LEMIEUX TORREFIED COLLECTION

The Lemieux Torrefied Collection by **Masonite** is the first of its kind in the wood door industry to undergo a protective torrefaction process, an all-natural green procedure in which wood is heated over time to eliminate its tendency to rot. A 20-year guarantee covers any warping, twisting, delamination, or rotting that might occur. This collection is offered in each of the 10,000-plus Lemieux residential entry door design options, and is available in maximum 4/0 widths and 8/0 heights and in select grade Douglas Fir, Brazilian Mahogany, Appalachian Poplar, and Aspen. **For more info circle No. 808**

10 TOUCHSCREEN DEADBOLT

The **Schlage** Touchscreen Deadbolt comes with a host of features for enhanced security control, including an autolock function, remote control (via the company's Nexia Home Intelligence system), and Schlage's built-in alarm lock technology, which senses a range of activity and alerts homeowners with an automated sound. The alarm lock function manages three movement levels: activity alert, when someone leaves or enters the house; tamper alert, when the lock is being disturbed; and forced entry alert, when significant pressure is placed on the lock. **For more info circle No. 809**

11 HOME STYLE LIBRARY AND PATTERN BOOKS

The Home Style Library by **Andersen Windows & Doors** gives homeowners the tools to help them discuss and communicate their vision of home by offering illustrations and descriptions of the most popular residential building styles. It also gives contractors and architects a common language to best understand their customer's desires and make it a reality. Andersen Home Style Pattern Books are dedicated to a single style and contain illustrations and descriptions of the architectural elements that make up each style. **For more info circle No. 810**

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101

BEST NEW PRODUCTS

Panasonic has combined two long life technologies to develop the most robust, energy efficient fan/light solution available. Utilizing only 7.5 watts, the 80 CFM WhisperGreen LED™ fans are more energy efficient than ENERGY STAR standards. The 12-watt LED light engine with a one-watt LED night light provides warm, energy efficient illumination.

Both new models include built-in variable speed control with a delay timer. The FV-08VKME3 features a SmartAction® Motion Sensor, which activates when it senses an occupant and automatically returns to the pre-set speed once the person has left. WhisperGreen LED™ fans are ENERGY STAR® rated and can be used to comply with ASHRAE 62.2, LEED, CalGreen and ENERGY STAR for Homes 3.0.

Panasonic is proud to be recognized by the EPA for the fourth consecutive year, earning their most prestigious ENERGY STAR® honor, the Sustained Excellence 2013 Award. In addition, WhisperGreen fans, including the new LED models, have been awarded ENERGY STAR's 2013 Most Efficient designation. This prestigious award recognizes the WhisperGreen line as being among the most energy efficient ventilation fans available.



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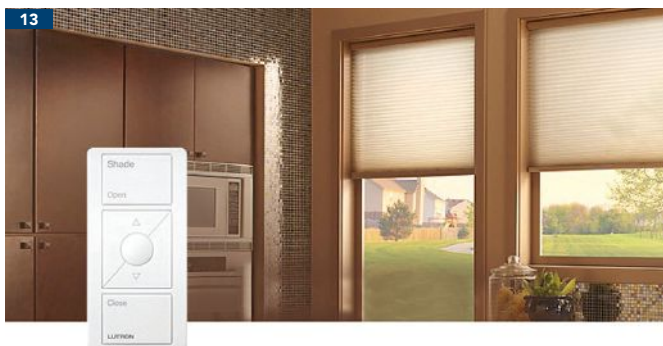
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12 DOOR FRAMES

Johnson Hardware now supports interior doors weighing up to 400 pounds, allowing for unique pocket, wall-mount, bypass, and multi-pass door installations. These various possibilities with non-swung door configurations are being used to create standout entrances and save space. The system includes an I-beam track of commercial-grade heavy-duty aluminum and heavy-duty four-wheel ball-bearing hangers glide along the track to provide seamless, smooth operation. **For more info circle No. 811**

13 REMOTE-CONTROLLED SHADES

These battery-operated shades from Lutron Electronics can be adjusted manually via remote control or programmed to different settings. Styles include single- and double-cell light filtering and single-cell blackout, allowing users to tailor them for any room in the house. Serena Remote-Controlled Shades operate on standard D cell batteries, with a lifespan of three years. **For more info circle No. 812**

14 VENETIAN STORM DOOR

Pella Windows and Doors recently introduced the industry's first storm door with blinds between the glass, offering privacy and light control

without the maintenance and hassle of exterior shading approaches. The Venetian storm door offers convenient cordless blinds encapsulated within two panes of energy-efficient insulating glass. The storm door comes standard with a multipoint lock and can be paired with any of the Pella Select series hardware finishes. **For more info circle No. 813**

15 H3 DOUBLE-HUNG WINDOW

Hurd Windows and Doors' new H3 double-hung window is a mid-priced model that includes several innovative features, including a concealed wood jamb liner and easy-tilt operation for easy cleaning. Its Fusion Technology integrates three materials — extruded aluminum, vinyl, and solid wood — into one window with improved energy efficiency, enhanced performance, appealing aesthetics, easy installation, and a tight seal. **For more info circle No. 814**

16 MONTARA HANDLESET

Kwikset's Montara Handleset provides two points of locking — on the handle and the deadbolt — for added security at home. Montara features a stylish arched design that can be adjusted to fit any standard door prep. The handleset also comes standard with Kwikset's SmartKey Re-key

Technology, which allows builders, remodelers, and homeowners to quickly re-key the locks. **For more info circle No. 815**

17 REMOTE-CONTROLLED ELECTRONIC DEADBOLT

SimpliciKey, manufacturer of the SimpliciKey wireless remote control electronic deadbolt, debuts KeyCloud, a mobile web application that allows users to safely and easily lock and unlock their SimpliciKey deadbolt from anywhere in the world via a smartphone or computer. The app will also alert owners when someone enters or leaves the home. **For more info circle No. 816**

18 STYLE LINE SERIES

Milgard Windows & Doors expanded its Style Line Series vinyl windows with the addition of two new window styles. Awning and casement window styles are now available along with picture windows, horizontal sliders, single-hung windows, radius/arch windows, and sliding glass patio doors. Style Line Series vinyl windows and doors feature a narrower profile, making for sleek, contemporary lines and maximum glass area for better views. **For more info circle No. 817**

Nobody remembers how the lamp reflected in her eyes.

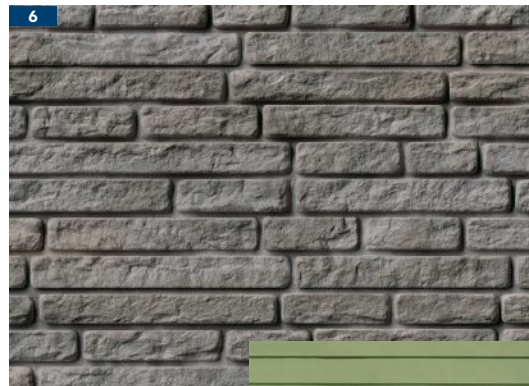
MISSED OPPORTUNITY

Fireplaces enrich moments, and fireplace solutions from Heatilator and Heat & Glo make it easy to give homeowners the beauty and memories they want while gaining the profits you need. From selection to installation and service, we do it all for you. So don't just build a house — create a home with the added warmth from the world's leading provider of hearth solutions. Like we said, easy.

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1 BELLAFORTE SHAKE ROOFING TILES

Bellaforte Shake multi-width polymer roofing tiles from **DaVinci Roofscapes** come in eight different profiles that replicate real cedar shakes. The 12-inch tiles feature snap-fit tabs for easy installation and self-alignment. Tiles are 100 percent recyclable and come with a 50-year limited warranty. **For more info circle No. 818**

2 SLATE AND CEDAR SHAKE TILES

InSpire Roofing's Slate and Cedar Shake tiles are now available in Wintergreen InSpire Cool Roofing Mix, a factory-collated blend of the traditional Evergreen, Ash Grey, and Granite slate colors. This roofing product from the Tapco Group can help reduce peak cooling demand by up to 15 percent. **For more info circle No. 819**

3 SHAKE COLLECTION

The **Nichiha** Shake Collection features products that deliver curb appeal and require less maintenance than traditional wood siding. These products are up to 100 percent thicker than other fiber cement shake panels and are resistant to termites and other pests. The collection includes NichiStraight, NichiStaggered, NichiShake, Sierra Premium Shake, and the newly enhanced NichiFrontier product line. **For more info circle No. 820**

4 PROFESSIONAL CONCRETE COATINGS

Professional concrete coatings from **Quikrete** feature a light semi-transparent base and a dark semi-transparent accent to enhance the appearance of walkways, pool decks, sidewalks, patios, and other concrete surfaces. The coatings are available in tan, gray, brown, and terracotta color systems. The brand's epoxy garage floor coating system is resistant to hot tire marks and maximizes the bond between the concrete surface and the protective barrier. **For more info circle No. 821**

5 MONTEREY SLATE 600 ROOF TILES

Emulating the authentic look of hand-split cedar shake, **Boral Roofing's** Monterey Slate 600 roof tile is crafted from clay and delivers a true rustic wood appearance with the long-lasting benefits of clay. The tiles weigh less than 600 pounds per square—up to 40 percent less than most products—and were designed for the wood shake replacement market. Installation does not typically require structural reinforcement. **For more info circle No. 822**

6 FOUNDRY STACKED STONE SIDING

This new vinyl siding from the **Tapco Group** features bold, rugged texture cast from hand-selected North Carolina quarried stone, an

enhanced coloring process that delivers scores of vibrant undertones and tonal differences, and an innovative first for the stone siding market—the only textured grout line for added authenticity. **Foundry** Stacked Stone siding can be easily cut with snips and hung just like traditional vinyl panels; it does not require the use of a circular saw. **For more info circle No. 823**

7 ROYAL ENVELOP BY MARIANNE CUSATO

Royal Envelop is a series of architecturally correct exterior window, entry door, and garage door surround trim packages developed in partnership between **Royal Building Products** and **Marianne Cusato**. The series utilizes a set of core mouldings and trimboards to create a variety of beautiful window and door surrounds that complete any type of home design. **For more info circle No. 824**

8 ANGLIA EDGER

These 8-inch-high pieces from **Belgard** provide an alternative for edging driveways, patios, and walkways; they can also be used to form planter walls. An array of color choices is available, with each displaying a hand-hewn stone look that has been tumbled to look distressed. A number of different lengths are available to create a natural-looking flow. All pieces are beveled,



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which allows users to create straight and curved designs. **For more info circle No. 825**

9 VERSAWRAP PVC COLUMN CLADDING SYSTEM

Versatex Trimboard has introduced a 4x6-inch version of its labor-saving, one-piece VersaWrap PVC column cladding system. VersaWrap minimizes field cutting, eliminates mitering, and increases curb appeal by ensuring perfectly aligned corners on every column. In addition to the new size, the company offers 4x4-, 6x6-, and 8x8-inch versions. **For more info circle No. 826**

10 TRUEXTERIOR TRIM

Boral Composites has created a new category (poly-ash) in exterior trim with its Boral TruExterior Trim, which is made from a blend of proprietary bio-based polymers and coal combustion product materials. The mix ensures consistency throughout the material and virtually no moisture cycling or absorption. TruExterior Trim is ideal for fascia boards, soffits, frieze boards, rake boards, garage door casings, window surrounds, and door trim. **For more info circle No. 827**

11 STAKWEL WINDOW WELL SYSTEM

Bilco's window well system is comprised of single interlocking modules that can be installed and

stacked to accommodate virtually any foundation depth. Mounting flanges are supplied with anchor holes that allow them to be quickly fastened directly to a foundation wall or window buck. The system is designed for use with both egress and utility windows. **For more info circle No. 828**

12 ULTREX EXTERIOR TRIM

The strength and performance of Ultrex pultruded fiberglass from Integrity by Marvin is now available in a durable, easy-to-install exterior trim solution. The patented Ultrex finish is three times thicker than competitive finishes to resist scratching and marring. It also provides five times the UV resistance to protect against fading, chalking, streaking, and cracking. Field-applied factory pre-cut kits or lineal lengths are available in all six of Integrity's AAMA-certified finish colors with either brick mould, flat, or sill nose profiles. **For more info circle No. 829**

13 UNDERSHIELD WATER DIVERSION SYSTEM

CertainTeed's UnderShield water diversion system is an easy-to-install vinyl ceiling system that turns deck undersides into dry, aesthetically pleasing areas for entertaining or storage. The 6-inch by 16-foot panels and concealed clip and grid system can be installed to deck joists to

divert precipitation to the edge of the deck. **For more info circle No. 830**

14 GRAND ENTRANCE

Benjamin Moore developed this new coating to protect a home's front door and trim from exposure to the elements via the company's low-VOC waterborne alkyd resins technology. Sold in quart sizes, Grand Entrance is available in a wide range of colors; Benjamin Moore also offers a specialty color card with 32 popular hues. Sheen availability includes High Gloss and Satin. **For more info circle No. 831**

15 CARRARAFINISHES

The LP SmartSide CarraraFinishes system consists of a stucco finish applied directly to LP SmartSide panel siding. The panel substrate is a smooth, square-edge panel siding that is approved specifically for use with CarraraFinishes. CarraraFinishes comes backed by a 10-year limited warranty that the finish will not chip, peel or flake. LP's 5-year, 100-percent labor and replacement feature, along with a 50-year prorated limited warranty applies to the panel substrate. **For more info circle No. 832**



1 LEARNING THERMOSTAT

The “learning” thermostat from **Nest Labs** adjusts its temperature controls to the homeowner’s personalized schedule. It takes about a week to learn and will also then adapt to changes made in the future. The thermostat’s sensors tell it when to turn off automatically, cutting down on energy costs. Monitor and adjust temperature anywhere with an Internet or wireless connection. **For more info circle No. 833**

2 ICE COLLECTION KITCHEN SUITES

Whirlpool’s Ice Collection takes cues from streamlined modern design and simple, effective appliance solutions. In addition to stainless, the collection is also available in the new Black Ice or White Ice color profiles. The collection includes Energy Star-qualified refrigerators, wall ovens with extra large EasyView windows, ranges featuring AccuBake temperature management systems, and energy-efficient dishwashers that use nearly half of the water and energy without compromising performance. **For more info circle No. 834**

3 FLORIN FIVE-FUNCTION SHOWERHEAD

The Florin 4.5-inch five-function showerhead from **Danze** meets strict requirements set by the EPA’s WaterSense program for water efficiency, using 20 percent less water than a standard showerhead. The five functions include: wide, centerjet, aeration, massage, and wide+centerjet; the easy-glide selector ring features a lever for easy switching between functions. Danze Intenze technology like D-Force and Air Injection improve performance even at low pressure. **For more info circle No. 835**

4 VIPER COMPACT ELONGATED HIGH-EFFICIENCY TOILET

Perfect for smaller bathrooms, this compact, elongated model is the latest in **Gerber’s** Viper line of high-efficiency toilets. With a usage of 1.28 gpf, it consumes 20 percent less water than a 1.6 gpf model. The 3-inch flush valve allows for quick bowl clearing, which is aided by dual-fed siphon jets. Available colors include White and Biscuit. **For more info circle No. 836**

5 SENSATE TOUCHLESS FAUCET

Thanks to **Kohler’s** Response technology, the Sensate touchless faucet activates in 20 milliseconds via the underside sensor. An optional manual operation feature ensures the faucet works even in power outages. The two-function sprayhead connects to the hose via swivel ball joint for easy movement. Kohler’s DockNetik magnetic docking system keeps the sprayhead locked in place. **For more info circle No. 837**

6 CITYSCAPE COLLECTION

This new line of **NuTone** luxury medicine cabinets is designed to add modern style and sophistication to the bathroom along with convenient storage options. Crafted from polished, stainless steel for a reflective, high-end look, Cityscape Collection medicine cabinets are frameless and feature full-length, continuous piano hinges that allow a wide opening for easy access. Five of the models, with names inspired by cities in California, include Avalon, Arcadia, Catalina, Huntington, and Monterey. **For more info circle No. 838**

What Gives?

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As the latest innovation from Simpson Strong-Tie, the Strong Frame® special moment frame features four Yield-Link structural fuses that eliminate lateral-beam bracing and are replaceable after a major seismic event. What's the advantage? It's easier to specify and it can save building owners significant cost. As with our other moment frames, there is no welding, only bolted connections.

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Circle 763



7 SMARTCAB II

Now available with undermount slides, SmartCab II from **Hafele** is the only storage system on the market that will fit a 15- or 18-inch base cabinet with a drawer above the door. Soft-close technology enables closing without slamming. Incorporated "apps" including a cutting board, spice storage, knife block, and roll manager. The actual product dimension of the base unit is 11 in. x 22 11/16 in. x 20 in. It is manufactured using birch plywood and North American maple solids. **For more info circle No. 839**

8 HYDRATI 2|1 SHOWER

The new **Brizo** Hydrati 2|1 shower features a showerhead design with an integrated handshower that can run separately or simultaneously. Both the showerhead and the handshower have four function modes and incorporate H2Okinetic technology, which sculpts the water into a unique wave pattern, creating the feeling of more water without using more water. Brizo offers four different models. **For more info circle No. 840**

9 LAMINATE PATTERNS

Formica has introduced 33 on-trend laminate patterns. Natural and timeless wood looks are in demand for cabinetry, islands, built-in furniture, and modern countertops, and include Ash, Legno, Teak, Walnut, and Ribbonwood. Nine new graphic, optical solid, and chameleon patterns strike a balance among visual interest, versatility, and longevity. Solid colors—including optimistic brights, mid-tone chromas, and complex neutrals—round out the 2013 collection. **For more info circle No. 841**

10 DRIFTBATH

The newest addition to **Aquatic's** Serenity line, DriftBath offers a quieter and calmer experience than the soaker, HotSoak, whirlpool, and air bathtubs. The DriftBath has more than 70 water-only ports located in the backrest and foot areas of the bath that create a soft current of water flowing in one direction. It also has a thick Lucite, cast-acrylic construction, four LED chromatherapy lights, and an electronic, one-touch keypad for controlling power and lighting. **For more info circle No. 842**

11 HAIKU CEILING FAN

Unlike traditional ceiling fans, which are designed primarily to maximize performance, the Haiku ceiling fan from **Big Ass Fans** offers both performance and beauty. Made from sustainable Moso bamboo, the fan's airfoils seamlessly blend with the central motor, resulting in a smooth, stylistic aesthetic. Haiku measures 60 inches in diameter and comes in Caramel or Cocoa Bamboo, or Matrix Composite in black or white. **For more info circle No. 843**

12 THINKGLASS STAIRCASE

ThinkGlass has perfected its cutting-edge technology to eliminate lamination lines, allowing the polished edge of glass treads to showcase the beauty of pure glass—making glass staircases a real and popular option. Glass treads of 1.5-inch thickness are up to three times stronger than granite or stone, and can bear a load of up to 1,800 lbs. at the center of a 36-inch-wide tread. **For more info circle No. 844**

Sleek Sophistication *comes home* *with* Nichiha's Illumination Series



Is Illumination Series

There's more to Illumination Series than meets the eye. Don't let its pretty face fool you. Behind its virtually endless color palette and sleek, modern appearance Illumination Series is concealing a meticulously engineered drained and back ventilated rainscreen system. Its hidden fasteners, corner pieces and wall system ensure Illumination goes up quick, looks great and effectively manages air flow and moisture. More than a building product... Illumination Series **is an element of surprise.**

Architectural Firm: Killefer Flammang Architects
Product: Illumination Series



The power of possibilities

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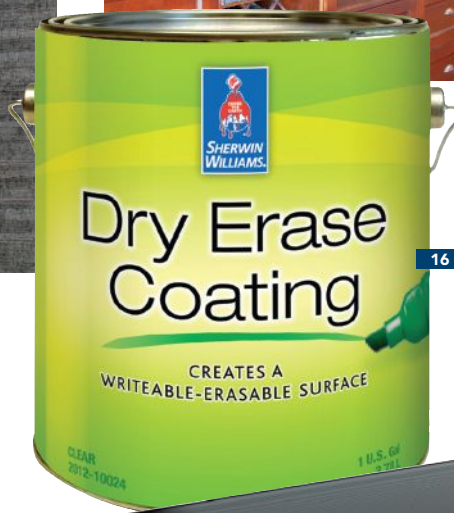
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13 STAINLESS STEEL LINEAR SHOWER DRAIN

The **Zurn ZS880** eliminates water pooling with its patent-pending adjustable frame and grate. Customizable for nearly every project, this drain comes with adjustable anchoring feet and built-in membrane flange, making installation quick and easy. The sturdy, stainless steel construction and integral tiling edge deliver years of corrosion-resistance and tile protection, keeping the Zurn ZS880 looking like new. **For more info circle No. 845**

14 HD RESIDENTIAL COLLECTION

Nature as artwork is the theme of the six new **Wilsonart HD** high-definition laminate designs. The six designs of the 2013 collection include Cosmos Granite, Golden Romano, Bianco Romano, Florence Gold, Summer Carnival, and Winter Carnival. These designs are part of a larger collection that includes 57 total designs, three decorative edge options, and eight integrated sink configurations. **For more info circle No. 846**

15 HALO RAINSHOWER

The new Halo Rainshower from **Moen** combines sweeping water coverage with a modern design. It features a 9-inch outer ring that can pivot to increase spray coverage to 14.5 inches, which is 60 percent more coverage than a traditional rainshower. Halo also comes with three different spray options, including a full rainshower, deep massage, and relaxing massage. **For more info circle No. 847**

16 DRY ERASE COATING

This new coating from **Sherwin-Williams** can be applied to nearly any interior surface and over any paint color to instantly create an economical dry erase board. The durable, clear gloss finish wipes clean easily and eliminates "ghosting"; the resulting board is compatible with all standard dry erase markers. Dry Erase Coating is designed for application by and is exclusively sold to professional paint contractors. **For more info circle No. 848**

17 ECO-DOWNLIGHT

The performance of the **Creative Systems Lighting** Eco-Downlight is equal to a 50-watt lamp using only 16 watts. The CSL Eco-Downlight LED IC/AT adjustable fixture also features an integral proprietary LED driver that is 90 percent efficient, an adjustable heat sink made of die-cast aluminum, ELV dimmer, and a 50,000-hour life rating at 70 percent lumen maintenance. **For more info circle No. 849**

18 FREEDOM INDUCTION COOKTOP

Thermador's Freedom Induction Cooktop is the first full-surface induction appliance with the flexibility of a natural-mapping user interface that intelligently recognizes cookware size, shape, and position to deliver heat without boundaries. This means that home cooks can move their cookware around during the cooking process, which is especially helpful as they add and remove different dishes during meal preparation so there are no limits on where to place the cookware. The cooktop also offers instantaneous and precise temperature control, safer cooking, and easier cleaning with its smooth and flush surface. **For more info circle No. 850**

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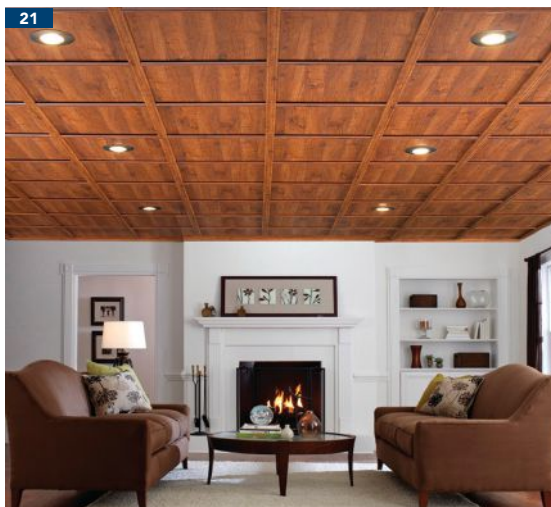


19 CLARVISTA-COATED GLASS

Tired of those soap spots on your glass shower doors and enclosures? **PPG Industries** has developed a coating for glass shower applications that greatly reduces corrosion caused by heat and humidity. When combined with Starphire ultra-clear glass by PPG, Clarvista-coated glass produces an exceptionally transparent shower glass that will not become foggy or spotty over time. **For more info circle No. 851**

20 TRAVERSE LED DOWNLIGHT

Sea Gull Lighting's Traverse LED downlight provides homeowners with the same performance features of incandescent downlights (dimmer, color rendering, and aesthetics), while reducing energy and operating costs by up to 80 percent. The Traverse LED provides 20 percent more light than similar offerings and has an efficacy of 51 lumens per watt. **For more info circle No. 852**



21 WOODTRAC CEILING SYSTEM

Sauder Woodworking has launched a new division, WoodTrac Ceiling System, that offers an affordable, easy-to-install coffered ceiling system for both new construction and remodeling projects. Available in four different styles (Abbey Oak, Bank Alder, Knock-Down Texture, and paintable), WoodTrac panels can be installed in any 2x2- or 2x4-foot suspended ceiling. **For more info circle No. 853**

22 STARCK ORGANIC FAUCET

Axor Starck Organic faucets feature an aerator that boasts an unprecedented 90 spray outlets while measuring less than an inch in diameter. The faucet has a low .9GPM setting, as well as a 1.3 GPM setting. Air enrichment helps to make the spray feel full and luxurious. To turn on the faucet, the user can turn the tip of the spout halfway for a .9GPM flow or all the way for a 1.3 GPM flow that adds extra volume. The spout/handle hybrid is designed for use with the thumb—the most intuitive and comfortable operation. **For more info circle No. 854**



23 MONOLITH

The **Geberit Monolith** Tank and Carrier System for floor-mount toilets is designed to give the toilet tank a sharp, modern look. A dual-flush mechanism uses 1.6 and 0.8 gpf. The system is secured to the wall and can be used in almost any remodel without needing to make structural changes. It is made of materials such as safety glass and metal and is available in black or white. **For more info circle No. 855**

24 BAMBOO FLOORING

Lumber Liquidators has expanded its brand of Bellawood pre-finished hardwood flooring with a new Bamboo flooring that features a transferrable 100-year warranty. This product is crafted using Bellawood's exclusive ThermO2 process, which elevates its color while creating a more stable floor. Ultra-strand construction offers a smoother texture than typical strand bamboo floors. **For more info circle No. 856**



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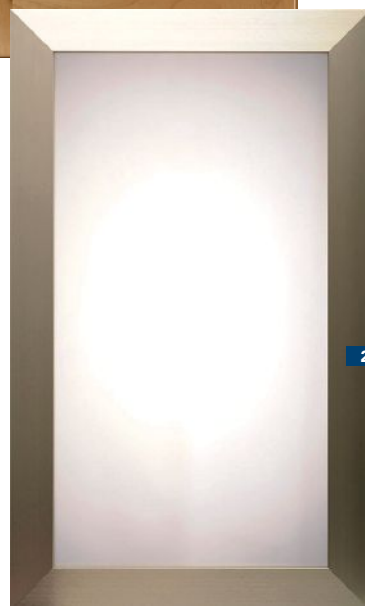
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25 BOLIVIAN ROSEWOOD FLOORING

BR-111 now offers hardwood in an exotic species, such as Bolivian Rosewood, which offers a deep, rosewood-like color with black striping on top of a dark brown background. The flooring features a 5 1/4-inch board width with a 1/2-inch thickness and lengths from 12 to 84 inches. The engineered hand-scraped flooring is backed by a 35-year warranty. **For more info circle No. 857**

26 IN2ITION SHOWERS

Delta Faucet has added its H20kinetic technology to its newest line of In2ition showers, which feature both a showerhead and detachable, handheld shower in one unit. The technology consists of an internal system that controls the speed, movement, and droplet size of the water exiting the showerhead, delivering the feeling of more water without actually using more water. All In2ition showers flow at a rate of 2.5 gpm. **For more info circle No. 858**

27 MESSINA DOOR STYLE

Wellborn Cabinet's newest door style, Messina, is a full overlay, wide stile and rail, cope and tenon door with a solid wood reverse raised center panel. Available in Cherry and Maple finishes, Messina is featured in three Wellborn collections: Premier Series, Estate Custom Collection, and the Elegant Bath Collection. Standard setup includes a three-piece drawer front; an optional slab drawer front is also available. **For more info circle No. 859**

28 ALUMINUM-AND-GLASS DOORS

Timberlake Cabinetry's Aluminum-and-Glass cabinet doors allow builders, remodelers, and homeowners to add a crisp European accent to classic wood cabinetry in the company's Portfolio Select and Portfolio product lines. Great for urban environments or as an accent piece in traditional kitchen designs, the cabinet doors feature a stainless-steel finish and frosted glass inserts for a high-style appearance. **For more info circle No. 860**

29 METRIS SINGLE-HOLE FAUCET

A part of the Metris collection of multi-height faucets, this new product from **Hansgrohe** was designed in collaboration with Phoenix Design. Made of solid brass, it flows at 1.5 gpm for 30 percent water savings. Automatic water volume limitation also comes as standard thanks to the EcoRight technology. The Metris Single-Hole Faucet includes pop-up assembly and is available in Chrome and Brushed Nickel. **For more info circle No. 861**

30 ACCORD SEATED SHOWER

Sterling's Accord Seated Shower is ideal for universal design and aging-in-place projects, with a wide removable bench, ample built-in storage space, and plenty of room to move about comfortably. Made of solid Vikrell material (a type of fiberglass), the four-piece modular design is easy to install, with caulkless seams and snap together walls. The seat can be positioned on the right or left side of the shower or can be easily removed. Grab bars can easily be added in the future. **For more info circle No. 862**

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1 PORCH FLOORING

Eastman's **Perennial Wood** porch flooring is real wood tongue-and-groove porch flooring. The wood is modified to resist change from moisture and is made to last longer than regular wood. Un-coated profiles come in two different widths and in 8- and 10-foot lengths. **For more info circle No. 863**

2 EARTHWOOD EVOLUTIONS TERRAIN COLLECTION

TimberTech's new Earthwood Evolutions Terrain Collection features two long-lasting colors, Brown Oak and Silver Maple, that emulate the earthy tones found in nature. Earthwood Evolutions is the industry's only fully capped deck plank that features TimberTech's proprietary HydroLock technology for great looks, durability, and moisture resistance. Backed by a 25-year warranty, the decking features a flat-grain surface pattern that does not trap dirt and has variegated color designed to achieve a true hardwood appearance. **For more info circle No. 864**

3 VINYL ROOF MEMBRANE

Duradek's vinyl roof membrane doubles as a walking surface and water barrier to protect rooftop decks from water infiltration. The ultra PVC membrane comes in more than two-dozen colors and patterns in rolls that are 54 or 72 inches wide. Installation includes heat-welded seams and edge-detailing to keep water out of living spaces below. **For more info circle No. 865**

4 10-FT. RAIL

AZEK Rail in the brand's Premier, Trademark, and Reserve profiles is now available in 10-foot lengths. The capped composite railing spans 10 feet between posts, allowing for faster installation and lower labor and material costs. Fewer rail posts are required, enhancing views when used in a decking application. The rail is made of a powder-coated, high-strength aluminum retainer used in conjunction with the composite handrail. **For more info circle No. 866**

5 KLEERWRAP POST WRAPS

Manufactured from cellular PVC to look and feel like painted wood, KleeWrap post wraps from

Kleer Lumber are cost effective and offer a way to improve the appearance and durability of exterior posts. The product is simple to install and is available in 4-, 6-, and 8-inch sizes to wrap 4x4 and 6x6 posts. Mitered crown, bed and base/cap moulding, and 5-, 7- and 12-inch outer wrap sets are available to customize the look of each post wrap. **For more info circle No. 867**

6 RETRACTABLE AWNING

The **Solair Comfort** retractable awning features a simplified pitch adjustment, H-bracket design, arms that reduce wind stress, and an improved swivel front bar attachment. A 78-mm roller tube reduces deflection, allowing the fabric attachment to lay flat. Rounded retainer pins reduce wear to the valance, while added roller supports reduce the space needed to mount the awning. It is available in three widths, two frame colors, and numerous fabric options. **For more info circle No. 868**

7 CABLERAIL

Feeney CableRail is made of weatherproof 316-grade stainless steel with more than 70-percent recycled content. The assemblies are



suited to any railing application and offer a low maintenance, environmentally friendly, and visually unobtrusive alternative to wooden or metal picket infill. They feature Quick-Connect cable fittings with patented automatic-locking jaws, and are available in pre-cut lengths from 5 to 70 feet. **For more info circle No. 869**

8 OUTDOOR ARTISAN FIRE BOWLS

Eldorado Stone's line of Outdoor Artisan Fire Bowls are available in two styles and four colors, and include 65,000 BTU gas burners that provide heat and light. The fire bowls can be installed in a matter of days and come with a hardwood cover, which turns the bowl into a table when not in use. **For more info circle No. 870**

9 OUTDOOR GAS FIREPLACE

Available in 36- and 42-inch sizes, the Heat & Glo outdoor gas fireplace from **Hearth & Home Technologies** is approved for use in screened porches, gazebos, and lanais. The IntelliFire Plus intermittent pilot ignition comes standard and can save homeowners up to \$10 a month on utility bills. A battery backup makes the fireplace

operable during power outages. The FireBrick technology helps the fireplace produce 25 percent more radiant heat than metal fireboxes. **For more info circle No. 871**

10 COMPOSITE DECKING

The **MoistureShield** Vantage Collection from Advanced Environmental Recycling Technologies is an environmentally friendly wood-plastic composite decking line that balances performance and costs while offering green-building benefits. Deck planks are 1-inch by 6-inches and are embossed with a realistic wood grain finish on both sides, making them fully reversible. **For more info circle No. 872**

11 PVC PERGOLA KITS

Walpole Outdoors offers a variety of standard pergola kits, from straight top to arched with round or square columns, in six sizes. The cellular PVC kits are available with retractable fabric canopies to provide shade and shelter, and are available in 29 standard colors. The pergolas look like painted wood but are designed to maintain a beautiful appearance throughout the year. **For more info circle No. 873**

12 PVC TRELLIS SYSTEM

The **Fypon** PVC Trellis System offers a low-maintenance solution for accenting garage doors, as well as entryways, garden sheds, and freestanding garages. Available in two sizes to accommodate either single- or double-car garages, the system comes as a complete kit with outlookers reinforced with PVC for durability, attractive beams, lattice, and hardware. The PVC pieces come in smooth white and can be assembled in just a few hours. **For more info circle No. 874**

13 NYLODECK COMPOSITE DECKING

This composite decking from **Nyloboard** is made from recycled carpet fibers and held together with VOC-free resins, providing added durability with the look of natural wood. The material is resistant to water, mildew, and mold, thus avoiding rotting or swelling; NyloDeck is also stain-resistant and UV-protected. The boards are available in multiple sizes up to 24 feet; colors include Caramel, American Gray, and Cocoa. **For more info circle No. 875**



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1 FOAM-CONTROL PLUS+

This EPS architectural-grade insulation from **ACH Foam Technologies** offers superior moisture resistance to XPS products, is available in greater thicknesses, and offers comparable compressive strength. The product sports a warranty for 100 percent of its R-value, compared with 90 percent for XPS. The product line features Foam-Control Plus+ 150, 250, 400, and 600; insulation is available in 2 ft. x 8 ft. and 4 ft. x 8 ft. sheets. **For more info circle No. 876**

2 RADIUS BENDING PLYWOOD

Radius bending plywood from **Columbia Forest Products** flexes at a minimum radius of 12 inches and even smaller radii when additional force is applied. Choose long-grain or cross-grain directions and a variety of laminates. Radius panels are available in 4 ft. x 8 ft. long-grain as well as 4 ft. x 8 ft. cross-grain, in thicknesses ranging from 1/8-inch to 16 mm. **For more info circle No. 877**

3 PANEL TECHNOLOGY

Sto's prefabricated wall panels are insulated to help boost energy savings and are face-sealed to create a continuous air and moisture barrier. Panels come in a variety of veneers, including brick, precast, metal, EIFS, and natural stone. It's also a third the weight of fragile quarried slate and is manufactured with up to 10 percent recycled content. The panels are available in either chamfer or beaded styles and in three color options. Stainless steel hardware provides further security and performance. **For more info circle No. 878**

4 HIGH FLOW TECHNOLOGY FOAM

Fomo's High Flow Technology allows intricate cavities and spaces to be filled at three-to-four times the depth of traditional pour-in-place foam. The chemistry allows the foam to flow through complex voids of all shapes and sizes up to 40 feet, completely filling the cavity. The products are available in both disposable and refillable sizes and multiple formations to suit a range of applications. **For more info circle No. 879**

5 PFT SIDING INSULATION COLLECTIONS

Progressive Foam Technologies introduced two collections of siding insulation: the Fullback FC Premium Series and H2O Premium Series. Fullback FC is insulation for fiber cement siding and is formed to fit the gap between the siding and the wall, keeping siding lines parallel. Halfback H2O is a universal insulation, working behind all types of siding and cladding. Both siding insulations have a permeability rating of 3.5, allowing moisture from inside the home to move freely to the outside. **For more info circle No. 880**

6 TJI JOISTS

Weyerhaeuser's TJI joists with durable Flak Jacket protection to enhance fire resistance provide a simple, cost-effective way to achieve one-hour floor/ceiling assemblies in multi-family applications and to comply with the 2012 IRC fire protection requirements for single-family homes. In multifamily buildings, the joists



provide a one-hour fire-rated assembly with a single layer of gypsum and no expensive mineral wool. They are available in multiple series and depths and installation does not require special tools, hangers, or training. **For more info circle No. 881**

7 STRONG FRAME SPECIAL MOMENT FRAME

Simpson Strong-Tie's new Strong Frame special moment frame, which is now code listed (ICC-ES ESR-2802), is designed to help prevent damage to structures in seismic events. Built using Yield-Link Structural Fuse technology, the frame is designed to ease installation and offers quick specification using readily available design software. With bolt-on/bolt-off ability, the links are fully replaceable if damaged. **For more info circle No. 882**

8 STEEL DECK FRAMING SYSTEM
Trex is rounding out its Elevations Steel Deck Framing System with a new galvanized steel

post and joists in a greater range of lengths. Making it possible for contractors to construct a deck substructure made entirely of steel, the new support post offers a preferable solution to pressure-treated lumber posts, which may warp, rot, twist, split, or decay. Designed to cut time and cost, joists are now available in one-foot length increments – ranging from 8 feet through 20 feet. **For more info circle No. 883**

9 ENERGYCOMPLETE SEALANT

The design of Owens Corning's EnergyComplete Sealant allows the expanding gasket to easily fill gaps and cracks that can't be accessed post-drywall, and also allows easy access to all top plates pre-drywall. EnergyComplete reduces the chance of mold growth by keeping airborne moisture from entering wall cavities, and creates a first line of defense against insects and other pests. A specially designed nozzle works with the sealant to help reduce product usage and allows contractors to seal critical, hard-to-reach joints. **For more info circle No. 884**

10 HYDROFLASH SELF-ADHERED FLASHING

This new product from Benjamin Obdyke can be installed in cold weather—down to zero degrees Fahrenheit—and applied wet. HydroFlash self-seals around nails, and no primer is needed. The flashing is UV stable for six months and exhibits less than 7 percent degradation over 10 years. Available in 4, 6, and 9 inches with a 7 mm thickness, HydroFlash is compatible with a wide range of building materials and building wraps. **For more info circle No. 885**

11 SHEETROCK DRYWALL PANELS

Sheetrock UltraLight Panels from USG Corporation are now ICC Evaluation Services compliant for installation on ceilings, with the long edges parallel to the framing. The ½-inch-thick panels are up to 30-percent lighter than other brands, making them easier to carry and install without sacrificing quality. Made with up to 95-percent recycled content, the panels also qualify as a low-VOC emitting material. **For more info circle No. 886**



1 LOPROFILE FAN

The Energy Star-certified LoProfile fan from **Broan** is designed for retrofit applications and multifamily new construction. The fan can be installed between 2x4 wall studs and includes a 4-inch oval duct connector and a transition for 4-inch oval to 3-inch round ducts. The fan is motor engineered for continuous operation at 80 CFM, exceeds the ASHRAE 62.2 minimum intermittent local ventilation requirement for bathrooms, and is designed for quiet operation. **For more info circle No. 887**

2 CIRC-LOGIC TECHNOLOGY WITH PUMP & TIMER KIT

Rinnai Circ-Logic technology, coupled with the **Grundfos** Pump and Timer Kit, offers homeowners the comfort and convenience of instant hot water with optimal energy usage. The combination of the Circ-Logic technology and the kit's timer function allows homeowners to set recirculation patterns that coincide with household usage patterns. Hot water is available when needed, without the expense of circulating hot water during times of inactivity. **For more info circle No. 888**

3 HY-PE-RTUBE FLOOR HEATING

The hy-PE-RTube, developed by **Zurn** and **Dow Building Solutions**, is one of the first radiant floor

heating solutions in North America leveraging polyethylene of raised temperature resistance (PE-RT) technology. The pipe resists recoil and lies flat when installed. In addition, it offers high-temperature, corrosion, stress crack resistance, and increased flow properties. hy-PE-RTube consists of five layers, which help to reduce noise when in use, and the outer layer protects against oxidation. The pipe is suitable for snowmelt applications and turf conditioning. **For more info circle No. 889**

4 20 AMP USB CHARGER

The latest USB charging device from **Leviton** offers the same 2.1A of charging power as its 15A counterpart, but now features a 20A/125V tamper-resistant receptacle, ideal for high-current devices, such as small kitchen appliances. It has the capability to charge two USB-powered electronic devices, leaving the device free to power devices requiring higher currents, and is designed to charge tablets, smart and mobile phones, gaming devices, e-readers, digital cameras, and other electronic devices. **For more info circle No. 890**

5 CONDENSING PDV WATER HEATER

The new Energy Star-qualified high-efficiency condensing power direct vent water heater from **Rheem** is the first in the industry to employ high-

efficiency condensing technology in a residential tank design. The water heater delivers more heat to the water and produces less heat exhausts from the vent. The cooler flue gases permit venting through 2- or 3-inch PVC piping. The unit also comes with a factory-installed exhaust riser, which vents at the top of the unit. **For more info circle No. 891**

6 FLOOR HEATING CABLE

Floor heating system manufacturer **Nuheat** has introduced a redesigned free-form floor heating cable, Nuheat Cable, which offers some of the industry's largest sizes, covering up to 240 square feet using a single kit. The new system is 33 percent larger than the company's previous offering and can cover large spaces such as basements, hallways, and living rooms. Other improvements include patent-pending cable guide design and thinner factory splice. **For more info circle No. 892**

7 IQ BLOWER SYSTEM

The **BEST** iQ Blower System has a flush, built-in design and is up to two times quieter and 22 times more energy-efficient than other high-performance range hoods, and it removes smoke and odors up to 30 percent faster. An intuitive



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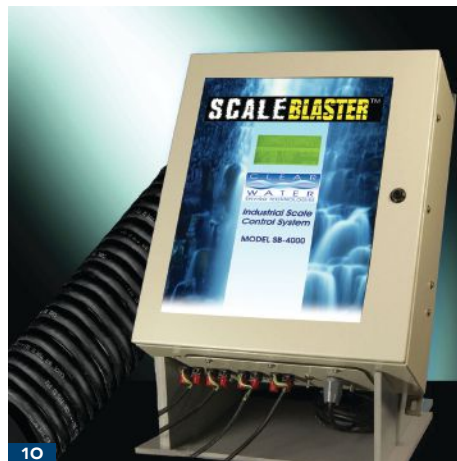
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system recognizes when the duct system is restricted, and an LED light flashes to notify the installer. **For more info circle No. 893**

8 SOLAR PM2 RESIDENTIAL CIRCULATOR

By leveraging variable speed control, the new Grundfos family of solar circulators offers homeowners up to 80 percent energy savings over standard solar pumping systems. Ideal for residential solar thermal systems, the Solar PM2 is an energy optimized, high-efficiency circulator that operates at flow rates between 0.5 and 40 gallons per minute, with head rates up to 47 feet high — typical ranges for residential and light commercial forced circulation solar systems. The Solar class circulators integrate seamlessly with most solar controllers. **For more info circle No. 894**

9 NRC83 TANKLESS WATER HEATER

Noritz has expanded its EcoTough Series of gas-fired residential condensing tankless water heaters with the new NRC83, an Energy Star-rated unit designed for smaller homes and multifamily dwellings. Available in both indoor (the two-pipe, direct vent NRC83-DV) and outdoor (NRC83-OD) models, the wall-mounted units have an energy

factor (EF) of 0.92 for natural gas and 0.94 with liquid propane, approximately 30 points higher than a standard, storage tank-type, gas-fired water heater. The indoor units can be vented with 3- or 4-inch Schedule 40 and 80 PVC or CPVC pipe, which is less expensive and quicker to install than the Category III Stainless Steel that must be used on conventional tankless water heaters. **For more info circle No. 895**

10 SCALEBLASTER

Scaleblaster from Clearwater Enviro Technologies eliminates the formation of lime scale deposits in pipes, boilers, and hundreds of applications. The system produces a modulating frequency waveform that hits the resonant frequency of the calcium molecules, causing them to lose their adhesive properties. Existing scale is removed and never forms again without the need of chemicals, salt, or maintenance. **For more info circle No. 896**

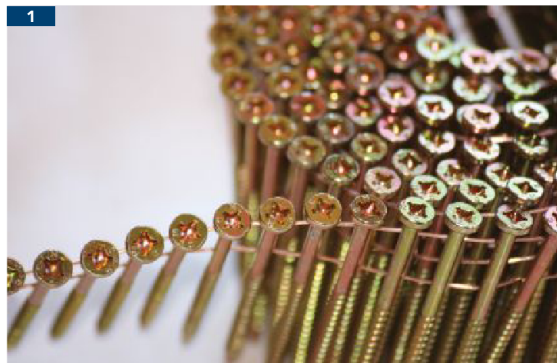
11 STANDBY GENERATORS

GE Generator Systems' next generation of 17- and 20-kW standby generators feature the company's new airflow technology, which allows the units to be placed closer to the home. The units are the only ones on the market

with a thermally protected fuel system that automatically shuts off the unit in the event of a fire. The all-steel enclosure and base can withstand temperatures more than double that of aluminum and far beyond that of plastic enclosures, and the enclosure's roof slopes from back to front, ushering rain water away from the home's foundation. Furthermore, the unit's design pushes engine exhaust out the front and directly away from the home. **For more info circle No. 897**

12 WHISPERGREEN LED VENTILATION FANS

WhisperGreen LED Energy Star-rated fans/lights from Panasonic Eco Solutions provide spot and whole house ventilation. The 12-watt LED light engine with a one-watt LED night-light provides warm, energy-efficient illumination. The fans increase the airflow to achieve the specified CFM output. The models include a dual adaptor for 4- or 6-inch ducts, are HVI certified and comply with ASHRAE Standard 62.2, the ventilation platform adopted by LEED for Homes, Energy Star Indoor Air Quality Program, CalGreen, and California Title 24. **For more info circle No. 898**



1 BALLISTIC NAILSCREWS

Ballistic NailScrews from **Universal Fastener Outsourcing** can be used in place of code-approved nails or screws and save 70 percent or more in labor costs. These patent-pending screws are driven with pneumatic framing tools and come in 20-degree plastic strips, 15-degree wire coils, and 15-degree plastic sheet coils. Applications include

sub-floors, shear walls, roof decking, composite and wood decking, fencing, crate and pallet building, manufactured housing, and metal applications from 12-to-20 gauges. **For more info circle No. 899**

2 SOFTPLAN 2014

SoftPlan's latest CAD software combines design technology with three-dimensional output and



64-bit memory model. This package update also introduces a subscription-based service, **SoftPlan+**, which provides subscribers with access to a suite of cloud services and other exclusive tools. This additional service allows users to mark up drawings, add notes, and take virtual tours of homes in full, panoramic 3D from any PC, iPhone, or iPad. **For more info circle No. 900**

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THE GREAT ROOM GROWS UP

Architects and designers see more L-shaped great rooms, more spatial definition, and a stronger connection to the outdoors.

By Susan Bady, Senior Contributing Editor

In some ways, the great room hasn't changed. It's still the part of the home that brings the family together—where everyone gathers to talk, eat, read, watch television, listen to music, and relax. However, the linear configuration popular in great rooms before the housing crash is giving way to new forms and uses.

Rick Garza, principal of RPGA Design Group, Fort Worth, Texas, says that for many years the great room, breakfast area, and kitchen were all open to each other and essentially part of the same space.

"Today, depending on the actual demographic of the [home-owners], great rooms are evolving to gain more definition of these spaces while still maintaining a connected relationship," Garza says. For example, large, arched openings with tall ceilings from the front door to the back porch convey openness while delineating specific uses.

Jerry Gloss, principal of KGA Studio Architects in Louisville, Colo., declares, "The L shape is the new shape." In a home that KGA recently designed for a move-down buyer, "the linchpin is the kitchen, and the L forms around an outdoor space. It's the only dining space in the whole house, but it's a grand room. It feels big even though it's a 2,600-square-foot ranch."

Irvine, Calif., architect Robert Hidey says his firm no longer designs formal living rooms, though there are still formal dining rooms from time to time. As Gloss puts it, "The formal dining room is the only ceremonial room left."

"The great room sort of made formal living a thing of the

past, [though] more recently it has started to reappear in the form of a parlor or library," Garza adds.

Even in regions where the weather can get chilly, it's become increasingly common to extend the great room to an outdoor living area such as a loggia or summer kitchen. In some homes, the kitchen can be closed off from the great room to muffle the sounds of food preparation and cleanup. Another variation that Garza has seen is a smaller, more intimate version of the great room called the warming room or hearth room.

CHANGING AND RE-ARRANGING

In years past, the great room might be adjacent to the kitchen, separated by columns, hallways, and walls. While it was designed for entertaining, guests had a tendency to congregate in the kitchen. Now the great room is integral to both the dining room and kitchen, with an emphasis on functionality rather than formality. Eliminating hallways frees up livable (and furnishable) space.

The size and importance of the kitchen varies according to geographic location, Hidey says. For instance, while a large kitchen is very desirable in California, it's a secondary consideration in Texas. But to Hidey, a great room isn't a great room unless it has a great kitchen with a large island. "Islands are getting larger and larger," he notes. "I don't think we can really do an island that's big enough." He's designed islands as long as 14 feet with seating for up to seven people.

Large media walls are always associated with great rooms.



The L shape is the new shape of great rooms nowadays, where the dining room and great room pivot around the kitchen. All three spaces wrap around a loggia. Kitchen islands are getting bigger, says architect Robert Hidey; this one seats six.

"It's kind of challenging where there aren't many solid walls," he says. "Often we find ourselves with just one wall where we can place a television." In such cases, the fireplace (another popular great-room feature) may be moved outside. There may even be a second TV mounted outdoors.

When outdoor rooms are connected to great rooms, it's important to provide extra circulation space so that people don't have to navigate around "floating" furniture to get outside, Hidey says.

In addition to fireplaces, media walls, and built-in bookshelves, great rooms may include such features as wet bars and command centers where homeowners can attend to the day-to-day tasks of running the household. Garza once designed a great room with a wall that opens to a hidden room, and a combination great room/library with an elevated walkway for the upper-level bookshelves.

In more upscale homes, spaces such as catering kitchens and children's play areas are often integrated into the great room, Hidey says. "New demands are placed on floor plans as the informal living areas become more important," he says.

SIZING IT UP

Great rooms are typically in proportion to the size of the home, Garza says. A 3,000-square-foot home might have a 15-by-22-foot, rectangular great room. In larger homes, the great room might be 19 by 27 feet. Hidey has designed great rooms that are as large as 25 by 30 feet.

However, great rooms don't have to be gigantic to work well, notes Richard Handlen, principal of EDI International, Larkspur, Calif. For one community, EDI designed a 14-by-14-foot living room that feels larger because it borrows space from the kitchen, dining room, and stair hall.

When square footage is at a premium, the best approach is to eliminate the formal dining room in favor of a combined great room, dining area, and kitchen. While it can be a challenge to allocate enough space for a great room in smaller homes, "Sometimes it's better to elevate the quality of the rooms you have than increase the quantity," Garza says. **PB**

FIVE GREAT ROOM TRENDS

1. They're L-shaped rather than linear.
2. They're connected to an outdoor space such as a loggia or summer kitchen.
3. The kitchen, dining area, and great room are open to each other, but the individual spaces are more defined.
4. Kitchens typically have large islands with seating for as many as seven people.
5. There may be a secondary room off the great room called the warming room or hearth room.

[GREAT ROOM]



This kitchen is more of an alcove than a separate room, opening to the high ceilings of the dining and living area. In this example, the fireplace and TV set share a wall.



BUILDER/DESIGNER: FRANKEL BUILDING GROUP;
PHOTO AND ILLUSTRATION: COURTESY OF FRANKEL BUILDING GROUP



BUILDER: CATALDO BUILDERS;
ARCHITECT: WISE SURMA JONES;
ILLUSTRATION: WISE SURMA JONES

To facilitate entertaining, this kitchen, breakfast room, and great room open to a large veranda and summer kitchen.

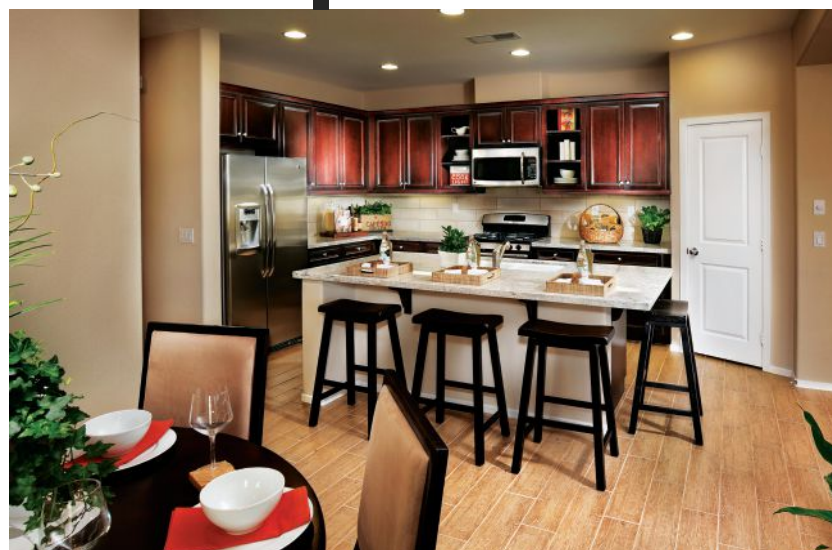
Floor space on the main level of this home is almost entirely devoted to the kitchen, dining room, and living room. The screen porch shares a fireplace with the living room, making it usable year-round. All of the spaces access an extensive deck system.

BUILDER: CLARUM HOMES; ARCHITECT: EDI INTERNATIONAL; PHOTO: MERT CARPENTER



Architect Richard Handlen observes that the snack bar in this kitchen allows family and visitors to talk with the cook while looking over his/her shoulder to watch TV. No one has to walk in front of the TV to circulate through the room because the entertainment zone is at one end of the "L." There's also access to the outdoors.

Large windows open to a side yard, flooding this great room with light. Traffic flows easily through the island kitchen and around the dining-room table.



BUILDER: BROOKFIELD HOMES; ARCHITECT: STARCK ARCHITECTURE; ILLUSTRATION: STARCK ARCHITECTURE; PHOTO: BROOKFIELD HOMES



Designed for move-ups in need of more elbow room, this 3,149-square-foot home focuses the kitchen, nook, and grand room toward the rear patio. The media wall shares space with the fireplace.



BUILDER: PLATINUM HOMES; ARCHITECT: GIESEN DESIGN STUDIO; ILLUSTRATION: GIESEN DESIGN STUDIO

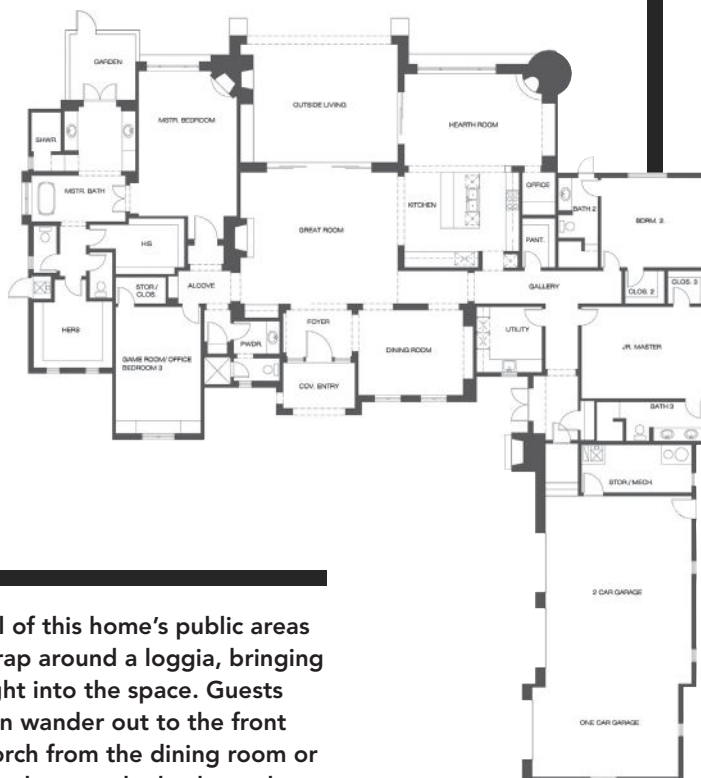


GREAT ROOM

Here is a layout that makes circulating from the living area to the nook and kitchen and out to the covered patio an easy trip for party guests.

design

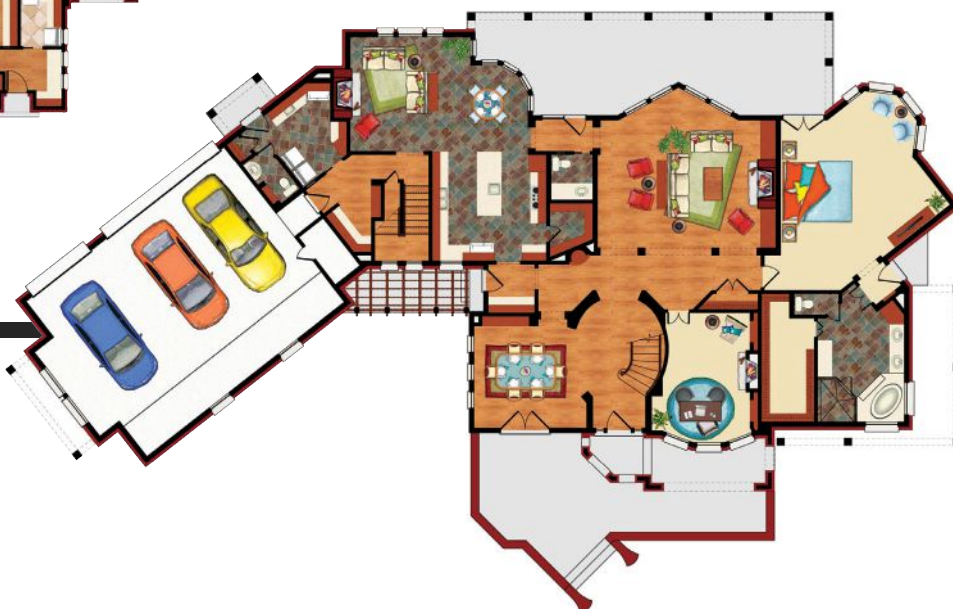
Here the great room makes a grand statement at the front door, opening to an expansive outdoor space. A hearth room off the kitchen serves as a more intimate gathering place.



All of this home's public areas wrap around a loggia, bringing light into the space. Guests can wander out to the front porch from the dining room or head out to the back porch.



This plan has a warming room—sometimes called a hearth room—adjacent to the breakfast nook. Half walls define the dining room without completely separating it from the great room.



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C ☐ Multi-Family F ☐ Other (specify): _____

6. How many homes does your firm build per year? (Check one box only.)
A ☐ Over 500 units D ☐ 11 – 25 units
B ☐ 101 – 500 units E ☐ 1 – 10 units
C ☐ 26 – 100 units F ☐ 0 units ☐

7. What is your firm's annual revenue? (Check one box only.)
A ☐ More than \$10 million D ☐ \$1 to \$999,999
B ☐ \$5 million to \$10 million E ☐ \$0 ☐
C ☐ \$1 million to \$4,999,999

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8. Which of the following building materials, products or equipment do you buy, specify or influence the selection of? (Check ALL that apply.)
01 ☐ Appliances
02 ☐ Cabinets and Countertop Materials
03 ☐ Caulks and Sealants
04 ☐ Central Vacuum Systems
05 ☐ Computer Hardware and Software
06 ☐ Construction Equipment
07 ☐ Decking / Fence Materials
08 ☐ Doors
09 ☐ Engineered Wood Products
10 ☐ Fireplaces and Accessories
11 ☐ Flooring and Floor Coverings
12 ☐ Garage Doors
13 ☐ Green Building Products
14 ☐ Hand and Power Tools
15 ☐ Home Automation Systems
16 ☐ HVAC and Environmental Controls
17 ☐ Insulation and Related Products
18 ☐ Lighting Fixtures
19 ☐ Locksets and Hardware
20 ☐ Paint, Stains and Finishes
21 ☐ Plumbing Fixtures / Faucets
22 ☐ Roofing Materials
23 ☐ Siding
24 ☐ Sound and Security Systems
25 ☐ Tile
26 ☐ Trucks
27 ☐ Windows
99 ☐ None of the above ☐
9. Which of the following publications do you receive personally addressed to you? (Check ALL that apply.)
A ☐ *Builder*
B ☐ *Custom Home*
C ☐ Neither of the above
10. Excluding land, please indicate the cost per square foot of the homes your company builds. (Check ALL that apply.)
A ☐ \$251/sq ft or more
B ☐ \$201-\$250/sq ft
C ☐ \$151-\$200/sq ft
D ☐ \$121-\$150/sq ft
E ☐ \$101-\$120/sq ft
F ☐ \$100 sq ft or less
11. Please indicate your primary supplier for each category:
- | Windows | Siding | Faucets |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| 01 ☐ Andersen | 06 ☐ CertainTeed | 11 ☐ Kohler |
| 02 ☐ Pella | 07 ☐ James Hardie | 12 ☐ Moen |
| 03 ☐ Marvin | 08 ☐ Ply Gem | 13 ☐ Delta |
| 04 ☐ Jeld-Wen | 09 ☐ LP | 14 ☐ Amer. Std. |
| 05 ☐ Milgard | 10 ☐ TAPCO | 15 ☐ Elkay |

AMPLE INFILL FOR THIN LOTS

2013 HOUSE REVIEW THEMES

SEPTEMBER	Features That Make a House a Home
OCTOBER	Design Hot Buttons for Different Generations
NOVEMBER	Creating "Wow" Exteriors
DECEMBER	Versatile Plans

Smaller-scale infill designs are not just for well-established urban areas anymore.

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

While infill projects continue to provide opportunities for builders in many areas, some of the locations might be surprising. As you would expect, most are found in large cities where there's a walkable and vibrant area with close proximity to entertainment and work. However, opportunities are also appearing in smaller towns where there's a growing interest in older and, often, historic neighborhoods. Although perhaps lacking the vibrancy of a larger urban

setting, many of the smaller downtowns offer pedestrian-friendly environments and economical building sites. They become particularly appealing to the growing number of retirees looking for a slower pace of life and who have no concern about being close to their workplace. The desire for smaller, single-family homes located in small-scale neighborhoods is addressed with the following infill concepts from our design team. These include unique solutions for garage placement, viable alternatives to multi-story condos on a waterfront site, and practical designs that thoughtfully blend in with existing older homes.

- A Rear garage entry
- B Formal front entry for guests
- C Courtyard
- D Formal dining
- E Great room with bar seating
- F Built-in cabinets with fireplace
- G Sitting area in master bedroom
- H Options for larger second floor



Over time many developed neighborhoods have suffered damage from weather and, possibly, from just normal wear and tear. The need for a revival of older neighborhoods may require infill with small-lot homes to revive the market. Smaller-lot homes can accommodate starter families, retirees, or even large families with options of expanding over the garage with added living spaces. The Byers Avenue homes have a maximum lot width of 35 feet and are designed with an uptown feel that can be easily modified to fit in with many different neighborhoods. These homes are equipped with an open-concept living space that has the family room, breakfast, and kitchen area all combined but still has a spacious dining room for formal gatherings. The upstairs holds all bedrooms with options of expanding to include additional bedrooms or a flexible room that could be used as an office or game room. Although these homes are on smaller lots, they are full of character and spacious living.

BYERS AVENUE

ARCHITECT

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817.332.9477

PLAN SIZE

Total: 2,508 sf
First floor: 1,336 sf
Second floor: 1,172 sf
Porch: 122 sf
Garage: 489 sf



CLOVER MEADOW

ARCHITECT

Richard C. Handlen, AIA, LEED AP
EDI International Inc.
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www.edu-international.com
415-362-2880

PLAN SIZE

Width: 36 feet
Depth: 80 feet
8 DU/A

The goal of this project was to create the look of a traditional downtown single-family neighborhood on very small lots. To accomplish this task, the garages had to be removed from the street. The 80-foot lot depth forced the garage to the rear property line, attaching to the neighboring garage. This layout eliminated what would have been dead space behind the garages; however, it left only 12 feet from the face of the garage to the rear of the house. The solution was to attach them side-to-side and access them from a common motor court straddling the property line. The result is four-plex garages on the interior lots and duet garages backed up to the public street on the corner lots. The motor courts are accessed from either street by driveways with a median of grass down the center.



- A Public street
- B Private perimeter streets
- C One base floor plan that fits all lots
- D Duet garage
- E Common motor court
- F Four-plex garage
- G Median driveway

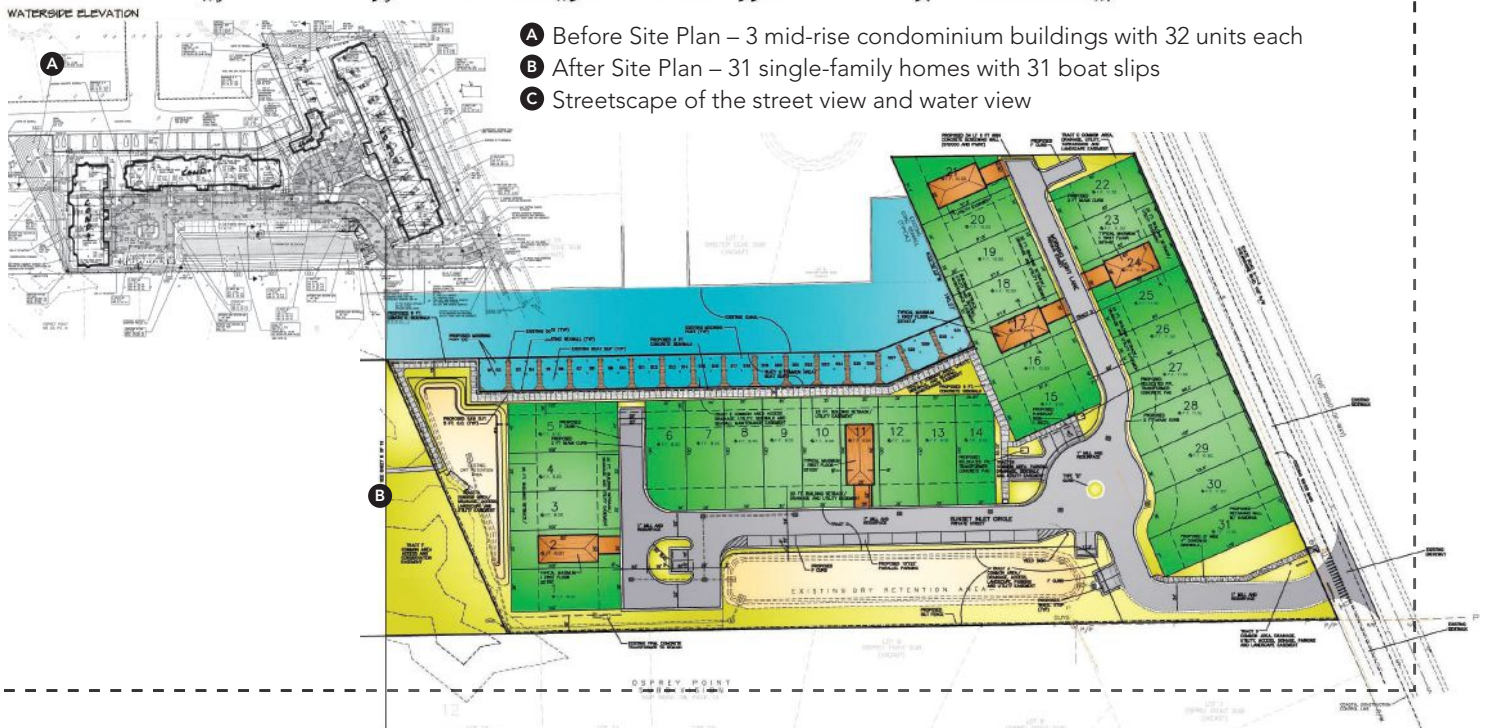


This is one of the thousands of perfect oceanfront condo sites on the coast of Florida. The site was planned for three mid-rise condominium buildings with 32 units each and all of the development complete, including utilities and roads, a 31-slip marina, and ocean-access boardwalk. Then the housing market hit bottom, leaving an amazing site on the ocean with everything but homes. With 31-boat slips, we needed just 31 homes so we looked at two- and three-story, 24-foot-wide single-family homes on the site. This design created an optimal solution on the site that is appropriate, well designed, and salable.

SUNSET INLET

ARCHITECT

Donald F. Evans, AIA
The Evans Group
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www.theevansgroup.com
407.650.8770



- A Before Site Plan – 3 mid-rise condominium buildings with 32 units each
- B After Site Plan – 31 single-family homes with 31 boat slips
- C Streetscape of the street view and water view

[HOUSE REVIEW]

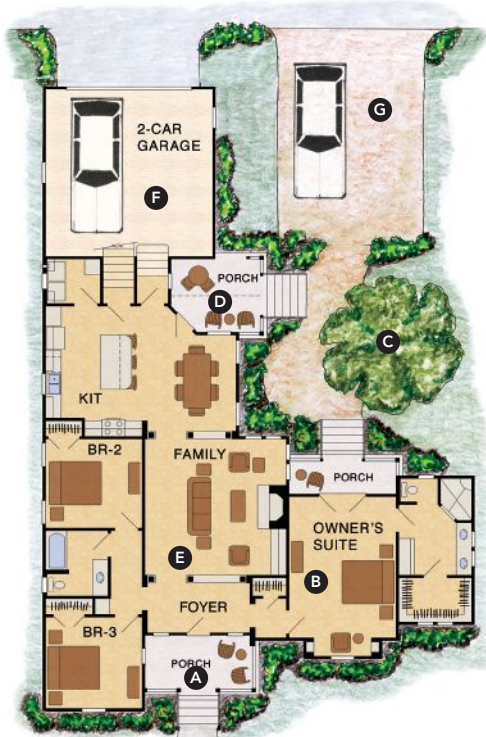
THE MCKINLEY

DESIGNER

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 254.897.3518

PLAN SIZE

Main house living area: 1,835 sf



- Ⓐ Raised front porch overlooks the small front yard and sidewalk.
- Ⓑ Secluded owner's suite has French doors opening to a private porch.
- Ⓒ An existing pecan tree frames the outdoor living space. Crushed granite provides a natural surface that helps with drainage.
- Ⓓ Outdoor dining porch
- Ⓔ Family room is defined by 42-inch walls at the dining area and foyer. Ten-foot ceiling and transom windows provide plenty of natural light and a view of the outdoor living area.
- Ⓕ Bonus area over the two-car garage offers a flexible space for storage, game area, or home office.
- Ⓖ Additional parking off the rear alley utilizes the same crushed granite material, providing a much softer and more natural surface than concrete.



This home was designed for an infill development adjacent to the town square of a small suburban community. Located within a designated historic district, exterior details and colors are required to meet stringent standards. Also, existing trees must not be removed. A total of 27 lots were carefully carved out of an old farm and mill site along the river. The surrounding neighborhood features homes built from the late 1800s to the early 1900s. This wide range of styles from Victorian to Colonial becomes the inspiration for all new designs. Narrow lanes with cut limestone curbs, stone sidewalks, and rear alleys mimic the existing streets.

Built in Raleigh, N.C., near North Carolina State University, this four-unit townhome provides high-quality housing for students in the area. As with any successful infill project, the building integrates into the existing community. The two-story building with staggered roofs and Craftsman-style exterior complement the area's architecture. The nine parking spaces are accessed through a drive at the rear of the building that links the two streets surrounding the project. In addition, the building was designed to preserve a prominent tree, which fronts the street and gives it a sense of longevity. Each unit has its own courtyard, allowing residents to enjoy their outdoor space. Through careful site planning and design, this downtown project is a great example of how infill can enhance a community.

CHAMBERLAIN-CLARK

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 Donnie McGrath
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- A Unit 1 front entry
- B Unit 2 front entry
- C Unit 3 front entry
- D Unit 4 front entry
- E Unit 1 outdoor courtyard
- F Unit 2 outdoor courtyard
- G Unit 3 outdoor courtyard
- H Unit 4 outdoor courtyard
- I Preserved existing large tree
- J Street
- K Driveway
- L Resident parking
- M Lead walkway



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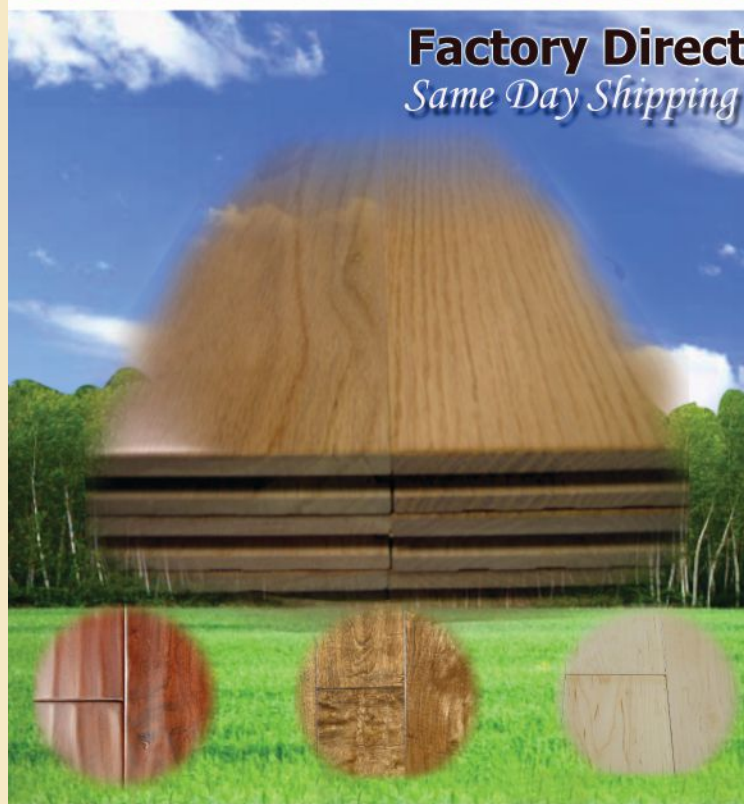
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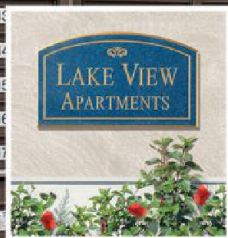
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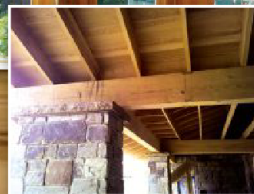
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Bloomfield's Don Dykstra: Sumitomo Deal Provides Confidence to Increase Leverage



Don Dykstra
President
Bloomfield Homes
Southlake, Texas

The slow speed and nature of the current economic recovery is one in which home builders looking to scale up need to find capital. Bloomfield Homes bolstered its access to credit recently by selling a 50-percent stake in the company to Sumitomo Forestry Seattle Inc., a division of Tokyo-based Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd. The timber-and-building-materials trading company's U.S. holdings also include two home builders in Washington—Henley USA, Seattle, and SFC Homes, Bellevue.

The partnership provides Sumitomo with an entry into the growing Dallas/Fort Worth market as well as 3,500 lots secured by Bloomfield, which posted \$88.9 million in sales and 402 closings last year. The Texas builder expects to hit \$135 million with 600 closings during fiscal 2013. President Don Dykstra discussed the advantages of the partnership and why it is the right fit for Bloomfield.

Q What does the deal with Sumitomo Forestry bring to the table for Bloomfield Homes?

A We believe the partnership with Sumitomo Forestry provides the opportunity for Bloomfield Homes to grow to its full potential. During the downturn, we accumulated a significant number of entitled land that now can be developed at an accelerated pace to take advantage of current market conditions.

Q Did you consider going to the bond market or an IPO before choosing an equity partner? Why was an investment partner a better fit for Bloomfield than the other two choices?

A At our size the bond market or an IPO were not viable alternatives. Bloomfield Homes did not need an equity injection, but the owners were interested in taking some money off the table. Although the Sumitomo Forestry transaction did not increase equity, it did result in financially stronger ownership. That gives both our lenders and the management team the confidence to increase leverage under the current bank lines of credit. Our intent is to continue our practice of reinvesting earnings into the business to support the future growth.

Q How did you go about looking for an equity partner, or did Sumitomo approach Bloomfield?

A We were introduced by a local market research company and over time determined that our business philosophies were very similar. Over the last few years we had met with a number of public builders, investment bankers, and private investors, but the fit was never just right. One of our main criteria was to continue using our current business model, rather than trying to convert to another philosophy.

Q As a result of this deal, are you looking to expand your footprint in Bloomfield's current market and/or will you build in new Texas markets?

A Our immediate focus is to achieve our 2013 goals in Dallas/Fort Worth. In addition to a 50-percent increase in volume in 2013, we expect to end the year positioned for continuing growth for the next several years. With regards to opening new markets, Sumitomo Forestry has expressed their desire to grow their business in the United States, and we intend to support them anyway we can.

Q In light of rising mortgage interest rates and tight labor, what's your forecast for Bloomfield?

A We are currently delivering approximately 50 homes per month utilizing only 10 floor plans with all inclusive specifications. This is very efficient for our trade partners as well as our own team. We believe our labor contractors are more profitable working with us than some of their other customers. Interest rates are outside our control so we will try to monitor the effects on the day-to-day business and make adjustments as best we can.



A FIVE-PART PLAN TO LOWER HERS RATINGS

The Numbers

Builder: Mishler Builders

Size: 3,500 square feet

Location: Hunt County, Texas

Energy Package: Propane Energy Pod

HERS Index: 51

Annual Cost Savings: \$1,154

CO₂ Emissions Reduction: 8.1 tons



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