

Qualified Remodeler

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July 2019

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Photo: Paul Rivera Architectural Photography

24 Design Solutions

Rusk Renovations unites two high-rise apartments to produce an extraordinary New York City master bathroom experience.



Photo: Sara Weidner, Eastman Creative

28 Chrysalis Awards

Recognizing 100 projects as the nation's best remodeling and design work within residential and commercial projects, plus awarding the Decade of Excellence Award.

SPECIAL REPORT

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Sixty leaders of customer satisfaction, based on ratings from GuildQuality, offer their insights into remodeling's performance indicator.

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Customer Satisfaction Done Right



Patrick L. O'Toole

EACH JULY FOR the past several years, we've published and posted a package of stories about customer satisfaction. We do it with considerable help from our friends at GuildQuality. Last year, as you may recall, we even published on our cover the faces of 60 remodelers who do it right.

Some readers have asked whether the topic is worth all the fuss—an annual issue packed with profiles and enough data to choke on. The answer is yes. Let me explain.

In 2003, when I first began covering the remodeling industry, research suggested that home renovators and remodelers were viewed as slightly more trustworthy than used-car salespeople. Some of that sleaze factor exists out there to this day. The main reason is the sheer size of the industry (nearly \$400 billion in annual activity) and the low barriers to entry in many states. Just about anybody, regardless

of actual skill level, can get into business overnight. Thus, there are plenty of shady operators out there giving the industry a bad name.

As loyal *QR* readers, you know this magazine is all about professionalism in business. Years before we partnered with GuildQuality, we published our own study of customer satisfaction. Our goal then and now is to offer tips and ideas that will help remodelers and improvers take the specific steps needed to satisfy—from the importance of keeping job-sites clean and organized to problem solving and setting proper expectations.

The data in this issue, expressed with numerical emphases provided by GuildQuality statistician Alex Overall, is shown in a dot-matrix bubble chart. There you can find a clear picture of the impact of factors such as price, timeliness and problem solving on 30 different

types of jobs. It's a roadmap for success.

But if I were you, I'd also pay careful to the ideas—the suggestions from this year's list of companies who have very high recommendation levels from their clients. Here are three that jumped out at me in the editing process:

“The biggest thing I teach all members of my crew is that if anything arises, such as breaking something or making a mistake, is to inform the homeowner immediately,” says James DelPrete, CEO of Beantown Home Improvements in Halifax, Massachusetts. “Almost everything can be resolved—no matter how bad it may be—if you are upfront and honest with everyone and willing to work to a common solution.”

Another gem on the subject of problem resolution is this one from John Martindale and Steve Zwagil of Brothers Services Company in Hampstead, Maryland.

“We try to avoid having problems in the first place by very carefully scoping every project and producing a formal scope of work that specifies all of our promises. That scope is handed off to our production team at a meeting including all three parties—the customer, sales consultant and project management team. This ensures everyone starts on the same page.”

The pithiest, I think, came from Divven Browne and Nathan Werner of Built Square LLC in Seattle, who listed a series of steps to ensure thorough communication. “Even with these steps—let's be honest—in the remodeling business, problems do arise; it's how we handle those problems that makes the difference.” **QR**

IT'S HOW YOU HANDLE PROBLEMS THAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE.

Patrick O'Toole

Qualified Remodeler

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Market Indicators

Remodeling Benefiting from Housing Shortfall, Stronger Existing-Home Sales

WITH THE NATION'S economy on sound footing and incomes on the rise, the number of people forming households in the U.S. has returned to a more normal pace. Housing production, however, has not.

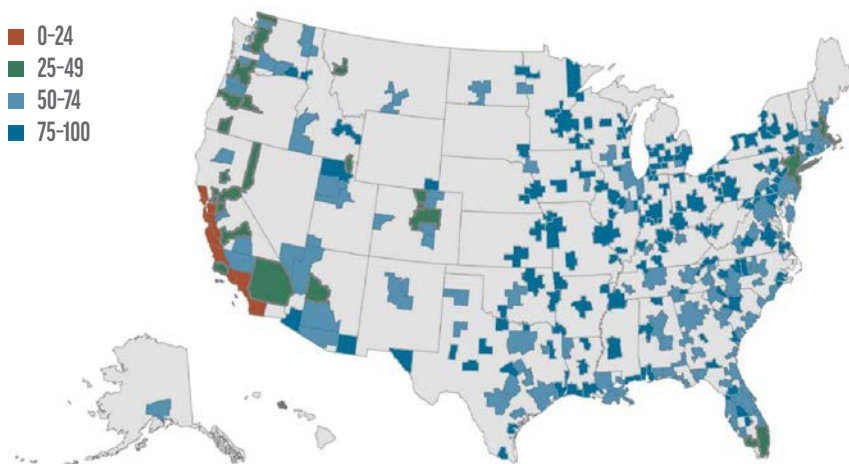
The 2019 State of the Nation's Housing report, released on June 25 by the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, documents how the housing shortfall is keeping pressure on home prices and rents, eroding affordability for modest-income households in many markets.

The report found that household growth is now back from post-recession lows, but new-home construction remains depressed, with new homes barely keeping pace with the number of new households. Several factors may be contributing to the slow construction recovery, including excess supply following the housing boom—which took years to absorb—and persistent labor shortages.

“The most significant factors, however, are rising land prices and regulatory constraints on development,” says Chris Herbert, managing director of the Joint Center for Housing Studies. “These constraints, largely imposed at the local level, raise costs and limit the number of homes that can be built in places where demand is highest.”

Meanwhile, a large percentage of new housing being built is intended primarily for the higher end of the market, Herbert says. The limited supply of smaller, more affordable homes in the face of rising demand suggests that the rising land costs and the difficult development environment make it unprofitable to build for the middle market.

Share of Recently Sold Homes Affordable to Median-Income Households (Percent)



Note: Median incomes are estimated at the core-based statistical area (CBSA) level—only CBSAs with at least 30 home sales in the past year are shown. Recently sold homes are defined as homes with owners who moved within 12 months prior to the survey date. Monthly payments assume a 3.5 percent downpayment, property taxes of 1.15 percent, property insurance of 0.35 percent, and mortgage insurance of 0.85 percent. Affordable payments are defined as less than 31 percent of monthly household income.

Source: JCHS tabulations of U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, and Freddie Mac, PMMS.

Market Indicators

Existing-home sales rebound

According to the National Association of Realtors (NAR), each of the four major U.S. regions saw a growth in existing-home sales in May, with the Northeast experiencing the biggest surge.

Total existing-home sales—completed transactions that include single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums and co-ops—jumped 2.5 percent from April to an annual rate of 5.34 million in May.

Lawrence Yun, NAR's chief economist, says the 2.5 percent jump shows that consumers are eager to take advantage of the favorable conditions. “The purchasing power to buy a home has been bolstered by falling mortgage rates, and buyers are responding.”

The median existing-home price for all housing types in May was \$277,700, up 4.8 percent from May 2018 (\$265,100). May's price increase marks the 87th straight month of year-over-year gains.

Although inventory is up, the supply numbers remain near historic lows, which has a direct effect on price, according to Yun. “Solid demand along with inadequate inventory of affordable homes have pushed the median home price to a new record high,” he says.

Properties remained on the market for an average of 26 days in May, up from 24 days in April and equal to the 26 days in May of 2018. Fifty-three percent of homes sold in May were on the market for less than a month.

Given that housing and properties have been selling so quickly, Yun continues his call for new construction. “More new homes need to be built,” he notes. “Otherwise, we risk worsening the housing shortage, and an increasingly number of middle-class families will be unable to achieve homeownership.”

Realtor.com's Market Hotness Index, measuring time-on-the-market data and listing views per property, revealed that the hottest metro areas in May were Rochester, New York; Fort Wayne, Indiana; Lafayette-West Lafayette, Indiana; Boston-Cambridge-Newton, Massachusetts; and Midland, Texas.

“The month of May ushered in the home sales upswing that we had been expecting,” says NAR President John Smaby, a second-generation realtor from Edina,

Minnesota, and a broker at Edina Realty. “Sales are strengthening in all regions while we see price appreciation for recent buyers.”

First-time buyers were responsible for 32 percent of sales in May, unchanged from the 32 percent the month prior and up from the 31 percent recorded in May 2018. NAR’s 2018 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers—released in late 2018—revealed that the annual share of first-time buyers was 33 percent.

Workforce Development

National Remodeling Foundation announces 2019 recipients

The National Remodeling Foundation (NRF) recently announced its 2019 scholarship recipients. This year, the scholarship was given to: Lisa Breitenfeld, who is attending

Minnesota State-Moorhead; Kristen Van Hoosen, a student at Pittsburgh State University; and Rhett Cox, who attends Clemson University.

The NRF’s annual scholarships are awarded to distinguished individuals pursuing a career in the remodeling industry and developing their business-related skills. The scholarship can be used for educational programs such as NARI, NKBA and NAHBR certifications or for industry-related educational pursuits through academics. This year’s recipients are studying construction management at their respective universities.

The pervasive skilled labor shortage in the construction industry has led to an industry-wide push to attract and recruit a new generation of workers who have yet to start their careers. The NRF scholarship program aims to support these individuals in pursuing their passions while benefiting the industry and ultimately the economy on both a national and local level.

Another important facet of this labor

shortage issue is the lack of women in the remodeling and construction industry. The National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) reports that participation in the industry is at only 9 percent.

“The NRF is proud that two out of three of this year’s scholarships were awarded to women,” says Steve Kleber, president of NRF. “We hope to continue to promote their involvement and success in the industry.”

Kristen Van Hoosen is in her fourth year at Pittsburg State University. She will be graduating with a degree in Construction Management with a Residential Construction emphasis and an Architectural Manufacturing Management & Technology minor.



Kristen Van Hoosen





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Van Hoosen is a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity and understands the importance of volunteering and plans to align her passion of working in the residential field while giving back to the community.

“I believe it is important for me to apply the knowledge and skills I have acquired to an important cause in helping others,” Van Hoosen explains. “The experience I gain while volunteering along with the connections I make in the residential industry play a considerable contribution to my future career.”



Lisa Breitenfield

Lisa Breitenfield is attending Minnesota State University – Moorhead and will be receiving her degree in Construction Management. She spent four years working as an assistant at Climate Engineered Structures

and also had the opportunity to compete in the Associated Schools of Construction Commercial Competition. Breitenfield is a member of the NAWIC and is passionate about urban revitalization and transforming buildings through well-planned and well-executed remodeling projects.

“I think it would be amazing to work in residential home restoration and remodeling,” Breitenfield explains. “I understand that the housing market is changing as our stock of housing is aging, and younger homebuyers are looking for unique architectural styles and smaller spaces closer to city centers than previous generations.”

Rhett Cox is a freshman at Clemson University. He will be receiving his degree in Construction Science and Management and minoring in business. Cox has made the Dean’s List and is a member of the Associated General Contractors of America. He has been very passionate about playing baseball, has coaching experience, and volunteered on Appalachia’s

Mission team and All-American Athletes. Cox plans to enter the construction field and to make big impacts on the industry and own his own business.

The National Remodeling Foundation’s scholarship application deadline is February 15 each year. The award amount varies dependent on the individual’s application and their chosen education program. Those who are not granted a scholarship are encouraged to reapply the next year for consideration.

To learn more about the program, go to nationalremodelingfoundation.org.



Rhett Cox

Industry Overview

President signs Executive Order addressing housing affordability

Greg Ugalde, chairman of the National Association of Home Builders and a homebuilder and developer from Torrington, Connecticut, attended the June 25 signing ceremony at the White House and issued the following statement after President Trump signed his executive order on housing affordability.

“NAHB applauds President Trump for making housing a top national priority. With housing affordability near a 10-year low, the president’s executive order on this critical issue underscores that the White House is ready to take a leading role to help resolve the nation’s affordability crisis.

“Given that homeownership historically has been part of the American dream and a primary source of wealth for most American households, the need to tackle ongoing affordability concerns is especially urgent. As we celebrate National Homeownership Month, we must ensure that homeownership remains in reach for younger and future generations. This can be achieved by providing access to affordable rental housing and growing the inventory of for-sale housing, particularly at the entry level.

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“NAHB analysis has found that regulations account for nearly 25 percent of the price of building a single-family home and more than 30 percent of the cost of a typical multi-family development. We are pleased that the president’s executive order calls for the formation of a White House Council chaired by HUD Secretary Ben Carson that will seek to reduce regulatory barriers that are making housing more costly.

“NAHB will continue to work with the White House and Secretary Carson to find innovative solutions to increase the production of sorely needed quality, affordable housing.”

Manufacturer Update

Industry milestones

Four industry firms are celebrating significant anniversaries this year.

Founded in 1979, **2nd Ave Lighting**, a manufacturer of custom decorative lighting, celebrates its 40th anniversary. Based in Yorkville, New York, the company is a vertically integrated operation that controls every step of production, which allows it to offer customization for each fixture based on specific lighting needs and applications

Joplin, Missouri-based roofing and decking manufacturer **TAMKO** is marking its 75th year in business. In 2019, TAMKO celebrates two important anniversary dates: March 9, the day in 1944 that TAMKO founders E.L. and Mary Ethel Craig bought an old streetcar barn and shingle-making equipment in Joplin for the business that would eventually become TAMKO Building Products. In addition, they will celebrate September 5, the day the Craigs officially named their new roofing company TAMKO, an acronym of the first letters of the states they believed would be their sales territory: Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma.

Saddle Brook, New Jersey-based **Arrow Fastener Company** celebrates its 90th year in business in 2019. Founded in 1929, the company is marking the milestone with consumer giveaways and charity. In addition they are putting a spotlight on vintage products from throughout the company’s history, including the T50, Model JT-21 industrial hand-held fastener, and original Hammer Tacker design. The HT50 Hammer Tacker is still made in the U.S. for roofing, insulation, housewrap and other professional jobs; it is a mainstay.

Founded in Milwaukee by a master carpenter in 1919, **Empire Level**, now based in Mukwonago, Wisconsin, celebrates 100 years of serving the construction trades with levels and layout tools. Empire Level continues its tradition of innovation and developing productivity solutions while remaining committed to manufacturing in the U.S.—as it has from the beginning. It employs over 200 people at its Wisconsin facilities. **QR**

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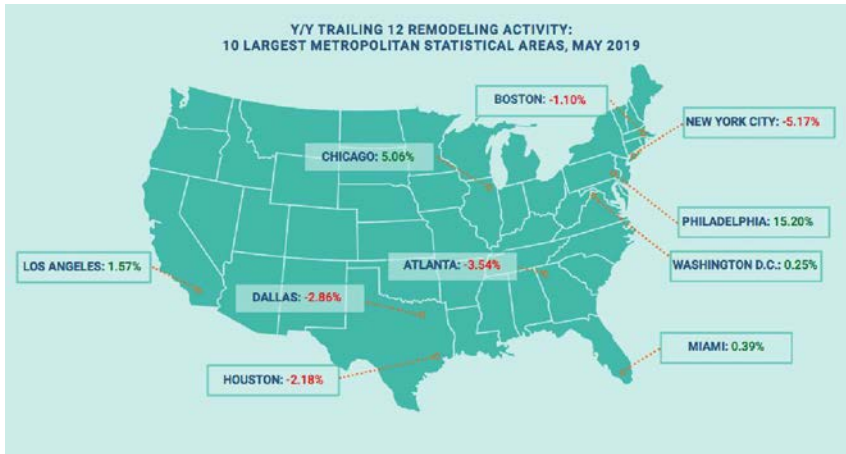


Photo: courtesy of BuildFax

According to BuildFax, a housing data and analytics company, the month of May's remodeling activity increased in five of the top 10 metropolitan areas. Philadelphia and Chicago saw the greatest gains year-over-year in remodeling activity, rising 15.2 percent and 5.06 percent, respectively. Los Angeles, Miami and Washington, D.C., also saw modest growth. For more about remodeling activity in these metro areas and predictions for months ahead, visit QualifiedRemodeler.com/five-metros-see-remodeling-activity-uptick.

Most Popular Products

These products had the most views in recent weeks. To learn more, go to QualifiedRemodeler.com and search the product or company name.

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Keys to Having a Great Financial System at Your Business

by Shawn McCadden, CR, CLC, CAPS

I CAN'T IMAGINE how someone would risk starting and running a remodeling business without knowing how the financial side of things work—knowing whether they will make a profit. Not knowing can put your retirement and your family's future at risk.

It might be just as foolish as setting out on a road trip to the other coast with duct tape over the gas gauge. Imagine not even checking your gas gauge as you begin your journey. Yet, every day a new remodeler will start a business and do just that. It's one of the main reasons 85 to 95 percent of all contractors eventually fail in business. Others can keep limping along pretending to be business owners because their wives have a good job with health insurance.

Without the right financial system in place at your business, should you be allowed to call yourself a business owner? I don't think so. Creating and maintaining an accurate financial system should not be a future goal, it should be something you already have in place. If you are committed to putting a great financial system in place, you should not assume you can do it on your own.

You will need help with both the creating and the maintaining of your system. You will also need the right accountant to help you make sure your system is accurate, mentor you on how to use it, confirm you are pricing for profit, and make sure you don't pay any more taxes than is legally required.

Knowledge and 'Schema'

I went to night school early in my career to learn about business accounting. The teacher was smart and I learned a lot, but I still had no idea how to set up a financial system specifically for a contractor, and how to use it. I had gained knowledge about how accounting should work. However, I lacked the experience I needed to set up and use QuickBooks to measure results at my business. What I needed was help from someone who already had the experience, also known as "schema," for how to do so, specifically for remodelers.

Additionally, after QuickBooks was set up and was consistently being used properly, I also had to gain the necessary schema for what my financial reports were telling me. That way, I would know whether the results were good or bad. My point is that knowledge is required but may be worthless unless you also make the investments needed to use to truly understand your system and what it can tell you. You need experience and practice to develop schema.

Bookkeeper or Data Entry Clerk?

Using, maintaining and keeping your financial system accurate takes a fair amount of time. With all the responsibilities of owning a remodeling business, as well as the potential value of where the owner invests his or her time, it's typically foolish for an owner to also be the bookkeeper. Plus, a good bookkeeper is not only much less expensive per hour than a business manager, the right bookkeeper will likely be better, more detailed, faster and will probably even enjoy doing it.

One key consideration here is to be clear on the difference between a bookkeeper and a data entry clerk. The data entry clerk only enters data. Although the clerk is expected to enter things accurately, they are typically only following the instructions of another person who is fully responsible for the accuracy and integrity of the bookkeeping.

A bookkeeper, therefore, keeps the books. Unlike a data entry clerk, the bookkeeper needs to have both the knowledge and the schema to keep a remodeling business's financial information accurate and up to date. I recommend you hire a qualified bookkeeper, not a data entry clerk, otherwise you, the business owner, becomes the bookkeeper by default. As the business grows, hire a data entry clerk to assist the bookkeeper.

Accountant vs. Historian

Your remodeling business needs a real accountant. You need someone who can help you plan and price for profit before you sell

work. You need someone who can help you read and interpret financial reports. You need someone to ensure that as you do business throughout the year, your pricing, estimating and production methods are working as needed to create planned profits. The right accountant would have already sat down with you to discuss your business goals for the year and how the new tax laws might affect your bottom line. The right accountant will have the schema needed to be a proactive partner helping you plan for and protect business profits.

If you think you have an accountant but you did not get the assistance I just described above, you may have what I refer to as a historian not an accountant. An accountant who helps you by doing your taxes after the year is over, is only reporting on what has already happened. By tax time, it's too late. What if you find out in April you lost money the year before? How much new work will you have sold by April with the flawed pricing strategy? One contractor I spoke with became painfully aware of this reality at tax time. He found he lost \$40,000 the year before and had already sold \$500,000 of new work using the same pricing strategy.

As the old saying goes, "history repeats itself." As business owners, if we don't consider the lessons learned when we study history, we are destined to relive it. On the other hand, a sound financial strategy and systems can help create profits and a great future for you and your business. **QR**

McCadden is a speaker, business trainer, columnist and award-winning remodeler with more than 35 years of experience. He can be reached at shawnmccadden.com.

UPCOMING TOPICS

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Creating a Schedule and Dealing With Changes

by Dan Taddei, MS Ed. BCA

THE PRODUCTION OF a schedule can take many forms, but the end result is a tool that must be usable for your production team to complete the project by a specified date for a desired cost and profit. Scheduling entails matching your company's capacity to the project you sell. Your capacity is a function of several factors, which can impact the schedule.

Understanding the capabilities of your staff is important to scheduling. How many projects can your project manager handle at one time? How many lead carpenters do you have on staff? How long does it take your team to set cabinets, frame out the new wall or complete the trim? These elements will drive the schedule and project length.

Your company's capacity also includes having a close relationship with your trade contractors. You need to be able to count on them to start and finish on time, maintain their pricing as bid and produce to your standards. At the same time, your trade contractors need to be able to count on your project being ready for them when they are scheduled, and they need to know that you will pay them in a timely fashion.

Another factor of your company's capacity is your suppliers. Are they able to deliver products when you need them? Will their prices be as quoted? In today's environment of rapidly changing prices due to tariffs and labor, these are the most challenging to control. If you quote a project that will not start for six months, the cost of materials and labor will surely go up. A close relationship with your trades and supplies may help you manage this to some extent.

Be sure to consider holidays in your schedule. You may need to include local events that may impact a production schedule, such as a tour of remodeled homes, your chapter's home show or even opening day of deer hunting season.

Every remodeling project is unique and needs to be treated as such. However, it is necessary to establish some foundations you can count on for each of your projects. Most

projects start with some measure of demolition. Consider if it can be "fast tracked," meaning a project is started while another is in the final stages. During build-out you will need to schedule in your trades and inspections. Depending on the space, you may be able to have several trades working at the same time. As for inspections, you will need to be familiar with the requirements and responsiveness of the inspectors in your municipality. You need know the rules of engagement and plan accordingly.

As you build out your schedule you may consider identifying check points—a spot on the schedule where an assessment of the project status is noted. Is it on track to complete on time and budget? Look for possible issues the project may face. Some teams run weekly production meetings to accomplish this, but many do not. As a result, they may find the project off schedule and over budget without really knowing how it got there.

Changes to the Schedule

Changes to the schedule can be caused by four players: the house, your staff/trades, the weather and the client.

- **The house:** Most design/build companies try to build in a 10 percent contingency fund to cover any issues the house may have. The list of possible issues is extensive. For example, unseen water damage, moving a vent pipe hidden in a wall or finding previous alterations not to code. These are issues that must be corrected before you proceed, and you should have a plan if they occur.
- **Staff/trades:** Losing a key staff member or trade contractor can be devastating to a small remodeling company. Depending on project schedules, you may be able to pull crew members from other projects to fill the gap. It is best to have a fallback system. If you need support for a lead carpenter, plumber or electrician, you have a source for temporary help.

- **Weather:** The impact of weather will depend on the type of project. A kitchen or bathroom remodel will not be heavily delayed, whereas an addition that includes digging, placing footers and foundation requires waiting for the weather to clear.
- **The client:** The client can radically impact the production schedule. Anything from a simple color change or selection of different fixture can cause delays. How you handle these changes depends on your capacity and how solid the start date on your next job is. Change orders must be your friend. Make sure your clients understand the change process and hold them to it. When you present the change order for approval, be clear on how it will impact their completion date. Make sure that when you work the changes into the schedule to not only account for all the costs associated with the changes, but also factoring costs in lost opportunity on your next job. Some remodelers discourage change orders and provide many roadblocks to discourage clients from submitting them. Other remodelers prevent change orders by conducting an exhaustive client interview and helping the client make selections that they will be entirely happy with.

Scheduling and managing change is part of the life of the remodeler, and your success is measured as much by your ability to manage the process as by the quality of the work your company does. Developing the schedule should be a formal process. NARI's Certified Remodeling Project Manager (CRPM) prep course spends three sessions on developing schedules and contingency planning and is a great place to start if you would like a more formal education on the topic. **QR**

UPCOMING TOPICS

AUGUST: Get to Zero

SEPTEMBER: Consumer Trends & Accessibility

OCTOBER: Growing Business with Finance

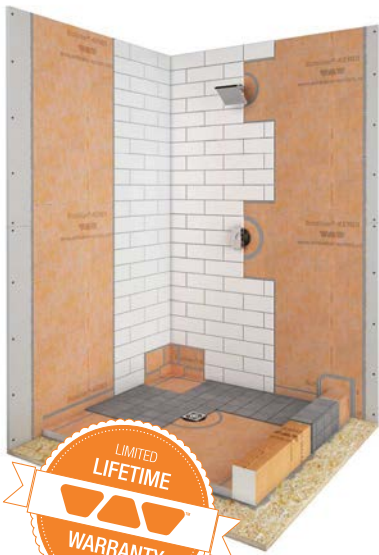


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Restore the Trades

McGowan helps resurrect a local Remodelers' Council and focuses on engaging the next generation of the industry.

compiled by Kacey Larsen

How did you choose this career? What led you to go into business for yourself?

I was a framing carpenter and loved it. [Then] I began in the home center industry as a kitchen designer in a local lumberyard. After working through the ranks, becoming successful in design and sales of kitchens, and developing an installation program, I decided to try my hand in the private showroom environment where outcomes were as important as concepts and ideas. I started a company in the Chicagoland area that included a kitchen and bath showroom and began building homes. Twelve homes of various types helped me gain experience in real estate and development of infill lots.

In 2014, my wife and I moved to Florida after giving four children a second chance, and happily they are all outstanding and productive in their professions. Three years after relocation, we began Navigator Homes & Kitchens. We learned how important it was to be a licensed contractor here and became one—it wasn't a requirement at the time I was a builder in the Chicagoland area. Since doing so, we have changed the name to be inclusive of our skills. Since 1987, I have been a remodeler and love changing lives and improving lifestyles with our work.



Photos: Sherri's Island Images

McGowan notes the "opportunities to change lives with our craft are as vibrant as ever."

What motivates you every day?

The thought that we can somehow help our clients experience remodeling better and do it affordably. Our satisfaction only comes when our customers brag on us.

How has the remodeling profession changed since you've been involved?

Creativity and differentiation have increased. We have learned that caring for the lifestyle of our client during construction is huge! Protection protocol is worth the extra effort to assure the client we care for them and their comfort is paramount. People in the Remodelers' Council generally are different this way.

You have been helping rebuild the local Manatee/Sarasota Building Industry Association Remodelers' Council after a three-year hiatus. What has that process been like?

Frankly I am learning as I go, but I will say I'm amazed at the infectious excitement that was here from the beginning. The Manatee/Sarasota Council was so active before! I think the economy and market conditions stopped a group of remodelers who had a fire in their belly, and it's time to stoke the coals again.

Also, you've been involved as an adviser at Manatee Technical College. What does that role entail?

It has involved spending a little time talking to instructors and listening to their passion for imparting skills but realizing the limits they face. The instructors can do a good job at introducing skills and identifying those who show a connection, but they can't teach an aspiring student what it's really like working in the field. I hope to make an arrangement to discuss real-time job skills and preparedness for the field. They have an advisory committee which I hope to be invited to be a member.



NEIL MCGOWAN

Navigator Kitchens & Construction, Inc.
Parrish, Fla.
navigatorkitchensconstruction.com

TITLE: President, Senior Designer and General Contractor

YEAR COMPANY FOUNDED: 2016

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 4

Your company started an apprenticeship program. What motivated you to create such a program?

I struggled with hiring subcontractors for carpentry and general remodeling skills. We decided to try to create the apprenticeship within our company as a way of investing in a younger workforce, hoping for a loyalty we weren't finding in the open market. So far we've only hired one guy, who is doing well. We hope to find another employee who has a bit more experience and can ease my burden in the field so I can continue growing the management of projects.

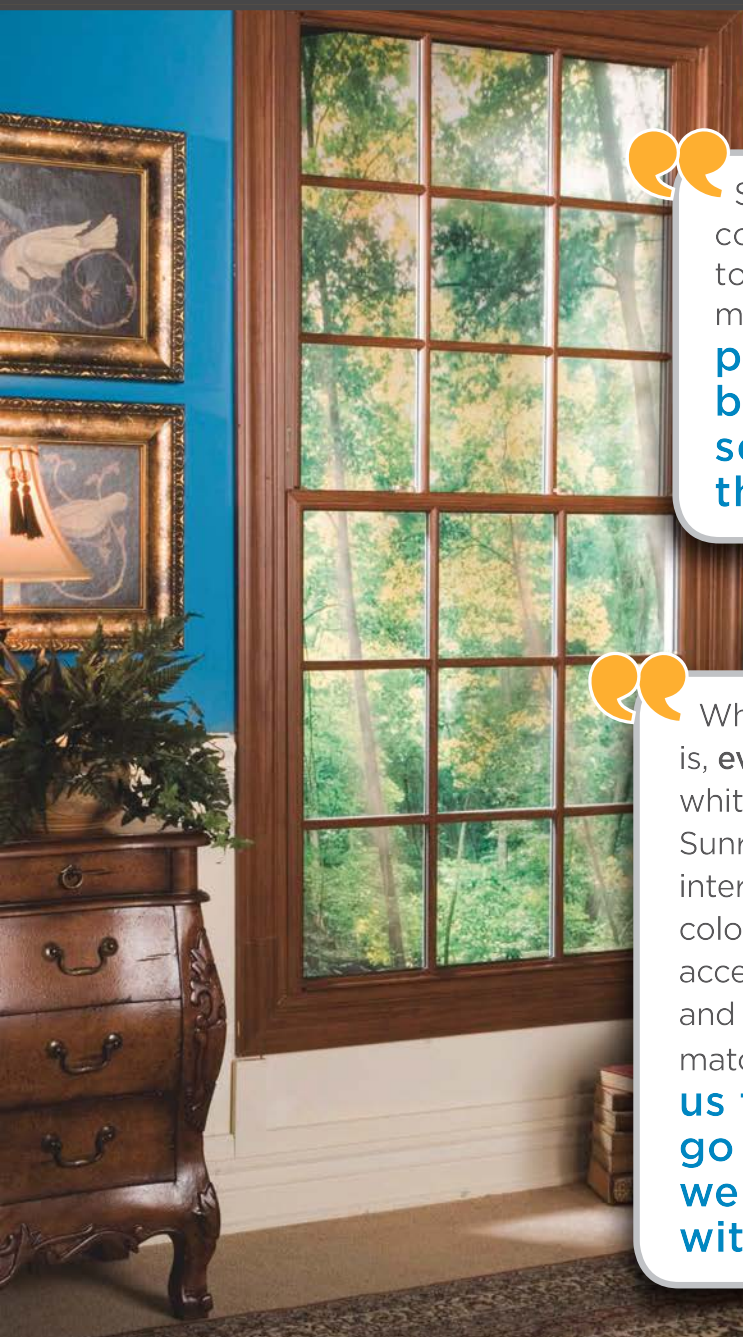
Right now, what is the focus within your business?

I feel we are doing well at treating people generously (our employees and our customers), and they want to be a part of our projects or hire us for more projects, so scheduling added work can be an issue. While our current clients have thought of a couple extra jobs they want us to do, we have to move on to others because we committed ourselves to a tight schedule. Our marketing is going well, and we have complete accountability in our community. Our challenge in is getting me out of the labor pool in order to manage projects and be more attentive to sales. It's taking more [time] than I like to get back to people; I would love to respond with a complete written proposal for complete projects within a 72-hour time frame. I think this is normal growing pains from previous experience with two other companies I've started.

Anything else you'd like to mention about career accomplishments?

Someday I hope to be able to do for myself what we have done for our clients: Live in a world that values relationships above all, creates value beyond the typical experience, and where we receive a blessing for doing this for others. **QR**

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Sunrise’s ingenuity, coupled with their drive to bring a window to the market place that excels in **performance and beauty, definitely sets us apart from the “me too” crowd.**”



Les Stone
RAMCO

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Mike Keating
Evergreen Door & Window

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For more info circle 58

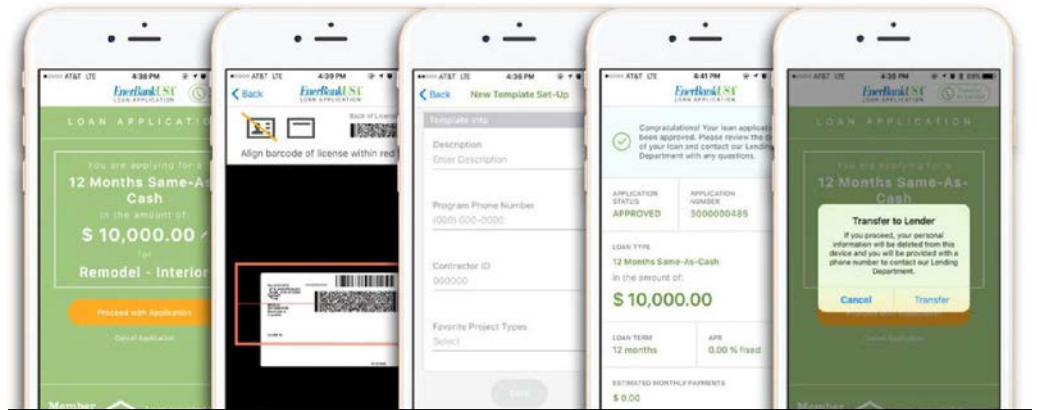
Financing Facilitation

A roundup of home improvement loan apps shows the capabilities and convenience they can afford remodelers who use them with customers.

by Kyle Clapham

HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS give consumers a viable option to pay for remodeling projects when they do not have much equity in their house or would rather not take on credit card debt. Many contractors recognize the value of offering finance packages that enable clients to afford a job; however, few of them have the time or bandwidth to absorb the services into their organization.

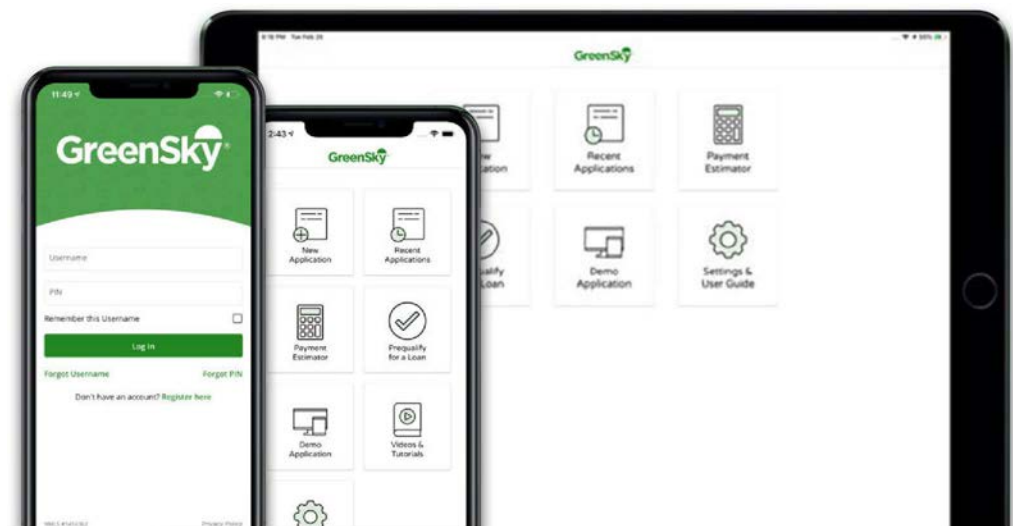
A number of lenders now partner with remodelers to provide flexible choices for customers who could benefit from a home improvement loan. More companies also have developed an app that can walk homeowners through the process and render a decision on their loan application before contractors leave the house, which can help close additional sales and increase their bottom line. **QR**



EnerBank USA



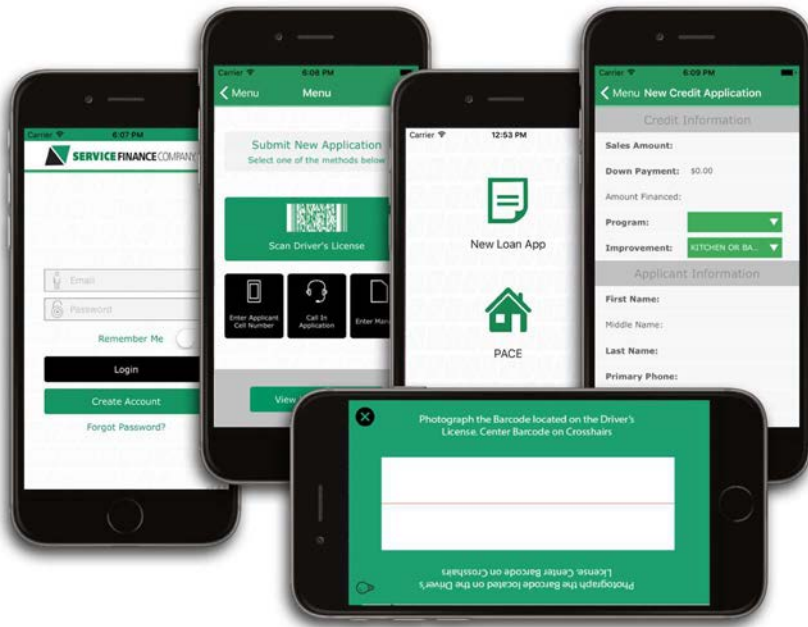
The EnerBank USA mobile loan app gives authorized contractors a new tool to offer customers who apply for a home improvement loan. Customers can transfer their application from the app to a live lender at any stage in the application process, and contractors have the ability to build custom loan templates that can jump-start the loan application process for their customers. Using the camera on their mobile device, customers can easily add contact information by scanning a state issued ID; after completing the application, customers typically receive a credit decision in seconds. Their personal information is secure and removed from the device, furthermore, as soon as the application is complete and submitted. For more information about the EnerBank USA app, visit enerbank.com/mobile.



GreenSky



The GreenSky mobile app helps remodelers grow sales and satisfy their customers through a simplification and streamlining of the loan application process. Customers can receive a loan approval in minutes after submitting their application. Following up with them, moreover, has never been easier because contractors can keep track of recently submitted applications in one place. The company designed its Payment Estimator to assist customers in comparing monthly payments for different size projects side by side. For more information about the GreenSky app, visit greensky.com/mobile.



Service Finance



The Service Finance mobile app allows registered dealers and their authorized agents to securely apply for customer financing on site 24/7.

Exclusive add-ons, such as the capture of demographic information by simply scanning a driver's license, enable customers to quickly fill out the secure application. Agents can be notified on their device in real time with an underwriting decision and also snap photos and upload work orders using the existing camera. The company's app provides a touch interface for customers to sign their loan documents electronically, giving an agent the ability to complete all the required tasks before leaving the property and reducing the processing time. Agents can then follow the progress of the request through all of the steps and manage their individual pipeline in real time. Office administrators can have access to the agent management dashboard as well after registering and completing training, at which point they have the ability to grant and delete access to the mobile application. For more information about the Service Finance app, visit svcfm.com.

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3 Surprising Ways to Create Outdoor Rooms

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Homeowners may live in their houses, but they really want to be outdoors.

New studies show homeowners are investing more in outdoor spaces than ever before, with 85% of those renovating opting for a major remodel or a complete overhaul, according to the 2017 U.S. Houzz Landscape Trends Study. Meanwhile, AIA's 2017 Home Design Trends Survey shows interest in outdoor rooms spiked more than 70%.

Art Steedle calls it the “third room” phenomenon. “Americans have always loved their backyards,” says Steedle, owner of Steedle Brothers Construction and an additional venture, Cargo Builders, which repurposes retired shipping containers as innovative spaces. “Everybody needs that third space to relax and unwind. And your backyard can be that third space — that place you decompress before you go into your second space, which is your home.”

Steedle should know. His outdoor room designs for top Hollywood celebrities have landed him on HGTV's “Jaime Durie's Outdoor Room,” DIY's “I Hate My Yard,” and recently HLN's “Homeowner Justice.”

Steedle says the best outdoor spaces are those that create a defined space and provide a view while also maintaining privacy. He says today's homeowners especially want clean modern lines and low maintenance. That's why he loves to use products such as cable rail infill in his outdoor spaces.

For more on how CableRail helps create outdoor rooms, visit www.feeneyinc.com

Here are three ways Steedle says remodelers can create outdoor rooms for their customers — even when it doesn't seem like it's possible:

1. Use the roof. Steedle says the roof is the “unfound” space of outdoor living. “If you have a flat section of your roof, that's a great place to expand your outdoor space,” he says. “You may even have a view you didn't know you had.” Steedle, a former roofer, says remodelers adding roof top spaces need to make sure they still shed water properly and that structures are tied to the home's flashing.
2. Connect indoors with outdoors. One of the most dramatic ways to create exciting outdoor spaces is merging inside with outside through large openings that almost disappear. Stacked glass door systems are especially popular. But remodelers adding these dramatic openings need to make sure headers are strong enough to sustain them.
3. Build a wall. Sometimes, outdoor spaces call for views to be blocked from neighbors or passersby, rather than opened up. Steedle likes to combine materials such as wood, faux concrete and corrugated metal. “You can create privacy, but also something that's almost a work of art,” he says. “And you're creating that space.”

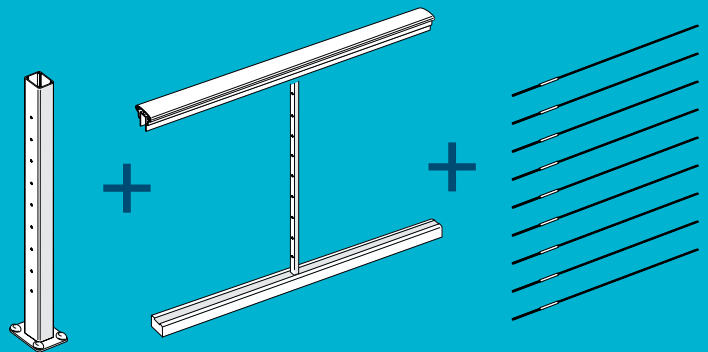
But whether it's a porch, rooftop or backyard, Steedle's main go-to for outdoor rooms is the clean, modern look of cable railing, which defines the space while still maintaining the view. Plus, it's a snap to install. “I love cable rails because you have the transparency, and you're not worried about the glass,” he says. “You can also pair it with different aesthetics and it looks great no matter what.”



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Photos: Paul Rivera Architectural Photography

In the Middle of Manhattan

Rusk Renovations unites two high-rise apartments to produce an extraordinary New York City master bathroom experience.

by Kyle Clapham

THE owner of two units in a modern, mid-town high-rise wanted to reconfigure the layouts and combine them into one exquisite apartment. New mechanical, plumbing and electrical systems would need to be installed, along with top-of-the-line fixtures, finishes and appliances. Custom built-in millwork with quarter-inch fillers (no scribes), moreover, would have to start fabrication before the walls were in place because of a tight schedule.

Rothlisberger, a renowned millworker based in Switzerland, endorsed Rusk Renovations as one of the few companies in New York who could think through an unbuilt project and construct walls within the required 8-inch tolerance, notes John Rusk, president of Rusk Renovations, which serves clients in Manhattan.



The design team moved the vanity to the side and placed the tub front and center to create an unimpeded view of downtown New York. The stone ceiling had to be designed so the 'floating' mirror could be installed afterward—at the end of the project.

“We have to agree that we’re going to hold a dimension of 57 and one-eighth; and when they show up with the millwork four months later, that wall is now in place, and it’s 57 and one-eighth and plumb,” says John, who established the residential contracting firm more than 30 years ago.

Built to Entertain

The tall needle skyscraper sways, so Rusk had to curtail its use of spinning lasers to level ceilings and millwork on windy days when the lines would move up and down the walls. A ladder accidentally cracking a window could cost \$20,000 to replace, not to mention the potential of glass falling 30 floors below; therefore, the company blocked off all windows with protection during construction.

Sourcing the millwork in Switzerland complicated the coordination of shop drawings and, ultimately, the product installation. To meet the schedule, Rusk had to draw elements in collaboration with the HVAC, plumbing and framing subcontractors and plan everything in 3D carefully so Rothlisberger could build cabinets that would fit when they arrived by boat.

Balancing the breathtaking views outside the building with the beautiful interior of the apartment often presents a challenge for contemporary tower living, John explains. The construction details and craftsmanship must measure up to the

extraordinary sightlines. Gorgeous stone-clad walls, a custom wine room and the superior millwork constructed overseas hold their own inside the unit.

“The owner was looking for something that was incredibly special in New York City, something that was knock-your-socks-off beautiful,” John says. “He entertains often, so the space is built for entertaining in addition to being a comfortable home for him and his family when they are in New York.”

Incredible Experience

The client also sought some personal perks, such as a larger master bathroom. Most of the view had been obscured by mirrors and sheetrock walls that concealed floor-to-ceiling vent lines in the center of the bath. The vents were offset just above the floor, run to the wall and then reconnected at the ceiling to continue traveling up through the building, which allowed the glass wall to the shower.

The design team moved the vanity to the side and placed the tub front and center in the bathroom to create an unimpeded view of downtown New York. To accommodate the piping, Rusk raised the tub on a curved platform clad in stone. While the other bathroom with a window has electric-operated glass to provide privacy at the flip of a switch, the master bath has no nearby structure.

“The building is so high that you can take a bath, and there’s no one who’s looking in. It’s just

MASTER DESIGN AWARDS 2018 RESIDENTIAL INTERIOR MORE THAN \$100,000 SILVER

COMPANY INFORMATION

Rusk Renovations
New York
ruskrenovations.com
Plainspace, D.P.C.
New York
plainspaceinc.com
Shari Pellows Interiors
Boston
sharipellowsinteriors.com

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project name: Apartment Worth the View
Project location: New York
Square footage: 2,650
Project cost: \$1.7 million

PRODUCT INFORMATION

HVAC: Climate Master
Thermostat: Honeywell
Cooktop: Gaggenau
Oven: Gaggenau
Refrigerator: Gaggenau
Microwave: Gaggenau
Dishwasher: Fisher & Paykel
Laundry: Miele
Wine cellar: Wine Guardian
Radiant floor: NuHeat
Plumbing fixtures: Dornbracht
Breakfast nook chandelier: Fuse London
Chandelier
Dining room chandelier: Ralph Pucci
Lianne Gold
Bar sconces/pendants: Holly Hunt Lighting
Pendants: Studio Joseph Watts
Master bath pendants: Ochre
Celestial Pebble
Single linear LEDs: Luminii



The tall needle skyscraper sways, so Rusk had to curtail its use of spinning lasers to level ceilings and millwork on windy days when the lines would move up and down the walls.

too far physically from anywhere else in the city,” John explains. “So it really is a place to have this incredible experience of bathing in the middle of Manhattan.”

Because the bathrooms and living areas are clad in stone, the design team had to identify a method for visualizing their choice of slabs, as far as how the veins in the stone could meet and flow throughout the space, he adds.

Back and Forth

Rusk took photos of each slab and uploaded them into a 3D computer program that enabled the design team and a stone artisan to manipulate the slabs in order to establish near-perfect alignments of stone for the project.

“On one axis you’re joining two slabs from consecutive lots, and that’s relatively simple; but in the master shower, you can see on the floor of the shower that they came up with a stone that very beautifully ties into the book-matched stone above it,” John says. “The design team manipulated what was basically a painting, and in the that process, they could line up the veins and colors in

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the stone to make something look both beautiful and thoughtful.

“It’s a collaborative process,” he continues. “It’s back and forth with the designer, the architect, the stone artisan and our project management team. We’re working to understand what they’re trying to achieve. Sometimes we’ll push back on them, and they’ll push back on us. Then it’s back to the drawing board to see if we can find something beautiful and possible.”

Rusk had to design the stone ceiling in the master bath so that the “floating” mirror could be installed at the end of the project, after the ceiling was put in place. The mirror would not allow for a medicine cabinet.

At the same time, the in-wall toilet uses a remote flushometer push button instead of the standard push plate that provides access to the tank guts in the wall. The team collaborated to design a push latch stone door that flows into the surrounding slabs but hides a medicine cabinet with a removable bottom shelf to access the tank guts. “And voila,” John notes. “One ball, two birds.”



The client took pleasure in the overall design of the residence and encouraged the team throughout the project.

With multiple stakeholders involved in the job and pushing each other, the project truly became a collaboration between the owner, contractor, architect and interior designer, John explains. “Because this is a such a spectacular space, the client really took pleasure in the overall design of the residence. He knew there was a lot of back and forth, but he kept encouraging the team, and they came through. He is incredibly appreciative of how the whole thing turned out,” John says. “In his words: ‘We remain tremendously pleased with the design and the quality of workmanship, but also just the wonderful way we’ve been able to live in the space and experience our home and the city in such an extraordinary manner.’” QR

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OUTDOOR LIVING UNDER \$75,000
Interior Trends Remodel & Design
Tucson, Arizona



2019 Chrysalis Awards For Remodeling Excellence

by Ken Kanline

THE Chrysalis Awards program recognizes the nation's best remodeling and design work and is open to all remodeling and design professionals in the United States.

This year, 100 projects were honored as winners of the Chrysalis Awards for Remodeling Excellence. The winning projects were determined based on overall design, creative use of space and materials and the degree to which the project enhanced the original structure.

Pictures of the 2019 award-winning projects—and all winning projects since 2000—can be seen at the Chrysalis website, chrysalisawards.com.

In addition to the project awards, this year Chrysalis also honors Jackson Design & Remodeling of San Diego, who has demonstrated a history of excellence by winning a Chrysalis Award in 10 separate years since 2000, by presenting them with the Decade of Excellence Award.

2019 CHRYSALIS WINNERS

Kitchen Remodel Under \$75,000

National Award (Team)

Innovative Construction
Roswell, Ga.

Molly Trost Interior Design
Woodstock, Ga.

Regional Award

TreHus Builders, Inc.
Minneapolis, Minn.

Regional Award

Rhode Island Kitchen & Bath
Warwick, R.I.

Regional Award (Team)

Jackson & Leroy Remodeling
Salt Lake City, Utah

AMB Design

Salt Lake City, Utah

Kitchen Remodel \$75,000-\$150,000

National Award

ONE eleven Ltd.

Las Vegas, Nev.

Regional Award

Vesta
Chicago, Ill.

Regional Award

Teakwood Builders, Inc.
Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

Regional Award Co-Winner

Design Center, Inc.
Marathon, Fla.

Regional Award Co-Winner

Michael Nash Design Build &
Homes Inc.
Fairfax, Va.

Kitchen Remodel Over \$150,000

National Award

Kasper Custom Remodeling, LLC
Dallas, Texas

Regional Award

Quartersawn Design/Build
Minneapolis, Minn.

Regional Award

Mitchell Construction Group, Inc.
Medfield, Mass.

Regional Award

Allen Construction
Santa Barbara, Calif.

Bath Remodel Under \$50,000

National Award

ONE eleven Ltd.
Las Vegas, Nev.

Regional Award

Diamond Bath LLC
Crystal Lake, Ill.

Regional Award

Mitchell Construction Group, Inc.
Medfield, Mass.

Regional Award

Summers & Sons Development
Company
Tucker, Ga.

Bath Remodel \$50,000-\$75,000

National Award (Team)

Gruver Cooley Corporation
Leesburg, Va.

Gruver Cooley Interiors

Purcellville, Va.

Regional Award

Design Alternatives
Lafayette, Ind.

Regional Award

CW Design LLC
Brookline, Mass.

Bath Remodel Over \$75,000

National Award (Team)

Rusk Renovations
New York, N.Y.

plainspace Architecture and
Design dpc.

New York, N.Y.

Regional Award

LaMantia Design & Remodeling
Hinsdale, Ill.

Regional Award

TLC Design/Build LLC
Auburn, Ala.

Regional Award

Neil Kelly Company
Portland, Ore.

Addition Under \$250,000

National Award

TreHus Builders, Inc.
Minneapolis, Minn.

Regional Award (Team)

RemodelWerks, LLC
Shrewsbury, Mass.

GMT Home Designs

Ashland, Mass.

Regional Award (Team)

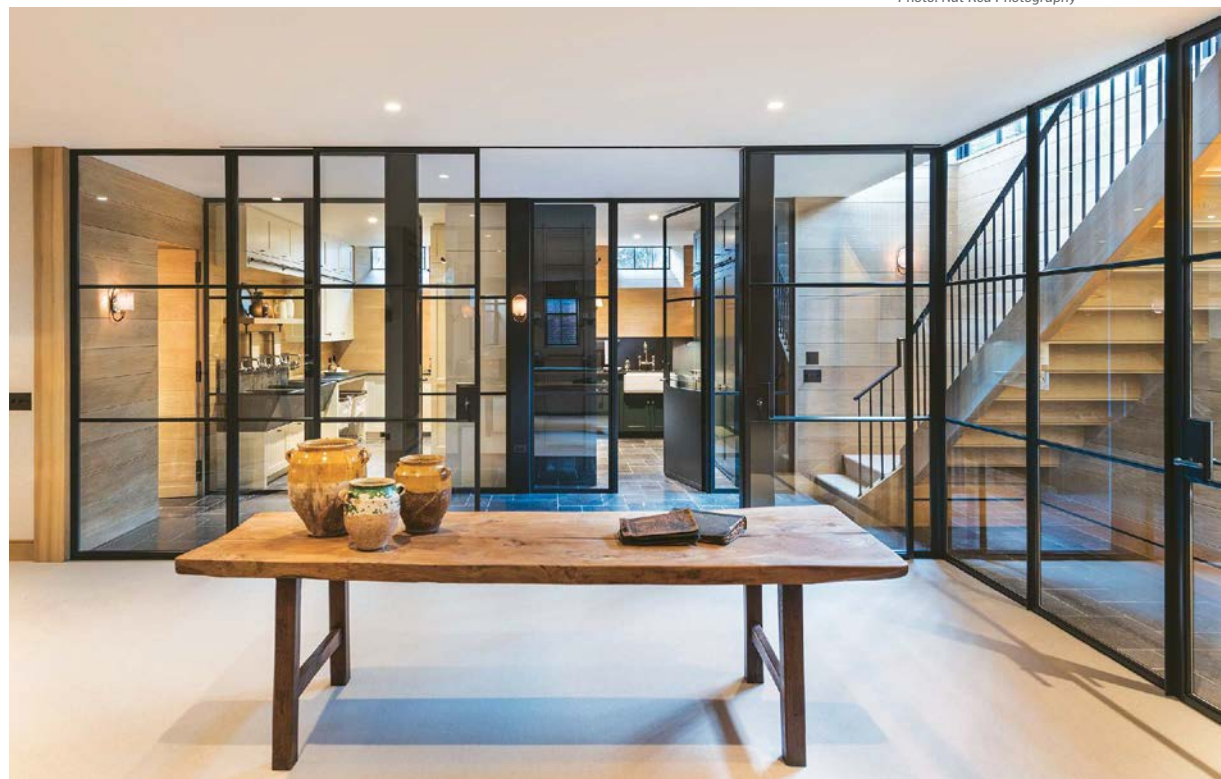
Innovative Construction
Roswell, Ga.

Kirkland + Associates Architects, P.C.
Norcross, Ga.

Regional Award

StoneHorse Design
Bozeman, Mont.

Photo: Nat Rea Photography



BASEMENT REMODEL OVER \$100,000

Adams + Beasley Associates
Carlisle, Massachusetts

Photo: Sylvain Côté



HISTORIC RENOVATION
Westchester Real Homes
South Salem, New York

Addition Over \$250,000

National Award
Denver Design Build, LLC
Denver, Colo.

Regional Award
Besch Design, Ltd.
Chicago, Ill.

Regional Award
Craftsmanship by John, Inc.
Houston, Texas

Regional Award (Team)
GTM Architects
Bethesda, Md.

Sandy Spring Builders
Bethesda, Md.

Residential Interior Under \$150,000

National Award
Sun Design Remodeling
Specialists, Inc., Burke, Va.

Regional Award
LaMantia Design & Construction
Brookfield, Ill.

Regional Award (Team)
Baxter Construction
Hopewell, N.J.

Tobias Design, LLC
Hopewell, N.J.

Residential Interior \$150,000-\$300,000

National Award
Pathway Design & Construction
Seattle, Wash.

Regional Award
ALH Home Renovations LLC
Roeland Park, Kan.

Regional Award
Baxter Construction
Hopewell, N.J.

Regional Award
Michael Nash Design Build &
Homes Inc.
Fairfax, Va.

Residential Interior Over \$300,000

National Award (Team)
Adams + Beasley Associates
Carlisle, Mass.

Pauli & Uribe Architects
Boston, Mass.

Regional Award
MA Peterson
Edina, Minn.

Regional Award
Red Level Renovations LLC
Atlanta, Ga.

Residential Exterior

National Award
Gallagher Remodeling, Inc.
Belmont, Mass.

Regional Award
Jon Mandel Contracting
Evansville, Ind.

Regional Award
The Porch Company
Nashville, Tenn.

Detached Outbuilding

National Award
Kasper Custom Remodeling, LLC
Dallas, Texas

Regional Award Co-Winner
Royal Oaks Design
Oakdale, Minn.

Regional Award Co-Winner
MA Peterson
Edina, Minn.

Regional Award
Harth Builders
Spring House, Pa.

Regional Award
HDR Remodeling
Berkeley, Calif.

Outdoor Living Under \$75,000

National Award
Interior Trends Remodel & Design
Tucson, Ariz.

Regional Award

MA Peterson
Edina, Minn.

Regional Award
S&W Kitchens Inc.
Longwood, Fla.

Outdoor Living Over \$75,000

National Award
MA Peterson
Edina, Minn.

Regional Award
Davitt Design Build
West Kingston, R.I.

Regional Award (Team)
Key Residential, Ltd.
Grapevine, Texas

Randy Angell Designs
Plano, Texas

Pool Environments, Inc.
Plano, Texas

Jason Osterberger Designs
Coppell, Texas

Claudine Roberts Design
Dallas, Texas

Regional Award
Neil Kelly Company
Portland, Ore.

Photo: Paul Rivera, Architectural Photography



RESIDENTIAL SPECIALTY OVER \$50,000, CENTER STAGE WINE ROOM

Rusk Renovations, New York

Team Member: Plainspace Architecture and Design dpc, New York

**Residential Specialty
Under \$50,000**

National Award
Amiano & Son Construction
Tabernacle, N.J.

Regional Award
Handyman Connection of
Eden Prairie
Bloomington, Minn.

Regional Award
Harwick Homes
Bonita Springs, Fla.

Regional Award
Chermak Construction Inc.
Edmonds, Wash.

**Residential Specialty
Over \$50,000**

National Award (Team)
Rusk Renovations
New York, N.Y.

plainspace Architecture
and Design dpc
New York, N.Y.

Regional Award
Buckeye Basements, Inc.
Delaware, Ohio

Regional Award
Sun Design Remodeling
Specialists, Inc.
Burke, Va.

Regional Award
Hanson Carlen Architecture
& Construction
Spokane, Wash.

**Whole-House Remodel
Under \$300,000**

National Award
Apex Contracting &
Remodeling Solutions
Tomkins Cove, N.Y.

Regional Award
Redstart Construction Inc.
Naperville, Ill.

Regional Award
Kitchen and Bath Design Studio
Houston, Texas

Regional Award (Team)
Jackson & LeRoy Remodeling
Salt Lake City, Utah
AMB Design
Salt Lake City, Utah

**Whole-House Remodel
\$300,000-\$700,000**

National Award
Jackson Design & Remodeling
San Diego, Calif.

Regional Award
Highmark Builders
Savage, Minn.

Regional Award
Red House Custom Building
Providence, R.I.

Regional Award
DMG Design + Build
Metairie, La.

**Whole-House Remodel
Over \$700,000**

National Award
Poole & Poole Architecture
Midlothian, Va.

Regional Award
Revolution Design and Build
Wayzata, Minn.

Regional Award
Landis Construction Corporation
Washington, D.C.

Regional Award
Lewis Builders
Carmel, Calif.

2019 Decade of Excellence Award

Jackson Design & Remodeling San Diego, California

This is the highest award that Chrysalis can present because it represents not only excellence in construction and design, but excellence that has been tested over time. It is presented only once to residential remodeling and design companies who have won a Chrysalis Award in 10 separate years since Chrysalis became a national competition in 2000.

This year we are honoring another top company who has demonstrated through their accomplishments and success what it takes to be at the pinnacle of the industry.

We welcome **Jackson Design & Remodeling** of San Diego, California, who has won eight National Awards in the categories of Kitchen, Bath, Universal Design and Whole House. They have also won eight Regional Awards in the categories of Kitchen, Bath, Addition and Historic Renovation.

Their commitment to quality, excellence and creative design puts them in an elite position within the remodeling industry.

They will join the four other Decade of Excellence winners:

Michael Nash Design Build & Homes, Inc. Fairfax, Virginia

- 9 National Awards in the categories of: Whole-House Remodel, Residential Exterior, Addition, Kitchen Remodel, Bath Remodel, Residential Interior, Detached Outbuilding.
- 21 Regional Awards in the categories of: Addition, Kitchen Remodel, Residential Exterior, Bath Remodel, Residential Interior and Basement Remodel.

Marrokal Design & Remodeling San Diego, California

- 5 National Awards in the categories of: Addition, Green Remodeling, Outdoor Living, Residential Interior.
- 29 Regional Awards in the categories of: Whole-House Remodel, Bath Remodel, Kitchen Remodel, Deck/Porch, Residential Specialty, Detached Outbuilding, Addition, Residential Interior, Outdoor Living, Historic Renovation, Residential Exterior.

TreHus Builders, Inc. Minneapolis, Minnesota

- 6 National Awards in the categories of: Kitchen Remodel, Residential Interior, Whole-House Remodel, Residential Insurance Restoration and Addition.
- 19 Regional Awards in the categories of: Kitchen Remodel, Deck/Porch, Historic Renovation, Residential Specialty, Addition, Residential Exterior, Whole-House Remodel, Commercial Remodel, Basement Remodel, Bath Remodel.

Allen Construction Santa Barbara, California

- 3 National Awards in the categories of: Whole-House Remodel, Commercial Remodel
- 19 Regional Awards in the categories of: Whole-House Remodel, Historic Renovation, Kitchen Remodel, Commercial Remodel, Outdoor Living and Residential Exterior.



WHOLE-HOUSE REMODEL OVER \$700,000, THE BARN AT WALNUT HILL

Poole & Poole Architecture
Midlothian, Virginia

Residential Historic Renovation

National Award
Westchester Real Homes
South Salem, N.Y.

Regional Award
Advance Design Studio, Ltd.
Gilberts, Ill.

Regional Award
Scott Wilson Architect, LLC
Franklin, Tenn.

Regional Award
Jackson Design & Remodeling
San Diego, Calif.

Residential Universal Design

National Award
ONE eleven Ltd.
Las Vegas, Nev.

Regional Award
Corinthian Fine Homes
Indianapolis, Ind.

Regional Award
Legal Eagle Contractors, Co.
Bellaire, Texas

Residential Insurance Restoration

National Award
Davitt Design Build
West Kingston, R.I.

Regional Award
AMEK Custom Builders
Bloomington, Minn.

Regional Award
A&I Fire & Water Restoration
Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Regional Award
Kowalski Construction, Inc.
Phoenix, Ariz.

Commercial Remodel Under \$500,000

National Award
Judy Coutts, Architect
Altoona, Pa.

Regional Award
DMG Design + Build
Metairie, La.

Regional Award
55+ TLC Interior Design, LLC
Scottsdale, Ariz.

Commercial Remodel Over \$500,000

National Award (Team)
Architectural Workshop
Denver, Colo.

R M Ruwart Design
Denver, Colo.

Regional Award
Project Construction
Company, Inc..
Hebron, Ohio

Regional Award
AMB Architects LLC
Houston, Texas

Basement Remodel Under \$100,000

National Award
HIVEX Basement
Finishing Company
Fredericksburg, Va.

Regional Award
CMH Builders, Inc.
Indianapolis, Ind.

Basement Remodel Over \$100,000

National Award
Adams + Beasley Associates
Carlisle, Mass.

Meredith Harrington Interiors LLC
New York, N.Y.

DGS Architecture
Boston, Mass.

Regional Award
MA Peterson
Edina, Minn.

Regional Award (Team)
Gruver Cooley Corporation
Leesburg, Va.

Gruver Cooley Interiors
Purcellville, Va.

Regional Award
Poehlmann Construction
Fort Collins, Colo.



A REPUTATION IS BUILT ONE REPLACEMENT PROJECT AT A TIME.

At Marvin, we know that you depend on our quality to keep working for you long after the job is done. However, success requires more than just having the right products. That's why we offer some of the best service and support around.

Discover a smarter way to replace. Find your local Marvin replacement partner at [marvin.com](https://www.marvin.com)

Trust, Value & Solutions

Thousands of your clients have spoken. The 5th annual QR GuildQuality Satisfaction Report shows their happiness depends on these three traits more than any others.

This report contains two parts: A statistical analysis of more than 100,000 GuildQuality, post-remodel client surveys and profiles of 60 remodeling firms with extremely high levels of customer satisfaction. It was edited and written by Kacey Larsen and Patrick O'Toole, with the data and graphics collaboration of Alex Overall, Bailey D'Alessio and Michelle Lolley at GuildQuality.

THE U.S. economy is strong—so is the remodeling market, which is estimated to grow 3 percent or more to nearly \$400 billion in 2019. These gains come on top of several years of even more robust growth for remodeling. That is why it is so striking that “value” has gained traction with clients, moving to the No. 2 spot when viewed as a trait of overall satisfaction. In addition, “budget” as a factor in satisfaction has jumped from the No. 15 spot in each of the last two years to the No. 7 spot this year. Could this subtle shift toward bottom-line results, among others year over year, be a harbinger of larger shifts in the market? Take the latest forecast for remodeling from John Burns Real Estate Consulting. It sees a slowdown in remodeling activity derived from big projects (everything over \$5,000) and strong growth in the number of small projects (under \$5,000). There are a number of reasons why the average ticket is falling back. First, younger homeowners are doing more home improvement; DIY is ticking upward too. Second, after years of rising house prices in most metro areas, that growth is slowing, meaning slower equity growth. As a result, maybe this year, for the first time in a while, people are putting tighter limits on what they are willing to invest.

Higher Expectations

Responsiveness to completed items on a final “punchlist” has grown in importance over the last three years. Back in 2016, it ranked as the No. 12 most important driver of customer satisfaction. Last year it moved up to the No. 7 spot, and this year it stands at No. 5. Does this shift correspond with market changes? Probably not. More likely it is a byproduct of widespread improvements in service levels in all parts of the broader consumer

economy. How quickly does Amazon solve a problem with an order? You send it back and the money is quickly refunded. In industry after industry, technology has raised expectations. Problems are resolved faster with less hassle. So if you are operating at 1995 or 2005 service-level speed, 2020 standards will certainly have a negative impact on how your customers perceive the job you are doing for them.

Responsiveness, Eye-to-Eye Communication

It should be reassuring to know, then, that after five consecutive years of careful measurement in producing this report with data from GuildQuality, attributes of “trust,” “responsiveness,” and an ability to “resolve problems” remain at the top of the satisfaction-driver list. You may not offer the most up-to-date communication technology—apps for viewing progress or regular photos from the jobsite. Your way might be a text or a voice call with weekly updates. Clients are OK without all the bells and whistles. But you certainly can control how they feel about you as a reliable partner. How well do you handle a situation when, unexpectedly, there is a pipe running through a wall that is slated for demo? How well do you communicate the value and quality of your solutions? You can do it. Even if you are old school, you can satisfy customers.

The data presented at right represents most-desired traits across all job types. On the following pages you will find these numbers broken down by job category and type. Some traits are more highly prized in big projects versus smaller ones. Finally, we profile 60 companies who share their thoughts on what makes them so successful at creating happy clients. It is information that can certainly help you improve your bottom line. **QR**

SATISFACTION TRAIT	2018 PEARSON COEFFICIENT	2017 PEARSON COEFFICIENT	2018 PERCENT CHANGE
Trust "I trust my remodeling company to follow through on commitments."	.827	.838	-1.3
Value "I feel I am receiving a fair value for my money."	.803	.775	3.7
Problem Resolution "The staff addresses and resolves problems effectively."	.773	.746	3.6
Professional & Organized "My remodeling company is organized and professional."	.760	.768	-1.0
Punchlist "The punchlist was completed in a timely manner."	.730	.724	0.9
Employees Professional "The employees of my remodeling company are professional and courteous."	.705	.620	13.7
Budget "My remodeling company worked within our budget and kept costs in line."	.703	.673	4.5
Communication "The staff at my remodeling company communicates with me effectively."	.696	.668	4.1
Construction Quality "I am satisfied with the quality of materials and workmanship."	.692	.653	6.0
Expertise "My remodeling company had the necessary expertise to build my project."	.674	.652	3.5
Work Done Right "My work was done right the first time."	.664	.640	3.7
Quality of Workmanship "I am satisfied with the quality of workmanship."	.661	.698	-5.3
Installation Crew "My remodeling company installation crew was organized and professional."	.629	.665	-5.5
Employees & Subcontractors "The employees and subcontractors are professional and courteous."	.612	.628	-2.6
Schedule "My remodeling company adhered to our agreed-upon schedule."	.590	.562	4.9
Clean & Safe "The jobsite is kept clean and safe."	.532	.480	10.9
Quality of Materials "I am satisfied with the quality of materials used."	.522	.569	-8.3
Sales Knowledge "My salesperson was knowledgeable and helpful regarding my project."	.520	.535	-2.8
Salesperson Professional "My salesperson was professional and courteous."	.488	.568	-16.9

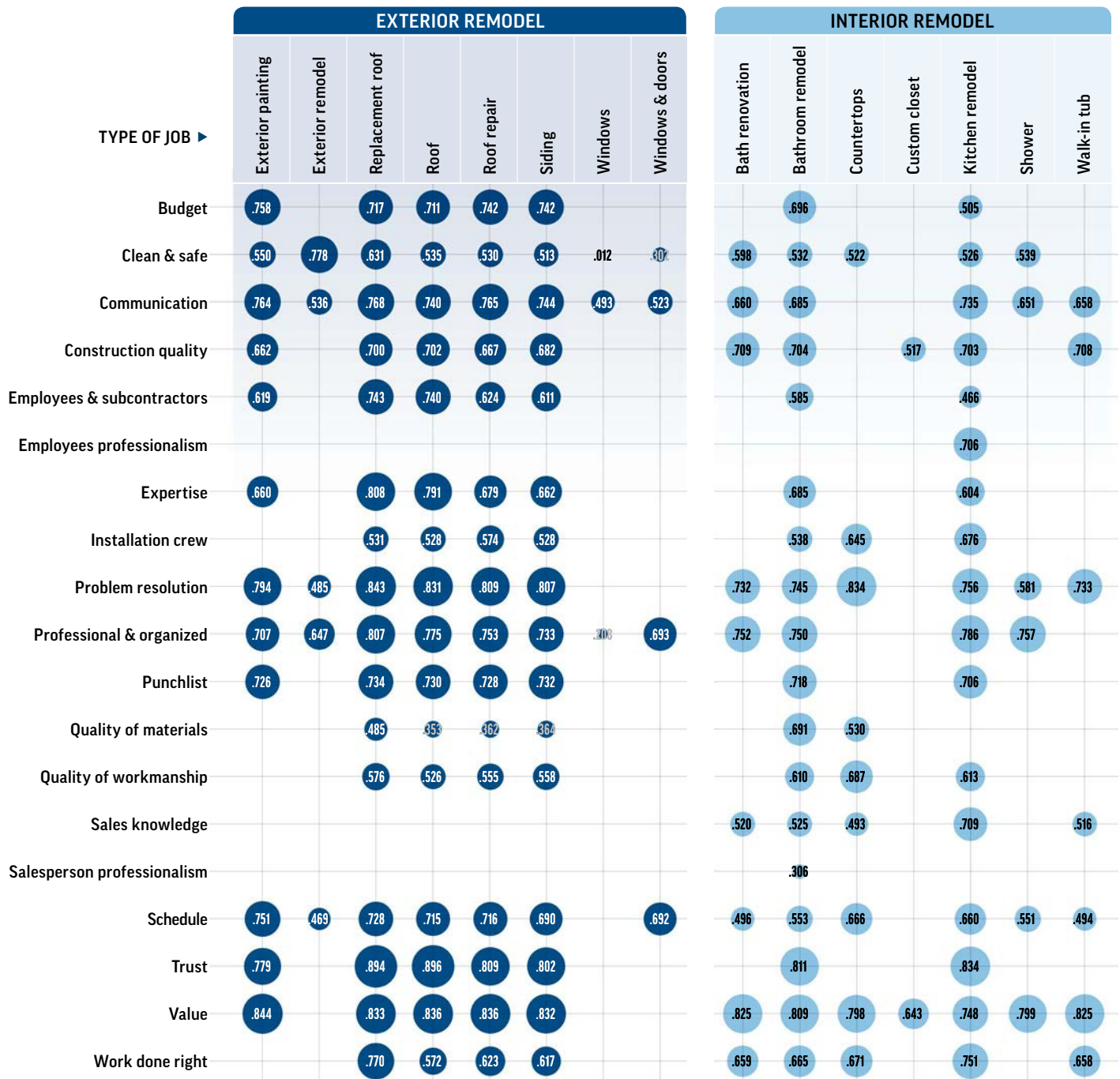
GUILDQUALITY

Since 2003, over 15,000 remodelers, homebuilders and home service providers have trusted GuildQuality to survey their customers and get honest, authentic feedback. Founded by Geoff Graham during his time as a real estate developer to be a surveying solution for small to mid-sized homebuilders and remodelers, GuildQuality's multitouch survey process, performance reporting and marketing tools make it easy for professionals in the residential construction industry to see their company through their customers' eyes, pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses, improve their online reputation, and generate more business.

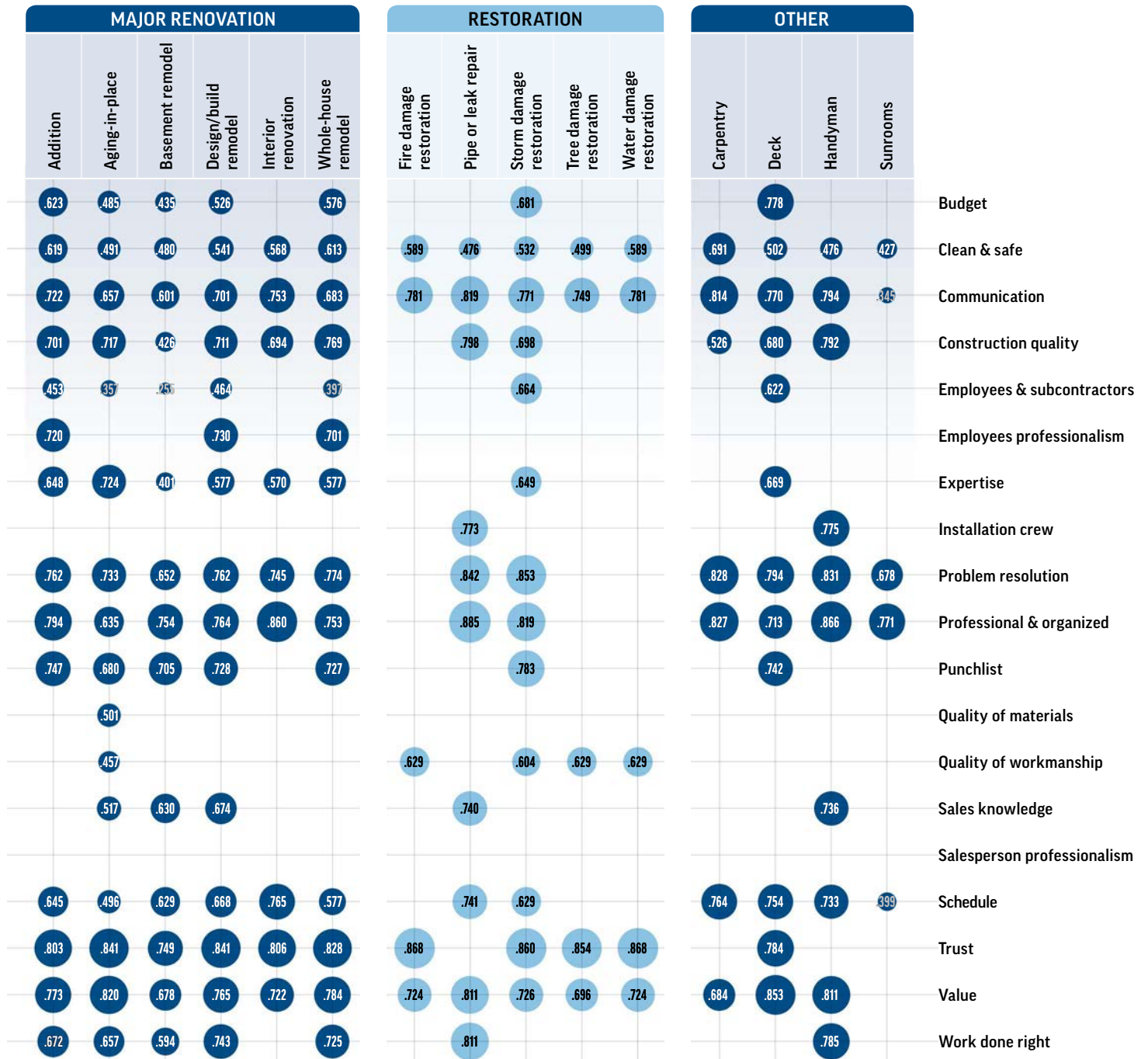
The Heat Map

At a Glance: Satisfaction Drivers for 30 Types of Remodeling Jobs

Data by GuildQuality's Alex Overall; edited by Qualified Remodeler








This bubble matrix shows areas of focus and importance for homeowners regarding their recent remodeling projects. The data was collected by GuildQuality and represents more than 100,000 consumer surveys conducted after a remodeling project. The Pearson Coefficient describes the strength of the relationship between two variables on a decimal scale of -1 to +1, which indicates the strongest possible relationship. The chart denotes the correlation between overall satisfaction and specific aspects of the customer experience for different types of projects.



COMPANY	TYPE OF FIRM	CEO	RESPONSE
<p>Acclaim Renovations & Design Mentor, Ohio acclaimreno.com</p> <p>96.98% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 57 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler	 Robert Gallese	<p>USING AND HANDLING RATINGS AND REVIEWS: At the final walk-through our clients are handed a document outlining the many ways to offer opinions of my company—sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Angie's List, Google and GuildQuality. Once a client posts their comments, we take those comments and post them to several different sites, such as Facebook and our own webpage.</p>
<p>ADR Builders Baltimore, Md. adrbuilder.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 10 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 Bret Stokes	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: Identify problems and find potential solutions prior to approaching clients with the issue.</p>
<p>All American Exteriors Locust Grove, Ga. myexteriors.com</p> <p>96.29% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 98.21% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 68 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build + Full-service Remodeler + Home Improvement/Replacement	 Tiffany and Thomas Williams (top) + Stephanie and Pete Williams	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: At All American Exteriors, we pride ourselves on our craftsmanship. Every project is based on high-quality materials and precision installation. We stand 100 percent behind our products and installations. That is why we hire the best, and we leave no stone unturned until our customers are fully satisfied.</p>
<p>American Home Design, Inc. Goodlettsville, Tenn. americanhomedesign.com</p> <p>94.3% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 94.32% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 1,300 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Don Bruce	<p>USING AND HANDLING RATINGS AND REVIEWS: Satisfied customers absolutely help our online ratings. We use a company called ReviewBuzz to survey our customers and make it easy to do online reviews for us.</p>
<p>Architectural Building Arts Madison, Wis. designbuildmadison.com</p> <p>98.9% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 21 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 Melinda Monroe and Aaron Monroe	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: We have built a business in the community for 30 years based on quality construction and our reputation. Our process begins with problem solving and the materials selected, to our employees and trade partners delivering quality craftsmanship at ABA to create the end result. We continue to train our employees to hold that line of quality. The majority of our clients come from referrals of past clients, who are their best resource for conveying our quality of work. We make the discussion of our attention to quality part of our sales process, and it aligns with meeting their expectations.</p>

COMPANY	TYPE OF FIRM	CEO	RESPONSE
<p>Bath Planet of Oklahoma Enid, Okla. bathplanet.com/oklahoma</p> <p>99.57% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 144 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Bath Specialist	 Todd Berdit	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: The best way to produce high-quality workmanship is providing comprehensive training and a thorough performance review before he or she begins working in the customer's home. After that, you must simply be sure the installer is paid well and often! We convey our commitment to the customer by agreeing in advance to repair unforeseen damage for no extra cost. [An] example: Rotten subfloor beneath the tub or old shower pan must be replaced, but we never add money to the final bill; we just take care of the entire job without being asked and without being paid extra.</p>
<p>Beantown Home Improvements, Inc. Halifax, Mass. beantownhi.com</p> <p>99.38% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 98.28% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 195 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 James DelPrete	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: The biggest thing I teach all members of my crew is that if anything arises, such as breaking something or making a mistake, to inform the homeowner immediately. Almost everything can be resolved—no matter how bad it may be—if you are upfront and honest with everyone and willing to work to a common solution.</p>
<p>BH Design + Build Mohnton, Pa. bhdesign.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 14 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 Ben Horning and Brock Garber	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: Our experienced project managers maintain a strong presence throughout the entire job, ensuring quality work is completed by our team as well as our trusted, long-term subcontractors. At the end of a project, our customers know we are always just a phone call away if anything does not meet their expectations.</p>
<p>Brothers Services Company Hampstead, Md. brothersservices.com</p> <p>93.3% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 94.68% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 3,299 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler	 John Martindale and Steve Zwagil	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: We try to avoid having problems in the first place by very carefully scoping every project and producing a formal scope of work that specifies all of our promises. That scope is handed off to our production team at a meeting including all three parties—the customer, sales consultant and project management team. This ensures everyone starts on the same page. Next, every customer is assigned both a customer care manager who coordinates the logistical details of their project as well as a project manager who is responsible for the field personnel as well as the quality of their work. With that level of upfront communication, problems are relatively rare. When they do arise, each project manager has a direct line to a production team manager, who is empowered to find a fair and reasonable solution.</p>
<p>Built Square, LLC Seattle, Wash. builtsquare.com</p> <p>98.53% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 20 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler	 Divven Browne and Nathan Werner	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: We feel that solid, effective communication is paramount to avoiding problems from occurring. We perform scheduled weekly meetings with all of our projects; host our production schedules online so that the customer can always track our progress; and ensure that customers sign off on all their finish items before we order them. Even with these steps—let's be honest—in the remodeling business problems do arise; it's how we handle those problems that makes the difference.</p>

COMPANY	TYPE OF FIRM	CEO	RESPONSE
<p>Byers Enterprises Grass Valley, Calif. thatsbyers.com</p> <p>96.83% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 93.07% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 1,652 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 <p>Ray Byers and Ray Byers Jr.</p>	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: To ensure quality and satisfaction, we train crews on an ongoing basis. We use a third-party survey company to make sure our clients are happy and review issues with the crews at bi-weekly production meetings. Our quality assurance manager [completes] follow-up inspections. When issues outside of our protocol are seen, digital photos are taken and shared with the crew so all members can review the issue. Another valuable tool is the “before” photos that sales capture during a pre-sale visit. These photos have saved us countless hours and resources in cases where clients see things they never noticed before we arrived to work.</p>
<p>Callier & Thompson Kitchens, Baths, Appliances Manchester, Mo. callierandthompson.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 61 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler	 <p>Bob Strate and Carolyn Beard</p>	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: We focus on setting realistic expectations through all phases of the project. We have also implemented several inter-company communication tools, helping to eliminate issues upfront. Aside from that, we’ve worked diligently at sending the message to everyone in our company, including subcontractors, that we are always going to do the right thing no matter what it takes. While we strive for perfection, we know that mistakes happen. We handle those mistakes the right way for our customers.</p>
<p>Capitol Window and Door Bowling Green, Ky. capitolwindowanddoor.com</p> <p>99.5% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 86 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 <p>Alan Cannon</p>	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: Our installers are highly skilled and trained. We have a small staff of professional installers and many of our prospective customers are aware of our installers’ reputation and skills before we ever interact with them. We are proud of our reputation in the community of providing outstanding products and unparalleled installation.</p>
<p>Carolina Exteriors Plus, LLC Apex, N.C. carolinaexteriorsplus.com</p> <p>96.32% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 97.5% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 200 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 <p>Clifton Muckenfuss and Wesley Newton</p>	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: 1) All crews are thoroughly vetted either through our manufacturing partners or by our in-house grading system. We will visit a current jobsite that a potential candidate/crew is working on and perform a jobsite audit and quality control inspection. 2) Project managers attend frequent internal training and quality meetings to discuss and review installation procedures, protocols, etc. 3) Project managers oversee crews of various types and size and review their work throughout the project to ensure it not only meets manufacturer’s specs but also internal quality specs. 4) Project managers are evaluated based on the quality scores their crews receive.</p>
<p>Case Design/Remodeling of San Jose San Jose, Calif. casesanjose.com</p> <p>96.56% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 36 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build + Full-service Remodeler	 <p>Jim Kabel</p>	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: From a proactive point of view, we set clear, quality expectations with our own craftspeople and our trade partners during the design cycle. We spell out these expectations in our subcontracts and create detailed elevations in our drawings for everyone on the production side to not only understand design details but the intent. Our designers review finish bids with tile, custom cabinet, countertop, cabinet and flooring partners, and always go on-site at the beginning of key phases, such as tile setting, to leave nothing to chance. We also photo-document key phases of the production process in our “daily logs” on our project management system. This helps communicate the “inside the wall” and other construction details that clients may not always appreciate or be able to see during their busy work days or if living off-site during the remodel.</p>

COMPANY	TYPE OF FIRM	CEO	RESPONSE
<p>Classic Remodeling & Construction, Inc. Johns Island, S.C. classicremodeling.com</p> <p>95.44% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 96.88% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 33 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 Bob Fleming	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: To ensure our work is of the highest quality, we start with a highly trained and experienced staff. We offer training and certification opportunities to make sure we have consistency in installation methods across projects and that each carpenter knows the finish details we expect. We convey workmanship to clients in a number of ways. It begins with past clients who share their experience and opinions of our work through GuildQuality reviews or testimonials. We frequently take potential clients onto jobsites or to past projects, so they can see examples of our work with their own eyes. By permitting all of our work and having each project inspected, a homeowner can be assured all our work meets or exceeds existing code. Finally, we provide a generous warranty that exceeds industry standards so our clients know we stand behind our work.</p>
<p>Contract Exteriors Murrells Inlet, S.C. contractexteriors.com</p> <p>96.01% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 97.83% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 559 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Randy Hann and William McCourt	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: Our focus is on communication. One way we accomplish this is through team meetings. Once a project is sold, the team goes over the details to make sure everyone is on the same page. A separate meeting with the customer is then scheduled to do the exact same thing. Everything is documented and photos are taken throughout the process. We know remodeling can be stressful and not something most of our customers have experience with. This is why we try to go over all the ups and downs with them prior to the start—to help set correct expectations and help avoid any unnecessary issues. If a problem does occur, our team addresses it calmly and is able to reference the previous documentation as needed.</p>
<p>Criner Remodeling Newport News, Va. crinerremodeling.com</p> <p>97.62% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 30 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler	 Robert Criner	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: We pride our company on quality, having a solid standing in the remodeling business since 1977. First, we only hire qualified carpenters and project managers. Along with being overseen by our production manager, projects are discussed at weekly staff meetings, ensuring each project progresses according to [its] timeline and any issues are taken care of immediately with all staff in the loop. Secondly, we only hire trade vendors who have the same standard of quality. Each project manager on-site monitors trade work to ensure all is being done correctly. When clients are surveyed after completion, we have them rate our tradespeople as well as our own staff.</p>
<p>DaBella Hillsboro, Ore. dabella.us</p> <p>94.25% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 97.14% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 5,038 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Donnie McMillan Jr.	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: At DaBella, we work with homeowners to provide outstanding service and premium products for roofing, siding, windows and bath replacement systems. In our first meeting with homeowners, our customer representatives go over in detail how the home improvement process will work. The customer is also assigned a project manager who reaches out to them and provides them a direct line of contact. We also have a full-time customer service department that our homeowners have access to. We are committed to keeping the customer informed and happy every step of the way and for years after their project is completed.</p>
<p>Davis Window and Door Norcross, Ga. daviswin.com</p> <p>99.16% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 96.97% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 337 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Mauricio Jaimes	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: 1) We use FARO 3D scanners to measure complex window or door shapes. Templates are always good so we deliver products right the first time, always. 2) We have developed advanced automation in our CRM: Automatic emails, dashboards and high visibility helps to see the big picture and drill into the details. Always live; always updated. 3) We have an experienced field technician that all he does is train people in the field and new employees. 4) Our installers have been with us an average of seven years, and they know the "Davis way."</p>



COMPANY	TYPE OF FIRM	CEO	RESPONSE
<p>DreamMaker Bath & Kitchens of Orland Park Orland Park, Ill. dreambkop.com</p> <p>98.31% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 12 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 Glen Borkowski and Denise Borkowski (not pictured)	<p>USING AND HANDLING RATINGS AND REVIEWS: We are proud to ask our customers for their reviews, starting with GuildQuality. We offer them a list of review sites at our first meeting and encourage them to check us out at all of the sites. We use our reviews from GuildQuality to share on Facebook and our website. Links to all reviews from GuildQuality, the Better Business Bureau, Houzz, Google and Yelp are responded to in a very timely manner, and we are proud to continue our efforts to make a customer a customer for life.</p>
<p>Eberle Remodeling Fair Oaks, Calif. eberleremodeling.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 20 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 Kent Eberle	<p>USING AND HANDLING RATINGS AND REVIEWS: We do not actively encourage reviews on social media. Most of our clients are inundated with requests to fill out surveys and are tired of responding to them. In addition, much of what is read in online reviews may be erroneous and misleading. However, there is no doubt social media reviews can be powerful and can cast the company in bad light. Responding quickly and thoughtfully to negative reviews is always the best policy. One bad review can tarnish years and years of hard work, so it's important to stay on top of them with prompt, honest and heartfelt responses.</p>
<p>Elor Energy San Diego, Calif. elorenergy.com</p> <p>98.26% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 99.34% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 2,800 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement + Energy-efficient Renovations	 Guy Motaey and Shimrit Motaey (not pictured)	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: Elor Energy has a research department that keeps us in check for our 98 percent customer satisfaction rating. We do not purchase any extra accessories, like caulking, stucco, nails, wood, etc., from a yard store. We only have high-quality materials to ensure the lifespan in our products. Elor is 110 percent committed to high-quality and great installation. We leave a strong warranty, backed up by the manufacturing company. Labor, material [and] manufacturer: "We do it right the first time."</p>
<p>Exterior Source Richmond, Va., and Chesapeake, Va. exteriorsourceva.com</p> <p>97.56% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 98.34% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 1,946 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Rod Renfrow	<p>USING AND HANDLING RATINGS AND REVIEWS: As a business in today's environment, you should assume that your potential customers will check you out online. This includes customer comments and recommendations. Because we realize how important customer recommendations are, we ask our customers if they would mind taking a few minutes to rate us—whether it's on Facebook or Google. We ask this during our installation follow-up call from our office. In addition, anytime that we get positive comments by phone, we ask that customer if he/she would post on our Google pages.</p>
<p>Fick Bros Roofing & Exterior Remodeling Co. Baltimore, Md. fickbros.com</p> <p>96.21% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 97.98% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 100 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Patrick Fick	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: We have "total quality management" meetings once a month. At these meetings, we review the profitability of every job. We discuss what went right, what went wrong and how we can prevent repeating those mistakes.</p>

COMPANY	TYPE OF FIRM	CEO	RESPONSE
<p>Gravina's Window Center of Littleton Littleton, Colo. windowsforyourhome.com</p> <p>96.24% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 97.73% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 600 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Jim Gravina	<p>USING AND HANDLING RATINGS AND REVIEWS: We send out customer surveys all the time, and they let us know what we did right and what we can do better. We also ask them to review us anywhere they choose if they can. Good or bad, feedback is of utmost importance because not every home and job are the same. No matter how long we have been in business we can always learn something new. The best place to learn is from our customers and reviews.</p>
<p>Hamtil Construction LLC St. Louis, Mo. hamtilconstruction.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 33 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler	 Paul Hamtil and David Hamtil	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: Our company invests a lot of time in preconstruction planning. A well-executed job handoff from sales to production is the start to a successful project. We discuss everything from design details to communication to housekeeping and use checklists and apps to capture information for use team-wide. Having good planning and setting client expectations well helps us to avoid issues. Inevitably, problems do come up from time to time. Our in-house team training includes role playing, discussing conflict resolution, reviewing lessons learned from issues we encounter, and reviewing our internal procedures for how to respond to problems.</p>
<p>HC Remodel & Design Omaha, Neb. hcremodel.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 22 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 Gary Haldeman	<p>USING AND HANDLING RATINGS AND REVIEWS: At the final walk-through, we always tell clients to expect to hear from GuildQuality and that reviews are very important to our business. We ask our clients to help us by leaving reviews on other websites as well. Clients do get busy, so one way we have utilized to receive more reviews is a short email sent a few months after the initial GuildQuality survey is filled out. We ask our clients to please consider leaving a review on Google or Houzz. We take an extra step of copying and pasting their GuildQuality review into the email to remind them what they said about their experience a few months before.</p>
<p>HIVEX Basement Finishing Co. Fredericksburg, Va. hivexbasements.com</p> <p>98.77% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 98.82% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 85 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Christopher McNally and Lena McNally	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: To ensure workmanship is top-notch, we train our crews to be the best at their specific trade and also have knowledge of the overall construction of basements so they can support each other. This results in our crews holding themselves and each other accountable to our high standard. If a crew member notices something that needs to be improved from a previous phase, they will be sure to correct it or let someone know what needs to be done. Conveying the quality of our work to our clients really comes from the initial conversation, which sets expectations about the basement finishing process. By letting them know phase-by-phase what to expect, it allows them to see past the construction and stay excited for the final product.</p>
<p>HMC Builders Seneca, S.C. hmcbuilders.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 275 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler + Home Improvement/Replacement	 Adam Jones	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: We guarantee everything we do—if we touch it, we own it. This can cause the occasional headache, but it enables our clients to trust that no matter what we will execute the project. If the project manager or company owner visits a jobsite and finds something done incorrectly, we have the same employees who incorrectly completed the project correct it. We have a zero-tolerance policy for sub-standard work. Anything not meeting our standards is removed and redone, regardless of cost or time involved. We find this is a learning opportunity for employees and also reinforces our expectations to have projects meet our standards.</p>

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<p>Hubbard Roofing & Exteriors, Inc. Calgary, Alberta, Canada hubbardexteriors.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 800 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	<p>Full-service Remodeler + Home Improvement/Replacement</p>	 <p>Sarah Hubbard and Kelly Bryden</p>	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: We are very transparent with our quotes and have no hidden or additional costs. The quote you receive is the total the customer will pay at completion. If a problem occurs, the customer's original point of contact (sales team) will work with the homeowner, and our employees are not engaged.</p>
<p>Hullco Chattanooga, Tenn., & Knoxville, Tenn. callhullco.com</p> <p>96.51% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 96.46% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 926 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	<p>Design/Build + Full-service Remodeler + Home Improvement/Replacement</p>	 <p>W. Matthew Hullander</p>	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: We believe that doing the job right far outweighs just doing the job. We take whatever steps necessary to ensure that the job is done correctly, and will go back until we are certain it is and the customer is satisfied. Our culture throughout Hullco ensures this. We make sure to ask a lot of questions and hire the best employees.</p>
<p>Jabs Construction Inc. Dumfries, Va. jabsinc.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 213 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	<p>Design/Build + Full-service Remodeler</p>	 <p>Christopher Jabs and Timothy Jabs</p>	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: We are a company with over 40 years in business. The craftsmanship learned by all our employees comes from the highest quality of work that goes back a total of four generations in our family. Our experience in the area where we work and our Class A license gives our clients the assurance that our work is top-notch.</p>
<p>Johnson County Siding & Window Co., Inc. Olathe, Kan. jocosiding.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 125 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	<p>Home Improvement/Replacement</p>	 <p>Bill Christie and Teresa Christie</p>	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: Our company operates on the belief that communication within our organization and with our clients is the foundation of our success. We begin with a very detailed scope of work so the homeowner knows what work will be done and exactly what products will be installed. Taking these extra steps to include details in the written scope of work helps to eliminate misunderstandings and assure the client their expectations will be met. We train our employees to pay close attention to detail, ask clarifying questions and be active listeners. If an unexpected problem occurs, we quickly and honestly inform the customer, take ownership for any error and explain how the problem will be resolved.</p>
<p>K Squared Builders, Inc. Keymar, Md. ksquaredbuilders.com</p> <p>99.31% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 19 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	<p>Design/Build + Full-service Remodeler</p>	 <p>Dale Kramer</p>	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: We take our motto, "The way you want it," to heart. We look at "industry standards" at best as a general description and believe our workmanship is well beyond it. If work is not done right, it will be redone properly. If it is right but perhaps a client doesn't understand what is acceptable, we will meet with them to educate and explain. For example, we recently had a client who did not understand that vinyl siding/trim is made to expand and contract and some gaps are necessary to allow this movement.</p>

COMPANY	TYPE OF FIRM	CEO	RESPONSE
<p>Karin Ross Designs Lee's Summit, Mo. karinrossdesigns.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 60 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build + Full-service Remodeler	 Karin Ross	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: Preparation is everything. From early stage of the process, client goes through a "class" with us of what to expect and how to handle it emotionally. So if a problem occurs, the client is prepared to start with, which makes things so much easier. Any employees we have are trained to stay calm and refer the client immediately to the owner. Karin is available right away to make sure she addresses the problem and has a solution.</p>
<p>KLAM Construction Clackamas, Ore. klamconstruction.net</p> <p>99.44% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 98.78% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 366 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Abel Serrano	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: We maintain good communication with our customers and quickly address any issues that arise. Beginning with the initial phone call, we make it a point to communicate clearly to our customers what to expect and to answer their questions to their satisfaction. Each member of our team understands that providing excellent customer satisfaction is a priority, and they know how important their role is in making sure our customers are taken care of. When an issue does occur, we apply the guidelines of common sense, honesty and respect to quickly find a remedy.</p>
<p>Kliethermes Home & Remodeling, Inc. Columbia, Mo. kliethermes.com</p> <p>96.67% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 95.83% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 50 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 Cale Kliethermes	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: Reputation is the starting point for our company. We have been in business for over 42 years. To ensure work of the highest quality, each client has a team consisting of a project coordinator, designer and project manager. Each team member is responsible for educating and guiding the client through the remodel experience. During construction, the client and project manager meet weekly. At each phase of the project, a checklist is completed with the client before moving onto the next phase. Our staff and trades are trained that if you think it is good enough it isn't, and what we do when no one is looking is more important than what you do in front of an audience.</p>
<p>Kotch's Windows N More Howell, Mich. kotchs.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 103 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Michael Kotch	<p>USING AND HANDLING RATINGS AND REVIEWS: We use those reviews from those sources on our website. We print them and place them in the hands of our potential customers.</p>
<p>Lakeside Exteriors, Inc. Chesterfield, Mo. lakesideexteriors.com</p> <p>95.88% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 87 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build + Full-service Remodeler + Home Improvement/Replacement	 Matt Merrifield and Dan Merrifield	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: All our jobs go through a preconstruction meeting, consisting of the homeowners, the design rep and the production manager. We discuss the job right after the sale to make sure the homeowner is comfortable [with] how we will proceed. We discuss where the material will be located as well as the dumpster and jobsite trailer. This meeting helps our communication as we prep for production.</p>

COMPANY	TYPE OF FIRM	CEO	RESPONSE
<p>Landis Architects/Builders Washington, D.C. landisconstruction.com</p> <p>94.71% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 97.22% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 96 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 <p>Chris Landis and Ethan Landis</p>	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: We have thorough processes and checklists in place that help us avoid missing critical information. Our team members also constantly communicate with each other and with the client. We also use Buildertrend, a cloud-based software, to keep the client updated with project photos and schedules. We tell clients there will be glitches during the renovation process, and it's our response to these glitches that shows our level of service. When we bring issues to the attention of the client, we try to present them with solutions and options at the same time.</p>
<p>McBride Construction Inc. Petoskey, Mich. mcbrideconstructioninc.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 69 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler	 <p>David McBride</p>	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: We hire quality carpenters who enjoy their work and take pride in the customer projects they do every day. We have the "McBride Way" that holds our carpenters and sub-trades to a higher standard to ensure our customers receive the best job possible every time. Our production manager meets with our lead carpenters twice per week and also calls them daily to make sure the project is going well and quality is maintained.</p>
<p>Modern Exterior Solutions Bellevue, Wash. modernexteriorsolutions.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 35 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler + Home Improvement/Replacement	 <p>Arbri Allaraj</p>	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: Before the start of a new project, I ensure all planning has been completed. I order all the necessary materials and ensure that delivery will be on time and appropriate quantities. I inform all my employees of the time that they're supposed to be on the jobsite as well as what is expected of the project. In the case a problem arises—such as when a customer is upset about something to do with the project—I let the customer talk and make sure I understand them, then I do my best to resolve the problem as efficiently as possible.</p>
<p>Mr. Roofing, Inc. South San Francisco, Calif. mrrroofing.net</p> <p>98.69% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 98.15% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 200 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 <p>Carlos Rodriguez</p>	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: All our production professionals are certified by the major manufacturers in the roofing and solar industry. We also have them complete NRCA and WSRCS training. This helps us install our systems correctly and meet the technical requirements for the long-term warranties by each manufacturer. We also have project managers follow a preconstruction meeting, a zero defects checklist per system we install, and a final walkthrough to ensure our client's complete satisfaction. Most of our projects are inspected by the manufacturers when we register the long-term warranties. All of our projects are inspected by the city or town's building department in which we are working. We perform safety tailgate sessions and bi-weekly safety meetings to help our production teammates work in a safe and healthy workplace and worksite. This helps us perform our work to the highest standards.</p>
<p>North Georgia Replacement Window, Inc. Roswell, Ga. ngwindows.com</p> <p>97.95% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 97.16% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 800 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 <p>Ted Kirk and Jonathan Collum</p>	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: Quality of workmanship is often in the details of the job. North Georgia Replacement invests every year in training our installers and improving our processes. We work with the best product and material providers and building scientist in the country to make sure we are using the most advanced procedures and materials available. We encourage our prospective customers to actually visit jobs—completed or ongoing—in their area and compare this to any company in our market. If this happens, we know we'll win nine out of 10 jobs.</p>

COMPANY	TYPE OF FIRM	CEO	RESPONSE
<p>Northern Lights Exteriors Denver, Colo. northernlightsexteriors.com</p> <p>95.24% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 97.06% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 400 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler + Home Improvement/Replacement	 James Hooven	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: Northern Lights Exteriors will do a preconstruction walk with all customers prior to job start date. During that meeting, our project manager, production manager, crew leader and homeowner all meet on-site to review the entire scope of work. All questions are answered at that time to make sure everyone understands what work will be done and even what unforeseen may come up. We ensure our production manager and crew leaders speak fluent Spanish so nothing is lost in translation between Northern Lights Exteriors' team and crew. We also send out communication prior to [project] start, letting the client know to call the production manager, project manager or office if any questions come up while the crew is on site.</p>
<p>Paragon Construction Company LLC Midlothian, Va. paragonrva.com</p> <p>98.36% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 69 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler	 Jeremy Shank	<p>USING AND HANDLING RATINGS AND REVIEWS: We are working on better utilizing the high reviews we received from GuildQuality on social media. Currently, we have created an in-house, two-sided brochure that has our reviews and scores on one side and a description of GuildQuality on the other. This brochure is used as part of our sales process. During all initial appointments, our customer adviser shows the brochure's front side to customers and uses the reviews as a selling tool. At the final warranty walkthrough, the customer adviser will pull out the same brochure, review what GuildQuality is and our scores, then explain how the customer can expect to be contacted. It has been a good tool for us and seems to be working.</p>
<p>Pathway Design & Construction Seattle, Wash. pathwaydc.com</p> <p>99.08% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 22 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build + Full-service Remodeler	 Paul Kocharhook	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: We took several measures to ensure consistency with our quality of work and our trade partners; we created a subcontractor agreement and Pathway standard product specifications. The subcontractor agreement is a written agreement between Pathway and the subcontractor about job expectations. The Pathway standard product specifications are a list that outlines our approved products to use on our jobsites. Because our core service is healthy home remodeling, we create highly functional living spaces through smart design and eco-friendly, healthy and energy-efficient products and practices. Our health focus extends to care and management in our building practices too, especially air quality—a critical element as most of our clients live on-site through construction. So our methods, procedures and practices are different, and we expect our trade partners to follow them as our extended Pathway family.</p>
<p>Patriot Roofing LLC Gig Harbor, Wash. patriotroofing.biz</p> <p>97.08% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 97.48% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 250 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Stephen Campbell	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: To ensure quality standards are met on each job, we spend approximately 120 hours per year, per employee in training classes put on by industry experts as well as in-house training. We also have our in-house quality control manager inspect and grade every project so we can keep a running total (posted for all to see) for each crew on how they are performing. This immediate feedback helps them to improve their quality of work, and it also allows for healthy competition among the crews.</p>
<p>Philbin Construction & Remodeling Co. Mokena, Ill. remodelwithus.net</p> <p>98.31% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 31 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler	 Matt Philbin	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: By design, all of our contracts and other signed documents are very clear and detailed. We want the client to have a thorough understanding of what each project includes and (in some cases) what it does not include prior to their commitment and prior to the start of work. Once the project begins, clients are constantly updated by field employees as well as project managers as to what is being done that day and the next. We feel that keeping communication open and being transparent with our clients helps avoid these situations in the overwhelming majority of our projects.</p>

COMPANY	TYPE OF FIRM	CEO	RESPONSE
<p>Quality Cut Design Remodel Minneapolis, Minn. qualitycut.net</p> <p>95.35% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 25 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 Kent Tsui, CR, CRPM	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: We try and complete as much of the work within our own company so we can control as much as possible. And the subcontractors we do use we have a very long relationship with them, so they are almost just an extension of our company.</p>
<p>Quillen Bros Inc. Bryan, Ohio quillenbrosinc.com</p> <p>93.74% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 94.8% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 409 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 Robert Quillen	<p>USING AND HANDLING RATINGS AND REVIEWS: Two to seven days after the installation, we schedule an appointment with the customer to have our company ambassador show up. He delivers them a small gift, takes pictures of the customer for social media purposes, and we ask for reviews while we are there.</p>
<p>Re-Bath of The Triad/Triangle/Wilmington/Myrtle Beach Greensboro, N.C. triadrebath.com trianglerebath.com wilmingtonrebath.com</p> <p>94.89% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 94.84% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 974 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Bath Specialist	 Tim Koehler	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: Every employee who touches a customer's job has a system in place to double check that we ordered the materials correctly and that we received the materials as ordered. We put a second set of eyes on every order. Also the installation instructions are scrutinized before the job is released. If we do have a problem arise, our team knows that communication is paramount—communication with the customer as well as internal communication. Our team understands urgency, and we make the seemingly impossible possible.</p>
<p>Renovations Prescott, Ariz. renovationsaz.com</p> <p>97.3% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 38 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 Tom Reilly	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: Our handoff from sales and design to production is detailed, and all three must sign off on subcontracts' work scope as well as a review of the project with sales, design (sometimes the same person), production manager/estimator [and] lead carpenter. By all parties having the same knowledge, many problems are avoided. When an issue does develop in the course of work, the lead carpenter is our first line of engagement. Then if necessary, that will move up the ladder. Generally, we have two rules: First, the customer is always right. Second, when the customer is wrong, see rule No. 1.</p>
<p>RJ Turner Remodeling, LLC Winston Salem, N.C. turner-remodeling.com</p> <p>97.87% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 250 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Full-service Remodeler	 Richard Turner	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: Problems seem to occur most often when customers are not completely informed of what is exactly covered in their contract. We have learned to go through great lengths now to clearly explain to the customers what items are covered and what items are not. If this is done before any work is started, then most projects go a lot smoother and we have satisfied customers.</p>

COMPANY	TYPE OF FIRM	CEO	RESPONSE
<p>Ronald L Dimon Construction Co., Inc. Manlius, N.Y. dimonconstruction.com</p> <p>99.08% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 61 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build	 <p>Ronald Dimon and Peter Dimon</p>	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: Quality workmanship is something that Dimon Construction is known for. We are very appreciative of our men because they take pride in the work that they do. Our customers are assured that their project, big or small, will be completed in the proper way—the way it should be done.</p>
<p>RPS Remodeling Lincoln, Calif. goforrps.com sacramentosiding.com eastbaysiding.com northbaysiding.com</p> <p>100% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 92 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 <p>Rick James</p>	<p>DELIVERING QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: All of our crews receive continual training to ensure that we adhere to best practices. We (ownership) are present on the job throughout the duration of the job. Communication is key, and it is an area that we are constantly trying to improve on. We encourage our clients to check out our GuildQuality surveys from our past customers. We will also provide our potential clients with local jobs they can go to see the quality of workmanship and to speak with our previous customers regarding their experience in working with RPS.</p>
<p>Van Metre Design Build Ashburn, Va. vanmetredesignbuild.com</p> <p>96.3% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 23 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Design/Build + Full-service Remodeler + Custom Home Builder	 <p>Brian Davidson</p>	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: We minimize issues that arise by setting the proper expectations for our clients and continually working to exceed those expectations. We spend a large portion of every project in the design and planning stages, so that once construction begins we have a very clear critical path to finishing the project on time and on budget. Every job comes with some hurdles so when issues come up, big or small, we proactively work as a team to adapt and overcome.</p>
<p>VanWeelden Co. Des Moines, Iowa bradvanweelden.com</p> <p>99.57% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 100% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 100 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 <p>Brad VanWeelden</p>	<p>APPROACH TO PROBLEM RESOLUTION: We try to emphasize that the customer is always right. If something unexpected happens or we make a mistake, we need to resolve the issue immediately. If these things aren't handled quickly, they can set a bad tone for the duration of the whole project. GuildQuality helps us evaluate and eliminate some of these possible problems that we may not have realized even existed.</p>
<p>Windows USA, LLC Royal, Ark. windowsusa.com</p> <p>98.14% GQ All-time Recommend Rate 98.14% GQ 2018 Recommend Rate 8,155 Number of Jobs in 2018</p>	Home Improvement/Replacement	 <p>Mike Allbritton</p>	<p>USING AND HANDLING RATINGS AND REVIEWS: We respond to customer reviews individually and personally. We begin by saying thank you; this allows us to show customers we appreciate and value their patronage and candid feedback. If the review is negative, we apologize and empathize. People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care. We are firm believers in owning our mistakes, we certainly endeavor to take responsibility without fail, [and] we most assuredly do not make excuses. Most importantly, we correct the issue to the customer's satisfaction, then ask they remove the negative online review or post a follow up concerning the resolution. If there's nothing that can remedy the circumstance, we will go to great lengths to respond to the reviewer, take ownership and promise to correct the problem so it does not affect other homeowners in the future.</p>



Thin Is In

Laminate and hard-surface manufacturers offer looks and edge profiles consistent with the trend toward slim surfaces.

by Patrick O'Toole

INTERZUM is the biennial global cabinet (furniture) and hardware trade show held in Cologne, Germany. It is a forum for new trends in kitchens and baths. Similar to the EuroCucina show in Milan, the coming trends are typically on display there 12- to 24-months prior to their appearance in the United States.

The predominant theme at Interzum for the past few years has been on space-saving and efficiency. How do you take a small space and make the best use of it? Better yet, how can a small space function as a kitchen and quickly convert back to living space?

Advancements in hardware are making these trends possible. Throughout the show this year, which was held at the end of May, exhibitors such



FORMICA's Living Impressions line includes new stone and wood looks. Neopolitan Stone is shown on the island (opposite page). A bold black and white-veined marble pattern, Nero Marquina, creates a high-end look in a monolithic wrapped island (top far left). Below left, a square-edged White Knotty Maple. The line also includes two specialty patterns. The vanity (near top) uses recycled laminate pieces to achieve a quartz look. Middle is a surface made of reclaimed denim. Near bottom is a more subtle and neutral stone called Pietra Grafite.

Circle 4 on inquiry card

as Blum, Hettich, Salice and others demonstrated how it is possible now to move very large cabinet doors with finger-touch ease. One minute you see an 8- by 8-foot decorative wall, and the next minute, doors open up and you have access to a functioning kitchen.

The trend began with space-saving and efficiency, but it has increasingly become about modern design—toward large, unadorned accent walls in larger rooms elegantly masking hidden storage and kitchen cooking and food-prep surfaces.

And while much of the innovation at Interzum centers on new hardware, little of it would be possible without the new, thinner and sleeker doors and surfaces.

“It’s very unusual to see one trend take an entire industry by storm, but that is the case with thinner

profiles,” says Brooke Mays, a designer with surfacing manufacturer Wilsonart. “Thinner countertops have been popular in Europe for the past few years. They are trending in residential kitchens everywhere because they are more modern and perfectly complement today’s thinner cabinet profiles.”

Mays made those comments to help kick off a new major product line from the company, Thinscape Performance Tops. It is a line of 12 hard-surface countertops that offer large-format marbles, stones, woods, and even a rugged steel look in a material that can be routed and customized by most fabricators throughout its core.

The launch of Thinscape also shows how surfacing companies like Wilsonart are blending lines across categories like never before. The company manufactures quartz, solid surface and laminate

surfaces for the residential and commercial design markets. Thinscape is a hard-surface product that highlights new ways the trend toward thin can be achieved.

The trend toward thin is also benefiting the laminate category. Laminates include natural wood veneers and metals. These tend to be high-end, designer-only oriented solutions offered at very expensive price points. Here we speak of plastic impregnated paper or high-pressure laminates (HPL). This is the segment led by some well-known



VT INDUSTRIES offers a number of on-trend stone patterns with pencil-thin, double-rolled profiles. At top is shown a Soapstone Sequoia pattern that is consistent with a color trend toward a gray and beige pairing, "greige." Thin black laminate countertops in a white kitchen (bottom photo) are VT's Jet Sequoia stone pattern.

Circle 5 on inquiry card

brands such as Formica, VT Industries and Wilsonart. But there are others: Abet Laminati and Arborite.

In the 1950s, '60s and '70s, Formica drove a HPL countertop trend in North America. There are many among us who grew up with Formica all around the kitchen, but mainly on the countertop. Then, in the '80s and '90s, natural stone, wood, tile and other materials gained popularity for countertops.

During this period, HPL was relegated to lower price points only. Its perception as a category was marred by unnatural seams and dark edges that were inconsistent with the patterns and colors of the surfaces. For example, even the most authentic marble or wood-patterned surface in HPL is often detracted from by multiple seams and dark edges.

New formulations in HPL have eliminated the seams and the ugly edges. Most laminates today have solid color throughout. And innovations in fabricating laminate countertops have seen the rise of several new edge profiles. Those include innovated rolled edges and pencil-thin turns.

Perhaps most importantly, over the last decade, designers, remodelers and homeowners have come around to appreciate the bold looks offered by new laminate colors and patterns.

Today, it is not uncommon to see bright, mid-century patterns used in high-end kitchen and bath jobs where a retro look is desired. Indeed, the focus in 2019 among laminate manufacturers and fabricators is on offering new emerging colors, patterns and finishes that are highly relevant in the movement toward thinner countertop profiles as well as everywhere else in kitchens, baths, mudrooms or laundry areas.

And because the trend toward thin begins with stone and porcelain surfaces, the new offerings tend to be photo-realistic marble, granite and quartz laminates. In addition, a number of wood species along with new slightly embossed finishes are also making debuts this year.

Living Impressions 2019 from Formica

Four years ago at KBIS, Formica made a splash by partnering with celebrated interior designer Jonathan Adler. He had written a book, "100 Ways to Your Happy Chic Life," and in it he touted how laminate surfaces offered a great look. Adler, an early advocate for the resurgence of the midcentury style in interiors, offered nine laminate designs for Formica in 2015 and four more in 2016.

This year, the company made an even bigger statement at the show with the introduction of its 2019 Living Impressions line, which offers a range of stone and natural wood finishes that are in high demand by designers. Stone and wood also complement the trend toward thinner, sleeker materials.



“The patterns in our 2019 Living Impressions Collection all have a story behind them,” says Gerri Chmiel, residential design lead for Formica. “The designs are a symbol of their place of origin, but they also will become a focal point for homeowners to create stories and memories around them.”

Six new laminate patterns utilize the company’s true-to-scale scanning technology, 180fx, which limits pattern repetition across large expanses of exotic granites, stones and wood grains. They are:

Nero Marquina: A black marble originally from the region of Markina in the north of Spain, it is a fine black marble with crisp white veining. **Neapolitan Stone:** It features the highest color variation of any granite—whites, beiges, blues and warm grays. **Pietra Grafite:** A soft gray with white veining that is clean with plenty of movement. **Istanbul Marble:** A Turkish marble pattern with sharp, sweeping movement blending light and dark with flashes of rusty gold. **White Knotty Maple:** A rustic take on the popular woodgrain, its natural and raw look has authentic visual imperfections. **Smoky Planked Walnut:** Emulating “shou sugi ban” (burning wood to waterproof it), charred, wire-brushed woodgrain reveals a distinct, luxe color.

Darker colors are frequently seen in the thinner materials. To that end, Formica’s new collection of laminates also includes three series of colors: the Onyx Series, the Marmara Series and the Oak Series.

The entire collection comes in two new finishes and two new edge options. **SatinTouch** and **Pure Grain**, a finish that adds dimension and depth to wood patterns. The edge options are **Waterfall**, a true and even curved edge, and **Double Radius**, a balanced curved edge.

And in a significant nod toward the thin trend, Formica announced that it is now offering its **Ogee** and **Bullnose** profiles in a 1.5-inch profile.

“The visual language of laminates is becoming accepted again. And there’s a couple reasons for this,” says Renee Hytry Derrington, global design lead for Formica. “When I started in the industry, people were talking about their grandma’s kitchen being laminate. So everybody ran to real stone. That generation has changed. Now the younger generation is coming up and they have no affinity for or against laminate or grandma’s kitchen. They’re actually really excited about the material because all of their parents had all granite.”

WILSONART’s Thinscape was a major product launch for the company this spring. The large photo (top) shows the Spanish Limestone paired with a wood-laminate island. From top right to lower right are three Thinscape patterns and a new laminate: **Rugged Steel** (top), **Italian Carara** (middle) and **Sterling Calcutta** (bottom). Bottom left is a Wilsonart laminate, a Greek region pattern, called **Drama Marble**.

Circle 6 on inquiry card



ARBORITE enhances its Maison Collection of laminates in 2019 with a number of introductions. Among them is Terrazzo Grande, shown above, in two different edge profiles. **Circle 7 on inquiry card**

Secondly, you have a new, younger consumer that’s coming up, and they also are not tied to traditional styles. They want contemporary styling. And that’s where you are seeing sleeker lines, lots of finishes, bold color—younger people are willing to experiment. And the beauty of our laminate program is that we have the ability to ship one sheet or 10,000 sheets tomorrow.”

Arborite Maison Residential

Arborite, which is a Montreal-based subsidiary of Wilsonart, offers a range of high-pressure laminate countertop solutions across the U.S. Its focus is on offering high-design looks to its network of fabricators, interior designers and remodelers.

The designs in Arborite’s 2019 expansion of the Maison Residential Collection are sleek, modern and fit well with the European trends shown at EuroCucina and Interzum.

“The kitchen remains the heart of the home, but roles and rituals have shifted to align with contemporary lifestyles,” says Terry Gentile, marketing and design director for Arborite. “It’s evolved into a showplace for entertaining, a space to connect with family and a headquarters for household management.”

According to Gentile, the new Maison collection includes two series. Panorama uses full-scale scans capture the unique imperfections and veining of true stone, while Welcome Home is a neutral palette that emulates composite stone.

Arborite has six new patterns in Panorama. Terrazzo Grande features a rustic farmhouse style. Nuvolato Marble includes veining softened by blending neutral color tones. Dreamcatcher offers a Scandinavian design with an organic look that is striated like tree bark. Carrara Venato is a warm marble featuring veins of silver and volcanic glass. Baroque Soapstone is a soapstone without the tendency to scratch or stain. Versailles Marble is designed as a unifying element with glimmering veins of white and gold over gray undertone. The Welcome Home series now includes Monolith, a stone pattern.

According to Gentile, the overarching aim of the new patterns and colors is to complement and improve the look of older cabinets.

“A designer’s clients may have older cherry colors that are very intense and orange or mahogany with purple undertones. When that happens, laminate almost needs to be a chameleon and needs to



be able to toggle back and forth between some of the new color stories we're seeing and some of the other older color stories that are already existing in the consumer's home," Gentile says. "We really wanted to be mindful with our new colors, whether you are using a '90s inspired cherry cabinet color or maple or something with light wood grain, that each of our designs are well balanced to make sure they can accommodate both warm and cool color tones. Lighter color marbles in particular take on a blue tint when paired with some of the darker colors. We wanted to avoid those types of issues."

Rounding Out the Edges

Thin profile countertops rely heavily on edging with pencil-thin seams and tight turns. New materials like Wilsonart's Thinscape, a product that features consistent color all the way through, can be routed with edges that mimic porcelain tops. Laminates, however, because they are mounted on either plywood, MDF or particle board, require tightly rolled edge profiles along with very tight seams to successfully achieve the thin style.

VT Industries' Dimensions Collection of laminates comes with several very popular edge profiles. The Ora is a very tight turning, pencil-wrap edge that is very similar in look to thin granite and porcelain countertops. The Afton edge is a double-turn edge that is reminiscent of a classic granite, fluted edge. In all, the company offers 12 edge profiles that fit any number of today's sleeker modern kitchen styles, says Angela George, VT's marketing communications manager.

"It is an understatement to say that laminates have come a long way in the past 10 to 15 years," George notes. "Edge options are a critical part of elevating the countertop surface. Right now VT's Ora edge profile is most popular. Also known as a pencil edge, the tight radius on top and bottom help achieve a realistic slab appearance."



Hartson-Kennedy Cabinet Top Co. is another laminate supplier focused on delivering the thin look in countertops, says Kristen De Uriarte Kennedy, a fourth-generation member of the family that founded the firm. Hartson-Kennedy offers a number of edge profiles to match the latest thin stone and wood looks that are now trending in countertops. The Caspian profile offers a pencil-thin, tight radius edge.

It also has some more traditional stone profiles, including: Amore gives a classic edge to kitchen or bath. The Vida profile offers a sculpted style, which finishes in a uncurving bottom edge. This effect gives the Vida profile a more substantial appearance, further emulating the look of stone. The Aegean is a sleek, eased-edge without the black line common to many laminate countertops. The Dura-Top is a contemporary design featuring self-edge front and cove self-edge backsplash. The Ultra-Top Waterfall offers a 1.5-inch front nose along with the 3/4-inch radius.

"I think the biggest thing right now is that just in the last 10 years, but even a little bit before then, so many of the laminate companies were doing a great job to make so many realistic colors to achieve natural stone looks. It can be natural stone such as marble and granite and range to quartz. They are so similar that sometimes you can mistake it for the real thing," De Uriarte Kennedy notes. "So we are doing our part to make edge profiles that add to the look of real stone, with those pencil-thin profiles that you see on HGTV and in other places today." **QR**

HARTSON-KENNEDY CABINET TOP CO. focuses on delivering thinner edge options to meet current trends. The above kitchen shows an on-trend mix of wood and stone. Left is a view of the company's Caspian edge, a pencil-thin, tight-radius roll. **Circle 8** on inquiry card

Customer-Satisfaction Selling

Presenting your product or service in a manner that meets the needs of your customers.

by Dave Yoho

THIS is not a new, earth-shattering concept. It is based on well-established factual research. All of which was developed by constantly surveying customers' buying habits, then examining why they do or don't do business.

The concepts of using customer-satisfaction selling can be described as a problem-solving discussion between the contractor-salesperson and the prospect that leads toward a meeting of the minds, which deepens the dependence of each on the other.

The contractor-salesperson's goal should be to elicit information, which unearths values and needs that might not have been otherwise expressed clearly, enabling the salesperson to appear collaborative, effectively establishing mutual trust.

You may think you do what that last paragraph describes, which then begs the question: Why is it that so often you perceive the customer did not accept your proposal?

- Your price was too high?
- They wanted to think it over?
- They wanted to discuss it (get an opinion) via a third party?
- They were going to settle for lesser quality?

This perception is then fueled by misinterpreting customers' statements, which leads to misinformation regarding customers' buying habits—all the while failing to uncover real needs and values. Then being sidetracked by spending too much time talking about yourself, the status of your company, the quality of your work and how much customers love you—all the while spending too little time asking questions and listening for answers.

Customer satisfaction can be better understood when viewing a lengthy and ongoing study, which includes surveys, wherein thousands of customers were interviewed in an ongoing effort to determine what the thinking and feeling was of those who interacted with people attempting to sell them or

convince them to do business. The study concludes that prospects most frequently purchased products and services based on their perceptions. Here are a few examples:

- The credibility of the contractor making the presentation. How was the information perceived?
- The degree of *rapport* between the contractor-salesperson and the customer. (*Note: Rapport is a state of mind that begins with feelings. Rapport is most easily developed in the early stages of contact.*) It is usually based on the contractor-salesperson having an understanding of how prospects think and feel.
 - Prospects like people who listen to them.
 - They like people who respond to and appear to endorse their values.
 - They like people who work at uncovering their needs, which they don't reveal initially.

Despite the well-intended efforts of the contractor-salesperson, it is almost impossible, unless needs are uncovered, to understand the customer's value system. These are not easily detected but can be made visible while inspecting the project and developing a needs assessment—uncovered with a system of questions, then exploring the answers.

A customer-satisfaction oriented contractor-salesperson understands that in the home improvement/remodeling industry—where a contract can range from a few thousand dollars to upwards of \$50,000—the customer *needs* a thorough project inspection plus the opportunity to discuss their perceived needs, their goals and perception of the outcome (clearly defined). Only then can a presentation and proposal be objectively evaluated.

There is probably no greater piece of *misinformation* that has been foisted on those who represent the home improvement industry than the following:

The customer should be given the price as promptly as possible. They perceive too much talking or the use of a printed or electronic

presentation as show and tell. It simply doesn't work with today's homeowners. (*Not true.*)

Often, those who represent home improvement/remodeling companies are deluded or simply misunderstand the selling process, frequently assessing it as "hard sell," "manipulation," "high pressure," "chicanery" or worse. This often relates to the various ways in which many companies create their customer communication methods (which they describe as selling) in an effort to promote the sales of their products and services.

This often leads to a dissatisfied customer; however, this need not be the outcome if properly executed. It is true that *many contractors-salespeople talk too much—and listen too little*. They don't ask the questions, which when answered lead to unearthing needs not otherwise expressed. Here is an example of how the communication process can produce positive outcomes. First, think of the word *ACID*, to remember four words: A – Arouse, C – Cultivate, I – Information and D – Determine.

If you *arouse* your customers sufficiently, then you can *cultivate* their interest. They will in turn provide you with *information* that will aid you in *determining* their actual needs (versus wants) and clues to their value system—which in turn will guide you in understanding how to deal with them.

Unfortunately, most contractors-salespeople reverse the *ACID* process. Early on in conversations with the prospect, they make a *determination* about the prospect's goals and values. Something as simple as the prospect saying, "We're looking for the best price," or "We're getting several prices, sharpen your pencil," can lead that prospect to being mislabeled as a price buyer, to satisfy this customer, the salesperson will have to lower the price.

Without complete information, which can only be acquired by *cultivation* (processing), contractors-salespeople make the wrong *determination*. If that customer is not *aroused* to a level where rapport takes place, valuable information regarding "needs" and "values" is probably never received.

Too often, the contractor-salesperson is misled to believe that *price* is a major part of the decision-making process. This is often an "attitude issue." If a rep believes that the product or service is not equal to the price they quote, they are setting themselves up to miss many sales. This is also true if they do not respond to customers' misinformation, such as, "It's the same kind of a product but it costs less." In most cases, this statement is based on misinformation, not only on the part of the prospect but also on that of the contractor-salesperson, who doesn't know how to respond without appearing confrontational.

Our research and the reliable data, which the research provides, has caused us to draw the following conclusion, which is shared by most companies

that utilize modern communication/sales training.

"There is seldom a cold, rational, dispassionate buyer who buys solely on merit. They can be prompted and motivated to find products or services which appear to meet their needs better than other options."

In the normal process of buying, a customer will make a decision based on four factual issues.

1. *Gain*: How do I benefit and how does this product/service meet my needs better than others?
2. *Pride*: Will I enjoy this product/service? Will it make me feel more secure and comfortable?
3. *Fear*: What will happen in the event I decide to do nothing, or am I protecting my original investment (home, building, etc.)?
4. *Imitation*: Why many others with the same conditions or circumstances choose this method.

Customer-satisfaction selling causes you to recognize that a presentation—which is tailored to a prospect's needs, goals, values and feelings—is usually viewed favorably when the decision is made to "buy." That customer, when queried, seldom says, "Joe Smith from XYZ Company sold this to me," or "Despite my reluctance, I was sold." They will usually state, "I bought this from XYZ." The customer is claiming credit for the purchase. The indication is that during the presentation, his/her needs were uncovered; his/her value system was put on the table and responded to by the contractor-salesperson.

This final piece of research represents the summation of all we've said in this article—again, referring to the survey data we constantly receive. Prospects were asked to define what they *wanted* when speaking to the contractor-salesperson. When they were queried later as to what their *needs* were in terms of the particular product/service they were examining, they unconsciously revealed portions of their value system, which appear to be at odds with their originally stated *wants*.

The method by which to establish and use *customer-satisfaction selling* is based more on fulfilling their *needs*, rather than responding emotionally and verbally to their stated *wants*. In this form of sales methodology, *don't assume anything*. Whenever an issue is raised, respond with a question; listen, pause and perhaps raise another question, which may unearth more than the original question revealed. Try to remember the *L.Q.R.* principle. *Listen*, wait three or four seconds. *Question*, listen carefully. This may require another simple question to get clarity; then *Respond*.

Customer-satisfaction selling is the basis for most of our sales training. It works for large and small companies, and it has proven to be a great benefit for both new and veteran salespeople. Our website, daveyoho.com, contains abundant free information on this subject and many opportunities to receive free recordings and printed material. **QR**



Dave Yoho is the president of the oldest (since 1962), largest and the most successful small business consulting company specializing in the home improvement industry. His recorded materials are sold throughout the U.S. and many foreign countries. His company employs a staff of consulting experts who specialize in advising companies on how to become more profitable in their business. His company sponsors ongoing seminar programs. For more information on their products, consulting services or seminars visit daveyoho.com or contact admin@daveyoho.com.



Give Your Company a Promotion

by Scott Siegal

EVER HAVE SOMEONE walk in your office and say, “I think I deserve a promotion?”

Of course you have.

And because you have, you’re familiar with the conflicting feelings that gives rise to. You’re rattled because your schedule has been interrupted. You’re fearful that if you don’t make the right decision or respond positively that person will leave. You’re unsure whether your company can actually afford to pay this person more or whether he/she truly deserves to be promoted.

You tell yourself that you should’ve seen this coming. But few managers or owners ever see it coming.

This type of scenario doesn’t happen every day. And in a better world, it wouldn’t happen at all. What I mean by that is if a company is run well, people who might walk in asking for a raise and/or promotion would already know whether they deserved one. He or she wouldn’t need to ask, and you wouldn’t end up being blindsided in the middle of the day by a situation you neither welcome nor are prepared for.

Let’s Look at Performance

Contractors, of course, would much rather think about selling and installing jobs than hiring and promoting. But HR systems are key to building and maintaining the smoothly functioning organization that enables you to sell and install jobs without running into those roadblocks that can have you suddenly backed up for miles—such as someone abruptly leaving because he or she decided they weren’t making enough money or because their contributions were not recognized and rewarded.

You can avoid that unexpected request for a raise or promotion, for example, with performance reviews.

I know reviews aren’t fun, and no one looks forward to them. But if you regularly evaluate employee performance—say every quarter—then both you and your employees

know where they stand in relation to the organization.

Performance reviews are something we train for in the Business Planning Boot Camp. It’s essential to have them in place if you want to move your company forward. You need reviews, an organizational chart and job descriptions if you’re going to be able to fill specific jobs that need to be there as you grow.

Employee retention and growth feed into each other. If you’re not retaining employees, you’ll be doing a lot of hiring; and if you’re spending a lot of time hiring, you’re spending less time planning for growth.

TRACKING PERFORMANCE ALLOWS YOU TO PROMOTE FROM WITHIN ON A TIMELY AND AS-NEEDED BASIS.

Think of production, for instance: If your sales are \$3 million and you’re not growing, then you’re not adding more crews. Everybody stays stagnant, and there’s no room for No. 2 or No. 3 to move up to foreman, crew manager or production manager. There has to be more work to provide that opportunity.

And even if you are growing, promoting people inside your organization can never be a sure bet unless you’ve tracked performance. It doesn’t help to promote someone into a job that he or she can’t do.

Employee Retention and Growth

How much difference would having performance appraisals make?

Let’s say someone comes into the office, and he or she says they feel they’re entitled

to a raise, or they want a promotion. One look at that person’s recent evaluations and you can swiftly determine if a raise or promotion is merited. “I see you got a so-so review the last time out. Not a lot of ‘exceeds expectations.’ And now you want to run the department?” You’re making a decision not from emotion but on the basis of a factual record.

Job descriptions and your organizational chart help accomplish the same thing. Say your marketing manager leaves and an administrative employee comes into your office and says, “I want to be the marketing manager.” You can look at the marketing manager’s job description—that he or she put together and you finalized—to see whether that person meets the qualifications to be a marketing manager at your company.

With performance evaluations, job descriptions and an organizational chart, you have about zero chance of getting blindsided by someone who believes that he or she is entitled to more money or a better position.

You can also promote people with assurance. I believe in the merit system. You want to do whatever you can to keep the good people who are working for you. If someone has earned a promotion or a raise, it’s wise to find a way to give it to him or her well before they ask.

Do that and you win in two ways. First, you know they contribute, and here’s an opportunity for them to contribute yet more.

Second, everyone in the organization takes notice. They can see that there’s opportunity for them at some point. There are many ways to retain people but no better way than promoting someone who deserves it. And then announcing and celebrating that promotion. **QR**

Scott Siegal is the owner of Maggio Roofing in Washington, D.C., and also owns the Certified Contractors Network. You can learn more about CCN by going to the website contractors.net.

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Vince Nardo, President
Reborn Cabinets - Anaheim, CA

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Products



Lightweight, modular stone veneer system

INDIANA LIMESTONE COMPANY launches its LiteCore panel system to provide the look of natural stone in a lightweight, modular panelized system. Available in a variety of natural stones—including limestone, granite or marble—the pre-designed panels come in standard-sized units and do not require mortar or complex design layouts. The natural stone veneer is adhered to a high-performing aluminum honeycomb backing and fiberglass mesh, resulting in 1-in. panel thickness while weighing 80 percent less than solid dimensional stone panels.

Circle 9 on inquiry card



Low-profile patio door emphasizes performance

The next-generation Contemporary Collection Sliding Patio Door from **WEATHER SHIELD WINDOWS & DOORS** boasts larger sizes, advanced sill design, improved performance and ease of operation. With a 2.25-in.-thick door panel that helps its thermal and structural ratings, the patio door is available in maximum panel widths up to 5 ft. and heights up to 10 ft. Its low-profile, 1.25-in. sill easily integrates with finished flooring for a seamless transition. A multipoint locking system encompasses the entire operating panel perimeter to lock securely on all four sides.

Circle 10 on inquiry card

Structural sheathing pairs with continuous insulation

OX-IS from **OX ENGINEERED PRODUCTS**

is a 4-in-1 product that meets building code requirements for structural sheathing, continuous insulation up to an R-9, and weather and air resistive barrier performance. Its non-reflective resilient exterior facer provides water resistance and high durability; its closed-cell, moisture-resistant polyisocyanurate foam core delivers high compressive strength, a long-term R-value and continuous air barrier; and a thin, high-pressure laminated member ensures even greater structural strength. Attach the insulated sheathing directly to the studs and tape seams using OX seam tape.

Circle 11 on inquiry card



Multi-width shake roof tile introduction

DAVINCI ROOFSCAPES adds a fourth shake profile to its offering with the introduction of DaVinci Select Shake. Resembling a traditional cedar shake look, the roof tile is 22-in. long, 5/8-in. thick, and available in 8- and 10-in. widths. The 10-in. wide pieces

have a simulated keyway that gives the appearance of 4- and 6-in. width shakes placed together, allowing for faster installation than its own previous single- and multi-width products. Eight color blends are available: Autumn, Chesapeake, Mountain, Tahoe (shown), Weathered Gray, Aged Cedar, Black Oak and Mossy Cedar.

Circle 12 on inquiry card



Exterior coating delivers durability, color stability

STO CORP. introduces its StoColor Dryonic exterior coating to the North American market. In addition to its wide range of design possibilities, the coating—modeled on principles found in nature—does not allow rain and condensation to collect on its surface, thus the surface dries in record time to prevent algae and fungi from growing. Because of the coating's robustness and resistance, it can be applied to all common substrates and is not easily scuffed, making it appropriate for use in heavily frequented zones.

Circle 13 on inquiry card

WE ARE NAHB REMODELERS

Elliott Pike, CAPS, CGR, is always looking for ways to make the remodeling company he began in 2008 better. That's why he relies heavily on the resources available to him through his **NAHB Remodelers** membership.

Elliott develops relationships with other remodelers and trade partners in his community and across the country with whom he exchanges business ideas, calls for referrals and expands his industry knowledge.

Join NAHB Remodelers and maximize YOUR business profitability, efficiency and expertise.
nahb.org/whynahbr

“THE DAY THAT WE STOP TRYING TO IMPROVE IS THE DAY WE START TO DIE AS A BUSINESS.”

*Elliott Pike, CAPS, CGR
ELM Construction LLC*



Photo Courtesy of
Melissa Garrison



NAHB Remodelers

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What's New



Cladding unites ancient tradition with performance

Ignite by **THERMORY USA** combines the aesthetic of “yakisugi” or “shou sugi ban” that originated in 18th century Japan with the modern, reliable performance of thermally modified wood. Because the yakisugi process involves charring only the outer exposed layer, long-term durability issues and inconsistencies are common—all of which are eliminated with the company’s thermally modified wood. The cladding is made of Scots pine and includes a Class 1 durability rating. Three lengths are available in a 1- by 6-in. grooved profile and in a brushed or “dragon scale” texture.

Circle 14 on inquiry card

LED light fixture features tilting technology



Create personalized light effects using **MODULAR LIGHTING INSTRUMENTS'** Rektor lighting fixture, which incorporates tilting technology that allows the LED light to be rotated 360 degrees and adjusted up to 90 degrees upward or downward. Usable on walls or ceilings, the fixture showcases a geometric, minimalist appearance, with no wiring or single technical detail visible. It comes in powder-coated white or black, brushed aluminum, smoked bronze or chrome with a metal housing cover accent.

Circle 15 on inquiry card



Screw handles truss, rafter, stud connections

MITEK designs its ProSeries WSTS Truss/Stud Screw to provide uplift and lateral load resistance for truss-to-top-plate, rafter-to-top-plate, top-plate-to-stud and stud-to-bottom-plate connections. Meeting 2015 and 2018 IRC and IBC code requirements, the screw comes in two lengths, offers a reverse screw angle on opposite ends for greater resistance to withdrawal, is fully threaded for installation flexibility, and its Type-17 screw point engages wood quickly for easy starting and driving. A removable installation angle tool, included with the screw package, helps simplify proper installation.



Circle 17 on inquiry card

Cabinet drawer with self-locking mechanism



DIAMOND CABINETS introduces its Secured Drawer with an installed self-locking mechanism on the inside to secure everything from prescriptions to passports. Featuring advanced sensor biometric technology from The Master Lock Company, users simply pull the drawer and the cabinet will open slightly to reveal a fingerprint sensor and battery. The fingerprint reader can store up to 100 unique fingerprints that can be identified to grant drawer access; a manual key lock is also included. It is available in 18-, 21- and 24-in. wide base drawer cabinets.

Circle 16 on inquiry card

Porcelain tile geometric pattern livens floors, walls

SOMERTILE livens up any space with its Porto Savona Hex Collection that features a geometric pattern and a satin finish glazed surface. Its design is simplistic—a snow white color tone accented with three thin colored lines across the tile—and can be arranged in a variety of possible pattern layouts. The collection is available in Aqua, Dandelion Yellow (shown), Niagara Blue, Rose Pink and Black stripe options. Made in Spain, the porcelain tile can be used on floor or wall as well as indoor or outdoor use.

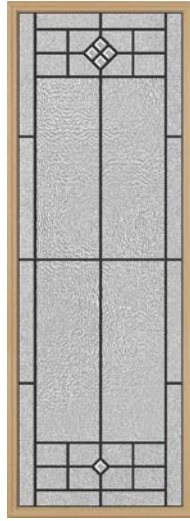


Circle 18 on inquiry card

Decorative doorglass provides doorlite, sidelite options

WESTERN REFLECTIONS, an **ODL COMPANY**, adds two decorative doorglass styles, Beaufort and Davidson, to its lineup. Offering medium privacy while incorporating three textures of glass, Beaufort (near right) draws inspiration from “modern plantation” style, combining square and rectangular shapes with flat caming that simulates traditional grille patterns. Pairing bronze vein, wrought iron caming and high-privacy arctic glass, Davidson (far right) emulates cathedral’s arched ceilings with interlocking arches on the top and bottom of vertical rectangles. For those in high-velocity wind zones, both designs are offered in Severe Weather glass and frame.

Circle 19 on inquiry card



Artificial grass deck tile

NEWTECHWOOD Ultrashield Naturale Grass Tiles provide a green solution for beautifying any space. The artificial grass deck tiles measure 1 by 1 ft. and can be used to accentuate an outdoor area, such as a deck, patio, balcony or rooftop. Made of recycled materials, the grass tiles are simple to install using dove-tail connectors, are long-lasting and require zero maintenance. Tiles arrive in boxes of 10 and can be paired with the company’s deck tiles, decking and more.

Circle 20 on inquiry card

Fixed window unit with between-the-glass blinds

Vari-Lite Windows by **HY-LITE** launch a new slant on privacy with between-glass blinds that can easily be raised, lowered and tilted open. The 4- by 4-ft. fixed window unit features fingertip controls on the side, and its cord-free operation reduces safety risks to children and pets. While white blinds are standard with the 4- by 4-ft. window, special options—including blind colors in tan, driftwood or bronze—as well as a variety of sizes are available through custom ordering.

Circle 21 on inquiry card

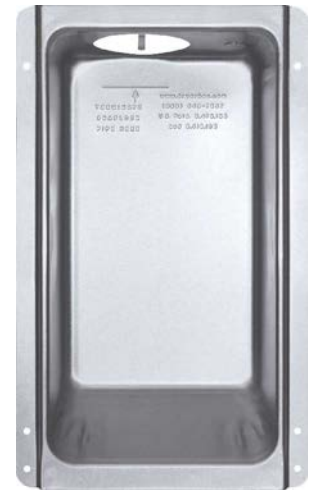


Design update simplifies installation

INOVATE DRYER PRODUCTS

updates its Dryerbox Models DB-425 and DB-350 recessed exhaust receptacles with square edges to make installations even easier. Initially launching with rounded edges, the company’s research and feedback from drywall professionals and contractors found square cuts are easier, faster and more precise, so adapting its configurations answers such need. All other specifications of the Dryerbox models remain the same: The flange will still protrude past the drywall to allow fine finishing around the product, and it’s still paintable.

Circle 22 on inquiry card



Waterproof engineered-wood flooring line

Aqua Allira from **TIMES FLOORING** is a waterproof engineered-wood flooring option for residential and commercial applications. Because of its AquaTimes application process that combines a Construction and Superior Formulated Finish, the wood does not swell, buckle or delaminate when exposed to water, making it ideal for use in bathrooms, kitchens, laundry areas, basements and more. The flooring collection features a nontoxic hypo-allergenic finish with an anti-microbial agent, and it comes in eight modern colors with natural variation for an authentic appearance.

Circle 23 on inquiry card



Tools



Adjustable 'drip control' on caulk gun series

IRION-AMERICA brings its "eXcePt" series caulk gun product line to the North American marketplace. Designed for 310-ml or 10.5-fl.-oz. cartridges and sausages and cartridges up to 600 ml, the series' features include a rubber-coated handle and trigger, anti-rust/scratch-proof barrel, built-in tip cutter and a 19:1 thrust ratio that dispenses various materials with ease. Adjustable "drip control" technology can be activated with a switch on the caulk gun's handle and can be turned on/off while laying a bead. **Circle 24 on inquiry card**

Incorporation of Bluetooth for additional tool control

The **BOSCH** GSB18V-535C Hammer Drill/Driver and Bosch GSR18V-535C Drill/Driver combine advanced user control with a compact, powerful cordless tool. Incorporating Bluetooth connectivity, the tools are linked to the free Bosch Toolbox App—available through the Apple App Store and Google Play Store—which can provide detailed tool usage feedback. Additionally, users can customize the tools, including changing the KickBack Control sensitivity. Both the hammer drill/driver and drill/driver utilize an EC Brushless motor, have two speed settings and feature an all-metal chuck. **Circle 25 on inquiry card**



Wall scanner attaches to smartphone

VAYYAR IMAGING expands its Walabot product line with a wall scanner that can see through even the most dense materials, the Walabot DIY Plus. Providing a visual map of everything inside the wall—including metal and wooden studs, pipes and wires—the all-in-one tool sees through up to 4 in. of materials like lath, plaster, drywall and concrete. The scanner easily attaches to an Android phone (with OS 6.0 and above On-The-Go) and is controlled through a free app available in the Google Play Store. **Circle 26 on inquiry card**



Circular saw balances power, speed, run time

MILWAUKEE TOOL announces the M18 FUEL 7 1/4-in. Rear Handle Circular Saw, which is capable of making up to 570 cuts in 2x4 per charge when equipped with the M18 REDLITHIUM High Output HD12.0 Battery. Providing a blend of power, speed and run time, the cordless circular saw features a cast magnesium construction to reduce the tool's weight, an electric brake that quickly stops the blade after a cut, an LED work light and multisized rafter hook for easy storage. **Circle 28 on inquiry card**

Time-saving brake accessory

BORAL'S TAPCO TOOLS eliminates the need for a tape measure and pencil when bending trim pieces with the introduction of its M2X Gauge. Named for its ability to "measure 2x" as fast, the brake accessory features 1/4- and 1/2-increments in orange and 1/8- and 1/16-in. increments in black while alternating white and gray blocks delineate 1-in. increments. Resulting in faster bending, trim pieces come out of the brake ready to install, with no pencil marks or snip cut marks on the finished product. **Circle 27 on inquiry card**



Tool line handles tough, hard to reach

The EXTREME Subcompact Series from **DEWALT** includes five compact, brushless 12V MAX tools. Measuring 5.97-in. long, the 12V MAX Brushless Drill/Driver (DCD701) fits in tight places and is optimized for use in small pilot holes. To protect the fastener and material's surface, the 12V MAX Brushless Impact Driver (DCF801) features three run-modes. Handling hard to reach fasteners, the 12V MAX Brushless Screwdriver (DCF601) offers the control of a 15-setting clutch. The 12V MAX 3/8-in. Brushless Impact Wrench (DCF902) achieves up to 1,500 in.-lbs. of max fastening torque, while the 12V MAX Brushless Hammerdrill (DCD706) produces 25,500 bpm to create a variety of holes in brick and block. **Circle 29 on inquiry card**

Bath



Bathtub collection designed for urban spaces

BAINULTRA's VIBE Collection is geared toward urban dwellers with its minimalist and contemporary flair. Aiming to address the needs of younger, sophisticated bathers and designed to fit smaller installations, these offerings from the company's urBAIN category draw inspiration from city skylines and architecture. Three design additions are the Back to Wall (5828, shown), which is specifically designed for installation against a wall; Oval (5830), featuring a 26-degree slope at the backrest; and freestanding Design (6033) with a wider bathing well.

Circle 30 on inquiry card



Toilet delivers skirted trapway, ADA compliance

STERLING delivers its first toilet with a skirted trapway, the Brella toilet, to eliminate areas where dust and dirt often collect. The toilet comes in chair height—allowing maximum accessibility and ensuring safer usage—and is ADA compliant. Its 1.28-gpf performance meets EPA WaterSense and CAL Green guidelines. Equipped with the ReadyLock mounting system, the installation of the skirted toilet does not require drilling, caulking or special tools for a standard 12-in. rough-in. The Brella toilet is available through Sterling's wholesale distribution partners.

Circle 34 on inquiry card



Multisensory shower experience

THERMASOL brings the spa experience into the home with the introduction of five shower products with smart technology. The ThermaTouch LCD in-shower touch-screen controller—available in 7 and 10 in.—manages all aspects of the digital shower and steam experience, while SignaTouch offers a 5-in. streamlined controller experience. The ThermaSol Digital Shower interface eliminates the need for multiple bath fittings with a modular design. Delivering floor-to-ceiling temperature uniformity within a steam shower, the SteamVection steam-head can be located 3 in. from the wall. Integrating seamlessly into an existing bath environment, the Serenity Light, Sound, Rainhead (shown) provides a soothing shower experience.

Circle 31 on inquiry card



Italian-inspired bath collection

Drawing inspiration from the Palazzo Bellia in Turin, Italy, the **ROHL** Italian Bellia Series combines sensual lines with a contemporary flair, informed by the building's shapely balconies, arched windows and slender turrets. The collection includes three lavatory faucets, tub fillers and handshowers, a thermostatic shower package and accessories. Select from polished chrome, polished nickel, rose gold and satin nickel finishes. Metal craftsmen in Northern Italy engineer and build the collection's faucets and fixtures.

Circle 32 on inquiry card



Flowing yet clean bath luminaire

The Interlace LED Bath luminaire from **DWELED by WAC LIGHTING** delivers a modern yet timeless silhouette with ample illumination. Weaving bands of light playfully in and out, the luminaire features an aluminum body with interlocked hoops and an acrylic diffuser in a chrome finish. Available in 28- and 38-in. widths, the fixture is damp location listed, meets Title 24 requirements, and its high-output LEDs deliver up to 1,637 lumens at a 90 CRI and 3,000K color temperature.

Circle 33 on inquiry card

Alliance pairs vanity designs with countertops

JAMES MARTIN VANITIES announces a collaboration and partnership with **SILESTONE by COSENTINO** to offer premanufactured Silestone vanity tops with its vanity designs. Aiming to support streamlining and expediting orders and operations, the partnership results in offering design professionals and homeowners more than 5,000 different combinations. Pair Silestone countertops in Classic White, Grey Expo, Pearl Jasmine and Iconic Black all in a classic polished finish and Charcoal Soapstone in a suede finish with more than 375 of James Martin Vanities' designs. **Circle 35 on inquiry card**



Windows



Meeting requirements for hurricane season

PLY GEM SIMONTON WINDOWS AND DOORS tests and certifies its complete collection of StormBreaker Plus windows and doors to meet impact standards for the Florida Building Commission, the Texas Department of Insurance Evaluation for the Texas coast, and select sizes and styles are certified to meet Miami-Dade and Broward County High-Velocity Hurricane Zone specifications. Impact-resistant KeepSafe Maximum glass features a durable interlayer that protects a home from flying debris, is a barrier against forced entry, and filters up to 99 percent of UV rays.

Circle 36 on inquiry card

Install replacement window from exterior

Part of its broad portfolio of replacement products, the **ANDERSEN** 100 Series insert window can be installed from the home's exterior, making for easier installation and less disruption to homeowners. The window series' 3 1/4-in. frame can be retrofit into existing window openings and is available in custom sizing for a weather-tight fit. Engineered with the company's Fibrex composite material, the windows feature a scratch-resistant, thermally bonded finish; clean corners for a refined look that won't rot, flake, blister or chip; and color-matched installation accessories.

Circle 37 on inquiry card



Wood windows offer style flexibility, performance

Available at more than 200 of its showrooms and Lowe's stores nationwide, the **PELLA** Lifestyle Series combines the durability and style flexibility of wood with features like interior/exterior color options, energy efficiency and sound control through the company's glass designs. The wood windows and patio doors incorporate innovations like accessible blinds-between-the-glass and shades, Rolscreen retractable screens, and integrated security sensors that pair with the Pella Insynctive App for monitoring. A limited lifetime warranty covers the series.

Circle 38 on inquiry card



Modern line expansion

MARVIN Modern expands with Casement and Awning products, joining its Multi-Slide Door and Direct Glaze Window as part of the modular system. The crank-out and push-out Casements are available in sizes up to approximately 3-ft. wide and 9-ft. tall; the crank-out Awning comes in sizes up to 8-ft. wide and tall; while the push-out Awning is available in sizes up to 4-ft. wide and 8-ft. tall. Both offer an optional concealed screen frame with high-transparency mesh and matching interior latch color.

Circle 39 on inquiry card



Expansion of wood replacement collection

JELD-WEN meets rising demand for wood replacement windows with additions to its Sitrine Collection, the Sitrine Pocket and Sash Pack. Able to fit with transitional and contemporary styles and comply with strict historical standards, the series includes sash pack, casement pocket and double-hung pocket windows. Quick-connect stops create a clean appearance after installation is complete, meaning concealed jamb liners and no putty or screw holes. These collection additions come in the same colors and finishes as the original Sitrine collection.

Circle 41 on inquiry card

Factory-applied standard, custom color options

The **PROVIA** Endure and Aeris window and patio door lines are available in 17 select factory-applied colors. Additionally, any paint color from Sherwin-Williams' color palette or any chosen paint supplier can be selected, too. This painted finish—available for the exterior of the Endure vinyl windows and interior/exterior options for the Aeris line—will have a 15-year warranty, plus a lifetime limited warranty on the window itself. This process results in an additional two-week lead time.

Circle 40 on inquiry card



Remodelers' Choice



The following product received the most reader inquiries from the April issue of *Qualified Remodeler*:

FIBOUSA

Through a partnership between Innovative Building Solutions and FiboUSA, the Fibo Wall Panels are now available across the U.S. to help solve tough wet-room challenges. The high-pressure laminate panels are hygienic and instantly waterproof, making them ideal for use in bathrooms, showers, laundry rooms and kitchens. Incorporating recent trends in tile designs, finishes and interior surfaces, the laminate panels come in a wide variety of styles and colors to fit a range of design styles. The large-format faux tile designs are available in a range of modern sizes, including 24 by 12 inches, 24 by 18 inches, 24 by 24 inches, and 12 by 16 inches.

In addition to functional and aesthetic benefits of Fibo Wall Panels, the system can be fit directly onto wood and steel studs or even existing walls. The 2 foot by 8 foot by 3/8-inch thick panels simply click, lock and seal together like tongue-and-groove panels; backer boards, membranes, glue and grout are not needed.

For more information, visit fibosystemusa.com, innovatewallpanels.com or circle 42 on inquiry card.

The following product received the most pageviews in the past month on QualifiedRemodeler.com:

ALSIDE

Providing more opportunities for personalization, seven new siding, soffit, trim and accessory colors have launched as part of Alside's Explorer Collection to help transform homes' exteriors. Drawing inspiration from nature, the color introductions span deep, saturated hues to cool neutrals and bold shades, and they are designed to complete the company's overall palette as well as complement each other.

The seven color introductions are: Fired Brick, Flagship Brown, Rustic Timber, Mountain Fern, Riviera Dusk, Sterling Gray and Ageless Slate. Find the Explorer Collection available in full or in part on the following Alside lines: Prodigy, Charter Oak, Odyssey Plus, Coventry, Conquest, Board & Batten and Williamsport. In addition to its wide design flexibility, the collection includes a lifetime limited warranty.

For more information, visit alside.com or circle 43 on inquiry card.



Upcoming Events

SEPT. 11-15

2019 CRAN Symposium Scottsdale, Ariz.

AIA Custom Residential Architects Network
tinyurl.com/2019-aia-cran

SEPT. 15-17

CCN 2019 Fall Conference | Grow Your Business Successfully, La Jolla, Calif.

Certified Contractors Network
contractors.net/conferences

SEPTEMBER 19

Inspiring Clients: The Very Latest Design, Product and Marketing Trends, Minneapolis

Kitchen & Bath Design News Seminar Series
KBDNseminars.com

OCT. 1-3

EEBA High Performance Home Summit 2019, Denver

The Energy and Environmental
Building Alliance
summit.eeba.org

OCT. 7-8

Smart Kitchen Summit 2019 Seattle, The Spoon

smartkitchensummit.com

OCT. 22-24

NAHB Fall Leadership Meeting New Orleans

National Association of Home Builders
nahb.org/find/meetings-and-events.aspx

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Due Diligence

No. 117 CG&S Design-Build completes an ownership transition while the remodeler builds its legacy in a competitive market.

by Kyle Clapham

CLARENCE AND STELLA GUERRERO founded CG&S in 1957 as a family construction business and spent the next few decades raising their eight children within the company, teaching them the trades of carpentry and bookkeeping. After all, they chose the name CG&S as an acronym for their family business mentality: Clarence Guerrero and Sons. In the early 1990s, they sold the company to their kids.

Billy Guerrero became president and head of sales and estimating while Dolores took on duties as general manager. Her husband, Stewart Davis, joined the company as an architect in 1994 and established a design studio for the business. As projects began to

it was clear we had to build a management team that didn't rely just on Stewart and me—that relied on other people to hold different departments together while this transition was being made.”

Dolores solicited advice from her remodeling peer group and other mentors and hired a mediator who specializes in family businesses. “My advice would be to talk about it early and get some assistance from other people,” she explains. “Even more, work on having open, honest, crucial conversations with each other. Because the better you communicate and trust each other—and believe in each other—the better you can go through those very difficult conversations later on.”

CG&S already has begun planning for the next 10 years, when both Dolores and Stewart prepare to exit the business, she adds. “Our biggest challenge, aside from the day-to-day things, of course, is how do we take a 60-year-old company into the next generation and still keep it strong and relevant and competitive in this market? That’s what takes my energy.”

The business strives to maintain the same reputation for quality and reliability that Clarence and Stella instituted in the late 1950s. Projects have expanded and become more comprehensive renovations with outdoor living as a key component, Dolores says.

“They live in their homes, they live in their kitchens, in their dining and living [rooms], and they want these integrated spaces,” she continues. “People just have more confidence in their buying potential (purchasing power), and so they’re willing to do more than they used to. It’s not that they spend willy-nilly. They’re still price conscious—they’re just price conscious in a bigger way.”

An accessibility to loans at reasonable interest rates, furthermore, has given homeowners another option to finance larger projects, Dolores notes. “We’re doing a lot more work with lenders, a lot more than we used to. Lending organizations can provide that service so much better than we can. We don’t have



DOLORES GUERRERO DAVIS, President and General Manager
COMPANY: CG&S Design-Build
DESCRIPTION: Design/build remodeler
LOCATION: Austin, Texas
TOP 500 RANK: No. 117
REMODELING SALES: \$11.9 million

“OUR FOCUS HAS TO BE DOING A LITTLE BIT IN EVERY SINGLE AREA.”

Dolores Guerrero Davis,
president/general manager

require more thoughtful design work, the company incorporated a design/build process and rebranded as CG&S Design-Build.

In 2018, Billy stepped down from the business after more than 40 years of service and received a formal buyout. He passed majority ownership to Dolores, who now serves as president and co-owner with Stewart, vice president of the company. They started conversations about the buyout in 2017, but the process turned out to be longer and more intense than anticipated, Dolores notes.

“We both had attorneys, and we got an evaluation of the company,” she says. “I have to say, for a family business, it’s so much more complicated than it sounds. There’s a lot of emotion tied to it, for obvious reasons. I knew this was my brother’s intent and desire, so

the bandwidth to manage it, and I don’t want to take it on. Doing design/build is enough.”

Finding and hiring qualified workers, however, will remain a challenge for CG&S as contractors stay busy throughout the year. Partnering with several different vendors and building trust with subcontractors can produce a reliable labor pool, Dolores says.

“It’s all about relationships,” she explains. “They know you’re going to pay them on time, that you’re going to be ready for them when you say. All those kinds of things really make a difference. I believe that when contractors can maintain those levels of trust with the vendors and suppliers, then they’re going to perform better for you.”

With an influx of people now moving to Austin, CG&S must keep its brand fresh and relevant among those who might have never heard of the company, Dolores notes. More contractors also claim to offer design/build services and can undercut pricing because they do not have a true overhead, so CG&S needs to sustain an online presence and a connection with its client base.

“Our focus has to be doing a little bit in every single area—selling at higher margins, building in a tighter, more efficient way, and making sure that the overhead doesn’t get bloated. I think every little bit counts,” she adds. **QR**



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