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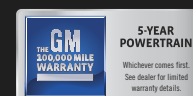
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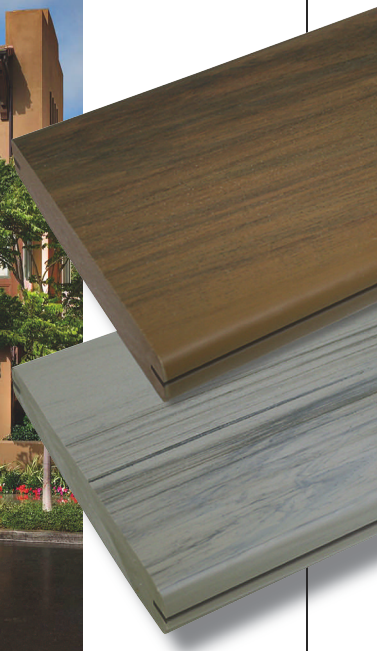
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# GOSSIP FROM A WALKIE-TALKIE

There isn't much I don't hear about over these waves. Project updates, building permits, lunch orders, baseball scores, and plenty of profanity — much of which revolves around shower valves. Either someone ordered the wrong valve, or installed the wrong valve, or changed their mind at the last minute. Can someone just make one valve that fits any shower so I don't have to listen to all this chatter? It's giving me a headache.



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# A New Future

*Are the fundamentals of home building changing? The drivers might tell us.*

**T**he housing industry is awash in the detritus of negative opinion. Builders complain about it constantly. We believe we can turn around the housing problem with positive vibes and a snappy mantra. "It is a good time to buy a house. It is a good time to buy a house."

A fundamental belief underlies this idea that our problems are consumer confidence. That belief is that nothing substantial in the home building industry will change during the downturn. Will all our assumptions and understandings about home building remain constant? When we emerge from the slump, will we conduct business as usual?

Builders, architects and consultants I speak with often wondered whether we're going through a shift in the nature of home building. I can't say there is a consensus.

What interests me most are the drivers for change. Home building does not change of its own accord. It evolves in reaction to market forces, regulation or other significant impact.

I have identified seven general areas I think could cause the home building industry to make a generational-style change.

■ **Transportation Patterns.** Our congested, deteriorating infrastructure will cause people to make new decisions about home location.

■ **Resource Consumption.** In an era of reduced access to common resources, home buyers will re-evaluate everything from the size of their homes to what they put in them to where they are located. The goal? Reduce consumption.

■ **Demographic Changes.** Large swings in our population makeup will force builders to deliver new kinds of homes to meet cultural and age differences.

■ **Technology Improvement.** We're on the cusp of making a quantum leap in our ability to deliver high-quality homes rapidly.

There are **seven industry drivers** I think could cause the home building industry to make a generational-style change.

■ **Investment Opportunity.** The bedrock of home building is that real estate is a good investment.

■ **Land Availability.** Will we have enough land to build on?

■ **Ideas of Community.** Facebook. MySpace. YouTube. These are all

new communities that allow people to connect to humans without having to leave their homes. The Grange Hall died two generations ago. Is the community center next?

There is a theory of history called punctuated equilibrium. In short, it means that we see small changes over time until we experience huge leaps. If I were a betting man, I would say we will see over the next decade massive evolution in the nature of home building.

Paul Deffenbaugh, *Editorial Director*  
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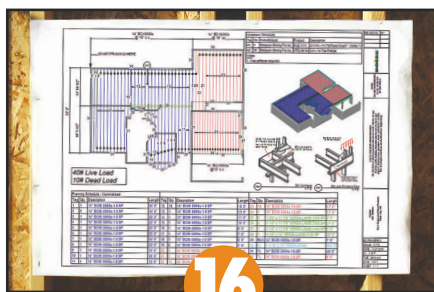


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## mail bag

Good article. We get so many complaints that housing is not affordable, but we are paying more in impact fees than ever before.

And when builders do the socially responsible thing by building infill or redevelopment projects — taking advantage of existing public infrastructure and allowing public services to be delivered more efficiently — they are levied the same fees as builders on the fringe.

This is a travesty. Instead of being rewarded, these builders are forced to subsidize costly sprawl.

**Tim Hernandez**  
New Urban Communities  
Delray Beach, Fla.

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# HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Never before have we had such a diverse candidate pool. Who will win and how will it affect home builders in the years to come?

Photo: Emmanuel Dunand/AFP/Getty Images



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[ CUSTOMER LOYALTY ]

# Need Customers? Go Guerrilla



As builders vie for a piece of a shrinking pie, the old forms of marketing are less effective. It's time to adopt some guerrilla tactics.

By Paul Cardis, Avid Ratings

Nearly 25 years ago, Jay Conrad Levinson coined the term guerrilla marketing in his book by the same name. He used the term to refer to a marketing strategy that uses unconventional and aggressive promotions that rely on energy and imagination more than ad dollars.

In competitive times, large home builders can lower their marketing costs by using guerrilla marketing tactics that differentiate them from their competition while showcasing their value to prospective customers.

Because originality is at the heart of any successful guerrilla marketing campaign, home builders should look beyond

■ Sonic drive-in restaurants created magnetic cups that adhered to the trunk or roof of a car, making it appear as if the driver accidentally left it there when he or she got into the car. The marketing stunt created a lot of buzz and word-of-mouth advertising for the business.

These ideas won't work for home builders, but they illustrate the unorthodox approach you need to take to get noticed.

As a home builder, consider these suggestions:

■ Conduct a "stop renting" seminar and recruit renters in the neighborhood of your next project. Conduct it weekly and educate buyers about the benefits and affordability of home ownership. While seemingly

tasting, complete with tapas and live music. Invite your existing happy customers from the community you are currently selling in or one nearby. Use the event to enable prospects to mingle with existing home buyers making attendees aware of a new housing development underway. In this guerilla strategy you become the non-imposing host, while your existing homeowners do the work for you. As the host you should focus on building key relationships and ensuring the prospective home buyers have a great evening.

There are few rules when it comes to guerrilla marketing; a good guide is to never do anything that could cause property damage or incite public fear.

In the end, successful guerrilla-marketing campaigns are about quality, not quantity. They're about being relevant to your audience and having impeccable timing. For home builders working with bare-bone staffs, reduced advertising budgets and fierce competition, the time for guerrilla marketing is now. **PB**

Paul Cardis is CEO of Avid Ratings Co., a research and consulting firm specializing in customer satisfaction for the home-building industry. He can be reached at paul.cardis@avidratings.com.

Guerrilla marketing campaigns are about **quality, not quantity**. They're about being relevant to your audience and **having impeccable timing**.

traditional forms of advertising for inspiration. Guerrilla marketing relies heavily on event planning, networking and free publicity. Some tactics from outside the industry:

■ Virgin Atlantic placed loaded egg cartons on baggage carousels to show how carefully the airline handles its customers' luggage.

basic, this type of low-volume but high-reward strategy is exactly what your company needs to survive these tough times. This strategy is great for your first-time buyer product.

■ For your higher-end empty nesters, team up with a local high-end restaurant that has the same target audience that you have. Sponsor a free wine

## Cardis' Tips

### RELATE

Guerrilla marketing must be relevant by connecting a company's products and services to something customers value.

### INNOVATE

Guerrilla marketing requires creative, out-of-the box thinking, which may mean stepping outside your comfort zone.

### NETWORK

Guerrilla marketing works best when you team with other businesses and organizations.

### BE CAUTIOUS

Guerrilla marketing rarely backfires, but when it does it's usually because the effort damaged property or prompted fear.



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[ HOMES THAT SELL ]

# Will High-End Homes Lead the Recovery?

By Bill Lurz, Senior Editor, Business



CHARLESTON, S.C., CUSTOM BUILDER Bennett Hofford Construction has hardly noticed a housing downturn, thanks to steady business in luxury resorts like Kiawah Island, where the firm sold this 5,100 square-foot home for \$3.7 million.

*Photo courtesy of Bennett Hofford Construction.*

Late last year, California production builder Mick Pattinson of Barratt American Homes told us that in 2006, “We saw reluctance to buy at the top of the market, in homes priced above \$1 million. But (in 2007) the top has come back — not just buying houses, but at prices that are good for us.” As a result, Barratt American has shifted its production toward the luxury market.

That got us thinking. Because the general economy is still cooking in the Sun Belt — even in markets where home sales are in the doldrums — is it possible pent-up demand is building among well-heeled potential buyers, not just in California, but elsewhere? Could luxury homes lead a broad-based home sales recovery?

There’s disagreement on that. Housing industry consultant and *Housing Giants* columnist John Burns says it’s not happening and doubts it will any time soon except for isolated developments with great locations. “The high end has not fallen as much as the low,” Burns admits, “because the biggest change in the market is the need for a larger down payment. The high end is just not affected as much by mortgage issues. There may be location-specific examples of high-end successes, but they are isolated exceptions, not the rule.”

## Where’s the boom?

That may be true, but the exceptions look bigger than just individual projects in good locations. Luxury resort towns, for instance — where the jet-setters gather — have strong housing markets. Some builders in those markets have hardly noticed a downturn. Hank Hofford of Bennett Hofford Construction Co. in Charleston, S.C., notes that Kiawah Island, a barrier island enclave, has hardly missed a beat the last two years.

“Kiawah sold \$370 million in real estate last year,” he says. “That’s not the \$530 million they did at the peak of the boom, but it’s probably still a top-five year



for them.” Hofford is riding the wave on Charleston’s resort islands, even though the rest of the market is slow. “We booked 19 jobs — 16 new custom homes and three remodels—for a total of more than \$35 million going into 2008. I’ve never started a year with that much custom work already signed up,” he says.

David Croom of Croom Construction Co. in posh Vero Beach, Fla., tells a similar tale. He won’t give numbers of homes completed or total revenues for his firm but says 2007 was one of his best years ever. “We’ll be down a little in 2008 just because the last two years were pushed higher by delayed projects from 2004 and 2005,” he says. “In 2004, we had the hurricanes in September. That delayed a lot of construction and pushed the prices of building materials sky high. Then we had spiraling inflation in lot prices and construction costs in 2005. A lot

of luxury home buyers backed away. They said, ‘This is nuts. We’ll wait until the market cools off.’ They came back in 2006 and 2007.”

Empty-nester, baby boomer snowbirds who travel with the jet set are not deterred by Florida’s crashing real-estate markets, Croom says. “Our market starts at \$1 million. These buyers are not into delayed gratification, and they’re not selling equities or betting on future earnings when they decide to buy. They want what they want — now.”

Croom won’t give us his job count for 2008. But the fact he has his own trade crews —100 skilled framers, trim carpenters and even painters — on his payroll says enough. If the overall economy stays strong, it seems possible housing recovery may start in the high end of the pricing spectrum. When we see it, beyond the ski resorts and beach retreats of the rich and famous, is another question. **PB**

## [ HOUSING QUALITY ]

# Anatomy of a Best Practice

Everyone loves a best practice. Not everyone, however, knows how to develop one. *Professional Builder*, along with best practices guru Michael Dickens, take the guesswork out of the process and provide you with an outlet to share the wealth.

## ANALYZE

Determine what’s wrong and what needs to be improved. Compare external best practices to your own processes.

## RESEARCH

What are others in your industry doing? Consult best practices-oriented magazines and Web sites for in-depth case studies and examples.

## DEFINE

Define the best practice by examining all options available and honing in on the one that best suits your team or your company.

## IMPLEMENT

Execute the best practice first in a smaller group or division. Make necessary changes and distribute to larger group. Conduct training as necessary.

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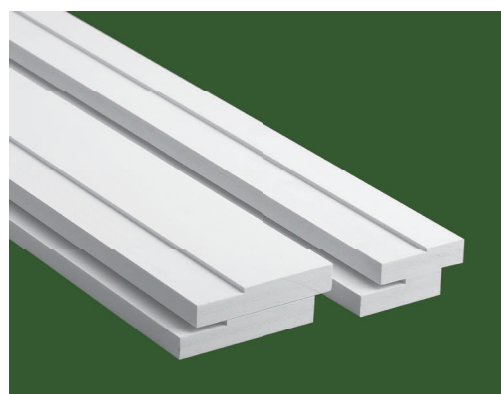
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# Do home builders have a dog in this race?

28

Here's *Professional Builder's* research on which party might benefit the home building industry the most.

By Felicia Oliver, Senior Editor

The 2008 Presidential election is breaking barriers. Both a woman and a black man are top contenders; for the first time since 1928, there is no incumbent or sitting vice president in the race. Both parties are agreeing: we need change.

But as uncommon as this election may be, will the fortunes of home builders under the new administration be business as usual? And what, if anything, do candidates plan to do to address the concerns of home builders?

We did some research and talked to some political pundits both within and outside the housing industry to get a pulse on which party might most benefit the housing industry.

## The voice of the industry is quiet on this one

A logical place to search for answers is NAHB, the advocacy group for the home building industry. But the NAHB as a matter of policy does not endorse a particular candidate.

"We are fond of saying that we are neither a Republican nor Democratic organization," says Bill Kilmer, vice president of



advocacy for NAHB. “We’re for candidates that are pro housing. We’ve got such a broad span of policy, and this is such a heavily regulated industry at the local state and federal levels. We’ve got policy that allows us to work with either party that’s in power.”

Kilmer also says NAHB has not kept any statistical data on how the housing industry and the policies they support have fared under Republican versus Democratic administrations.

Though NAHB strives for a middle-of-the-road stance, Kilmer says there are certain issues it favors — federal housing programs (the major tax incentives for home buyers) and regulation of government sponsored enterprises like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac — on which Democrats tend to come down stronger. Estate tax repeal; tax codes for small businesses and incorporation of small businesses; and land development and environmental regulation issues like property rights tend to be favored by Republicans.

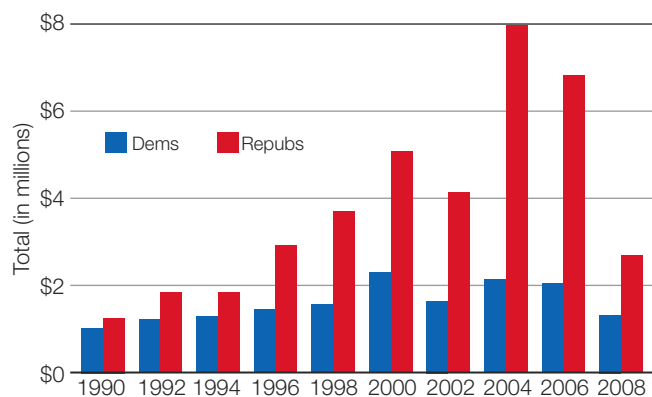
“We’re not going to have a preference one way or another as an association on behalf of the industry,” says Kilmer, “but

certainly our members exercise their preferences pretty robustly and work fairly vigorously among themselves to mobilize that support,” surmising that there are Builders for Clinton, Builders for Obama, McCain, etc., throughout NAHB’s membership.

### Follow the money trail

Kilmer’s comments are politically correct, but what do the numbers say? Contributions from NAHB’s political action committee slightly favor Republican congressional candidates so far in the 2008 election cycle; 45 percent of contributions went to Democrats and 55 percent to Republicans. But when you look at the long-term contribution trends of home builders — a group that as a whole contributed \$9.1 million to federal parties and candidates in 2006 (NAHB, the industry’s top contributor, gave \$2.7 million during that election cycle) — it has consistently given more to Republicans than Democrats by at least a 2-1 ratio, according to data published by the Center for Responsive Politics. In election cycle 2004 (see graph below),

## HOME BUILDERS: LONG-TERM CONTRIBUTION TRENDS



A LOOK AT THE LONG-TERM CONTRIBUTION TRENDS of home builders shows they have consistently given more to Republicans than Democrats by at least a 2-1 ratio, according to data published by the Center for Responsive Politics.

Election Cycle	Total Contributions	Donations to Democrats	Donations to Republicans	% to Dems	% to Repubs
2008*	\$4,175,678	\$1,432,419	\$2,743,009	34%	66%
2006*	\$9,061,752	\$2,145,268	\$6,876,384	24%	76%
2004*	\$10,185,218	\$2,219,016	\$7,952,452	22%	78%
2002	\$5,916,408	\$1,700,395	\$4,209,574	29%	71%
2000	\$7,562,860	\$2,404,144	\$5,137,666	32%	68%
1998	\$5,398,340	\$1,660,370	\$3,728,470	31%	69%
1996	\$4,558,488	\$1,559,807	\$2,994,081	34%	66%
1994	\$3,314,872	\$1,373,448	\$1,928,104	41%	58%
1992	\$3,211,899	\$1,284,268	\$1,924,481	40%	60%
1990	\$2,312,939	\$1,022,775	\$1,290,164	44%	56%
Total	\$55,698,454	\$16,801,910	\$38,784,385	30%	70%

\*The asterisked figures on this page and page 30 do not include donations of “Levin” funds to state and local party committees. Levin funds were created by the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002. Also, the numbers on this page and page 30 are based on contributions of \$200 or more from PACs and individuals to federal candidates and from PAC, soft money and individual donors to political parties, as reported to the Federal Election Commission. Although election cycles are shown in charts as 1996, 1998, 2000, etc. they actually represent two-year periods. For example, the 2002 election cycle runs from Jan. 1, 2001 to Dec. 31, 2002.



*"I think both parties are going to be pretty tough on the mortgage banking industry."*

— John McIlwain, Urban Land Institute

federal contributions to Republicans were 78 percent versus 22 percent for Democrats — a 4-1 ratio.

These numbers make a convincing case that the average home builder thinks Republicans best represent his or her interests.

"From a broad perspective, home building tends to fair better when we have a more conservative type of government regulation, and that has traditionally followed with Republicans," says David Reemsnyder, president and CEO of HHHunt Homes in Blacksburg, Va. "It supports less government in that arena rather than more."

But looking at the building industry from the labor perspective, the numbers fall a bit differently. Long-term contribution trends for building trade unions show contributions to Democratic candidates far outweigh those to Republicans. Since 1990 this group has donated a minimum of 84 percent to Democrats every election cycle, and during the 1994 cycle it was a whopping 96 percent.

### CANDIDATES REBUKED

IN FEBRUARY NAHB ISSUED A STATEMENT that it wouldn't approve and disburse PAC contributions to federal congressional candidates and their PACs until further notice. The reason given was that Congress and the administration "have not adequately addressed the underlying economic issues that would help to stabilize the housing sector and keep the economy moving forward."

### ANCILLARY ISSUES THAT AFFECT HOUSING

A jolt to the economy may reverse housing's fortunes, but other issues also affect home builders in practical ways.

#### Subprime debacle and FHA reform

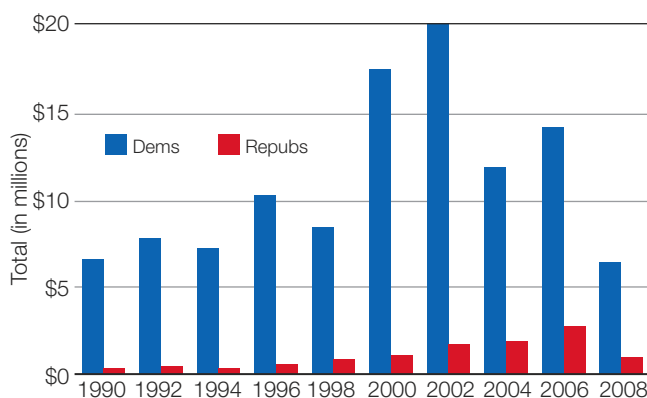
Subprime providers thrived in large part due to statute limitations that kept the Federal Housing Administration from offering better loan options to high-risk borrowers. To make FHA loans more appealing, the Expanding American Homeownership Act of 2007 was passed by the House of Representatives in September and is in committee with the Senate as of this writing.

Home builders should fear an increase in foreclosures.

"You want to reduce foreclosures and delinquencies as much as possible so you don't put more homes on the market," says John McIlwain, senior resident fellow and J. Ronald Terwilliger Chair for Housing at the Urban Land Institute. "Most of those people who get foreclosed aren't able to now buy a home."

"Looking back at the history, I think that the Democrats would be more inclined to reform FHA than Republicans

### BUILDING TRADE UNIONS: LONG-TERM CONTRIBUTION TRENDS



LONG-TERM CONTRIBUTION TRENDS for building trade unions show contributions to Democratic candidates far outweigh those to Republicans, according to data published by the Center for Responsive Politics.

Election Cycle	Total Contributions	Donations to Democrats	Donations to Republicans	% to Dems	% to Repubs
2008*	\$7,088,985	\$6,323,285	\$760,700	89%	11%
2006*	\$16,834,138	\$14,095,273	\$2,619,265	84%	16%
2004*	\$13,497,898	\$11,816,569	\$1,655,329	88%	12%
2002	\$21,476,567	\$19,883,952	\$1,550,615	93%	7%
2000	\$18,399,318	\$17,393,632	\$960,486	95%	5%
1998	\$9,254,531	\$8,511,507	\$712,774	92%	8%
1996	\$10,797,678	\$10,245,171	\$515,390	95%	5%
1994	\$7,500,691	\$7,195,305	\$277,787	96%	4%
1992	\$8,357,490	\$7,832,859	\$408,581	94%	5%
1990	\$7,038,525	\$6,658,637	\$361,888	95%	5%
Total	\$120,245,821	\$109,956,190	\$9,822,815	91%	8%



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*“We’re for candidates that are pro housing. ... We’ve got policy that allows us to work with either party that’s in power.” — Bill Kilmer, NAHB*

would,” says William H. Hudnut III, senior resident fellow and Joseph C. Canizaro Chair for Public Policy at the Urban Land Institute. “It seems as though the Republicans have given relative short shrift to HUD (FHA is, of course, a HUD program).” Hudnut is also a former Republican Congressman and Mayor of Indianapolis.

“I think both parties are going to be pretty tough on the mortgage banking industry,” says McIlwain. “Ultimately Democrats may be a little bit tougher than the Republicans, but I would think either one would work hard to put some new controls over it.”

### Tax incentives for home buyers

Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, proposed a bill to eliminate mortgage interest deductions for homes larger than 3,000 square feet — considered prime offenders in the production of green house gas emissions. But NAHB wants to see existing tax incentives for home buyers protected.

“Tax provisions could play a role in stemming the downturn,” says Kilmer. “That’s going to continue to be a priority, protecting the major tax incentives that are already part of the Internal Revenue code. ... I don’t think that with the Democrats in power in Congress that any of those elements are necessarily at risk as they might have been when the Republicans were in control.”

Kilmer warns that the leadership of some Democratic tax writing committees has made expensive propositions — such

as the reformation of the Alternative Minimum Tax — that would require funding, and that they might feel pressure to tinker with housing tax incentives to pay for that.

### Is there a green party?

NAHB rolled out its proposed National Green Building Standard at last month’s International Builders’ Show. While NAHB backs green building, it is fighting mandates it believes would be required if the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED for Homes program — which is being considered and adopted in various municipalities and regions — is adopted nationally.

Reemsynder thinks industry stewardship will be adequate over the long term to get green standards implemented, but if the government doesn’t move quickly enough, “I suspect Democrats would try to speed it up,” he says.

McIlwain doesn’t think Congress will issue a national green building mandate. He does think Democrats tend to be more open to the idea of energy conservation.

“The Democrats traditionally have been more active in providing [tax] incentives for things like solar and wind,” says McIlwain. “And energy is going to become an increasingly large issue for builders. It’s going to drive up their costs, and will it shift the market. People will start looking for ... greener homes with reduced energy usage. It’s hard to know at this point where a Republican administration would be on this. But they have traditionally been more hands off.”

### The immigration hot potato

Immigrants — both legal and illegal — have a great impact on the home building industry. Projections are that immigrants and minorities will increase their ownership of homes in the next 10 years. And it cannot be overlooked that a large part of the construction labor force comes from this group as well.

Hudnut says it’s difficult to distinguish between the two parties on this issue:

“Both have taken the very short-sighted view that panders to people’s fears and emotions,” Hudnut says. “I think [President] George Bush was right on this issue with his recommendation for, I don’t want to call it amnesty, but earned citizenship — giving them a chance versus hounding them out of the community. ... Immigrants are part of the glue that holds our economy together.”

In the interest of full disclosure, William H. Hudnut III has run and served as a Republican during his entire life of public service. He good naturedly refers to his Urban Land Institute colleague, John McIlwain, as a “rabid Democrat.” **PB**

## Does it really matter who’s in control?

*In the grand scheme of things, how much does it really matter which party or administration is in the White House? Could a new administration reverse the housing downturn?*

*Though both parties want to fix it, Dr. Paul Green, director of the Institute for Politics at Roosevelt University in Chicago, says the downturn has to run its course.*

*“When the economy is bad, housing slumps,” he says. “Government can help. It can abate it. It can slow it down. But we have to find ways of creating new dollars and new wealth through jobs in this country.”*

*“There’s no magic wand,” Green adds. “Economics is called a dismal science because sooner or later the rules win.”*





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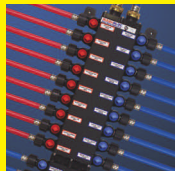
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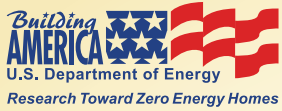


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# A Winning Day

Susanne Day, senior project manager at The Marketing Directors in New York, managed sales teams that sold 821 homes for more than \$636 million in five communities. She's this year's Nationals Marketing Director of the Year. Read about Day and the other sales professionals who won Nationals gold in the March 24 issue of *Housing Giants*.

## INSIDE

John Rymer: Real-estate agent bonuses  
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The model homes debate [ page 43 ]

Set up a successful homeowner  
association [ page 44 ]



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## [ SALES TRAINING ]

# Incentive to Change



Before you offer that next gift card to your real-estate agents, consider putting a few of these ideas in place.

By John Rymer, New Home Knowledge

**R**eal-estate agents are a major factor in getting more than your fair share of sales. Ask any new home sales professional what got them to the top of our industry, and real-estate agent sales are sure to make the short list. It's not surprising that when builders need sales, they entice real-estate agents with all kinds of incentives.

Real-estate agents are quick to point out that they love spiffs and bonuses; however, they're short-term, expensive solutions that typically provide only tepid results. I have often compared real-estate agent bonuses to liposuction:

**Real-estate agent bonuses are like liposuction: a quick, painful solution to what could have been accomplished through basic changes in everyday habits.**

a quick, painful solution to what could have been accomplished through basic changes in everyday habits.

So what makes a real-estate agent really show your homes and community? As a builder, you should pay attention to the following:

**They know and trust the builder.** Many companies short-changed the realty com-

munity during the go-go days when they could sell all the homes they wanted without paying co-op commissions. Today these same real-estate agents often look for retribution. While there is no way to rewrite history, owners and senior management should first consider how to personally reach out to the realty community to show their unqualified commitment.

**Competent on-site sales team.** With a lot of turnover among new-home sales professionals, many top real-estate agents feel like they are rolling the dice when they enter a new-home sales office. No amount of spiff or

bonus will bring a top real-estate agent to a sales office if he or she believes the new home sales professional is incompetent or unable to close the sale. When doing outreach and meeting top real-estate agents, your sales staff shouldn't simply explain why they want their business; they should demonstrate their competence.

**An easy-sale community.** Time is a real-estate agent's most valuable asset. Real-estate agents want to show communities that sell themselves. When doing outreach with real-estate agents stress the compelling value of your community, sales you recently made and the attributes that make your community the easiest sell in the market place.

**Great customer satisfaction.** While everyone likes a happy customer, real-estate agents live or die based on the satisfaction of their customers. Most top real-estate agents receive 90 percent of their business from referrals. Top real-estate agents know that without a happy experience with their new home customer, their chances to get the re-sale listing in a few years are slim to none.

**Spiffs and bonuses.** Once you have addressed the issues above, go ahead and include all the spiffs and bonuses you can afford. Real-estate agents really love them. **PB**

*John Rymer is the founder of New Home Knowledge, which offers sales training for new home builders and real-estate professionals. He can be reached at [john@newhomeknowledge.com](mailto:john@newhomeknowledge.com).*

## Rymer's Rules

**STRESS YOUR COMPETENCE.** No amount of incentive will offset dealing with inexperienced sales professionals.

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[ POINT/COUNTERPOINT ]

# Model Homes Are Necessary. Or Are They?

Moderated by Bill Lurz, Senior Editor, Business

Online marketing expert Stan Kates debates with *PB* columnist John Rymer on the necessity of building model homes and staffing them with on-site sales agents.

**F**rom the 1950s, production builders have sold subdivisions by using dreamy model homes staffed with eager sales agents. Does the digital age make that big investment unnecessary?

We asked two of North America's most experienced consultants in the field of new home sales whether today's elaborate online marketing programs make model home presentations obsolete. Of course, the two we picked have wildly divergent opinions on the subject. But both sides of this argument seem to have merit. Let us know which side of this debate you're on at HousingZone.com.



RYMER

John Rymer's firm, Rymer Strategies, is headquartered in Tampa, Fla.

KATES

Stan Kates' company, Kates Marketing Group, is based in Toronto, Canada, and has offices in Las Vegas.



## Stan Kates: No to model homes

We started marketing without model homes in 1972, replacing them with movies and word pictures painted by well-trained sales agents in retail locations — not on the building site. In that project, we sold 2,600 homes from 13 miles away. We haven't looked back.

### Marketing without models is:

- Faster
- Cheaper
- More flexible

Today, computer technology offers tools light years beyond what we had in 1972. Virtual reality tours show how houses look, feel and live. We create "virtual models" that can show you the view from anywhere in a room, or from your condo balcony toward the city skyline. Without models, we cut marketing costs by one third. We still use them some, when the builder needs a crutch. But we often sell out before they open. If you make a product mistake, it's a lot easier to correct in cyberspace than in a model.

Buyers are computer-savvy. They play video games. They're used to computer simulations. The younger the buyer, the better it works. But it still works at high price points, with older buyers. We just sold a \$4 million condo totally online.

You still need good sales people, but less time. Online, a sales agent can meet 25 prospects a day, not five. We're looking for builders with guts to go totally virtual, without building even a sales office. We're doing it on a project in Belize.

## John Rymer: Model homes a must

The Internet has enormous impact on the way we sell houses, but it's a tool in the process — not a one-stop shop for purchasing a new home. Two-thirds of customers will use the Web in their search. But like a first date, their goal is to identify potential matches — not make a life-changing decision on the first encounter.

### The Internet has its greatest sales success in three kinds of industries:

- Services such as banking, stock trading or travel
- Manufactured products and shopping for identical items such as TVs
- Merchandisers with generous return policies, such as Amazon

### New homes are different because:

- All homes are unique.
- Builders have an uneven reputation for quality.
- Buying a new home is significantly affected by emotion.
- No builder is willing to offer a full money-back guarantee.

Model homes show the builder's quality, which customers can see and touch. And on-site sales professionals nurture the emotional connection. Both are vital. They work together. There are easier ways to reduce costs than depending on Internet sales. **PB**



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# Community Associations as a Friend

Builders with communities that have homeowner associations face unique challenges and risks. We offer best practices to set up an association that succeeds.

**By Mark Jarasek, Senior Editor, E-Media**

*Photo: Town & Country Homes*

## (Not Foe)

Lifestyle: it's a buzzword tossed around among home builders and developers to promote their housing communities, whether they're targeting growing families or active adults. It's not surprising considering lifestyle communities have proven to be quite popular with these target markets.

Creating a lifestyle environment typically calls for substantial amenities: clubhouses, pools, tennis courts, workout facilities, walking trails and other perks an imaginative builder includes. It also calls for a self-sustaining community. After all, someone will need to be in charge of taking care of all those fine and fancy amenities after the builder has packed up his tools and moved on to the next project.

A builder's reputation, and possibly even the entire company, is at risk if it does not properly set up the reserves, governance documents and other essentials for the community association.

When these types of communities are created, it's the builder's or developer's responsibility to establish the association that will manage and maintain the community's common elements.

At any point in the process, no building company wants members of a community to band up against it, whether for construction defects, inadequate association reserve funding





**AMENITIES** found at Town & Country Homes' Churchill Club community include a swimming pool just behind a private 8,400-square-foot clubhouse. The builder recently turned association control over to homeowners, who will now manage the community property.



or other grievances. A good transition from builder to community association control can minimize animosity and even lower the amount of lawsuits between the parties. The risks are real.

"The transition process can be fraught with miscommunication and misunderstanding, not to mention acrimony and even costly litigation," says attorney Ronald L. Perl, former president of the Community Association Institute Research Foundation.

There are nearly 300,000 association-governed communities in place today throughout the United States, but the learning curve remains, says one expert.

"Considering the evolution of community associations throughout the United States and the explosion in the use of this type of residential ownership over the past 15 years, it may seem hard to believe that we are still deeply imbedded in the learning curve of how to plan, build and turn over these types of communities to the new homeowners with minimal confrontation and subsequent litigation," writes Mitchell H. Frumkin, president of engineering consulting firm Kipcon, in a white paper prepared for a 2008 International Builders' Show presentation titled "Removing the Risks in Developing a Community Association."

Frumkin also observes in his white paper that builders' and developers' efforts over the past five years for a more proactive approach to the transition process have been able to minimize the risks commonly associated with these self-sustaining communities.

Ray Blankenship, area vice president for K. Hovnanian-owned Town & Country Homes, says that some of the pitfalls between builder and association can be related to governing documents, including rules, bylaws and declarations and — perhaps even more so — money.

"As a builder, you want to keep the association dues as low as possible to help your sales effort, but if you go too low, you leave the homeowners with little to no reserves and possibly a deficit

## CASE STUDY: TRANSITION OF THE CHURCHILL CLUB COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

TOWN & COUNTRY HOMES, a K. Hovnanian company that has been building homes and developing communities in the Chicago area for more than 50 years, successfully transitioned its Churchill Club community, which comprises single-family homes, townhomes and condominiums in Oswego, Ill. Ray Blankenship, area vice president of Town & Country Homes, provides a step-by-step process to establish governing associations in the communities it builds.



1. Bids are solicited from three established association management companies.
2. Once bids are received, a company is chosen and a budget is established. Budgets can vary greatly based on profile of the community: the type of amenities, the amount of open space and whether it is a single-family, townhome or condominium community.
3. Rules and regulations, as well as a means to enforce them, are established. All of this is done before the sales office opens.
4. A board of directors is created, which comprises Town & Country staff who are directly responsible for community development.
5. The association becomes operable under the builder-controlled board of directors. The board manages and monitors issues and budgetary concerns as needed with the management company.
6. Once the community is 75 to 100 percent occupied, it turns it over to the homeowners. A transition meeting is scheduled by the management company 30 to 60 days out. A letter explaining what's going on and a request for individuals to run for the board is sent to the community homeowners.
7. When the transition meeting is held, a motion is made for the builder to step down and the homeowners take control. The new board is voted in. Town & Country Homes also holds a question and answer session with all attendees.
8. A follow-up meeting is scheduled between the new board and Town & Country Homes to go over outstanding issues and the budget.
9. Once Town & Country has relinquished control of the board, it's up to the new board to decide whether to retain the current management company, find a new one or manage the community themselves.

Blankenship says there is always something the new board doesn't like about the way the temporary board managed the association. He says that in some cases the new board may want to change certain rules and regulations; in other cases it's the way the budget was managed. Says Blankenship: "In almost every case, it gets worked out and they move on."





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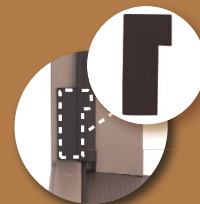
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once you turn it over to them,” Blankenship points out.

Blankenship says the best way to combat these issues is to establish a realistic budget that works and provide guidance for the community association in the early years. In addition, all documents related to the community should be provided to the home buyers early in the process, “so they know what they are getting into.”

In his white paper, Frumkin names the three most common risks in dealing with community association: deficient construction, inadequate budgeting and inaccurate governing documents — almost an exact echo of what those out in the field say.

### A set-up for success

Frumkin says risk management techniques can minimize confrontation with new homeowners. The first step, he says, is establishing a risk management plan that addresses the risk areas throughout the entire process.

Builders and developers looking to be proactive in the creation of lifestyle communities have help. In 2004, The CAI Research Foundation, in partnership with NAHB, released a “Developer to Homeowner Best Practices Report.”

The free report, which can be downloaded from the CAI Research Foundation or NAHB Web sites, provides guidelines and case studies designed to help communities transition from builder to community association control. Topics covered include transition issues such as construction, governance, document preparation, communications, maintenance of common property, financial control, budgets, litigation, engineering reports and insurance.

“We worked with our partners to develop a resource that can help builders and homeowners avoid some of the most

## COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS: A FORCE IN AMERICAN HOUSING

- About 13 percent of residential housing in the U.S. is within some form of a community association.
- There are currently 295,700 association-governed communities throughout the U.S.
- More than 23.8 million housing units exist within association-governed communities in the U.S.
- More than 58.8 million residents live in association-governed communities.
- More than 1.7 million Americans serve on a community association board, with close to 400,000 participating as committee members.
- The estimated real-estate value of all homes in community associations is close to \$4 trillion, approximately 205 of the value of all U.S. residential real-estate.
- Community association boards maintain investment accounts of more than \$35 billion for the long-term maintenance and replacement of commonly held property.
- Some of the largest community-managed associations in the U.S. are in Columbia, Md.; Reston, Va.; Valencia, Calif.; Summerlin, Nev.; and Highlands Ranch in Highlands, Colo.

Source: The Community Associations Institute

common mistakes,” Pearl points out.

Smart builders might want to tap into these resources. And they can make themselves look real good in the eyes of any new homeowner board if they also make those individuals aware of best practices resources. **PB**

## Community Associations Institute – A Resource for Home Builders and Community Association Board Members

*“For better and worse, the threat of litigation exists in almost every part of society, and the community association industry is no different,” says CAI Spokesperson Frank Rathbun. But it doesn’t have to be that way, he says.*

*“The more people understand and incorporate best practices, the less likely they are to encounter problems, some of which do have the potential for litigation. Best practices can help developers and homeowners avoid common mistakes,” Rathbun says.*

*If they aren’t already, home builders*

*involved in the development of self-sustaining communities might want to become familiar with the Community Associations Institute and its foundation.*

*“Those who take advantage of CAI and foundation tools and resources will put themselves in a better position to create, inspire and sustain better, more effective communities,” Rathbun says.*

CAI is a national membership organization “dedicated to fostering vibrant, competent, harmonious common-interest communities.” It provides education, tools and resources to people who govern

*communities and the professionals who support them.*

The Foundation for Community Association Research supports the CAI. The foundation is a non-profit organization that conducts research, educates and offers other resources for those involved in residential community association governance and management.

Anyone interested in CAI resources or membership can call their toll-free number, 888/ 224-4321, or visit its Web site at [www.caionline.org](http://www.caionline.org).



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# WEE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE

As practical as it is charming, the weeHouse is the brainchild of Alchemy Architects in St. Paul, Minn. WeeHouses are modular structures with sustainable features such as bamboo flooring, fiber-cement siding, in-floor heating and Low-E windows. They range from wee (341 square feet) to not so wee (1,386 square feet) and are priced from \$125 to \$200 per square foot. Alchemy sells most of the little houses to consumers and recommends they work with local contractors on foundations and permitting/zoning issues. But if you're interested in doing a weeHouse development, they'd love to talk to you. Take a virtual tour at [www.weehouses.com](http://www.weehouses.com).

*Photography by Alchemy Architects*



## INSIDE

Spotlight on talent: The National Sales and Marketing Awards. [ page 53 ]



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\* Based on a comparison of a 2008 Chevy Kodiak C4500/C5500 2WD 60" CA to 2008 Ford F-450/F-550 2WD 60" CA. Vehicle shown with equipment from an independent supplier. ©2008 GM Corp.

 **AN AMERICAN  
REVOLUTION**



By Felicia Oliver, Senior Editor

# GOING FOR GOLD

The National Sales and Marketing Award is the ultimate pat on the back for the best work in new-home sales and marketing. Individual sales and marketing professionals; home builders and associates; and sales and marketing councils all get to share in the limelight and accolades.

**G** These award winners prove that it can still be done – that builders can create ad campaigns, promotional events and marketable, well-merchandised home designs that will grab the attention of both home buyers and industry professionals. One gold winning promotion laughed in the face of mainstream media naysayers and built a successful regional campaign with the tagline: “It’s a Great Time to Buy.”

It’s worth mentioning that John Laing Homes did particularly well this year, winning 11 gold awards – the highest aware in the program – among several divisions. But many smaller regional and local builders came away with recognitions and bragging rights as well.

As always, there are lessons to be learned from the gold winners. Everyone can take away something: how to successfully market a luxury community built on an urban brownfield, how to get buyers to pay more money for less space when you exceed their design expectations or how to just make a simple floor plan sing. The housing market is challenging almost everywhere, and many gold winners have had less than stellar sales overall.

But the recognition a winning project brings is worth the time, effort and – yes, in some cases – the cost to execute it well. What can you do differently this year to win gold? Read what these winners did and get inspired.



# Icon at Playa Vista, 90094



**G**o Hollywood — or get pretty darn close. There are swimming pools, but to see movie stars, homeowners will have to load up the Range Rover, grab a map of celebrity homes and knock on the door.

Playa Vista is the first new community on the posh Westside of Los Angeles in more than 50 years, according to Icon at Playa Vista builder Laing Luxury Homes. Besides being in close proximity to Hollywood, Playa Vista is on the former site of Howard Hughes' aerospace empire. By the mid-1990s, the former aircraft hangars had been renovated into Hollywood sound stages. Scenes from movies such as "Titanic," "What Women Want," and "End of Days" have been filmed on location at Playa Vista.

Icon at Playa Vista offers 62 luxury single-family detached townhomes and duplexes clustered around the new Icon Park (The judges felt that although the community is a hybrid of both attached and detached homes, all are built on condo plats, so Attached Community of the Year was the most appropriate category). This community gives buyers the opportunity to own something new, spacious and luxurious in

an established area. It even has its own zip code: 90094.

"For us as a builder, it's the first sort of urban project that we've done," says Pete Carmichael, director of sales and marketing for Laing Luxury Homes. "It's still technically a single-family detached home, but it's on a lot and it's tall and narrow — more like an urban home."

"You can drive in for the weekend, park your car and you don't have to get back into your car for the rest of the weekend," says Erica Wolter, marketing coordinator at Laing Luxury. "You can walk to the local parks or to the local coffee bean. It's a complete community."

Icon offers an array of elevations ranging from Spanish to transitional. It features floor plans spanning from about 3,200 to over 3,700 square feet with two to five bedrooms and up to four-car garages. The homes have large formal and informal areas, family kitchens and master suites. Media rooms, hobby areas, home offices or guest suites are optional.

The success of Icon is a result of patience and perseverance. It took about 20 years to get entitled, and complications arose on a couple of environmental fronts. It was adjacent to





a wetlands area, and some methane was found underground. Though challenging from both a budget, operational and marketing standpoint, these obstacles were eventually overcome.

Icon also won gold for Best Landscape Design for an attached product. "Despite the small landscape areas, the use of unique paving materials, plant textures and custom designed features help create an intimate feeling," says Craig Delahooke, landscape manager with Laing Luxury.

And Icon won gold for Best Detached Floor Plan Between \$1 Million and \$2 million for its Plan 3. (More about this win in the April issue of our sister publication *Custom Builder*.)

**Project:** Icon at Playa Vista, Playa Vista, Calif.

**Builder:** Laing Luxury, Newport Beach, Calif.

**Architect:** JZMK Architects, Irvine, Calif.

**Interior Designer:** Meridian Interiors, Costa Mesa, Calif.

**Ad Agency:** The Roxburgh Agency, Costa Mesa, Calif.

**Number of units:** 62

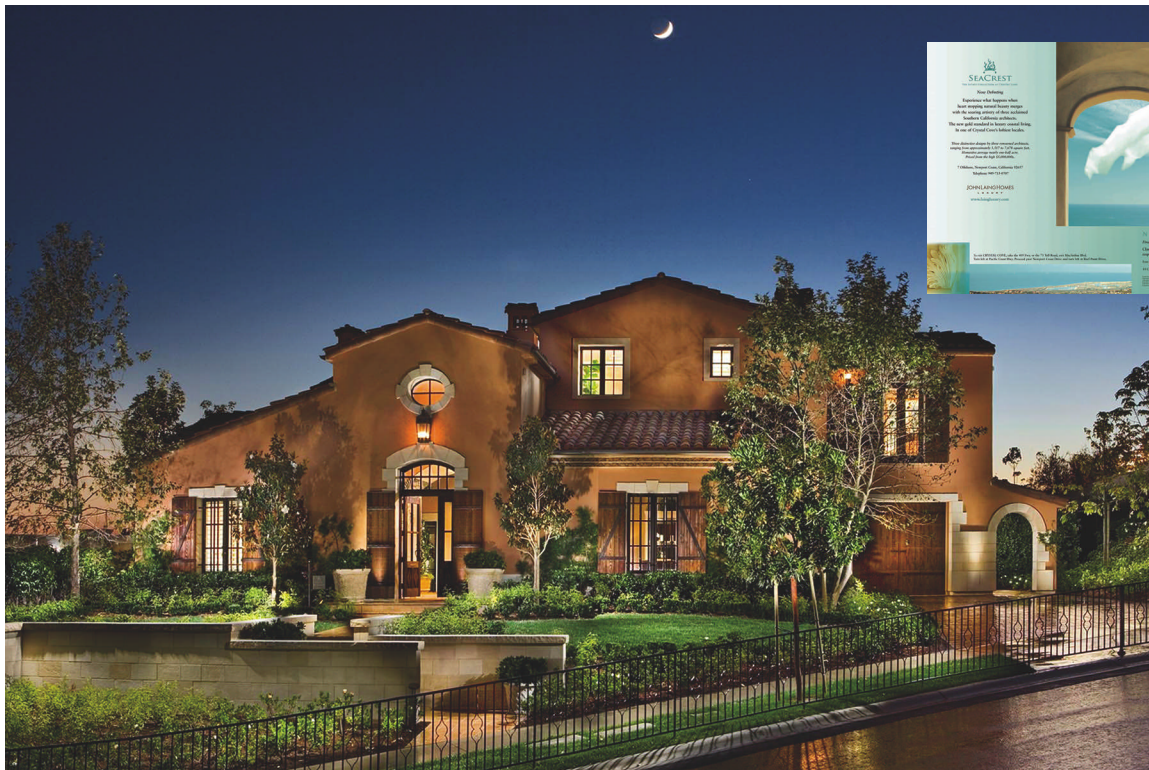
**Price range of units:** \$1,614,000 to \$1,969,000

**Square footage of units:** 3,328 to 3,697 square feet

**Photography:** Eric Figge Photography, Irvine, Calif.



# A Production Home Customized to the Nth Degree



**C**rystal Cove is a master-planned community in the Newport Coast of California with a mix of conventional production homes, production estate homes and custom homes. Laing Luxury Homes' Seacrest is part of the Estate Collection — 29 multi-million dollar homes with sweeping ocean views.

The oversized Seacrest home sites average 18,600 square feet. The homes themselves measure approximately 5,517 to 7,678 square feet. Buyers are given a choice of elevations from three different architects, making them highly custom.

"Seacrest really is a half step down from the custom program and two steps up from the production programs," says Pete Carmichael, director of sales and marketing at Laing Luxury. "The level of finish among all the fixtures and different amenities within the house is top quality. It's the kind of thing that I

don't think you'd see in another production program anywhere across the country."

Carmichael says advertising Seacrest posed a real challenge. "Should you be advertising at all when you've got a program that you're selling for \$7 million?" says Carmichael.

The successful ad, which also won gold for Best Color Ad, plays off the idea that each home can be customized;

it's the buyer's own personal work of art. In the background, you can see the back loggia of the home with arched pillar supports. One of the elevations, The White Residence, also won gold for Best Single Family Detached Floor Plan Over \$2 million and will be featured in the April issue of *Custom Builder*.

Seacrest is sold out but not closed out; they are working on the last escrows. If this all goes according to plan, Carmichael expects close out by the first quarter of 2008.

**Project:** Seacrest, Newport Coast, Calif.

**Builder:** Laing Luxury, Newport Beach, Calif.

**Architect:** Ade Collie at EBTA Architects, Irvine, Calif.; Bob White at Ritner Architectural Group, Newport Beach; and Robert Hidey or Robert Hidey Architects, Irvine, Calif.

**Interior Designer:** Meridian Interiors, Irvine, Calif.

**Ad Agency:** The Roxburgh Agency, Costa Mesa, Calif.

**Number of units:** 29

**Price range per unit:** Around \$7 million

**Square footage of units:** Approx. 5,517 to 7,678

**Photography:** Eric Figge Photography, Irvine, Calif.



# Designed to Sell

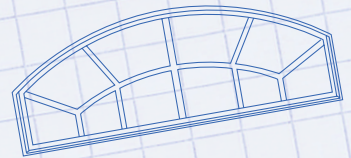
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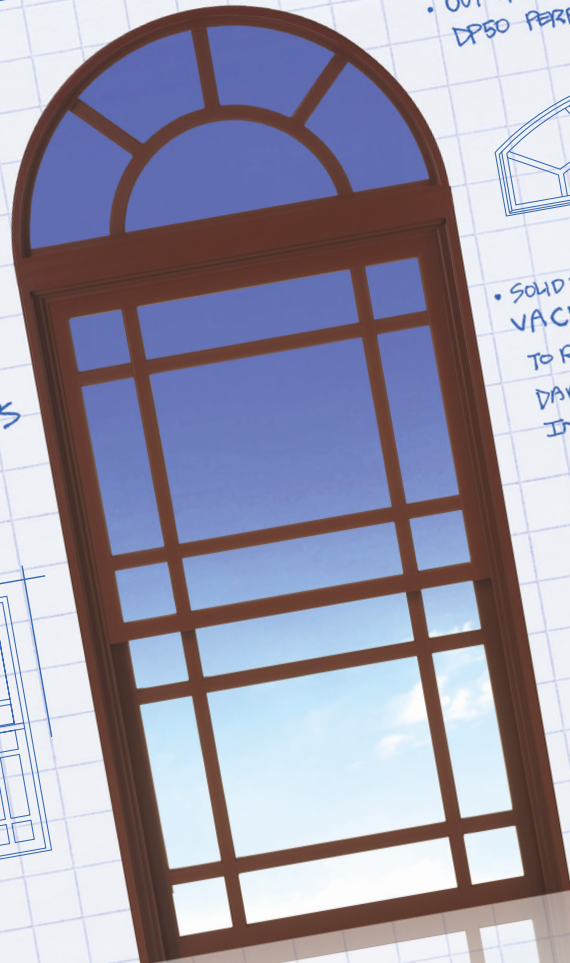
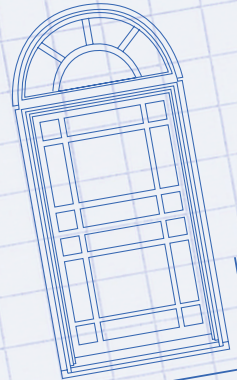
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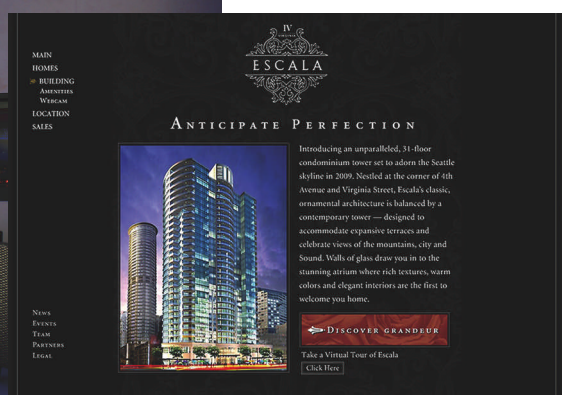
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**E**scala is an uncommon product in the local Seattle market place and in most places across the country — an exclusively affluent, large condominium estate building. The homes start at \$500,000 and go well above \$10 million.

“This floor plan is unique to the market and unique to most condominiums in that the elevator actually opens onto your own private foyer,” says Dean Jones, president and CEO at Realogics in Seattle, the marketing firm for Escala. “It’s like having your own elevator, as opposed to the typical dormitory approach that a lot of condominiums, even luxurious ones, still take. And it features tremendously large balconies — major terraces that in some cases are as large as the backyard of someone’s prior home.”

Escala is huge at 275 units, 30 stories but manages to exclude the exclusivity of a private estate. Great effort was made to create a sense of elegance, grandeur and entitlement in everything, from the floor plans to marketing tools such as the Web site, which also won gold. Escala also won gold for a buyers’ retention promotional event hosted by the operator of a private social club that will be located in the building. The event took place before contract conversions and was

effective in closing the deal.

Jones says differentiation and a target market unaffected by subprime lending were two keys to success.

“There wasn’t really any value engineering,” says Jones. “I would argue that building would never get built again in this current market.”

“We’re over 25 percent sold with over \$80 million in pre-sales,” says Jones. “And that’s on a partial release of inventory. Our developer is very comfortable where the product sits in the market. We have two years left to build the building.”

**Project:** Escala, Seattle

**Builder:** LEXAS Companies, Seattle

**Architect:** Thoryk Architecture/Mulvanny G2 Architecture, San Diego

**Ad Agency:** Realogics, Seattle

**Web site designer:** Phinney/Bischoff Design House, Seattle

**Number of units:** 275

**Price range per unit:** Mid-\$500,000 to more than \$11 million

**Square footage of unit:** 2,500

**Photography:** Kathryn Barnard, Seattle





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# You Never Get a Second Chance To Make A First Impression



**S**outhshore was the first community to come out of a partnership formed between John Laing Homes and Village Homes back in 1999. The goal was to build an outstanding design and landscape program that would catch the attention of potential buyers immediately.

The centerpiece of the community is the Lake House, a recreational facility located on Senac Lake, a water system that runs through parks. Several models and parks were also completed before potential buyers came to visit.

"People could see the difference as they drove into the community" says Barb Anderson, marketing director for Laing/Village. "To have that type of a multi-million dollar facility put into place so early on in a project is not the norm. The partners really wanted to create that first impression right from the get go."

The "Wanted" campaign direct mail piece, which also won gold, was an engaging means of communicating events and announcements during the year to Southshore's interest

list, called the Insiders Club.

"Are you a big fish story teller or a Veranda lounge?" says Ander-

son. "People have to go online and take a quiz, and they determine based on their personality type which category they fit into.

"The intent," she adds, "was to communicate that our community welcomes all breaths of life — different, unique individuals and a variety of personalities."

**Project:** Southshore, Aurora, Colo.

**Builder/Architect/Interior Designer:** Laing/Village, Centennial, Colo.

**Ad Agency:** Greenhaus, San Diego

**Number of units:** 2,600

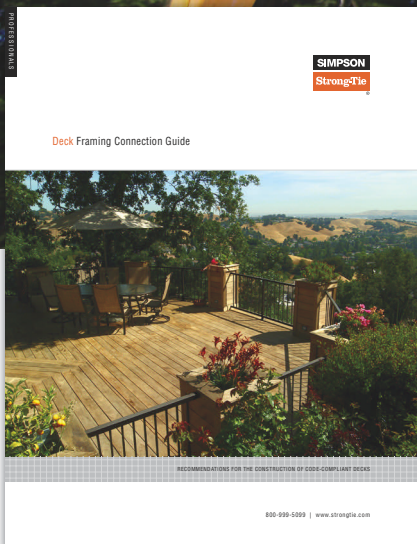
**Price of units:** Low \$300,000s to high \$500,000s

**Size of community:** 803 acres

**Photography:** AronPhoto.com, Denver



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A growing number of deck failures have emphasized the need to build decks to meet code requirements just like any other structure. To help design structurally safe, code-compliant decks Simpson Strong-Tie introduces our new Deck Framing Connection Guide. The guide recommends structural connectors and provides best practice guidance based upon specific building codes.

Understanding the critical connections on a deck has never been easier.

To request a copy of the Deck Framing Connection Guide call (800) 999-5099 or visit [www.strongtie.com/codeguides](http://www.strongtie.com/codeguides).

For FREE info go to <http://pb.ims.ca/5643-22>



# Veer Off the Path to Success



**T**he builder and architect took the road less traveled with Veer — a loft building located in the South Lake Union neighborhood of Seattle — and that seems to have made the difference.

South Lake Union is an up and coming “funky” area, according to Vulcan Real Estate Marketing Director Megan Murphy. In addition to several creative, established business enterprises, Amazon.com recently announced it’s coming to the neighborhood.

“There are several businesses in the area that are independently owned, interesting and really creative and unique,” says Murphy. “With Veers Lofts, we wanted to blend in with that atmosphere.”

They came up with the name Veer because it characterized the target market, the non-traditionalist: the graphic designer, professional skateboarder or even an accountant who plays with a rockabilly band on the weekend. At some point they had a choice of going the traditional route or veering off the beaten path.

“An unconventional person is going to move into a place that’s a bit more interesting, not a traditional two-bedroom, one-bath floor plan,” says Murphy. “It’s a big open space that you can create and personalize for yourself.”

Murphy says the graphic design team that designed the logo — DEI Creative — was their target market, so they really understood this project. The second “e” in the logo, which also won gold, changes to adapt to the background or materials surrounding it. Like Veer’s target market, it does the unexpected.



**Project:** Veer, Seattle

**Builder:** Vulcan Real Estate, Seattle

**Architect:** Johnson Architects, Seattle

**Ad Agency:** DEI Creative, Seattle

**Number of units:** 99

**Price range of units:** Mid \$200,000s to high \$600,000s

**Square footage of units:** 565 to 1,060 square feet

**Rendering:** Vulcan Real Estate, Seattle





## The most impressionable art is behind the wall



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EFFICIENT

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Saving today's energy-conscious consumers up to 50% on their energy bills makes Icynene a highly attractive investment. And it delivers incremental cost savings for remodelers too. Icynene provides remodelers with an airtight solution to superior building envelope performance, which can be achieved in fewer steps, saving both time and money.



**The Icynene Insulation System®**  
Healthier, Quieter, More Energy Efficient®

Icynene introduces its Builder Advantage Marketing Support Program, designed to help you sell your Healthier, Quieter, More Energy Efficient® homes. For more information about this program, visit [Icynene.com/insulateright.aspx](http://Icynene.com/insulateright.aspx)

For FREE info go to <http://pb.ims.ca/5643-57>



**GOLD WINNER / Best Single-Family Detached Floor Plan, \$400,000 to \$650,000**

## East Coast Dresses West Coast for Success

**T**oll Brothers took a popular floor plan used in its East Coast division and modified it for the Colorado market. The Silverton is featured in Beacon Point, a community of 68 estate homes bordering the Aurora Reservoir.

“It was easy to modify the elevations and outside façades to be more of a Colorado style,” says John Vitella, Colorado division president for Toll Brothers.

The floor plan has a two-story foyer and an attractive curved stair case in the center hall that leads into an open dining room, gourmet kitchen and solarium. The two-story family room features a wall of windows that takes advantage of the view. The turned layout enables this large home of 3,963 square feet to fit onto smaller lots because of the reduced front setback exception.

“It just flows really well,” Vitella says. “It has a nice feel when you walk in the room.”



**Project:** The Silverton, Aurora, Colo.

**Builder:** Toll Brothers at Beacon Point, Englewood, Colo.

**Architect:** VTBS – Van Tilburg, Banvard & Soderbergh, Denver; and Toll Architecture

**Interior Designer:** Possibilities for Design, Denver

**Ad Agency:** Toll Brothers Advertising/Marketing and Web Department, Horsham, Pa.

**Price of unit:** \$548,975 base

**Square footage of unit:** 3,963

**Photography:** E. L. Imagery – Eric Lucero, Highlands Ranch, Colo.

**GOLD WINNER / Best Single-Family Detached Floor Plan, \$400,000 and Under**

## Making the Basic Box Beautiful

**D**esigning an appealing box-style home with just the right detail and options at a price amenable to first-time home buyers isn't easy. Trend Homes did it with its Plan 852.

The home has a two-car garage; three bedrooms; living and dining areas; and a bonus room and den option. It's in a gated community with pools and a lake and is available for under \$250,000. The plan includes a Country French, Italianate and Spanish elevation.

“The Spanish probably doesn't really compliment a French colonial,” says Dave Maldonado, architect and partner at the KTGy Group, Irvine, Calif., who worked on this plan, “but it enabled Trend Homes to come in with a price sensitive innovation because the architecture for a Spanish style is very simple in nature.”

**Project:** The Lakes at Anney, Gilbert, Ariz.

**Builder/Architect:** Trend Homes of Arizona, Gilbert, Ariz.

**Architect:** KTGy Group, Irvine, Calif.

**Interior Designer:** Artistry by Design, Gilbert, Ariz.

**Price of units:** \$219,950 base

**Square footage of model:** Approximately 2,065

**Photography:** Larry John Wright, Mesa, Ariz.





# Decking, Evolved

Our decks go equally well with red wine, BBQ sauce or ketchup.

First there was wood, then composites, and finally there's the next generation of decking. Presenting AZEK Deck, a superior decking option that is refining - and redefining - the very notion of building a deck. Engineered with Procell™ Technology, AZEK Deck virtually eliminates the shortfalls associated with wood and composite decking so you can forget the stains and mold problems that are common with the leading composite decks.

Built to withstand a houseful of household objects, homeowners can actually live on their AZEK Deck. Spilled wine, fruit punch, even hamburger grease are no match for AZEK Deck's stain resistance. And since it's scratch resistant also, you won't have to worry about scuffing it up during installation and AZEK Deck will keep looking great for years.

AZEK Building Products has more than 20 years of experience in cellular pvc manufacturing. We make AZEK Trim, the number one brand of trim, and AZEK Moulding. And now, we're bringing our leadership and innovation to AZEK Deck.

**To see why AZEK Deck is the solid choice for building a better deck, visit [azek.com](http://azek.com) or call 877-ASK-AZEK.**



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Deck

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**AZEK®**  
Moulding

For FREE info go to <http://pb.ims.ca/5643-23>



## Rustic Charm Goes Contemporary



**T**he Colter model at Trapper's Camp is for the luxury resort second-home buyer — someone looking for rustic mountain architecture mixed with cutting edge design.

"We took the western, contemporary sophisticated direction with the interior and juxtaposed it with the log and chink," says Hillary Reed, interior designer and principal of HRI Design. "They really complement each other well."

These homes average about 2,400 square feet and sell for at least \$1.6 million in a market filled with 5,000 to 10,000 square foot mega chalets. "We were trying to appeal to the emotion and just get back to the basics."

Twenty of the first 24 units leased sold. Five duplicate furnishing packages of what she did for the models have been requested.

**Project:** Trapper's Camp at Promontory, Park City, Utah  
**Builder:** CSE at Promontory, Park City, Utah  
**Architect:** Downing Thorpe James, Boulder, Colo.  
**Interior Design:** HRI Design, Littleton, Colo.  
**Price of units:** \$1.6 million  
**Square footage of unit:** 2,406  
**Merchandising cost per square foot:** \$55  
**Photography:** Mark Boisclair Photography, Phoenix

## A Small Space Magnified By Design

**A**t 1,200 square feet, this deluxe two-bedroom high-rise Chicago condo looks anything but cramped thanks to thoughtful, creative design.

Interior designer Joanne Siciliano of Riha Design Group in Chicago chose chocolate brown and cream as the color palette to create a modern look with clean lines. Making the entry hallway and the dining area look airy was particularly tricky.

"In the hallway we created an entire wall of interesting contemporary mirrors ... to really open up that corridor," says Riha. "In

the dining room, instead of using chairs around the dining table, we did benches. Without the [chair] back, your eye kind of sees right through and makes it feel more spacious."

**Project:** XO Condominiums, Chicago  
**Builder:** Kargil Development, Chicago  
**Architect:** Lucien LaGrange Architects, Chicago  
**Interior Design:** Riha Design Group, Chicago  
**Price of units:** \$250,000 to \$1 million  
**Square footage of unit:** 1,200  
**Merchandising cost per square foot:** \$115.94  
**Photography:** Amber Frederiksen Photography, Bonita Springs, Fla.



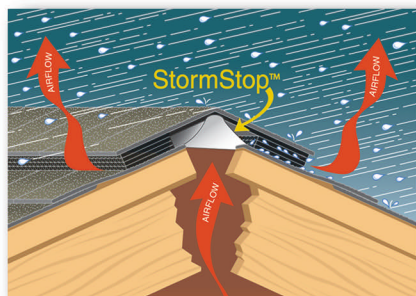


*Featured Users: Riverside Homes and Start to Finish Roofing - Portland, OR*

# Trimline Ridge Vent is a Good Value!

*Trimline® Ridge Vents offer Quality Performance, Great Appearance and Quick Installation.*

**T**rimline Ridge Vents provide superior ventilation by creating a balanced system that continuously releases hot, moist attic air while drawing fresh air through soffit vents. Creating a balanced, continuous ventilation system increases a home's total energy-efficiency while extending the life expectancy of its roof material – a great selling point for your customers. Engineered from a unique corrugated plastic



material, Trimline vents fit a variety of roof styles including shingle, cedar, tile and metal. Designed to vent at the ridge – the hottest point of the roof – the Trimline vent system has the added benefit of creating a smooth roofline, eliminating the unsightly louver vents commonly found on many homes.



## Trimline is the Best Ridge Vent

Kendall Klimper, president of Start to Finish Roofing in Portland, OR, says that Riverside Homes exclusively uses Trimline Ridge Vents on all new construction homes. Klimper says "We are convinced that the Trimline Ridge Vent is the best ridge vent and provides great results when the ventilation is balanced at both the ridge and the soffit." Klimper says whenever he presents Trimline Ridge Vent to a builder he educates them on the benefits of using Trimline, stating the quality performance, great appearance and quick installation.

## Trimline Adds Value to the Home

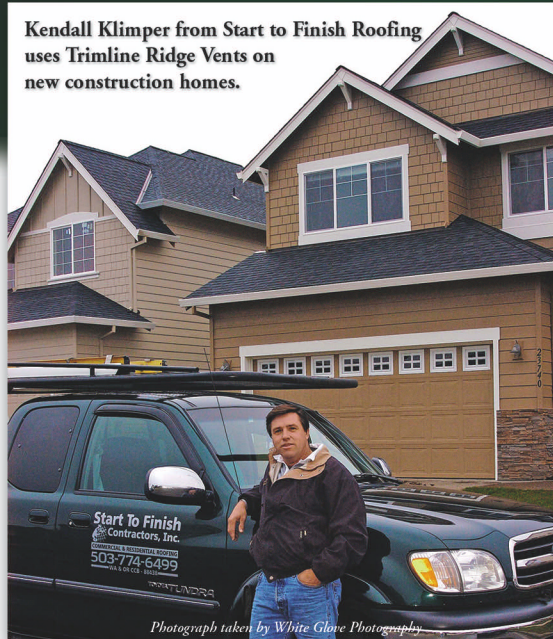
Klimper says houses are being built so they are sealed tight these days and become a moisture collector. However, ridge vents help move airflow throughout the house, including the attic. The builders that work with Klimper know that Trimline Ridge Vents protect the investment of the home and add value to the entire house. Klimper believes in the Trimline Ridge Vent product so much that he promotes the product to builders and distributors in the Northwest.

Trimline is so confident that builders everywhere will be satisfied with its ridge vents, it offers a limited lifetime warranty. Trimline is the most certified product in the industry, meeting all building code certification requirements for Miami-Dade County, ICBO, BOCA, TDI, and UL Class A or C.

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Kendall Klimper from Start to Finish Roofing uses Trimline Ridge Vents on new construction homes.



Photograph taken by White Glove Photography

*"We are convinced that Trimline Ridge Vent is the best ridge vent and provides great results when the ventilation is balanced at both the ridge and the soffit."*

*Kendall Klimper  
Start to Finish Roofing*



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# Striking in Black and White



**O**nyx is a condominium project just outside Toronto in Mississauga, one of the fastest growing areas in Canada. In an area with tons of condominium projects, competition for attention is fierce; big signs with bold colors battle to see which will catch the public's eye.

"We looked around and saw that the only colors that aren't being used here are black and white," says Gerry Ryan, principal of G. Ryan Design. "We would stand out just because we weren't fighting with everybody else. That's where the name Onyx came from."

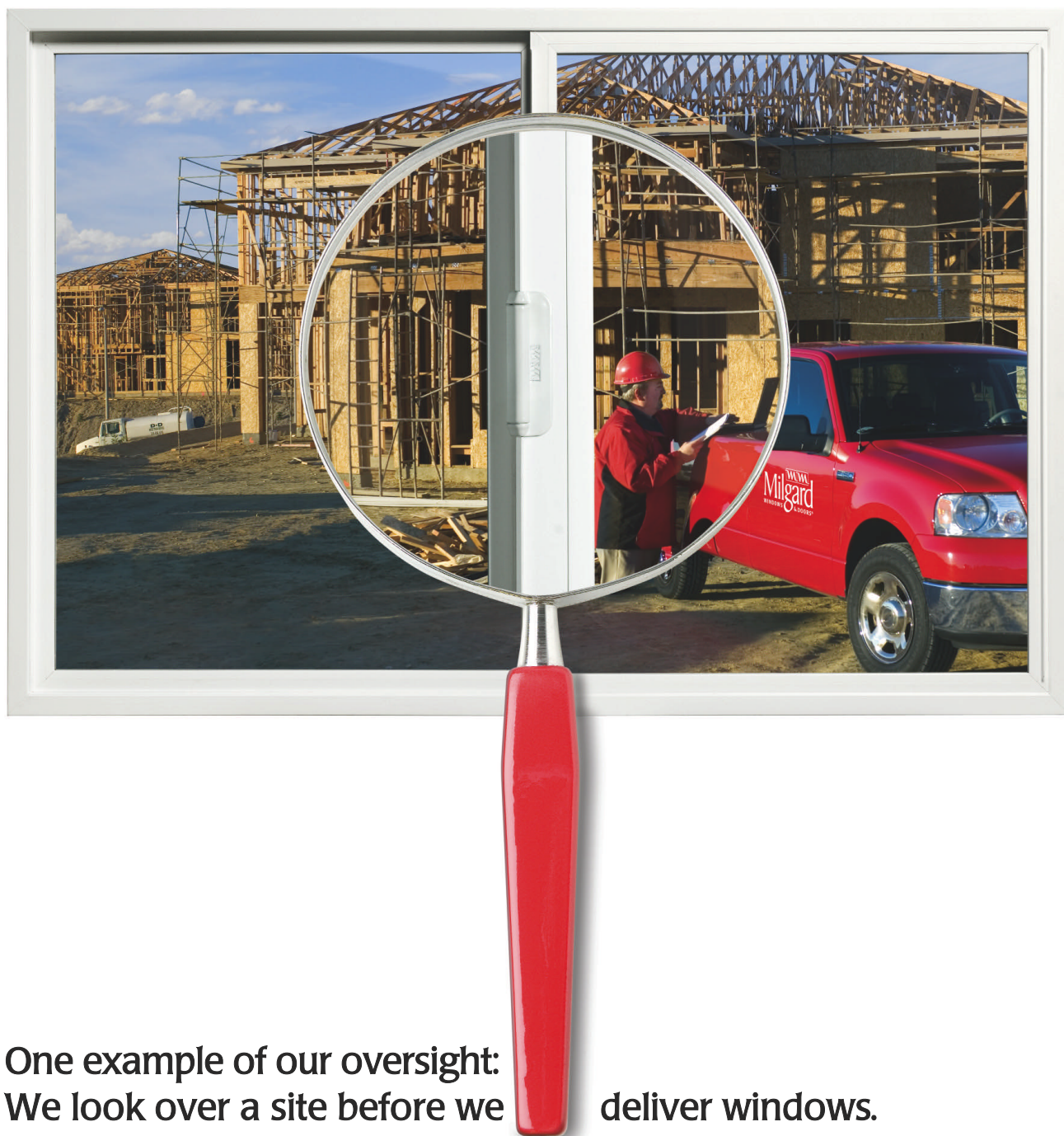
"The sales office had a lot of glass in front of it, and our signage was backlit, which made it even more different than the other guys just doing plywood signs," adds Ryan. "As you drove along the street you could see inside the sales office, so it was very inviting. You could see the model; you could see people walking around."

The brochure stands out by looking less like a housing brochure than a fashion magazine. "It was out of scale big ... with lots of lifestyle pictures of people filling double page spreads of the brochure. Again, it was something fresh for the area," Ryan says. "That was why we turned out to be a success. It was out of character [compared to] everyone else. It was fun, too."

**Builder:** Davies Smith Developments, Toronto  
**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** G. Ryan Design, Toronto







**One example of our oversight:  
We look over a site before we deliver windows.**

Why do more production builders work with Milgard? We focus on each and every detail. We visit the job site to make sure that you're ready for installation. Then, we contact you to confirm the delivery schedule. We even offer an optional Lock 'n Slide program, where Milgard technicians test out the windows, for example, making sure the screen is not damaged and fits properly. We'll make any needed adjustments, so nothing holds up your closing. We lock. We slide. We open. You close. Visit [milgard.com](http://milgard.com) or call 1.800.MILGARD.





## The Industry Fights Back


**T**he Northeast Florida Builders Association took up the gauntlet, combating the mainstream media's consistent slams on the housing industry.

"The 'It's a Great Time to Buy' campaign provided balanced perspective," says Tim Hamby, president of Renaissance Creative, the company that developed the campaign. "It rebutted local media's doom-and-gloom tactics by featuring online insights and analysis of housing market news and data, including industry experts relating national news headlines to local market conditions. The campaign helped change public perception, demonstrating that it is a great time to buy — possibly the best time ever."

More importantly, there seemed to be more careful, balanced real-estate reporting in the local city newspaper, he says.

"We received many notes of gratitude for and requests from other industry professionals to use the content from the site," says Hamby.

**Project:** "It's a Great Time to Buy" Campaign  
**Client:** Northeast Florida Builders Association  
**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** Renaissance Creative  
**Advertising budget:** \$285,000



**Why are they smiling?**

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## Thinking Inside The Box

**T**he Brand Box graphically demonstrates Milesbrand's four-step proprietary branding process. It was created to increase new business to offset reduced spending from existing clients due to market conditions.

"We created the Brand Box so that we could send anyone who is interested in talking to us actual examples of the deliverables we've done for other clients at each step of the process," says Dave Miles, president and founder of Milesbrand.

"It's almost like the Chinese dolls," says Miles, "where you go from the big doll to the little doll to one that's smaller and smaller. You open it up and you've got a red box, and on top of the box is an explanation of what you're receiving. You open the box up and you work through the brochure and all the steps. We've found this to be the most effective thing we've ever done to convey the value of the branding process and what we do."



**Project:** Milesbrand's Brand Box  
**Associate or Supplier:** Milesbrand, Denver  
**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** Milesbrand, Denver  
**Cost:** \$15,000





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DuPont™ Elvaloy®, from the family of DuPont™ polymers used as the basis of the world's best roofing membranes, is the brand leader with decades of proven performance in billions of square feet of roofing. Now, Elvaloy® is available in a new premium roofing underlayment that provides even more durable roof protection.

DuPont™ RoofLiner with Elvaloy® is a lightweight, easy-to-use roofing underlayment that offers superior tear- and UV-resistance, with improved water hold-out and better mold-resistance than roofing felt. In fact, just 1 roll of DuPont™ RoofLiner with Elvaloy® replaces 5 rolls of 30-lb felt, so you can provide excellent protection against leaks with just one trip up the ladder.

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# Gold Winners Not Featured

## Best Rookie Sales Person of the Year \*

**Gunmit Jaspal**, The Ryness Co., Newport Beach, Calif.

## Best Sales Person of the Year \*

**Charlie Hatter**, Pulte Homes, Fairfax, Va.

## Best Sales Team of the Year \*

**Donna Haas, Joanne Stump**, The Ryness Co., Newport Beach, Calif.

## Best Sales Manager of the Year \*

**Cynthia McPherson**, Landmark 24 Realty, Savannah, Ga.

## Marketing Director of the Year \*

**Susanne Day**, The Marketing Directors, New York

## Sales and Marketing Council of the Year – under 250 members

**Desert Sales & Marketing Council**, Palm Desert, Calif.

## Sales and Marketing Council of the Year – 250 to 500 Members

**Sales & Marketing Council of Southern California**, Mission Viejo, Calif.

## Sales and Marketing Council of the Year – over 500 Members

**Sales & Marketing Council of the Northeast Florida Builders Association**, Jacksonville, Fla.

## Best Graphic Continuity

**1010 Midtown**, Atlanta

**Builder:** Daniel Corporation, Atlanta

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** Milesbrand, Denver

## Best Brochure for a Community Priced \$400,000 to \$650,000

**Wilcove at Nocatee**, Ponte Vedra, Fla.

**Builder:** Centex Homes – North Florida Division, Jacksonville, Fla.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** The Robin Shepherd Group, Jacksonville, Fla.

## Best Brochure for a Community Priced \$650,000-\$1,000,000

**W Atlanta Downtown Hotel & Residences**

**Builder:** Barry Real Estate Companies, Atlanta

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** David Tufts and Betty Harbourt, The Marketing Directors, Atlanta and Sherman Advertising, Miami

## Best Brochure for a Community Priced Over \$1 Million

**Four Seasons Private Residences Toronto**

**Builder:** Menkes Developments

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** L.A. Inc., Toronto

## Best Brochure for a Resort Community Pacífico, Playas Del Coco, Costa Rica

**Builder:** The Jack Parker Corp., Fort Myers, Fla.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** B-Squared Corp., Naples, Fla.

## Best Brochure for a Master-Planned Community

**Backcountry**, Highlands Ranch, Colo.

**Builder/Developer:** Shea Homes, Colo.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** Milesbrand, Denver

## Best Brochure for a Home Building Company Allen Edwin Homes, Kalamazoo, Mich.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** Milesbrand, Denver

## Best Internet Marketing Campaign

**Linens-N-Things Promotions**

**Builder:** Kimball Hill Homes, Houston

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** Inhouse

## Best Digital Marketing Tool

**Park, Vision DVD**

**Builder:** Wakefield Development, Raleigh, N.C.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** Littleton Advertising & Marketing, Raleigh, N.C.

## Best Black & White Ad

**SummerGrove**, Newnan, Ga.

**Builder:** Pathway Communities, Atlanta

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** McRae Communications, Atlanta

## Best Corporate Combo Ad

## Three Generations Ad

**Builder:** Davidson Communities, Del Mar, Calif.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** Martin Stevers Design, El Cajon, Calif.

## Best Color Ad for a Master-Planned Community

**Versant**, Asheville, N.C.

**Developer:** Versant (??)

**Ad Agency:** Denmark (the agency), Atlanta

## Best Radio Commercial

**"Perfect Fit Living"**

**Builder:** John Laing Homes, Roseville, Calif.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** EMC Creative, Danville, Calif.

## Best Television Commercial

**Baldwin Park, "Achingly Beautiful"**

**Builder:** Baldwin Park Development, Orlando, Fla.

**Ad Agency:** TenUnited, Orlando, Fla.

## Best Overall Ad Campaign (Tie)

**Pacífico, Playas Del Coco, Costa Rica**

**Builder:** The Jack Parker Corporation, Fort Meyers, Fla.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** B-Squared Advertising, Naples, Fla.

AND

**"Perfect Fit Living"**

**Builder:** John Laing Homes, Roseville, Calif.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** EMC Creative, Danville, Calif.

## Best Community Service Project or Promotion

**Talega – "It's a Dog's Life"**

**Builder:** Talega Associates, San Clemente, Calif.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** The Roxburgh Agency, Costa Mesa, Calif.

## Best Marketing Campaign for a Green-Built Community

**Fallen Leaf at Riverbend**, Sacramento, Calif.

**Builder:** Treasure Homes, Roseville, Calif.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** Barcellona, Folsom, Calif.

## Best Web Site for a Builder

[www.frontierliving.com](http://www.frontierliving.com)





**Find Larry** Larry uses a Sprint Mobile Broadband router to get 40-story buildings off the ground. It lets him be in many places at once, with instant control of the job from his laptop. He can start a construction site immediately without waiting for T1s or other wire lines. See how many on-task Larrys you can find. Don't forget to count the Larry taking a lunch break. He might be eating, but he's still working. Learn how mobile broadband can help you now. [sprint.com/business](http://pb.ims.ca/5643-27)



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# Gold Winners Not Featured

**Builder:** Frontier Living, Thornton, Colo.

**Web Site Designer:** Cherry Creek Marketing Group

**Best Web Site for an Associate of the Building Industry**

**www.interactivate.com**

**Builder:** Interactivate, San Diego

**Web Site Designer:** Interactivate, San Diego

## Best Urban Sales Office

**Beyond the Sea Condominiums, Toronto**

**Builder:** Empire Communities, Thornhill, Ontario, Canada

**Interior Design:** Munge/Leung Design Associates, Toronto

## Best Suburban Sales Office

**The Tides, Crystal Cove, Newport Beach, Calif.**

**Builder/Architect:** Standard Pacific Homes, Irvine, Calif.

**Interior Design:** Pacific Dimensions, El Segundo, Calif.

## Best Sales Information Center

**South Lake Union Discover Center, Seattle**

**Builder:** Vulcan Real Estate, Seattle

**Architect:** Miller/Hull, Seattle

**Interior Design:** MICE North America, Tempe, Ariz.

**Ad Agency/PR Firm:** Fearey Group, Seattle

## Best Design Center

**The Landmark, The European Village of Homes, Greenwood Village, Colo.**

**Builder:** Integrated Builders, Dallas

**Builder/Architect:** Blue Architects, Denver

**Interior Design:** Mandil, Denver

**Landscape Designer:** Ouellette & Associates, Boulder

## Best Landscape Design for a Detached Community

**Tremezzo, Henderson, Nev.**

**Builder:** Pardee Homes, Los Angeles

**Landscape Architect:** SJA Inc., San Juan Capistrano, Calif.

## Best Interior Merchandising of a Model Priced

## Under \$400,000

**Madison Place, Plan 2, Fresno, Calif.**

**Builder:** The McCaffrey Group, Fresno, Calif.

**Architect:** Kevin L. Crook Architect, Irvine, Calif.

**Interior designer:** Creative Design Consultants, Costa Mesa, Calif.

## Best Interior Merchandising of a Model Priced \$650,000–\$1 Million

**Murano, Bertolini, Palm Springs, Calif.**

**Builder:** The Enterprise Companies, Chicago

**Architect:** James Cioffi Architects, Palm Springs, Calif.

**Interior designer:** Riha Design Group, Chicago

## Best Interior Merchandising of a Model Over \$1 Million

**The Tides, Residence 1, Crystal Cove, Newport Beach, Calif.**

**Builder/Architect:** Standard Pacific Homes, Irvine, Calif.

**Interior designer:** Pacific Dimensions, El Segundo, Calif.

## Best Single-Family Detached Home Priced \$650,000 to \$1 million

**Alcana at Escena, Residence Four, Palm Springs, Calif.**

**Builder:** Standard Pacific Homes, Palm Springs, Calif.

**Architect:** William Hezmalhalch Architects, Santa Ana, Calif.

## Best Single-Family Detached Home Priced \$1 million to \$2 million \*\*

**Icon at Playa Vista, Plan 3, Playa Vista, Calif.**

**Builder:** Laing Luxury Homes, Newport Beach, Calif.

**Architect:** JZMK Architects, Irvine, Calif.

## Best Single-Family Detached Home Priced Over \$2 million \*\*

**The White Residence at Seacrest, Costa Mesa, Calif.**

**Builder:** Laing Luxury Homes, Newport Beach, Calif.

**Architects:** Bob White in collaboration with the Ritner Group, Laguna Beach, Calif.

## Best Attached Home Plan Priced Under \$500,000

**Arts District Hyattsville, The Adams, Hyattsville, Md.**

**Builder:** EYA, Bethesda, Md.

**Architect:** Lessard Group, Vienna, Va.

## Best Attached Home Plan Priced Over \$500,000

**Vantage of Palo Alto, Plan 2, Palo Alto, Calif.**

**Builder:** Warmington Homes of California, San Ramon, Calif.

**Architect:** KTGy Group Inc., Irvine, Calif.

## Best One-of-a-Kind Home (Tie) \*\*

**Wine Country Residence, Paso Robles, Calif.**

**Builder:** Woody Woodruff Construction Company, Templeton, Calif.

**Architect:** Bassenian/Lagoni Architects, Newport Beach, Calif.

AND

**Tradewinds at Southshore, Aurora, Colo.**

**Builder:** John Laing Homes, Denver

**Architect:** Woodley Architectural Group, Highlands Ranch, Colo.

\* Will be featured in the March 24 issue of *Housing Giants*

\*\* Will be featured in the April issue of *Custom Builder*



Of course it goes on the wall; that's where art belongs.

The Electrolux ICON™ Double Wall Oven is functional art. It has the amazing ability to bake conventionally and by convection simultaneously. Its smooth stainless steel surface hides an integrated Wave-Touch™ control panel, the interior holds Smooth-Glide™ oven racks that move with the touch of a finger, and its wide glass surface gives a panoramic view of the foods inside. Available in a bold professional series and a gracefully styled designer series, the Electrolux ICON™ Double Wall Oven can help turn your next kitchen design into a neoclassic.

For more than 70 years Electrolux appliances have graced the kitchens of fine European homes and restaurants. Now they are available in the United States. To speak with a representative, call 800.365.1365. For more information, or to view the Electrolux ICON™ series on the Web, visit **[electroluxusa.com](http://electroluxusa.com)**.



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# Nationals 2008 Judges



**Jeffrey DeMure**

Jeffrey DeMure & Associates  
El Dorado Hills, Calif.

**Dan Green**

The Green Companies  
Newton, Mass.

**Steve Mackey**

Mackey & Company  
Naples, Fla.

**Jan Mitchell**

Sales & Marketing Ideas  
Pleasanton, Calif.

**Bob Posner**

Posner Advertising  
New York

**Deanna Sihon**

New Home Trends  
Mill Creek, Calif.

**Karen Richardson**

Kathy Andrews Interior Design  
Houston

**Ross Robbins**

Lee Evans Group/Shinn Consulting, Inc  
Littleton, Colo.

**Tom Roddel**

Roddel & Associates  
Tustin, Calif.

**Peter M. Mayer**

Judging Chairman  
Peter Mayer Productions

**Ann Ladewig**

NAHB/NSMC Liaison

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**FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:**

Jeffrey DeMure, Bob Posner, Steve Mackey, Karen Richardson, Jan Mitchell, Dan Green, Tom Roddel and Deana Sihon. Not pictured: Ross Robbins.



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# LOCK IT IN

Jeld-Wen's new MAGLock magnetic locking mechanism is a prime example of the innovations hitting the industry. The magnet lock technology is a first for the market and is now standard for the company's Premium Vinyl slider and single-hung vinyl windows.

*Photo courtesy of Jeld-Wen*

79

## INSIDE

Open up to the latest in windows and skylights [ *page 81* ]

All builders on deck: decking and patio materials you want to know [ *page 85* ]

Lean, mean and green home building concepts [ *page 87* ]



A man's head is shown in profile, looking upwards. On his forehead, there is a small model of a yellow construction vehicle, specifically a skid steer loader with a bucket, which appears to be weighing down on him.

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[ WINDOWS + SKYLIGHTS ]

# Crystal Clear



## Wood Works

The latest windows from Andersen Windows & Doors include the 400 series, which features pre-formed rigid vinyl PVC cladding. Sill members feature a solid wood core and the company's Fibrex composite material on the exterior. A factory-applied rigid vinyl anchor flange on the head, sill and the side of the outer frame help secure the window to the house.

**For FREE information, visit** <http://pb.ims.ca/5643-125>

## Low-E Ogee

You normally don't lump "historic" and "Low-E" together, but Kolbe does just that with the Ogee Direct Set windows. The windows have  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch of insulated glass with an argon gas fill to give the historic-looking windows a green kick. Performance divided lights, multiple grilles and a slew of custom wood species are included in the bonanza of options.

**For FREE information, visit** <http://pb.ims.ca/5643-126>



## Designed to Decorate

Made for all types of construction jobs, Pella's Designer Series collection of stylish windows and patio doors feature optional between-the-glass shades, blinds or decorative panels. The windows and patio doors also offer energy-efficient double- and triple-paned glass options, and many of the SKUs meet Energy Star requirements.

**For FREE information, visit** <http://pb.ims.ca/5643-127>



## Lock It Up

As the first company in the nation to introduce magnet lock technology for residential vinyl windows, Jeld-Wen's new MAGLock mechanism now comes standard on the company's Premium Vinyl slider and single-hung windows. The one-touch lock is easy to use and has an unobtrusive low-profile design.

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Today, we've grown to offer so much more than CPVC piping solutions. In addition to being the only global supplier of both CPVC and PEX piping technologies, our compounds can be used to produce weatherable fencing and siding materials, industrial systems, and even aircraft interiors. With all that product diversity together with our collective expertise, technical resources and rich history, we had to come up with a new name to describe everything that we now offer.

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**buildit**

[ WINDOWS + SKYLIGHTS ]

## Crystal Clear

### A Constitutional Change

Carrying a rather historic namesake, MW Windows & Doors' Jefferson Series is available in double-hung, casement/awning and picture windows and is complemented by a variety of accent windows and architectural shapes. The Jefferson series features a cellular PVC sash and frame with a two-piece sill, brick mold and blind stops.

For FREE information, visit <http://pb.ims.ca/5643-129>



### Beveled Beauty

The new Designer Select Bevel Series from Pittsburgh Corning features 11 patterns in a glass block form. They feature the company's VUE glass with bevel-like designs or a stipple pattern. All 11 products are available in 8- by 8- by 4-inch glass blocks.

For FREE information visit <http://pb.ims.ca/5643-130>

### Rubbed the Right Way

The crew from Medford, Wis., pulled out all the stops on Weather Shield Windows & Doors' push-out casement window. Its standard 4 $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch jamb thickness and push-out hinges with friction/stay devices keep the windows securely in place. Simulated divided light grille bars are available in putty-glazed or colonial profiles. Oil-rubbed bronze hardware comes standard.

For FREE information, visit <http://pb.ims.ca/5643-131>



### I Had a Vision

The engineers certainly had foresight with Visions 3000 single-hung windows. The windows combine the classic look of wood in premium vinyl. The sash glides within a 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch jamb, and the window has a traditional Brickmold profile with an integral J-channel. The 3000 windows sport fusion-welded corners, replacing unsightly squared-off appearances or overlapping frame and sash sections.

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# Introducing...

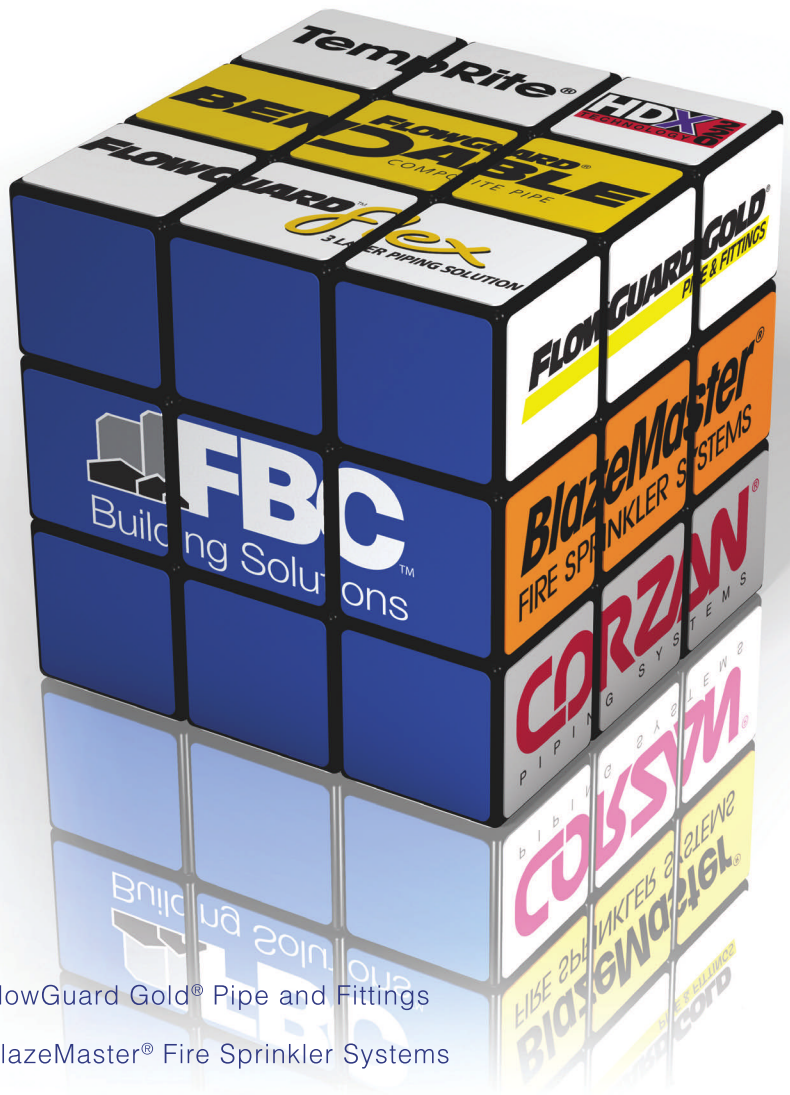
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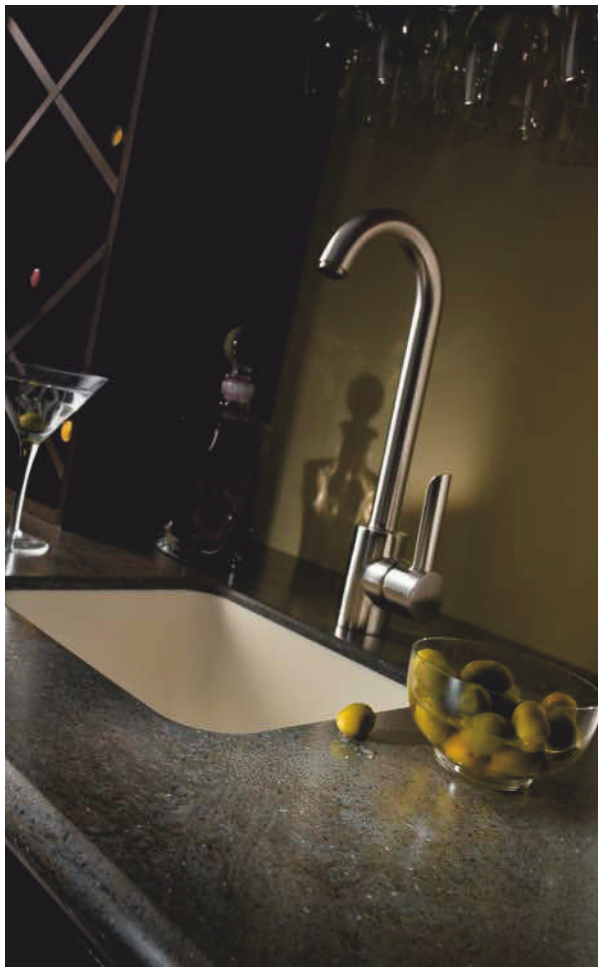
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[ DECKING + PATIO ]

# Decked Out

## Water Won't Cascade Here

If you're doing work on an elevated deck, consider installing this new drain system from McFarland Cascade. The DrySnap system is made of vinyl ceiling panels that collect and direct runoff way from the space below decks. The joist brackets attach to the bottom of the joist, eliminating inherent problems with inconsistent joist spacing.

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## Clash of the Titan

An expansion to Railing Dynamic's product line is the Titan Pro Rail system. The Pro Rail is a vinyl-clad aluminum rail consisting of boxed 6- or 8-foot railing sections and a choice of boxed structural posts with brackets pre-attached to accommodate a variety of applications. **For FREE information, visit <http://pb.ims.ca/5643-134>**



## Escape the Mundane

Homeowners want consistency and clean lines on their fences. FenceScape's new rail brackets bring just that; they are powder coated and color matched to the company's Mountain Cedar product line. The composite materials used are culled from reclaimed wood fibers and pure plastic resins made in a realistic, weather-resistant wood pattern.

**For FREE information, visit <http://pb.ims.ca/5643-135>**

## She Sells Sanctuary

The latest in cPVC from Fiber Composites falls under its fiberon line. Called Sanctuary, the deck boards look real and have some of the natural variations found in wood. Made with a cPVC core with no fiber fillers, the boards' surface comprises a durable layer of acrylonitrile styrene acrylate, a material used to protect automobile bumpers and outside mirrors.

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**[ PATH REPORT ]**

# Green on the Cheap

Labor and resource-efficient construction techniques allow you to stay in the black while going green. **By Kelly Cutchin, PATH Partners**

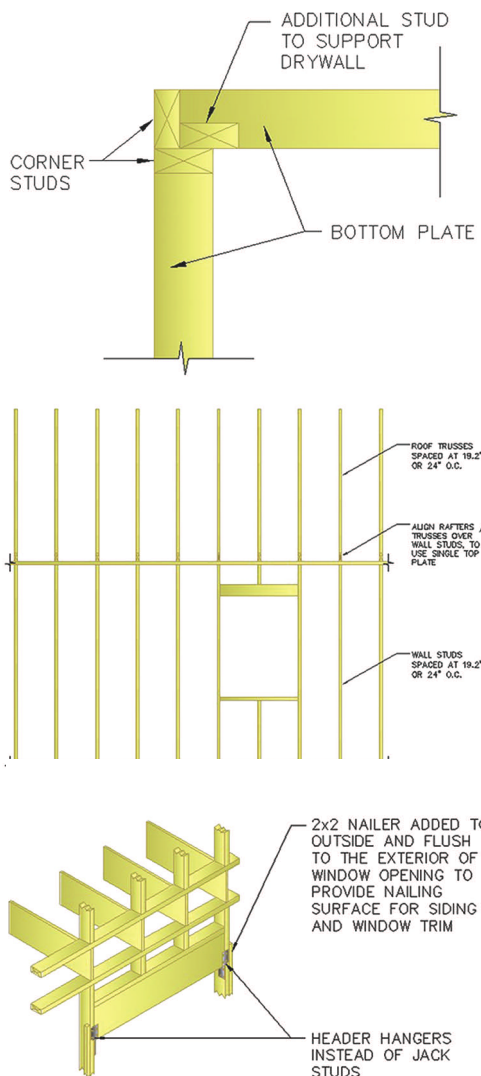
**B**uilders who aren't selling to the mansion market can afford to build green homes. Many building techniques and products labeled green are labor and resource efficient, so they cost a builder less. A floor plan under 1,500 square feet, framing techniques that save lumber and smaller diameter pipes that save water may not make the pages of glossy consumer home magazines, but designs and technologies like these can help you build an affordable green home while making a profit.

## Build small

A simple place to start is size. Smaller homes require fewer resources to construct and less energy to heat and cool. Smaller floor plans also cost less, which allows clients to choose finer finish materials that would have been cost prohibitive on a bigger project.

Rob Hart offers his clients green on a budget. President of HartMarin in Novato, Calif., Hart recently completed Virginia Groves, an eight-unit subdivision in Novato that showcases environmentally conscious development practices and includes affordable housing. Hart put 60 percent of the units (five homes) on the market for half the average price of new homes in the area.

The single-family detached Virginia Groves homes range from 1,150 to 1,350 square feet. According to the National Association of Realtors' MLS records, the average home in Novato spent 110 days on the market in August 2007. Virginia Groves homes have been selling



**OVE METHODS** for open-corner framing (top) leave space for insulation where conventional framing techniques leave none. Correctly spacing studs (middle) and rafters saves lumber because one top-plate can be used instead of two. Header hangers, nailers and right-sized headers (bottom) save time and money on a job site. For non-load bearing walls, no header is necessary in most zones.

almost twice as quickly since they went on the market in May.

## Use Passive Solar Design

A year-long study conducted by the city of Davis, Calif., in 1974 showed that a properly sited house enjoys substantially lower heating and cooling bills than an identical house sited perpendicular to that.

Passive solar design goes beyond turning your home plan on its axis. Place high-mass materials such as brick, stone or concrete where they can absorb the sun's heat during the day and release it at night.

Brad Lancaster, a permaculture landscape designer in Tucson, Ariz., says that proper shading with plantings, arbors and eaves can reduce cooling bills by another 25 percent.

## Use advanced framing

Optimum value engineering uses engineering principles to reduce framing materials while still meeting structural performance requirements. Examples of OVE construction are 19.2- or 24-inch on center framing rather than conventional 16-inch on center; two-stud corners with drywall clips; aligned rafters and studs so a single top-plate suffices; and a modular 24-inch layout to get the most out of dimensional lumber and sheet goods.

Fewer framing members not only save wood and take less time to install, but they also leave more space for insulation. Reducing the amount of framing also cuts down on thermal breaks.

According to the NAHB Research Center, using OVE saves about 35



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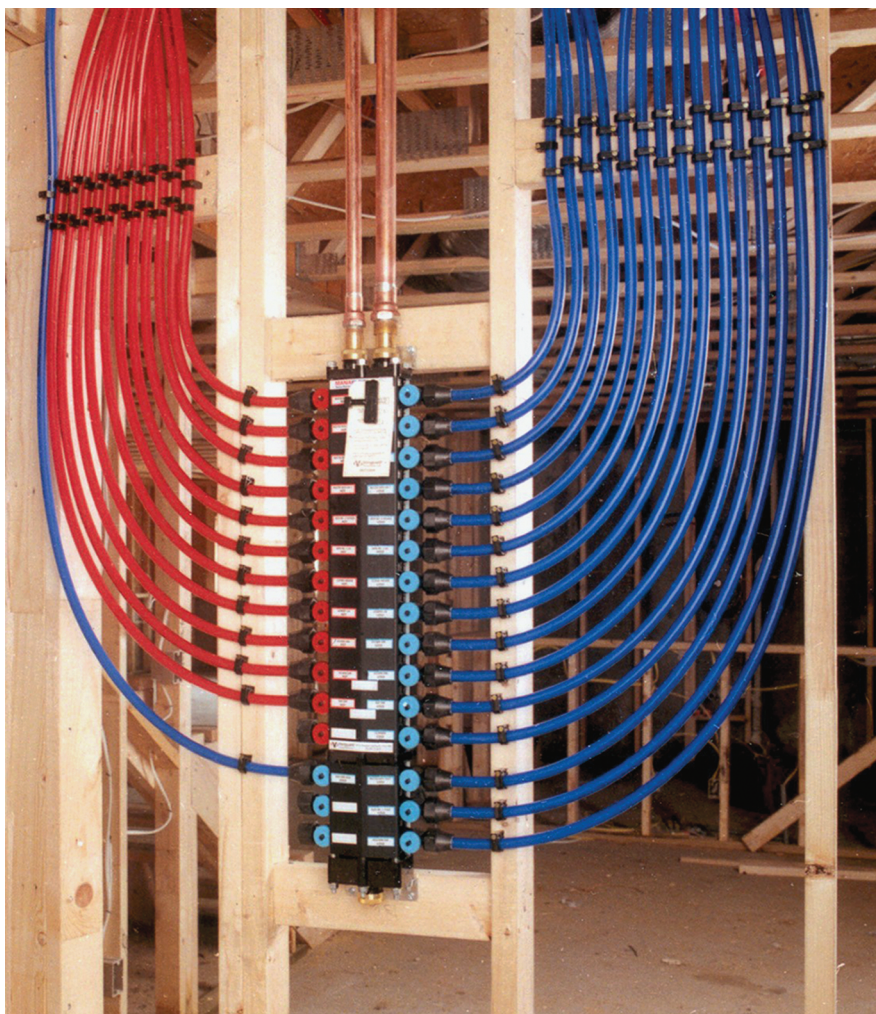
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studs in a two-story 1,120 square foot house, or about \$500. Estimated labor savings are 3-5 percent of framing costs.

### Home run plumbing

Using flexible, cross-linked polyethylene piping and a plumbing manifold, the combination, known as home run plumbing, saves water and offers outstanding durability. The flexible  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch piping requires fewer fittings than rigid pipe, providing more consistent water pressure that delivers hot water to the faucet faster than conventional pipes. With better inherent insulation than copper or PVC piping, PEX keeps water hotter, too. PEX piping doesn't rust or develop pinhole leaks like copper piping, and being able to turn water off at the manifold with the flick of a switch makes it easier to repair leaky faucets.

**HOME RUN PLUMBING**, pictured here, uses color-coded flexible pipes and a plumbing manifold that acts like a circuit breaker for your water. *Photo courtesy of PATH*

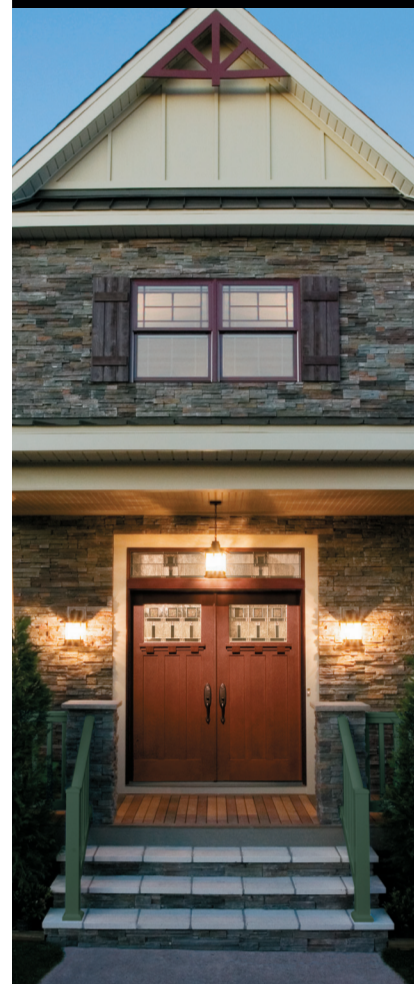
What's in it for the builder? Home run plumbing installs more quickly than rigid copper or PVC pipe. Although materials for home run plumbing may cost 33 percent more than conventional materials (due largely to the price of the manifold), it's worth the initial outlay.

### Recycling

Depending on your municipality, separating job site waste for recycling could save money on dump fees. Scrap metal can be sold to a scrap yard, drywall can be ground up as soil amendment and scrap lumber can be given a new life.

Recycling isn't just for the end of a job.

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Consider stopping by one of the more than 500 Habitat for Humanity Habitat ReStores nationwide. These and other recycled building material stores offer everything from doors to ductwork, usually priced at 30-50 percent below retail costs.

Instead of leaving extra building materials on site or hauling those rejected cabinets to a dump, you can also donate them to a ReStore, which will save on dump fees and earn your business a tax-deductible write-off.

Learning how to build green now could open new business opportunities in the future. It has for Hart, who has become a green building consultant. **PB**

*Kelly Cutchin writes about better building practices on behalf of the Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing. PATH is administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Learn more at [www.pathnet.org](http://www.pathnet.org)*



**THE SMALLER FOOTPRINT** of Virginia Groves' homes in Novato, Calif., allows more outdoor space that translates well for buyers. According to MLS records, in August 2007, the average home in Novato spent 100 days on the market.

*Photo Courtesy of HartMarin*

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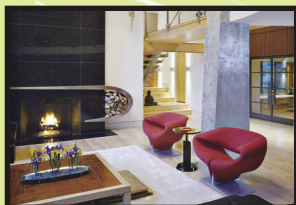


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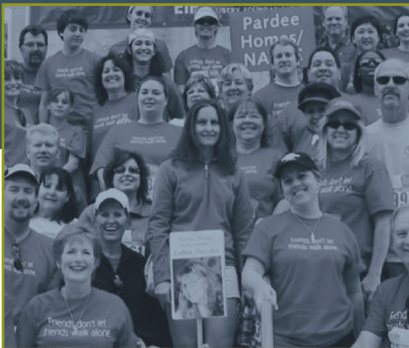
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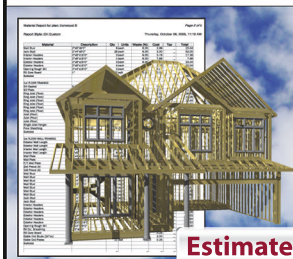
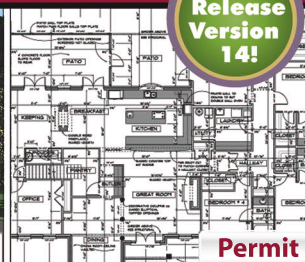
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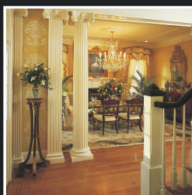
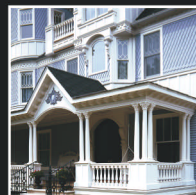
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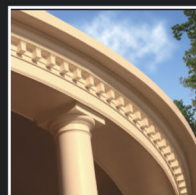
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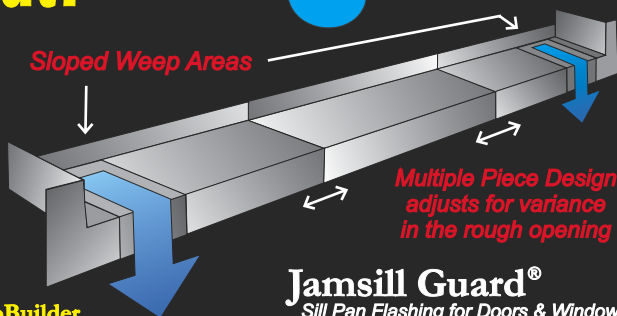


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## Think About It

### 250,000

That's how many people will opt to buy new housing in communities specifically built for people 55 or older, NAHB's 50+ Housing Council has found.

### 90%

Will green get wild? A recent AIA poll revealed that 90 percent of registered voters said they would be willing to pay \$5,000 more for a house that would use less energy.

### 11

Technical Olympic USA filed for Chapter 11 on Jan. 29 and has plans to restructure the company.

### \$101

Oil hit another record price per barrel, surging to \$101 at the end of February. The president of Excel Futures says that number will likely climb to \$120 a barrel, CNNMoney.com reported.

### 0.6%

The annualized GDP growth between third and fourth quarters 2007 dropped from 4.9 percent to 0.6 percent. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, annualized GDP growth stood at 2.2 percent for 2007, down from 2.9 in 2006.

**1,359** Number of entries submitted to the National Sales and Marketing Awards this year.



**16,000** House sale swaps among users across six Web sites geared toward this new trend. The Wall Street Journal reported homeowners are connecting with other sellers to swap purchases. I'll buy your house if you buy mine.

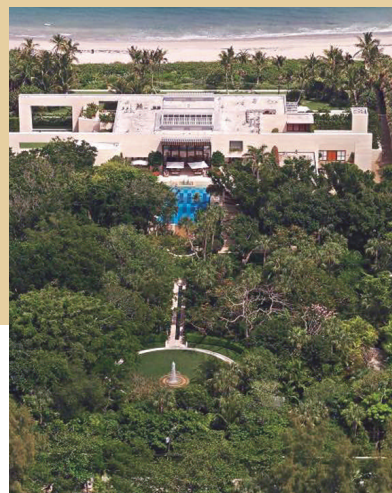


**92,000** People who attended the 2008 International Builder's Show in Orlando, Fla., in February. More than 1,900 exhibitors packed 1 million-plus square feet of exhibit space, NAHB reports. That's one big crowd.

**1967** Year the House of Tomorrow at Disneyland closed. But fans of the home can breathe a sigh of relief; Disneyland and Taylor Morrison are building a successor called Innoventions Dream Home set to debut in May.



**65 cents** The price per share Dominion Homes will pay to buy itself out. If shareholders accept it, the deal will take Dominion Homes private.



**\$81.5 million** The selling price of movie producer Sidney Kimmel's oceanfront mansion in Palm Beach, Fla. The house is more than 30,000 square feet and has an atrium, a pool, a two-bedroom guest house, a five-car garage and two pool cabanas. Any takers?

*Photo: Richard Graulich/Palm Beach Post*





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