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inspiring architects and custom builders

Engaging warm modernism

Pet peeves revealed

Trends in the window market

Maximizing shower space

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Coastal Properties Want Spanish Tile Look Without the Weight

Advanced Lightweight Material Installs Quickly Without Challenges of Natural Products

Colors

Black

Canyon Earth

Desert Red

Goldenrod

Saddle Brown

Sage



Distinction Tile Canyon Earth installed on one of several homes in Deal, NJ.

Builder/Contractor: More Core Construction

Distinction Tile Color: Canyon Earth

Distributor: Allied Building Products

Look of Natural Products

"Distinction Composite Roofing answered the call," said Ralph Tawil of More Core Construction. His homeowner on the New Jersey coast was remodeling and wanted the look of Spanish tile. However, it couldn't bear the weight of natural tile. The homeowner liked that Distinction Tile looked like natural tile and didn't have the weight challenges of natural tile.

Quick and Efficient Installation

More Core Construction likes how easy and efficient the Distinction Tile is to install. Distinction Tile is stronger, and there isn't as much breakage on the job site. The lightweight feature of the Distinction Tile also makes it easy to load and install on the roof. More Core presents Distinction Composite Roofing as an option on other roofs in the area.



More Core Construction Installing Distinction Tile

Above: Ralph Tawil (right) and some of his More Core Construction crew taking a break during installation.

Below: Distinction Tile's light weight and easy handling make installation quick and less challenging.



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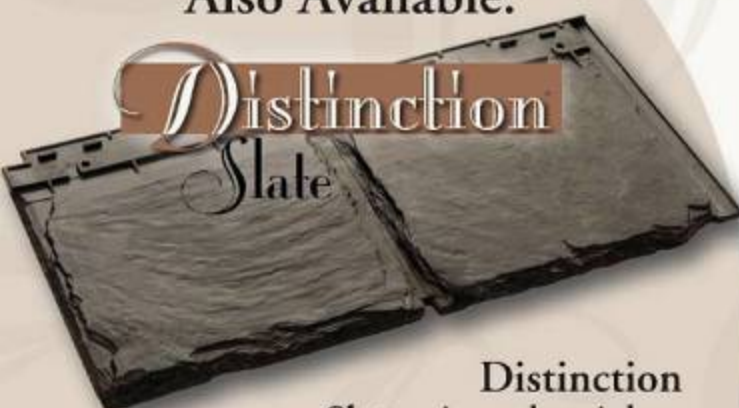
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For more info circle #64

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FEATURES

- Engaging warm modernism** 16
Clever design connects home with site, and neighbor with neighbor
- Pet peeves revealed** 22
The biggest complaint is clients who don't appreciate good design
- Home tour inspires, excites** 26
Details and design tricks delight those on a tour of San Diego custom homes
- Windows: Weathering the economic storm** 28
Driven by tax credits and improved quality, window sales are strong
- Maximizing shower space** 34
Think about water pressure, body size, drain ventilation and more
- 2010 Design Excellence Awards application** 41
Get the industry recognition you deserve

NEWS, PRODUCTS

- Kitchen/Bath Spotlight: Showers** 40
- Product Focus: Bathtubs** 42
- Product Focus: Roofing** 42
- Product Focus: Garage doors** 43
- Literature Gallery** 43
- Advertiser/Editorial Index** 45
- Finishing Touch: A walk on history** 46

ADVICE, OPINIONS

- Editor's Comments** 6
- Jauregui on Design** 8
- Grant on Building** 10
- Dellanno on Communication** 12
- Wagner on Green Homes** 14

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Editor's Blog
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 News



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rdbmagazine.com/mobile



16



26

28



42



34



46

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Clients are annoying

The temptation to make lists at this time of year is strong. Naturally, I made one for you, but it's unlike any list you've seen before. This is a list of complaints, not resolutions. An informal online survey we conducted reveals that, seemingly, clients are the most annoying part of your job. It's clear clients are annoying on several levels. The most common complaint about clients relates to their value of good design. Second on the list is the cost-per-square-foot method of comparison. There are plenty more to follow, so let's get to the list (in no specific order):

Pet Peeves in the Custom Home Market

- Having to be a client's personal therapist
- Subs that don't call back
- Subs that show up late or not at all
- Dirty job sites
- The bid system
- Cost-per-square-foot comparisons
- Clients who find fault with everything
- Clients who don't understand cost
- Clients who can't make decisions
- Client's with no vision
- Clients who undervalue the planning process
- Clients armed with piles of magazine photos
- Clients who expect you to read minds
- Clients who "draw up" their own home design
- Clients who meddle throughout the entire process
- Clients who don't value good design
- Builders who don't understand good design

You might be wondering where this list came from. Several weeks ago, we asked a few architects, designers and builders to tell us what annoys them about doing business in the custom home market. Some answers were submitted via e-mail, and others were posted within the *Residential Design & Build* social networking group at LinkedIn.com. Complete reader responses can be seen on pages 22 and 24 of this issue.

Another frequently mentioned pet peeve is a lack of knowledge about good construction and design practices. Architects and builders who don't educate clients along these lines were called out several times.

Speaking of the value of good design, our 2010 Design Excellence Awards program is now accepting applications. Enter to receive the recognition you deserve. Our competition costs less than any other residential design awards program in the custom home market, so give it a shot.

You can find information, past winners and entry instructions for the RD&B 2010 Design Excellence Awards by visiting rdbmagazine.com/awards. ▶



Rob Heselbarth, Editor

residential design & build
inspiring architects and custom builders

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GROUP PUBLISHER Tim Campbell

E-mail: tim.campbell@cygnusb2b.com

EDITOR Rob Heselbarth

E-mail: rob.heselbarth@cygnusb2b.com

MANAGING EDITOR Jon Minnick

E-mail: jon.minnick@cygnusb2b.com

SENIOR EDITOR Ken Betz

E-mail: ken.betz@cygnusb2b.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Dan Berman, Joe Dellanno, Rob Fanjoy, Elizabeth Gillette, Jay Grant, Luis Jauregui AIA, Chuck Ross, Harry Spaulding, John D. Wagner

ART DIRECTOR Tracy Hegg

PRODUCTION MGR. Steve Swick

CIRCULATION MGR. Dawn Gundlach

READER SERVICE MGR. Rich Hendricks

PRODUCTION SERVICES REP. Kathleen Weaver

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Heidi Riedl

cygnus
Business Media

CEO John French

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER Paul Bonaiuto

V.P. HUMAN RESOURCES Judy Heidebrecht

V.P. MFG. &

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY Tom Martin

V.P. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Patrick Nadler

V.P. AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT Julie Nachtigal

CORPORATE INFORMATION

TECH DIRECTOR Eric Kammerzell

CYGNUS PUBLISHING

PRESIDENT, PUBLISHING Mike Martin

V.P. CORPORATE Elizabeth Pennell

CORPORATE PRODUCTION DIRECTOR Brett Apold

V.P. CYGNUS

INTERACTIVE PLATFORMS David Parsha

V.P. CYGNUS INTERACTIVE SALES Paul Caplan

SENIOR V.P./

CUSTOM MARKETING Patrick Nadler

CYGNUS EXPOSITIONS

SENIOR V.P./INTERIM HEAD Julie Thompson



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Architects as Realtors

A real estate license can grow your earnings and secure your future

By Luis Jauregui, AIA

Architects are generalists; we orchestrate projects as a whole, consulting with other professionals in areas outside our realm. In today's challenging economy, residential architects are reaching beyond traditional architectural roles. We more often are becoming the consultant as a means to an end and to supplement our income. We are adopting skills and widening our focus beyond purely architectural design.

We also consult with clients regarding the remodeling potential of a resale home, again at the referral of a real estate agent, again at a nominal fee and again aspiring to be hired for design and project administration. We're very good at what we do. In relatively short order, we identify existing design conditions such as structural and mechanical issues. We visualize the property's transformation into a charming bungalow with open flow plan, expanded kitchen and baths and well-placed

outdoor components and landscaping. We act as a home inspector, pointing out potential foundation concerns or signs of plumbing or heating problems. Generally, we advise whether the property is a reasonable fixer-upper or a bottomless money pit.

Interestingly in each of these scenarios, the architect is applying his expertise in the area of

If you already provide this kind of real estate consultation (and most of us are), it only makes sense to obtain your real estate license; some of your AIA continuing education classes may apply in some states. It will require additional commitment as well as annual fees to associations and listing services. The time will be well invested and the ancillary knowledge you will gain will be useful.

You can offer real estate services to your clients as broadly or as limited as you want to. You can also dedicate your knowledge and tools toward growing your own wealth by researching the market and investing in a property to remodel and sell. In the book, "The Ten Roads to Riches: The Ways the Wealthy Got There (And How You Can Too!)," Forbes columnist and money manager Ken Fisher identifies investing in real estate as one of the most effective vehicles leading to potential wealth.

Buying investment property will, of course, require a higher level of investment upfront (cash), both for a down payment and for cost of improvements, and may not be suitable for your current situation. Lenders are requiring more equity upfront and financing requirements are more stringent. But if you know the market and possess the tools to make it happen, you'll be much better positioned to make it happen. ■

In the past few months, I have run across several architects who have chosen to obtain their Realtor licenses, offering real estate services in their own practices and via the web. This seems like a natural extension of our area of knowledge.

As architects, we frequently consult with clients/owners, and their real estate agents regarding home sites before they buy. We provide our professional opinion regarding the property's attributes and potential for improvements, either as a courtesy or at a nominal fee. We do so in expectation of being hired for design and project administration after closing. Many of us credit the consultation fee as an incentive to get the job.

While the real estate agent earns a substantial commission and the client realizes a potentially significant equity gain, the architect/expert earns a somewhat nominal consulting fee, if any.

The question begs to be asked, "Why aren't you a licensed real estate agent?" And, "How can you apply your expertise about real estate to better advantage [i.e. more lucrative]?"

As an agent, you'll have the opportunity to earn your client's trust and develop a relationship before the project really begins. Being a Realtor with an architectural background will set you apart as the expert offering the best possible representation.



Luis Jauregui, AIA, has been a member of the local and national chapters of the American Institute of Architects for more than 20 years. He is an active leader within the

Homebuilders Association of Austin, Texas, serving as president, and as director at the local, state and national homebuilders' association levels. Read past columns at rdbmagazine.com.



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For more info circle #4



Case closed

Legal battle with a client ends with payment made and wisdom earned

By Jay Grant

In my October 2009 column, "Let the seller beware," I shared the story of Steve, a buyer who contracted with my company to build a 7,000 sq. ft. custom home on his lot. At the column's conclusion, Steve and I were in settlement talks. I had prepared my lawsuit to begin foreclosing on his home based on the construction liens I had secured to defend my monetary rights.

The saga concludes as follows: Settlement talks stalled because Steve was negotiating for time so I would lose my legal window to initiate a lawsuit to foreclose on his home. I filed the suit in late October. Steve resumed talking settlement again in earnest. After agreeing on an amount, he offered a two-payment plan: half up front and half in the form of a secured note.

I rejected that because regardless of the security of the note, Steve could not be trusted to deliver and I would remain entangled with him. I discounted the settlement amount further and then received payment in full on the day the settlement documents were signed. The release Steve signed stipulated that all warranties for work provided were null and void. He expressly gave up his right to claim any defects with the home.

Case closed. Settlement signed. Steve is permanently out of my business life!

There was a moment midway during the building of his home when I should have stopped the job and demanded that Steve provide all funding per our agreement. Next time I will. If you want to benefit from my trials and tribulations, remain cognizant of the following concepts:

1. When a prospect or client repeatedly displays a lack of willingness or ability to trust you, consider yourself notified that this person also cannot be trusted. A zebra does not change its stripes and a client who reveals a pattern of behavior will repeat it, so expect that his past behavior is a reasonable predictor of how he'll handle future problems; then act accordingly.

2. When a client knowingly attempts to dramatically deviate from the agreed-upon business terms contained in your agreement and attempts to force or persuade you to unilaterally concede anything without a fair quid pro quo negotiation, draw the line and commence immediately all fair and legal hardball tactics to retain all of your building, financial and contractual rights.

3. If a client is getting funding from a lender, require that funding is released directly to your company.

4. Although there is an innate desire to complete all required steps to obtain a certificate of

occupancy for your project, it is prudent to withhold critical paperwork from the building department until you feel 100 percent secure that your final payment is either imminent or in hand. Specifically, New Jersey requires a proof of registration that a new home warranty has been obtained, and that in the future the document will stay in my office until the client has made all funding available for my final payment.

5. Maintain an ongoing dialogue with your client at all times. Long after it was evident that I had a problem, I continued to speak directly with Steve and maintained civility. This tactic ultimately allowed me to negotiate with him directly until the day we signed a settlement. I saved thousands in legal fees and countless months of negotiating through expensive lawyer letters and documents.

6. Hiring the right lawyer makes a tremendous difference in your legal fees and the speed with which your case is resolved. My original lawyer was intent on elongating the process, which benefited only his billable time. After firing him, I interviewed four more lawyers. The one who assisted me most efficiently and economically was first a specialist in this line of work, and secondly was happy to work toward closure and settlement. ▀



Jay Grant, president of Grant Homes, a residential design/build firm in Mendham, N.J., focuses on building luxury custom homes and renovations/additions. He is the recipient of more than

20 industry awards including best website for granthomesusa.com. Grant is available for business consulting. Send e-mail to granthomes@msn.com. Read past columns at rdbmagazine.com.



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For more info circle #1

*Computation based on comparison of showerheads that have a flow rate of 2.5 gpm under ASME A112.18.1.

Plan to succeed

The right tools and a well-thought-out plan can help your business

By Joseph Dellanno

Do you have a closet full of software, hardware or other business-related items that were purchased either online or at a trade show? How many of these purchases never made it out of the box? How many times have you promised yourself that you will open the box but never do? We all have made these impulse purchases with the greatest of intentions, and we know which road is paved with great intentions.

In 2010 I will be on an odyssey in search of the best products and services in the design/build industry. The goal is to provide readers with an unbiased opinion and provide you the opportunity to explore options that could add value to your company. The ultimate goal is to increase your market awareness and ultimately provide outstanding service to your customers.

This past fall I had the opportunity to attend the Boston Business Builders networking meeting where I was introduced to a wide range of business owners. There were about 100 people in the room and I met many of them. A few people stood out in the crowd, such as an Internet software designer, a commercial painter and even a Hollywood hair stylist.

Of all the companies I had the pleasure of learning about that night, one company stood out from the rest. This company provides a simple, low-cost solution to keep customers feeling good about why they would hire you and your business.

CardConcierge.com is an online personal greeting card service that enables business owners to keep in touch with their customers on a personal level. In theory, keeping in touch helps us build and maintain our branding efforts, but who has the time to send a "Welcome to our company" letter, a "Thank you for your business" letter or company holiday cards?



Sue Connaughton, president of Card Concierge, approached me two years ago with this idea and at the time it made perfect sense. Two years later the idea has taken off. It is clean and simple: Communicate to another person that you are thinking of them.

A few years ago a different company called Y2K Marketing also caught my attention and I listened to their marketing strategies on CD. They were explaining how to turn green apples (your prospects) into red apples (your customers) by fertilizing your market area on a regular schedule (personal touches). The CEO told a story to drive home his point.

He knew if he forgot an important date or event in his marriage there would be trouble in paradise, so at the beginning of each new year he purchased 12 personalized cards for his wife and prestamped them to be sent one per month. This ensured he would not forget her birthday or anniversary. He figured if he planned at the beginning of the year to sprinkle the cards over the 12 coming months he would meet or exceed her expectations. Remember, happy wife, happy life.

We all look for the right idea, the magic bullet or the one thing that will turn our com-

pany around, but in reality there is no single solution. The solution is the sum of the parts. Last year was a wake-up call for many of us. For those companies that have managed to weather the storm, I hope you continue to push forward and get back to the fundamental mechanics of business.

You have a new year and a new start. Are you going to plan your work and work your plan? Are you committed to developing relationships with your past, present and future clients? Are you committed to turning green apples into red apples with personalized messages, and are you ready to delegate to people who can help your business? ■



Joseph Dellanno is the founder of My Design/Build Project, a web communication application for design and build teams, and president of My Design/Build Coach, providing design/build business training. He is also president of Design Solutions Inc., a national design firm. Send e-mail to info@mydesignbuildproject.com. Read past columns at rdbmagazine.com.

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The effect with our water-efficient models is a luxurious, indulgent shower that actually conserves water using up to 36%* less water compared to a standard showerhead flowing at 2.5 gpm. As a result, H₂Okinetic Technology helps save on utility costs.

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So, when the town of Orme, Tenn. was faced without reliable water supply, Delta sent water-saving products—including showers with H₂Okinetic Technology—as well as a support team to stop leaks and



better manage available water supplies. With the installation of water-efficient products from Delta, water-saving faucet aerators, and high-efficiency toilets and other leak-stopping products from other manufacturers, residents enjoyed 45% greater water efficiency and 12-hour water availability (compared to 3-hours daily previously).

To truly appreciate the scope of the water savings achieved, consider this: one week of water savings with a showerhead featuring H₂Okinetic Technology is equivalent to 385 bottles of water or 50 days of drinking water, based on a two-person household taking a daily eight-minute shower in a seven-day week.

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Currently, Delta offers water-efficient showerheads featuring H₂Okinetic Technology in three styles—contemporary, classic and traditional—plus a new addition of the Addison™ 6" raincan showerhead.

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*Based on a flow rate of 1.5 gpm versus Industry Standard ASME A112.18.1/CSA B125.1 of 2.2 gpm.

For more info circle #2

Greening the building shell

A well-designed building envelope will save heating and cooling costs

By John D. Wagner

In 2010, I'm taking a room-by-room approach to green building. My columns will examine specific rooms and how to make them as green as possible. To begin, I'm compelled to address the largest "room" in a home, and that's the building shell itself.

Way beyond VOCs, recycled content and driving hybrids, by far the greenest thing you can do is design a high-integrity thermal envelope so your structure consumes as little fuel as possible for heating and cooling. This kind of "at-scale" application of green principles really makes a difference. All the recycled coffee mugs, reusable grocery bags and other recycling contribute positively to the green effort and I don't want to diminish that. However, the benefits of someone recycling, say, a ton of old magazines is environmentally negated hundreds of times over if the structure is bleeding heat/cold, guzzling fuel and pumping out CO₂.

Greening of the building shell should improve the thermal performance of the building using materials that: A) are nontoxic/low-toxicity; B) are harvested and/or manufactured in a sustainable way, and; C) don't consume a great deal of fuel when shipped. Let's take a category-by-category look at the principles driving your options, starting at the top.

Roof. Reflective or even light-colored roofs lower cooling loads, sometimes dramatically. (Black shingles reflect about 5 percent of the sun's heat; gray shingles 20 percent, and white shingles 25 percent.) Look for an Energy Star roof, which meet baseline reflective qualities. Note: They are not all metal. Some three-tab products are Energy Star-rated, which feature reflective granules that turn back sunlight. MIT is experimenting with roof panels that change color with temperature to match reflectivity to conditions (<http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2009/madmec-roof.html>). When sheathing, note that radiant barriers or insulated sheathing are key to any good system.

Certified wood. For framing and sheathing, use certified lumber. Frankly, it's difficult to purchase lumber in North America that isn't sustainably harvested. For political reasons, USGBC's LEED standard accepts only FSC certified lumber, while ignoring other good standards. But NAHB's National Green Building Standard recognizes both FSC and SFI. Nonetheless, look for a label and learn its background.

Air infiltration. Insulation is tested for R-value in an environment with no air infiltration. In the field, however, air infiltration will



always rob R-value. (According to DOE, air that infiltrates from the outside can account for half the energy required to heat or cool a structure.) For truly energy-efficient walls, spec products that cut down the air infiltration and work in concert with your insulation package.

Weather barriers must be breathable, but sometimes code calls for a vapor barrier on the inside surface of walls in cold climates (and some mixed climates) where we want to prevent any warm, humid indoor air from seeping into walls. That's a very green feature indeed. (Note that housewrap is always a sealing system, which usually includes tape and flashing. Not using the entire system can violate the warranty.)

Adhesives, caulks and sealants. When sealing, note that adhesives, caulks and sealants are three entirely different prod-

ucts, each with specific design applications. Each is important when sealing the building shell, but no matter what you use in the appropriate setting, it has to be a low- or no-VOC product. There are five general types or technology platforms and water-based products is the greenest. A second technology platform is polyurethane. Nothing flashes off but CO₂, so they're green choices.

A third platform is silicone, which offers great flexibility. The fumes you smell are from a solvent chemically identical to vinegar. The fourth platform is hybrids, which offers the best of silicone's features with the best of polyurethane. Hybrids cure rather than dry; many are low-VOC or solvent-free. The last platform is solvent-based which contains derivatives like xylene and benzene. Avoid them.

Insulation. Cooling U.S. homes costs \$40 billion yearly and consumes 15 percent of all U.S. power, 90 percent of which is created with coal and fossil fuels. Proper insulation can easily save 20 percent of fuel costs. There are intriguing choices out there that go way beyond standard batts, such as insulation with "smart paper" facing that changes its molecular configuration to allow moisture in or out. But for all insulation, consider formaldehyde, a known carcinogen that is widely used in binders and adhesives. Also, look for low-emitting or formaldehyde-free products. For filling gaps, use spot-application spray foams that are isocyanate-free and formaldehyde-free. ■



John D. Wagner is an award-winning author of many books and articles about construction, and a frequent contributor to the industry's leading trade magazines. A sought-after speaker for industry events, he

can be contacted at JohnDWagner.com. Read past columns at rdbmagazine.com.



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Single-family construction: 80%
New construction: 15%
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CONSTRUCTION

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COMPANY STATS

Residential construction: 80%
Single-family construction: 90%
New construction: 50%



*Engaging design
connects home with
site, neighbor with
neighbor, owners with
privacy and green
with common sense*

By Rob Heselbarth, editor

like the term 'warm modernism,'" says Phil Rossington, AIA, who designed the home on Myrtle Street in Redwood City, Calif., when describing its style. No cold glass and hard steel edges in this house. Instead, comfort and functionality drive the design of this single-family home.

Originally a renovation project for Rossington Architecture in San Francisco (rossingtonarchitecture.com), extensive termite damage necessitated a teardown of the existing structure and construction of a totally new house. Anthony Murphy, president, A. Murphy Construction in Point Richmond, Calif. (murphyconstruction.com), who was educated in Ireland as a construction technician, managed construction. The warm modernism style attracted Murphy for several reasons.

"Most of our work is modern. It's a little more challenging than working with classic casing and baseboard and wood coverings. A minimal style means there's less room for error and it won't be as easy to cover any errors you might make. But I prefer the challenge," he says.

Modern homes can be sterile. "If you walk into a house or structure and don't feel comfortable, you failed," he insists. "You can have nice lines that are very clean, but if the space is uncomfortable and not cozy, in my mind that's not a success. A home that's too cold can look crisp and clean but the warmth is gone. I'm not an architect, but those are my thoughts on it."

Myrtle Street runs through an eclectic neighborhood in which every style and bastardization thereof is present, Rossington observes. Neighbors were concerned how modern this home would be, so he arranged a meeting with them to discuss the design process.

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The home wraps around the yard to create privacy as well as views and access from most spaces within.



"I have always [had similar meetings with neighbors], in San Francisco especially," he notes. "People come out of the woodwork to protest almost anything. So if you're proactive and send drawings to the neighbors, they can speak up in an environment you control. I even make my clients talk to the neighbors."

The layout

The design concept was to wrap the house around a courtyard in the back. All rooms flow onto the back deck in the courtyard which serves as an extension of the indoor space. On the front of the home, a porch commands the attention.

At once, the porch both engages with the neighborhood and creates privacy behind it. The porch concept emerged early in the design process to reverse the effect of the

PROJECT STATS

Location: Redwood City, Calif.
Size: 2,500 sq. ft.
Cost (not land): \$1.1 million

EXTERIOR

Roofing: Elk
Siding: LaHabra
Brick/stone/stucco: Cultured Stone
Doors: Andersen
Windows: Andersen
Locksets & hardware: Baldwin
Insulation: Owens Corning
Paint/stain: Benjamin Moore
Skylights: Velux
HVAC: Carrier, Rinnai, Dayton

INTERIOR

Doors: T.M. Cobb
Fireplaces: Majestic

KITCHEN

Sinks: Franke
Faucets: Hansgrohe
Range: Thermador
Exhaust hood: Sirius
Refrigerators: Jenn-Air
Dishwashers: Bosch
Microwave oven: Panasonic

BATH

Tubs: Americh, American Standard
Toilets: Toto, Coroma
Shower faucets: Grohe
Sinks: Porcher, Catalano
Sink faucets: Grohe

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previous structure which turned its back on the street. The porch is rooted aesthetically to the site using long horizontal lines that also reach to the ground and attach themselves, Rossington says. Aiding this cause is the wood railings on the porch that match the fence encircling the property. "It helps relate the home to the site; it reinforces that they're designed together."

Effort also was made to relate the home to the neighborhood, and to fit snugly into the context of the single-story homes on either side.

Sensible green

A detached garage creates a space in which to store cars and a woodshop, and

The porch (at left) provides a space for interaction with the neighbors while protecting the private space within the walls of the home.



Operable clerestory windows allow for natural ventilation to cool the home, while creating natural lighting for the heart of the interior space.



The kitchen follows the warm modernism theme found throughout the rest of the home.

provides green benefits by eliminating infiltration of harmful fumes into the living space. The woodshop can be accessed through French doors opening to the courtyard described previously.

The owners came to the table wanting a green home, Rossington remembers. "They wanted to make it affordable as well, not doing unnecessary things for the sake of making it green. They made smart decisions," he says.

Rossington calls attention to a few examples of this home's green elements, including: the porch overhang and sun screens on windows "which stick out 2 ft. but dapple the sun just enough"; operable clerestory windows that allow hot air to rush out for natural cooling, and also provide natural lighting; percolation pits in front and back that grab water off the roof and slowly release it into the ground to minimize runoff; and solar panels to generate electricity.

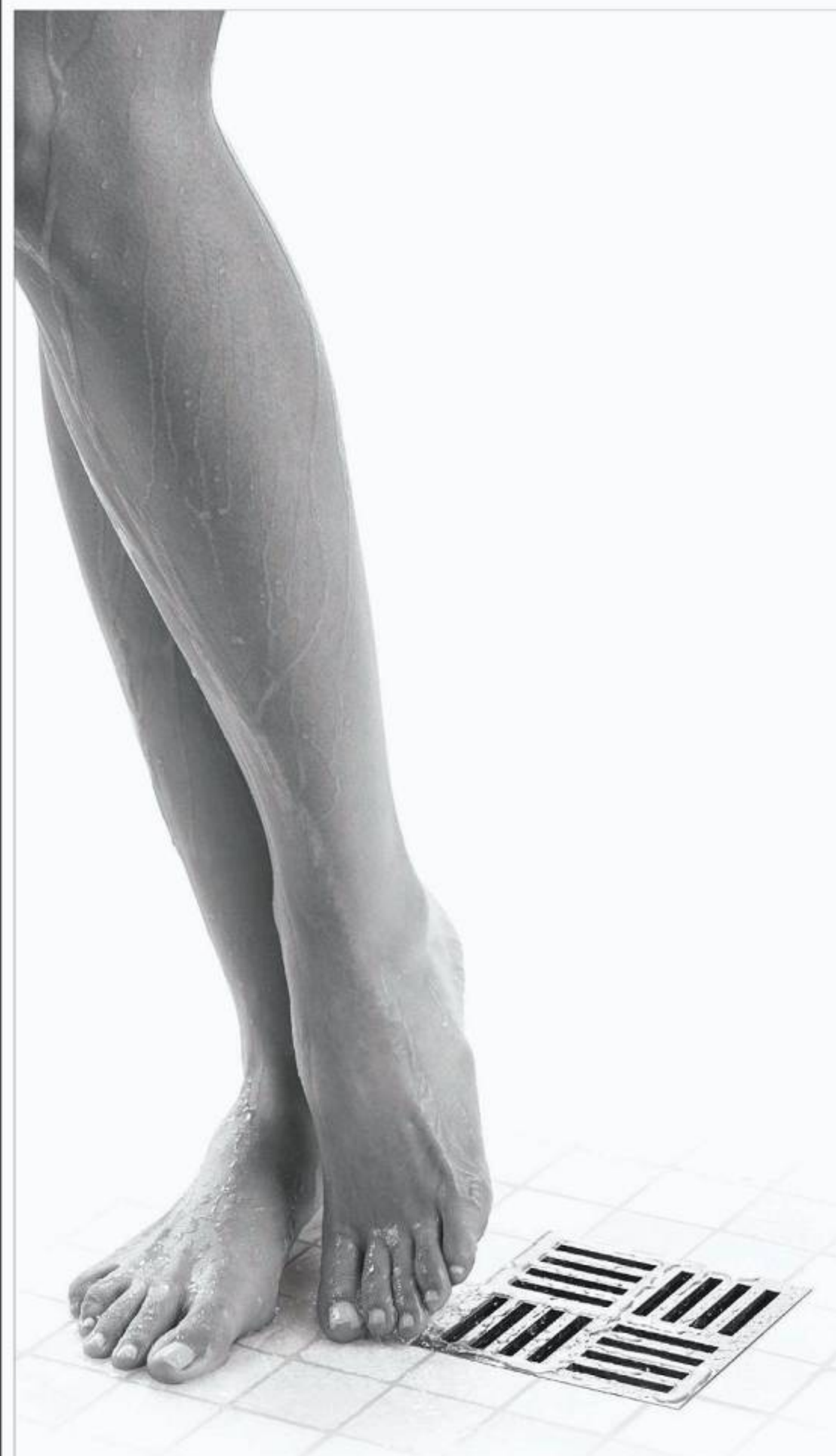
"Much of the green in this home is common-sense green," Murphy says. "Even the way the home sits on site to take advantage of natu-

ral lighting and passive cooling is green. It just makes sense."

Secrets of success

Murphy feels strongly that the three main entities on any project — designer, builder and owner — must be on the same page from day one. "Too often, you have the architect and client on the same page while the builder is a square peg. When you have those three people heading in the same direction toward a common goal, that's when you have success. On this project, we had success because communication levels were kept open. There was a lot of, 'What do you think of this or that? This approach might be less expensive.' Creative ideas were allowed to flow in all directions with little stress," Murphy says.

"One point I'd like to make is that lowbidding — the bid system — is such a walking disaster," he insists. "The most important thing a client can do is to perform due diligence on the builder, and to research the work they've done. The biggest factor shouldn't be the dollar. Anyone can lowball." ■



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Pet peeves revealed

Builders and architects are annoyed by clients who don't value good design. But that's not the only thing that annoys them

By Rob Heselbarth, editor

It's good to get things off your chest. Everyone does it, so *Residential Design & Build* invited builders and designers to share their pet peeves. Many of these comments were posted in the RD&B group on LinkedIn.com, while others were submitted via e-mail.

Share your gripes via e-mail to editor@rdbmagazine.com or by joining our group at linkedin.com (search for RD&B).

Here now are a few of the comments we received. Enjoy.

As a custom builder we have to be personal shrinks, personal friends, sex therapists, etc. Also, [a pet peeve is] clients who can find fault in every little thing.

John Witt
Witt Construction
Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

LinkedIn



When customers ask how much per square foot we charge for a custom home. Also, being asked to bid on a home based on incomplete plans and specifications.



Roland P. Valois
R. P. Valois & Company
Dartmouth, Mass.

My biggest pet peeve is the uneducated client who thinks the only thing that matters is cost. Also, the professionals in the industry who don't work to educate these clients.

Bud Dietrich, AIA, ALA, NCARB
Harold Forrest Dietrich Architects
Deerfield, Ill.

Number one pet peeve is the owners getting too involved with the subcontractors and not the designer or the general contractor. Also, too many home magazines with too many pictures of rooms, fixture, patios, etc.

Carroll Armentor

Indecisiveness which produces frustrations and loss of interest on our part. Changing approved decisions which means delivery time and bottom-line profits suffer. Also, wanting to see everything — it's time-consuming, usually confusing and often leads to my previous pet peeves above.

Lee Najman
Lee Najman Designs
Port Washington, N.Y.

I have several pet peeves: 1) The client who can't "see" anything unless it's done and then says "I don't like it." 2) The famous, "While you are here can you ..." 3) Subs who don't call when they aren't going to show up.

4) Subs who don't return calls. 5) Dirty jobsites. Hate 'em! 6) The client who went to Europe or Hawaii then doesn't have enough money to do the job the way it was spec'd.

Darrin Thornton

I've always been a little discouraged about the ratio of homes designed and built by speculative builders vs. the homes designed by architects. It appears in many markets that for every 10 homes built maybe one was designed by an architect. Spec home builders have really stepped up their performance in recent years, producing beautiful homes, which causes me to wonder how relevant architects will continue to be in the residential construction market. It seems that clients don't know the difference and don't care, as long as they get what they want in a home.

Brent Legendre
Scott Wilson Architect
Brentwood, Tenn.
submitted via [LinkedIn](http://LinkedIn.com)

Buyers and builders are not willing to spend money on planning and do not understand why the project took too long or went over budget. Along with this you can add the lack of spatial visualization by the buyer, and in many cases the builder as well. Another one is when the buyer comments that "they had no idea it was going to look like that." To further magnify this lack of visualization is the buyer who comes to you with a scrap book of "things" they want on their house, and cannot understand why they cannot have a feature because the floor plan does not allow for it.

Donald Maupin
Maupin Design
Waukesha, Wis.
submitted via [LinkedIn](http://LinkedIn.com)

A Word From A Builder Who Knows



“At first, I just couldn’t see the need for fire sprinklers in homes. I figured smoke alarms were enough.

But I’ve been building homes with fire sprinklers for 15 years. That’s changed my thinking.

Smoke alarms should be in every home. But too often, people don’t keep batteries in them, or disconnect them.

Fire sprinklers take the homeowner out of it. They protect people all the time. If there’s a fire, the sprinkler is going to automatically control it. That saves lives and property.

My customers like the idea of being protected. So do I.”

*Don Sparks, D. G. Sparks, Inc.,
San Jose, CA*

The Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition (HFSC) is a nonprofit and noncommercial educational organization that offers **FREE** information to homebuilders and their buyers. HFSC’s *BUILT FOR LIFE* video provides homebuilders with details about the design and installation of home fire sprinkler systems. Builders can request the *LIVING WITH SPRINKLERS* video for people living in sprinklered homes.

For more information about HFSC’s free information, visit **HomeFireSprinkler.org**.

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My pet peeve: The misunderstandings owners have of good design. I know, as they say, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and the customer is always right, and things like that, but there are basics of good planning, layout and architecture that are pleasing and useful for function. I will add that it seems neither homeowners nor contractors understand the value of good planning/design that a custom project takes. Just about anyone can add a 15-ft. by 20-ft. addition, or sketch a three-bedroom home. But to really design it in a way that is lovely, functional with all the other nuances, that's value. They want custom, but don't



want to pay!
Timothy Schrock
Design Build Solutions
Lebanon, Ind.
submitted via [LinkedIn](#)

These are not peeves; they are what we need to get our clients to understand. 1) Just because a real estate agent gives a cost per square foot does not mean that is what your house will cost. 2) Owner's costs (design fees, engineering fees, permits, insurances etc.) are outside of the construction cost. 3) The budget is a target and has implications to the level of finish and size of the house. 4) The economy has influence, but we are not manufacturers giving the same discounts as the auto industry. 5) There is a correlation between cost, quality and size. 6) We are not mind readers. 7) Just because you want it does not mean you get it for the base cost.

Robert W. Lisi, RA, LRB
Dolphin Architects and Builders
Johns Island, S.C.

My biggest single pet peeve is clients who draw their own home plans (either sketched on graph paper or worse yet, using \$50 home design software) and then give them to our architect so he can "draw it up." They completely short-circuit the design process, and as a consequence miss out on the tremendous value added by an architect. Invariably these clients invite you to suggest better alternatives to their design, but they're so "invested" in their own design that they never choose to imple-

ment a suggestion from a full-time residential design professional.

My next biggest pet peeve is clients and/or real estate agents who want to benchmark a custom builder's work by comparison with other custom builders on a cost-per-square-foot basis. No matter how hard we work to educate clients and real estate agents, they still want to "dumb down" the comparison to a single, simple (and meaningless) metric.

Also, clients who agonize over the wrong details at the wrong point in the design and/or construction process. For example, the client who is paralyzed during the site planning or conceptual design of their home because they can't decide what type of cabinet hardware they'd like, or the swing of a particular door.

Timothy P. Cleary, P.E.
Charles Ross Homes
Williamsburg, Va.

My main frustration is that many prospective clients do not understand the importance or value in starting the process by creating and commissioning an effective design and project management team, or simply that the team they have put together does not have a clearly defined purpose or vision. I have seen firsthand the costly mistakes that have been made when an inexperienced architectural designer has not properly understood the client, building code or functional layout requirements, or simply did not have good design sense. The result is something has been built or partially built that then has to be reworked to make it right. In some instances, I have had to point out the necessary revisions to the architectural designer or contractor.

I have been involved with residential projects in Canada, and in Europe. The same problems exist in both places. However, from what I have observed I would say that this issue is more obvious in Canada and the United States. Our cultural approach to the custom build process is more of a fast-food approach than in Europe. Just like we can drive through and get a burger and large fries, we can "drive up" to the local custom builder who claims they can design a dream home, and give them a menu of requirements, and ask them to supersize it

and sometimes they throw in a free toy — everyman's Happy Meal.

Just like fast food, we get what we pay for — something that might hit the spot at the time, but is not healthy, enjoyable, beautiful, and does not improve our lifestyle. So what can we do about it? We can — and we all do — complain about it and that is the easy part. Most of us — self included — could do a better job of educating not only our clients but also the media, builders/developers, and the industry at large to the benefits and potential cost savings they will reap from having a team put together at the beginning of a project that will work cohesively all the way through their project, with integration of all disciplines at every stage. In short, we need to sell ourselves better!

At the moment the client has a smorgasbord of designers, architects, builders and more builders to choose from. If they can get something cheaper down the street from Fast Food Design and they have not been clearly instructed regarding the differences between what we offer and what the fast food guy is offering, who have we to blame but ourselves? My observation is that before we focus our discussion with the client on our fees, that we should be setting ourselves apart by telling our prospective clients about what makes us different. What makes us unique. What makes our process special. Give them examples of projects that you added value to, or rescued from certain death. Be specific. Be inspiring.

Oh, and just as importantly, those of us who offer complimentary services to one another must work closely together in a more united and integrated approach. If we are not supporting each other, we run a greater risk of an unhappy client. If one link in the chain is weak or breaks, the whole chain is affected. You know the saying; "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Well, it's up to us to give our clients a vision for the great results that can be achieved when the custom design and build process is done well.



Kevin Gray
Sizeland Evans
Interior Design
Calgary, Alberta, Canada
submitted via [LinkedIn](#)



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For more info circle #11

Home tour inspires, excites

Details and design tricks delight builders and designers touring San Diego custom homes

By Rob Heselbarth, editor

Design inspiration can come at any time, especially if you were on the home tour during the 2009 Custom Builder Symposium & Design Institute held in San Diego this past November. The selection of homes featured on the tour once again had builders and designers oohing, aching and inspecting every little detail.

"The homes were phenomenal," says Mike Payne Jr., vice president of operations, Payne & Payne Builders in Chardon, Ohio, which also was named Custom Home Builder of the Year during the two-day event. "They're on the ocean with incredible views. Those builders and architects face site-specific challenges.



Seen above are three levels of living space that, while connected via an open floor plan, also provide separate space if desired.

This home by Wardell Builders (right) is one of three within a development. The property's narrow dimensions forced the home's vertical orientation.



Wardell Builders was brought into this project to save it from itself. The result is a stunning hilltop estate that impressed many on the tour.



They had small sites but needed to provide a lot of square footage and drama. So for example, one of them incorporated wells to introduce daylight into the lower levels. And when you walked into one of the homes, you immediately see right through it and look out over the ocean. It's amazing," Payne says.

The sunny oceanside environment is different than most parts of the country, but worthy of inspection, says Kathryn Alexander, president/owner, Alexander Design Group in Wayzata, Minn. "A lot of what I saw can be applied here in Minnesota. Our firm deals with upper-end homes and custom waterfront properties, so the oceanfront remodel was comparable to what our clients are looking for in either a teardown and build new or remodel of an existing home. The other homes in the tour all had inspiring ideas," she says.

"I sometimes find that tours aren't challenging enough for me, but not the Symposium tours. My personal favorite was the Wardell Builders house in La Jolla where they took the

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Shea Homes (above) opened the doors to three models for those on the tour to browse.

The major renovation of this seaside home (left) was done by Wavecrest Enterprises. What drew the most oohs and ahs was the incredible view upon entering the house, through the home and over the ocean.



sublevel of the house all the way to the lot lines to pick up extra square footage. We are involved with a lot of variance work because of code restrictions and hardcover requirements. What a creative way to work around setbacks!" she says.

As the sponsor, Lutron Electronics has a hand in choosing the homes on the tour. Effort was made to find homes that fit the interests of both builders and designers, says Erik Anderson, Lutron's residential solutions manager. "We looked at construction, traffic flow, layout, all things that both architects and builders would be interested in," he says.

Common among a few homes on the tour were methods for temporarily separating formal and informal spaces; features Payne enjoyed seeing. "I also liked the use of indirect lighting in the showers, ceilings and other places. The lighting was incredible. In the shower example, rather than using cans, they built a small soffit and hid track lighting behind it that

shined light down the walls. It was soft lighting that gave the tile wall more texture than it would have had. In one of the family rooms there was a soffit around a coffered ceiling that hid rope light. It was clever," Payne says.

Ah-ha moments

Anderson from Lutron enjoyed the reactions to the lighting company's occupancy sensors. "Part of our job is to create awareness of products they could use. Here you have these builders and designers of high-end homes who get so excited about a little \$130 product that really wowed them," he says.

Anderson also finds it interesting to stand around a window casing with three builders from different regions who construct it differently in each of their home towns. It's also interesting to watch builders' and designers' eyes to see what catches their attention, such as unique lighting fixtures, ceiling treatments and other unique features, he adds.

"The [home] tour is a fantastic way to interact with builders and architects and to share opinions on what they see in the homes," Anderson says. "It's also a great way to compare one market to another, how homes differ. As a sponsor, we're learning how to better position our products to the market. We have a lot of time to interact and talk about facets of these homes that don't have anything to do with lighting."

A progressive city such as San Diego provides an opportunity for a builder like Payne from Ohio to experience different architectural styles. "The traditional style back home is nothing like they do [in San Diego]. It's great to be exposed to that and to potentially take some style elements home. It gives us more tricks in our bag," Payne explains.

A first-time Symposium attendee, Payne enjoyed the experience. Aside from the home tour, he enjoyed networking and meeting other builders in a surprisingly intimate setting. "When we arrived we didn't know anyone, and when we left we felt like we made lots of friends."

The home tour takes place the day before the Symposium's educational events begin, which is a great way to get geared up and in the right mind-set for what attendees will learn and discover over the coming weekend, Anderson says. "Seeing the different architectural styles, interacting with colleagues, it gets their wheels turning; it warms them up for the main event." ▀



Weathering the economic storm

Driven by tax credits and the desire for improved quality and design, window sales are strong

By Rob Fanjoy

It has been a hard slog for many in the building industry the past few years, but most window manufacturers have come through relatively unscathed because their products remained in high demand. Even for products intended for the high-end markets where new home construction has virtually stalled, homeowners are demanding high-performance windows for mid-priced homes and remodels. This is largely due to the fact that, especially in tough economic times, people

want to save money by conserving energy.

"With the energy tax credit, windows have actually been moving up on most homeowner's list of priorities," says Berit Griffin, public relations coordinator, Marvin Windows and Doors. "People aren't moving, so they are upgrading their old windows with new, energy-efficient models." Marvin has seen increases in the replacement and remodeling markets, and Griffin says even in new construction many people are building smaller



Pella identifies a trend in which homeowners set their home apart from others by accenting replacement windows (seen at left and below) with accessories like grilles, blinds, shades or decorative panels between glass and decorative hardware to coordinate with faucets, fixtures and other items in the home.



homes but specifying more, better-quality windows. "People want a high-quality window and are willing to pay for them. They are looking at life-cycle cost and energy savings more than initial price."

Bigger, better, more

It may seem odd that in a time when consumers are conservative with their building and remodeling dollars they'd be willing to spend money on windows, but that's exactly

what many manufacturers are experiencing. Homeowners are shifting focus away from building new homes and are instead opting to remodel; any new homes are smaller. In both cases, consumers are willing to pay for windows if they get everything they want.

"Today's consumers expect greater energy efficiency to reduce their utility bills," says Kathy Harkema, public relations manager, Pella Corp. "Many now plan to stay in their home for the long haul and are choosing more and

better windows to let in natural light, create a better view and reduce energy costs." Pella has seen many customers take advantage of the tax credit to install products with the company's SunDefense low-E insulating glass. In addition to keeping conditioned air in, the product also blocks 95 percent of damaging UV light. In response to increased demand, Pella also has expanded its Impervia line of energy-efficient windows with SunDefense glass to include casement and awning styles.

Kolbe is responding to homeowners' needs with an extra-large double-hung window and ThermaPlus glass to address energy and stimulus package requirements.



On top of better energy efficiency, people often want their windows to be bigger. "We've recently introduced our TerraSpan lift-and-slide door to address the high-end market trend of opening up walls to the outdoors," says Lance Premeau, product and market analyst, Kolbe Windows and Doors. This door can incorporate up to 10 individual panels of up to 12 ft. in height that either nest in back of one another or recess into a pocket, completely disappearing from view.

Premeau says to further address the trend of large windows and doors, Kolbe is introducing a new double-hung product capable of extremely large sizes. "We have also begun to address the need for better-performing windows with our recent introduction of ThermaPlus glass to address the energy and stimulus package requirements," he says.

Griffin says Marvin Windows also sees increased demand for large window and door units. Marvin's Ultimate Lift and Slide doors, which can be pocketed or stacked and feature low-E glass with insulating argon

gas, have been popular lately. "We're seeing increased demand for venting picture windows, especially in homes built in the mid-1900s," Griffin says. "Our Tilt Turn can mimic a picture window while being able to turn in like a door or tilt at the top. We've also seen a lot of people pair our hopper windows at the top of a fixed unit to add ventilation. People want to stay true to their home's design while adding performance and aesthetics."

As for Milgard, the company is focusing on two key areas: energy efficiency and material innovations, says Scott Morgan, vice president of sales and marketing. "Our 3D and 3D Max Energy Packages continue to gain traction with window dealers and homeowners alike as they look for easier ways to choose the best-performing windows for their specific application. We've added triple glazing as an option on our vinyl Tuscan Series replacement line, and our fiberglass Ultra and WoodClad Series windows and patio doors, creating a clear energy performance advantage for homeowners.

"Right now, frame material innovations in the industry are focusing on fiberglass as the perfect working material for frames. Milgard was very early to recognize the benefits fiberglass offers, and as a result we pultrude our own fiberglass in-house to control quality. We continue to invest in our Ultra Series and WoodClad Series fiberglass windows."

We want it all — now

"Homeowners are emphasizing energy efficiency, but they also want as many options as they can possibly choose from when picking a window," Premeau says. This means manufacturers are constantly updating and adding to their glass, configuration and size options as well as interior and exterior finishes, hardware styles and finishes, and other special features.

"People want to set their home apart from others in the neighborhood, so they're accenting their replacement windows with accessories like grilles, blinds, shades or decorative panels between glass and decorative hard-

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Milgard continues to invest in fiberglass windows as it has for many years.

ware to coordinate with faucets, fixtures and other items in the home," Harkema says.

Pella offers blinds between the glass for vinyl sliding patio doors and entry doors. Pella also has expanded its EnduraClad aluminum-clad exterior color options to include distinct and varying shades like cranberry and vanilla cream. "Many homeowners opt for natural shades and lighter tones, but more and more people are seeking to express their personal sense of color with a bold contrast of colors on the exterior of their windows and doors," Pella's Harkema says.

Kolbe also has introduced a new color palette for its interior finishes, and in the interest of meeting virtually any consumer demand in this arena, the manufacturer offers the ability to match nearly any interior finish. Kolbe also devel-

oped and introduced a square glazing bead and divided light bar profile. "These Craftsman- or Mission-style options give more freedom for homeowners to design their windows to match their home's themes or styles," Premeau says.



People also want their windows to be easy to use and maintain. "This arises from the universal design trend," Griffin says. "People want to stay in their homes a lot longer, so they want windows that not only last, but are easy to clean and continue to operate smoothly for years and years." Marvin's Ultimate Casement window now features a "wash mode" that allows the unit to swivel 140 degrees so owners can wash the outside of the window from inside the house. It is also available in dramatically large sizes.

Full circle

The immediate future for windows looks healthy, according to many manufacturers. Homeowners will always aspire to build, remodel or upgrade their living spaces, even in a down economy as many people will then spend more time in their homes. "Since windows are seen and enjoyed both inside and outside the home and can substantially enhance both its enjoyment and value, we see the installation of energy-efficient windows remaining a top remodeling project choice," Harkema says.

And the key to window demand — even before this recession — seems to be energy efficiency. Manufacturers have been and plan to continue upgrading the energy performance of their windows. "Energy efficiency will continue to be a driving force in the window industry in the coming years," Premeau says. "Homeowners will continue to request larger units that perform at a high level, especially in the high-end market." ■



Marvin is seeing increases in the replacement and remodeling markets, and in new construction many people are building smaller homes but specifying more, better-quality windows.



Jeld-Wen's new EverTone exterior finish for vinyl windows is available in eight colors including chestnut bronze, Mesa red, Hartford green, French vanilla, dark chocolate, black, arctic silver and desert sand. These colors match the company's clad-wood window colors. For more info circle #46



The new Andersen A-Series gives architects, contractors and remodelers a style guide that includes standard and custom sizing, more standard colors, prefinished wood interior options and broader choice of accessories. For more info circle #47

EnduraShield all-fiberglass windows by Weather Shield are designed for efficiency, durability and convenience. The units resist scratching, denting, warping, rotting, corroding and infiltration by termites and other pests. For more info circle #48



The new Loewen double hung is constructed with coastal Douglas fir or Honduran mahogany on the interior. The exterior can be specified with low-maintenance, extruded aluminum cladding or natural wood. For more info circle #49

ARTICLE RESOURCES

Kolbe
For more info circle #50
Marvin
For more info circle #51
Milgard
For more info circle #52
Pella
For more info circle #53

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Eagle
For more info circle #54
Hurd
For more info circle #65
MI Windows
For more info circle #55
PGT
For more info circle #56
PlyGem
For more info circle #57
SilverLine
For more info circle #58
Windsor
For more info circle #59

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For more info circle #45

Maximizing shower space

Have you thought about water pressure, body sizes, drain ventilation, ceiling height or ceiling angle? You should.

By Jeff Holloway, CKD, CBD

The kitchen and bath industry has provided architects, builders and remodelers the components to assemble a spa-like experience in the shower. Included in these components are numerous thermostatic valves, volume controls, body sprays, rain heads and hand-held shower sprays.

With so many components it is easy to make a mistake while specifying, ordering and installing them. A hiccup during the installation of these items can cause expensive remedies that prolong the length of the project and steal profit.

Careful planning along with multiple jobsite visits can prevent problems. Planning begins with a survey of the clients' wants and needs. The client is the central component of the system, so be mindful of their budget and the space they have to work with.

Prepare a script for questioning your clients about their needs, and approach this survey with a sense of humor. Questions about the number of people sharing the space at one time often raise eyebrows and cause blushing. Asking where grab bars can be placed can be challenging as well; many "Boomers" can get defensive when we suggest they place stability aids along shower walls.

After determining the number of people sharing the space, we make each user stand straight and tall as we take measurements of specific points on their body so we can properly position components within the shower space. We measure from the floor to the back of the knee; the small of the back; the top of the shoulders; the centerline of the eyes; and the top of the head. We also measure from the finished floor to the wrist while standing with their hands to their side. These measurements must be made for everyone who will

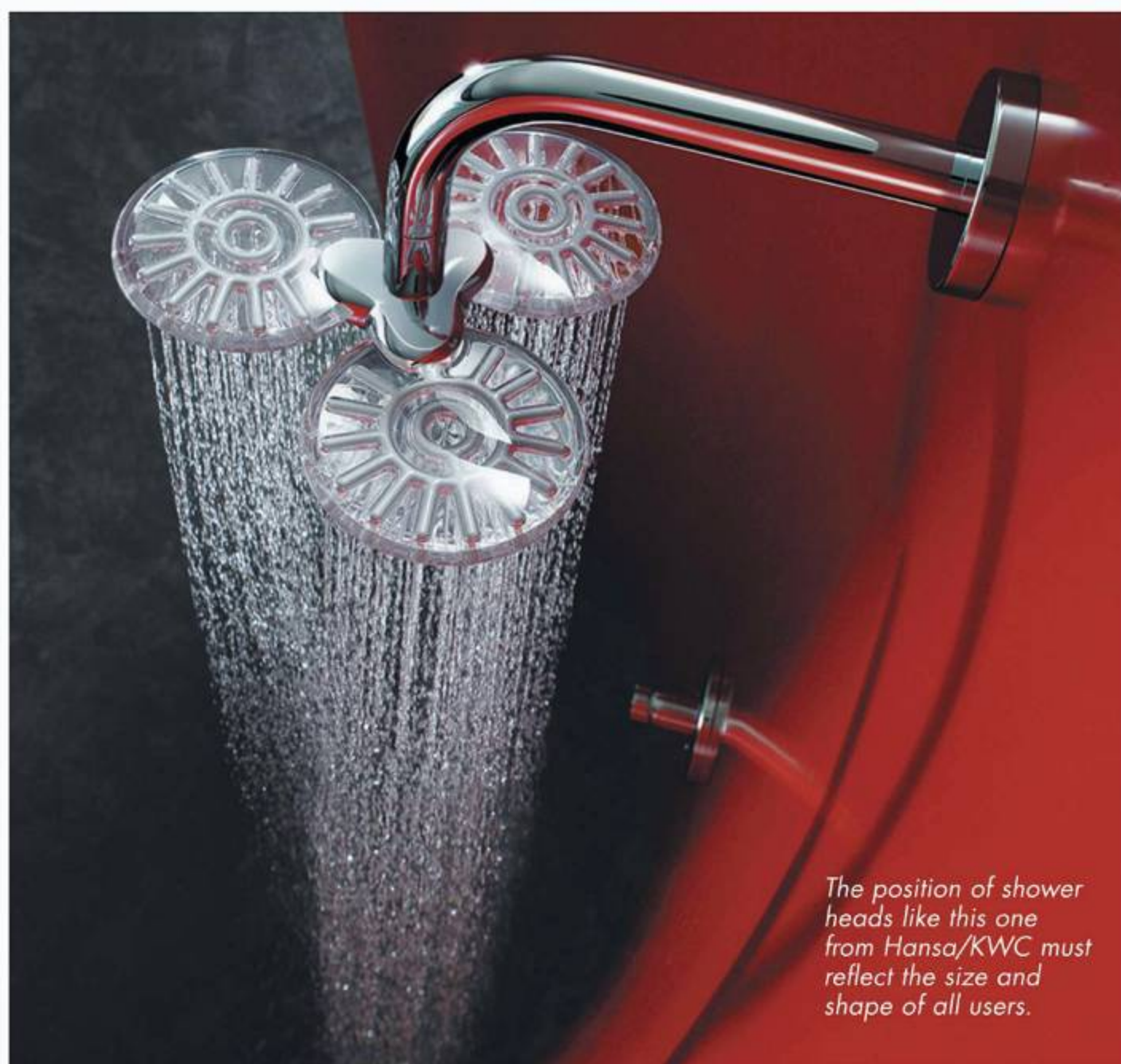
use the shower. We have found that many families share the master bath, and it's important that everyone's body size be taken into consideration.

Measurements are averaged to locate the heights of thermostatic valves, volume controls, hand-held sprays, rain head sprays and grab bars. Normally, adjustments are required. Sometimes we've had clients stand in the shower while we position components during the rough-in stage. Heights vary but some simple averages that apply are as follows: 52 in. to 56 in. off the finished floor to shoulders; 38 in. to 44 in. to mid-back; and 26 in. to 32 in. to lower back and upper thighs.

Size matters

Remember that big is not always better. Naked bathers require warmth for comfort so do not design the shower too large. In addition, the optimum distance from most body sprays is 30 in., so design with this number in mind. We find that a 48-in. long space is adequate for a single user. If two people are going to use the space at the same time, a minimum of 60 in. has worked well. In any instance a minimum width of 36-in. is required.

Ceiling height is also important when determining the overall size of the shower. Eight feet should be the limit. If introducing steam



The position of shower heads like this one from Hansa/KWC must reflect the size and shape of all users.

Photo: Courtesy Hansa and KWC America

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Take several measurements of everyone who will use the shower space to optimize the positioning of components such as showerheads, body sprays and controls.

to an enclosure, slope the ceiling about 8 degrees to prevent water droplets from falling on bathers. When positioning rainhead sprays, remember that the glass should be a minimum of 3 in. above the spray head. We set our shower arms at 84 in. off the finished floor.

The floor plan should include a seat or bench in the shower area. Industry standards are about 18 in. off the finished floor and at least 15 in. deep. The bench should not interfere with the minimum floor area. We almost always install a corner seat or bench the width of the shower that is open below. There are many premanufactured products in the market to help accomplish this.

Asking about water pressure is important for remodeling more than new construction and should not be ignored. Most systems require a minimum of 45 psi to operate effectively. Without this pressure, bathers will not be able to operate multiple showerheads and body sprays.

Just as important as pressure is water volume. Existing supplies may not have enough volume to supply the thermostatic valves with water to power all spray heads at once. Most of the multiple-spray systems use 3/4-in. supply lines. Some products can accommodate 1/2-in. supply lines, but these systems do not provide as many options for spray heads.

Drainage is another important consideration when we plan for this type of shower. It has been our experience that a 2-in. drain is

more than sufficient to accommodate up to 20 gph, which most of these spas are capable of creating. However, it is imperative that you work with a manufacturer's representative or a licensed and insured plumber to determine the drain size. Some larger multivalve configurations could require multiple 2-in. drains or a single 3-in. drain line.

Different styles of floor drains are available from round to trough-style drains with removable grids. Remember, every drain requires a vent. Make sure there is a place to terminate the vent. This is important if you are installing the system in the first floor. The vent needs to run up through any additional floors and terminate at the roof. If an additional vent is required, wall and ceiling repairs will need to be added to the scope of work in a remodeling situation.

It's important to evaluate the client's hot water supply as well. In new construction this is easy because an additional water heater can do the trick. On average roughly 75 percent of water running during a shower is hot. With multiple showerheads running at a minimum of 2 to 3 gpm, a 55-gal. water heater will be depleted in about 10 minutes.

Technical issues

Once the challenge of accommodating bathers has been met, the installation becomes technical and it requires input from the plumber, project manager and in my case, me. If everyone shares in this responsibility early on, it is much easier to hold everyone

accountable if a problem occurs during, or more importantly, after installation.

Many builders or architects may be surprised that I supervise installations so closely. They may think once a set of measured shop drawings has been created it is up to the installers to get it right. This is wrong. There are too many variables in the field that require adjustment. The reality is, wall thickness, stud and structural wood placement, finished floor height from wet beds, HVAC ducting and electrical channels create obstacles that need to be worked around. The best planning at the drafting board does not prevent problems in the field.

You might also wonder if it's worth it from the trade's perspective. The increased risk, time and exposure may not be what many architects, builders or remodelers want to contend with. I have found that even though these installations require a tremendous amount of time they are highly profitable. As designers and installers we can create revenue through the sale and markup of these shower products. This revenue along with careful consideration of the billable hours involved with installing these products can lead to increased profits along with satisfied clients who are willing to refer us to their friends. ■



Jeffrey Holloway, CKD, CBD, has been designing kitchens and bathrooms for more than 22 years. Holloway's projects have been featured in local and national shelter magazines, and have won

consecutive Chrysalis Awards. He has been recognized by the National Association of the Remodeling Industry as a regional contractor of the year. Holloway provides instruction to individuals and business owners that want to learn more about successfully incorporating kitchen and bath design, sales and installation into their existing practices. Holloway is an instructor for the NKBA. Contact Holloway at jpholloway@comcast.net, at hollowayhomeimprovement.com or 609-390-4812.

Rohl offers solutions for the master bath designed to make a private sanctuary available for daily relaxation and rejuvenation. With a full cache of products in traditional, trans-modern and modern styles, homeowners can create a restful master bath environment within a budget that's right for them. For more info circle #12



Brizo's new Sensori custom shower system offers fully customizable showers that coordinate with the brand's other collections. Trim packages are available in Traditional, Euro, RSVP and Vesi designs. Expanded showerhead offerings now provide an option for either wall-mount or ceiling-mount heads in every design category. Multiple showerhead options, body sprays, body jets and handshowers are available. For more info circle #13

Multiple showerhead options, body sprays, body jets and handshowers are available. For more info circle #13



Moen's ioDigital shower interface is available for three applications: vertical spa, shower and Roman tub. The device provides quick, visual feedback, and LED indicators flash until the requested settings are achieved. Each LED on the temperature indicator represents a precise temperature range, which allows adjustment to an exact temperature. For more info circle #14

Kaldewei's Superplan shower tray models including sizes between 29.5" x 31.5" and 70.9" x 39.4" in. The steel enamel shower trays are designed to be a more durable and attractive solution compared to fully tiled shower areas, thanks to the installation system and user-friendly optional extras such as the easy-clean finish and anti-slip enamel. For more info circle #15



Grohe's Rainshower F-Series shower tiles are designed to blend into an environment, maximizing shower space. Combining with a thermostat and hand shower, the shower tile creates a customized showering zone minimalist in design yet comfortable, functional and enticing to use. For more info circle #16



Danze offers a spectrum of showerheads, body sprays, hand-held showers and stylish shower arms for creating a custom shower experience. Styles range from modern, clean lines of the Sirius Collection (shown here) to the detailed, old-world feel of the Opulence Collection. These shower systems are designed with its other faucet/bath collections in mind and are offered in a variety of finishes. For more info circle #17

Kinetik features two sets of soundless Symmetry rollers designed to slide smoothly over a shower enclosure's solid stainless steel bar at the push of a finger, without flexing or friction. Each system, consisting of 3-in. stainless steel rollers with stainless steel bearings and running rail, supports up to 300 lbs. The system is designed to offer architects a virtually unlimited ability to customize the enclosure's dimensions to meet any desired specifications. For more info circle #18



Jaclo's Modern Series of luxury grab bars feature straight lines, square or diamond-shaped flanges and minimalist details. Two new styles including Contempo and Cubix are ideal for the modern bath. If installed vertically they can be fitted with an adjustable slider-cradle that allows for the use of one of several hand showers. Grab bars are available in 18 standard finishes as well as custom styles and finishes. For more info circle #19



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PRODUCT FOCUS: TUBS

SpaBerry by **Dimension One** is a two-seater hot tub that comes in red, yellow, gray, white and blue. BerryWrap allows the exterior to be customized with any high-resolution photo. It features drink holders, massage jets, a waterfall and LED lighting. For more info circle #33



MTI Whirlpools expands its Boutique Collection with solid-surface tubs and sinks designed by Matthew Quinn. The Intarcia tub is adorned with an antique brass inlay. The solid surface tub is available in white, biscuit, raven and osprey colors. For more info circle #34

The Viaggi bathtub from **Maax** is designed to radically transform the atmosphere of a bathroom. This seamless egg-shaped bathtub sits atop a thick, wooden frame, striking modernist compositions that transform this tub into a work of art. For more info circle #35



American Standard's new collection of Premium Combo Massage Baths blends relaxing bubbles and therapeutic massage. A custom soak is achieved with the Acumassage whirlpool system, Smooth Air massage and chromatherapy lighting. For more info circle #36

Toto's Nexus bath collection adds The Island Soaking Tub to its full-line luxury suite. It's designed to unite design and comfort with a smooth transition from its steep sides, which enhance long luxurious soaks, to the gentle slope of the tub's interior. For more info circle #37



PRODUCT FOCUS: ROOFING

The TruSlate Premium Roofing System from **GAF/Elk** combines the beauty of real slate with 21st-century technology. The tiles are designed to be easy-to-install genuine slate roof components that are affordable for property owners and builders alike. For more info circle #38



MonierLifetile's new concrete roof tile colors meet LEED requirements for reflectivity. The new "color-through" concrete roof tiles are naturally pigmented through the entire body to provide long-lasting color. The tiles resist surface damage and degradation. For more info circle #39



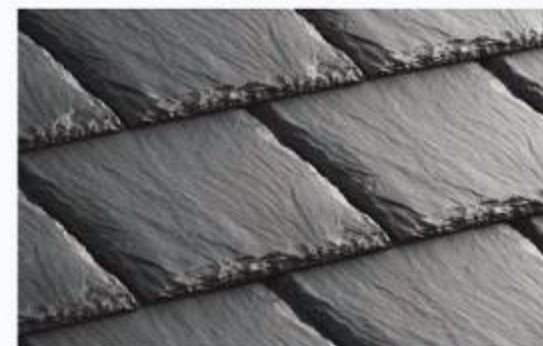
Owens Corning Duration designer colors draw from multiple color granules to produce vibrant color and maximum contrast. Color combos include merlot, aged copper, Sedona canyon, Pacific wave, sand dune, storm cloud and summer harvest. For more info circle #40



Distinction tile from **Trimline Building Products** features the authentic, traditional look of concrete and clay tile without the weight. Years of successful in-field performance and industry-backed testing support a 50-year warranty. For more info circle #41



Vail Titan Select metal shingles by **Custom-Bilt Metals** are made with heavy-gauge metal construction and an interlocking design making it nearly impossible for moisture to penetrate. The shingles reflect up to 70 percent of the sun's energy. For more info circle #42



Symphony composite slate roofing by **CertainTeed** is formed with the texture and contours of real quarried slate. It is designed to be lighter, more durable and cost a fraction of the price. It is an Energy Star-qualified product. For more info circle #43

These custom wood garage doors by **Summit Door** are created with Western red cedar.

The tongue-and-groove boards run continuously throughout the door and are kerfed on the back to prevent cupping. Lites can hold glass of various tints, textures and patterns. For more info circle #20



Clopay's Canyon Ridge collection features a polymer composite cladding with high-definition grain that replicates real wood. The 1/2-in.-thick material is attached to an insulated three-layer steel base door for added energy efficiency and strength. For more info circle #21



First United Door's Steelite steel carriage-house door incorporates four unique designs manufactured from 23-gauge steel, making them strong and dent-resistant. The embossments are recessed and beaded creating a high degree of resolution. For more info circle #22



To maximize curb appeal, **Jeld-Wen's** factory finish option for its line of composite garage doors comes in Portabello, a rich, dark beige color, to complement a variety of architectural styles and provide long-lasting, easy-care protection. For more info circle #23

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For more info circle #30

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GROUP PUBLISHER Tim Campbell
tim.campbell@cygnusb2b.com

CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

1233 Janesville Ave.
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538
Phone: (800) 547-7377 Fax: (920) 563-1707

SALES OFFICES

WEST

Joshua Lentz
5012B 40th Avenue, NE
Seattle, WA 98105
Phone: (206) 283-6762 Fax: (206) 428-9114
E-mail: joshua.lentz@cygnusb2b.com

MIDWEST

Paul DeGrandis
Accelerated Media Solutions
1213 Wilmette Ave, #210
Wilmette, IL 60091
Phone: (847) 920-9510 Fax: (847) 920-9206
E-mail: pauld@accelmediasolutions.com

EAST

Beth Emerich
500 Bedford Street, #240
Stamford, CT 06901
Phone: (203) 353-9318 Fax: (203) 683-6512
E-mail: beth.emerich@cygnusb2b.com

INTERACTIVE/ONLINE

Tim Steingraber
3030 Salt Creek Lane, Suite 200
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Phone: (847) 454-2723 Fax: (847) 454-2759
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ADVERTISER INDEX

Arthur Harris & Company	44	Pella Corporation	7
Bank of America Corporation	47	ProClosets.com	43
California Faucets	21, 44	Safety Maker, Inc.	44
Delta Faucets	11, 13	Simpson Strong-Tie Co., Inc.	15, 44
Gruppo Romi	43	Soci	31, 43
Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition	23	Trex Company, LLC	18, 19
Imperial Range Hoods	44	Trimline Building Products	2-3
LiteSteel Technologies America, LLC	25	Weiland Sliding Doors & Windows, Inc.	9
My Design/Build Business Systems	33	Whirlpool USA	4
Nana Wall Systems, Inc.	48	Wine Chillers of California	44

EDITORIAL INDEX

American Standard	42	Marvin Windows & Doors	33
Andersen Windows & Doors	33	MI Windows	33
Brizo	40	Milgard Windows & Doors	33
CertainTeed	42	Moen	40
Clopay	43	Monier Lifetile	42
Custom-Bilt Metals	42	MTI Whirlpools	42
Danze	40	Olde Wood Ltd.	46
Dimension One	42	Owens Corning	42
Eagle Roofing Products	33	Pella Corp.	33
First United Door	43	PGT Industries	33
GAF/Elk	42	PlyGem Building Products	33
Grohe	40	Rohl	40
Jaclo	40	SilverLine Windows & Doors	33
Jeld-Wen Windows & Doors	33, 43	Summit Door	43
Kaldewei	40	Toto	42
Kinetik	40	Trimline Windows	42
Kolbe Windows & Doors	33	Weather Shield	33
Loewen	33	Windsor Windows & Doors	33
Maax	42		



A walk on history

Some people refer to it as trophy flooring. Others call it American history under your feet. Ultimately, it's really old wood that's reclaimed and processed by, appropriately, Olde Wood Limited.

By deconstructing worn-down, unwanted or unsafe barns, or by harvesting standing-dead old-growth trees, Olde Wood Limited is able to provide flooring material that features the authentic look of wood that's hundreds of years old.

"Our flooring has been installed in multi-million dollar homes, and the first thing the owners' friends and family notice is the flooring. By the time this wood is in their house, it's close to 200 or 400 years old," says Ryan Lowe, director of marketing.

Barn wood features a true weathered appearance with plenty of character, while the old-growth lumber harvested from dead

trees is a more subtly patterned product. Barn siding typically is reused for wall treatments or outdoor areas. Some clients have installed it on ceilings, too, Lowe notes.

"For a restoration, remodel or new construction, Olde Wood Limited provides an opportunity for a homeowner to instantly add a piece of American history to their home," he says.

With a finite number of old barns still standing, the antique wood is a limited resource. There's plenty to go around for many years, Lowe explains, but some day it all will disappear. The company has torn down old railroad houses and other historical buildings, too. Lowe makes it clear Olde Wood Limited is aware of the historic aspects of certain structures.

"Barns outlive their purpose and start to deteriorate and banks just won't insure them anymore. So the owner has a decision to make, and usually it becomes a liability.

While a structure might disappear, we're saving that old wood that otherwise would be in a landfill," he says. Barn deconstruction provides access to rare species of wood, such as American chestnut and longleaf heart pine for homeowners looking for something their neighbors won't have.

Olde Wood Limited mills flooring to exact specifications, as opposed to warehousing standardized product. "We don't cut the floor until a customer places an order. Turnaround is four to six weeks, typically. They get whatever they want; however thick or wide, it's 100 percent custom," Lowe says.

Roughly 80 percent of Olde Wood's business is antique flooring, with the remaining 20 percent consisting of entire barn beams and a small amount of recovered slate shingles.

For more information visit oldewoodltd.com or circle 60 on the inquiry card. — Rob Heselbarth

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a silver pen, signing a document. The hand is positioned in the lower right of the frame, with the pen tip touching the paper. The document has some text on it, but it's mostly illegible. The background is a warm, brownish-orange color.

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