

LBM JOURNAL[®]

STRATEGIES FOR LUMBER/BUILDING MATERIAL DISTRIBUTION PROS

LBMJOURNAL.COM

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020 \$10 U.S.

IN DEPTH: TECH TOOLS

REAL ISSUES. REAL ANSWERS.
TRANSITIONING TO A DIFFERENT
ERP SYSTEM

HILLTOP LUMBER

DELIVERING DREAMS IN THE
LAND OF LAKES

A man with short hair and a blue jacket is sitting on a stack of lumber in a warehouse. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background shows more stacks of lumber and the structure of the warehouse.

BRIAN KLIMEK OF
HILLTOP LUMBER

7 Ways LBM Distributors Can Improve eCommerce Sales

eCommerce is ingrained in modern consumerism—and it's not just in the B2C space. B2B eCommerce is expected to reach \$1.8 trillion and account for 17% of all sales by 2023.¹

You need eCommerce. But competition is fierce, so simply implementing an eCommerce solution isn't enough. Check out these seven ways you can hone your eCommerce strategy to optimize online sales.

1

Use a technology platform that offers the same functionality as a B2C site. Your customers have probably been using eCommerce in their personal lives for a long time, and they've built up certain expectations. That's why whatever eCommerce platform you use should provide all the functionality users have come to expect in the consumer space.

2

Build your eCommerce site to promote SEO. Search engines use a complex algorithm that scans web content to match search terms to keywords on websites. That means your product descriptions should build in keywords that your customers will search for. This is called search engine optimization (SEO), and it will help guide people to your site.

3

Tie back to your ERP system for accurate data. It's vital that the information on your eCommerce site is accurate and up to date. Tying your eCommerce site to your ERP system ensures product descriptions, available inventory, pricing, and more are in sync.

4

Migrate existing customers to your eCommerce site. It costs less to service customers online than via traditional methods. Encourage your current customers to utilize your online site. You'll save time and money, and your customers will no longer be bound to your office hours.

EPICOR[®]

¹ US B2B eCommerce Will Hit \$1.8 Trillion By 2023, Landscape: The B2B eCommerce Playbook, January 28, 2019.



5

Nurture new customers gained from online sales. Your online store can bring in new customers to your business. It's important to nurture these relationships just as you would with a customer that you see face-to-face. Be sure to reach out to new customers in a planned, consistent manner.

6

Compete to win. Meet your competition on their turf by selling on popular online marketplaces like Amazon Business. Also, your eCommerce site should be a place where customers don't just go to purchase products—they should go there for quality information like online catalogs and FAQs.

7

Add value to your eCommerce. To compete in the online marketplace—especially against large competitors—consider ways that you can add value to eCommerce activities. Distributors should explore innovative ways to reach customers via a combination of channels to stand out.

To learn more about maximizing your eCommerce platform, read our white paper [“7 Ways LBM Distributors Can Improve eCommerce Sales”](#)

Find it at:

lbjournal.com/white-paper-7-ways-lbm-distributors-can-improve-ecommerce-sales/

Contact us today  LBM@epicor.com  epicor.com

**SQUEAK-FREE
GUARANTEE™**

OUR WORD IS OUR BOND.



With a unique foam-to-gel formula, NEW AdvanTech™ subfloor adhesive delivers a powerful panel-to-joist connection with a fast, easy application — even on wet or frozen wood¹. And when you combine it with the moisture resistance, strength and fastener-holding power of AdvanTech® subfloor panels, you get a subfloor assembly backed by the industry's only Squeak-Free Guarantee². And that's what makes AdvanTech® products the FLAT OUT BEST™ choice for a quiet, stiff floor.

See it in action at AdvanTechSFA.com.



¹ Exceeds ASTM D3498. ² Limitations and restrictions apply. Guarantee for panel-to-joist connection on an AdvanTech™ Subfloor Assembly. Additional limitations and restrictions apply. See SqueakFreeGuarantee.com for details. © 2020 Huber Engineered Woods LLC. AdvanTech and AdvanTech logos and designs are trademarks of Huber Engineered Woods LLC. HUB 22869 08/20.

SUBFLOORS: ADVANTECH® SUBFLOORING VS. OSB VS. PLYWOOD

By: Matt Risinger, Risinger & Co.

When I started out in construction, I was working for a production builder. For many years, like most builders of that era, we used OSB (oriented strand board) subfloor — typically a 3/4-inch tongue and groove panel. There was no real choice in OSB then. It was whatever was available from the lumber supplier, and we didn't think a whole lot about it. We used a conventional construction adhesive and nailed off the floor, as that was the fastest method. But we had all kinds of squeaks on the houses we built. I thought that making the transition to screwing down the subfloor would be the answer to my squeak problems, but this didn't help all that much. We still had frequent callbacks for squeaks. We also had a fair amount of edge swelling — an inevitable result of rain during the framing stage before we got the house dried in. That was a pain, too, because the swelling resulted in a wavy, bumpy floor that contributed to the squeak problems. Floor squeaks are the result of wood movement. Either a nail comes loose, or a screw shears off and you have up-and-down movement, or the edges swell and cause gaps beneath the underlayment that allow for creaks. Frequent callbacks did not do a lot for either the builder's reputation or for the bottom line.



Matt Risinger, owner of Risinger & Co. and experienced builder who specializes in fine craftsmanship and building science, shares his experiences with high-quality OSB and plywood.



Traditional OSB vs. AdvanTech® Panels

Commodity OSB (left stack) starts out at 3/4-inch thick, but after soaking in water, it swells. The AdvanTech® pieces (right stack) soaked in the same amount of water stay dimensionally stable. Typically, the swelling happens at the edges where the cut strands are exposed to rainwater or snow melt that drains down through the gaps at the panel edges of an installed subfloor. Once the edge swells, it does not return to the original panel thickness.

When I was working for a production builder, I didn't really have much say in the purchase of materials, so I wasn't able to change to a different subflooring product. Honestly, at that time, I did not really know there were other options. But when I started building custom homes about 12 years ago, one of the first changes I made was the switch to plywood. It was 1-1/8-inch plywood we should have glued to the framing, but we just nailed it. This provided a nice stiff floor and eliminated my squeak issues. However, on one of my very first houses using plywood, we had a giant downpour during construction when the frame was open. This resulted in a ton of edge swell. Being a custom-built house, I had to fix it by sanding the edges

and flattening the floor. The whole time the job was on pause for this to happen all I could think was "OK, I love that I have eliminated squeaks. I love that I have a stronger, stiffer floor. But, man, this edge swell is a pain." (And I hadn't budgeted for the sanding either.)

I was looking for something better, but I thought "OSB? I've used that before and had problems. I'm not going back to that!" It was around that time, maybe 10 years ago, that someone suggested I try AdvanTech subflooring.

I was soon to learn that there's a big difference between AdvanTech panels and other subflooring options. Commodity OSB uses glues and a process that permits the panel to soak up moisture. Most subfloor-grade plywood uses similar glues between the laminations. While plywood gives you a more consistent panel, it is still prone to wicking moisture.

Plywood and OSB manufacturers try to improve this by sealing the panel edges, but the sealant, whether it is a wax or a paint, tends to get scuffed off. Think about how often panels get dragged on their edges across a truck bed or across the floor deck in the process of installing them.



Above, subfloor panels were allowed to stand in a pan of dye-colored water. The dye stained the three AdvanTech panel samples (left) just to the level of the water in the pan, but the dye readily wicked through the grain of the plywood laminations (right), penetrating deep into the panel area.

Two things really distinguish how AdvanTech panels are made that contribute to their high performance over commodity OSB: resin technology and manufacturing precision. AdvanTech panels use an advanced liquid resin that coats flakes during the manufacturing process to make sure the panel is thoroughly protected. A lot of engineering and quality control goes into how the strands in AdvanTech panels are oriented and sized within the multiple layers to create a woven matrix of fibers that achieves the right balance of stiffness and dimensional stability. Commodity OSB is also set up in layers but can have larger variations in strand size and orientation within the layers and may use a different kind of resin that does not necessarily have the same moisture resistance. The AdvanTech subflooring manufacturing process also has a high level of precision to make sure the wood strands are the optimal thickness and dimension for a more stable panel. During manufacturing at AdvanTech panel mills, there are extensive quality control checks along the whole panel production process so that only the very best final boards earn the AdvanTech® brand mark.

Once I made the switch to AdvanTech subflooring, I had zero edge swell, even with heavy rains during construction. I've not had a single squeak and have never had to sand edges down. That has been a huge change for me. I opt for the 1-1/8-inch panel on most of my projects because I want zero bounce in the floor. Certainly, I spend a little more on this subfloor than I have in the past. However, the elimination of problems makes it totally worth it. As with most material choices, it's never just about initial cost. Think about it: Not having to pay the unexpected costs of sanding, which interrupts the flow of the project, is one thing. But if I had to fix a squeak after the owners have taken possession and are living in the home, that is a nightmare. My business is based on an expectation of quality. Having no callbacks — having a much stronger, squeak-free floor — has made all the difference in being able to build a solid reputation for high-performing homes.

 To learn more about subfloor best practices, visit [YouTube.com/MattRisinger](https://www.youtube.com/MattRisinger).

8 FROM THE PUBLISHER

Navigating disruption
BY RICK SCHUMACHER

10 FROM THE EDITOR

The stories behind the selling
BY JAMES ANDERSON

12 THE BUZZ

LBM industry updates, news and events. Plus, news from lumberyards across the country, and responses to our September Tough Call survey.

20 SALES & OPERATIONS

Are a lot of sales meetings a waste of time?
BY BILL LEE

22 BUILDING SALES

The game of selling
BY RICK DAVIS

23 RECRUITING & HIRING

Add a Recruiting Audit to your end-of-year to-do list
BY RIKKA BRANDON

24 LEADERSHIP

Giving everyone a voice
BY RUSS KATHREIN

25 CREDIT Q & A

How much can I charge for a past due fee?
BY THEA DUDLEY

26 MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

Structure earnouts to the seller's advantage
BY JOHN WAGNER

27 PROCESS & PROFIT

'The small stuff' is material to the bottom line
BY SHANE SOULE

52 NLBMDA UPDATE

Clarification on DOL's independent contractor proposed rule
BY KEVIN MCKENNEY

56 TOUGH CALL

THE PETER PRINCIPLE PROBLEM

A newly-promoted employee is underperforming in his new role. What would you do?



34

34 HILLTOP LUMBER

Delivering dreams in the land of lakes
BY JAMES ANDERSON

28 REAL ISSUES. REAL ANSWERS.

TRANSITIONING TO A DIFFERENT ERP SYSTEM
BY LBM JOURNAL READERS

40 IN DEPTH

TECH TOOLS

Platforms may change, but the goal is the same: create clarity from confusion
BY MIKE BERGER

48 PRODUCTS



40



48



VIRTUALLY GUARANTEED GROWTH.

In today's marketplace, ecommerce has blended in-store and online shopping into a seamless experience. Consumers can shop whenever they want – from wherever they are.

As a Do it Best member-owner, you have a powerful, fully-customizable ecommerce tool to help you build a robust, localized dot com presence.

Do it Best has four game-changing features to help you meet the needs and expectations of your customers, including same day in-store pickup, member-sourced inventory, enhanced curbside pickup, and the all new Pick N Pack app to help your associates manage online order notification, retrieval and fulfillment.

Do it Best ecommerce gives you the tools you need to reach your customers wherever they are and bring them to exactly where you want them to be — your growing business.

To learn more, call us today at 888-DO-IT-BEST (888.364.8237).

“These features make it even easier to give our customers the convenient shopping options they expect, plus we're getting more online business and foot traffic in our stores — it's a win-win.”

Douglas Wasiura
Sr. Vice President of Marketing & Ecommerce
Valu Home Centers

First CHOICE.
Best CHOICE.™



Do it Best Corp.



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Boone County Lumber

Doing Business During a Pandemic

Read how BCL overcame retail challenges to serve customers during shutdown

“COVID-19 related City and County Stay-at-Home orders put unusual demands on our work environment. Public access to our office and retail space was restricted and office occupancy reduction was in the best interest of my employees. Our cloud-based, point-of-sale system enabled



my employees to work seamlessly, remotely from home or while mobile. With access to our point-of-sale system from any internet connection, we can forward phone calls to available team members to

perform critical tasks. Many times, our customers are served safely and timely and are unaware they are communicating with someone working remotely.

Spruce® brought us a better way to perform critical day-to-day tasks and assure the health and safety of vulnerable employees by allowing us to reduce building occupancy without compromise to productivity. Our former, server-based, obsolete, point-of-sale system did not allow the seamless flexibility of “anywhere access” to every aspect of our point-of-sale environment. We no longer store data on-site, worry about failed backups, or worry about health compromises that could be possible by asking vulnerable employees to come into the office for performing accounting or sales tasks.

I’m thankful to have made the transition when we did.”

—Brad Eiffert, President
Boone County Lumber, Columbia, MO

Like what you’ve read so far?

Read Brad’s full story to see how he overcame specific challenges you may be facing: <https://bit.ly/3k5ltFL>

How business gets done.

WHITEPAPER

How COVID-19 Has Changed the Workplace

Flexible Business Models Benefit Essential Retailers

Essential businesses must adapt quickly to a post-pandemic "new normal"

Home and building supply retailers who can operate remotely in some ways can bring the most flexibility to their business, reduce risk within the store while still allowing operations to flourish. Creating a hybrid work arrangement and omnichannel retail environment will result in "agile and nimble" businesses that can accommodate a rapidly changing post-pandemic landscape.

The longer the crisis lasts, the more comfortable employers and workers have become with the adjustments that have been made, from health screenings and enclosed spaces in the office, to work-from-home (WFH) arrangements. States have been determining criteria for many workers to return to work. Those who are deemed most essential, including shop floor workers in manufacturing, have returned more quickly than those that are able to work remotely. Those who can work from anywhere, using technology, may never make a complete return to the office. Hybrid work arrangements are likely to result "agile and nimble" workplace designs, blending co-working and traditional enclosed spaces will certainly be part of the new workplace.

This paper briefly explores the emerging office layout and professional working models that are

emerging, as well as the statistics that underlie our present understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on workplaces and our projections for the future of our workplaces.



Read the full article

How COVID-19 Has Changed the Workplace for more on how the pandemic has altered businesses' requirements to be successful going forward: <https://bit.ly/2Hd03ro>

Executive Editor & Publisher

Rick Schumacher
Rick@LBMJournal.com

Editor

James Anderson
James@LBMJournal.com

Creative Director

Richard Hart
Design@LBMJournal.com

Contributing Sales Editor

Rick Davis

Contributors

Mike Berger, Rikka Brandon, Thea Dudley,
Russ Kathrein, Bill Lee, Kevin McKenney,
Shane Soule, John Wagner

Controller

Nancy Frazer
Nancy@LBMJournal.com

Director of Operations

Michelle Fischer
Operations@LBMJournal.com

Administrative Coordinator

Tina Saucke
Tina@LBMJournal.com

Circulation Director

Vicki Blomquist
Vicki@LBMJournal.com

ADVERTISING SALES

NORTHEAST & SOUTHEAST
Jodie Cook Redwood
Jodie@LBMJournal.com
Ph: 800.324.3492 Fax: 952.892.7816

CENTRAL & WEST
Michele Randazzo
Michele@LBMJournal.com
Ph: 904.310.9540 Fax: 952.892.7816

 @LBMJournal

 LBMJournal

 LBM Journal

 LBM_Journal

SUBSCRIPTION CHANGES

For subscriptions or address changes
call 847.763.9580
e-mail LBMJournal@omeda.com
or visit www.LBMJournal.com/subscribe

BACK ISSUES & EXTRA COPIES

operations@LBMJournal.com

Copyright 2020 by Custom Built Publishing LLC. Opinions expressed are those of the authors or persons quoted. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without written authorization. LBM Journal is sent free-of-charge to qualified dealers and distributors of building materials. Publisher reserves the right to determine qualification. Non-qualified annual subscription rates: US, \$48; Canada, \$60 (U.S.); Airmail to all other countries, \$120 (U.S.). Single copy price: \$15 + S&H.

Navigating disruption

WE DID IT. WE SURVIVED 2020.

Well, technically, since I'm writing this on November 5, and the presidency for the next four years has yet to be determined and coronavirus cases are spiking across the U.S., there's still a stretch of uncharted territory to cover before we can look back on 2020 as the year that was. But considering what we've all been through to get us to this point, it's clear that we, as individuals, as companies, and as an industry, have what it takes to not only survive, but to adapt and thrive.

Think about it. After beginning the year full of optimism for what would almost surely be another strong year of residential construction and remodeling, COVID-19 threw our world into chaos. But instead of panicking, you worked within our rapidly-evolving reality to continue serving your customers and your community. You managed the unknown, did what was necessary to keep your people safe and your companies operating, and forged ahead. Then, you went from fears of an economic collapse to navigating unprecedented demand for building materials, complete with spiking prices and product shortages.

In my conversations with readers from across the U.S., I hear stories of a once-in-a-lifetime experience that they've worked through with their people, their customers, and their communities. While 2020 has been a year that I'll likely talk about the same way my parents talked about the Great Depression, this wasn't our first rodeo. We've done it before, and we'll do it again. While no one knows what next life-altering challenge awaits, I know that we'll not only make it through to the other side, we'll be stronger and smarter.

Looking forward to 2021 and beyond, I'm happy to share that the LBM Journal team has been working hard on fresh new ways to serve the you and the rest of our community. The LBM Sales Podcast that Editor James Anderson just launched with Rick Davis is only the beginning. Whether you're looking for a new podcast to subscribe to, or if you're new to the world of podcasts, this would be a great place to start.

While we know (because you tell us), that the print edition of *LBM Journal* is important to you, we also know (because the analytics tell us) that the revamped LBM Journal daily e-newsletter and LBMJournal.com website, along with the webinars and white papers, are finding an enthusiastic audience. When you talk, we listen. Then act on what we learn. And because of that, I'll be announcing some exciting news soon.

Stay tuned. From the entire LBM Journal team, a sincere thank you for the opportunity to grow your sales, your business, and your brand.

— Rick Schumacher
Executive Editor & Publisher



Rick@LBMJournal.com

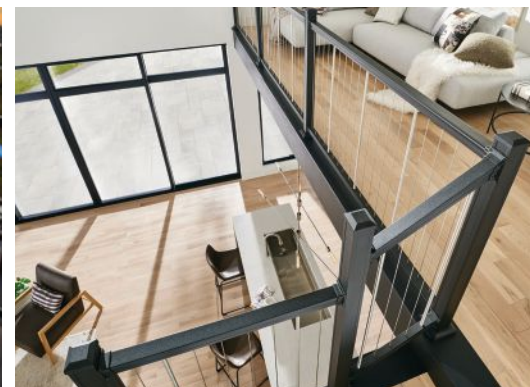
Take the Long View



KEY-LINK[™]
FENCING & RAILING



Photo Credit: Holbrook Lumber Company



RAILING · FENCING · CABLE RAILING · ACCESSORIES · LED POST LIGHTING

KEY-LINK CABLE RAILING IS ALL ABOUT THE VIEW.

Home and business owners love how it looks, and contractors love how easily it installs. From the lake to the stage, cable railing gives home and business owners the look--and the view--they want. Manufactured in the USA from high-quality aluminum and stainless steel cable, it's easy to install and built to last for years.

LEARN MORE: KEYLINKONLINE.COM



The stories behind the selling

I HAD BEEN KICKING AROUND the idea of starting a podcast for the *LBM Journal* audience for some time. I kept putting the idea on the back burner because I didn't feel qualified to do it. My experience and connection to the industry is made up of exactly the five-plus years I've spent here at *LBM Journal*. Though I once worked at a hardware store in high school, and today consider myself a less-than mediocre handyman, I'm not qualified to give business advice. I just wanted to share great stories and I wasn't sure how that fit among the relevant, actionable content provided by our regular columnists and writers.

Enter Rick Davis ... Over the past few years that Rick has been writing for us, presenting at LBM Strategies conferences, and leading webinars on lbmjournal.com, I've learned that there's more to him than what I had come to expect from sales consultants. I've spent most of my career working in newsrooms where the training manual specifically says to be suspicious of anyone on the sales side of the building. However, if there's one thing I've learned here, both from Rick Davis and my boss, Rick Schumacher, is that the act of (art of, maybe?) sales has everything to do with asking questions, finding shared experiences, providing solutions, and storytelling. Coincidentally, these are all tenets of good journalism.

If you haven't yet heard, Rick Davis and I have launched The LBM Sales Podcast, though we both agree that there's much more to it than

sales. Through Rick, who is the preeminent sales consultant in our industry, I have found a way to discover and share stories that aren't always sales-specific, but are always sales-related. Rick has a way of unearthing real stories from his guests, who so far have included Kevin Hancock of Hancock Lumber, and Rabbi Tamara Kolton, psychologist and author of "Oranges for Eve." (If you think a Rabbi and self-proclaimed feminine mythologist can't teach you something about sales, you'd better think again.) Future guests include a highly-respected lumberyard CEO, a young national marketing director, and a business efficiencies expert. Each of these guests tell of their experiences in a way that only Rick could get them to share. Each of their stories—some humorous, some deeply personal—have reminded me of the value of human connection and importance of learning from each other. And, of course, each story has taught me more about what it takes to be a better salesperson.

I look forward to sharing these conversations with you, and I'm positive that you will find a connection in each episode. The podcasts are available on lbmjournal.com as well as Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and most anywhere else podcasts are found. If you have a recommendation for a guest or episode topic, or any other feedback, please feel free to reach out. After all, sharing feedback, suggestions, and stories is how we become not just better salespeople, but a stronger community.

— James Anderson
Editor



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Anderson".

james@LBMJournal.com



**A squeak-free
fastener from
the brand your
customers trust.**



Available in
6", 5" and 3½" lengths

Introducing the Strong-Drive® SDPW DEFLECTOR screw

from Simpson Strong-Tie — a premium structural fastening solution that provides support for non-load-bearing, full-height partition walls and helps minimize squeaks and wall separation. Keep your shelves stocked with the high-performance fasteners your customers demand. Pair it with our Strong-Drive SDWC Truss screw for load-bearing walls to offer a complete wall-to-truss fastening solution.

For more on the Strong-Drive SDPW DEFLECTOR screw, visit our website at go.strongtie.com/sdpw or call (800) 999-5099.



UPDATES

INDUSTRY

LP Building Solutions has launched LP SkillBuilder, a free, comprehensive digital hub featuring LP SmartSide Trim & Siding courses and training, tips, and additional resources.

Boise Cascade has completed the purchase of a new property in Gallatin, Tennessee that will increase its presence in the Nashville market.

Trex has been awarded the 2020 Sustainability Leadership Award by Business Intelligence Group.

Boral Roofing has launched a Virtual Design Center developed to give site visitors an immersive digital experience.

Oldcastle APG is building a new facility in Ridgeway, South Carolina.

PEOPLE

Tando has announced the addition of **David “Alex” Catron** to its sales team in Northern Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine.

Annie Kao, vice president of engineering at **Simpson Strong-Tie** has been named to the Girl Geek X List of Top 60 Women Leading Engineering Teams.

LP Building Solutions Chairman and CEO **W. Bradley Southern** has been named to the National Association of Manufacturers Board of Directors.



KAO



SOUTHERN



HAWKINS



MAJIKE



KRAMER



OLOSKY



TOMCZAK



AVERY

Kodiak Building Partners has presented the Kodiak Chairman’s Award to **Linda Hawkins**, president of AO Door.

MFM has hired **Steven Majike** for Oklahoma sales.

ABC Supply has named **Marc Kramer** director of corporate development.

Simpson Manufacturing has named **Michael Olosky** as the company’s chief operating officer.

Gene Tomczak has joined **Professional Builders Supply** as CFO.

Austin Avery has joined **Red River Lumber** as millwork purchasing manager.



HARSCH



BROSCHART

Woodtone has hired **Shane Harsch** as VP of specialty products, and **Jean-Michel “JM” Broschart** as vice president-supply chain.

Send news and updates about your organization to James@LBMJournal.com



BUILDER CONFIDENCE RISES TO ANOTHER HIGH

Builder confidence in the market for newly-built single-family homes increased two points to 85 in October, further surpassing the previous all-time high of 83 recorded in September, according to the latest NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI). These are the first two months the index has ever been above 80.

“Traffic remains high and record-low interest rates are keeping demand strong as the concept of ‘home’ has taken on renewed importance for work, study and other purposes in the Covid era,” said NAHB Chairman Chuck Fowke. “However, it is becoming increasingly challenging to build affordable homes as shortages of lots, labor, lumber and other key building materials are lengthening construction times.”

“The housing market continues to be a bright spot for the economy, supported by increased buyer interest in the suburbs, exurbs and small towns,” said NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz. “NAHB analysis published last week showed that new single-family home sales are outpacing starts by a

historic margin. Bridging this gap will require either a gain in construction volume or reductions in available inventory, which is already at a historic low in terms of month’s supply.”

All the HMI indices posted or matched their highest readings ever in October. The HMI index gauging current sales conditions rose two points to 90, the component measuring sales expectations in the next six months increased three points to 88 and the measure charting traffic of prospective buyers held steady at 74.

Looking at the three-month moving averages for regional HMI scores, the Northeast increased six points to 82, the Midwest increased three points to 75, the South rose three points to 82 and the West increased five points to 90.

We Care

For the past 45 years our family has grown and consists of employees, customers and suppliers across the U.S. We understand the past few months have been challenging for you, for us, for our entire nation. Families and communities have been impacted in ways never seen before. Today, more than ever, we hold true to The Culpeper Promise and value all the partnerships we have forged over the years. Thank you for trusting in us.


CULPEPER
WOOD PRESERVERS

The Trusted Brand in Pressure Treated Lumber

culpeperwood.com

UPDATES

DISTRIBUTION

Russin will distribute **Arcitell's** Qora Cladding in the North East, New England, and Mid-Atlantic regions.

Sherwood Lumber has entered a distribution agreement with **Regal Ideas** aluminum railing in the Northeast market.

MoistureShield has expanded distribution with **BlueLinX** branch locations in Kansas City and St. Louis, Missouri; Omaha, Nebraska; Nashville, Tennessee; Sparta, Wausau, and Madison, Wisconsin; Grand Rapids, Michigan; and Monroe, Louisiana.

Cameron Ashley has opened a Reno, Nevada distribution center.

Jeske Hardware Distributors recently opened a new office and distribution warehouse in Sparks, Nevada.

Emery Jensen has launched XPRESS Hardware, a new merchandising program designed for specialty retailers.

CO-OPS & BUYING GROUPS

LMCTogetherWeBuild.com, **LMC's** new website is designed to promote the "Together We Build" program.

The **Do it Best Foundation** has awarded two \$10,000 grants to American Red Cross chapters in Louisiana and Oregon.

Do it Best has promoted **Chris Beach** to a newly created member growth manager role.



BEACH

Send news and updates about your organization to James@LBMJournal.com

2021 EVENTS

FEB 9 – 11

NAHB INTERNATIONAL BUILDERS SHOW

VIRTUAL | buildersshow.com

FEB 25 – 27

ORGILL SPRING DEALER MARKET

VIRTUAL | orgill.com

MAR 25 – 27

LMC ANNUAL MEETING

Phoenix, AZ | lmc.net

APR 13 – 16

NATIONAL LUMBER & BUILDING MATERIAL DEALERS ASSOCIATION LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT

Washington, D.C. | dealer.org

MAY 14 – 17

DO IT BEST SPRING MARKET

Indianapolis, IN | doitbestonline.com

Send information about your company's events to james@LBMJournal.com

CUT THE CORD!

Grabber's New Cordless Subfloor Tool

Grabber's new SuperDrive® 75 subfloor screwgun comes with a 20V DeWalt 2,000 RPM screwgun and two batteries. Now you can screw down subfloors without dragging a cord or spending time trying to locate a power box.

FEATURES AND BENEFITS

- Use for any screw application from 3/4-in to 3-in
- Use with screw diameters from #6 to #12
- Simple design, easy to service
- Compact and lightweight industrial design
- Most versatile tool on the market
- Set and forget depth control system
- Extra long bit life with LOX® bits and screws

RECOMMENDED APPLICATIONS

- Subfloor/Deck/Dock
- Roof Tile
- Wood to Metal
- Drywall and Sheathing
- Roof Tile

7520VXT
DeWalt DCF624 20V 2,000 RPM
Screw gun with special subfloor nose piece and extension.
Kit also includes two 20V DeWalt batteries

SuperDrive® 75 Series

"The Professional's Choice!"
www.grabberpro.com

ELECTRICAL CORDS CAN BE SUCH A DRAG.

NEW HOME SALES COOL AFTER SUMMER SURGE

Sales of newly built, single-family homes in September fell 3.5% to 959,000 from a downwardly revised August number, according to newly released data by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Census Bureau. Despite the monthly decline, the September new home sales rate is 32.1% higher than the September 2019 pace, and on a year-to-date basis, new home sales are up 16.9% in 2020.

Inventory inched up to a 3.6 months' supply, with 284,000 new single-family homes for sale, 32.1% lower than August 2019. This is the third consecutive month with inventory running under four months' supply. Of the inventory total, just 48,000 are completed, ready to occupy. These inventory numbers point to additional construction gains ahead, as indicated by record levels of the NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index.

Regionally, on a year-to-date basis new home sales were up in all four regions: 22.5% in the Northeast, 25.9% in the Midwest, 14.4% in the South, and 18% in the West.



DON'T BUY BLINK. CONSUMERS DON'T EXPECT INNOVATION.

The world has changed. Homeowners are increasingly savvy, more involved in purchase decisions, and looking to get more from products installed in their homes. Many are requesting windows and doors with blinds between glass. Take advantage of this new shift in consumer behavior and growing market for blinds between glass, partner with Blink® Blinds + Glass today.

**3 OUT OF 4 BUILDERS
AND REMODELERS
ARE LIKELY TO OFFER
BLINDS BETWEEN GLASS
AS AN UPGRADE.***

CALL TODAY TO ADD BLINK® BLINDS + GLASS TO YOUR WINDOW PORTFOLIO.

866.472.0042

blink®

BLINDS + GLASS

— An ODL brand —

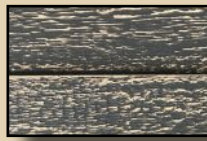
BlinkODL.com

*Proprietary research prepared for ODL, June 2020

LP Smartside Lap Siding - Red Mahogany



Clay



Bleach Gray



Red Mahogany



- Detailed oriented - Quality Products - *ColortonesComplete* Process - Dependable -

(800) 948.4349 | carolinacolortones.com



Mushroom



Cherry



Weathered

LP Smartside Board & Batten - Mushroom



SINGLE-FAMILY STARTS CONTINUE TO CLIMB

Single-family starts showed continued growth in September as overall housing production increased 1.9% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.42 million units, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The September reading of 1.42 million starts is the number of housing units builders would begin if they kept this pace for the next 12 months. Within this overall number, single-family starts increased 8.5% to a 1.11 million seasonally adjusted annual rate. This is the highest pace of single-family starts since June 2007. The multifamily sector, which includes apartment buildings and condos, decreased 16.3% to a 307,000 pace.

“The housing market remains a bright spot in the U.S. economy, and this is reflected in today’s positive housing starts report,” said Chuck Fowke, chairman of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). “Builder confidence is at an all-time high as buyer traffic is strong—another sign that housing is helping to lift the economy.”

“Home sales have exceeded for-sale home construction recently, which means additional home building in the near term,” said NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz. “Demand is being supported by low interest rates, a suburban shift in demand and demographic tailwinds. However, headwinds due to limited building material availability is slowing some construction activity despite strong demand, with authorized but not started single-family homes up 22.4% compared to a year ago.”

On a regional and year-to-date basis (January through September of 2020 compared to that same time frame a year ago), combined single-family and multifamily starts are 11.0% higher in the Midwest, 5.7% higher in the South, 4.5% higher in the West and 1.4% lower in the Northeast.

Overall permits increased 5.2% to a 1.55 million unit annualized rate in September. Single-family permits

increased 7.8% to a 1.12 million unit rate. Multifamily permits decreased 0.9% to a 434,000 pace.

Looking at regional permit data on a year-to-date basis, permits are 4.5% higher in the Midwest, 6.4% higher in the South, 0.5% higher in the West and 4.1% lower in the Northeast.

TOUGH CALL ANSWERS

ANSWERS TO OUR SEPTEMBER TOUGH CALL SURVEY:

IS THE BIGGEST FISH WORTH IT?

SECURING THE BUSINESS OF THE BIGGEST BUILDER IN YOUR AREA COULD MEAN SACRIFICING YOUR EXISTING CUSTOMERS’ NEEDS. HERE’S HOW READERS WOULD HANDLE THIS TOUGH CALL.

SURVEY RESULTS FROM LBMJOURNAL.COM

3%

JUST DO IT. You’ve been after his business for years. Here’s your chance. Agree to the challenge, and make sure your team understands that Biggest Fish is first in line for all materials.

27.8%

YES, BUT... Tell him that you’ll do everything you can to get him the material he needs, but make sure he realizes that many building materials are in short supply, so no guarantees.

35.6%

NOT NOW. In normal times, you take great pride in your on-time and in-full promise. But getting his business based on a promise you can’t keep is a very bad decision.

33.6%

MAYBE. Before saying yes or no, learn what specific materials his other vendor can’t deliver. If you can, you’re in!



THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO VOTED ON THE SEPTEMBER SURVEY. SEE PAGE 56 FOR THE NOVEMBER/DECEMBER TOUGH CALL: “THE PETER PRINCIPLE PROBLEM”

SOFTWOOD LUMBER DRIVES UP CONSTRUCTION INPUT COSTS

Construction input prices increased 1.6% in September compared to the previous month, according to an Associated Builders and Contractors analysis of Producer Price Index data released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Softwood lumber prices were a major contributor.

Among 11 subcategories, eight experienced monthly increases, with the largest increase registered in softwood lumber prices, which rose by 27.4%. In August, softwood lumber prices rose 16%. The price of softwood lumber is up an astonishing 81.2% over the past year, a reflection of supply chain disruptions combined with the rapid expansion of single-family homebuilding. Natural gas prices were 12.1% higher than the previous month, while crude petroleum and unprocessed energy materials, were down 9.8% and 0.7%, respectively. Steel mill products was the only other subcategory in which prices declined in September, falling 0.1%.

“That may be changing,” explained ABC Chief Economist Anirban Basu. “Materials prices expanded nearly 2% in September and are now higher than they were at the same time last year. Despite the lingering pandemic, the global economy has been recovering, increasing demand for key commodities. Rapid viral spread, including in Europe and parts of North America, render materials shortages more likely during the winter months. Were Congress to pass a stimulus package under current conditions, especially one offering a meaningful infrastructure component, materials prices could rise even faster.

“But fears of persistently rising materials prices may be overblown,” said Basu. “For now, Congress is not focused on passing a near-term stimulus. The pace of economic expansion has been softening recently, and the global economy is poised to slow during the winter months as economic shutdowns have begun to reappear. All of this suggests potentially softening demand for materials during the months ahead, which would help to suppress rapid price increases.”

BY THE YARD

NEWS FROM LUMBERYARDS
AROUND THE COUNTRY

US LBM ACQUIRES ZEELAND LUMBER

US LBM has acquired Zeeland Lumber & Supply, a building products dealer and manufacturer with six locations in Michigan and Northern Indiana. US LBM now operates 16 locations in Michigan, including five component manufacturing plants, along with four locations in Indiana.

VASSAR BUILDING CENTER UNVEILS NEW, EXPANDED LOCATION

The new location includes nearly 20,000 square feet of hardware, plumbing, electrical, and hand and power tools, along with new or expanded categories like lawn and garden, work clothing, and The Color Bar, a comprehensive paint destination. The new facility also features a kitchen and bath design center and a full-service lumberyard.

CONCORD LUMBER ANNOUNCES TWO PROMOTIONS

Concord Lumber has announced the promotion of Chris Maffetone, previously the division manager of ColorWorks Paint & Decorating Centers to the position of sales coordinator for Concord Lumber Corporation. Andy DeMars, the company's Maynard ColorWorks store manager has been promoted to the role of ColorWorks division manager, responsible for overseeing paint store locations.

R.K. MILES HONORED BY UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

r.k. Miles, Inc., a third-generation, family-owned business with 10 locations in Vermont and Massachusetts, was awarded the 2020 UVM Grossman School of Business Multi-Generation Family Business Award.

DEALERS, GOT NEWS?

Send info on your company's new location, anniversary, expansion, local recognition, honors and awards, new hires, promotions, or other news to James@LBMJournal.com.

MCCOY'S BUILDING SUPPLY EXPANDING TO LIBERTY HILL, TEXAS

McCoy's Building Supply recently broke ground for a new store located in Liberty Hill, Texas. The new facility will serve builders, remodelers, do-it-yourselfers, and the farm and ranch community. It is projected to open in May 2021.

NATION'S BEST ACQUIRES SIMMS LUMBER

As part of Nation's Best's acquisition strategy, Dallas-Fort Worth based Simms Lumber will operate under its existing name with its key leadership team continuing to oversee company operations alongside Nation's Best.

MISSISSIPPI'S NABORS DO IT BEST HOME CENTER ACQUIRES C & D LUMBER CO.

Nabors Do it Best Home Center has expanded to serve Northeast Mississippi with its acquisition of C & D Lumber Co., in Amory. As part of the acquisition, Nabors also announced plans to expand the Amory location to approximately 6,500 square feet, as well as renovate the lumberyard and store interior.

STINE DONATES \$50K FOR HURRICANE RELIEF

Stine Home & Yard first established its Employees 1st Foundation three years ago. Employees 1st makes cash grants to Stine associates who are facing unexpected difficulties that require financial assistance. The grant program is available to Stine's 600+ qualifying employees who work at 10 locations across the state of Louisiana and one location in Mississippi.

US LBM EXPANDS IN CENTRAL FLORIDA

US LBM has announced the recent opening of a new full line Raymond Building Supply location in Lakeland, Florida. With the opening of the Lakeland location, US LBM now operates 28 locations across Florida, with its divisions in the state including Coastal Roofing Supply, Jones Lumber, LouMac Distributors, Rosen Materials, and Raymond Building Supply.

EASIER

VERSA-LAM LVL

STRONGER

EASIER

Stronger is better. From the strength of our industry-leading Versa-Lam® to our uncompromising commitment to do the right thing, you can build your business on the strength of Boise Cascade®.

Stronger. It's not just what Boise Cascade does, it's who we are.



Boise Cascade®
ENGINEERED WOOD PRODUCTS

bc.com/ewp | 800.232.0788

© 2020 Boise Cascade Company. All rights reserved.

Are a lot of sales meetings a waste of time?

BY BILL LEE

DO YOUR SALESPEOPLE place a high value on sales meetings? Ask the outside salespeople in the LBM industry what they think about their company's sales meetings and nine out of 10 of them will tell you they are a waste of time. I make this statement based on the answers I have received when I have surveyed our industry's sales representatives myself.

There are several causes, but based on my notes, there are three primary reasons our industry's salespeople don't consider their sales meetings worthwhile:

- The overall discomfort of most meeting facilities.
- The exterior noise and the interruptions that commonly take place no matter where the meeting is held.
- The repetitive nature of the topics that are discussed at virtually every sales meeting.

COMFORT OF THE MEETING SPACE

As a store manager or sales manager, do you agree that improving the comfort of the meeting space could make a significant difference in the learning experience for your salespeople? If your answer is yes, I recommend you ask your salespeople to make a list of the specific improvements they believe would enhance their learning experience.

Based on my experience, here are a few areas I would list:

- As long as we cannot congregate when holding meetings, go ahead and make the best of Zoom, but put some teeth in your rules against using Zoom while driving.
- Don't allow meetings in an area either off site or in an area of the business where announcements over the PA system can be heard.
- Do not allow cell phones to ring in the meeting; plan several 15-minute breaks during the day to return phone calls.
- Specify comfortable chairs and writing surfaces.

- If the meeting room is too large, invest in a speaker system.
- Especially for a full day meeting, serve a hot lunch and include a sales training segment, even if it has to be a short session.

CONTROL INTERRUPTIONS

Salespeople are too important to the customer service aspect of a building supply business to be completely cut off from contact with their customers or other members of the organization. The key here is to control the times during the day when interruptions are going to be allowed. The manager in charge of the meeting should protect the salespeople from any interruption that is going to preoccupy them to such an extent that they cannot concentrate on the topics being discussed in the meeting.

If practical in your operation, I have seen a smooth flow of critical pieces of information to the salesperson at designated times during the day by appointing an inside salesperson to funnel notes and telephone messages to the individual salesperson.

REPETITIVE TOPICS

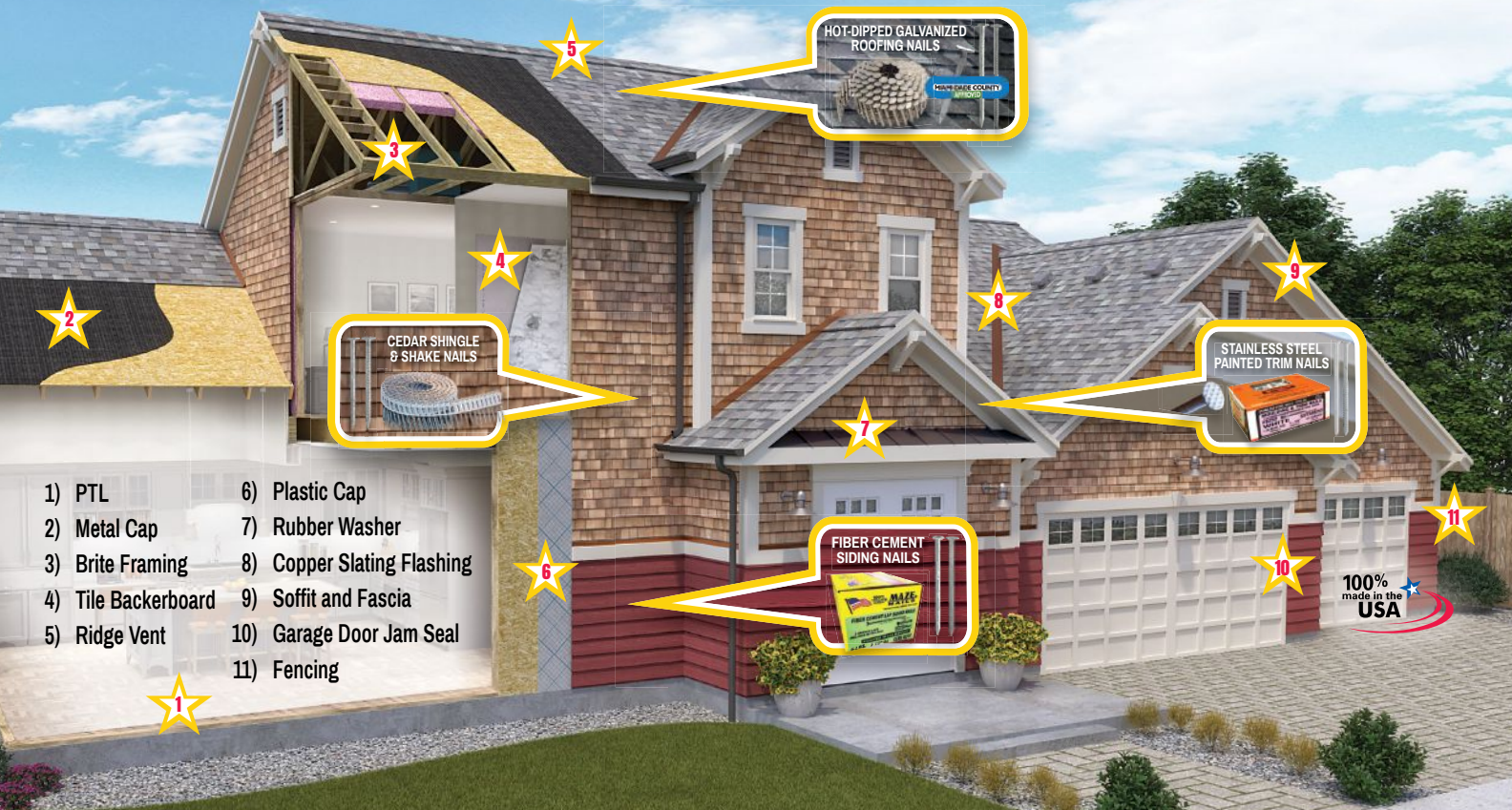
Shipping and sales predictions: How accurately are your salespeople able to estimate how much they are going to sell by product in the coming month? Consider eliminating this exercise. Let's face it, most of them don't have a clue what their current customers are going to bill in the upcoming month. Therefore, what they offer is their best guesstimate as to what will ship to each job before the end of the month.

What is the price of commodities going to do between now and the end of the month? This is where buyers try to earn their keep. They may pretend they know, but they really don't, as salespeople add up the sales they believe they have in their hip pocket.

Try this—include in sales meetings a discussion about what salespeople can accomplish despite the blunders from other departments. ■



Bill Lee is a respected sales and business consultant in the LBM industry. For more information, contact Bill at leeresourcesinc@gmail.com



- 1) PTL
- 2) Metal Cap
- 3) Brite Framing
- 4) Tile Backerboard
- 5) Ridge Vent
- 6) Plastic Cap
- 7) Rubber Washer
- 8) Copper Slating Flashing
- 9) Soffit and Fascia
- 10) Garage Door Jam Seal
- 11) Fencing

ANY WAY YOU SLICE IT, WE'VE GOT YOUR PROJECT COVERED

Look for the nails in the bright yellow boxes!

Maze Nail has been helping build America for over 170 years. Since the very beginning, our sole mission has been to provide top quality specialty nails - **100% Made in the USA**. Maze is the exclusive manufacturer of **STORMGUARD®** Double Hot-Dipped Galvanized Nails with a **LIFETIME WARRANTY** against red rust. In addition to galvanized nails, we manufacture a full line of stainless steel, copper and aluminum nails. Look for our bright yellow boxes of hand driven nails, as well as our universally-compatible wire and plastic collated coil and stick pneumatic nails. Trust the leader in Specialty Nails - **MAZE NAILS!**



Let us help you choose the right nails for the job!

800-435-5949 | mazenails.com

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CST Monday through Friday.



**MAZE 100% MADE IN THE USA NAILS
ARE MANUFACTURED WITH PRIDE AT OUR
HEADQUARTERS IN PERU, ILLINOIS.**



The game of selling

BY RICK DAVIS

A SALE IS A PUZZLE TO BE SOLVED...or at least attempted, even if you can't solve it every time. A puzzle is a test of logic and creativity that requires recognition of the situation; the right strategic development for each situation; and execution of tactics that fulfill the strategy. All puzzles and games require a lifetime of education where moves are tested, observed, and mastered to produce predictable, desired outcomes.

I'm an avid crossword puzzler, sudoku solver, board game aficionado, and devotee of all games involving playing cards. I approach selling with the same style of learning with which I solve puzzles and play games. Thus, when a client called me to solve a sales puzzle for him, I was eager to help. An out-of-town builder was coming to his market and requested, (more like demanded), a list of all the subcontractors in the market. What do *you* do with this puzzle?

I believe there is a correct answer to this question, even if it won't guarantee the desired outcome. The key to game theory is not a guaranteed outcome, but the best percentage move in a given situation. Sometimes the rolls of the dice don't go your way and, at other times, you encounter lucky breaks. In the end, the best players at the game win in spite of the fickle fortunes of fate.

Thousands of salespeople and managers struggle in their careers because they repeat their first year of selling thirty times in a career while others achieve three decades of sales growth. The successful ones accumulate new game winning moves week after week. Eventually they accumulate a skill set that enables them to outperform their competition with regularity.

The crucial skill to improving your sales game is awareness. You learn a new move and then store it in your library of tactics for future use. This lesson I learned three decades ago

during a phone call to a high-volume manufacturer of modular homes. The prospect described a process so unique to our industry that I have never seen it since. The company made rooms in a factory that were shipped to jobsites and assembled as hotels and multi-family dwellings.

At one point, I was so naturally curious about the buyer's business that I said, "You work for an amazing company!" After he proudly agreed, I said, "Well...I do too! I'm not sure if we're a perfect fit for what your company does, but I sure would love a tour of your factory to at least meet and find out." He quickly acknowledged that my statement was compelling and agreed to the meeting.

Decades later, I still use and teach the same phrases to salespeople making cold calls. There is no way to state mine was the perfect sentence to use when making an introductory cold call, but it sure beats the trite question, "Got anything coming up I can bid on?" The question might get you an opportunity to bid a low percentage opportunity. The approach I tried years ago still works today as a great conversation starter and, not coincidentally, results in better closing ratios.

If you're wondering, the advice I gave my client about the subcontractor list was this: Tell the builder, "If I give you my list, I'll be doing you a disservice. You won't know the different areas of specialty, capacity or even dependability each sub brings to the table. The best thing to do is meet. I will understand your business and operational challenges and then I can help you select the best subs to get your job done as profitably as possible."

It might not be the best response, but it's better than sending a blind list of contacts to a builder you barely know. Not surprisingly, my client got the meeting with his builder and accumulated one more winning move in the game of sales. ■



Rick Davis, president of Building Leaders, is a premier sales trainer in the building materials industry. His latest book, *Sales Economics: The Science of Selling*, is now available at buildingleaders.com. Rick can be reached at rickdavis@buildingleaders.com

Add a Recruiting Audit to your end-of-year to-do list

BY RIKKA BRANDON

AS YOU SIT BACK and evaluate your business in 2020 (and what a 2020 it has been!), don't just look at numbers. Now is the perfect time to analyze your employee recruitment efforts (and perhaps how much you've learned and applied from my columns over the last few years). If you've seen a lack of interest in your job postings, had great candidates turn down offers, or just feel like your recruiting and hiring efforts haven't netted the return they should, a Recruiting Audit can help pinpoint where you could use improvements.

A Recruiting Audit doesn't require spreadsheets and data analysis. It's a simple set of questions to help you ascertain what needs more attention and refinement in 2021. Here's a sampling of questions from a full Recruiting Audit I use when consulting with clients:

Are you able to clearly define the daily, weekly, or monthly activities and expected results for each role before you hire for it? Do you know what actions they need to take consistently to get your desired results?

An employee can't perform as expected if they don't know what those expectations look like. What should they strive for in their first 90 days, 180 days, and year? Are you able to communicate this with potential hires during the interview process?

Do you often have applicants pull out of the process or decline offers? Do you have a high turnover rate for new employees?

Losing good candidates frequently likely means something isn't working. Perhaps your compensation is too low for your area and the tight labor market. Remember, you're not just competing against other lumberyards for hourly workers and trades; you're also up against big companies with similar positions. Make sure you're researching local salary surveys or on salary.com to make sure your compensation is above average to attract and keep quality team members.

Do you often feel disappointed in your new hires?

Sure, you're going to be disappointed sometimes. But "often" is too much. And this usually means you don't have upfront clarity as to what you need in the role. Perhaps you have a general idea of what the job entails, but you're not clearly communicating expectations. This can lead to fewer qualified applicants and, as a result, settling for the best you can get, which sometimes isn't best at all. Invest more time into your recruiting efforts ahead of time, and it will save you money down the road.

Do you get enough quality and quantity of applicants from your current recruiting efforts?

We've talked about this in several of my columns: Ensure you're treating a job ad like a piece of your marketing, not like an internal job description. Sell your organization and the opportunity as much as informing them of the role. Also, be sure to leverage multiple avenues, from local job boards to Indeed to social media posts and ads.

Do you feel like you or some of your managers aren't great at interviewing?

A lot of times, interviewers judge a candidate too quickly, positively or negatively, which can lead to asking questions that prove that impression right and cloud their view of what the candidate is actually saying. Instead, ensure your team learns to use "contrary evidence" to get a full picture of the candidate so that they recognize their "gut" reaction and keep an open mind. One way to do this is to try to prove yourself wrong once you've recognized that you've already formed an opinion.

Conducting a Recruiting Audit with these and other questions can help you identify potential weaknesses in your hiring efforts and ultimately can help you implement and conduct a more thorough, productive process that nets quality candidates and stellar hires. ■



Rikka Brandon, a recruiter in the LBM industry since 2001, is a building products recruiter with Building Gurus. Reach her at rikka@buildinggurus.com

Giving everyone a voice

BY RUSS KATHREIN

I RECENTLY ATTENDED the virtual LBM Strategies Conference and was able to hear Kevin Hancock's keynote speech, in which he talked about giving a voice to everyone in his company. Afterwards, I thought about his message and the results he has seen at Hancock Lumber, and I recalled something I had witnessed years ago that demonstrated the effectiveness of Kevin's message.

I had taken a team of 15 to an off-site team building and training retreat. Right off the bat our team was introduced to the Lifeboat Drill, and we were told that we would practice this exercise several times each day. On the last day we would conduct the exercise in front of all the other teams at the training facility, and the best time to complete the drill would win.

The Lifeboat Drill consisted of a large black cloth zippered bag with various pieces of unmarked 1x4s in different lengths from 2' to 4' and an instruction page with a diagram. The goal was to unload the bag and stack the 1x4s on the ground in a fashion that exactly matched the diagram and thus create a "lifeboat." Since we had plenty of people, I told the team that I would sit this exercise out and just observe.

After looking through the bag and reviewing the diagram, the team did their initial trial run. True to form, the supervisors and the Type A personalities took charge and instructed a few of the other team members where the pieces were to be placed, while the rest of the group stood by and watched. After a few attempts, the team told the facilitator they were ready to be timed. As they had done in their practice sessions, a few participated, while most stood around and offered what little help they could. The first time was over two minutes.

During the course of the first day, we took breaks from the training. Gradually, reading the instructions louder and faster, and by having the keeper of the bag hand out boards faster, the core participants got the time of the exercise down, while the rest of the team stood around them and offered encouragement in order to stay engaged. The second time was 1:45,

the third time was 1:22, and the last practice session of the day was 1:05. The team had cut their time in half and was feeling pretty good.

Right before we broke for the day, someone asked the inevitable question, "What was the record time for the Lifeboat Drill?" Our instructor laughed and said, "You don't want to know. It will just discourage you." "Yes," the whole team exclaimed. "We want to know the record so we can beat it!" The instructor smiled and then informed us that the record time for the drill was 13 seconds.

At dinner, the core participants all acknowledged that they could speed up some, but not five times faster. That is when everyone agreed that they had to completely rethink the exercise and start asking more questions and approaching it differently. One of the people pointed out that there were 14 boards in the bag with 15 people doing the drill. Another observed that if everyone had one duty and had it memorized, they would not need someone reading the instructions.

On day three, when the final time trials were done, not only did our team win, but we set a new record of 9 seconds!

I usually share this story as an example of implementing lean ideas in a process. Reduce waste, identify bottlenecks, eliminate friction, continuous improvement, etc. Yet after hearing Kevin's presentation, I remembered that most of the observations and ideas that made the team so successful in the exercise came from the people on the team who either by tradition, precedent, or personality, would have remained in the background and normally not have had their voice heard. Once the "leaders" of the team hit a wall and ran out of ideas, only then did the others have an opportunity to gain their voice and express their ideas that ended up solving the problem.

How many people in your organization are not given a chance to have their voice heard? How often do we tell people how they should do their job rather than asking them what they think can be done to do their job better? ■



Russ Kathrein is the former president and CEO of Aurora, Ill.-based Alexander Lumber. He is also chair-elect of the National Lumber & Building Material Dealers Association. Reach Russ at russ.kathrein@gmail.com

How much can I charge for a past due fee?

BY THEA DUDLEY

Dear Thea,
We are currently charging late fees for past due invoices. We want to see if there are any guidelines out there for what to charge our customers. Thank you.

— **Uncertain service charges in Chickasaw**

Dear Uncertain,
 If I said “let your conscience be your guide” would that work? Recapping your question for those of us (me) trying to process it: You are currently charging service fees on past due invoices but want to know if there are any guidelines on what you should be charging.

I came up with more questions for you than you did for me.

- What is the rate you are currently charging for late charges?
- How did you arrive at the current rate?
- How long have you been assessing late charges?
- Are the late charges spelled out in your credit application terms and conditions?
- Have you asked your attorney what is the maximum amount you can legally charge?

Those are the preliminary questions that lead me to this...How do you explain your charges to customers? You should have a logical and well-thought explanation prepared in advance to offer customers. Nothing is quite as haunting as bumbling through a response that goes down like a fat kid on a seesaw—just a fast and loud thud.

The short answer to your question is “no.” There is no credit manager guideline for what to charge customers for service charges or late

fees. The more complex answer is “yes, there is, it is called the law.” Most, if not all, states have some context around what you can legally charge. There is usually a maximum level.

If you look to your peers on this or review a cross section of credit applications, there does appear to be an “industry standard” of 1.5% per month or 18% per annum. Every now and again I see some really ambitious company up the ante and play with those charges. My current reigning favorite goes something like this: “We are a for-profit corporation. We can adjust to you paying your invoices late and will be charging 3% per billing cycle to accommodate you.”

My credit manager heart skipped a bit on that one, but I must say that I have to admire the set of nuggets on the person who wrote it, got it on their credit application, and managed to get people to sign it (which just goes to prove, nobody ever reads them until we are in court or ticked off). Frankly, I am not sure if that amount is legal, but back to your question.

Your company attorney or a construction litigator would be a great resource for you. Depending on whether or not you are a national, regional, or single-state organization, they will be able to guide you past 1.5%, or the maximum allowed by law in your state.

I am all for charging service charges. After all, if my company is going to “support” financing beyond what was agreed on, we should not be out any financing costs. I also am not a fan of gouging my customers. If this is a partnership, let’s treat each other with respect and fairness. You can start whistling that catchy little Jiminy Cricket tune again. Go on, you know you want to. ■



With more than 30 years of credit management experience in the LBM industry, Thea Dudley consults with companies on a wide range of credit and financial management issues. Contact Thea at theadudley@charter.net

Structure earnouts to the seller's advantage

BY JOHN WAGNER

AN EARNOUT is a mechanism used to bridge the gap of perceived company value between the buyer and the seller. In most deals, the seller believes their company is worth more than the buyer wants to pay. In our M&A work, we have never seen a buyer come in with a letter of intent that contains such a strong offer that the sellers says, "Wow, I can't believe they are giving us so much money!"

If an investment banker is representing you in the sale of your company, they can fairly accurately predict what the incoming offer will be, ballpark. There are "swim lanes" that most buyers stay in as for the multiples of EBITDA being used to value LBM companies. We subscribe to an expensive database that reports these multiples and values from other deals in the LBM sector. Still, even when you're prepared, a seller's response upon getting an offer goes more like this: "Well, it's not bad, but it's not as high as we would like."

First, note that the purchase price offered in the LOI is almost never the *final* offer. As a rule of thumb, there can be a 10% swing to the seller's advantage; your investment banker should provide the metrics and negotiating firepower to argue for more cash. So, a \$10 million offer can get pushed to \$11 million. That said, let's say you and the buyer are still far apart on price, yet you like the buyer, and you want the deal to work. How do you bridge that gap between the buyer's offer and the seller's bottom line number? In absence of the buyer simply adding more cash when asked to pony up (fat chance), this is when an earnout is a perfect mechanism to bridge the gap.

The seller can go back to the buyer and say, "We want you to win the deal, but we need \$1 million more to achieve our bottom-line goals. Why don't you pay us \$10 million in cash at the closing, and another \$1 million a year from now?"

The buyer may say: "Ok, I think we can. But we have to put financial performance goals in

place. If you achieve the goals 12 months from now, we'll pay the additional \$1 million."

This is just one area where your investment banker really earns their fee. The buyer will want to structure the \$1 million payment on A) aggressive performance goals, a.k.a. *stretch numbers*, B) the earnout will be based on EBITDA, and C) they will want the earnout to be "all or none," meaning that you either hit the goal, or not. A penny under, then there's no \$1 million payment.

In response, your investment banker should say that A) the stretch numbers are too high; let's have something realistic in place. A good method would be to forecast using multi-year average growth trends. B) You should not base the earnout on EBITDA, because it's easy for the new owner to suppress that EBITDA by manipulating expenses. Just adding a new regional sales manager with a \$150,000 pay package, and another \$50,000 in new marketing expenses can cripple the seller's ability to meet the EBITDA goal required to get the \$1 million. Instead, base the performance goal on sales revenue, not EBITDA. And C) the earnout can't be all or none. It should be graduated. For example, if the sellers achieve 75% of the performance goal, they get 75% of the \$1 million. But also put a floor in place as well, so that under no circumstance shall the seller receive less than a certain amount of the earnout, no matter what happens (e.g. a virus pandemic); say 50%.

A one-year earnout is an ideal time, if an earnout is required at all. Some buyers will push for earnouts to be *multi-year*, in part because they are trying to use the future proceeds of the company to help pay for it. But the longer you go out in time on earnouts, the more you lose control of the very aspects of company operations needed to achieve the target performance, because, remember, you'll be an employee with diminished power, and not an owner. So, shoot for, *max*, one year on earnouts. And have your investment banker advise you on their structures. ■



John Wagner is a managing director at 1stWest Mergers & Acquisitions, which offers a specialty practice in the LBM sector. Reach John at j.wagner@1stwestma.com

‘The small stuff’ is material to the bottom line

BY SHANE SOULE

I LOVE THE BIG IDEAS, technology adoption, and visionary solutions our industry is innovating. I spend a lot of time considering and communicating those, but there’s great value within what we might categorize as “the small stuff” as well.

Materials handlers in our yards are crucial, not only for our customers experience, but also for a couple percentage points of our cost. Let’s dig into some things that could seem small, but over time, could be very valuable.

Metrics: Measuring material handler performance is a key metric, measured by lines per hour. A line is defined as a “line on the order,” regardless of quantity. I maintain different expectations by type of work being done. My typical goals were as follows:

- Lineals and OSB: 10-12 lines per hour
- I-Joists/LVL: 4-6 lines per hour (including cutting as required)
- Receiving wood products and putting away 15-20 lines per hour
- Cycle Counting 50+ lines per hour

Some companies calculate board footage per hour by team member and team. That works too, but won’t account for other activity-based performance that you’ll need to track.

The second step is changing actual behavior in the yard and eliminating waste. Specifically, look to transition non-lean activities like these:

From banding areas to mobile workstations:

Change the banding areas where material handlers drive the loads to actual workstations for the material handler. This is an easy and cheap fix that will speed the team up tremendously. Mount a bander to the side of the lift and eliminate extra drive time, or heaven forbid, the waiting for an open bander. Also, mount a medium-size trash can to the rear for material handlers to pull banding and dispose of it.

From staging areas to build stations: With the goal of eliminating movement that the customer does not value or pay for, invest in a portable build station. I’ve built these in the past and

then realized that there is already a product available, and it’s less expensive than custom fabricating one. Check out lumberbuddy.com. Instead of loading the forks and taking the material to a staging area line by line, bring the staging area with you.

From generalists to specialization: With the advent of mobile picking software that allows for material handlers to have pick lists digitally via phone, tablet, or scanner, you can divvy up workloads any way you like rather than the old-school process of one material handler picking each order, driving all around the yard, grabbing each different product. You can keep material handlers in “aisle ranges” to eliminate travel and increase efficiency. With this technology you can assign multiple parts of an order to different material handlers in different “aisle ranges” and then point them all to a staging location for each to bring their portion when complete. This enhances the number of lines each team member can pull each day with less travel, and ultimately, less work.

The same skillset to pick a window or trim order is vastly different than an order of studs and OSB. There is a small percentage of material handlers who can pick lumber at the speed needed for efficiency, and then slow down and handle finish products with enough care and precision. One way to knock this learning curve down is to embrace specialization. Hire different team members for the different types of work they are doing to maximize both efficiency and quality control.

These three areas represent the biggest opportunities for improvements from what I’ve seen. I could write a series on these concepts, specifically for material handlers, because there is so much opportunity in just this single area. One of the best things I have done was hire consultants, experts in their fields, to help me out. Once we know better, we can do better. If you solely rely on yourself or your team to come up with improvement ideas, you are bottlenecking your ability for maximum improvement. ■



Shane Soule consults with LBM and component companies to increase productivity and profits, and improve the experience for both customers and team members. Reach Shane at shane@shanesoule.com



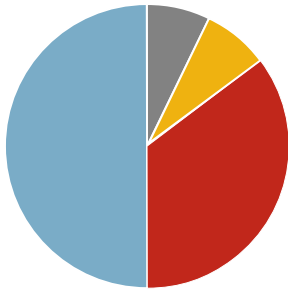
With technology playing an ever-growing role for our companies, LBM dealers and distributors are looking to get the most from their ERP systems. The decision about which ERP system to use and how often it should be upgraded play a critical role in nearly every department across an LBM dealer's business. From the front office, to sales, to the yard, nearly everyone interacts with an ERP throughout the course of their workday. Finding the right one is a huge step for a company, and that's only the first step. Implementation, training, and upgrading also play vital roles in the selection process.

This month's **REAL ISSUES. REAL ANSWERS** survey was suggested by a reader who is looking for insights as she and her company evaluate upgrading their system. Thanks to the nearly 200 readers who responded to our survey and shared their insight into...

TRANSITIONING TO A DIFFERENT ERP SYSTEM

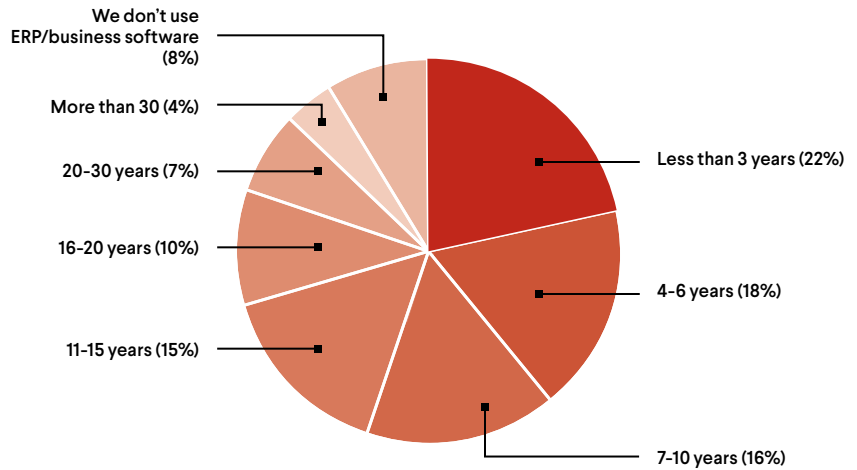
BY LBM JOURNAL READERS

How important do you believe e-commerce will be to your company's future?

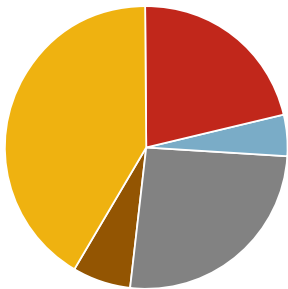


- 8% Not important
- 35% Somewhat important
- 50% Very important
- 7% Not sure

Approximately how long has your company been using its current ERP/business software?

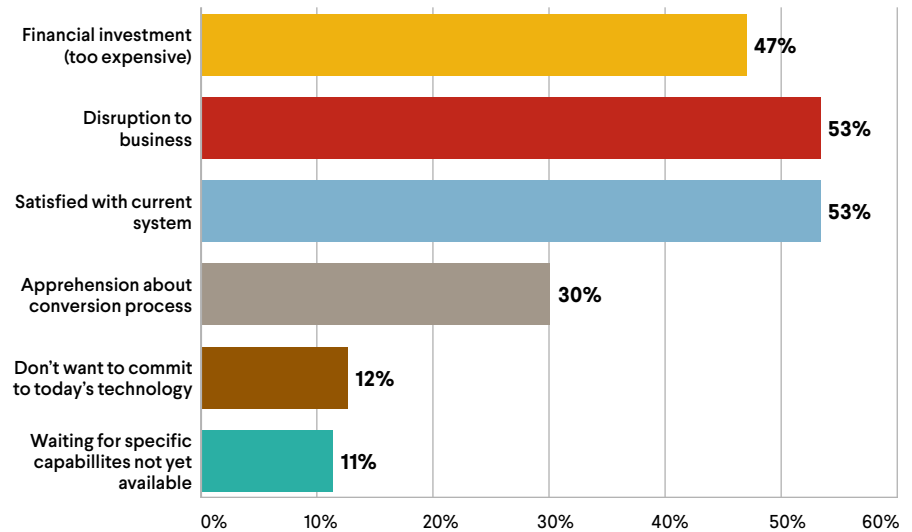


When do you foresee your company upgrading/transitioning your ERP/business software system?



- 42% Within the next 3 years
- 21% In the next 4-6 years
- 4% In the next 7-9 years
- 26% In 10 years or more
- 7% We don't use business/POS software

Given the rapid improvements in technology, why doesn't your company upgrade its ERP/business software more frequently?



WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR THIS DEALER?

What tips and insights would you offer to help ensure A) a smooth transition from an older system to the new one, and B) satisfaction with the final result? Also, if you've gone through a conversion recently, what would you do differently next time?

RESPONSES FROM LBM DEALERS AND SPECIALTY DISTRIBUTORS

"Allow twice the time and twice the budget you initially figure to get competent on the new software."

"Double your current schedule and it will be smoother in the long run."

"Ask and sign up for a service package for after the sale. ERP companies are in business to get you on their platform and tend to leave you on an island once implementation is complete."

"Clean up as much data as possible before the conversion. We thought we did a decent job, but almost 7 years later I am still cleaning up bad data."

"We transitioned to a new system several years ago, and we found we did not prepare our inventory which was located in multiple locations well enough for the new platform. Over-prepare and you will not be disappointed."

“First off, get as much training as you can get before starting. Secondly, do it in your slowest sales period and make as much effort to the transition from as many people as possible. The up-front work will pay off in the future.”

“Above all train, train, and train. It does not matter how great your staff is with technology, there will be huge issues the first 2-4 months. Ask for details on everything. In order to make your investment worthwhile, make sure everything is completely understood and every section works the way you expect (it will never do what the old system did in the exact same way but it will work how you need). Ask questions. If you don't ask, they won't go into the deepest details to answer your question.”

“I wish we would have taken more time training to learn the minor details.”

“Pay to have it implemented.”

“As the leader of the company, you need to be all-in on the transition, actively engaged, and going through it side-by-side with your employees. Keep the outlook positive when things don't come as easily on the new software at the beginning, and continually point out the 'why' behind the transition. Keep the vision of a system that does the things you need it to at the top of your team's mind while they are struggling in the weeds. It will make all the difference in attitude and ultimately in the speed with which your team will learn the new system. Don't assume that all the features you are using in your current software are available in newer software. Verify items that are important to you before upgrading.”

“Try every scenario you can possibly think of on their demo system before committing.”

“Have 15-20 absolute must-haves, then get them in your contract before you sign.”

“Involve everyone in the company who uses any part of the ERP including you, yard staff, and drivers.”

“Ask a lot of questions about how to obtain the info and reports you need. Also, do not underestimate the importance of practice with the new software for all employees from owners, to the floor salespeople and everyone in between. A new ERP is useless if you and your staff don't have a working knowledge of how it works and tracks data.”

“Keys: invest in training, and clean the database.”

“A) Get a full understanding of how the new systems, processes, and workflows actually work for your users. Find the differences in those processes to make sure you can incorporate them in the training on the new system. Also make sure the new system can handle the load of all the users using it at the same time (bandwidth). B) Clean up data before your new vendor imports into the new system.”

“The sales pitch is not the reality of how the system works. Find a dealer using the system and visit them. Talk to employees in different areas of their store.”

“The accounting side gets underestimated and needs way more attention pre-implementation.”

“Have a written process for every step of operations.”

“Train, train, train your staff then cross-train.”

“Have a test period fully operational for several weeks so everyone can use and become good at using the new software.”

“Selection will vary significantly depending on your needs and in-house capabilities. We want a system with strong data mining capabilities but also full access to the data for anything we need to do outside the system. Look for integration with other software you use to save transaction time and also a vendor that is strong in mobile and web-based access.”

“Do the transition during a slow month in winter when your order file is thin. Set up a team of people to assist with the conversion, people from sales, accounting, payables, receivables, purchasing, marketing, IT, etc. Make sure to check off all the prerequisite boxes before going live, and make sure your sales team has had plenty of practice transacting sales on the new platform before going live.”

“Having a qualified representative on site prior to, during, and after you go live to address any issues that may, and will, go wrong.”

“Watch out as probably everything has been told is either untrue or mis-represented. Heavily leverage payment with actual deliverables and performance.”

“Clean up all your data you do not need to convert, work closely with the software company you are going to upgrade to and follow their suggestions. This makes the transition easier. Make sure all employees are trained on the new software, so when you begin your first day of business it is less stressful.”

“We did upgrade five months ago—the thing I would have done differently was not try and bring seven stores live at the same time because it was difficult to address all their problems at the same time. All-in-all we are satisfied with our new software, but still have a few bugs to work out.”

“Do not hire those who are not computer literate.”

“The Institute of Managerial Accounting published an article on the cost of quality. The premise being that investing in quality pays a higher return on investment. Keep that in mind when selecting an ERP and budgeting for the implementation.”

“It's hard to know what to ask when looking for software you will have for multiple years to come, so ask others on the same software before, during and after you buy in!”

“Completely commit yourself and your staff to the implementation. Develop an order of operation prior to going live.”

“We moved from a green screen legacy system to a state-of-the-art system in March 2017. The challenges are still fresh! The implementation team from our vendor said we were well-prepared. We reviewed our entire data base and cleaned it up...inventory, customer accounts, vendors, pricing, the whole works. We were a beta site for our vendors' training module and assigned staff modules to complete with rewards. We invested in on-site one-day training for all of our counter staff and invested in enough vendor staff on site for four days after go-live to help at each location (we have three).”

“Preparation! Capture your needs and improvement goals to research in new ERP systems.”

“Make time to train your team. Set them up for success. Nothing is more frustrating than trying to learn a new system. When everyone learns how to operate the new system on their own, it leads to a lot of inconsistencies that have to be corrected in the future.”

“Go in with eyes wide open and do not set unrealistic expectations. Over-communicate the need for, and projected advantages of the new system. Plan very well and ensure commitment across your teams.”

“A) spend time on cleanup, setup, implementation process to get maximum results. B) no such thing as a ‘smooth conversion.’”

“Software sales folks tell you what you want to hear. They will disguise the limits of their software by pumping you full of the positives instead.”

RESPONSES FROM WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTORS AND MANUFACTURERS

“Buyer Beware! Recognize changing ERPs impacts customers and employees and poses a giant risk to your company. Know what you’re getting and train, train, train before conversion. It’s hard to change directions after conversion. We should have postponed rather than proceeded with conversion during the COVID-19 shutdowns. We did not have enough knowledgeable people onsite from our software vendor. We’re still cleaning up mistakes made during the first month and have numerous issues to resolve and problems still occurring daily. Six months after, our company is grappling with how to restore business functionality. Every department has problems. The old system that all were ready to replace never looked so good as it does now!”

STAINLESS MADE SIMPLE

Cascadia Railing Systems
make it SIMPLE and
AFFORDABLE to add
beautiful STAINLESS
STEEL RAILING
to any home!

CASCADIA
RAILING SYSTEMS

<http://bit.ly/Cascadia-Railing>

888-842-9492

Distribution inquiries are welcome.

© 2020 AGS Stainless, Inc.



“Total buy in from top management is key to getting the rest of the team on board with such an undertaking. Allowing plenty of time for training prior to going live with a new system. We even did some training on Saturday mornings to keep everyone focused. That cost a little more upfront, but if you hear the nightmares from companies that were not prepared, the cost on the back end could be way more than that. Having a dedicated system administrator (either a person or a small team, depending on the size of your company) is also key to lead the training and implementation process. Spend the money and time up front to get it right on day one.”

“Do not overlook your inventory setup. This is the single most important function. If the inventory is not implemented properly everything else falls apart.”

“Do your independent homework. Do not rely on information or data represented by the ERP supplier alone. Seek contrary evidence and right size your solution.”

“Be sure to understand how reporting from the ERP system can flow into sales reporting using add-ons like QlikView with a Salesforce.com CRM. The ERP system is often chosen by the operations and finance team, with little regard for sales reporting and management. Some of this is starting to change as the need for e-commerce is greater (especially order online, pick-up in store) functions.”

“I’d tell the dealer to abandon any thoughts they have of making their new system look and/or behave like their old system. Instead spend their time training their staff on the features, advantages and benefits of the new system.”

“Begin training three months in advance. Test every process to make sure it works for you.”

“Use a ‘play’ system to practice for at least 90 days prior to going live and ensure your team has really used the play system.”

“It is important to have the support and commitment from all those effected, to truly have a smooth transition.”

“Do your homework and talk to similar companies who have recently converted to new systems for advice and possible issues. Make sure your various departments are on-board with the new system before the selection is made.”

“If I could go back four years during our implementation, I would focus much more on the inventory setup. I would also run the testing longer and more in-depth. We spent too much time on the Sales Order and Customer Service aspects of the change.”

“I would highly suggest doing this transition in the winter months and start with a small portion of your locations if possible. You don’t want all locations going live at once, gives you time to work out the bugs and make the transition smoother. Make sure you have one of two super users per location so they can assist others with training and questions. I would also suggest having online tutorials that your staff can use to learn at their own pace ahead of any go-live date.”

“Ensure we have the resources to commit to the transition as it is almost a full-time job to pull together all the data into a new system. Dedicate a team to focus and prioritize, don’t expect them to make this just a part of their already full workload.” ■

SplitStop™
HIGH-PERFORMANCE DECK SCREWS

The Absolute Value-Added Choice for Your Deck Project

T3 COMPOSITE SCREWS

Your deck... 10 square feet BIGGER... using screws vs hidden fasteners

Place your order today

Call 888-578-3273 or visit our website: SplitStop.com for more information & free samples.

THE READER WHO SUGGESTED THE “REAL ISSUES” TOPIC WILL RECEIVE AN LBM JOURNAL PRIZE PACK.
Includes: cap, mug, pen, and more.

LBM JOURNAL IS PROUD TO PRESENT



Created to recognize and celebrate lumberyards that have been serving their communities for more than 100 years.

THERE IS NO MEMBERSHIP FEE

A company that's been around for a century has already paid its dues.

MEMBERS RECEIVE AT NO CHARGE

- Recognition in LBM Journal and on LBMJournal.com
- Certificate of membership
- Press release for distribution to local media
- Special Century Club logo for your use
- Century Club member window clings
- Recognition at the annual LBM Strategies Conference

To nominate your company (or another dealer) for membership, and to see a complete list of members including an interactive map, please visit LBMJournal.com/century

HILLTOP LUMBER

DELIVERING DREAMS IN THE LAND OF LAKES

In the land of 10,000 lakes, Brian Klimek lives and works among some of the best of them. His family's company, Hilltop Lumber, supplies builders in the central lakes area of Minnesota, where second homes and vacation properties have brought record sales in recent years.

Now with five locations, Hilltop Lumber, like many success stories, started out small. The first location was established in Glenwood, Minnesota in 1988 by Brian's father, Paul, who ran a successful construction business with his brothers. As the brothers were toying with the idea of spinning off a second crew, Paul was visiting with another contractor near Glenwood and learned that the lumberyard had closed.

"There was nowhere in nearly 20 miles to buy a 2x4 or a nail to put in it," Brian tells of his father's story. Seeing opportunity in what would become a prime vacation area, Paul placed a bid on the bank-owned property, and soon had ownership in a lumberyard.

Serving the Glenwood community and delivering to an increasing number of builder clients in a larger radius, Paul expanded to Alexandria, Minnesota in 1994. The Alexandria yard would eventually become the company's headquarters, and locations in Parkers Prairie, Brandon, and Ottertail, Minnesota would follow between 2000 and 2014.

Brian now runs the operation, though he prefers to be called a team leader if there must be a title attached to his name. Paul still owns a 51% stake, and is now more involved in other building-related projects while Brian and two of his sisters work on supplying materials and building relationships with customers.

SERVING THE LAKES AREA

Through all five locations, Hilltop Lumber serves a customer base made up of 84% professional contractors. Because the company serves small towns with some high-end vacation property construction, Brian says the Alexandria location, with its 40,000 square-foot of display area, office space, and warehouse, is essential to Hilltop's growing business, making up about 70% of the company's total sales.

"In our area, the builders don't have showrooms," Klimek says. "They rely on our showroom and our people to help their customers pick out products."

Both the Alexandria and Ottertail locations have complete showrooms. Alexandria's was updated in 2005, when it tripled in size and now features four different "model homes" Klimek says, in which most everything is a working display, including two recently-added, fully operational 16' wide Marvin doors. ▶





"We help plan, supply, and deliver dreams," says Brian Klimek, citing directly from the company's Purpose Statement. The core values at Hilltop Lumber are ethics, teamwork, excellent service, having fun, and making a difference in customers' lives.

Hilltop prides itself on being a complete stop for builders and homeowners alike, including a home décor area where Klimek says a customer can meet on one side of the showroom and pick out windows, then cross the room to choose flooring, cabinets, countertops, and blinds.

No one knows the true number of residents the area sees over the summer months, especially in Alexandria and Ottertail, Klimek says, and the area continues to grow with teardowns, remodels, lake homes and second homes. Some 350 lakes in the surrounding area make up some of the best fishing and boating in the state.

“In the Alexandria area and surrounding communities, there’s a new high school, great manufacturing, a variety of retail, and a lot of good jobs here. On top of all the recreation that’s here, we’re fortunate to be around this area,” he says.

TEAM VALUES

Klimek says Hilltop Lumber’s core values have led him and his team to success. Overall, 64 team members work among the five lumberyards, with 40 of those based in Alexandria. Of those employees, 11 work as outside salespeople.

“We help plan, supply, and deliver dreams,” Klimek says, citing directly from the company’s Purpose Statement. The core values at Hilltop Lumber are ethics, teamwork, excellent service, having fun, and making a difference in customers’ lives.

“Family first” and “giving back” are also core tenets of the company’s values. “If a team member has to bring kids into school every day, we can adjust hours,” Klimek says. “Their

family is first and we want them to come to work and not have to worry about it.”

Community involvement includes everything from sponsorship and donations to youth groups, to wood duck houses for Boy Scouts, and many other materials donations.

In a large service area made up of a number of smaller towns, Klimek says he feels fortunate to have added strong team members in recent years, and he intends to keep that trend going. The same amenities that draw vacationers and retirees to the area are what he says will bring in new team members.

“The business is there, and we’re stretched a little thin, but we’re adding great people and will continue to do so. We are a place that I think people want to work and so we have been fortunate to keep raising the bar with the team we have been able to add. Where our stores are located in rural Minnesota, there are a lot of recreational things you can do, plus, being located in Central Minnesota, you can drive pretty much anywhere,” Klimek says.

LOOKING AHEAD

Klimek is focused on maintaining Hilltop Lumber’s competitive position among local independent yards and nearby big box stores. Most recently, he began switching to Kerridge’s K8 software platform, which will transition the company to e-commerce through online and mobile applications.

“It’s a long process to switch,” he says, “but for our own salespeople to have the mobile option in the field and to do so many things away from the office is big for us.”



Through all five locations, Hilltop Lumber serves a customer base made up of 84% professional contractors. The Alexandria location, with its 40,000 square-foot of display area, office space, and warehouse, is essential to Hilltop’s growing business, making up about 70% of the company’s total sales.





His focus on the future doesn't rule out growing with more locations, Klimek says, though he doubts he'd build anything new. Growth through acquisition is how the company has expanded in the past and he plans to continue that path when the time is right.

"There are many independents that maybe don't have a plan in place, and we're interested in looking at those if it works out as far as time and location," he says.

The COVID-19 pandemic has already taught Klimek a few lessons that he plans to carry through after things return to some form of normal, he says. While the company has had some of its best months yet during the pandemic, he's discovered that a good entrepreneur learns to position their company for the unexpected.

"I don't know that anyone would have predicted it, but we've been fortunate with the commodities side of things," he says, adding that masks and cleaning products have become regular SKUs in most Hilltop locations.

While pricing and sourcing have been "interesting," Klimek says, his team has weathered it fairly well. In learning to plan for extended lead times, the company started a



Now with five locations, Hilltop Lumber, like many success stories, started out small. The first location was established in Glenwood, Minnesota in 1988 by Brian's father, Paul, who ran a successful construction business with his brothers.

Market Memo to send out to contractors and customers to keep them up to date with lead times and current pricing.

Training from vendors and through the Northwestern Lumber Association, along with servant leadership training for team leads keeps Hilltop Lumber focused on relationships with builders that often feel like a partnership. Close builder relationships established by Paul when the first location opened 32 years ago are modeled by Brian and the rest of the Hilltop Lumber team still today. ■

GET TO KNOW HILLTOP LUMBER

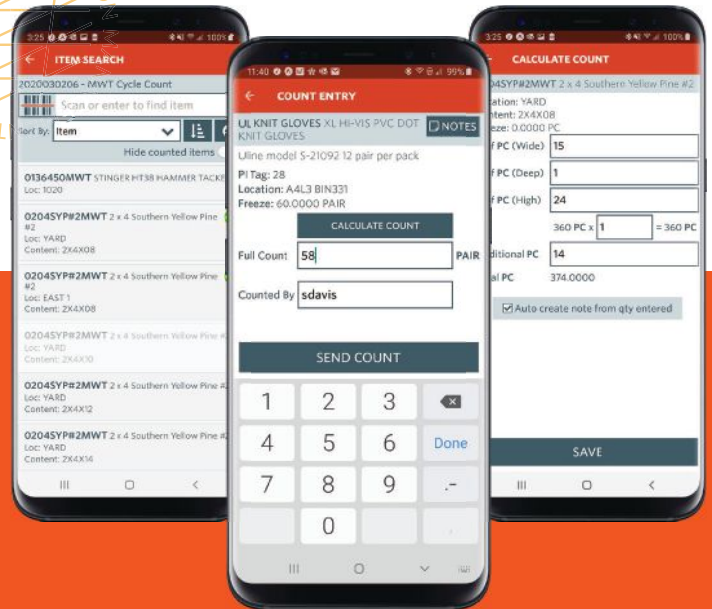
FOUNDED:	1988
OWNERSHIP:	FAMILY
LOCATIONS:	FIVE
EMPLOYEES:	64
BUSINESS SOFTWARE:	TRANSITIONING TO KERRIDGE
BUYING GROUP/CO-OP:	DO IT BEST
TOP 3 BRANDS SOLD:	MARVIN WINDOWS AZEK DECKING LP SMARTSIDE

dmsi
AGILITY



WHEN YOU CAN TRUST YOUR INVENTORY, YOUR CUSTOMERS CAN TRUST YOU.

Accurate, real-time inventory lets you be the dependable partner your customers expect.



The Mobile Warehouse Tools app makes it possible.



Real-time receiving

Products are received in real-time, so Sales always knows what's in stock. Just unload deliveries, scan the items – and you're done.



Adjust locations and quantities on the fly

Moving products? Staff can update locations with just a few taps.



Hassle-free picking – every time

Accurate inventory data means orders are picked faster without the frustration of hunting for items.



Fulfill custom orders faster

Eliminate production delays with real-time updates from the shop floor. Automatically notify service reps when items are ready.



Inventory counts in hours – not days

Complete physical inventory without disrupting normal business operations.

Mobile Warehouse Tools is part of the Agility ERP system. Agility streamlines inventory and order management, so it's easier for your staff to deliver the fast, high-quality service customers expect.

DMSi Software focuses solely on dealers and distributors of building materials. We streamline core processes so our customers can grow their businesses better.

DMSi

sales@dmsi.com
402-330-6620

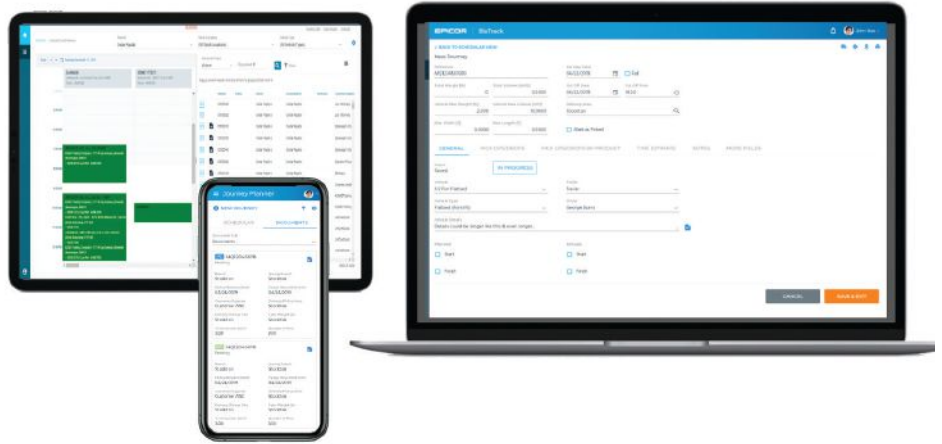


TECH TOOLS

PLATFORMS MAY CHANGE, BUT THE GOAL IS THE SAME:
CREATE CLARITY FROM CONFUSION

BY MIKE BERGER

IN 1901, GREEK SPONGE DIVERS in search of treasure brought to the surface from an ancient wreck a strange, encrusted geared device. Dating from the first century B.C., this so-called Antikythera mechanism turned out to be a radically advanced geared machine that could calculate the position of the sun and planets, the phases of the moon, and even future solar eclipses. In short, it was a piece of technology that enabled the ancient Greeks to predict the future and adapt to what it would hold.



ABOVE: New from Epicor, BisTrack Kinetic is a UX (User Experience Design) that the company says enables employees to work remotely while simplifying common business practices and streamlining processes. With it, users can schedule, dispatch and deliver product, optimize truck and driver usage, minimize errors, as well as manage other functions.

Seems we're not that different from our ancestors. Today, we turn to technology in the form of business management software such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platforms that can collect, store, and interpret business data. And while the tools have changed, the goal has not: to better solve complex problems. "LBM dealers are looking for tools that best enable their employees to be productive and respond to customer needs no matter where they are," says Jason Parchomchuk, product manager, building supply for Epicor Software Corp., a software company based in Austin, Texas, that provides technology solutions for manufacturing, distribution, retail and services industries.

But there's a changing face of technology, one that is quickly adapting to current world situations and providing new ways to succeed in the face of these unprecedented challenges. "With supply chain disruption and pricing volatility, strategic pricing, analytics, and forecasting are even more crucial to maintain profitability and help overcome issues," says Parchomchuk. "Their customers are looking for flexible, safe options to do business with their suppliers—via mobile, online ordering and payment, and curbside delivery."

CHANGES IN THE COVID-19 WORLD

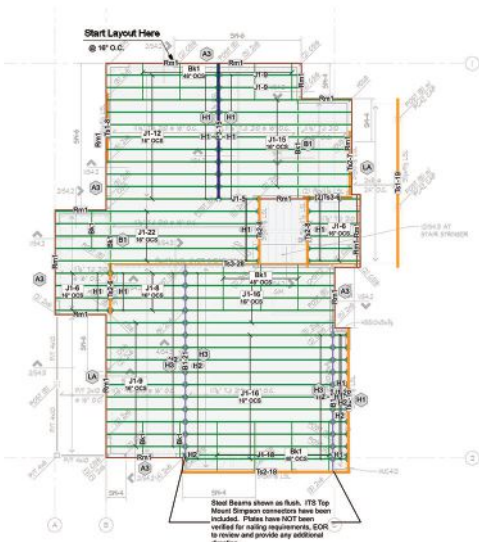
When the World Health Organization first named the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak as COVID-19, ERP developers rationalized—as did most people—that any disruption in business would be short-term. Little did they suspect that the impacts would be as far reaching as they have proven to be. As a result, it has become imperative for businesses to embrace technologies that enable them to thrive despite business conditions. "2020 really showed us and our whole industry that you can still be successful during great uncertainty," says Amy Warren, director of business and sales development for Weyerhaeuser Distribution. "COVID-19 forced us out of our routines and pushed us toward innovation where all of us could see the benefits of embracing technology."

One methodology is to utilize technologies that create efficient remote working environments that still deliver flawless customer service. "The demand for stable and secure remote access to software systems and sources of record is the most important trend we're seeing for our customers in this 'new normal,'" says Cindy Carlson, senior account manager for DMSi. "SAAS software solutions allow dealers to safely grant access to their users no matter where they're working. Communication and collaboration software like Zoom or Microsoft Teams let service teams continue working together to keep processes rolling, answer customer questions, and provide updates. Mobile apps are vital to quickly retrieve data when reps are out in the field. They can manage the account from the palm of their hand." >



BELOW LEFT: Starting in January, Paladin made its Paladin Pilot remote management software available free for the first six months, and its latest release contains features which include new mobile capabilities that, according to Paladin, significantly enhance an LBM dealer's online presence while providing new ways to easily expand product lines.

BELOW: DMSi's Agility Sales Analytics dashboard provides a quick overview of data such as daily total sales and sales comparisons, along with customizable analysis of data groups such as top customers and sales by product group, top sales agents, and more. Its Mobile Warehouse Tools app provides functionality for counting, moving, picking, and receiving inventory as well as completing production.



ABOVE: According to Weyerhaeuser, its Estima software empowers dealer sales reps to convert a take-off request to a sales opportunity by utilizing the take-off process to solve problems before they happen. The comprehensive output builds teamwork during the sales presentation so that the LBM dealer can build collaboration with the customer.

Coupled with an LBM distributor’s staff working remotely is its customer base shopping remotely—a trend that is on the rise for B2B retailers. “With showrooms being closed, businesses are looking for new ways to interact with customers,” says Cindy Carlson, senior account manager for DMSi. “An e-commerce solution enables your customers to review stock, place orders and self-manage their account. While e-commerce is not new, the sense of urgency is. Everyone is now in a race to implement it.”

Cary Anderson, vice president and general manager of North America for Kerridge Commercial Systems, also sees the increased importance of leveraging technology. “With the current pandemic situation, dealers have adjusted rapidly to the ‘new normal’ by better leveraging technology,” he says. “Dealers who already had an e-commerce solution heading into the pandemic were able to exploit their competitive advantage as consumers began to ramp up their online ordering and demand for curbside pickup.”

Of course, e-commerce comes with challenges. For example, the Buy Online, Pickup in Store (BOPIS) e-commerce model—a staple of B2C commerce that has been a big player in the recent economic success of big box stores such as Home Depot which, according to its most recent annual report, accounted more than 50% of its \$10 billion in online sales to BOPIS—now needs to be adapted to B2B transactions. As John Maiuri, president of the LBMH Division of ECI explains, “Among the many challenges for deal-

ers that are looking to adopt a BOPIS e-commerce model is ensuring they have an impeccable inventory tracking process in place. To ensure success, dealers must have an accurate accounting of all sales information, credit card details and inventory quantities so that when a customer comes to pick up their purchase, items are staged, payments are completed and the experience runs smoothly.”

Ralf Benett, marketing manager for Paladin Data Corp., agrees. “For years, the industry has been moving toward being more mobile and customer-friendly with mobile applications and more shopping options,” he explains. “The challenges presented by the coronavirus shutdown only exacerbated the adoption of those technologies. Mobile technology allows stores to serve customers all over the store and even outside and on deliveries instead of funneling them through an in-store checkout line. They also simplify programs such as curbside pickup and remote payments. Contactless payments make in-store checkout safer, which is an important issue with shoppers today. And omnichannel operations that link online and in-store sales facilitate programs like BOPIS, which allow stores to serve customers outside normal business hours.”

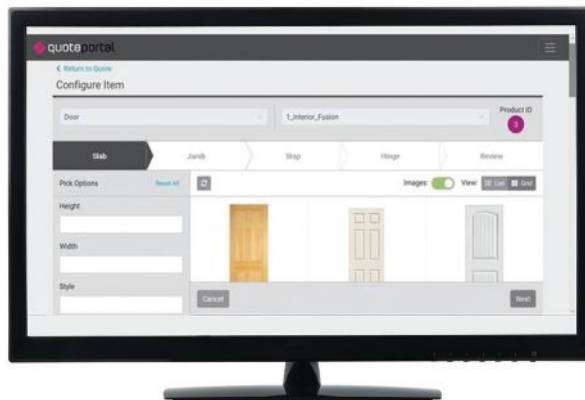
SOFTWARE ADAPTS AND DELIVERS

In light of these business environment changes, technology is evolving to provide solutions that grow business, build customer relationships, simplify process, and reduce overall costs. “The key to growing any business is



ABOVE: Simpson Strong Tie’s Deck Planner software allows designing in both 2D and 3D modes. Other features include an in-app tutorial, and additional functionality to make it simple, convenient and task-driven.

RIGHT: According to Kerridge, its lumber and building materials supplier software supports an LBM dealer’s sales cycle from the initial inquiry through quotation to order placement and incorporates management information, analysis, and reporting tools.





LEFT: BC Connect is a web-based platform of integrated tools (such as BC Framer shown here) from Boise Cascade designed to let dealers and distributors manage engineered wood product workflow. It gives customers a central resource to manage projects, coordinate drawing services, import and manage material lists, create quotes, optimize job pack creation, and store other project files conveniently using the Internet.

having clear, up-to-date information on how that business is performing in real-time and have a straightforward way to manage critical, integrated operations,” says ECI’s Maiuri. “A business management software solution like an ERP offers a suite of integrated applications that a business can use to manage different aspects of their operations, like accounting, purchasing and inventory, business reporting and customer marketing.... Everything an LBM and hardware business could need is all in one place, cutting down the amount of time an owner needs to spend on routine business management, allowing them to focus instead on growth opportunities.”

LBM dealers who are seeking solutions through technology share two primary needs explains Matt Meyers, founder and CEO of Yesler. “First, their employees’ time is valuable. Software should empower people to do more with their valuable time. Second, too many LBM processes and too much knowledge is tied up in specific individuals. This creates a risk that when these people retire, their knowledge leaves with them. Yesler leverages an LBM dealer’s own relationships, data, and operating knowledge so the dealer retains the advantages they have earned.”

For example, Boise Cascade’s software is intended to improve the efficiency and profitability for its LBM customers and make many of the day-to-day processes run smoothly. It recently added a new tool to its BC Connect program so that users can create and compare multiple versions of material cut patterns to help them

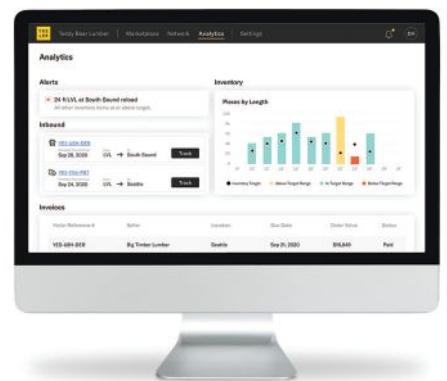
compare the key parameters of waste, offcuts, and raw material usage to find the best solution based on current inventory and on-hand materials. BC FloorValue—an integrated part of Boise Cascade’s BC Framer software—identifies potential floor problems by allowing a dealer to quickly check floor plans and evaluate different product series, on-center spacing and sheathing thickness from a price vs. value standpoint.

Epicor’s new BisTrack Kinetic system simplifies common LBM business processes and enables users to do business and serve customers at any time from any location. Its BisTrack Web Store API allows users to integrate their Epicor BisTrack solution with third-party or custom web store applications for online catalog and sales capability.

Weyerhaeuser recently added an electronic transfer feature to its Javelin v6.3 software that takes a Javelin project material list and sends that order directly to the lumber dealer’s local Weyerhaeuser distribution center for processing.

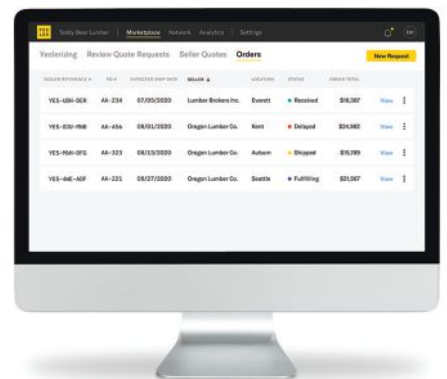
And in the case of DMSi, its Mobile Warehouse Tools app provides functionality for counting, moving, picking, and receiving inventory as well as completing production, while its PartnerView e-commerce platform now includes integration of a free chat tool along with the ability to have customers initiate pick up requests.

For deck projects, Seljax has developed SeljaxDeckDesign.com, a new opportunity for LBM Dealers and LBM Suppliers to enhance their online capa-



ABOVE: Yesler’s new Analytics was developed to read POS data, performs analysis and modeling based on operational choices, then create simple visuals for recommended orders to be transacted in Yesler or traditional channels.

BELOW: According to Yesler, its focus with its Marketplace is not simply to change the way transactions occur; it is to change the economics of LBM dealers, supply chain. It has launched two new pilot products for LBM dealers in the last month to help them leverage data and relationships while saving time and money.



bilities. The online software provides the ability for consumers and contractors to design their own deck online, and the site can be linked directly to an LBM dealer’s website. ➤

To respond to coronavirus challenges, Paladin recently enhanced its Mobile2 suite of products. Its Paladin Pilot remote management software is available for free for the first six months, and its latest release includes new mobile capabilities, integrations that enhance online presence, and new methods to expand product lines. “We are constantly enhancing our products,” says Paladin’s Benett. “We continuously release updated versions of Paladin so our clients are always running the most up-to-date software in the industry.”



In June, ECI announced a variety of enhancements to its Spruce and RockSolid MAX software solutions that include an e-commerce API that allows users to work with the web developer of their choice and allow documents to be viewed and data collected for the creation of new accounts. “The Spruce suite of software gives our customers a way to manage their entire business’s operations in one integrated solution” says ECI’s Maiuri.

In September, Yesler began to test its Buyer’s Network, a new visual tool for LBM buyers designed to organize and manage the buying process. According to Yesler, the software allows buyers to leverage their networks of relationships with suppliers, while Yesler organizes needs to prevent supply outages, monitor communications, and negotiate the best deals. It then tracks commitments and orders, after which it utilizes that data to gain insights.

And in October, Buildxact launched a new pilot program with two large LBM merchant groups in North America for its new Merchant Plan. Specifically created for the LBM dealer, Merchant sales teams can use the platform to provide pricing and specifications, respond to builder RFQs, interact with builder customers during quote formation, showcase merchant range width, and more. “Based on the feedback we are receiving,” says Yates, “we’re confident that our Buildxact Merchant and builder platform is the future of LBM pro sales relationships with small- to medium-sized contractors.”

SUCCESS RELIES ON CHANGE

Rather than being intimidated by these advancements, technology developers say that the successful LBM dealer is the one who is willing to embrace it. “We all need to be open to the benefits of change,” says DMSi’s Carlson. “Look for opportunities to make changes that bring value to your customers. Observe, ask and listen to your front-line employees and your customers. Identify and work to resolve pain points. Provide solutions to things no one ever thought to question. As a result, you will be your customers’ best supplier and establish better business processes that can be further automated by software solutions. Think of change not as an obstacle but as the light at the end of the tunnel.”

Technology developers stress that it’s not about abandoning the past; rather, it’s an equation of keeping what has worked well and then using technology solutions to build on it. “Choosing to adopt new technology is not a binary decision: relationships vs efficiency, brands vs commoditization, or jobs vs automation,” says Yesler’s Meyers. “Dealers should run their business using software to leverage their assets—people, physical assets, relationships.”



ABOVE LEFT: ECI’s RockSolid MAX software includes, at a monthly price, the core features needed to run a successful hardware/home center store such as point of sale, purchasing, inventory management and accounts receivable.

ABOVE: ECI’s Spruce suite of software is designed to give customers a way to manage business’s operations in one integrated solution. With features that handle purchasing through delivery, ECI says that Spruce can eliminate redundancies and improve communication across the organization.

BELOW: Buildxact’s quoting and construction management software for builders, remodelers, and contractors features point-and-click estimating said to create detailed price lists, automatic quote generation, and the ability to remotely assign work and manage schedules.



BELOW: MaterialsXchange has created a digital trading platform that allows buyers like retail lumberyards, component manufacturers, and distributors to negotiate purchases with mills and importers directly, in real time. The platform provides pricing, logistics, and then transfers secure payments which allows for the purchasing process to be fully integrated. Reporting is fully transferrable throughout the LBM industry’s various computer systems.



Serving the Northeast Retail Lumber Dealer Since 1976



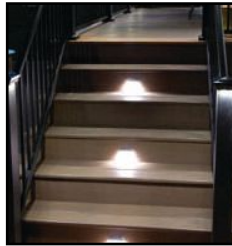
There are so many important factors to consider when selecting vinyl railing. You want to be sure the brand you choose has a reputation for quality, safety, and a beautiful selection of vinyl railing styles. Shoreline Vinyl has earned that reputation, and we are grateful that you are considering our American-made products for your home.



Strong & Easy to Install -- Discover Shoreline Vinyl Railing!

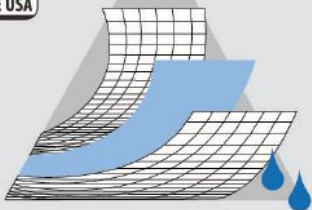
Vinyl Railing

Shoreline Vinyl never uses reground, recycled material. All Shoreline Vinyl railing products are manufactured in the USA on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.



Post & Stair Lighting

- Plug-together wire harness
- Single power supply for all lights
- No electrical permits required
- Weather-resistant connectors, lights (Special Order)



ADVANCED Building Products Inc.

- Deflect, Drain, and Dry
- Advanced Moisture Management Solutions
- Allowing Moisture to Drain, Not Remain®



Multiple sidings, one rain screen



Industry leading roof ventilation mat for use behind wood shingles



Dual vertical and horizontal channel design allows for dual drainage and cross ventilation



800-942-7776

www.midstatelumber.com



MSL

MID-STATE LUMBER CORP.



A Customer-Centric, Innovative, and Environmentally Conscious Company

NEW JERSEY
200 Industrial Parkway
Branchburg, NJ 08876

NEW YORK
270 Kings Highway
Warwick, NY 10990

PENNSYLVANIA
181 Pringle Street
Kingston, PA 18704

MASSACHUSETTS
225 Cedar Hill Street
Marlborough, MA 01752

“Dealers can improve their operations with software, but must shed their painful memories of their first POS implementation or the last deployment when they consider Yesler. Modern software like Yesler works differently. Does Amazon.com require you to quit using traditional retail or other shopping apps? When you sign up for Uber, do you have to sell your personal vehicle? Yesler empowers you to transform your supply chain starting with one transaction, one product, and one relationship at a time at your pace.”

Technology, manufacturers point out, is not your enemy. Rather, it enables you to serve the customer better by helping you communicate your experience, offer better prices, handle resource and purchase order management, and improve order fulfillment. As Buildxact’s Yates explains, “This is not the old (and expensive) ‘the customer is always right’ emphasis on service. Instead, understanding technology allows you to provide a greater service level and a more rewarding experience to your customer at a low and scalable cost.”

As well, capital investment in technology solutions should be seen as an opportunity. “Many business owners view their software and technology investments as an expense rather than investments in growth and opportunity,” says ECI’s Maiuri. “There is a fundamental difference, however, between the owner who embraces new technology versus those that attempt to yield maximum returns off twenty-plus year-old software. Newer technology can improve workflows, aid with staff recruitment, deliver a greater customer experience and provide greater business insight efficiently and effectively.”

Bear in mind that technology investment reaches beyond the price of the ERP system itself, and LBM dealers will best succeed when they implement other changes in partnership with their ERP investment. “When you

are faced with implementing a new ERP system we strongly recommend hiring a dedicated team to manage the project from start to finish,” says Kerridge’s Anderson. “Your ERP provider can design a very effective project plan but if you simply assign people from your existing team to manage the project along with their regular duties, then that project is very likely to fail.”

Business technology is not a one-time investment, points out Paladin’s Benett. Just like purchasing equipment like forklifts, business machines, rental equipment and company vehicles, retail technology should be regularly maintained and updated. “That means updating your equipment such as POS terminals, printers, scanners and mobile devices, and dedicating yourself to continuing education,” he explains. “As rapidly as technology evolves, there are always new things to learn and new ways your system can improve your operations. Investing both money and time into maintaining your business management system will keep you on the path to success.”

If there’s one thing in which the LBM industry can take heart in, it’s the fact that it isn’t alone. Many other industries have or are facing the same challenges, and have succeeded. Today is an opportunity for new wins, and technology can guide the way, and it’s paramount for LBM dealers to embrace those changes now before outside forces claim those wins. As Yesler’s Matt Meyers explains, “Look across other industries that have transformed—travel, real estate, retail—and ask yourself, ‘Is LBM the one industry that will remain exempt from technology transformation?’ LBM dealers are the critical link in the supply chain to builders today, but investments by outsiders like Softbank or Amazon could change that. Consolidation within the industry by dealers or ERP providers can change the landscape and options for independents.” ■

Michael Berger is the former managing editor for HANDY Magazine and has been writing about home improvement and construction for the past nineteen years.

RESOURCES

Companies highlighted participated in this article.

Boise Cascade:
bc.com

Buildxact:
buildxact.com

Cadsoft:
cadsoft.com

DMSi:
dmsi.com

ECI Software Solutions:
ecisolutions.com

Epicor Software Corp.:
epicor.com

Expertek:
expertek.com

GPS Insight:
gpsinsight.com

Hyphen Solutions:
hyphensolutions.com

Kerridge Commercial Systems:
kerridgecsna.com

LP:
lpcorp.com

MaterialsXchange:
materialsxchange.com

MiTek (Sapphire Supply software):
mitek-us.com

Mobile Visual Pro:
mvpestimator.com

Paladin Data Corporation:
paladinpointofsale.com

Ponderosa Building Materials Software (Computer Associates Inc.):
caisoft.com/solutions/ponderosa

PreBuiltML:
prebuiltml.com

RenoWare Technologies Inc.:
renoware.ca

ResiCAD:
resicad.com

SaberisConnect:
saberis.com

Seljax:
seljax.com

Simpson Strong Tie:
strongtie.com

Weyerhaeuser:
weyerhaeuser.com

WoodPro Software:
woodprosoftware.com

Yesler:
goyesler.com

Yesware Solutions (Maker of LBM LiftOff):
yesware.com



WE DON'T JUST TAKE RESPONSIBILITY.

**WE HAUL IT
THOUSANDS OF MILES.**

We build on our promise to earn your trust with each delivery.

From our distribution centers to your yard – we take pride in listening to your needs, understanding your customers' goals – then delivering the best service and building products in the business. You can rely on Weyerhaeuser Distribution to be your partner – and we look forward to helping your business grow.

For more information about what we can offer you, go to

Weyerhaeuser.com/Distribution



Weyerhaeuser

EACH MONTH, HUNDREDS OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES VIE FOR INDUSTRY ATTENTION. HERE ARE SOME THAT OUR EDITORS THINK WILL INTEREST LBM JOURNAL READERS.



Deckorators Trailhead entry-level composite decking

Deckorators has introduced Trailhead, a low-maintenance composite decking for the 2021 deck building season. The new wood-plastic composite (WPC) decking family is said to offer value as well as an industry-leading 25-year structural, 25-year stain-and-fade, and 25-year removal-and-replacement limited warranty. With an expected average retail price in the low \$2-per-lineal-foot range, Deckorators Trailhead composite decking is designed to offer affordability as well as a rugged, trend-setting appearance. Trailhead comes in Ridgeline (gray), Pathway (brown), and Canyon (red-brown) —three lightly streaked colors with natural, flat-grain embossing. The 7/8" x 5-1/2" Trailhead boards are available in 12', 16', and 20' solid and grooved-edge profiles and feature a shallow scalloped profile with four lobes. Trailhead WPC composite decking is expected to be available in the U.S. and Canada in early January 2021. deckorators.com

Boral Ply 40

Manufactured by Boral Roofing, Boral Ply 40 is an SBS modified fiberglass reinforced underlayment/base sheet for tile, shingle or shake roofing. Designed for easy installation and ideal for use with metal roofing systems, Boral Ply 40's modified asphalt minimizes the wrinkling and buckling which is commonly associated with non-modified membranes. Developed as an all-season solution, Boral Ply 40 is said to offer durability and better protection than felt at a low cost. The recently improved underlayment now offers an uncovered exposure time, without any degradation, of six months (an improvement from its original three month uncovered exposure time). Boral Ply 40 is available in 39 3/8" x 66' (216 square feet) rolls, each weighing 80 lbs. Certifications and approvals include: ASTM-D6757, D4601, ASTM-D226 and D4869. boralroof.com



ProVia Stone Calculator

ProVia's Stone Calculator, an automated calculator for manufactured stone, automatically creates a materials list for ProVia's stone veneer, replacing the traditional pencil-and-paper process. The calculator was developed to increase the efficiency of the manufactured stone calculation process by saving time, reducing potential for errors, and minimizing waste from over-ordering. The online tool automatically populates associated order values during the calculation process, in real time, as installers fill in their initial measurements. The Stone Calculator is free of charge, and while designed for the detailed requirements of professional dealers and installers, it is open for use by the general public. provia.com/stone-calculator



Fortress Building Products cladding

Fortress Infinity CBPC cladding, the company's latest product category, is a co-extruded bamboo-plastic composite developed to offer effective moisture-resistance and inspiring wood emulation in rainscreen applications. Drawing from performance attributes of Infinity and Apex deck boards, Fortress cladding is designed to be strong as the first line of defense against water infiltration. Fortress Infinity cladding is available in four in-stock and nine special-order colors inspired by tropical hardwood species: Tiger Cove, Cape Town Grey, Caribbean Coral, and Oasis Palm. Fortress Infinity cladding is fully backed by a 25-year residential and 15-year commercial warranty. Available as square and grooved boards, Fortress Apex cladding is fully backed by a 30-year residential and 15-year commercial warranty. fortressbp.com/cladding



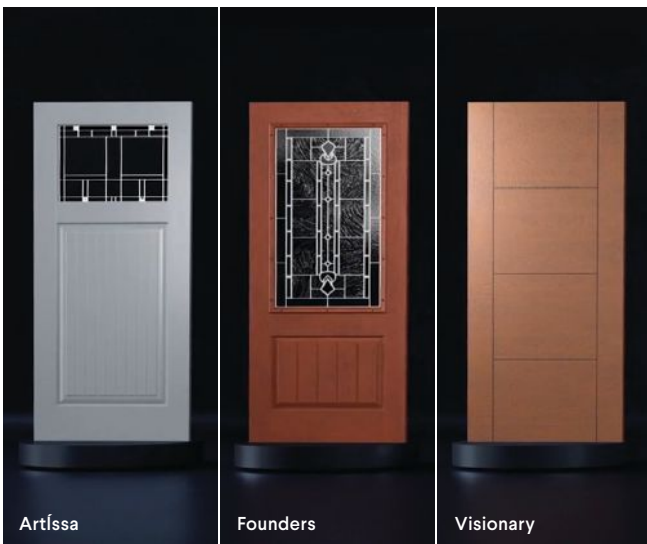


Simpson Strong-Tie's Quik Drive

Simpson Strong-Tie has received a Pro Tool Innovation Award in the Drills/Drivers-Decking, Cordless category for its Quik Drive PRO200SG2 multipurpose system. The new Quik Drive PRO200SG2 multipurpose system is equipped with a DeWalt cordless 2,000 rpm brushless driver motor and a lightweight extension for ergonomic stand-up driving. The cordless system is designed to eliminate the need for compressors, generators, or power to run fastening equipment. It can be used either with or without the lightweight extension. The Quik Drive PRO200SG2 system includes the auto-feed attachment, battery charger, two lithium-ion batteries, and a protective soft case. strongtie.com

DQ Technologies delivery notifications

DQ Technologies has added two products to its Integrated Delivery Management suite. Both products are designed to elevate a customer's experience by providing up-to-date order status information at their fingertips. DQT's SMS and e-messaging services provide updated delivery status information by sending automated SMS and email messaging directly to customers, including current order status, ETA, and delivery confirmation. The Customer Portal App is a dedicated delivery and tracking app designed with your company's branding, providing your company its very own mobile app to offer to customers with real-time order status, line item detail, up to the minute order ETA, and access to past order proof of delivery signatures, and pictures. dqtech.co



Therma-Tru Classic Craft premium door series

Therma-Tru has reimagined its Classic Craft premium series of doors, which will be available in February 2021. The product line will feature three unique, curated collections. The Artfssa Collection pays homage to the handmade culture of the American Arts and Crafts movement, featuring clean lines, Shaker styling, and Craftsman-inspired glass. The Founders Collection includes curved and arched details, embellished panel embossments and intricate glass designs. The Visionary Collection features sleek lines, forward-thinking designs, and minimalist details. thermatru.com/comingsoon

ULINE

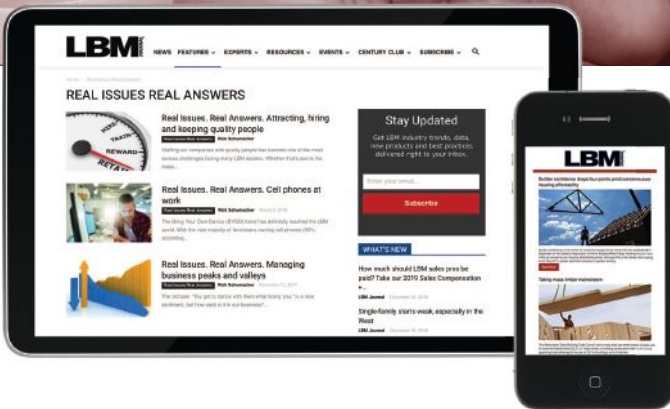
OVER 2,200 LABEL PRODUCTS IN STOCK

ORDER BY 6 PM FOR SAME DAY SHIPPING

COMPLETE CATALOG

1-800-295-5510

uline.com



The new **LBM JOURNAL DAILY** e-newsletter is built for pros in the lumber/building material industry, delivering the latest news and insights on market trends, new products, sales and marketing tips and more into your inbox every business day.

This free daily e-newsletter complements the robust, recently reinvented **LBMJOURNAL.COM** website.

LBM JOURNAL is committed to using the latest technology to deliver information the way you want it: print issues, digital issues, daily e-newsletter, website, webinars, white papers, social media, and the live **LBM STRATEGIES CONFERENCE**.

Subscribe for free at **LBMJOURNAL.COM**, then browse, bookmark, share and interact with the most relevant and credible content and people in the market. Here's to building your sales, your business and your brand.

THANK YOU TO OUR PREMIUM PARTNERS



LP WeatherLogic Air & Water Barrier

LP's WeatherLogic Air & Water Barrier is now an APA Structural I Rated wall and roof sheathing. With the addition of this product, LP Structural Solutions offers a full portfolio of framing and sheathing solutions to help achieve a tight building envelope. Backed by LP's 30-year limited warranty, LP WeatherLogic Air & Water Barrier is designed to withstand temperature cycling and deliver consistent, long-term protection. LP WeatherLogic panels help safeguard homes from water intrusion while allowing moisture vapor to escape. An integrated wall and roof sheathing solution, the product combines both air and water protection with the increased structural capacity of a Structural I rating. LP WeatherLogic system is installed with AAMA 711-13 approved acrylic seam and flashing tape. The product can be used with LP WeatherLogic Water Screen to drain water from between cladding and water-resistive barriers. lpcorp.com



Diablo Steel Demon AMPED saw blades

Diablo Steel Demon AMPED reciprocating saw blades are developed for use on metals ranging in thickness from 3/16" to 9/16". The blades offer Titanium Cobalt (TiCo) Hi-Density Carbide, and Black I.C.E. coating, designed to deliver maximum efficiency, long cutting life, and versatility in thick metal demolition and cutting applications. Diablo's AMPED blades also feature an enhanced carbide-tip-to-blade connection designed to handle extreme impact resistance in thick metals. Diablo's proprietary Perma-SHIELD non-stick coating, offers less gumming and friction. turnpouyourcuts.com



Wolf Home Products new siding colors

Wolf Home Products has expanded its Wolf Portrait Siding color options to now include Pearl White, Baltic Blue (shown), and Denim. Wolf Portrait Siding is engineered to replicate the natural look of wood siding without the inherent maintenance. Inspired by Wolf Serenity Decking, Wolf Portrait High-Density Cellular Siding uses 100% ASA capstock. The siding is designed to offer superior UV and harsh-climate protection. wolfhomeproducts.com





MONO



GOTHIC ARCH



GAMBREL



TIMBER TRUSS



LAM-PLY TRUSS

RIDING ARENAS • CATTLE ENCLOSURES • STORAGE • SHOPS

- Spans up to 72 ft.
- Bird nesting control
- Up to 12 ft. spacing depending on desired load
- No feed alley post obstruction
- Additional ceiling height for more usable space



Independence, WI

starwoodrafters.com • 715-985-3117 • 888-525-5878

Clarification on DOL's independent contractor proposed rule

BY KEVIN MCKENNEY

RECENTLY, the Department of Labor (DOL) issued a proposed rule that, if enacted, will affect how a worker can be defined as an employee rather than an independent contractor under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). NLBMDA has been reviewing the rule and is submitting written comments to the regulatory docket on behalf of the industry.

After reviewing the rule, NLBMDA's view is that the rule would simplify the criteria for employers to determine whether workers may be classified as independent contractors, who then would not be subject to the minimum wage, overtime and other requirements of the FLSA, which would be different to workers defined as employees who are covered by that law.

It is worth noting that the rule would affect only states with laws that are less strict with regard to wage. States with strict "ABC" tests, including northeastern states, would not be affected by the proposed rule.

NLBMDA's concerns as expressed in past regulatory comments, is that over the years, DOL has issued opinion letters and other guidance addressing differing interpretations of the independent contractor analysis. The patchwork currently in effect causes confusion and ambiguity with regard to classifications. The need for a clearly defined standard has been understood for quite some time and NLBMDA is pleased to see this issue being addressed by DOL.

The proposed rule would establish an "economic realities" test which is similar to what the legal system has applied with deciding worker classification issues. The key aspect of these tests generally consider whether a person performing services for a potential employer as an independent contractor truly operates their own independent business that is not

economically dependent on the employer. Furthermore, DOL, according to their information, proposes to:

- Adopt an "economic reality" test to determine a worker's status as an FLSA employee or an independent contractor. The test considers whether a worker is in business for themselves (independent contractor) or is economically dependent on a putative employer for work (employee).
- Identify and explain two "core factors," specifically: the nature and degree of the worker's control over the work; and the worker's opportunity for profit or loss based on initiative and/or investment. These factors help determine if a worker is economically dependent on someone else's business or is in business for themselves.
- Identify three other factors that may serve as additional guideposts in the analysis including: the amount of skill required for the work; the degree of permanence of the working relationship between the worker and the potential employer; and whether the work is part of an integrated unit of production.
- Advise that the actual practice is more relevant than what may be contractually or theoretically possible in determining whether a worker is an employee or an independent contractor.

What remains unclear moving forward is if this proposed rule is enacted as written, what impact it will have beyond DOL decision-making and policy development when it comes to other kinds of policymaking and court judgments. Regardless, NLBMDA is pleased to see DOL's leadership on finding and applying a common standard. The clarity for dealers across the country will be a welcome change regarding this issue. ■



Kevin McKenney is director of government affairs for NLBMDA in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit dealer.org.

SUPPORT THE COMPANIES THAT SUPPORT NLBMDA YOUR NATIONAL VOICE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.




NLBMDA's Manufacturers and Services Council (MSC) members are leading nationwide and regional companies that supply products and services to lumber and building material dealers and regional chains. MSC members are also buying groups, cooperatives, and other for-profit and non-profit organizations. By supporting NLBMDA's important work on national legislative and regulatory issues, MSC members show their dedication to promoting and enhancing the success of independent dealers and regional chains.

IF LBM DEALERS ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS, THIS GROUP IS FOR YOU. FOR MEMBERSHIP DETAILS, CALL 202.367.2496 OR VISIT WWW.DEALER.ORG



Windsor Mill manufactures the WindsorONE Interior/Exterior wood trim line as well as a collection of historically accurate moldings.

888-229-7900
windsorone.com



Boise Cascade

In-demand products;
Nationwide distribution;
Tools for the business of EWP;
Easy to do business with.

800-232-0788
bc.com/ewp



Cadsoft®

Envisioneer is an easy to use visual take off tool with vast POS integrations. It also includes design and visualization tools for the perfect business hub.

888-223-7638
cadsoft.com



Do it Best Corp. is proud to be the only co-op that fully supports independent retailers with over 67,000 products across every category.

260-748-5392
independentsdoitbest.com



ECI Spruce Computer Systems, Inc. innovates business intelligence for the lumber and building materials dealer industries with superior technology and service.

800-777-8231
ecisolutions.com/spruce



Epicor Software serves over 2,000 LBM companies with our business management software solutions. BisTrack software is the preferred choice of inspired LBM pro dealers and distributors.

888-463-4700
epicor.com



Total needs risk management, customized insurance coverage, face-to-face service.

It's Our Business to Protect Yours®

800-533-0472
federatedinsurance.com



GAF has become North America's largest manufacturer of commercial and residential roofing.* Our success is a result of our pursuit of quality, industry-leading expertise and comprehensive roofing solutions.

*Source: Fredonia Group study

877-423-7763
gaf.com




Huber Engineered Woods offers specialty products such as AdvanTech® flooring and ZIP System® sheathing and tape.

800-933-9220
huber.com



Since 1858, Johns Manville is a leading manufacturer and marketer of certified Formaldehyde-free™ fiber glass building insulation, foam board, and spray foam insulation.

800-654-3103
specjm.com



With more than 30 years of experience in the insulation industry, Knauf Insulation is committed to meeting the increasing demand for energy efficiency in new and existing homes through the dealer/retail channel.

800-211-8426
knaufinsulation.us



Delivering real-world business strategies, information and insights to LBM distribution pros.

952-892-7793
lbmjournal.com



Building Business Together.

LMC's network of nationwide buying power is the collective strength that keeps independents strong. LMC Dealers are steeped in history, and positioned for tomorrow.

610-293-7140
lmc.net



The global market leader for decades in the delivery of trusted, innovative wood preservation technologies, cutting-edge application systems, custom marketing services and other support services. We focus on the individual needs of each customer, offering both residential and commercial products.

678-627-2000
wolmanizedwood.com



MaterialsXchange is an electronic B2B marketplace for commodity lumber and building materials. We host a network of digitally connected users who communicate in real-time with instantaneous interactions.

twitter.com/m_xchange
materialsxchange.com



Builder Products

The MiTek Builder Products division as part of our family of MiTek companies, was formed to unify our builder products teams to serve our customers with industry-leading products, software, support excellence and passionate commitment to customer success.

800-328-5934
mitek-us.com

SCHWEISS

DOORS

HYDRAULIC — OR — BIFOLD

ONE-PIECE DOORS STRAP LIFT DOORS

SCHWEISSDOORS.COM 507-426-8273

THE DOOR LEADER

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (Requester Publications Only). 1. Publication title: LBM Journal 2. Publication number: 1930-5516. 3. Filing date: 9/25/2020. 4. Issue frequency: Monthly except combined November/December. 5. Number of issues published annually: 11. 6. Annual subscription price (if any): \$48. 7. Complete mailing address of Known Office of Publication (not printer). 10880 175th Court West, Suite 240, Lakeville, MN, 55044. Contact Person: Vicki Blomquist; Telephone: 952.929.7194 8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher. 10880 175th Court West, Suite 240, Lakeville, MN, 55044. Full Names and complete mailing addresses of publisher, editor and managing editor. Publisher: Rick Schumacher, 10880 175th Court West, Suite 240, Lakeville, MN, 55044. Editor: James Anderson, 10880 175th Court West, Suite 240, Lakeville, MN, 55044. 10. Owner: Custom Built Publishing, LLC, 10880 175th Court West, Suite 240, Lakeville, MN, 55044. 11. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent of more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: None. 12. Tax Status: The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes: NA. 13. Publication Title: LBM Journal. 14. Issue date for circulation data below: 9/01/2020. 15. Extent and nature of the circulation: Avg. no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months, and no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date. 15a. Total number of copies (net press run). Average No. Copies Each Issues During Preceding 12 Months: 38,656. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 39,361. 15b. Legitimate paid and/or requested distribution (by mail and outside the mail): (1) Outside County paid/requested mail subscriptions stated on PS Form 3541. (Include direct written request from recipient, telemarketing and internet requests from recipient, paid subscriptions including nominal rate subscriptions, advertiser's proof copies and exchange copies.) Average: 32,804; Single issue 32,152. (2) In-County paid/requested mail subscriptions stated on PS Form 3541: (Include direct written request from recipient, telemarketing and internet requests from recipient, paid subscriptions including nominal rate subscriptions, advertiser's proof copies and exchange copies). Average: 0; Single issue: 0. (3) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, counter sales and other paid or requested distribution outside the USPS. Average: 0; Single issue: 0. (4) Requested copies distributed by other mail classes through the USPS (e.g. First Class Mail). Average: 0; Single issue: 0. 15c. Total paid and/or requested circulation (sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4)): Average: 32,804; Single issue: 32,152. 15d. Non-requested distribution (by mail and outside the mail): (1) Outside County Non-requested copies stated on PS Form 3541 (include sample copies, requests over 3 years old, requests induced by a premium, bulk sales and requests including association requests, names obtained from business directories, lists and other sources). Average: 4,798; Single issue: 5,779. (2) In-County Non-requested stated on PS Form 3541 (include sample copies, requests over 3 years old, requests induced by a premium, bulk sales and requests including association requests, names obtained from business directories, lists and other sources). Average: 0; Single issue 0. (3) Nonrequested copies distributed through the USPS by other classes of mail (e.g. First-Class Mail, Nonrequestor copies mailed in excess of 10% Limit mailed at Standard Mail or Package Service Rates). Average: 0; Single issue: 0. (4) Non-requested copies distributed outside the mail (include pickup stands, trade shows, showrooms and other sources). Average: 18; Single issue: 18. 15e. Total non-requested distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) & (4)). Average: 4,816; Single issue 5,797. 15f. Total distribution (Sum of 15c and e). Average: 37,620; Single issue 37,949. 15g. Copies not distributed. Average: 1,036; Single issue: 1,412. 15h. Total (sum of 15f and g). Average: 38,656; Single issue 39,361. 15i. Percent paid and/or requested circulation (15c divided by f times 100). Average: 87.20%; Single issue: 84.72%. 16. Electronic Copy Circulation. 16a. Requested and Paid Electronic copies. Average No Copies Each Issue During Previous 12 months: 2,596. No Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 2,339. 16b. Total Requested and Paid Print Copies (line 15c) + Requested/Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a). Average: 35,400. Single Issue: 34,491. 16c. Total Requested Copy Distribution (Line 15f) + Requested/Paid Electronic Copies (16a). Average: 40,216. Single Issue: 40,288. 16d. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c x 100). Average: 88.02%. Single Issue: 85.61%. I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are legitimate requests or paid copies. 17. Publication of statement of ownership for a requester publication is required and will be printed in the 11/01/2020 issue of this publication. 18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner: Rick Schumacher, Executive Editor & Publisher, 9/25/2020. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

1st WEST
Mergers & Acquisitions LLC

JOHN D. WAGNER
919.796.9984
j.wagner@1stwestma.com
1stwestma.com

M&A ADVISORY TO THE LBM COMMUNITY

With a focus on companies with \$10-\$100 million in sales, 1st WEST has a specialty practice serving the readers of *LBM Journal* and the manufacturers and distributors that serve them.



The Farnsworth Group is an independent market research and strategy consulting firm, specializing in the building supply and home improvement markets.

RESEARCH PROVIDED FOR:

- Acquisition due diligence • Company strategy
- Strategic planning • Product strategy • Brand strategy
- Marketing strategy, advertising, and media decisions
- Market expansion • Customer satisfaction

Contact: Jim Robisch | 800-394-5755 ext. 109
jrobisch@thefarnsworthgroup.com

Helping manufacturers, dealers, distributors, and others improve performance with market information.

THE Farnsworth GROUP

thefarnsworthgroup.com

COMPANY	PAGE	PHONE	WEBSITE
* 1st West Mergers & Acquisitions LLC	45	866.489.6604	1stwestma.com
AGS Stainless	31	888.842.9492	agsstainless.com
AdvanTech Subfloor Assembly	2-3	800.933.9220	advantechagame.com
Boise Cascade Engineered Wood Products	19	208.384.6161	bc.com
Boral Building Products	OBC	800.521.8486	boralbuildingproducts.com
* Carolina Colortones	16	800.948.4349	carolinacolortones.com
* Culpeper Wood Preservers	13	800.817.6215	culpeperwood.com
DMSi	38-39	402.330.6620	dmsi.com
Do it Best Corp.	5	260.748.7175	doitbestonline.com
ECI	6-7	877.521.1100	ecisolutions.com
Epicor	IFC-1	800.999.1809	epicor.com
Grabber Construction Products	14	800.477.8876	grabberman.com
Kerridge Commercial Systems	IBC	919.379.3800	kerridgecsna.com
* Key-Link Fencing & Railing	9	800.704.7130	keylinkonline.com
LBM Century Club	33		lbmjournals.com/century
* Manufacturers Reserve Supply	BB, 9	973.373.1881	mrslumber.com
Maze Nails	21	800.435.5959	mazenails.com
* Mid-State Lumber	45	800.942.7776	midstatelumber.com
ODL Inc. - Blink Blinds + glass	15	866.472.0042	blinkodl.com
* Rollex Corp.	9	800.251.3300	rollex.com
Simpson Strong-Tie	11	800.999.5099	strongtie.com
Starwood Rafters	51	888.525.5878	starwoodrafters.com
Titan Metal Werks, Inc.	32	888.578.3273	splitstop.com
Uline	49	800.295.5510	uline.com
Weyerhaeuser	47	800.525.5440	weyerhaeuser.com

*Denotes regional distribution.

Note: last-minute changes will affect the accuracy of this listing.

IBC=inside back cover, IFC=inside front cover, OBC=outside back cover,

BB=belly band, INS=insert, PB=polybagged, WP=white paper

THE PETER PRINCIPLE PROBLEM

A NEWLY-PROMOTED EMPLOYEE IS UNDERPERFORMING IN HIS NEW ROLE. WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Like many LBM companies across the U.S., 2020 was a year of extremely strong sales for your lumberyard. Like many of your peers, the increase in business stretched your existing team to its limits. This meant expanding your team, promoting a couple of star employees, and hiring several people to take their place. Sure, there were growing pains. But the promotions and the onboarding of new employees went better than expected, and you felt that your company was well positioned for a solid future. And you were right, except for Peter. Here's the story.

Peter started with your company working in the yard during summers in high school and college. His work ethic and personable demeanor made him a well-liked and valued member of your team. After college, you were excited to hire him full-time, with the goal of grooming him for an eventual leadership position. He worked his way up through the ranks, learning the different areas of the company, and proved to be a stellar inside salesperson. An ambitious young man, Peter let you know that he'd be very interested in moving up to outside sales. So, the next time a territory opened up, he became your newest outside sales rep.

In a relatively short time, Peter built up his territory—generating additional sales from existing accounts, while

managing to score a couple of sizable new builders, making him one of your top performing reps. While he was great at what he was doing, and earning a solid income, he didn't want to stay in sales forever. He asked for a closed-door meeting, and here's what he said: "I've loved all the jobs I've done here and appreciate all the opportunity you've given me. I understand that I'm doing well for the company as an outside sales rep, but I really see myself in management. I'd appreciate it if you'd keep me in mind the next time a leadership opportunity is available."

Since he'd nailed every job he'd done, it didn't take much convincing for you to tap him as your company's new VP of sales. Peter was ecstatic, "I won't let you down!" he promised. But that's not how it worked out. Though it seemed like a natural next step for him, after six months, it appears obvious that he just can't do the job.

You're familiar with the concept of The Peter Principle, in which people are promoted to their level of incompetence. You'd never believed it, and had never experienced it, until now. With your sales numbers trending down and Peter earning a healthy salary for a job he's not suited for, the smart move is to somehow gently demote him back into the sales role—but you know that he'd see this as a real slap in the face. What would you do?

▶ CAST YOUR VOTE ONLINE AT: LBMJOURNAL.COM

- **PULL THE BAND-AID.** The longer you wait to demote Peter from executive management back into outside sales, the more it'll hurt when you do. Just do it, and move forward.
- **TALK IT THROUGH.** Sit Peter down and tell him that the new position doesn't seem to be working. If he feels the same, he may welcome a return to a job he excels at.
- **JUST WAIT.** Moving from sales to management is a big step, and it's unrealistic to expect immediate results. Nurture Peter's management skills, and help him grow into the position.
- **ADAPT HIS ROLE.** Instead of choosing between outside sales and executive management, incorporate elements of both, to help set him up for future success as a leader.

SOMETHING ELSE?

If you'd take a different plan of attack, email your suggested solution to James@LBMJournal.com. If we publish your reply, we'll send you an LBM Journal mug.



Business Software Built for the Lumber Industry

We deliver complete business management solutions to help lumber businesses improve margins and cut costs.

Contact us to find out more.



Source
Effectively



Stock
Efficiently



Sell
Profitably



Service
Competitively

919.379.3800 | info@kerridgecsna.com | www.kerridgecsna.com



Kerridge
Commercial Systems

Your business. Your way.

Beyond curb appeal, our mortarless stone siding has bottom line appeal.

With colors and textures that fit any style home, our mortarless, panelized **stone siding** isn't just easy to install. It's easy to sell.

Visit VERSETTASTONE.COM to see how Versetta Stone can build your business.

VERSETTA
STONE®



BORAL
BUILDING PRODUCTS