

LBBM JOURNAL[®]

MAY 2023 \$15 U.S.

1000

RECOGNIZING THE INDUSTRY'S
TOP DEALERS AND THEIR
WINS IN 2022 IN THE FACE OF
ONGOING SUPPLY AND LABOR
CHALLENGES



CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM RULES
THE WINDOWS AND DOORS
SEGMENT DESPITE ECONOMIC
CONCERNS

TURNING ORDER TAKERS
INTO SALES PROS



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Just one conversation

I'M A BIG BELIEVER in the power of connecting with other industry pros. The reason? Because over the past 30-plus years in this industry, I've witnessed what happens when LBM leaders leave their company for a few days and travel to learn, share, and network with peers. As I write this, a few members of the *LBM Journal* team and I, along with hundreds of other media pros, are preparing to travel to New Orleans to do just that at the annual Niche Media conference.

My initial experience attending a conference with fellow publishing peers was in 2005, shortly after launching *LBM Journal*. Back then, there were essentially three national magazines serving the LBM industry, and *LBM Journal* was the smallest by far, and maybe best described as the burr under the saddle of the big guys. I wanted to change that, so in the hopes of learning something that could help me grow my business, I attended a publishing conference in New York.

There's one conversation from that event that I'll never forget, because the result of it, went on to play an outsized role in the growth and success of *LBM Journal*. It happened during a publisher's roundtable, where we were encouraged to share our biggest challenge. At that point, we desperately needed something that would set us apart from our much larger competitors.

A fellow publisher recommended one of her vendors, a company called Baxter Research Center. I reached out to Baxter upon my return, liked what I heard, and decided to give them a try. Not only did it work, their adViewPRO studies became among our top sales tools. As the years went on, we consistently gained market share on the leader...until suddenly in 2017 we found ourselves the market leader. Then, in early 2020, when COVID-19 began rearing its ugly head, I had the opportunity to purchase Baxter Research Center. Which brings us to today.

Now, when I attend the Niche Media conference, I do so as a publisher (of *LBM Journal*) and a sponsor (Baxter Research Center—brc.com). I'm not sure where *LBM Journal* would be today were it not for that one conversation. Because Baxter relied solely on word-of-mouth marketing to grow its business, it's likely that I would never have heard of them had I not attended that event.

As a newly minted publisher, what I didn't know would have filled volumes. I did know that my best bet was to learn from others who'd been in my shoes. I found at that conference that people want to help. That welcome reality made my path forward with this media company that much less daunting.

Conferences aren't for everyone. But they can be life-changing for people who truly want to learn and are open to seeking out those who've "been there, done that". We built the LBM Strategies Conference with that in mind, which focuses on learning from others—with plenty of networking time to connect with old friends and make new ones.

Whether it's the LBM Strategies Conference, or an event hosted by a vendor or an association, I encourage you to consider attending. When you do, open yourself to making new connections. You never know when just one conversation will have a lasting impact on your business.



Rick@LBMJournal.com

— Rick Schumacher
Executive Editor & Publisher

LET'S GET GROWING

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The powerful words of mission statements and business philosophies

IN MONTHLY magazine publishing we often work on two, if not three, issues at a time. Of course, in niche publishing there are themes that carry through from issue to issue, and in our corner of the B2B media world, those themes are rooted in strategies for operating your building materials distribution business.

An interesting theme came into view recently while working on our May and June issues. As you can see in this month's magazine, we're featuring this year's LBM 100 top dealers. Up next in June's edition we'll kick off the LBM Journal 40 Under 40 program, in which we recognize and celebrate the next generation of industry leaders. While reviewing the 40 Under 40 nominations, specifically a question that asked nominees to declare a personal mission statement, I saw several parallels to our LBM 100 questionnaire that asked partic-

ipants which three words sum up their company's philosophy. It doesn't take a rocket scientist (or even a magazine editor) to understand how a successful young businessperson's personal mission statement will one day align with the key words that make up the philosophy of a successful business. Yet, in this industry in which we often point out the difficulties in filling aging ranks with fresh, young talent, it is reassuring to see that, as The Who once said, "The kids are alright."

If you're wondering what some of these words may be that make up both a personal mission statement and a business philosophy, I've dropped them into a Word Cloud here below. I think you'll agree that the future looks bright when the strong words at the core of our industry's top 100 businesses are also the next generation's mission statements.

— James Anderson
Editor



James Anderson

james@LBMJournal.com

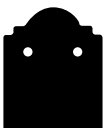




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UPDATES

PEOPLE

At **Envision Outdoor Living**, **Zane Vinson** is Western division manager, **Adam Caplinger** is Southeast division manager, and **Jarrold Moore** is business development manager.

Shyam K. Reddy is now president and CEO at **BlueLinx**.

Toni Burke will lead strategic and investor relations at **Building Industry Partners**.



SHYAM K. REDDY



TONI BURKE

DISTRIBUTION

Tando's Beach House Shake and TandoStone brands will be distributed by **Manion's Wholesale Building Supplies'** branches in Superior, Wisconsin and St. Cloud, Minnesota. Tando also announced **Arnold Lumber** as a Beach House Shake flagship dealer.

Sherwood Lumber has announced a new distribution center in Danville, Pennsylvania.

INDUSTRY

Hoover Treated Wood Products broke ground on a new \$9 million wood treating facility in Fairfield, Texas. The plant will treat fire-retardant wood products.

Huttig has changed its name to **Woodgrain** and has joined Woodgrain's distribution division.

Westlake Royal Building Products has launched a contractor loyalty program called PROS Perks.

Schweiss Doors has announced a new manufacturing facility in Fairfax, Minnesota.

J.M. Huber Corporation donated \$500,000 to the **Gary Sinise Foundation**.

Roseburg has announced a \$700 million investment in Southern Oregon manufacturing facilities.

LP Building Solutions has announced the first production of LP SmartSide at Sagola, Michigan facility.

ASSOCIATIONS

The **Hardwood Manufacturers Association** elected **Tommy Petzoldt** of **East Perry Lumber Company** in Frohna, Missouri, as president.

BUYER'S GROUPS & CO-OPS

Simpson Strong-Tie has been named **LBM Advantage's** 2022 Specialties Vendor of the Year.

An initiative at **LMC** called TogetHER aims to grow the number of women in the LBM industry.

Do it Best donated nearly \$1 million in home improvement products to West Orange Habitat for Humanity in Orlando, Florida.

LMC has promoted **Paul Thorne** to VP of business development and has hired **Jack Phipps** as the new VP of technology.

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

DMSi Software has acquired **Millwork Development, LLC**.

Palmer-Donavin has acquired **Diamond Hill Plywood**.

ODL has expanded into exterior doors by purchasing **Tru Tech Doors** of Ontario, Canada.

Ambassador Supply has acquired **Hitek Truss Company**.

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

LACK OF EXISTING INVENTORY CONTINUES TO SUPPORT BUILDER CONFIDENCE

Builders remained cautiously optimistic in April as limited resale inventory helped to increase demand in the new home market even as the industry continues to grapple with building material issues.

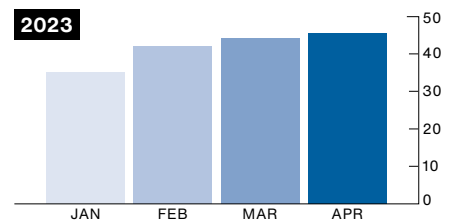
Builder confidence in the market for newly built single-family homes in April rose one point to 45, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI).

"For the fourth straight month, builder confidence has increased due to a lack of resale inventory despite elevated interest rates," said NAHB Chairman Alicia Huey. "Builders note that additional declines in mortgage rates, to below 6%, will price-in further demand for housing. Nonetheless,

the industry continues to be plagued by building material issues, including lack of access to electrical transformer equipment."

The HMI survey shows that the share of builders reducing home prices continues trending down, as 30% said they reduced prices in April, compared to 31% in March and February, 35% in December and 36% in November. The average price reduction in April was 6%, the same as in February and March but lower than in December (8%). The share of builders using incentives to bolster sales has edged up from 57% in February, to 58% in March to now 59% in April, but it's still lower than it was last December (62%).

The HMI index gauging current sales conditions in April rose two points to 51 and the component charting sales expectations in the next six months increased three points to 50.

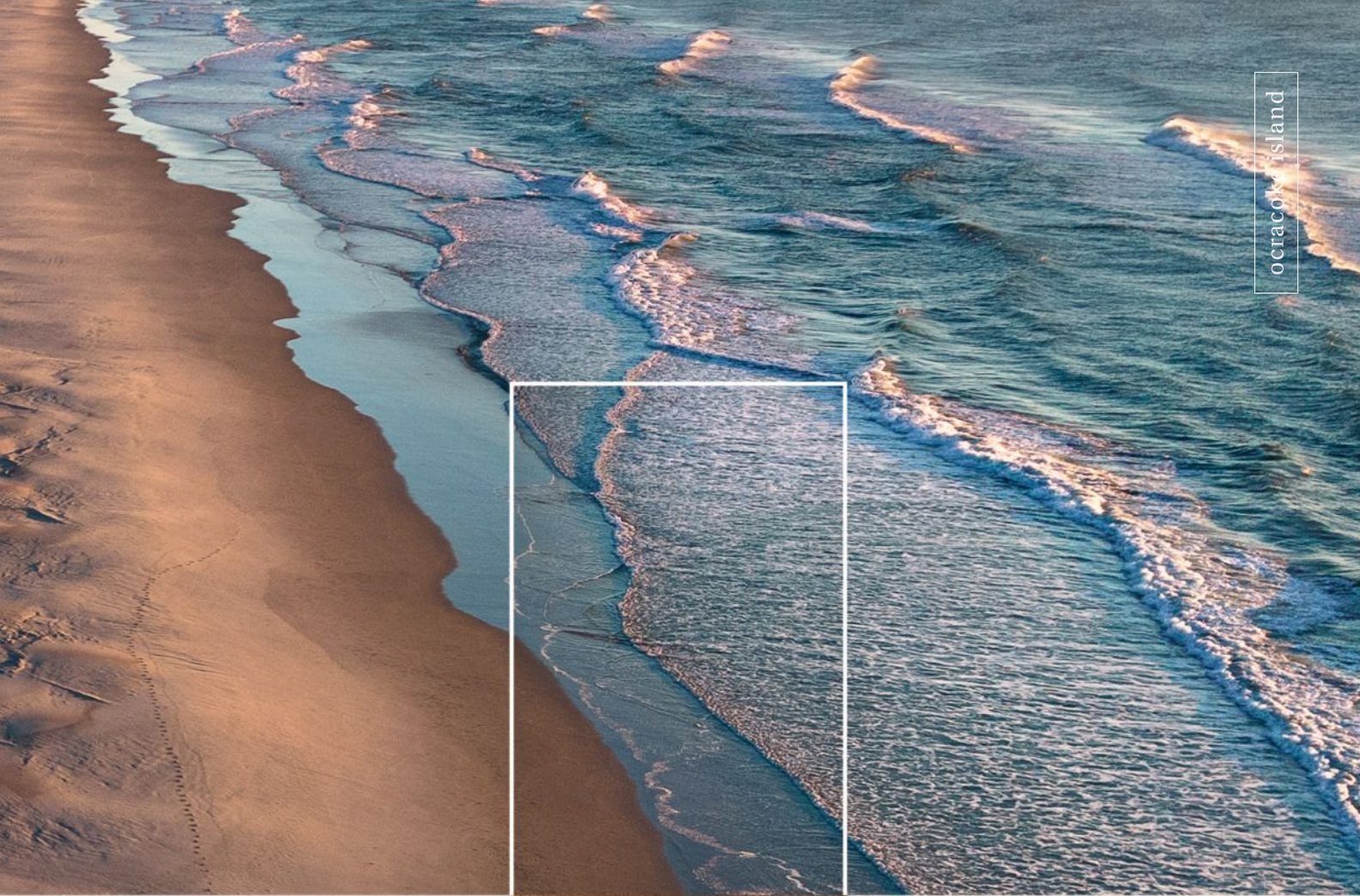


Builder confidence in the market for newly built single-family homes in April rose one point to 45.

This marks the first time these components both returned to the 50+ range since June 2022. The gauge measuring traffic of prospective buyers remained unchanged at 31. This is the first time the traffic component failed to improve in 2023.

Looking at the three-month moving averages for regional HMI scores, the Northeast rose four points to 46, the Midwest edged up two points to 37, the South increased four points to 49 and the West moved four points higher to 38.

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SOUTHERN PINE LUMBER SHIPMENTS HIT 107-YEAR RECORD HIGH

Shipments of Southern Pine lumber recorded an increase from the previous year in 2022 for the 13th consecutive year, according to the Southern Forest Products Association, which tabulates shipment totals with the Southern Pine Inspection Bureau (SPIB) and Timber Products Inspection (TP). The 2022 total also marked the third straight year of shipments above the 20 billion board feet (Bbf) mark, starting with 20.8 Bbf in 2020.

Shipments in 2022 totaled 22.16 (Bbf), a 5.5% increase over the volume shipped in 2021 (20.93 Bbf). They have been on an increase since 2009, when shipments totaled 11.79 Bbf, down from 14.57 Bbf in 2008.

SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING STARTS IMPROVE IN MARCH

Single-family production showed signs of a gradual upturn in March as stabilizing mortgage rates and limited existing inventory helped to offset stubbornly high construction costs, building labor shortages and tightening credit conditions.

Overall housing starts in March decreased 0.8% 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 March reading of 1.42 million starts is the number of housing units builders would begin if development kept this pace for the next 12 months. Within this overall number, single-family starts increased 2.7% to an 861,000 seasonally adjusted annual rate. However, this remains 27.7% lower than a year ago. The multifamily sector, which includes apartment buildings and condos, decreased 5.9% to an annualized 559,000 pace.

Overall permits decreased 8.8% to a 1.41 million unit annualized rate in March. Single-family permits increased 4.1% to an 818,000 unit rate, but are down 29.7% compared to a year ago. Multifamily permits decreased 22.1% to an annualized 595,000 pace.

TOUGH CALL ANSWERS

LBM JOURNAL'S MARCH ISSUE SURVEY

THE WAGE DEBATE

RECENT POSTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA SHOW JUST WHAT YOUR EMPLOYEES THINK OF YOUR COMPANY'S PAY STRUCTURE—AND IT'S FAR FROM POSITIVE. HERE'S HOW READERS WOULD HANDLE THIS TOUGH CALL.



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30.7%

TALK IT THROUGH. These employees need to know that you have evidence they are disparaging your company. Bring them into your office and talk about the issue. Hear their side.

4.6%

GIVE WARNING. Each person on this thread needs fair warning that talking publicly about wages will not be tolerated. Let them know they've been warned, and you won't stand for it again.

56.2%

EVALUATE WAGES. Clearly, they're on to something. While they went about it in the worst possible way, they have brought a serious issue to light. Maybe it's time for a wage review.

8.5%

GIVE THEM A BUMP. Get ahead of this competition's hiring spree and match their wages...or top them, if possible. If people are unhappy, at least it won't be because of low pay.

REMODELING MARKET SENTIMENT EDGED UP IN Q1

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) released its NAHB/Westlake Royal Remodeling Market Index (RMI) for the first quarter, posting a reading of 70, edging up one point compared to the previous quarter.

The NAHB/Westlake Royal RMI survey asks remodelers to rate five components of the remodeling market as "good," "fair" or "poor." Each question is measured on a scale from 0 to 100, where an index number above 50 indicates that a higher share view conditions as good than poor.

The Current Conditions Index is an average of three components: the current market for large remodeling projects, moderately-sized projects and small projects. The Future Indicators Index is an average of two components: the current rate at which leads and inquiries are coming in and the current backlog of remodeling projects. The overall RMI is calculated by averaging the Current Conditions Index and the Future Indicators Index. Any number over 50 indicates that more remodelers view remodeling market conditions as good than poor.

"Remodelers are generally optimistic about the home improvement market, although some are noting negative effects of material shortages and higher interest rates," said NAHB Remodelers Chair Alan Archuleta. "Customers are still undertaking larger projects, but are mostly paying cash rather than financing them."

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RICK DAVIS
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Building Leaders, Inc.



THEA DUDLEY
Credit Overlord &
Cashflow Specialist
Pocket Protectors LLC



RAY HAYLES
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BRADLEY HARTMANN
CEO | Hartmann & Co.



DENA CORDOVA-JACK
V P of Organizational
Development
Misura Group



SCOTT McMILLAN
Owner
Walker Lumber & Supply



JIM SOBECK
CEO | Sobeck Holdings
and New South Real Estate
Partners



TED RIEPEL
Managing Partner &
Founder | 1st West M&A



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BY THE YARD

NEWS FROM LUMBERYARDS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Spahn & Rose honored

Spahn & Rose Lumber Company, of Dubuque, Iowa, received the 2023 Iowa Lumber Association (ILA) Dealer of the Year award.

Kodiak's Christensen Lumber celebrates 100 years

Christensen Lumber Company was originally founded as Luehrs-Christensen Coal & Lumber Company on March 23, 1923, in Fremont, Nebraska.

R.P. Lumber receives Large Business of the Year Award

R.P. Lumber was recently named as the City of Edwardsville, Illinois's 2022 Large Business of the Year. R.P. Lumber employs more than 700 people in communities across Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Dawson Taylor turns 100

Taylor's Do it Centers has announced the milestone celebration of hardware veteran Dawson Taylor's 100th birthday, along with his 70-year long career in the home improvement industry. He celebrated his 100th birthday on Sunday, April 2.

Promotions in Kodiak's Construction Supply division

Cody Brooks is now president of Barton Supply and Don Barton will transition full-time to president of Kodiak Building Partners' Construction Supplies group.

Promotions at Wilson Lumber

Jesse Whitaker has been promoted to director of millwork operations, and Jackie Crutcher to director of truss operations at Wilson Lumber in Huntsville, Alabama.

Executive promotions at TAL Holdings

Vernon Shallenberger has been promoted to the position of vice president of sales and operations, and Dana Cowart has been named vice president of technology and acquisition integration.

Nation's Best acquires two East Coast locations

Patrick Building Supply & Rental and Mountain View Home & Hardware join nearby Palmetto Home Centers in Charleston, South Carolina, as Nation's Best extends its East Coast presence.

New hires at The Detering Company

Mike Flores joined The Detering Company as general manager of Houston Lumber. Dan Durski has been hired as CFO.

Davis-Hawn celebrating 100th year

Davis-Hawn Lumber, a family-owned company, is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year.

Gulfeagle Supply acquires Exterior Solutions

Gulfeagle Supply has announced the acquisition of Exterior Solutions, a building materials supplier in Gulfport, Mississippi. The acquisition also prompted a relocation of the existing Gulfeagle Supply branch in Gulfport.

Lensing Building Specialties celebrates 75 years

Lensing Building Specialties, an Evansville, Indiana-headquartered building materials distributor, is celebrating 75 years in business. Lensing Building Specialties is a third-generation, family-owned business employing more than 130 team members.

HPM Building Supply acquires 87ZERO

The acquisition establishes a new division called 87ZERO by HPM that will service large-scale projects for developers, hoteliers, and contractors.

TAL Holdings acquires Harbor Rental and Saw Shop

TAL Holdings has agreed in principle to acquire Harbor, Washington's Harbor Rental and Saw Shop. With this acquisition, TAL will have a total of 30 locations located in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.

Wilson Lumber earns two 'Best Workplace' certifications

The organization earned the distinction of Alabama's only 2023 "Best Workplace" certification from the Best Christian Workplace Institute. In addition to this award, Wilson Lumber was just designated a 2023 "Best Place for Working Parents" by the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber Foundation. This marks Wilson Lumber's second year in a row to receive both certifications.

McCoy's Building Supply moving back to Lubbock

McCoy's Building Supply finalized the purchase of 7.5 acres of land in Lubbock, Texas this past summer and recently broke ground with a goal of opening the new store this year. The Texas-based supplier last had stores in Lubbock from 1971-1995.

US LBM featured on Military Makeover show

US LBM was featured on an episode of Military Makeover: Operation Career, a television series that highlights employers that provide rewarding career opportunities for veterans of the armed forces. The full episode spotlights US LBM, featuring five company associates who are representative of US LBM's veteran population.

US LBM opens new truss facility and distribution yard in Central Florida

The Auburndale, Florida facility is more than 100,600 square feet and located 40 miles northeast of Tampa and 60 miles southwest of Orlando. It will operate as part of US LBM's Raymond Building Supply division.

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 Rick@LBMJournal.com.

EVENTS

MAY 8-21, 2023

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SEP 8-11, 2023

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LMC LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
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lbmstrategies.com

NOV 6-8, 2023

LMC EXPO | Philadelphia, PA | lmc.net

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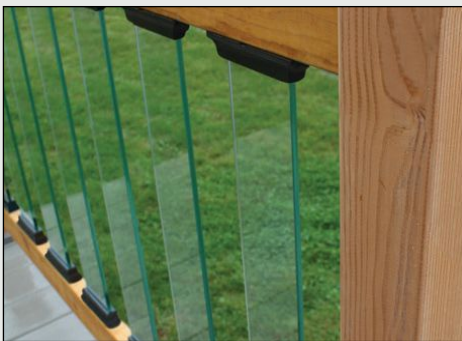
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Servant selling as a marketing tool

BY BILL LEE

LET ME BEGIN by reminding our readers that it is the job of a building supply sales force to sell the capacity of the business they work for. Well-educated sales people are called upon not to pick and choose, but to do their dead-level best to sell the full product line their organization brings to market.

While there are occasions when a newly hired salesperson is handed a “full book of business,” perhaps because a career salesperson retires or abruptly leaves the company, nine times out of 10 there are only two ways for new salespeople to grow sales: sell more to current customers, and take business away from the competition.

It's no secret that a significant percentage of our industry's salespeople are reaching retirement age, and the next few years will see many newly recruited salespeople joining a company's sales team. The first step will be to learn enough product knowledge to know what they are selling, and the second will be to make a big decision: What benefit—what value—am I going to offer my customers and prospects to motivate them to do more business with me and less with their current suppliers?

This is what sales is all about, folks, and for a greater percentage of your customers' purchases to be from you, you are going to have to figure out how you are going to make that happen. Some salespeople will resort to begging, because they have nothing to offer that their customers are not already receiving. How about you? Where will you begin? What will you propose to your customers and prospects to persuade them to do business with you?

Based on my experience, the more educated salespeople become in regard to the “business” side of home building, the higher the odds their advice will be sought after. Salespeople who are

new to the selling profession quite often receive very little training on how to approach an existing customer for the first time or how to make a prospect call. I encourage new salespeople to ask their sales manager or one of the highly respected salespeople in the company to give them some pointers for making initial sales calls.

Here are a few of the pointers I recommend managers cover with new salespeople:

- Current customers are especially important. Introduce yourself and tell them about your background and why you are looking forward to servicing their account in this market. Ask if there are any unresolved issues you need to be aware of. Make sure in case of an emergency your contact knows how to get in touch with you and vice versa.
- One idea that has worked well for me is to put together a hand-picked “Best Practices” list that I believe any manager would benefit from. At the bottom, I include the source of the article and the author's name. Since this is a marketing piece, include your cell phone number, name and address.
- One of my favorite “Best Practices” I lifted from chapter 75 (entitled “How to Fire!”) of Jim Sobeck's book, “The Real Business 101.” Most of us botch firing an employee. We wait too long to do it. We are unprepared with the right words and demeanor. Keep neat, fresh copies of your favorite “Best Practices” and use them like a leave-behind with those you visit.

Industry guru Bradley Hartmann puts it very succinctly: “You are owed nothing. Deliver value first.” If these lists are well presented, they represent value. ■



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

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Fractal selling

BY RICK DAVIS

YOU'VE LIKELY never heard the term “fractal,” but it affects your sales performance more than you may know. A fractal is a repeating pattern of shapes and sequences that can be found in nature. You’ve seen fractals in the repeating hexagonal crystals of snowflakes; in the duplicated shell formations of mollusks; in the layers of artichokes, leaf patterns, and other forms of nature.

Fractals are used to create mathematical and scientific applications for computers, medicine, and more. For example, a fractal sequence known as the Sierpinski carpet enables modern day communication in antennae, cellphones, and satellites. It is responsible for enabling the GPS upon which we rely.

So why, you ask, are you reading about fractals in a sales column? Perhaps you’ve heard of the butterfly effect, the concept that a flap of a butterfly wing in one part of the planet can cause a typhoon on the opposite side of the globe. It’s an example worth noting because one singular event in your life can produce a windfall of success that might seem unrelated but is nevertheless due to the power of fractal theory.

I like to think of prospecting energy as “fractal selling,” something I personally discovered many years ago after making hundreds of phone calls to land one lumberyard as a client. I feared it would take the same amount of energy to land every client. At the time, I didn’t know the butterfly effect of the single client. The GM of that one lumberyard connected me to his sales manager. Later, that sales manager recommended me to an editor, which led me to my first engagement as a magazine columnist. That engagement enabled me to speak at conferences throughout North America, which would lead me to meet hundreds of industry professionals, which would lead to a career as a sales management consultant. That first client was my butterfly.

A second client I gained from the hundreds of phone calls was a manufacturer that eventually sponsored dozens of events at which I spoke

throughout the country. The audiences for this manufacturer were roofing and siding dealers. Thus, a second butterfly opened the doors to a second matrix of the construction distribution channel.

These two customers laid the foundation of nearly all my success today. If you ask successful salespeople in our industry, they will share similar stories. The intense prospecting energy of a sales career need not be sustained if you find the right opportunities from the start.

Fractal selling proves that prospecting and networking is an evolving experience. Early in a sales career, the most successful sales professionals meet a lot of people...a lot! They are “cold” leads because the buyer doesn’t know the salesperson prior to the first engagement. Over time, the salesperson discovers that one of their satisfied clients provides a favorable referral. An employee of the satisfied client later branches out on her own, and her first call for a credible supplier goes to the salesperson she knows. Yes, the salesperson continues prospecting while discovering that many of the best leads are referrals or inbound calls based on a well-established personal brand.

Eventually, the mature salesperson realizes they can begin to cull through leads and select the best sales opportunities in the market while (perhaps) funneling secondary opportunities to a junior salesperson. This is the moment when the hard-working, formerly assertive prospector has evolved into a selective order-taker—the salesperson who gets high-quality orders handed to them because of the fractal selling and accumulation of credibility throughout a career.

Make no mistake—prospecting is the foundation of sales. You should, however, expect your prospecting energy to evolve as your career matures...if you’ve put in the initial effort. Whether you know it or not, your career is a fractal of interpersonal connections that ultimately determines the fate of your sales success. Prospect now for the repeating energy of fractal selling that will come easier in the long run. ■



Rick Davis is the Sales Education Leader for ABC Supply and the President of Building Leaders. You can buy his books or learn more about his online sales training platform at buildingleaders.com.



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Assessment tools to build strong cultures

BY DENA CORDOVA-JACK

THE HIGHEST-FUNCTIONING cultures are built by developing strong leaders and teams. Nevertheless, there is a strong temptation to build our teams to resemble a herd of “Mini-Mes,” when research overwhelmingly reveals diverse teams are simply smarter.

“Working with people who think differently than you and bring varied skill sets to the table may challenge your brain to overcome its stale ways of thinking and sharpen its performance,” a 2021 Harvard Business Review article asserts. The challenge, however, is finding out who at work thinks differently and how they can help the organization.

One of the most successful ways to identify those people is through assessments. There are countless evaluations on the market, all claiming to achieve the research that you want and need, but the reality is that different assessments will be aligned to specific goals.

One good recommendation is the Gallup Strengths Finder, an excellent tool for graphing where your teams fall on a continuum and identifying gaps from a team perspective. It assists team members in identifying their strengths, then assigns each of those strengths a numeric factor and provides insight on how to build upon those strengths. This assessment is simple, straightforward, and relatively inexpensive, and the results will give you a methodical approach for building a balanced team.

A company’s cadence, mission, vision, and values are owned by leadership, who are responsible for providing a clear picture of the company culture. It’s why a strong leadership is so essential for a thriving culture. According to Dr. Sunnie Giles, an organizational psychologist who studied 195 leaders in 15 companies in over 30 global organizations, here are the top 10 traits of a strong leader in today’s world:

1. Has high ethical and moral standards
2. Provides goals and objectives with loose guidance direction
3. Clearly communicates expectations
4. Is not myopic, and as the flexibility to change opinions
5. Is committed to ongoing development

6. Communicates often and openly
7. Is open to new ideas and approaches
8. Creates the feeling of succeeding and failing together
9. Is committed to growing next-gen leaders
10. Creates a positive culture and provides safety for trial and error

Interestingly, there is scant difference in importance between the 10 traits—they all matter.

What is the best way to ensure the leaders we choose either have these traits or have the core competencies to develop them? Hogan Assessments is a socio-analytic tool that clearly explains a potential leader’s prominent personality traits. It uses three modules to evaluate different aspects of an individual’s personality: typical personality characteristics, core value drivers, and career derailment risks. This gives a 360-degree perspective into an individual’s psyche and helps determine their traits and leadership suitability.

Assessments should be one of many tools utilized when making decisions on hiring and promotion. They bring insight but should be combined with other factors such as education, career accomplishments, work history, observation of the individual in a team environment, EQ, and IQ.

Begin your analysis at the top of your organization to ensure your leadership is aligned. With that alignment, your teams will have the north star needed to achieve results. Then, utilize the same process on all groups and departments within your organization.

World-renowned author and thought leader Peter Drucker states that “culture eats strategy for breakfast,” and he is right. The magic of a dynamic culture comes from strong leaders, teams, an engaged workforce, a clearly articulated vision and mission, and when individuals are empowered. No matter how well thought out your business strategy is, the execution of that strategy will flounder in a culture that is not optimized. Assessments are a simple tool that can provide a quick and efficient path to help you achieve cultural success. ■



Dena Cordova-Jack built her 30+ year career with GP, Boise Cascade, Foxworth-Galbraith, and most recently as VP of Organizational Development for Kodiak Building Partners. She currently serves as Vice President for Misura Group. Reach Dena at dcordovajack@misuragroup.com.



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That which is most precious

BY RUSS KATHREIN

Never ahead, ever behind, yet flying swiftly past; for a child, I last forever; for an adult, I'm gone too fast. What am I?

The answer of course is time, the one thing we have that's limited, yet it's something we take for granted. When I was newly married and started having children, I got the chance to attend a David Sandler presentation. He developed the Sandler Selling System, and back then you had to pay to attend a live seminar. It was incredibly invaluable to me as a young person starting out in sales, and he said one thing that has resonated in my brain ever since. He talked about people working long hours in their job to impress their boss, and then carving out quality time for their families. "You've got it all turned around," he shouted loudly. "It's about *quality* time at work, and *quantity* time with your family!"

That comment struck me like a thunderbolt. How often had I thought if I'd just tried harder for a longer period of time it would have helped me be successful? While hard work at your job does pay off, smart work that is more productive creates more opportunities. From that point forward I vowed I would always look for better ways to do things, even if it meant challenging the system.

Today, I look for things in my work life that waste time, and then I try to figure out how to improve or eliminate them. Here are some examples and some pet peeves I alone cannot fix:

Meetings: The first rule is to have an agenda of how the meeting will work, and for goodness sake, can we get rid of the time on the agenda spent talking about the agenda? Also, I have found conference rooms tend to be too comfortable and we end up stretching the meeting to the time allocated. To combat this, I'll hold a stand-up meeting or connect in some open-area collaboration. Get done what you need to

do and let everyone disperse. And while virtual meetings can be very productive for regular updates, you have to turn on your camera. If I can't see you, that means to me you're not engaged, you're multi-tasking, or you've checked out.

Cell phone greetings/cell company voicemail instructions: Stop with the long-winded introductions. All I need to know is that I have the right person. Give your name and company and let me get to my message. And why is it I have to listen to the phone company tell me how to leave a phone message before I hear the beep? I think by now we all have that down. Mobile phone companies—give people back some of their life!

Requests for information: If you have the information already, don't make me keep giving it to you. The healthcare industry is the biggest culprit when it comes to requesting the same information over and over.

Improper email usage: We all know ALL CAPS MEANS YOU ARE SHOUTING. And if you CC me on an email, don't expect a reply. The email was not to me. Lose the Reply All function. We don't all need to know what your reply was back to the sender. I especially despise Reply All emails that say "Thanks" or "Got it."

Group texts: You want to drive me nuts? Put me on a social group text with a bunch of numbers not on my contacts. Not only are the comments mindless, but I have no idea who is responding.

Okay, time to step off the soapbox. Now that you've heard mine, what things have you found that waste time, and what have you been able to do about them? Send me your responses at russ.kathrein@icloud.com and I will share the best of them in a follow up column. ■



Russ Kathrein is with the LBM Division of Do it Best Corp. based in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

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Who ultimately pays the finance charge?

BY THEA DUDLEY

Dear Thea,
Wondering if you would have some guidance on how to “nicely and respectfully” let customers know that the finance charges they incurred are due and legit. It’s on our credit application that they signed and agreed to. Many times I hear, “Our company doesn’t pay finance charges,” or, “With all the money we spend at your place... yada, yada,” or finally, “Well, I paid some invoices early so...” HELP!
— Who is financing who?

Dear Who’s Money,

This IS a favorite. I love when a customer says they don’t pay finance charges but they pay late. Well, cowboy, where does that leave us? The “With all the money we spend” comment is another frost on my flakes. Yes, and we provided you with product, on-time delivery, and a short-term loan. YOU chose to forego the arrangement. Try that with your bank. By the way, taking your business elsewhere affords the opportunity to experience finance charges elsewhere if your payment structure remains the same.

The question becomes: Is your company’s credit culture going to support the enforcement of those charges? If you make the push, however politely to collect said fees, are your leaders going to support you or roll over?

Once you have established company support of your policy, my responses range to fit the mood of the conversation. In some instances I have flat out asked if we lived up to our end of the agreement. How would they react if I delivered their products the way they pay? Late and without any consideration? Yes, it is over the top and perhaps snarky to some. Said correctly, it works wonders and sets the tone for a pretty

good conversation. Some of my best customer relationships started out as a bit of a bumpy ride.

You have to be prepared for the lame comments, excuses every credit manager has heard, and is both amazed and baffled by. Approach it with logic and a calm demeanor. Remind them that, while you appreciate their business, this is a business transaction, and just as we deliver on our commitments, we expect them to do the same. We agreed to short-term financing. For us to maintain our ability to offer quality products and service at excellent pricing, we have to pay our suppliers within discount long before the customer in question gets that product from us. If customers do not pay as agreed, we have to borrow money on our bank line of credit, and that costs money. Customers always think dealers are making “bank.” Fact is, we all have obligations.

Offer a concession to first-time offenders by offering to “absorb” one time and ask that they adhere to the policy in the future. Word to the new: never give something away for free. In short, if you are going to write off a finance charge, make sure the customer knows you did. People do not value what they don’t know about. If you have written off countless finance charges and now you’re so done, your customer has no idea this is the fifteenth offense you have written off and the reason you are huffy. Make them aware.

Some repeat offenders will need it spelled out for them many times over. I have put very few customers on hold for past-due finance charges, but it happens, and gets their attention. Stop dragging it around. Get it sorted out: pay on time, pay the price for lateness, or make a business decision to turn the fees off and stop feeling like a mustache-twirling villain for asking. ■



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

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Where are acquisition values holding?

BY JOHN WAGNER

WE GET A STEADY stream of emails and phone calls from LBM dealers who want to know one thing: Are acquisition values holding in this period of inflation and higher interest rates?

The answer is nuanced. Inflation continues to be a threat, as measured by how aggressively the Fed is moving to tame it, but the catastrophic housing recession that many feared is probably not going to arrive, and even a moderate recession is likely to be focused on geographic pockets that lack growth fundamentals.

To track what values are being paid, our firm subscribes to a database from GF Data that tracks acquisitions by sector. GF Data tracks a wide range of companies, but they also issue a break-out report that shows the values paid for companies with “above-average financial characteristics.”

The GF Data chart shown here tracked 2,302 deals completed from 2003 to 2022, including deals not in the LBM sector, but hundreds that were. The multiple paid in 2021 for companies with “above-average financial characteristics” was 6.6X EBITDA for companies that sold for between \$10-\$25 million. It was more likely 6.6X Adjusted EBITDA, as that is typical of all the deals that we see.

TEV/EBITDA—BUYOUTS WITH ABOVE-AVERAGE FINANCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

	2003								
TEV	-2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL	N=	
10-25	5.7	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.6	6.6	6.0	787	
25-50	6.5	7.4	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.6	6.9	709	
50-100	7.4	9.6	7.9	8.3	8.7	8.8	7.9	526	
100-250	8.7	8.8	10.2	9.1	10.0	9.7	9.2	280	
TOTAL	6.6	7.8	7.6	7.7	8.1	7.9	7.1		
N=	1382	156	155	160	268	181		2302	

If you look at companies that sold for \$25-50 million, the multiple was 7.6X in 2021. And for companies sold for \$50-100 million, it was 8.7X in 2021.

But look! The multiple paid in 2022 held or—in the \$50-100 million range—increased! How could values be holding in a time of inflation and higher interest rates? These were companies with “above-average financial characteristics.”

Before we look at what “above average” means, let’s look at the key performance indica-

tors (KPI) used to separate above-average from average, and then we will look at the target numerical values for those KPIs.

The leading KPIs acquirers focus on are growth and EBITDA margins. For growth, an above-average company is growing revenues at 10% a year or greater. That’s aggressive, but a 10% YOY growth is what you need if you want a premium multiple on your Adjusted EBITDA.

For Adjusted EBITDA percent, the baseline target for an above-average LBM company is 10%. (A 10% Adjusted EBITDA margin means that for every \$1,000 in sales, \$100 is Adjusted EBITDA.) Here too, if a company slips below that 10% target, it also slips off the 6.6X and starts looking at 6X, 5.5X, or lower. (A company with 10% YOY growth and 10% Adjusted EBITDA margin is called a “Ten & Ten” company.)

How would the slippage from 6.6X to 6X affect value? Say your Adjusted EBITDA is \$2 million. The 6.6X deal value would sell for \$13.2 million; the 6X for \$12 million; and the 5.5X for \$11 million. So, the difference in “TEV” paid (the Total Enterprise Value) for a \$2 million Adjusted EBITDA company that dips below that “Ten & Ten” distinction would drop from \$13.2 million at 6.6X to \$11 million at 5.5X.

In the LBM sector, the 10% Adjusted EBITDA margin is fairly common for companies that have a relatively small proportion of commodity lumber in their product mix. As a product class, commodity lumber is not high-margin, yet you have to carry it. But if the commodity mix starts to creep upward above, say, 40% of your overall product offering, your Adjusted EBITDA percent will slip, as will the multiple offered to you in an acquisition. For LBMers that are offering value-added products like millwork and trim packages, window/door shops, paint, diverse retail, and especially high-margin manufactured components, we have seen mid-to-high teens for Adjusted EBITDA percentages. Make no mistake, that KPI is of keen interest, and these elite companies invariably sell more quickly, with less leverage (seller notes, earn-outs) applied by the seller to hedge risk, and they will likely obtain a premium TEV as a result of the higher multiple applied. ■



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

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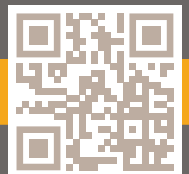
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BIOPHILIC DESIGN

THE DESIRE TO CONNECT WITH NATURE CAN SPELL SALES FOR LBM DEALERS.

BY MIKE BERGER

The famous naturalist John Muir once said, “Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity.” What if this feeling could be experienced every day? That’s the idea behind biophilic design, a concept introduced by E.O. Wilson, a biologist and university research professor emeritus at Harvard who put forth the idea that humans instinctively strive to experience nature in everyday life.

At its core, biophilic design attempts to create a sense of harmony between us and our homes, and promises a slew of well-being benefits. “Numerous studies have concluded that surrounding ourselves with natural wood products, such as redwood, enhances our overall physical and mental wellbeing,” says Jessica Hewitt, director of marketing for Humboldt Sawmill Company. “It has also been shown to increase productivity in working and learning. Thus, the remote or hybrid employee and children studying or learning at home can all benefit from being surrounded by natural wood, and what could be more natural than beautiful and sustainable redwood.”

ACHIEVING NATURAL CONNECTIONS

Biophilic design is rapidly finding its way into home building and remodeling thanks to its therapeutic benefits—especially important as more people than ever are spending extended time at home in a post-COVID-19 world.

“In the past, biophilic design was considered niche, expensive, and generally limited to high end buildings/ industrial settings,” says Kim Guimond, chief administrative and marketing officer for Modern Mill, the manufacturer of ACRE decking, siding, and trim boards. “There’s too much evidence pointing to the positive effects of biophilic design on one’s well-being for all of us in the A&D/LBM community not to try to find ways to scale it and make it accessible in any environment from high end condos and offices to Amazon warehouses and multi-family housing so these benefits are accessible to all. Innovations in simulated nature from innovative wood alternatives to lightbulbs that mimic sunlight make it possible.”

This connection is achieved in part through the use of natural materials, larger windows and patio doors that allow more of the outside world to be seen from inside a structure,



LEFT: A vacation home on Harrison Lake, British Columbia, was extensively remodeled using clear redwood from Humboldt Sawmill Company and includes a covered outdoor kitchen, fireplace, seating, and dining areas.

PHOTO BY ATTILIO FIUMARELLA

RIGHT: Ply Gem Perspective Multi-Slide Vinyl Patio Doors provide large, unobstructed views that allow the outside world to be experienced from inside. Ply Gem Perspective offers pocket, bypass, and bi-parting configurations, as well as custom sizes up to 10' tall or 30' wide.



As Modern Mill points out, biophilic design is not necessarily about incorporating plants into a living space. Rather, it's about incorporating elements such as water, stone, and wood that signal to our nervous system that our wellbeing/needs are met, as shown here with the company's ACRE bead board used as a ceiling cladding.

and ancillary products that help create the living spaces that bring the outside in. "Windows and doors are key elements of biophilic design, allowing for natural light to enter a home while providing panoramic views, ventilation and passage to the outdoors, ultimately helping to connect homeowners to nature," explains Andy Karr, senior product manager for Cornerstone Building Brands windows.

These natural connections can be achieved through the use of the small as well as of the large, manufacturers point out, especially when they are part of a thoughtful design approach. "LBM dealers should know that to have success incorporating biophilic design into a product, and to sell a consumer on biophilic design, it needs to be authentic and realistic," Katie Sponseller, corporate decorative glass designer for ODL, Inc., points out. "It doesn't always need to be as overt as a green wall or an indoor water feature. Something as simple as increasing natural light in a home is a great example. ODL seeks to merge the interior of your home with the outdoors with stylized, privacy, and clear doorglass styles. Biophilic design can also show up in natural textures and biomimicry, such as ODL's textured privacy glass, Rain."



SELLING THE CONCEPT

Exemplary examples of biophilic design can be found in large, grandiose structures such as the "Vertical Forest" by Stefano Boeri Architects, residential towers in Milan, Italy, that contain 400 condominiums along with more than 900 trees, 5,000 shrubs, and 11,000 perennials. The reality, however, is that few builders are capable of duplicating such structures, and rare is the LBM dealer that could support such an endeavor.

This doesn't mean, however, that LBM dealers can't benefit from biophilic design. "This is a great conversation starter with the A&D community," says Guimond. "Consider Lunch and Learns, AIA presentations, and architects toolboxes available from manufacturers like Modern Mill as door openers and value adds to help this community break traditional barriers and begin systematically incorporating the principles of biophilic design into all designs and extending these benefits to all and in the most unexpected places."

Manufacturers suggest LBM dealers can take advantage of this design trend by educating their customers about on-trend product options and their value. "As a selling tool, consider that natural light and connection to the outdoors improves the value of a home or building," says Sponseller. "Thoughtfully placed windows and doorglass increase natural light, and well-lighted spaces appear larger and more open."

Dealers can further leverage the growing trend of biophilic design by ensuring they have an appropriate assortment of products, says Karr. "Products like large format, multi-slide patio doors address several of the biophilic design principles," he explains. "Displaying products such as these in a dealer's showroom often creates an inspiring focal point that allows for sales associates to engage customers and demonstrate how these products create a gateway to the outdoors."

By leaning into biophilic design, LBM dealers can offer on-trend choices their customers may not have previously considered, while simultaneously improving the bottom line through increased sales. And in the end, the places created will, as John Muir penned, provide a place of personal sanctuary: "Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul." ■



THIS MONTH'S Real Issues question comes from a dealer who believes the over-abundance of business that happened during COVID-19 has had a lasting impact on his salespeople. In a nutshell, the dealer is looking for insights on how to turn his now expert order takers back into sales pros.

Each month, we ask readers who have opted in to receive our emails one question from a reader who is searching for answers and has asked us to share their concern. Thank you to the more than 100 dealers who offered specific responses to the dealer's question about...

TURNING ORDER TAKERS INTO SALES PROS

BY LBM JOURNAL READERS

WE ASKED READERS HOW THEY WOULD RESPOND DIRECTLY TO THE DEALER'S QUESTION:

"During the COVID-19 era, when business was over-abundant, my sales team became expert order takers. Now that the market is slowing a bit, and the orders aren't coming as fast and furious as before, it seems that my team sorta forgot how to sell. What are other dealers doing to light a fire under their salespeople once again?"

RESPONSES FROM LUMBERYARDS, FULL-LINE BUILDING MATERIAL DEALERS, AND DISTRIBUTORS:

“We’re grappling with the same question.”

“Sounds like poor management. You point the fingers at the sales reps, but what were you doing during this time when business was over-abundant?”

“We have gone back to the traditional practice of setting goals and having regularly-scheduled touch ins and coaching sessions. Also realize this will not change back overnight.”

“We’ve done bonus programs tied to overall sales. However, we’ve found great success with making shorter-time period goals and a lower, but still solid reward. For example, we set a very high goal for overall sales in the month of February and the reward was a team dinner at a high-end local steakhouse. This excited them, and we set a record for the month. The challenge is acknowledging that it is not business as usual, and additional non-regular motivation might be required.”

“Having them learn more about our products and how to better answer questions on how best to use them.”

“Have not had any problems with selling.”

“Talk to your customers. Get to know them.”

“As the general manager, I ask them to schedule sales calls for us to make jointly.”

“It isn’t a matter of lighting a fire under people as it is understanding the markets the salespeople are working in. We are constantly being bombarded with salespeople for products we rarely sell wanting to order us quantities that we couldn’t sell in a decade. Know your customers. Know what they need and don’t try to push specialty products for which your customers have no need. It’s about spending the time with the right customers instead of carpet-bombing all of them with ‘offers’ that aren’t really offers at all.”

“Remind them what the LBM world was like during COVID-19. Educate them on ABM [Account-Based Marketing] tactics. Increase the number of networking and relationship building events available to them.”

“We are not having that problem at this point.”

“Start with ME. What am I doing to model the behavior I want from them? Am I giving them good info—not just ‘sales are down’? Ask them for ideas. Ask them what they need to increase sales. Is it tools or training? Ask them if they are satisfied with their performance. Ask them to rate their own performance.”

“Let them feel the pain.”

“We returned to more scheduled ride-alongs with the sales manager and implemented WAR (weekly action reports) to assist in providing direction and focus to the sales team.”

“Make sure they follow up on quotes.”

“We prefer to allow our customers to order what they want. We do try to steer homeowners in certain directions.”

“Force them out to get in front of customers.”

“Work hard. It’s the smart thing to do.”

“Maybe you need to replace some team members.”

“Try to start a competition between the salespeople with a reward that is obtainable with a little effort.”

“Retrain-refresh-reenergize. Review your pay package.”

“Increase incentives/commissions on new accounts. Tie operational bonuses to overall sales performance.”

“Good luck. Be personable and professional. Ask questions.”

“Have a sales pro come in and do a presentation. I have been thinking of the same thing. We also used to do mock sales calls to show the sales staff what to say and do on a call.”

“Communication is extremely important, as is sharing numbers. There are a number of speakers that can help motivate. Rely on your associations to assist with and understand what is going to help. I truly don’t think we are out of the woods yet. Challenges yet to come!”

“Back to basics. Our salespeople are 100% commission based. They need to sell to make a good living. Get meetings with their customers and be part of their problem-solving issues.”

“Reassigning accounts, basing commissions on profit dollar growth, creating sales teams of inside/outside to match skill sets.”

“We’re reminding our salespeople that their sales goals must be met.”

“Remind them that 80% of their business comes from 20% of their customer base. Get back to listening to what your core customers are doing and find out their new needs. Boots on the ground.”

“That’s what I was going to ask you! When things are quiet, we ask them what their customers are up to. We are getting them trained to pick up the phone and call the customer to see what they might need help with when its slow.”

“We are reminding them of what it is like to not have money flowing in.”

“We are considering incentivizing them for new and additional business.”

“Weekly sales meetings as a group and individual weekly account reviews.”

“Not at this point in our sales cycle just yet, but when it slows down, we will do more PK training. Our sales teams will likely feel some hunger pangs and then return to the hunt!”

“Training and prodding them to make calls to check in with their customers and follow up on quotes. A compensation package that leans heavily on commissions is a good incentive for most salespeople.”

“I have not observed that change in individual salespeople. The ‘hunters’ are still hunting and the ‘farmers’ are still farming.”

“We are setting targets that they need to reach. If they do not reach expected goals, it leads to a sit-down meeting to develop a plan to get there.”

“Need to sell and upsell. Ask more questions and give better advice than the competition. Empower them to be experts.”

“Constant reinforcement for the passion of selling.”

“You've got to focus on adding value and building that relationship. Spend time talking with customers and talk about more than just material.”

“Everyone (management, salespeople, and customers) was over busy during the crazy doesn't-matter-what-I-pay-get-it-for-me-now events of the past couple of years. Between the easy sales and the extra workload, it was easiest for your team to pick the low hanging fruit and just roll on. But before you start bringing up improvements they need to make, or sales goals make sure you take the time to check in and reconnect to them as people. Invest some time into your team and see where they might be burned out or what they had to cut out of their sales routines just to keep up with the work on their plates, then work with them to build back the skills and strategies that are needed to be successful now.”

“Explain the difference between a clerk and a salesperson.”

“We started setting monthly sales goals for the sales team in the set of four tiers. Each tier they reach, they get the reward.”

“First off, forget ‘light a fire under them.’ If you want an effective team, you need to lead them. Second, third, and fourth thing: training, training, training. Sales training, product training, building technology training. Your salespeople need to know how to bring value to the customer—knowledge of the customer's business, how to best serve them, what new products will make your customer's lives easier. Sales training on the basics of engaging a customer, providing options, and quote follow up. Some of this will seem basic to many, but when business is easy, we often forget the simple things that close the sale.”

“Training, training, training.”

“Increase the number of jobsite visits! Do not ask for orders! Show you care and are readily available. Every supplier will drop the ball some time. You need to be the first person that comes to mind.”

“All the usual things that are under the headline of ‘Better Discovery.’ When do you need it? How are you using it? Delivered or picked up? Is this part of a project? What else is needed? Etc. etc.”

“Providing current, updated training to refresh sales reps' knowledge. Promote and encourage upselling.”

“Have a meeting and go over sale tools again to refresh what they need to do.”

“This is a management issue. Not a sales issue. Meet with your inside and outside sales team. Inform them that you are going back to basics. (1) Track percentage of quotes turned into sales. (2) Log legitimate (in-person) cold calls. (3) You set quarterly sales goals. (4) Your inside salespeople can log 10 outgoing calls and 10 incoming calls each day. You will review and follow up with each team member. Your old-timers will squeal. Let them. I'm sure you have employees waiting for the opportunity to join your sales team.”

“More frequent meetings to review sales. Have more training and product knowledge scheduled which has been missing for three years.”

“I've heard this story before. Our sales team has always been expert order takers. If the customer knows what they want and is familiar with the items they are specifying, then you are an order taker whether you like it or not. The worst problem was pricing and availability of all products. If your salesmen lost their ability to sell it was not caused by this event. They just lost their desire to sell and should be replaced if they can't pick it up!”

“More sales training and incentives.”

“I think the approach I take is to share real data with them. Let them see the drop in sales and discuss the reasons. At the end of the day, the staff want the business to succeed.”

“Conscious and direct focus on the competition's customers.”

“Look for new products and ideas for them to promote to the customers.”

“For a period of time we were so inundated that it was difficult to take the time to upsell, speak with customers, etc. We are again back to that model and with six full time employees, retained them all.”

“Salespeople are always hungry for more business but only a true sales professional will continually look for smarter business. Encourage your team to make more planned and cold calls. Sell more profitable products to customers who already buy from you and learn to distinguish suspects from true prospects. Start having organized sales meetings again to help guide the sales team. Some of the best salespeople are made with training and leadership.”

“I encourage my salespeople to focus on add-on sales as well as impulse buys that pertain to the customer's needs. I also remind my salespeople to remember that our customers are the most valuable asset that we have, so it is imperative that we are innovative in filling customer needs in a market in which some materials are not immediately available.”

“We just had an ‘experience’ with a retired framer turned salesman during the COVID-19 period. From day one we told him the process that we call ‘from cradle to grave’ on all orders taken is how our 77-year-old lumber company has operated. He never got it. He was only expert in taking the orders and collecting his commissions. No order follow-up anywhere through the process. Updating the store to a new store POS culled him out finally. My best advice is to use the downtime between orders to refine the processes in your store with everyone to get on the same page while collaboratively looking at ways to adjust the process to identify any opportunities to improve upon.”

“It’s hard to light fires and hold salesmen accountable. If you ask too much, they quit and go work somewhere else because they know you can’t find the help to replace them.”

“First, remember that not all salespeople are the same. One possible way to re-energize them may be to have a meeting with each individually and discuss their accounts. What projects they have going or upcoming, last time they visited, next step to get the sale, etc. This can have a twofold result: your salespeople will look at it as you have interest in them and their sales, and they may realize that they have been slacking a little and will get back out there and push for sales again.”

“Start bringing in vendors and manufacturers to go over product training. Having more knowledge about what you are selling gives salespeople more confidence in selling rather than taking orders.”

“Great question. We are in the same situation and would welcome any suggestions.”

“Just have to push them out the door and make the cold calls.”

“Sales are picking up with us. My sales team is still working hard to take care of the customer.”

“Incentivize.”

“I have just accepted the general managers role with our company. One of the first details is to stop the salespeople from becoming order takers and not selling. First thing is to get their list of customers and contact them yourself to see how often they see the salesperson. Don’t do their job for them, but make sure you are aware of customer service issues.”

“Get back to managing. Account review, ride-alongs with set agendas, account analysis on product groups, to name a few.”



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RESPONSES FROM WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTORS, MANUFACTURERS, AND SERVICE PROVIDERS:

“I think it's important to continue to ask questions and listen to your customers. How can we help solve your problems, whether it be lead time, packaging issues, quality, etc.? When you indicate that you truly care about your customers' needs and want to make their life easier, as opposed to just trying to make the next sale, that resonates with them. They want to do more business with you. Sales managers would do good to remind their sales team of this important skill. This may also be an opportunity to introduce a new product to them that they currently are sourcing elsewhere.”

“Incentive payouts.”

“Find a refresher webinar on sales. It's a tough problem, but if they see their commissions lighten up, that should light the fire.”

“Get back to the basics: education and the value of your goods and services. What value do you bring to your customers?”

“Stress the importance of being a partner with your customers by getting the salespeople involved with problem solving and value engineering their needs when an opportunity arises. This helps the customer and also helps the sales force with complacency and boredom.”

“Skill training, followed by reinforcement. Focus more on unit growth vs. volume.”

“Our salespeople were previously on salary. Rather than give them a raise like everyone else got, we started a commission program.”

“Strong times create weak salespeople: I get it. The ease of business over the past couple years has softened your sales staff. To combat this, I have re-vitalized compensation programs I used back in 2009-2011 when orders were tight. Reward Performance. Not Activity. Scale reward upward as performance increases (sell more/make more). Lace in personal recognition from leadership, public recognition around peers, and non-monetary rewards (A temporary seat at the table for leadership decisions that impact sales strategy). Finally: Toughen up your leadership. Go back to forced rank listings (let everyone know who is winning and who is last). Set clear, measurable expectations and immediately have conversations and offer support when/if they are missed. Salespeople want/need/thrive on a goal. They know when they are missing, don't let them hide behind 'covid syndrome.' Strong salespeople need strong leadership. It starts by looking inward and evaluating yourself as a leader.”

“You've got to do customer service surveys and pay a sales commission on stuff above a certain number or quota.”

“Revisit the vision as frequently as possible. Engage conversations. Get them excited about talking about the business and they will quite naturally seek out people to talk to. Engagement breeds engagement. Keep everyone informed on activity. Activity breeds activity.”

“I would first question what makes him believe they forgot how to sell? Is it because the orders are not rolling in at the accelerated pace that they were during the COVID boom, or that orders are more than 10% below pre-COVID numbers in unit sales? What positive tools does the dealer have at his disposal to motivate his team and build excitement around what is a far less exciting market environment?”

“Ask salespeople to gather market information as much as they can and analyze it. Salespeople will find out new chances as well as they find out what's going on the market, and set up a new strategy and sales direction.”

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“Reaching out to existing customers—in person—to get re-connected, and to ask them how their business has changed, how their role may have changed, and reminding them that we are here to provide the best solutions for their business. Show up, listen, remind our customers why we are the best value...rinse and repeat.”

“As a manufacturer, our territory sales managers were instructed by our customers not to make sales call on their retail stores during Covid. This policy extended over a number of months. In an effort to stay in front of the customer, we utilized Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and other means to supplement face-to-face calls. Now that we are able to see our customers face-to-face, we are receiving comments that they are not seeing our salespeople. It appears our territory sales managers are in still in Covid mode. We need to make sure our sales team understands the importance of ‘hunting’ for new business, as well as calling on existing customers to support efforts in growing their business.”

“Offering a bonus plan for new business.”

“Establish a written and documented sales process. Conduct one-on-ones every other week to review and define areas to work on. Understand the pipeline each month.”

“I have only one salesman and we always talk about how to get more business.”

“I started from square one with low-hanging fruit. We analyzed every customer and what items we have seen a drop off in. I put in place call reports which I have never done before. They get daily tracking on new business dollars. We are tracking all outbound phone calls. I’m doing a weekly one on-one and discussing their weekly activities around new business.”

“I would suggest if you don’t have a commission-based structure, you start looking into it. Salary-based salespeople are not focused on selling. You are paying them to be order takers.”

“Tell them the story of California’s Pelicans! During WW2, fishing companies canned a lot more tins of fish for men fighting overseas. Pelicans hanging around these canning facilities got fat on the ‘spoils’ cast back onto the sea from those canneries. After the war, these canneries went out of business and the pelicans and subsequent generations did NOT know how to go out and fish for themselves! Many starved! But an enterprising individual brought in some pelicans from Florida who taught the ‘locals’ how to fish again! That saved California’s pelicans. And if a sales manager can teach his young pelicans how to fish, they will be okay too!”

“Bring your vendors in for PK. Have meetings with mini courses to stoke their fire for sales. Look at your CRM and make sure it fits their needs.”

“Review the basics; knowledge is power. Make sure your staff is up to date on current products. Value proposition is going to be important with prices rising, so make sure staff can explain the features and benefits. Be the source with the answers.”

“Get belly-to-belly with the customers.”

“We have adjusted our management team into ops and sales to better focus the team going into uncertain economic times. One team is focused on operations and efficiency, the other team is focused on SALES and GP\$. Combined, the two focused groups keep a strong bottom line.” ■

HAVE A REAL ISSUE?

CONTACT: Rick@LBMJournal.com

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LBM JOURNAL[®]

100

LBM 100 SHOWS MORE BIG GAINS IN 2022

BY JAMES ANDERSON

Since we first launched the LBM 100 in 2021, each year has ushered in new record sales for LBM dealers participating in the list. Kicked off during one of the most bizarre business climates in modern history, the list is compiled of dealers who continued to succeed throughout the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, and into the highly volatile markets and supply chain conundrums that followed.

Now in its third year, the LBM 100 continues to demonstrate the strength of the lumber and building materials industry while fighting new challenges such as sky rocketing interest rates, rising inflation and fuel costs, labor shortages, and foreboding talk of a recession. If that list of challenges faced any other industry, it is unlikely that we would see that 94 of this year's top 100 dealers reporting increases in sales in 2022. Nearly all of those increases were in the double digits, and some, including Howard Lumber and Hardware in Statesboro, Ga. (No. 44) and Glecker and Sons in Jacksonville, Fla. (No 38), topped 80%.

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EPICOR

A number of records were set in 2022, including those at Zuern Building Products (No. 54) in Slinger, Wisc., where President Tom Zuern reported, “Record sales, record profitability, continued improvement to journey value,” while the company sold \$24 million more in delivered sales using 144 fewer deliveries. “Every product category was up at least 18%,” Zuern said.

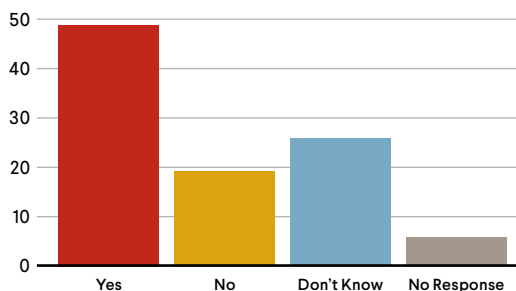
At Carter-Jones Lumber Co. (No. 5) in Kent, Ohio, Director of Marketing Mark Ely said, “We surpassed \$3 billion in sales for the first time in our company’s history. We also made major gains with our national builder customer base and grew that portion of our business at a rate which far outpaced our overall growth.”

Other 2022 records mentioned by LBM 100 dealers include the first \$100 million sales year at Concord, Calif.-based Ashby Lumber (No. 73). At Frisco Wholesale Lumber (No. 71), in Frisco, Texas, the company surpassed \$1 billion in sales over the company’s history.

GROWTH IN 2022 AND BEYOND

The year saw a number of mergers and acquisitions, as reflected in this year’s LBM 100. Some, such as Buffalo Grove, Ill.-based US LBM’s July acquisition of Foxworth-Galbraith Lumber Company, surprised even industry insiders. Foxworth-Galbraith ranked No. 11 on the 2022 LBM 100 list, citing sales of \$926.5 million in 2021. While US LBM was in the news often in 2022 for acquisitions (the company gained 46 locations over the course of the year), the moves didn’t alter the heavy hitter’s firm hold on the No. 2 spot on the LBM 100. This year US LBM maintained that second spot and reported a 24.5% gain at over \$11.4 billion in gross sales.

Percent of companies planning to expand in the next 12-24 months



In comparison, the No. 1 spot on this year’s list, Texas-based Builders FirstSource, acquired six companies for a total of 24 locations in 2022 and held the top spot with a 19.5% increase in gross sales to \$22.7 billion. Kodiak Building Partners, based in Highlands Ranch, Colo., and No. 4 on this year’s list, also acquired six companies last year. Also notable is up-and-coming TAL Holdings (No. 31), headquartered in Vancouver, Wash., which acquired four companies, adding a total of 14 locations. TAL reported 60.5% gross sales growth year-over-year.

Overall, nearly one quarter of the dealers on this year’s LBM 100 list indicated that they had gone through the acquisition process (on either the buy or sell side). And if that number seems high, consider that nearly half of the LBM 100 companies intend to grow this year or in 2024. While not all will be done through acquisition, 49% indicated that they plan to expand in the next 12-24 months. Just 19% said they did not have an expansion on the horizon during that time period, and another 26% indicated that they didn’t know. ▶

NEARLY ONE QUARTER OF THE DEALERS ON THIS YEAR’S LBM 100 LIST INDICATED THAT THEY HAD GONE THROUGH THE ACQUISITION PROCESS (ON EITHER THE BUY OR SELL SIDE).

PRODUCTS SOLD*

PLYWOOD / OSB	90%	ROOFING	73%	SAFETY PRODUCTS	49%
DIMENSION LUMBER	89%	SPECIALTY WOODS	69%	CONTRACTOR CLOTHING & GEAR	47%
DECKING	88%	STAIR PARTS / SYSTEMS	69%	PLUMBING PRODUCTS	46%
SIDING: FIBER CEMENT	88%	DRYWALL	66%	WALL PANELS	46%
ADHESIVES / CAULKS / SEALANTS	88%	INSULATION	64%	FLOORING	45%
DOORS	87%	TOOLS: HAND	63%	ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES	45%
WINDOWS	87%	SIDING: OTHER	62%	DECK RAILING	44%
ENGINEERED LUMBER	87%	TOOLS: POWER	59%	LAWN & GARDEN	40%
HOUSEWRAP / WEATHER BARRIERS	86%	SIDING: VINYL	59%	GRILLS	35%
FASTENERS / CONNECTORS	85%	CABINETS	58%	LANDSCAPE / HARDSCAPE	35%
SHEATHING / UNDERLAYMENT	84%	CONCRETE / MASONRY	55%	GARAGE DOORS	26%
SIDING: ENGINEERED WOOD	83%	PAINT, STAIN, & SUNDRIES	54%	FIREPLACES	19%
MOULDING / TRIM / MILLWORK	82%	LADDERS	53%	APPLIANCES	18%
TRUSSES	79%	FENCING	53%	HVAC	13%
LOCKSETS / HARDWARE	77%	KITCHEN & BATH	50%		
BUILDERS' HARDWARE	75%	SOLID SURFACING / COUNTERTOPS	50%		

*PERCENTAGE OF LBM 100 THAT SELL EACH CATEGORY.

40% OF LBM 100 DEALERS NOW OFFER ONLINE SALES. THAT NUMBER IS UP 9.5% FROM 2022'S REPORT OF 30.5% OF DEALERS WHO OFFERED PRODUCTS FOR SALE ONLINE.

CUSTOMER FOCUS

In an industry that continues to grow despite its obstacles, this year's LBM 100 is indeed building for the future. As a means of doing so, dealers continue to serve their strongest customers in the highest percentage, namely custom builders. Unchanged from last year, custom builders made up 41% of LBM 100 dealers' customer base. Down slightly are the percentages of production homebuilders served at 21%, but up percentage point each are professional remodelers and consumer/DIYers.

Perhaps a holdover pandemic-era convenience, but also a sign of changing buying habits, 40% of LBM 100 dealers now offer online sales. That number is up 9.5% from 2022's report of 30.5% of dealers who offered products for sale online. Indeed pandemic-related are "buy online pick up outside" type orders. Of those who sell products online, curbside orders made up 27.4% of the deals in 2022. Just more than 35% of online orders placed at LBM 100 dealers are picked up in store.

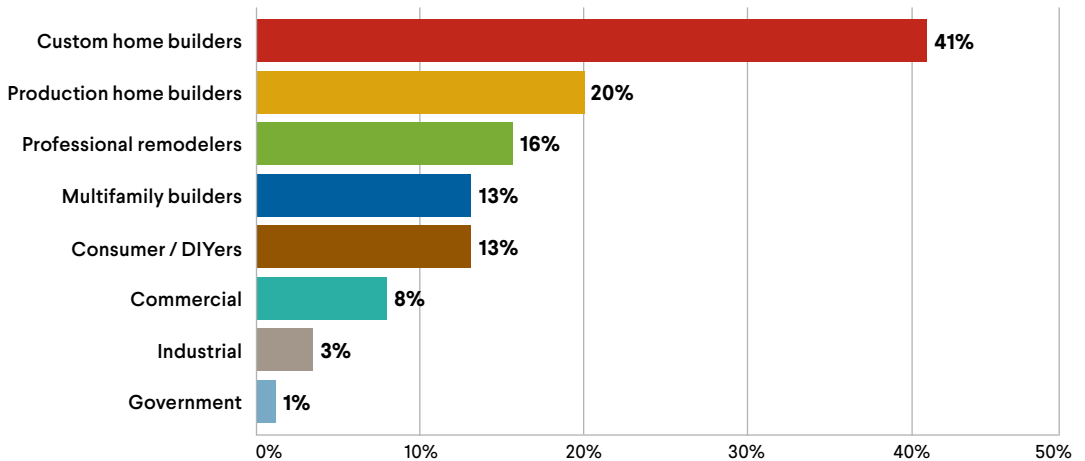
GRABBING OPPORTUNITY

Opportunities abound in any industry, and the LBM dealers on this year's top 100 list know where to focus next. Again in 2022, recruiting, hiring, and retaining talent were major challenges in the industry. Sixty-eight percent of LBM 100 dealers indicated that finding and keeping good team members is a challenge. While a concern industry-wide, it appears to be ebbing a bit, as 84% of last year's LBM 100 indicated the same challenge. Some dealers, like Curtis Lumber (No. 23) based in Ballston Spa, N.Y., are solving their local labor woes.

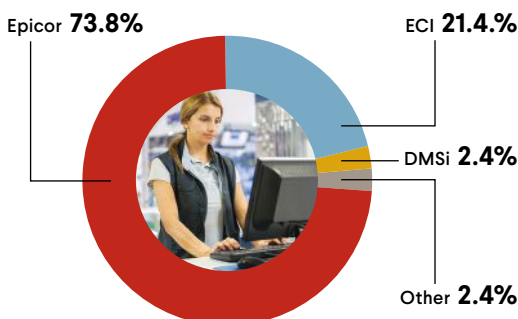
"Curtis Lumber, in conjunction with the Saratoga Builders Association started a Workforce Development Coalition for the trades six years ago that is now showing significant growth," said Doug Ford, VP of sales and purchasing at Curtis Lumber. "It is focused on driving awareness to students around the career paths into the trades through involvement with the high schools, colleges, and technical schools."

CUSTOM HOME BUILDERS LEAD THE WAY

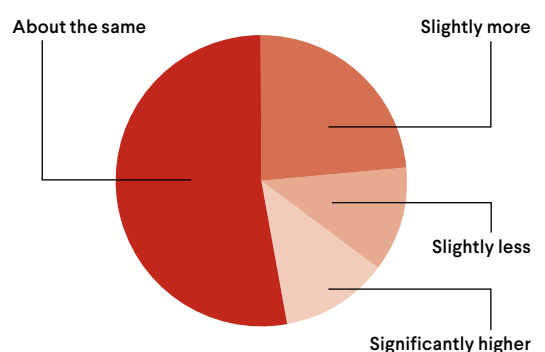
Average percentage of sales to each customer type.



ERP platform most used

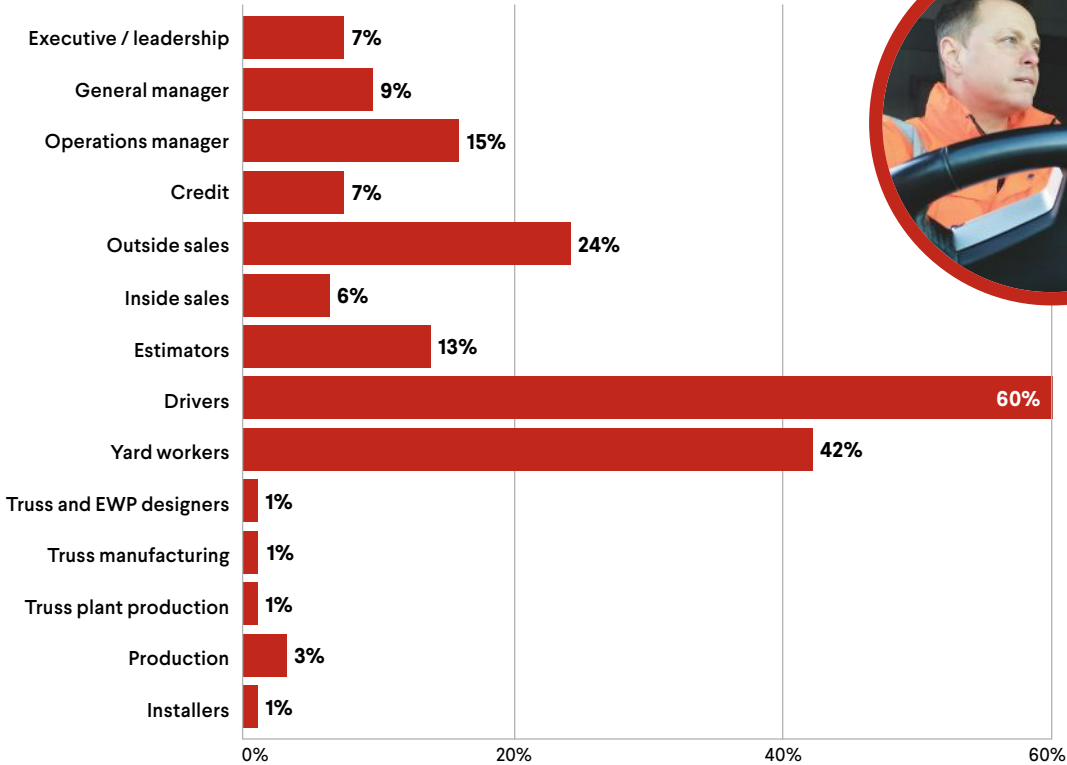


Online sales for 2022 compared to 2021



DRIVERS TOP THE MOST DIFFICULT POSITIONS TO FILL

Percentage of LBM 100 companies indicating positions are challenging to fill.



As dealers such as Curtis Lumber have made strides in recruiting and retaining the next generation of LBM pros, driver positions in particular have proven hardest to fill. This year's LBM 100 dealers indicated that of all the positions that are challenging to fill, drivers exceed any other role by nearly 20%. Following drivers, of which 60% of dealers indicated are the most difficult to fill, are yard workers at 42% and outside sales reps at 24%.

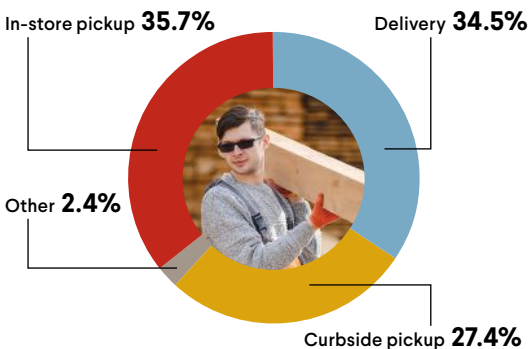
Some companies have felt a bit less weight on the hiring challenge as recession fears caused larger companies to reduce staff. "The economic slowdown has offered our company

some good, quality employees...those changing from employers that may be less stable than us," said one Northeastern dealer.

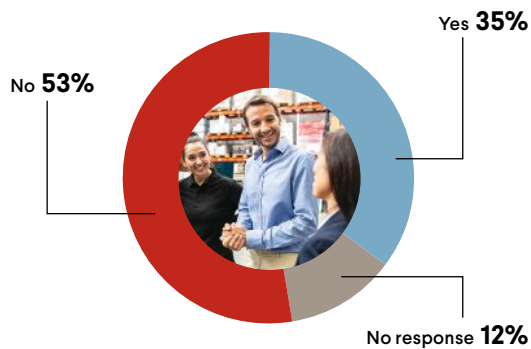
While many in the industry will agree that the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic-era concerns are behind us, there continues to be a watchful eye on inflation indicators. Many dealers have indicated that 2023 will still be a year of growth, despite higher interest rates and lingering supply chain challenges.

"There will be fallout in the industry and cash is always king. We will be ready to take advantage of business opportunities," said one Texas dealer. ■

Percent of how customers receive their online order



Percent of LBM 100 companies that have a mentoring program



RANKINGS

RANK

RANK	PRIOR RANK	2022	2021	% CHANGE	LOCATIONS		EMPLOYEES			
		GROSS SALES (in millions)	GROSS SALES (in millions)		2022	2021	2022	2021		
1		Builders FirstSource Dallas, TX	1	\$22,700.00	\$19,000.00	19.5%	570	565	29,000	28,000
2		US LBM Atlanta, GA	2	\$11,476.00	\$9,220.00	24.5%	487	441	15,500	14,500
3		84 Lumber Eighty Four, PA	3	\$8,754.34	\$7,863.53	11.3%	310	265	6,776	6,442
4		Kodiak Building Partners Highlands Ranch, CO	7	\$3,208.48	\$2,490.49	28.8%	131	111	6,060	5,818
5		Carter-Jones Lumber Co. Kent, OH	6	\$3,100.00	\$2,565.00	20.9%	171	168	4,153	3,958
6		McCoy's Building Supply San Marcos, TX	8	\$1,689.21	\$1,423.65	18.7%	88	92	3,415	2,921
7		Lansing Building Products Richmond, VA	9	\$1,561.00	\$1,300.00	20.1%	112	112	1,905	1,724
8		Parr Lumber Company Hillsboro, OR	10	\$1,045.00	\$991.00	5.4%	44	45	1,508	1,379
9		Matheus Lumber Company, Inc. Woodinville, WA	13	\$1,026.00	\$750.00	36.8%	9	8	152	123
10		Ganahl Lumber Co. Anaheim, CA	14	\$782.00	\$666.75	17.3%	11	11	1,000	960
11		Riverhead Building Supply Corp. Calverton, NY	15	\$673.00	\$555.00	21.3%	20	19	768	764
12		Mead Lumber Company Omaha, NE	16	\$626.01	\$475.85	31.6%	52	47	1,296	1,175
13		Central Retail Network Group Collierville, TN	n/a	\$579.45	\$529.23	9.5%	146	141	3,259	3,244
14		Sunpro Corporation Orem, UT	17	\$559.14	\$453.56	23.3%	27	27	537	511
15		Idaho Pacific Lumber, Inc. Meridian, ID	22	\$557.48	\$342.50	62.8%	1	1	85	80
16		Mill Creek Lumber & Supply Company Tulsa, OK	18	\$517.29	\$437.00	18.4%	27	27	815	818
17		Hammond Lumber Company Belgrade, ME	21	\$438.00	\$360.00	21.7%	22	21	890	820
18		R.P. Lumber Co., Inc. Edwardsville, IL	19	\$435.00	\$390.00	11.5%	84	80	750	725
19		Drexel Building Supply Cambellsport, WI	23	\$390.00	\$336.00	16.1%	10	9	695	651
20		Franklin Building Supply Boise, ID	20	\$374.80	\$317.28	18.1%	12	12	690	740
21		Hancock Lumber Company, Inc. Casco, ME	25	\$349.00	\$294.47	18.5%	12	13	360	340
22		Tibbetts Lumber Clearwater, FL	28	\$339.60	\$239.64	41.7%	8	7	n/a	n/a
23		Curtis Lumber Co. Ballston Spa, NY	26	\$325.77	\$290.73	12.1%	23	23	699	674
24		Stine Sulphur, LA	24	\$299.00	\$320.00	-6.6%	11	11	817	860
25		Erie Materials, Inc. Syracuse, NY	27	\$298.07	\$268.90	10.8%	10	10	350	358
26		Reliable Wholesale Lumber Huntington Beach, CA	n/a	\$288.00	\$310.00	-7.1%	2	2	152	180
27		Koopman Lumber Whitinsville, MA	30	\$277.07	\$218.92	26.6%	11	10	420	370
28		Bliffert Lumber and Hardware Milwaukee, WI	34	\$265.48	\$201.90	31.5%	10	8	305	244
29		The Building Center, Inc. Pineville, NC	n/a	\$260.88	\$221.66	17.7%	8	7	452	413
30		Star Lumber & Supply Wichita, KS	35	\$246.79	\$191.87	28.6%	7	7	435	360
31		TAL Holdings, LLC Vancouver, WA	42	\$244.00	\$152.00	60.5%	29	15	612	324
32		HPM Building Supply Keaau, HI	n/a	\$240.00	\$211.00	13.7%	17	15	510	475
33		Western Building Center Kalispell, MT	32	\$235.90	\$205.53	14.8%	13	13	397	374
34		Spahn & Rose Lumber Co. Dubuque, IA	36	\$229.46	\$190.64	20.4%	25	24	335	325
35		Western Pacific Building Materials Portland, OR	n/a	\$228.78	\$160.77	42.3%	6	6	405	385
36		Scherer Bros. Lumber Co. Brooklyn Park, MN	29	\$220.00	\$233.00	-5.6%	5	5	294	309
37		Keim Home Center Charm, OH	33	\$218.30	\$204.68	6.7%	3	2	589	579

RANK		PRIOR RANK	2022	2021	%	LOCATIONS		EMPLOYEES	
			GROSS SALES (in millions)	GROSS SALES (in millions)		CHANGE	2022	2021	2022
38	Gleckler and Sons Jacksonville, FL	57	\$214.00	\$117.00	82.9%	5	2	300	200
39	McCray Lumber Company Overland Park, KS	37	\$212.44	\$183.61	15.7%	7	7	258	227
40	Friedman's Home Improvement Petaluma, CA	n/a	\$201.00	\$205.00	-2%	6	7	531	571
41	Timberland Lumber Brazil, IN	40	\$193.52	\$167.21	15.7%	2	2	162	156
42	Homer T. Hayward Lumber Co. Monterey, CA	39	\$190.00	\$175.00	8.6%	8	8	236	237
43	Harbin Lumber Company Lavonia, GA	43	\$188.21	\$149.00	26.3%	6	6	287	279
44	Howard Lumber & Hardware Statesboro, GA	65	\$187.74	\$102.95	82.4%	4	2	175	80
45	Big C Lumber Granger, IN	38	\$184.16	\$176.80	4.2%	18	18	323	314
46	Belletetes Inc. Jaffrey, NH	n/a	\$175.00	\$155.00	12.9%	9	9	320	305
47	Mans Lumber and Millwork Trenton, MI	n/a	\$171.72	\$137.69	24.7%	5	5	247	243
48	Dufrene Building Materials Inc. Cut Off, LA	55	\$170.00	\$118.00	44.1%	9	8	297	215
49	The T.H. Rogers Lumber Company Edmond, OK	n/a	\$164.72	\$141.20	16.7%	40	40	220	210
50	Your Building Centers Altoona, PA	51	\$160.62	\$129.06	24.5%	20	17	464	356
51	Russell Do it Centers Alexander City, AL	47	\$153.63	\$136.05	12.9%	9	9	225	225
52	Central Valley Napa, CA	41	\$152.00	\$153.00	-.7%	8	8	213	209
53	Cassity Jones, Inc. Longview, TX	50	\$151.41	\$129.75	16.7%	10	10	162	164
54	Zuern Building Products Slinger, WI	56	\$149.00	\$117.00	27.4%	7	7	204	193
55	Talbert Building Supply Roxboro, NC	n/a	\$148.45	\$112.91	31.5%	6	5	207	183
56	Jackson Lumber and Millwork Co Inc. Lawrence, MA	46	\$147.06	\$136.87	7.4%	5	5	202	198
57	Wilson Lumber Huntsville, AL	53	\$143.00	\$120.00	19.2%	6	6	325	350
58	Millard Lumber Inc. Omaha, NE	52	\$140.00	\$129.00	8.5%	3	3	307	315
59	Garris Evans Lumber Company Greenville, NC	63	\$139.10	\$103.90	33.9%	5	5	165	158
60	Beisser Lumber Company Grimes, IA	48	\$134.85	\$134.22	.5%	3	3	160	150
61	Williams Lumber & Home Centers Rhinebeck, NY	49	\$130.00	\$110.00	18.2%	7	7	295	300
62	Graves Lumber Co. Copley, OH	61	\$128.05	\$105.34	21.6%	1	1	108	102
63	The Lester Group Martinsville, VA	58	\$127.20	\$115.34	10.3%	5	5	117	117
64	Griffin Lumber & Hardware Perry, GA	67	\$126.00	\$96.00	31.3%	10	8	197	185
65	Buck Lumber & Building Supply, Inc. Charleston, SC	72	\$121.55	\$86.83	40%	1	1	80	75
66	Gillman Home Centers Batesville, IN	59	\$120.62	\$109.61	10%	15	14	375	340
67	Tindell's Building Materials Knoxville, TN	70	\$118.32	\$88.79	33.3%	6	6	243	210
68	Scholl Forest Industries, Inc. Houston, TX	73	\$112.69	\$83.86	34.4%	1	1	35	32
69	Webb Concrete & Building Materials Heflin, AL	64	\$110.81	\$103.68	6.9%	7	7	170	167
70	Henson Lumber Cresson, TX	66	\$110.65	\$96.04	15.2%	2	2	110	110
71	Frisco Wholesale Lumber Frisco, TX	n/a	\$108.28	\$86.06	25.8%	1	1	62	56
72	Randall Brothers, LLC Atlanta, GA	69	\$107.36	\$86.52	24.1%	4	4	159	162
73	Ashby Lumber Concord, CA	68	\$102.20	\$96.20	6.2%	2	2	168	170
74	Gutherie Lumber Co. Livonia, MI	n/a	\$99.40	\$101.00	-1.6%	1	1	87	85

RANK		PRIOR RANK	2022	2021	% CHANGE	LOCATIONS		EMPLOYEES	
			GROSS SALES (in millions)	GROSS SALES (in millions)		2022	2021	2022	2021
75	Louis J. Grasmick Lumber Company Baltimore, MD	80	\$93.24	\$65.41	42.5%	1	1	60	60
76	Goldsboro Builders Supply Goldsboro, NC	78	\$92.87	\$70.04	32.6%	7	6	125	110
77	Arnold Lumber Company, Inc. West Kingston, RI	71	\$91.49	\$87.42	4.7%	4	4	150	133
78	Preston Feather Building Centers Petoskey, MI	n/a	\$85.37	\$77.46	10.2%	4	4	116	113
79	Maximus Building Supply Collierville, TN	74	\$85.00	\$81.00	4.9%	4	4	117	92
80	Kellogg Supply Company Manteo, NC	n/a	\$82.70	\$65.50	26.3%	4	4	180	160
81	Townsend Building Supply Dothan, AL	77	\$80.43	\$70.89	13.5%	6	6	145	140
82	Ziegler Lumber Company Spokane, WA	75	\$78.60	\$70.27	11.9%	6	6	200	200
83	Lummus Supply Co. Atlanta, GA	81	\$77.64	\$64.05	21.2%	5	5	89	86
84	Walker Lumber & Supply Nashville, TN	n/a	\$77.32	\$59.00	31.1%	1	1	72	65
85	Associated Building Supply Inc. Oxnard, CA	79	\$75.30	\$65.27	15.4%	9	9	52	55
86	Associated Truss and Lumber Sunnyvale, TX	n/a	\$72.00	\$60.00	20%	1	1	180	170
87	Lyon & Billard Lumber Meriden, CT	82	\$72.00	\$69.00	4.3%	4	4	86	86
88	Bethel Mills Inc. Bethel, VT	n/a	\$68.00	\$65.00	4.6%	8	8	150	130
89	Rock Materials Dallas, TX	n/a	\$61.00	\$44.00	38.6%	2	2	93	96
90	Huston Lumber & Supply Company Watchung, NJ	n/a	\$54.03	\$47.10	14.7%	2	2	59	59
91	Moore Lumber & Hardware Pine, CO	n/a	\$53.36	\$46.76	14.1%	6	5	160	127
92	Morsches Lumber Inc. Columbia City, IN	n/a	\$52.57	\$48.51	8.4%	5	5	84	81
93	LENCO Supplies Buffalo, NY	84	\$50.28	\$44.66	12.6%	4	3	78	76
94	Rocky Mountain Forest Products Arvada, CO	86	\$46.04	\$42.01	9.6%	4	4	60	52
95	Brown Lumber and Building Supply Columbiana, LA	n/a	\$40.00	\$35.00	14.3%	1	1	43	50
96	Hamilton Building Supply Hamilton, NJ	90	\$38.09	\$31.12	22.4%	1	1	73	70
97	Rice Lumber Shelburne, VT	89	\$35.90	\$31.40	14.3%	1	1	35	35
98	Fort Worth Lumber Company Fort Worth, TX	n/a	\$31.64	\$23.50	34.6%	1	1	55	53
99	Framing Square Lumber Midland, TX	n/a	\$31.00	\$29.00	6.9%	1	1	28	28
100	Dakota County Lumber Farmington, MN	91	\$30.47	\$28.14	6.9%	1	1	37	34

A big thank you to all of the companies who shared their data for the third-annual LBM 100. We're especially proud that the numbers all came directly from the companies themselves, with zero "guesstimates" from our team. These same high standards will guide future updates to this important and insightful industry snapshot.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The 2023 LBM 100 study was conducted February 2023 through April 2023. The resulting LBM 100 list ranks companies based on their total sales for 2022. The list was created solely based on responded companies, with an intentional decision to not estimate figures if a company chose not to participate. As a result, some companies do not appear on the list that otherwise would have.

The survey data and charts contained herein are based on those respondents who completed the full survey by the response deadline and chose to answer each question. Not every question was required, therefore not all results are based on 100 responses.

If you have questions about the LBM 100 or would like your firm to be included in next year's survey, contact Rick Schumacher at rick@lbmjournal.com.



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New from ODL, its Bay Point doorglass features panels of hammered texture that create a medium level of privacy interspersed with patinaed caming and accents of clear seedy and gray bubble glass.

WINDOWS AND DOORS

CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM RULES THE FENESTRATION SEGMENT DESPITE ECONOMIC CONCERNS.

BY MIKE BERGER

There's something about doors that seem to inspire us, and history is replete with important portals that provide both an aesthetic and a physical purpose. Take for example the Imperial Gate of Hagia Sophia, the cathedral in Istanbul, Turkey, built in the 6th century CE under the direction of Byzantine emperor Justinian I. Constructed from oak rumored to be from Noah's Ark and hung within a bronze frame, the Imperial Gate (or Emperor Door) was once reserved for use only by the emperor and his procession.

Windows are no less spectacular, as evidenced by Notre Dame Cathedral's South Rose Window. Over 42' in diameter, it's considered to be one of the most beautiful rose windows ever created. Constructed in 1260, the window was a gift from King Saint Louis and contains 84 panes of glass divided into four circles. And while a devastating fire in 2019 destroyed much of Notre Dame itself, the South Rose Window miraculously survived.

While these ancient examples stand as icons, today's modern doors and windows are just as important, especially to LBM dealers struggling to make sense of what the next 12 months may bring for the fenestration segment. Recent bank failures and continued threats of rising interest rates have many industry experts nervous about what's to come, and the numbers seem to support those concerns. For example, the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development reported that for February of 2023 privately-owned housing starts were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,450,000—that's 18.4% below the rate from the same time last year. ▶



Endure double hung vinyl windows from ProVia are Energy Star-certified and can be ordered with a variety of glass customizations including grids, tinted and decorative glass, and internal blinds. They can also be customized to coordinate with a home's interior colors and are available in wood grain and several exterior paint color options.

RIGHT: ProVia's Legacy entry door (shown here in Sandstone with Laurence decorative glass and sidelites) is built with 20-gauge steel and has 49% more galvanized steel than 24-gauge doors, which the manufacturer says makes them superior in strength and rigidity than other steel security doors.



FAR RIGHT: According to Therma-Tru, its new Veris collection of doors are designed to reconnect the home with the outdoors through the use of minimalist design and expansive glass. Available in single and French door configurations, the collection's pivot entry doors feature the company's largest door panel available with options up to 5' wide x 10' tall.



While statistics such as this spark fear in some, others see opportunity. "There are definite signs of new construction slowing, but we anticipate this will not have any significant negative impact on the remodeling segment," says Phil Wengerd, vice president of market strategies for ProVia. "Despite the rise in interest rates a few months back, consumers are still spending money on their homes. We haven't seen a negative effect on leads or sales."

"The current shortage of new housing inventory, however, will eventually necessitate new construction starting back up again," he points out. "The surge of remodeling projects that occurred while folks were working remotely and not spending money on traveling during the height of COVID-19 has subsided, but home improvement investments are still strong."

Jennifer Renaud, chief marketing officer for Masonite, also sees potential growth pitfalls, although not ones that aren't insurmountable. "Through 2023 we expect end-market demand to be lower due to the economic impact of steep inflation and higher mortgage interest rates we have seen over the past year," she predicts.

"During this period, we believe latent demand in each of our markets will continue to grow as people wait on the sidelines for more predictability in interest rates and housing prices. As economic conditions stabilize, we expect the housing market to return to growth. Factors such as a continuing housing supply deficit, the aging housing stock and elevated home equity should support a rebound to more normalized levels of new home construction and repair/replace/remodel market growth."

If a sluggish economy is in the cards for the remainder of 2023, some door and window manufacturers see it as an opportunity for innovation. "Historically, it has been periods of economic downturn when the fenestration industry has shown the greatest propensity to innovate," explains Jamison Eige, vice president of OEM and retail for ODL, Inc. "When the industry slows, it gives forward-thinking companies an opportunity to add new products, configurations, or features. These innovations will help guide the window and door industry out of the slow-down and ensure that builders and consumers continue to get the best possible products to meet their needs."

According to the manufacturer, Milgard AX550 Moving Glass Walls are an innovative solution that blur the line between where indoor space ends and outdoor living begins. Available in sliding, pocket, and bi-fold configurations, these doors are available in sizes as large as 10' tall and 20' wide.



Window and door manufacturers can't simply assume, however, that growth is a given, as Anthony Matter, vice president of branding and creative for MITER Brands. "With rising interest rates and slowing demand, growth within the window and door industry will be earned in 2023," he says. "The companies that can deliver the highest-quality products, on-time, accurate, and complete will be the ones to grow. It will be a long, down year for the manufacturers who struggle with quality, lead times, or in-full deliveries."

DESPERATELY SEEKING SIZE

When it comes to product demand, one catchphrase seems to ring true this year for doors and windows: bigger is better. Whether it's with taller or wider dimensions, door and window manufacturers report increasing demand for larger openings and more expansive panes of glass. "In the markets that we serve, taller doors and larger windows continue to be popular with homeowners," says ProVia's Wengerd.

Products in today's homes are trending towards blended styles and connected spaces, Therma-Tru's brand manager, Lisa Fink-Kennedy, explains. "From modern to casual, design styles are borrowing elements from each other with a focus on simple, compelling style," she says. "Homeowners are looking for new ways to connect indoor and outdoor spaces, extending the feeling of home beyond four walls."

Masonite's Renaud also sees consumer trends leaning towards connecting the sense of nature with everyday living spaces. "According to research prepared exclusively for Masonite, the macro-trends driving home design present a fascinating juxtaposition between a return to glamour and a desire to reconnect with nature and calm the senses," she points out. "The return to glamour fuses traditional and modern elements, such as a wood front door with ornate panel details and a high-gloss lacquer finish. The desire to connect with nature and find sanctuary can be brought to life through front doors with glass for maximum natural light and a mix of rugged and sleek materials, including natural woods."

This desire to connect with nature is a concept called biophilic design, a movement that strives to bring the outside in by making use of natural materials along with larger windows and doors to create a sense of unity with the natural world. (You'll find more about biophilic design on page 26 of this issue.)

Of course, the use of larger glass to achieve that connection brings unique challenges, and manufacturers are actively developing products to meet those specialized needs. "Consumers are looking for larger glass products with more viewing area," says ODL's Eige. "This has ushered in a greater need for new solutions to control light and privacy. ODL continues to meet that need with larger sizes of Blink Blinds + Glass, including a soon-to-be released Blink XL unit that will be available in sizes up to an 8' x 8' patio door configuration."

GREEN IS THE NEW BLACK

Since long before the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency launched the ENERGY STAR program in 1992, energy efficiency for windows and doors has been a driving force in product development. That demand for energy-saving products has only increased over the years—especially in the wake of COVID-19 forcing homeowners to spend increasingly large amounts of time in their homes—and door and window manufacturers are taking note.

"Energy efficiency is one of the primary reasons homeowners replace their windows," MITER Brands' Matter comments. "With the latest round of tax rebates, you can expect to see more homeowners upgrade their windows and doors for the tax benefits as well as the energy-efficient enhancements they'll experience." ▶



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Masonite M-Pwr Smart Doors are the first residential exterior doors to integrate power, LED welcome lights, a video doorbell and a smart lock into the door system. Introduced exclusively for new home construction at CES 2022, Masonite M-Pwr Smart Doors are now available for renovation, repair and remodeling applications.



Masonite’s Renaud references her company’s research that shows energy efficiency as a key consumer need and purchasing decision. “Offering homeowners more energy-efficient door solutions helps them maintain a comfortable environment in their homes and reduces energy waste,” she says.

Energy efficiency is just one factor of sustainable design, a consumer trend manufacturers and other industry experts say smart LBM dealers should position themselves to be able to capitalize on. According to the National Association of Homebuilders, homebuyers will pay more for sustainable features like energy-efficient windows, and in its recent “Global Sustainability Study 2021” conducted by global strategy and pricing consultancy Simon-Kucher and Partners, it reported more than 34% of the population on average is willing to pay more for sustainable products or services, and those willing to pay more would accept a 25% premium on average.

“Fenestration manufacturers are looking to incorporate more sustainable composite materials, and continue to be leaders in recycling materials found in window and door extrusions

and frames,” says ODL’s Eige. “The term is widely discussed nowadays, but to incorporate sustainability successfully, companies must tailor their efforts to be relevant, realistic, and authentic to their product.”

Sustainability is a key factor in the purchase decision process for entry doors, says Therma-Tru’s Fink-Kennedy. “Therma-Tru is committed to making safe and sustainable products, and leaving a positive, lasting impact on the environment. Most of our scrap lite frame material is reused to make new lite frames, and leftover material cut out of the door for glass inserts is reused as insulation for barns, animal shelters, utility buildings and more.”

SUPPLY CHAIN SUCCESS

It’s one thing to know what doors and windows customers want, it’s another to be able to provide them in a timely fashion, and supply chain issues have wreaked havoc on product availability since the global pandemic began. According to the White House in July of 2021, roughly 60% of the construction segment reported significant supplier delays. Sadly, some of those problems continue to linger, and LBM dealers need to be prepared to deal with them.

“LBM dealers have been experiencing challenges with labor and their supply chain, and I expect that to continue in the near future,” says ODL’s Eige. “Keeping adequate inventory while not tying up too much money in stock will continue to be a challenge. LBM dealers who more accurately forecast their business will have a competitive advantage in this new environment.”

MITER Brands’ Anthony Matter also shares a similar opinion. “Supply chain challenges and product availability are not as prevalent as they were during the height of the pandemic, but issues still exist for some parts and pieces,” Matter points out. “These challenges are most

RIGHT: Opening up to 17’ feet wide and available in heights up to 8’, MI Window & Doors V3000 Series 1618 multi-slide patio door is available with numerous aesthetic options, including decorative hardware and multiple interior and exterior color choices.



FAR RIGHT: According to Blink Blinds + Glass by ODL, its Blink 7/8" Custom is the only blinds-between-glass product available in a 7/8" IG platform for windows and sliding patio doors.



common among smaller, regionally focused manufacturers who don't have the same level of resources that larger manufacturers have."

Some experts, however, see a bright spot, pointing out how those supply chain pitfalls actually led to manufacturing improvements. "I believe whatever challenges dealers may face in the near future are manageable compared to those in the past few years," ProVia's Wengerd says. "The pandemic and economic consequences gave manufacturers and dealers an opportunity to create a new normal in terms of dealing with product and supply chain issues and lead times. Those challenges gave us all an opportunity to become better at what we were doing."

It's a business model that stresses being resilient and able to adapt to changing conditions, a philosophy that door and window manufacturers suggest LBM dealers use for success. "What

you improvised during those challenging times, the solutions you found and the resiliency you developed, should be integrated into your process," Wengerd recommends. "We couldn't have predicted the business disruptions and repercussions that the pandemic created. Forecasting and planning ahead for unknown adversities must be implemented into your business plan."

Developing that resiliency comes in part from closely analyzing how you're merchandising your product offerings, say manufacturers. "I recommend taking time quarterly to walk through their own doors (both physically and digitally) to examine the signage, showroom, and resources made available to their customer base," suggests ODL's Eige. "Do your assets impart the look and feel you want to attract the customers you need? Keeping things fresh and offering new innovations and resources will trigger your builders to

look to you as an industry leader who helps them stand out and succeed."

As well, door and window manufacturers recommend LBM dealers build strong, open lines of communication with suppliers and manufacturers to help maintain that resiliency. "LBM dealers should maintain steady contact with their window and door suppliers to ensure there are no surprises," says MITER Brands' Matter. "The better-prepared manufacturers are for changes or spikes in demand, the less likely supply chain challenges will arise."

FEED THE BRAIN

That aforementioned needed preparation comes in part, say manufacturers, from taking advantage of product knowledge programs they offer, and successful LBM dealers will avail themselves of as much product knowledge as possible in order to be the best resource for their customers. ▶



Storage Systems for LBM Dealers

- The Auto-Stak System
- Cantilever Rack Systems
- Metal Buildings
- Drive-Thru Systems
- Millwork Storage Systems
- Pallet Rack Systems
- A-Frame Systems



Cantilever Drive-Thru System



Bulk Shed



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For example, Therma-Tru's Virtual Experience is an interactive online portal that allows trade professionals to experience the latest on-trend Therma-Tru products in an immersive virtual environment. The Virtual Experience coordinates with the company's Keys 2 Success program, which helps trade professionals stay updated on their knowledge of Therma-Tru's new and existing products while earning entries to win prizes for their participation.

ODL has developed training modules called Blink University for its Blink Blinds + Glass product. These videos, which can be found on YouTube, tackle the most common questions while helping dealers become better sales representatives for ODL's products.

For Masonite, it is presenting a series of webinars and on-demand online training to educate its dealers about Masonite products and solutions. "Most recently, we held a series of three ses-

sions on the Masonite Performance Door System, its features and benefits, and how to market it to builders and consumers," Renaud explains. "Future sessions will focus on Masonite M-Pwr Smart Doors and the evolution of smart home technology."

ProVia is expanding its Installer Certification Program by increasing the number of training sessions and broadening the scope of training. "We continue to create more short instructional videos for training and on the jobsite," says Wengerd. "We've also implemented using QR codes on our packaging boxes; installers can scan the code and link to a PDF with instructions."

And while not a training program per se, MITER Brands recently added a training and event manager to its marketing team whose primary role is to develop and execute training programs. "Over the next several months and years, we plan to build out a com-

prehensive training curriculum that will be delivered in-person, online, and on-demand," adds Matter.

While nothing is a given, when taken as a whole, insights from door and window manufacturers seem to suggest a positive—if somewhat cautious—optimism. Improvements in the supply chain, coupled with a potential uptick in new housing starts as the year progresses, all spell potential wins for LBM dealers who take the time to innovate and educate while seeking new ways to do business. "We know what normal used to look like; now we need to take what we've learned and create a new normal," stresses ProVia's Wengerd. "We can't go back to the pre-pandemic way of doing business, expecting to just coast. When life is smooth, you don't plan, you just live, and that can be a dangerous way to function in business." ■

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Grabber Construction Products SuperDrive Mach1 Collated Fastener

According to Grabber Construction Products, its new SuperDrive Mach1 is the first collated system explicitly designed to meet the demands of onsite and offsite light-gauge steel frame construction and is ideal for metal framing professionals looking to enhance productivity, improve installer safety, reduce material waste, and improve fastener precision. It attaches to a Makita or DEWALT impact driver and includes features such as a no-slip tip, reversible feed track (for right- or left-handed workers), SureLock fine depth adjustment, quick removal strap, as well as a compact design that includes pass-through spaces for the impact driver's LED lights. The new tool is compatible with Grabber's SuperDrive 7/16" to 7/8" collated screws. grabberpro.com



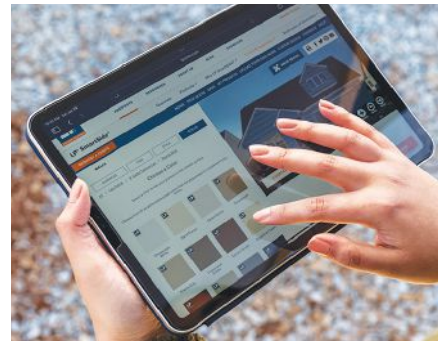
Westlake Royal Reversible Beaded Planks

New for 2023, Westlake Royal Building Products' 8" Reversible Beaded Plank is suitable for both interior and exterior applications. With one surface created in a traditional "Nantucket" style bead board and the other in a classic v-groove, the planks feature a full PVC skin to eliminate any milled surfaces, a hidden nailing hem for seamless installation, and 26% more area than traditional 6" bead board that the manufacturer says results in faster installation. The 1/2"-thick boards come in 16' and 18' lengths and are available in small pack sizes and bulk units. westlakeroyalbuildingproducts.com



LP SmartSide Home Visualizer

LP SmartSide Home Visualizer is a free online tool LP Building Solutions has developed to enable consumers and professionals to easily compare different siding ideas in real time on an actual home. Users can upload a photo of their house (or use one of the various already-created home types) and toggle between different styles and colors of siding to determine their favorite. The online tool features 16 LP SmartSide prefinished siding colors as well as a variety of widths, textures, and engineered wood siding styles. Once the siding has been chosen, users may move on to trim, fascia, roofing, doors and more, following the same basic method of choosing a new look. Or for a small fee, users can enlist the help of a designer to assist with customization. lpcorp.com



CAMO Joist + Ledger Tape

Made in the USA, National Nail's CAMO brand's Joist + Ledger Tape is a self-adhesive butyl tape that creates a waterproof membrane to protect wood deck framing against moisture and potential rot. When applied to the top of joists and ledger board, between joist hangers and ledger board, between rim joists and fascia, and between framing and joist hangers, the tape self-seals around fasteners, blocking the pathway of water into wood. Backed by a 20-year limited warranty, one 65' roll of CAMO Joist + Ledger Deck Tape covers approximately 75 square feet of deck framing and is available in three sizes: 1-5/8" width for single joists to fully cover tops of 2x wood joists; 3-1/8" width for use with double joists; and 6" width for ledger and rim joists. camofasteners.com



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ABOUT RICK

RICK DAVIS, CSP, CDT - is a sought-after speaker, trainer, sales consultant, and the president of Building Leaders, Inc. He is also a world class magazine columnist who has been awarded gold and silver medals from the American Society of Business Publishing Editors.

"The best online training I've ever seen and I've seen them all."

Jeff Hills __ Director of Online Training, Preston Feather

"It was like a Netflix binge for me. I got so into it, I just couldn't stop watching."

Geric Potts __ Manager, Jarco Supply

"There is no question this works. The training is really good."

Robert Hughes __ President, Hughes Lumber



RICK DAVIS
CSP, CDT



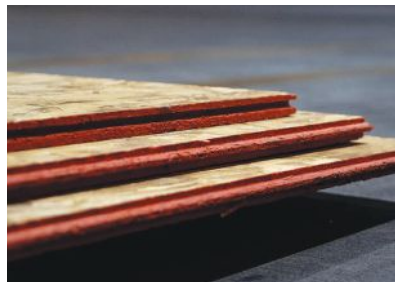
DEWALT 20V MAX Brushless 1/2" Hammer Drill

New from DEWALT, the DCD798 20V MAX Brushless 1/2" Hammer Drill measures a mere 6.93" in length and features an integrated hammer mode function. According to the manufacturer, this new hammer drill quickly drills into materials including wood, masonry, and metal, with up to 28,050 bpm in hammer mode for masonry drilling. It produces 404 unit watts of power with up to 1,650 RPM (no-load) and features an on-tool LED, a two-speed transmission, a variable speed trigger, and a 1/2-in. metal ratcheting chuck. The 20V MAX Brushless 1/2" Hammer Drill is available as a bare tool or with DEWALT's DCB203 battery and charger. dewalt.com



RoyOMartin TuffTier OSB Sub-Flooring

TuffTier OSB Sub-Flooring from RoyOMartin is designed for applications requiring a structural subfloor, ideally suited for flooring in both residential and commercial construction. According to the manufacturer, the sub-flooring panels deliver exceptional strength and rigidity for quiet durability, and self-spacing tongue-and-groove design is reported to deliver easier and more efficient installation. Available sanded or unsanded, the panels are manufactured from wood sustainably sourced through FSC certified timberlands. royomartin.com



KEEN Utility Fort Wayne Boot

Featuring a wrap-over rubber cap, the new Fort Wayne Boot from KEEN Utility offers flexibility, protection, and traction. Created as a reinterpretation of the classic moc toe wedge work boot, the Fort Wayne features a direct-attached Luftcell air-infused PU midsole for weightless comfort, a Barnyard Resistant leather upper, and KEEN.DRY waterproof, breathable membrane. Other safety enhancements include asymmetrical carbon-fiber safety toes that the manufacturer says is 15% lighter than steel as well as a lugged, EH-rated oil- and slip-resistant rubber outsole. keenfootwear.com



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Grip-Rite Flat Head Structural Screws

New from Grip-Rite, its Flat Head Structural Screws are designed as replacements for lag screws and can be used for decks, fences, pergolas, and other exterior projects, and are approved for treated lumber in exterior wood structural applications. They feature a Type 17 point and coarse threads that the manufacturer says allow for easy, quick penetration into wood with no pre-drilling required.

grip-rite.com





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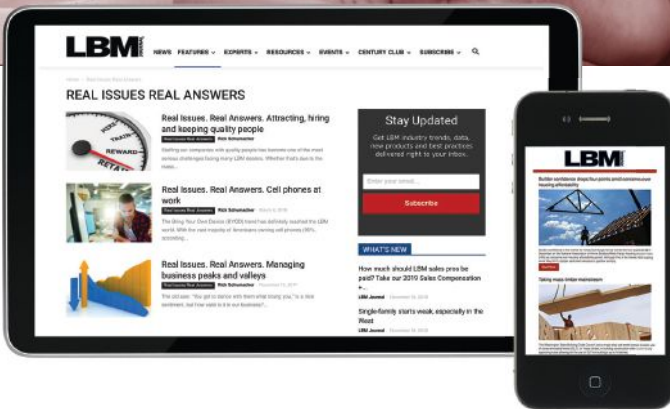
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Note: last-minute changes will affect the accuracy of this listing.

IBC=inside back cover, IFC=inside front cover, OBC=outside back cover, BB=belly band, INS=insert, PB=polybagged, WP=white paper.



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HAVING WORKED in the LBM business since high school, you've learned the value of customer relationships built over time. Unlike many businesses that are one-time only transactions, you get to know your customers, and the trust that develops forms the foundation for future business. Once that trust is broken, it can be tough to piece back together. Which is where you find yourself today. Here's the story...

Two years ago, you accepted a job offer to manage an established lumberyard in a market of just under 100,000 residents. It was your chance to put to work all that you've learned and see what you could accomplish.

You knew this location was under relatively new ownership. But what you didn't know was that the manager you replaced managed to irritate, alienate, and effectively shatter the trust the company had established with its customers (and some of its vendors as well).

As a result, many formerly loyal, longtime customers started buying their materials—and building relationships—at other lumberyards. While many LBM dealers spent 2022 setting new revenue records, you spent last year wrestling with ways to get customers back. You made some progress, primarily because you had plenty of material while your competitors were scrambling to refresh their inventories.

You'll never forget the conversation you had with Alan, a prominent custom builder, when he came to re-establish an account to buy only those products he could get nowhere else. "I'm only here because my regular supplier is sold out of some key materials, and doesn't know when he'll get 'em back in stock. The last time I bought from your company, I was seriously overcharged, and when the deliveries finally showed up (they were always hours or days later than promised), the materials were either wrong, or damaged, or both.

Your company cost me a lot of money, and when I asked them to make it right, they just kept putting me off until I swore I'd never return."

While you don't blame these former customers for their decision to leave, you can't seem to get them to realize things are different now. You've seen the financials, and you understand why the owners are pressuring you to turn things around so that they don't have to close the doors. What would you do to re-earn the trust of your local building community?

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- **LOWER YOUR PRICES.** If there's one thing that gets people's attention, it's the opportunity to save a buck. Slash prices on some key items, and once they're in the door, win them over.
- **INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS.** Reach out to your former best customers individually and ask for a meeting. Your goal is not to sell, but to listen and learn, and begin the slow process of re-earning their trust.
- **"WHAT WILL IT TAKE?"** There's a reason that question works. It can make people truly stop and think about what it would take to get them to give you another chance. Give it a try.
- **TAKE IT BACK.** Study your market and identify an unmet opportunity; then, innovate with your team and your vendors to outperform your competition, and make builders want to work with you.

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.



LBM CENTURY CLUB HONORS 100-YEAR-OLD BUSINESSES

The LBM Century Club was founded on the simple belief that companies that have been around for 100 years deserve to be recognized. Launched in 2016, the LBM Century Club has grown to 171 members, with more coming in each month. In all, the companies have provided 21,501 years of combined service to their communities.

By no means does the LBM Journal's Century Club list include every 100-year-old company... at least not yet. That's where you come in. Do you work for, or know of a lumberyard or building materials retailer that is 100 or more years old? Send them our way, so that we can give them the recognition they deserve. Century Club members receive a certificate for their store, window decals for their front doors, free admission to the LBM Strategies Conference where they are guests of honor at a Century Club induction ceremony, as well as recognition in their local media, all free of charge. Nomination is easy! Just visit LBMJournal.com/nominate and answer a few questions. We'll take it from there. For a complete listing of LBM Century Club members, visit lbmjournal.com/lbm-century-club.

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PARKES LUMBER CO. Lawrenceburg, TN	est. 1896	INTERSTATE + LAKELAND LUMBER Greenwich, CT	est. 1922
GRIFFITH LUMBER COMPANY Manhattan, KS	est. 1911	BADGER LUMBER COMPANY Parkersburg, WV	est. 1922

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