

# LBM JOURNAL<sup>®</sup>

STRATEGIES FOR LUMBER/BUILDING MATERIAL DISTRIBUTION PROS

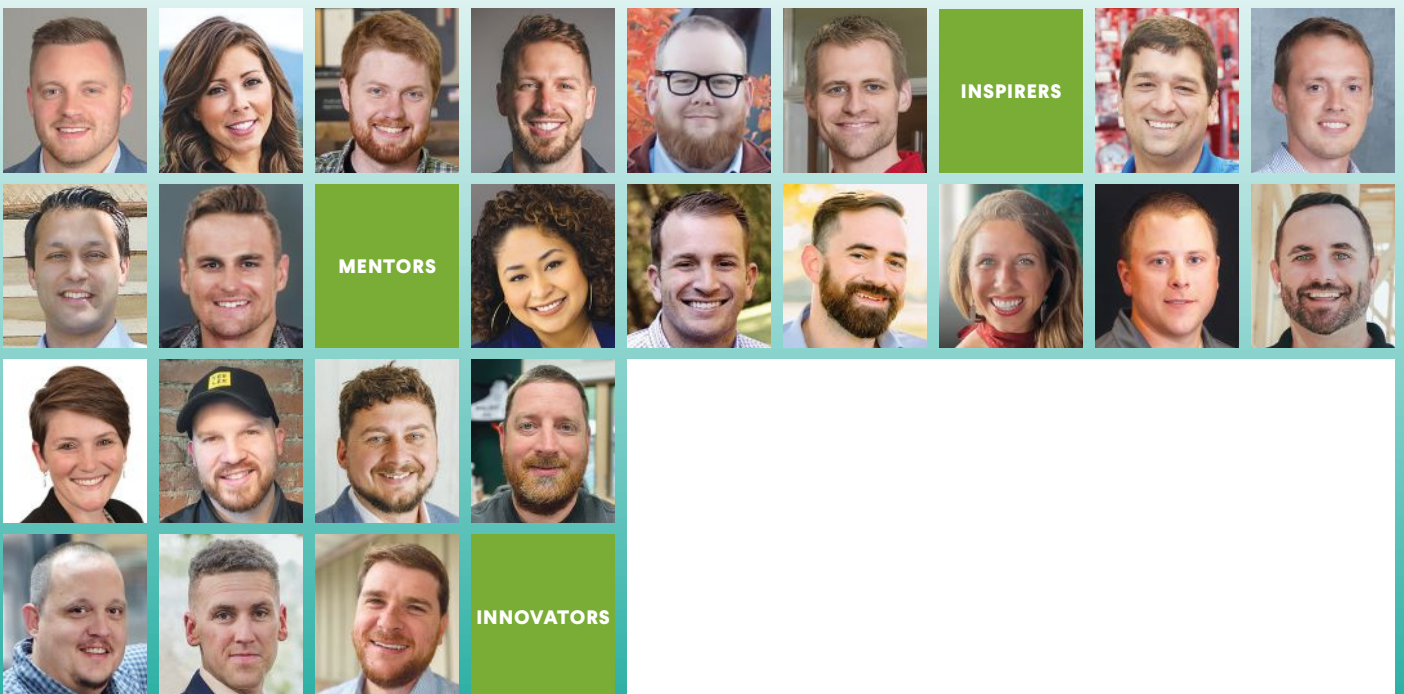
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JUNE 2023 \$15 U.S.



# 40 UNDER 40

CELEBRATING THE GROWING CLASS OF YOUNG LEADERS IN THE LBM COMMUNITY



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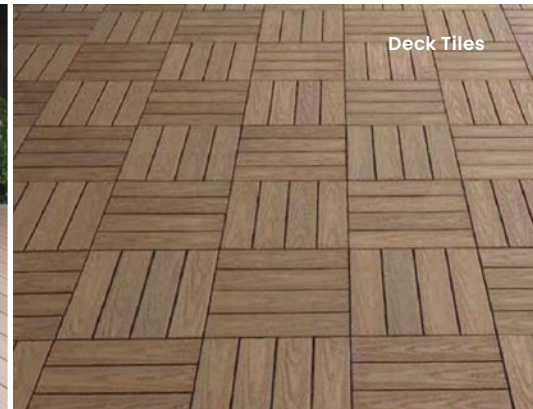
Something else we pride ourselves on is providing you with a complete package. This means we have fascia and caps. It means that we're here to help if you ask us how to finish a certain cut end or this corner over here. A complete package to us means not abandoning you like the other guys, but instead making sure you won't have to waste time contacting another company or researching how to finish a job.



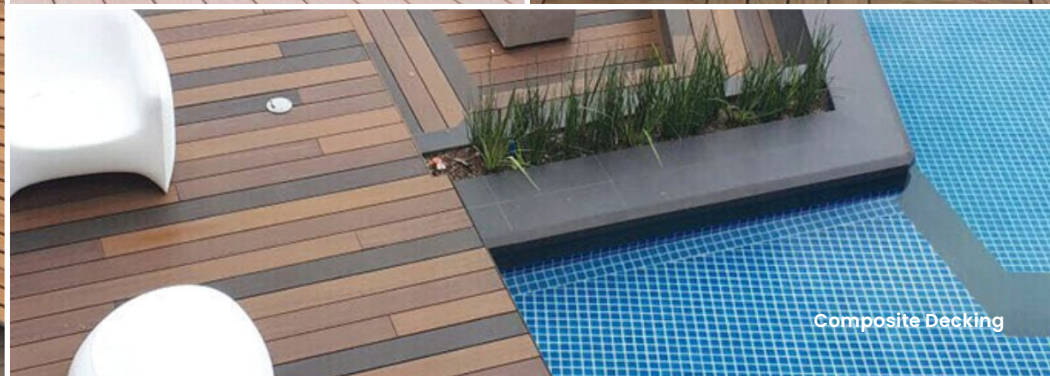
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# INSIDE

- 4 FROM THE PUBLISHER**  
The generational challenge  
BY RICK SCHUMACHER
- 6 THE BUZZ**  
Industry updates, news, and events. Plus, the latest from lumberyards across the country, and responses to our April issue Tough Call survey.
- 12 SALES & OPERATIONS**  
Salespeople—don't overlook the power of networking  
BY BILL LEE
- 14 BUILDING SALES**  
Locate, locate, locate  
BY RICK DAVIS
- 16 BUILDING CULTURE**  
Six organizational changes to make your culture your competitive edge  
BY DENA CORDOVA-JACK
- 18 LEADERSHIP**  
Your first loss is your best loss  
BY RUSS KATHREIN
- 20 CREDIT Q & A**  
Getting creative with the credit application  
BY THEA DUDLEY
- 22 MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS**  
Don't fear high lumber prices  
BY JOHN WAGNER

**64 TRAINING NOT INCLUDED**  
Though the LBM industry is hungry for young talent, a company's lack of formal training and a "sink or swim" attitude has a new employee questioning his decision to go to work for the local lumberyard.



PRESENTING THE 2023 LBM 40 UNDER 40 INDUCTEES. CELEBRATING THE GROWING CLASS OF YOUNG LEADERS IN THE LBM COMMUNITY.

**34**

- 26 REAL ISSUES. REAL ANSWERS. THE TECHNOLOGY-FREE LUMBERYARD**  
BY LBM JOURNAL READERS
- 50 IN DEPTH TECHNOLOGY**  
In an environment filled with disruption, technology helps ease the pain.  
BY MIKE BERGER

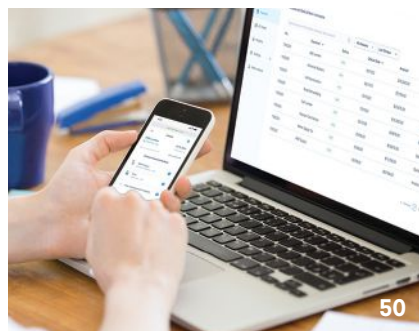


**58**

**58 PRODUCTS**



**26**

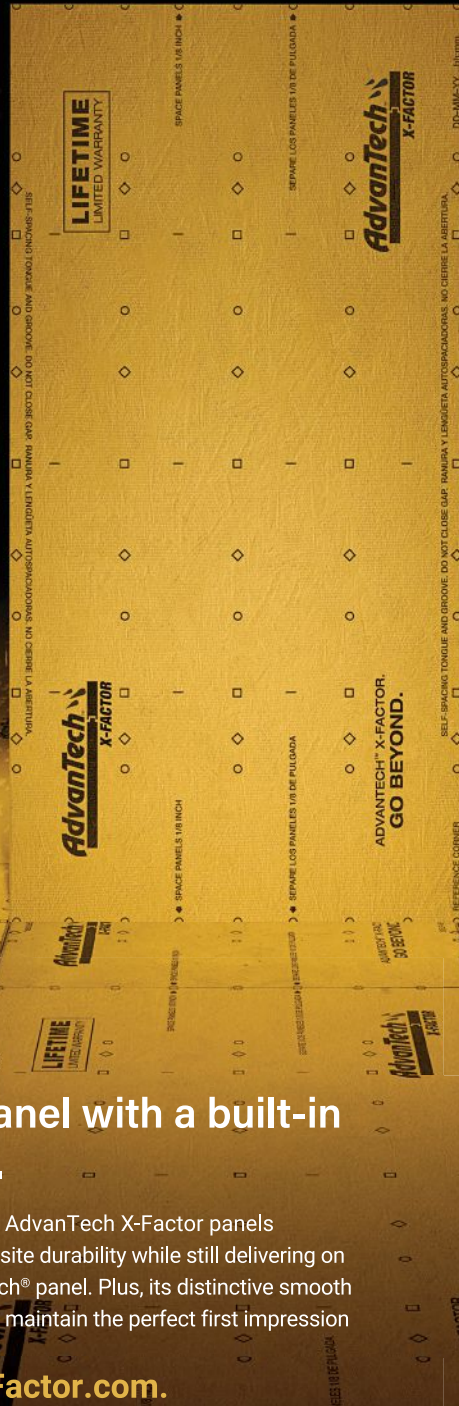


**50**

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Leading Suppliers Council



# The generational challenge

**AS THE MEDIA COMPANY** serving the largest audience of LBM pros, we cover a lot of ground including product trends, insights from successful dealers and thought-leaders, industry news, and much more. That strong connection with more than 40,000 industry pros means that, working together, we can have a tremendous impact on our LBM community.

Every month, hundreds of readers share the business challenges they're wrestling with via our Real Issues survey. Every month, one topic leads the pack, with concerns like these:

- "Finding young sales talent who want to join this industry. Who is succeeding on this and what are they doing to attract the people?"
- "Finding young talent to train to take over current management positions. Most young people don't want to wait; they want the big money and titles now, and don't want to learn and earn!"
- "How do we get younger, more motivated leaders in our company more involved with senior leadership, so we don't lose them before the opportunity they're looking for opens up?"



Rick@LBMJournal.com

There's no doubt our industry has a chronic challenge with attracting and retaining young talent. That challenge is exacerbated by the aging of our workforce, and with it the decades of practical, tactical knowledge that vanish into the ether each time an experienced pro retires. With each departure, the LBM community loses something. So what do we do when faced with a generational challenge? As Bradley Hartmann reminds us, "Control what we can control." Here's what we suggest:

First, recognize and celebrate the strong young leaders in our midst. While there aren't as many as any of us would like, they're here, and it's our job to nurture and learn from them. That's what the LBM 40 Under 40 is all about. The inaugural class is pictured on the cover, and there's info about each one beginning on page 34. The good news is that there were far more than 40 well-qualified nominees, and this year is just the beginning. Watch for more info about our inductees and, if you have young leaders at your company, celebrate them!

Second, learn from people and companies who are addressing this issue head-on and are making a difference. People like Doug Ford and Pam Stott of Ballston Spa, New York-based Curtis Lumber, who are successfully recruiting the next generation of builders, remodelers, and LBM pros. Rick Davis featured them on his LBM Sales Podcast last November, and Doug will be sharing this story via video at the LBM Strategies Conference this fall.

Third, make sure to share what we know with others in the LBM Community. I'm convinced that there's no challenge we can't overcome. The only way we know about Curtis Lumber's efforts is because they reached out. If you have insights to share, contact me. The more determinedly we work together, the more headway we'll make on this generational challenge.

— Rick Schumacher  
Executive Editor & Publisher



Go from constantly wasting money on dead stock to freeing up \$100,000 in tied-up, unsold inventory.

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costs annually

**\$100,000**  
savings in  
inventory



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## UPDATES

### PEOPLE

**Altenloh, Brinck & Co.** announced the appointment of **Derek Fielding** as the new vice president of strategic marketing. Additionally, as part of a new strategic focus for **SPAX**, **Eric Ashack** has been promoted to the position of vice president of sales.

**Tando Composites** announced the promotion of **Chris Powanda** to director of business development, builders and commercial projects.

**Building Industry Partners** has added **Paul Dodge** as operating partner. Dodge will serve as a director for West Coast Lumber.

### BUYING GROUPS & CO-OPS

**Allison Meyer** has been named director of communications at **Do it Best**. Former director of communications, **Randy Rusk**, is now community affairs manager.

**LMC** has named **Jonathyn Truax** to the Great Lakes regional manager role.

**LMC's Rachel Hoops** has joined the board at **Structural Building Components Association**.

Select **LMC** dealers completed the Kellogg School of Management Leadership Excellence Masterclass.

**LBM Advantage** held its fourth NextGen Leadership Conference at the Omni Hotel, Charlotte, North Carolina from April 30 through May 3. Attendees were next generation owners and future leaders from LBM Advantage members.



DEREK FIELDING



ERIC ASHACK



CHRIS POWANDA



PAUL DODGE



ALLISON MEYER



RANDY RUSK



JONATHYN TRUAX



RACHEL HOOPS

### MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

**LP Building Solutions** is acquiring **Forex's** Wawa, Ontario OSB facility.

### ASSOCIATIONS

The **Lumbermen's Association of Texas** announced that **Meagan McCoy Jones**, president and CEO at **McCoy's Building Supply** and co-chair of LAT's Legislative Committee, is its 2023 Texas Unity Dinner honoree.

The **National Association of Home Builders** has named **James W. Tobin III** as the association's new president and CEO.

### INDUSTRY

**Pennsylvania Lumbermen's Mutual Insurance Company** raised more than \$140,000 for **St. Baldrick's Foundation** when 17 PLM team members shaved their head to raise funds.

**LP Building Solutions** has partnered with **Outland Youth Employment Program** to introduce Indigenous youth to careers in natural resource industries.

**Westlake Royal Building Products** sponsored **NAHB's** National Home Remodeling Month in May.

**MFM Building Products** received the 2023 **Eastern Ohio Development Alliance** Small Manufacturer Excellence Award.

**Koppers Performance Chemicals** has joined the **Tennessee Green Star Partnership**.

### DISTRIBUTION

**Four Corners of South Carolina** will distribute **Black Label** lumber.

**Master Halco** has expanded **Envision Outdoor Living Products** distribution in Southern California.

A new partnership between **Allura** and **BlueLinx** will bring distribution into several Midwest markets.

**Wolf Home Products** has brought **Key-link Fencing & Railing** to the Midwest.

**Metrie** has expanded California distribution with acquisition of **Anderco**.

**Associated Materials** recently opened three new **Alside** supply centers throughout the country.

**Manufacturer's Reserve Supply (MRS)** and **Henry** announced a distribution partnership for weatherization products.

**Mid-States Wholesale Lumber**, a subsidiary of **Snavely Forest Products**, is expanding its product selection to include **TYPAR** into select Mid-States markets.

Send news and updates about your organization to [Rick@LBMJournal.com](mailto:Rick@LBMJournal.com)

### HOME PRICE GROWTH SLOWEST SINCE 2012

According to CoreLogic, U.S. home price growth fell to 3.1% in March, the lowest rate of appreciation since the spring of 2012. While home price growth rose for the 134th consecutive month, it declined from one year earlier in 10 states, mostly those in the West, which partially reflects the region's lack of affordability and continued inventory shortages. Also, demand for higher-priced homes is slowing compared with median-priced homes, thus pulling appreciation down in that region at a faster pace.

Some potential homebuyers remain hesitant due to inflation; slowing job gains and wage growth; a potential recession; and interest rates that are still elevated above a mortgage rate of 5.5% that would likely attract more buyers to the market. As a result of these conditions, CoreLogic projects that U.S. annual home price growth will continue to decline over the spring and early summer before picking back up later in 2023.

## REMODELING MARKET SPENDING EXPECTED TO DECLINE THIS YEAR

After more than a decade of continuous growth, annual spending on improvements and repairs to owner-occupied homes is expected to decline by early next year, according to the Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity (LIRA) released by the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. The LIRA projects that year-over-year expenditures for homeowner improvements and maintenance will post a modest decline of 2.8% through the first quarter of 2024.

“Higher interest rates and sharp downturns in homebuilding and existing home sales are driving our projections for sluggish remodeling activity next year,” says Carlos Martín, project director of the Remodeling Futures Program at the Center. “With ongoing uncertainty in financial markets and the threat of a recession, homeowners are increasingly likely to pare back or delay projects beyond necessary replacements and repairs.”

“Homeowner improvement and maintenance spending is expected to top out at \$458 billion in the coming year, compared with market spending of \$471 billion over the past four quarters,” says Abbe Will, associate project director of the Remodeling Futures Program. “However, strong and steady growth in the number of homes permitted for remodeling projects, as well as a slew of federal incentives for energy-efficiency retrofits may yet buoy remodeling expenditure from steeper declines.”

## TOUGH CALL ANSWERS

### LBM JOURNAL'S APRIL ISSUE SURVEY

## IT'S TIME TO SELL. NOW WHAT?

Looking back at a long career in the lumber business, you've decided it's time to put the company up for sale. But what option should you choose? Here's how readers would handle this tough call.



### SURVEY RESULTS FROM LBMJOURNAL.COM

#### 18.9%

**KEEP IT LOCAL.** Sell to the longtime competitor. You may not get as much as you'd like, but you trust that they'll take care of your team and your customers.

#### 32.8%

**FOLLOW THE MONEY.** Choose the option that will deliver the biggest payday, while working to ensure that your team and your customers are taken care of. Then go enjoy your retirement!

#### 23.7%

**EMPLOYEE OPTION.** The core group of employees who have been with you the longest know the business best and deserve to profit from it long after you're gone.

#### 24.6%

**NOT SO FAST.** Your health is good, you still love coming to work, you have money in the bank, so what's the rush? Agree to let your financial planner explore options, but don't sell until you're ready.

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO VOTED ON THE APRIL SURVEY. SEE PAGE 64 FOR THE JUNE TOUGH CALL: "TRAINING NOT INCLUDED".

## EVENTS

### AUG 1-3 | 2023

ORGILL FALL BUYING EVENT  
Dallas, TX | Orgill.com

### SEP 8-11 | 2023

DO IT BEST FALL MARKET  
Indianapolis, IN | doitbestonline.com

### SEP 12-13 | 2023

LBM ADVANTAGE ANNUAL MANAGER  
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE  
Montgomery, NY | lbmadvantage.com

### SEP 19-22 | 2023

LMC LEADERSHIP SUMMIT  
Columbus, OH | lmc.net

### OCT 11-13 | 2023

LBM STRATEGIES 2023  
Charlotte, NC | lbmstrategies.com

### OCT 23-25 | 2023

LBM ADVANTAGE FALL PLANNING  
CONFERENCE  
Boston, MA | lbmadvantage.com

### NOV 6-8 | 2023

LMC EXPO  
Philadelphia, PA | lmc.net

### FEB 27-29 | 2024

INTERNATIONAL BUILDERS' SHOW  
Las Vegas, NV | buildersshow.com

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

BY THE YARD

**Davis-Hawn celebrates 100th anniversary**

The family-owned company celebrated with over 200 valued customers, vendors, and friends at a Cinco de Mayo themed lunch.

**TAL Holdings acquires Ennis Lumber Company and Beaverhead Home Center**

With this acquisition, TAL's footprint will expand to a total of 32 locations across Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, further cementing its commitment to the Pacific Northwest region.

**US LBM names new chief information officer**

Andrew Campbell brings 30 years of experience to US LBM, and as CIO is responsible for all aspects of US LBM's technology platform and systems, including internal- and external-facing applications, cyber security, and data management and analysis.

**US LBM names its 2023 Humanitarian Award winner**

US LBM has named Freda Jones, market finance manager, as its 2023 Humanitarian Award Recipient for her outstanding community involvement and charitable work. As part of this recognition, the US LBM Foundation has awarded a \$10,000 grant to Special Equestrians on behalf of Jones.

**Bliffert Lumber & Hardware brings on Chase Lumber**

The two fifth-generation Wisconsin companies have a combined 244 years of experience in the building industry.

**Gillman celebrates grand opening of 15th location**

Batesville, Indiana-based Gillman Home Centers operates 15 locations throughout Ohio and Indiana, and is ranked #66 on LBM Journal's 2023 LBM 100 list of top dealers.

NEWS FROM LUMBERYARDS AROUND THE COUNTRY

**Kodiak Building Partners celebrates 2023 class of Emerging Leaders**

The Kodiak 2023 Emerging Leaders include participants who were nominated and selected by various leaders throughout the Kodiak organization to participate in the program because of their ongoing dedication to their company and leadership potential talents.

**New leadership for Your Building Centers**

Central Pennsylvania-based Your Building Centers (YBC) announced that Tim Leupold, has been promoted to president and CEO. Leupold has been acting president and CEO since the passing of Rich Lender, YBC's previous president and CEO in October 2022.

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.

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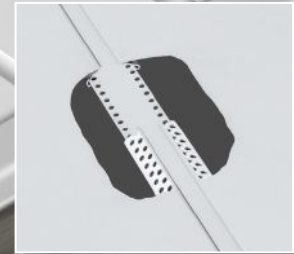
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# LBM STRATEGIES

## 2023 CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 11-13 • HILTON CHARLOTTE UPTOWN

Ready to outperform the competition? Join other LBM industry leaders from across the U.S. to learn, share and network, then get back to work armed with fresh ideas and actionable insights to grow your sales, your business and your brand. Breakfasts, lunches, networking breaks and cocktail receptions—all included with your registration—offer an ideal opportunity to connect with old friends and make new ones.



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### 2023 SPEAKERS



**DENA CORDOVA-JACK**  
V P of Organizational  
Development  
Misura Group



**DAVE DAVIS**  
President & CEO  
Spahn & Rose Lumber Co.



**RICK DAVIS**  
Founder and Principal  
Building Leaders, Inc.



**THEA DUDLEY**  
Credit Overlord &  
Cashflow Specialist  
Pocket Protectors LLC



**DOUG FORD**  
VP Sales & Purchasing  
Curtis Lumber Co.



**BRADLEY HARTMANN**  
CEO | Hartmann & Co.



**RAY HAYLES**  
Co-Owner  
Walker Lumber & Supply



**SCOTT McMILLAN**  
Co-Owner  
Walker Lumber & Supply



**CASSIE MILAM**  
Marketing Director  
The Detering Company



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



**RICK SCHUMACHER**  
Executive Editor &  
Publisher | LBM Journal



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



**JOHN D. WAGNER**  
Managing Director  
1st West M&A

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#### SPONSORS



# Salespeople—don't overlook the power of networking

BY BILL LEE

**WHEN I FOUNDED** Lee Resources, Inc., one of the most productive activities we organized were roundtables made up of non-competing building supply owners and managers. The roundtable members would come to meetings we organized prepared to discuss their measurable performance in a number of key areas.

The key to this exercise was that while each company was successful in its own market, each executive was eager to compare his or her measurable results to learn how they stacked up against each other's performance.

All kinds of ideas developed from each roundtable as each dealer announced their level of performance in each measurable category. Gross margin, average collection days, inventory turnover, inventory shrinkage, and returned merchandise as a percentage of sales were just a few of the measurable results that were discussed.

The numbers were important, but the way they achieved the performance levels was what the individual dealers were most interested in learning.

A big part of my business at Lee Resources has always been presenting training programs for my client base. I joined an organization called the National Speakers Association (NSA). Even before becoming a member of NSA, I began to identify the members whom I perceived to be the most successful at sales training. Eventually, several of those speakers and I got together and formed a sub-group we called Master Speakers International (MSI). We met quarterly to discuss the problems in our respective businesses and what we had done to solve them.

There were no secrets between us because none of us competed with each other. We were all totally open in sharing both our problems and our successes.

What I learned from networking with these successful sales trainers was the single most

important activity I did to set myself apart from my competitors.

As you attend industry functions, I strongly encourage you to meet as many non-competing salespeople as you can who sell the kinds of products you sell to the kinds of customers and prospects you also sell to. Swap business cards and make good notes about your impressions of each salesperson you meet. The key, again, is that these salespeople are not competitors. They work in different markets, so each of you can feel comfortable openly discussing the confidential kinds of issues virtually all building material salespeople encounter.

We had seven members of MSI who stayed in the group for the long haul, just short of 20 years. We used each other to bounce ideas off of, to brainstorm solutions to common problems we were facing, and to discuss how to turn prospects into customers, how to overcome objections, how to deal with pricing objections, how to upgrade sales to higher quality and higher profit levels, etc.

If one of the members of our group was facing a really big opportunity to sell a big job, we might schedule a special telephone meeting so we could all provide our input for how he or she might best present the case that their company was in the best position to provide the training.

Outsiders, people who know what you are going through but who don't have emotions involved, can be worth their weight in gold to enable the salesperson who has, say, a multi-million dollar job on the line, to take a more objective approach to the sales presentation.

When the members of MSI began to retire, we had one final meeting. It was 100% social, but to a person, we all agreed that MSI had been the single most influential factor on the success of our respective businesses.

Networking is a powerful and important learning and marketing tool! ■



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

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| FRUITLAND, MD      | COLERIDGE, NC      |
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# Locate, locate, locate

BY RICK DAVIS

**THE THREE LAWS** of real estate are well known—location, location, location. I argue that the three laws of selling are locate, locate, locate.

Chances are you live in a market in which your share of the market is miniscule. I'm talking about you as a salesperson, not your branch or the larger company you work for. I'm talking to you. Even if you're a big player chances are you're only getting 10% of the market share, leaving 90% of the remaining slice of pie on the table.

This means the world of opportunity is huge. Therefore, rather than stress over the negative responses you get from many prospects, focus instead on the easy, low-hanging fruit available to you today and tomorrow. The key to success is simply to shake hands and locate the easy sales in your territory.

Success begins by clearly defining the target audience you seek. This means prospecting, which literally is defined as sifting for nuggets of gold. In sales, it means sifting to find the right opportunities in your market by defining the characteristics of your perfect customer.

**Start with loyalty.** If you contact prospects who inform you of the close relationships they have with existing suppliers, count that as a trait you desire. Become the first choice they make when they need a new supplier and you will enjoy future loyalty from them.

**Seek fair margins.** Some buyers are constant shoppers who always are seeking the lowest price in the market. It is equally true that some buyers value the quality of service you can provide by recognizing that the long-term cost of doing business is infinitely more important than the short-term price. Seek buyers who traditionally pay fair margins.

**Recognize when the nuisance factor is not worth the margins.** Some contractors are simply too much hassle to deal with at the margins

they are willing to pay. I'm not suggesting that you avoid high-maintenance accounts altogether. Instead, evaluate the cost of doing business relative to the margins and ensure that the nuisance factor of a problem account is justified by the profits.

**Expect timely remittance.** Strangely in our industry, we seem to tolerate payment terms that wouldn't remotely be okay with a consumer. The best customers recognize that mutual benefit requires fair and timely payment of invoices. Proactively seek customers who manage their cashflow properly.

**The right volume is relative.** Young salespeople mistakenly swing for the fences by seeking that multi-million-dollar buyer who will make life easy. The problem is that large-volume accounts require a lot of work and, worse yet, present a danger to a salesperson when one account represents the majority book of business. Most veteran salespeople will tell you that a) it's better to hunt a lot of deer and rabbit than elephants and b) their biggest accounts are those that started small and grew with the salesperson.

**Seek buyers who buy the products you sell.** As ridiculous as the previous sentence seems, it's true that many salespeople are caught shopping for products they don't sell. A buyer tosses the young salesperson a bone by telling them he needs some closet parts for a special shelving design in a walk-in closet adjacent to a chlorine pool. The salesperson swings at the curveball in the dirt (I know! Second baseball reference in one article...but it *is* baseball season), and chases a bad opportunity. Find buyers who buy the products you sell.

Sales success is easier when you have a clear vision of your target audience. Only then can you fill your customer list with the right buyers who offer long-term profitability. ■



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](http://buildingleaders.com).



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# Six organizational changes to make your culture your competitive edge

BY DENA CORDOVA-JACK

**HIGH ON EVERY** business owner's wish list is creating a sustainable, competitive advantage. Leveraging your company culture as your unique value proposition to accomplish this is your company's best attribute that carries no risk of being cloned.

Developing a high-performing company culture, however, is no easy task in these days of a shrinking workforce, underemployment, and changing norms about what defines a workplace. According to a recent Gallup poll, just over 50% of employees define themselves as not engaged at work, and that 50% disengaged group spans all generations, not just the newest ones.

According to Jim Clifton, CEO of Gallup, Inc., six functional changes must be made within an organization to create a culture of constructive collaboration that attracts employees to the company and retains those employees for the long term.

**1. It's not just the paycheck, it's the purpose.** It is a fundamental human driver to have a purpose, and employees want to work for organizations that have a mission and purpose they identify with. Fair compensation is essential, but it is not the only driver employees consider.

**2. Job satisfaction is important. Professional development is even more critical.** Employees want to work for organizations that invest in them, help them develop their skill sets, and promote them accordingly. Career pathing is critical.

**3. Old leadership models are changing.** Command and control approaches are ineffective, especially with younger generations. Employees today want coaching leaders that take an interest in them personally and professionally and value them as people, not as a number that affects the bottom line.

**4. Give feedback.** Younger generations want constant, clear communication. Annual reviews are not inherently wrong, but it is far more effective to have ongoing conversations. Consistent one-to-one meetings are even better.

**5. Transition to a new strengths-based culture.** Recent research in organizational development has concluded that gaps in an individual don't necessarily turn into a strength. Spending time and resources to fill a gap is less effective than focusing on expanding an employee's natural strength.

**6. It is not just my job; it's my life.** Everyone wants an excellent job with stability and fair compensation. But in today's world, the line between our personal and professional lives is becoming increasingly blurred. Employees want to know if an organization will focus on them as a whole human—not just as an employee. They want to be valued and heard for their opinions and contributions. Employee resources for health and wellness are paramount; being part of something bigger and positively impacting the communities they live and work in is essential.

Building your competitive advantage on pricing, product, or processes may be a short-lived strategic approach. Customers' expectations of service and value are rapidly shifting. Workforces are dynamically changing. Markets are volatile, and given time and resources, your competitors can clone your processes and products, beat your pricing structures and poach your people.

It takes continuous, consistent effort to drive continuous growth and improvement while keeping a competitive edge. Intentionally building your culture as your competitive advantage will give your company a sustainable, unique strategy to beat whatever market volatility throws your way. ■



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](mailto:dcordovajack@misuragroup.com).

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# Your first loss is your best loss

BY RUSS KATHREIN

**IN THE COMMODITY** world, there are times you make a good buy (we like to brag about those) and times you make a bad buy (we like to forget about those). The problem with making a bad buy is that you have to figure out a way to get out of it. Some people will try to wait and hope the market will go up and turn the bad buy into a not-so-bad buy, or maybe even a good buy. But here's the thing—hope is never a good strategy. Anyone who has been in the business long enough will tell you to take your lumps and get rid of the product as soon as possible. I believe in this idea so much that I've elevated it with all of my people to "Rule #1: Your first loss is your best loss."

The interesting thing about Rule #1 is that it applies to a lot of other areas of business and life. Take a customer complaint for instance. When you have a problem with a customer, the longer it takes to respond to them, the angrier the customer gets. And when you do respond, the longer you take to resolve the issue, the greater the customer's expectations become. You are always better off dealing with a customer promptly and trying to resolve it quickly, because the pain only grows as time goes on.

Rule #1 also holds true with staff issues. If you have a challenge with someone who reports to you, it's always better to deal with it head on than to let it fester and get worse. Often, you'll find the act of addressing the issue did not turn out as bad as you thought it might, and if you are in the position of having to terminate an employee, the sooner you do it, the better for everyone. I can honestly say that, given all the times I've had to let someone go, I have never looked back and wished I'd waited longer to

pull the trigger. Quite the contrary; I've either found out more things that were unflattering to the employee that made me mad at myself for not pulling the trigger sooner, or I've had the employee actually express relief that the situation was ending, again leaving me wondering why I waited so long.

Another appropriate use of Rule #1 is in relationships, both professional and personal. When I got married I was given two pieces of advice: "Don't leave the toilet seat up," and "Never go to bed angry." The former is just good common sense that an up-until-recently single guy needs to absorb. The latter is just a variation of Rule #1. Talk out what is bothering you so it's resolved quickly and you both can sleep soundly. Same holds true with business relationships. You know they're on a good footing when you can discuss your differences with the other party and put them behind you.

People will ask me what other rules I have, and I share that I really only have one other called Rule #4. Why is it not called Rule #2? That's because I learned Rule #4 while working with some of the managers at 84 Lumber, and it was part of their list of unofficial rules for business. Rule #4 is "Better you than me," or in certain positive circumstances, "Better me than you." So when you come and tell me you have an unpleasant situation that you have to deal with, I will ask you what Rule #1 is. When you say, "I know, your first loss is your best loss," I will smile at your correct answer and because you know what you have to do. Then I will hold up my four fingers letting you know I sure am glad you are dealing with the problem rather than me. ■



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

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# Getting creative with the credit application

BY THEA DUDLEY

**Dear Thea,**  
**We received a credit application but when they signed the app they included a copyright emblem and “All Rights Reserved Without Prejudice” on all the signature lines. I emailed the applicant and asked for a clean signature on our application. They immediately asked me to provide a lawful reason why we were requesting changes. I have never seen this before and not even sure what they are trying to tell me with this. How do I respond?**

— **Baffled in rights**

Dear Baffled,  
 Sometimes there aren't any words and you have to laugh: a seemingly simple document, straightforward in its purpose, and along comes some creative genius who turns it into a Lifetime movie, complete with predictable plot and outcome.

Dude, seriously, I can't accept this. The reason? I don't have to. I am not required to. Private industries can make up their rules/requirements at will—like asking all applicants to put a heart shaped smiley face above all occurrences of the letter “i”. As long as you aren't violating any state or federal regulations, you're OK. Public companies have a few additional regulations, but to my knowledge, and the input of a few attorney buddies, they don't have to accept alterations either.

A simple “We accept no alterations to our credit application” will suffice. The real challenge is communicating with this character. The cleanest and shortest path to resolution is to email said sender that, while you appreciate the opportunity to do business together, the application in its current submission is not acceptable and you are requiring a newly completed app without their added creativity to be considered for an account with your company.

As you have probably guessed, this will not be the end of the story. Aren't you curious? Over the years I've had weird stuff cross my desk. One had a red ink (at least I hope it was ink) thumbprint along with a declaration of being a “free man” who adhered to no recognized laws accept those of his Savior. Ok, I respect your right to do you, but ya can't have credit here unless you agree, and adhere, to play on our terms. We have certain policies, and while some are flexible, playing tic-tac-toe on my credit application is not.

Quickest way to clear the air and end the email war: Pick up the phone and call. What is driving this signature creativity or any other alteration they made? What are they trying to achieve? Often a conversation closes the gap and you can get resolution. At least you have an understanding of what is driving the artwork and if a compromise can be reached. It's an opportunity to explain your company's view of what you can and can't accept and why. I am not above compromising. Let's face it, there has to be some logical reason driving the alteration and one that doesn't involve my company becoming your “sponsor.”

Have some questions ready for that conversation. Do they sign this way at their bank? What about leasing or other finance companies? While the objective is to find resolution, never lose sight of what this comes down to—you are loaning money. It may be in the form of product, but that does not dilute that you are loaning money. How does that wonky signature impact your ability to protect and collect your investment?

The Golden Rule of lending money: Them that has the gold makes the rules. You are holding the gold. Skip the drama and have your poop in a group with a well-rounded application, complete with talk track. ■



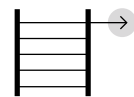
With more than 30 years of credit management experience in the LBM industry, Thea Dudley consults with companies on a wide range of credit and financial management issues. Contact Thea at [theadudley@charter.net](mailto:theadudley@charter.net)



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\* Claim based on a 12'x18' deck with 8 posts and 7 panels (RDI Elevation Rail installed 49 minutes faster than competitive cable railing install of 129 minutes)

# Don't fear high lumber prices

BY JOHN WAGNER

**IN EVERY ONE** of our LBM deals over the past two years, acquirers have used a “price effect” model to determine the sustainable EBITDA of the business, after factoring out the increases in commodity lumber prices driven by COVID-19 and supply chain challenges. The model that acquirers use to establish sustainable EBITDA—defined as the EBITDA figure that is likely to repeat after the price volatility has been bled out of the commodity market—is a price/volume/cost of goods (or COGs) analysis. In our role as seller’s representation, we too have developed a “price effect” model (in the form of an elaborate spreadsheet) that looks at monthly cost of goods sold and inventory levels, while indexing those KPIs against what commodity lumber prices were over that same period of time. (We pull those lumber prices from a data source found at [tradingeconomics.com/commodity/lumber](https://tradingeconomics.com/commodity/lumber) where you can determine past lumber prices to any single day, historically.) The acquirer runs their models, we run ours, and we compare notes, eventually agreeing on the sustainable EBITDA to which a multiple is applied for valuation purposes.

Over the past two years, the general consensus has been that lumber prices would come off their highs over time. Accordingly, the higher the spike in lumber prices, the more pressure we would see from acquirers for a negative adjustment to EBITDA to get to that “sustainable” figure. A quick check of that data at the time of this writing shows that lumber has ranged in price over roughly the last 12 months from \$1,426 to \$370. (It peaked in May 2021 at around \$1,700.)

We are now at time when any price effect adjustment to EBITDA should be out of the system by the end of the 2nd quarter of 2023. In other words, for now there are no new negative price effect adjustments to EBITDA. However, while prices are currently low or stable now, the consensus is that lumber prices will start to rise again during the busy 2023 building season,

even as building activity is tempered by higher mortgage and borrowing costs.

If commodity prices start to increase, it could benefit both sellers and acquirers. As a seller, your business will likely be valued on your trailing 12 months performance and/or last year’s performance. That said, if commodity prices continue to increase after you sell your business, that will benefit the acquirer with increased profitability. From a seller’s standpoint, on a trailing 12 month basis, perhaps the higher rolling average of lumber prices (when indexed to COGs and inventory), is something that will continue in 2023 and beyond. Maybe that’s the new normal. And if the higher EBITDA is something you would have enjoyed as the owner, why shouldn’t the acquirer pay to enjoy it as well, by building into their purchase price the multiple on the “extra” EBITDA they are likely to see in their first year of ownership, and potentially far beyond that?

As we have watched LBMers deal with volatile lumber prices over the last two years, we have noticed their gross profit margins have remained largely unchanged. (Just to level set, the gross profit margin—GPM—is the percentage of sales revenue that is gross profit, and gross profit is sales revenue minus COGs.) LBMers have maintained a “steady state” of GPM, and therefore enjoyed more gross profit dollars and higher EBITDA due to the higher lumber prices.

This maintaining of GPMs through these recent flush times is a genuine testimony to the discipline that LBMers have shown in controlling costs. Most LBM dealers benefited (sometimes dramatically) from the increased commodity prices; the commodity price increases, however, were not sustainable, and now commodity prices are at or below pre-pandemic levels. This demonstrated history of holding the line on GPMs will give acquirers the confidence that LBM dealers will be able to maintain their GPMs if commodity prices begin to increase in the future. ■



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](mailto:j.wagner@1stwestma.com)



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# HARDIE™ ARCHITECTURAL COLLECTION, COUNTLESS WAYS TO MEET CUSTOMERS' DESIGN NEEDS

What do homeowners want for their home exteriors? Some of the latest trends should sound familiar, but others are evolving in new ways.

Dark colors, for example, continue to be in demand. In the latest homeowner survey conducted by James Hardie, participants moved away from whites and standard neutrals in favor of darker, bolder options like dark blue, gray, and dark green.

Often, those dark colors are part of a more varied palette as designers and homeowners alike seek multi-textured facades. Similar monochromatic shades or contrasting yet complementary colors combine with blending profiles, textures, and materials to keep exteriors unique and different along the streetscape.

In addition to appearance, durability has become top of mind alongside the ongoing trend of low maintenance. In the James Hardie study, two in three homeowners said they will likely update their home to be more resilient against weather events. And in the American Institute of Architects' Home Design Trends Study for Q3 2022, low-maintenance materials were the top product feature architects say is popular with homeowners, ranking higher than smart thermostats and tankless water heaters, among others.

**The Hardie™ Architectural Collection** offers dealers and their customers an opportunity to meet these trends while creating eye-catching facades. Along with contemporary beauty, the cladding helps to protect the home from pests, water, and fire. The low-maintenance fiber cement siding is engineered to stand up to the elements and resist the effects of wind, moisture, and extreme temperatures.

## ENDLESS DESIGN POSSIBILITIES

A curated siding solution of panel, plank and trim, the Hardie™ Architectural Collection enables unique combinations of contemporary textures and architectural details to achieve any style, whether modern, transitional, traditional, or somewhere in between. The Collection includes:

**Hardie® Architectural Panel – Fine Sand:** With an even-textured, smooth finish, these panels offer a sleek look. They also feature shiplap joints for visual interest.

**Hardie® Architectural Panel – Fine Sand Grooved:** Like Fine Sand, these panels offer a smooth, even texture, with lines milled into the panel every 16 inches.

**Hardie® Architectural Panel – Mounded Sand:** These panels feature a rough-textured, traditional look, with shiplap joints for V-groove architectural lines.

**Hardie® Architectural Panel – Seagrass:** Inspired by nature, the Seagrass panel features gentle flowing lines for a dynamic finish.

**Hardie® Artisan Square Channel Siding:** Suitable for traditional and modern styles, this siding features precise, right-angle cuts that create wide channels.

**Hardie® Artisan Shiplap Siding:** Brings charm to any home and allows design flexibility from modern to rustic

**Hardie® Artisan V-Groove Siding:** Deep V-shaped channels great for vertical, horizontal, and soffit applications. As a curated collection, the panel, plank and trim in the Hardie™ Architectural Collection can be combined to achieve an array of styles.

## MODERN

Along with clean lines and crisp forms, this contemporary home showcases the popular exterior trend of blending multiple textures for a varied façade. Shifts in surface texture infuse variety yet are balanced by a monochromatic color scheme. This look uses Hardie® Architectural Panel in Fine Sand-Grooved in a vertical application, the same panel in a dark earthy color and horizontal application, and Fine Sand panel in a trendy gray around the garage. Hardie® Plank under vertical windows adds one final detail.



## TRANSITIONAL

The Modern Farmhouse trend continues to evolve, as seen here with this transitional approach that blends elegant simplicity with nostalgia. Simple massing, a single body color, and unique stylistic details lend a fresh, upbeat take on the classic look. This façade combines Fine Sand-Grooved Hardie® Architectural Panel in a vertical application and Hardie® Panel with Hardie® Trim Battens in Arctic White at the center.



## TRADITIONAL

Quaint and charming, this clean, balanced exterior combines color, form, and unique profiles for a timeless take on coastal architecture. It features Hardie® Architectural Panel in Mounded Sand for the main cladding, Hardie® Architectural Panel in Fine Sand-Grooved on the gable accents, and Hardie® Trim in Arctic White for window accents.



**To see more design options and possibilities, download and share the Hardie™ Architectural Collection Look Book at [www.jameshardie.com](http://www.jameshardie.com).**

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# THE TECHNOLOGY-FREE LUMBERYARD

BY LBM JOURNAL READERS

It's never smart to assume. Yet, every now and then, we assume anyway. Case in point: the last time a Real Issue survey was about investing in new technology, we assumed that all *LBM Journal* readers' companies were using technology in their business. Indeed, the multiple-choice question, "How recently has your company updated or upgraded its software and technology tools?" didn't have an answer option for technology-free companies.

Which brings us to this month's Real Issues question, which came from the new owner of a lumberyard that's been operating technology-free for more than 30 years. He's looking for advice on whether or not to pull the trigger and computerize.

We did as we do each month and surveyed our readers via email with a few quick questions. A big thank you to the 247 readers who responded and shared their insights.

## HERE'S THE QUESTION:

"We recently purchased a lumberyard that has been a successful business for over 30 years. The yard runs on zero technology—no computer system, no website, no tech of any kind. I think computerizing could help greatly by streamlining operations and giving us information to manage smarter. However, since the company is doing fine without it, and since computerizing would likely rock the boat with our longtime team members, I don't know if I should. It ain't broke; should I break it? Would love to hear what other LBM pros recommend."

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

“Evolve or die. It will be a big disruption, but I have found that people are adaptable. You may have a brief behavioral spike and then everyone will accept the new normal.”

“I can appreciate the dilemma. Before making a change I would recommend you poll your employees for what areas they think a computer system would benefit them? If you can get their buy-in and a system that helps them address issues they’re facing, it should be a lot easier to implement the change. It’s more important to have the people than to upgrade the system.”

“My approach would be to start with something small. Take a relatively non-invasive procedure or tech solution and allow time for employees and customers to see the benefits, while still hearing their concerns and questions. This may allow some buy-in to be built up, rather than just coming in to overhaul their entire business practice overnight. Purposeful baby steps!”

“I would slowly introduce the technology to those that are open to it. One of our old timers who was so against it in the beginning became a trainer to many new associates over the years.”

“Integrate slowly, starting with inventory management.”

“Slowly bringing this yard up to speed with the modern world may help improve inventory control and help with overall unit turns.”

“I want to know this also.”

“I would look hard at new technology. If you choose the right POS system for your company, it can be invaluable. The work of keeping track of all sales and inventory is done for you. You will be amazed at what you had no idea about in your daily activities. Also, you will be able to take on more customers and grow your business. I feel you must change with the times or you will get left in the dust.”

“I can agree with going either way. I came from a lumberyard where the owner rejected technology—until he saw the advantages of having an accounting program. No more customers slipping thru the cracks. My current yard fully embraces technology, from advertising to accounting and inventory. While this is something I had wanted from my previous employer, I see the drawbacks in systems upkeep and education. It is nice to see stock in other locations but that is only as good as the right material going to the right spot—which doesn’t always happen. While I generally agree with ‘if it’s not broke, don’t fix it,’ maybe easing into technology would be a way to go rather than jumping in the deep end. Start with a website or social media pages. At least review accounting and order entry software to see if it can help. While you may not want to alienate your longtime employees, you don’t want to be too far behind when you need to replace them with people who rely heavily on technology.”

“It’s inevitable but go easy. We are doing new software right now, and it’s very difficult for us older learners to grasp.”

“Technology is the future, whether we like it or not.”

“It is tough with the existing team members, but our computer that we purchased in 2016 has been much better for both sales and back office. It took some training and a lot of teaching, but overall, it helped us tremendously.”

“You need to know the needs and wants of your customers. Younger and tech savvy customers may want more than written tickets provided. Your staff may be better prepared for an upgrade than you realize. However, there will always be the grumbles.”

“I would definitely modernize with technology, current team members will buy into the improvements and new future employees will likely be apt to join the company. Look forward to tomorrow, not today or yesterday.”

“I appreciate the long-timers; however, they will most likely be retiring sooner than later. Some things technology can never replace, and unfortunately the newer generations do not know how to function without technology. If you stay where you are, you will never move forward. What’s working today will not work tomorrow. In order to keep up with the ever-changing world, the answer is yes, introduce some technology. It helps your current business and it’s an investment to your business future.”

“I understand keeping it simple. However, if the AR/AP isn’t computerized, definitely start there. Continue to add small bits where the return is greatest.”

“It depends on what you want out of your business. I purchased a lumberyard that ran that way without any technology. We now do 5x the volume the former owners did, and we spend a fraction of the amount of time ordering product. We are a lot more efficient with technology in place, but I have the experience and knowledge to have implemented it. If I need to pull up a past invoice, it only takes a second. We also save on statements that go out to the customers along with the automatic emails.”

“Start small. Add email and chat options with [Microsoft] Teams. Once this is adopted, think about an ERP system, and bring in one module at a time. If you are interested in expanding staff, it will be difficult to attract younger talent if technology is not in use.”

“How are you meeting the demands of the current business environment, not to mention the future? How do you attract a new generation to your business? How would a forward-thinking customer look at you as a business partner? You need to get moving.”

“Do it. It will help manage inventory, track results, and will give a better insight on how profitable the business really is. Think short-term pain for long-term results.”

"If you can't give the customer what they want, then you can't run a self-sustainable business. Sounds like your team members are giving the customers what they want, and it also sounds like there is room for improvement. There are many tech tools out there that can be developed to aid your team members. Don't add tech for the sake of 'streamlining,' but with the goal of helping your team serve customers better. Definitely go slow. If it doesn't help your team help your customers, don't do it!"

"A stand-alone location could continue to operate without technology; however, if the owner ever decides to expand and either open a new location or purchase an existing lumberyard, technology will become a must-have. Do it now to promote future growth potential. Everyone today uses technology. There is no excuse to resist training and learning a software system that will make your job easier."

"When we switched to the Computer Age many, many years ago, our rule was that if we had to do something twice, then the computer should be used. By now, everything we do is by computer, both for the knowledge and for ease of operation. We would need at least 20% more people without the computer."

"This is the exact situation I am dealing with."

"Forward looking, I'd assume new employees coming on board in the future would be tech savvy and may not want to go to work for an 'ancient' company."

"It is hard to imagine positive growth in the business without at least easing into more technology. The next generation of customers will be expecting expanded access to information regarding their purchase history, faster quoting, and faster transactions at point of sale. I argue that technology will provide an improved service level to the customer at the same time making it easier for the staff to provide it. This will be a win/win for customers and staff, with the added bonus of more information for the management team."

"When I closed my business and joined an organization with computers, the transition was not difficult. I already knew the products, and the computer was an added tool when needed."

"Do it and start saving \$\$\$. You can greatly reduce administrative overhead by properly utilizing technology. And tech is nothing new. ERPs have been around for 30+ years. I'd be more concerned that the previous owner's reluctance to utilize information might be a sign they've been hiding some turds on the balance sheet. You might have bought a lemon that needs an overhaul and better controls. Use what allows you to properly run that operation. It's yours now."

"If it's not broken, don't change. I think computerization is greatly overrated. We made one small change in the way we did things. Last count, it cost us between \$30,000 to \$40,000."

"Sooner than later your going, to need technology. Your older staff will need to be replaced with Gen X and Z."

"Technology can make you far more efficient, but the learning curve is steep. Once you've transitioned and all have embraced your new way of doing things, you'll be better positioned to attract new hires and continue to grow your company. Just make sure you do your homework well and have asked many questions before jumping into a system that may or may not be what you need. The biggest obstacle is not always knowing what questions to ask. Go for it...and good luck."

"I don't see how you do it. I used to handwrite invoices. We could have never grown without the help of technology."

"Nobody likes to leave their comfort zone, but technology will make their lives easier in the long run and streamline many processes."

"Suggest maintaining status quo operations, then gradually implement an industry-specific software package to increase efficiency and boost profitability."

"Integrating a computer system will no doubt help with inventory management alone, searching sales and purchasing history, speed of information. Small steps, but no doubt it will be a necessity moving forward."

"First of all, men (who are most of a lumberyards employees) are terrible with math and reversals of numbers. Manual invoices are going to have a lot of errors. When we operated manually, we had a full-time person checking invoices, and it was amazing how many errors were found. Being manual also allows employees to use whatever pricing they want, taking care of friends, etc. We use technology as much as we can. We have an app where customers can see their account, pay their balance due, and place orders from their cell phone. This is what contractors and consumers want."

"It is just luck that the company is doing well (if it really is), so go forward with reasonable technology. Use technology that helps and assists the team, so it is not viewed as a bad thing but a good thing."

"With technology ruling the world, it is almost impossible to imagine operating without it. We are a lumberyard that has been in business for 100 years and have been slow to embrace new tech. As we have upgraded our systems and looking to the demands of society with everyone shopping online, I think it is an absolute necessity."

"Technology is not going to slow down. Although you have longtime team members, you must think of the future of the company and all future employees. Perhaps start slow, with a simple inventory location and cycle count program. I think the key is to get everyone involved from the start and discuss the pros and cons."

"Without knowing the size and scope of the business, it is hard to have an informed opinion. However, I would say in general you are operating in the blind. Also, the business is not scalable without technology. I can't imagine running our business intelligently without technology." ►



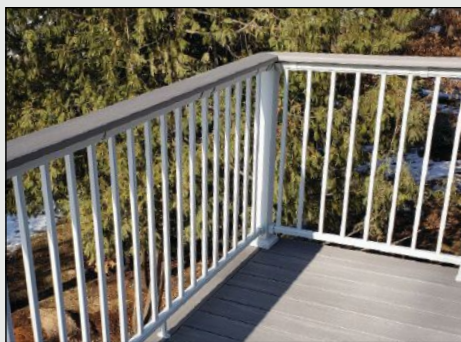
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"I have been with this company for almost 23 years, and during that time we have gone from pencils and paper to handheld computers that verify the product being picked, the quantities being picked, and where the items are being shipped to. The system also creates random cycle counts, which provides a virtual inventory without hand-counting inventories. The handheld units are connected with the purchasing employees that can see items that are counted and shows the quantity on hand. This allows the buyers to have an idea of the quantities to order on their next stock order. For inventory management alone, I strongly suggest computerizing."

"You may believe 'It ain't broke,' but that don't make it so. Today, you're playing ball in a Double A league. If you want to move to AAA or the Big Leagues, you must upgrade to a computerized information system. And that's just the first change you must make. Then you can start on the next nine things."

"You grow with technology and digital marketing, inventory controls, etc., or you die."

"If it ain't broke, don't fix it' isn't always as simple as it sounds. There are so many tools out there now to improve efficiency. Implementation requires care and strong communication though."

"I would think a computer system with a live inventory would be worth the investment. We still load and deliver off hand-written paper and then bill it out through the computer system."

"You should go ahead and move forward by computerizing. At this point it should be expected by your team and not really cause any issues."

"You must install a system for accounting, inventory, along with any other tool to track equipment in order to give you a real picture of the business. I am sure your employees all drive vehicles with computers, and their cell phones have apps so that shouldn't be a problem."

"We hand wrote invoices up until six years ago. When we went live on our system, there were some growing pains from our employees and customers. Overall, our business and our customers benefited greatly from the conversion. Pick a good software that is industry specific and implement it in the winter."

"You absolutely need to make the switch. People hate change, but technology is where the industry is headed and you can either hop on board or be left behind. I understand that it is still working as of now and it will be a challenge to switch, but I think the benefits outweigh the risks."

"I don't know how you operate in today's markets without computerized technology. I am a 37-year veteran of the industry, have worked for a number of the top companies in our industry and couldn't function as a lumber buyer without the technology that I currently enjoy. I have gone through a number of computer system start-ups and changeovers during my career, and they don't always go smoothly, but they always improve operations in the end."

"I've been on both sides of it. I can't imagine not having it now. I can do all aspects of accounting on it with no other employees. That alone is a huge money saver. Add in all the other aspects of a POS system, and you won't look back."

"I think the size of the store and age of the current employees would be the determining factor. If you have a lower volume store with mature employees, I would probably not computerize, but if you have a larger volume store with a younger employee group, they are probably hungry for the technology."

"I have heard that philosophy from the introduction of OSB, pneumatic nailers, composite decking, etc. The time to explore change is not when you have to, or you will be lapped by your competitors. If there is nobody in line to take over the business, I could not imagine myself purchasing it with the absence of pertinent data and verifiable information!"

"Bringing computers in 12 years ago was the best thing we could have done. The amount of information and reports allow us to make better decisions. The only downside is that you have to have a staff who can use it and know how it works. If you do not have a computer savvy staff, then do not add technology."

"I feel you answered your own question in your statement, 'I think computerizing could help greatly by streamlining operations and giving us information to manage smarter.' My suggestion would be to practice smart change management throughout the process."

"From my perspective (49 years in the industry) managing with technology is a given. Information available from technology on inventory, turns, margins, shrink, average/replacement costs when bidding, and customer performance, just to name a few, are invaluable when owning/managing a company in our industry today. I would highly recommend implementing computer technology as soon as possible. Getting your existing team to buy in may be a challenge, but I don't believe it would take long for them to see and appreciate the advantages that technology brings to their job once you have a system in place."

"In your situation, I would wait on the website conversation until both you and your team are comfortable with and really capable of working with whatever POS system you would decide to implement. At that point I would take a serious look at a web presence. It is hard for me to imagine any company, large or small, being successful in our industry long-term without taking full advantage of POS and web technology available today."

"We fought computerizing for many, many years. Things are so much quicker with computers doing most of the work for you like calculating and conversions. I'm still old school however, and have boxes and boxes of paper backups that I will probably never look in."

"I would move to computerizing to allow for easy reports and required reporting of taxes."

"I think you will find that bringing technology in will help in the long run. But be specific and upfront with employees on the who, what, when, where, why to ease concerns for employees. It will be a learning curve for sure though."

"Start small. Computerize one area first (shipping/receiving, inventory, accounting, etc.). Make small changes and tweaks to the lumberyard."

"If the right system is brought in, and the data input is clean, it will aid every member of the team. Delaying this long to computerize is actually beneficial, because tech is so much cheaper today than say, 25 years ago. Longtime team members are going to hand over the reins someday anyway, and the younger generation will easily run better with accessible data. This advice from a 72-year-old veteran!"

"It may be running, but you are wasting time and profits without technology."

"Some technology for inventory purposes would be very helpful, however sometimes adding too much can make it more complicated and create more issues. If this company has been successful for so many years, they should keep their core values and ways of operating."

"I would add the computer system for point-of-sale and inventory. It's a no-brainer in my opinion."

"Personally, I feel you are not doing yourself any favors in not taking any step towards modern technology. There's so much to gain in learning software and so much time to save doing simple tasks. Also, we branched out and found a new market in e-commerce which has been working out well."

"Not a fan of 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it,' especially in an industry like ours, where preventive maintenance keeps our forklifts, trucks, etc. operational. While you might be doing 'fine' by some measures, how can you be sure you are truly maximizing your profits/sales etc.? I am biased in this, as I was brought into a 100+ year lumber business with zero lumber experience for the sole purpose of catching up our systems and efficiency. In our case, that has paid off exponentially."

"It very likely depends on the customers and the market. In a highly competitive market, in which many of the target customers are high-end and/or high volume and/or commercial customers, implementing technology is likely to be necessary to increase market share. In a rural, non-competitive market, there may be plenty of time left to remain without technology." ▶



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“Baby steps! Implement a small tech improvement and see where it leads. The experienced staff may have some great ideas on where to start. Involve your staff and brainstorm. Might be easier than you imagine.”

“You don’t know what you’re missing, and your growth will be limited. Technology will improve current processes and allow for future growth. Rocking the boat is what makes companies (and people) grow. Change is almost never fun, but are you going to let your employees hinder the possibilities of your company?”

“Computer systems allow for scaling and growth with the same or fewer employees. If you are happy with the current size of your company and staff levels, don’t do it. If you want to grow, a computer system may be necessary to achieve your goals.”

**RESPONSES FROM MANUFACTURERS, SERVICE PROVIDERS AND WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTORS:**

“Change for the sake of change is never good. Calculated change where we have analyzed the benefits outweigh the challenges is critical. Unfortunately, the phrase you quoted is one our industry has lived (and died) by. Remember, if you’re not growing, you’re dying. You need the team to understand the benefits a system brings, how it will improve their workday, the customer experience, and the benefit for the company long-term. You are running one of the most complex retail operations out there, and the way you’re operating is a little bit like driving your vehicle down the road with no dash lights and no functioning gauges. Get key members of the team involved in the process as you research options and find one that fits the needs of your organization. You will not regret having the right tools to build a more successful business.”

“Don’t view it as ‘breaking it.’ You will be streamlining processes and making your life easier in the long run. It has been successful for 30 years, and if you make these changes now, you can be successful another 30.”

“I would slowly integrate new technology. In the long run the business will be better off and by taking it slow you lower the disruptions that always come with change.”

“I would recommend slow implementation of technology. Before you do, though, develop some buy in. Ask the employees what bugs them. Chances are they are frustrated by something that technology can improve. Then, start with something simple, share how it’s made the lives of the employees better, and build on that.”



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“Yes, I would update. It’s like building the well before you are thirsty. The lack of technology will hurt you and by the time you need it, it will be too late. Invest now.”

“Even if it is working fine now, the longtime team members will not be there forever and it will be harder to bring on new talent into an antiquated system. I can’t imagine that vendor and customer communications or tracking is as accurate or efficient as it could be.”

“The world moves forward, whether or not you care to move with it. I was a railroad worker during college. We were always taught to be in touch with our surroundings. If it moves, move with it. I have survived with this motto in my head. COMPUTERIZE!”

“Don’t do it! I bought my company in 1978, free of all technology. Then we went to using a computer for accounts receivable only. As the company grew, we started adding all sorts of tasks to be added to the computer, finally adding computerized inventory. The computer was running the company, not the reverse. It became so complicated, I could no longer understand it. We then hit awful economic times in the early ’90s, and I almost lost the business. A number of long-term employees quit, because they just couldn’t deal with the computer.”

“I would bring someone in to show what would be valuable to your business and test the waters. Presently if you don’t make at least a step in the direction of at least getting your inventory and accounts receivable on a system you may be headed for trouble. Remember that your longtime team members aren’t getting any younger, and most of your new hires will be tech savvy.”

“As a company that is transitioning between 1st and 2nd generation ownership, we are facing similar problems. We have chosen to target specific things that are easy to change. The computer system was first because that had the most immediate effect on day-to-day operations.”

“While the company has functioned successfully for the past 30 years without technology, all signs point to that changing very soon. In order to be competitive in any industry, you must begin to embrace at least some of the technology that will help streamline processes. Computerizing your records is a good start.”

“There are so many benefits to computerization. It would be worth the headache to make the change. If it cost me some current employees, I would hate that but that would be their choice not mine. To me the benefits outweigh the negatives.”

“Depends on the objectives of the business and its owner. Sound business decisions require multiple inputs and not just gut feeling. Help team members understand ‘why’ it needs to be done and include them in the ‘what’ and ‘how’ it is done.”

“There are several things to consider. Is the company capable of expanding customer base? If the company is capable, then considering the greater potential volume with the technology equipment seems to make sense. Also, considering work force, many businesses struggle with getting enough help, whereas the technology equipment would be a benefit in that area as well.” ■

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One of the thorniest and most consistently challenging issues facing the LBM community is attracting, hiring, and retaining young talent. That's why we've launched the LBM 40 Under 40—to recognize and celebrate the growing class of strong young leaders in the LBM community.

To be clear, the inaugural class of the LBM 40 Under 40 featured on the following pages are not “rising stars” or “future leaders.” The people on these pages have paid their dues and have put in the work. They are already leaders in their companies and communities, and they are driving our industry forward today.

Perhaps most importantly, they're living, breathing proof that the LBM industry represents an incredible opportunity for young talent to build a rewarding career doing important work.



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If you'd like to meet them in person, this year's inductees have all been invited to attend our LBM Strategies Conference this fall to be recognized and to meet with other LBM leaders from across the U.S. Plus, several of them will take the stage, sharing their insights on attracting other young talent.

This is just the beginning. Next year's LBM 40 Under 40 will welcome 40 new members, and the judging will be done by this year's inductees. Our goal is to provide them with a forum to share ideas, build relationships, and grow in their professional roles.

**SO IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT WE PRESENT, IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER, THE 2023 LBM 40 UNDER 40 INDUCTEES.**

## JOHN PERNA

President & CEO | Hamilton Building Supply

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

Continuing to grow our company at Hamilton Building Supply by engaging and developing our talented associates. We're at \$36 million and I believe we can get to \$50 million+ out of our one location. Lastly, continue to be the best devoted husband and father that I can be and raise our family to be respectful and authentic.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

This is by far the best industry you can build a very successful and meaningful career in. Management consulting, pharma, and tech industries are all overrated because they don't build anything that's truly tangible. We're a part of something very real and that's the supply, support, and management of home building in America. Better yet, many of the people in this industry are authentic, family-oriented, and truly want to see everyone around them succeed.

### FUN FACT:

I have a second job as the CFO/HR Manager/Maintenance Guy for my wife's company, Vivid Women's Health, which is a women's pelvic floor physical therapy provider based in Newtown, Pennsylvania. So, in addition to windows, doors, and lumber, I'm also well versed in vaginismus, diastasis recti, and vulvodynia!



## SUNNY BOWMAN

President & CEO | Dakota County Lumber

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

Running a \$50 million+ lumberyard with 60 engaged employees excited to be at a destination workplace. Starting work on a secondary location and breaking into the luxury home market. Expanding the "Perfect Delivery Promise."

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

This is an exciting industry to be a part of, full of amazing individuals! Don't be afraid to jump in, ask questions, and learn! There's a lot of room for advancement, and you can help lead the charge.

### FUN FACT:

I love playing hockey, skiing in Colorado, adventuring with my husband and kids, and finding ways to do good in the world with my resources and blessings.





## MATTHEW HOLMES

President & CEO | Holmes Building Materials

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

At Holmes, we have been very fortunate to have a young and determined management staff. Because of this great group of people I am surrounded by, I see us honing our skills and striving to be the best building materials supplier in Southern Louisiana over the next five years.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Take it slow. If you perform and go the extra mile, your superiors will take note of it and give you as much opportunity to succeed as possible.

### FUN FACT:

I love construction projects. I've lived in the same mid-century house for four years and have had a construction project going on the entire time (my wife is a good sport).



## CODY MILLER

Lumber Divisional Merchandise Manager | Hartville Hardware & Lumber

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

Our company is growing so much, so it's hard to say where I'll be five years from now or what my next steps will be. I'll continue to evaluate our vendor programs, negotiate rebates, and align our products and pricing tools across our locations. I also want to keep looking for more opportunities for growth, such as potentially adding new lumberyards.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

One thing I've learned, especially in the past couple of years, is just how important relationships are in the LBM industry. Treating others how you'd want to be treated, whether that's employees, customers, or vendors, is important for anyone getting started professionally. That's what will set you apart in LBM much more than in retail.

### FUN FACT:

I enjoy golfing, home improvement projects, and woodworking. My wife and I raise six chickens at home and our two small children love chasing them around. I love to snow ski and I was actually named after a mountain in Jackson Hole, Wyoming—Cody Peak.



## ALEX ARMSTRONG

Location Manager | Peter Lumber Company

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

In the same seat I am in today. I love this company and its family values. Being the manager of the local lumberyard in a small town is rewarding, and helping the local customers complete their vision is a great feeling.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

If you enjoyed shop class (if it still exists) in high school, don't be afraid to try a summer job at the local lumberyard.

### FUN FACT:

I recently got 2nd place in a chili contest, and the winner made vegan chili! I will never get over this and think about it daily.



## CJ YOUNG

Operations Manager | Ward Lumber

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

With Ward Lumber! Five years ago, I never would have imagined that'd be my reply. The culture of Ward Lumber has become one of the best things about it. Not only are employees encouraged to grow, they've taken on ownership of the company; some represent the company as board members, making impactful decisions about the future of Ward Lumber.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Don't be afraid of starting at the bottom. There is a lot of fulfillment in entry-level positions.

### FUN FACT:

At age 15, I knew I wanted to apply to the Rotary Youth Exchange Program, but my parents weren't convinced. Instead of feeling defeated, I got affidavits from other adults, put together a presentation, and held a meeting with my parents and the Rotary Club once my application had been accepted. It worked!



## ANDY MITCHELL

Owner | Mitchell Lumber Co.

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I envision myself running an even stronger company. I believe that laying a strong foundation for sustainable growth will pay off in the end. I hope to still be providing quality building materials to the people of my community.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Lumber is way more fun than it sounds. Stick with it, work hard, and you can go farther than you can imagine in this field.

### FUN FACT:

I have displayed and continue to grow my dad's antique tool and water ski collection.



## DAVID QUALLS

Regional Sales | PARR

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I see myself continuing to grow my knowledge and experience in the LBM industry and hope to have developed a few key sales support roles into outside sales positions. I see myself moving into a director role within the next five years.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

We are blessed to work in such a great industry. Someone without a college degree can have lasting success in the LBM industry, and it is a "pay for performance" industry where the sky is the limit on what you can accomplish if you work hard and build trust.

### FUN FACT:

My daughter and I started a podcast called "Lessons From my Father." We created it so that other teenagers out there that don't have a father figure or parent to teach them about life can listen to our lessons and have an opportunity to not make the same mistakes I did early in my life.



## NICK WHITE

Systems Administrator | Gilcrest/Jewett Lumber Company

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I will be working either at Gilcrest/Jewett or for our parent company, US LBM. I aspire to serve in an advisement role where I can help develop budgets as well as help make important business decisions for the company.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Give the LBM industry a chance regardless of your background or education. With the rapid adoption of technology within the industry over the last several years, there are so many opportunities that don't necessitate any prior knowledge of lumber, doors, concrete, etc. There is room for growth and advancement in many areas of the industry.

### FUN FACT:

I have been an assistant high school girls' soccer coach since 2013 and have helped coach three state championship teams.



## CALEB GROTHAUS

Director of Business Development | Palmer Donavin

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I see myself in a vice president or executive-level role, helping our company reach the next level. I'd also like to further my network and relationships in the LBM industry, working with LBM consultants and writing articles and conducting keynotes for *LBM Journal*.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

This industry does not get enough praise. It may not be the "sexy" choice, but there are great people in our industry, plenty of money to be made, and a lot of fun to be had. If you work hard and you address and solve issues (while relating to customers as people), you can make an incredible living in this field of work.

### FUN FACT:

I have four siblings (three brothers and a sister) and all of our names start with C: Caleb, Collin, Colton, Caiden, and Cenah. It's been a nightmare for our teachers, as all of us look pretty similar!



## CRYSTAL PIESCHEL

Director of Marketing | Mid-Cape Home Centers

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

Having built on my executive role by continuing to grow my industry knowledge and leadership skills, while further developing my marketing and business development skills within the LBM industry.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

The LBM industry is an opportunity in and of itself. There are countless ways to grow and develop impressive, life-long careers. Start with getting involved in both local and national industry associations, always be learning, make connections, and see first-hand how unique each success story is and create one of your own.

### FUN FACT:

I've (safely!) shot a few automatic rifles.



## LANCE LATKIEWICZ

Director of Operations | Mans Lumber and Home

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I see myself as the president of Mans Lumber and Home, leading us into new growth areas and developing an operation that is in tune with itself and the sales operation for seamless information sharing and communication hand-off.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

I think young people need to do two things. Do not overthink the fact you may not know what you want to do. Then, be in the “yes” business. Say yes to a lot of chances, roles, opportunities, etc. Saying yes opens a high volume of opportunities. Ultimately, the only way to know what you will favor and may have natural talent in is by trying a lot of things.

### FUN FACT:

I played Division 1 college football and spent a year as a football strength and conditioning coach with Ohio State football where I was part of a Big Ten football championship in 2008.



## CLAY LEAVITT

Vice President | Marcus Lumber

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I'd like to see my time management improved through the steps and processes I'm developing now so I can continue to make strides in that area in the future.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

“Show up. Be prepared. Take care of business.” These are three simple steps that sometimes aren't so commonly applied, but when you do them consistently, you will set yourself apart. And, this industry rewards you for doing just that.

### FUN FACT:

When my oldest son, Jack, was turning five, he talked constantly about working at the lumberyard with me. As a birthday present, I made him a “Marcus Lumber Company Yard Man” for a day. Jack was given MLC apparel to wear, and he helped customers by communicating across the company's two-way radios.



## JACE MATTINSON

CFO | Nation's Best Holdings

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

As a mentee, mentor, and leader in this industry, with a few more years of experience and an expanded toolbelt to continue to drive value for our customers, vendors, partners, and team members.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Network and learn. This industry is big in that there are all sorts of different places you could find yourself. It is small in the sense that it is a very close-knit group of people, and the longer you are in it, the smaller that circle seems to be.

### FUN FACT:

I've been to 30 countries, 36 states, lived in Eastern Europe for 2 years, and speak Bulgarian fluently.



## GRANT LEAVITT

General Manager | Marcus Lumber

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I'll be at Marcus Lumber. My role will likely be the same, and although some of the products, people, and pricing will change, my commitment to helping serve others and helping others succeed will continue.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

LBM is an attractive career, as it can offer a very clear path to success. It is very rewarding to work in an industry that was deemed "essential" along with making relationships that last a lifetime.

### FUN FACT:

I teach Dave Ramsey Financial Programs at church. I enjoy biking and running with my wife, Rachel, and son, Grayson.



## KARI GAVIRIA

President | Madison Wood

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

Right here in my current role as president, growing and enhancing our current business model to meet the needs of future generations.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

The harder you work, the luckier you'll be.

### FUN FACT:

I have two boys that keep me on my toes. Currently Wednesday is the only day of the week that my evenings aren't on some sort of field or court for sports.



## JEFF HILLS

Project Manager, Process Improvement | Preston Feather Building Center

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I plan to continue my growth as a project manager and team leader to be able to grow the next round of LBM professionals. As we as an industry continue to adapt new technologies, I want to find new ways to utilize the increased data to increase knowledge sharing, increase customer satisfaction, and reduce project cycle time.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Being in the lumber business isn't just selling 2x4s; there are hundreds of different jobs one can do, and the best part is you get to see the output of your company everywhere: local businesses, family homes, and whatever crazy ideas people want to build. It's also one of the few industries where you can make your career what you want without mandatory degrees or certifications.

### FUN FACT:

When I'm not working on Preston Feather things I'm busy picking up new hobbies, cooking wild game, or building this year's autocross derby car.



## MARKUS HIGGS

Assistant Manager | Carter Lumber

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

In five years, I see myself as a general manager or area manager.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

It is important to be dependable, reliable, and always look to learn from those around you. If you do these simple things, you will make yourself the obvious choice for additional responsibilities and opportunities.

### FUN FACT:

I love anything with a motor, specifically Harley Davidson and any General Motors LS platform. I also follow all things combat sports, including boxing, MMA, and Jiu Jitsu, and I am a prior service Army Infantry member.



## JAKE HENDERSON

Corporate Purchasing  
Mobile Lumber & Millwork, Coast Design Kitchen & Bath, Grand Bay Lumber

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

As a third generation in a family-owned business, I am proud to serve this industry and the Gulf Coast for years to come.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Find a career that complements your skill set. If you choose a field and it's not a good fit, you learn that about yourself; try a new field or position that better suits you. If you land yourself in a position that you're passionate about, advancement could occur quickly.

### FUN FACT:

I am an avid outdoorsman and enjoy traveling, hiking, nature, and family.



## TYLER GARRETT

President & CEO | Moscow Building Supply & Pullman Building Supply

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I see myself still growing and maturing our business into a healthy operation. As president and CEO, I'm committed to growing not only my company but my staff as well. I also want to continue building a strong top management team all around.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

This is not an industry for the faint of heart. If you want to make a go of it, surround yourself with good people, and do right by your customers and your employees every single day. Many might not see a clear-cut career path here, so it's up to us to show them that there is an opportunity for growth and to make a great living.

### FUN FACT:

I make the most of my vacation time. For example, I'll go moose hunting for a couple of weeks in British Columbia or go on grizzly bear hunts in Alaska. One time, my buddy and I got dropped off in the middle of the Yukon, floated downriver while moose hunting, and got picked up by a plane 130 miles downstream.



## DUSTIN BYARS

General Manager | Kay Supply Building Center

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I will have continued to acquire new businesses, adding value to our contractors and lumberyards. My reputation of being a leader who embodies initiative in business and community will be well-established.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Be vocal and take action. This industry is a long game and success isn't overnight. Bring your ideas forward and take the initiative to help them to move forward. Showing your enthusiasm for serving others in this industry will take you far.

### FUN FACT:

I am an avid hat collector with more than 300 hats. Since I have such a variety, people notice that I wear a different ball cap each day.



## ANDREW BLACK

Senior Area Operations Manager | New South Construction Supply

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I see myself growing in my role in operations management and leadership with our company, and my plan is to coach and lead our young managers into great leaders at our company and beyond.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

There is no elevator to success. You have to take the stairs and put the work in. Once you realize this, you can begin your journey and start the process. Begin with the end in mind, set your goals, then relentlessly pursue them every day, and you will find success!

### FUN FACT:

I played rugby as a loosehead prop at Clemson University from 2007-2011, then on Hilton Head Rugby Club men's team for a few years after that as a prop and outside center.



## DUSTAN WAGNER

Owner | Wagner Lumber & Supply

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

Acquiring or opening a second location. My focus towards this goal includes building a dependable team.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Go for it. It is very exciting to have a hands-on career where you get to build and create things that may have not existed otherwise. My biggest advice is to learn as much as possible. The industry is lacking skilled workers.

### FUN FACT:

When I bought this company I had almost zero construction or building materials knowledge, but I knew how to run a business. I hit the ground running and I have continued to grow my knowledge every day.



## SALLIE KEENE DENTON

Business Development Representative | Wilson Lumber Company

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

The first time someone at Wilson Lumber asked me this, I cried. Due to challenges in my personal life in addition to a career change, I was in survival mode, unsure what my next five months looked like (let alone the next five years). I knew I wanted to be financially stable, in an environment where I could use “whatever talent I had to do my work to the best of my ability” (to paraphrase Ruth Bader Ginsburg). I now feel confident enough to say that, in the next five years, under my guidance, Wilson Lumber will be the haven for designers and architects across North Alabama and Tennessee to bring their clients.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

As a woman in a male-dominated industry, my first piece of advice is to not give up, even though there will be days you want to. Second, don't hesitate to use your connections. Finally, interview the company while they interview you. Make sure it has a plan for growth, a career path that you can follow, and a culture and work environment you want to be part of and thrive in!

### FUN FACT:

In my spare time, I co-host a podcast with my best friend, Katie. It's called “The Ladies List,” and we interview women business owners in Huntsville.



## JACOB DUFRENE

Part Owner | Dufrene Building Materials

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

Growing into 10 + stores and over \$200 million in sales.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Do it! Retail is a tough business to run, but learning to be a leader to your team is what will determine your success in this business.

### FUN FACT:

I played sports growing up and earned a full ride scholarship to play football at University of Kentucky.



## MARK BLICKENSTAFF

General Manager | Moore Lumber & Hardware

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I see myself still working with Moore Lumber & Hardware with a reputation that allows for a bigger audience to promote the LBM industry.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Just keep pushing. Get educated. No, that doesn't mean college necessarily, but always be focused on being the absolute best resource for your partners. Operate with integrity, have the hard conversations, but don't ever lose your integrity.

### FUN FACT:

I'm a proud Idaho Vandal! In my spare time I serve on the board of directors for the University of Idaho Alumni Association.



## MARSHALL MAURER

Growth Product Manager | Yesler Solutions

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I see myself bringing leadership and creativity to whatever role I'm in, and bringing home the energy that comes only from a sense of purpose back to my family every night (ideally with rustic header beams above me).

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

There are jobs that seem fun from the outside and serve little purpose, and there are jobs that are fun on the inside and serve real purpose. Lumber is the latter. Lumber is a great place to develop one's leadership methods, build hard and soft skills, and bring one's own values and energy to an industry that needs and welcomes the next generation of stewards and stalwarts.

### FUN FACT:

I'm a crack ornithologist who enjoys writing bird stories for my son to unwind after a long day in the lumber industry.



## JENNY VASQUEZ

Senior Director of Human Resources | Kodiak Building Partners

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I would like to have expanded my knowledge and expertise in HR by pursuing additional certifications and attending industry events and conferences. I also see myself taking on greater leadership responsibilities within my organization, mentoring and coaching young professionals, and collaborating with other industry leaders to drive positive change.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Take advantage of every opportunity to learn and grow. I would also encourage them to network and build relationships with others in the industry, as these connections can be invaluable in terms of career development and growth.

### FUN FACT:

I am an avid traveler and have visited more than 20 countries around the world. I believe travel is an excellent way to broaden your horizons and gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for different cultures and ways of life.



## AARON PARK

Outside Sales | Main Street Lumber & Millwork

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I look forward to each day and challenge, and I will continue to grow my business and establish deeper relationships with each project that passes.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Homebuilding is fun. Don't forget about all the sticks that make the home! Lumber and millwork sales is a niche job that you typically won't find on Indeed. The growth is endless, and it can be whatever you make of it. You will have daily challenges; be the person that faces them head on with a can't-fail attitude and you will succeed.

### FUN FACT:

I am married to the love of my life, Julia, and we have been blessed with two beautiful daughters, Savannah and Reese. We are also proud parents to Queso (Yellow Lab), a few cows, and a new pony (whose name is yet to be determined).



## NEIL AGARWAL

President/CEO | GE Frisco

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I'd like to leverage my background in mergers and acquisitions to acquire other businesses and expand into new products and services, and grow our lumber and special services divisions such that we would be a good candidate to bring in outside capital to infuse and power significant growth at the company.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Keep your ears and eyes open to continuously learn, ask questions, and find a mentor/champion in the industry. Also, maintain a good attitude with a penchant for learning and hard work. Finally, understand that there are tough moments in any job. Sometimes we have to do work that may not be as fun, but that's part of becoming better and stronger at what you do.

### FUN FACT:

Our family at one point owned a sawmill, so I started driving a car there at the age of 6. I started on my dad's lap and "graduated" to fully controlling the vehicle by 9 years old. I know this sounds dangerous, but it was a wide open space on private property, and luckily I didn't go too fast or far.



## TAYLOR GROSS

President | Gross-Yowell

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

If I'm lucky I'll be doing much of the same, and pursuing growth as we continue.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Soak it all in! I was blessed to grow up in this business at a very young age. I've done it all. Don't discount the entry level jobs. Learn from them. They will pay huge dividends later.

### FUN FACT:

When not spending time with my family I enjoy spending time at one of the ranches.



## CALEB DRENNING

Vice President of Purchasing and Marketing | YBC (Your Building Centers)

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I look to be doing exactly what I am doing today, but be even better at it. I want to be a sponge and learn everything possible about the LBM industry. I want to continue to network with the experienced professionals of this industry.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

For anyone looking to get into a new career, the LBM industry is the perfect option. There are many opportunities to grow your role and develop a long term career. Every person I have met has been more than willing to share their knowledge and expertise with me as I continue to evolve into my role.

### FUN FACT:

10% of people in world are left handed and I happen to be one of them! I enjoy remodeling old homes in my community, I have a truck full of tools, and I often spend time bringing older homes back to life.



## MATT GOEBEL

Inventory Manager | Star Lumber & Supply

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

At Star Lumber in our executive leadership in some capacity.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Start at the bottom if you are able to do so. Your company's services are rendered at the bottom and knowing how these duties are performed will help you on every step up the ladder.

### FUN FACT:

I grew up working on a dairy farm as the oldest of six boys.



## LINDSEY DiGANGI

AVP, Marketing | Pennsylvania Lumbermens Mutual Insurance Company (PLM)

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I see myself as a senior leader at PLM, leading a group of hungry and humble PLM employees who understand the importance of what we do to support the industry and the importance of what our insureds' do to support their communities. I see myself as the face of PLM and active in various associations. I am passionate about the next generation and women's groups that are forming within industry associations and am actively committing financially to support the growth and development of these groups today.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

You are entering the working world at a very interesting time. Don't assume you already know where your degree or your trade skill will fit from an industry perspective. If you stay curious and don't make assumptions, you will quickly learn that everything and everyone has a story. Those stories have incredible value in your understanding of your role in the larger ecosystem of the company and industry you are in.

### FUN FACT:

When I'm not at work, I love to make things! I'm a baker and a potter. If my brain can dream it up, I want to make it with clay or decorate it with frosting.



## TIM LUCAS

Product Line Manager, Windows & Exterior Doors | GBS Building Supply

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

Working on getting replacement windows off at GBS. I would like to take what I'm doing in the custom home realm and roll it into a replacement market so GBS can offer both custom and replacement windows.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

For people trying to grow in the lumber business, find something you are passionate about and stay hungry. Keep your enthusiasm, passion, and hunger during the training phase.

### FUN FACT:

I like to spend any free time I have woodworking. I've made the conference room tables at GBS, retirement gifts, pens, and furniture. I set up a shop in my garage, my wife hates it. My love of woodworking comes from my grandfather. He taught me everything he knew. He passed away in 2014 and I like to think I'm carrying on that family legacy.



## JAMI LEE WRIGHT

Team Cheerleader | Wright Building Center

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I'd be hard pressed to tell you where I'll be at 5:00 tonight let alone 5 years from now.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Work hard, own your mistakes, and know the value of honest, timely communication.

### FUN FACT:

My daily work attire consists of a buffalo plaid robe (much to my Mama's dismay). I even added a Wright Building Center patch to make it official. Trust me—it's pretty sweet.



## JOHN MUZZY

Retail Division Human Resources Manager | Hancock Lumber

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

Hopefully in a very similar position as I'm currently in! I'm incredibly fortunate to have an amazing family, live in a great state, and spend my professional time working in a capacity that I truly believe has a positive impact on my teammates and their families.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Think about the types of work that you find satisfying. Maybe you get satisfaction helping people. Perhaps you're most fulfilled when you see what you've accomplished with your own two hands. Maybe you work best with data and problem solving. If all I knew about someone was one of those things, I'd be able to talk to them about possible paths at Hancock Lumber. I would also recommend taking the time to really consider what types of industries accomplish something that they personally find purpose in. It's not just selling materials; we are a big part of putting people in their homes, of helping their vision and dreams turn into reality.

### FUN FACT:

Just like Hancock Lumber is a seventh-generation company, I was the seventh generation of my family born into the same house in a small town where I graduated high school with just 17 other kids.



## ISAAC WEBER

President | Lugbill Supply Center

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I see Lugbill Supply Center opening more locations. I have a vision of four locations in planned areas. My goal would be to open two to three in the next five years.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

First and foremost, do what you love and always put God first in everything you do. Always be willing to listen to someone's advice—that doesn't always mean take someone's advice, but through others experiences and failures you can learn, and in return not make the same mistakes others have.

### FUN FACT:

One of my favorite things to do is try new restaurants and foods I've never tasted before.



## ALAN WALTERS

Owner | Miller Lumber Sales

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

Miller Lumber owns property adjacent to our current facility where we look forward to growing our business. We plan to use this area to expand our carrying capacity, minimize loss, and provide a better customer experience by building additional sheds, increasing space for shipping and receiving, and providing a more ergonomic flow for both our customers and employees in the yard.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

Listen and be teachable. Pay attention to the small things that successful people around you do. Another piece of advice I would give is understanding the jobs around you will set you up for success, regardless of your role as an employee.

### FUN FACT:

Over the course of 15 years, my dad and I went to watch every team in Major League Baseball play a game at their home stadium.



## JEFFREY HOPFENBECK

Co-Founder & CEO | Simple Homes

### WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS:

I intend to grow Simple Homes into a national player in the offsite construction space and see a future where we are helping our customers deliver thousands of units per year across multiple markets. In the process, I hope we are able to help collaborate with other industry participants to figure out new ways to use design, technology, and innovative building methods to deliver desperately-needed housing units in a world where skilled labor continues to be scarce.

### ADVICE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

As someone who was not previously in the LBM world, I have absolutely fallen in love with the industry and intend to build the rest of my career here. I think the biggest thing that has surprised me is the length and depth of the relationships in the industry. Whereas some industries can be quite transactional, long-term relationships are a core part of the LBM industry, which is something I really love.

### FUN FACT:

I love to travel and have been to over 50 countries. My goal is to reach over 100 by the time I am 50.



## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Not surprisingly, we received far more nominees than we could recognize in LBM Journal's 40 Under 40. It's why each year we'll welcome an entirely new group of professionals to our list of inductees. If your name (or the name of an associate you nominated) wasn't included this year, we encourage you to re-nominate again next year, when this year's winners will serve as judges. And it is our sincere hope that everyone will continue their influential work that serves to influence and inspire other young LBM professionals.

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# TECHNOLOGY

IN AN ENVIRONMENT FILLED WITH DISRUPTION,  
TECHNOLOGY HELPS EASE THE PAIN.

BY MIKE BERGER

**DATA** management has been on the minds of us humans for a very long time. Take for example the ancient Inca civilization. Its people used a device called a quipu that consisted of fiber strings onto which they tied knots in intricate patterns to represent data about everything from taxes to census records to military movements.

While we don't have to rely on knots any longer, data management today is just as important as it was to the Inca 1,000 years ago. Unfortunately, the ability to manage that information can be a daunting task for LBM dealers, and many don't know where to begin with unraveling those data knots. According to leading technology experts, however, by better understanding the leading trends and tech concerns for the LBM industry, dealers can successfully weave their way through, creating a better data landscape for themselves and their customers.



## A YEAR OF DISRUPTION

Like its preceding year, 2022 had more than its share of challenges. The continuing influence of the COVID-19 pandemic, labor and supply chain disruptions, and fears of inflation and recession all created pressure across every facet of the LBM industry. “It’s undeniable that the past twelve months have been marked by continued economic uncertainty in the form of layoffs, a looming recession and a tumultuous housing market,” says John Maiuri, president of the LBMH division of ECI Software Solutions. “As a result, we’ve seen a spotlight on technology for the LBM industry to help dealers better manage market challenges.”

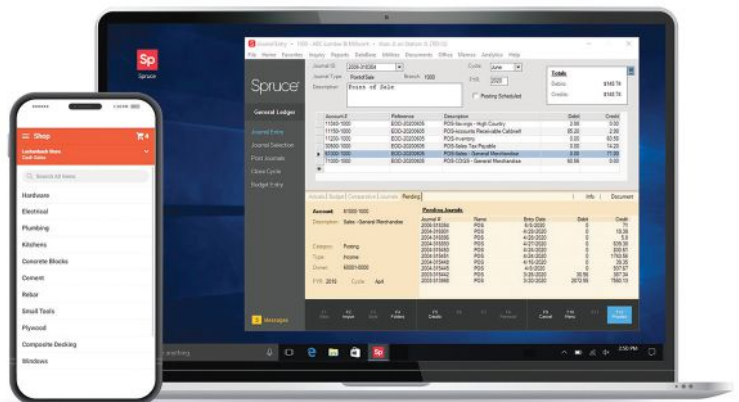
It’s an environment that’s forced LBM dealers to look for innovative solutions to improve what they do and how they do it. “The last 12 months have brought significant changes in technology needs for building supply dealers due to continued shifts in consumer behavior,” says Graham Rigby, regional vice president of Epicor, pointing to factors such as e-commerce, logistics, and payment processing as disruptors.

Luke Strait, vice president of Precision Estimating, Inc., also sees the importance of innovation, especially in the face of disruption. “Higher interest rates, labor shortages and insecurity in the last twelve months are pushing LBM dealers to do more—better and faster than ever before. Having solutions that they can trust is key in this environment. Having solutions that they can trust and that work well together... that’s gold.”

To downplay the impact of those disruptions would be difficult indeed, says Yaser Masoudnia, CEO and co-founder of BlueTape. Similarly, it’s hard to overstress the benefits technology tools can bring to the bottom line. “The last twelve months have seen a lot of volatility in material prices and uncertainty about U.S. economics,” he explains. “With the housing market slowing down and interest rates increasing, LBM dealers need to take advantage of technology that will help them combat these fluctuations and prepare for whatever is coming by mitigating their exposure to risk. Most LBM dealers are exposed to significant risk due to the fact that they manually process their credit accounts and run credit accounts themselves. Any market effect on dealer customers will in turn increase risk for the supplier’s receivables.”

And it’s not only receivables that’s been impacted; every aspect of LBM business has been impacted. “Honestly the only way to answer that question is to ask what hasn’t been disrupted by technology in the last year? Probably nothing,” says Steve Yates, executive vice president of Buildxact. “If you look at a dealer’s business, there isn’t one thing that remains untouched by new technology—from AI to ChatGPT to warehouse management software, tracking mechanisms, advances in autonomous vehicles, sales platforms, and the list goes on and on and on.” ▶

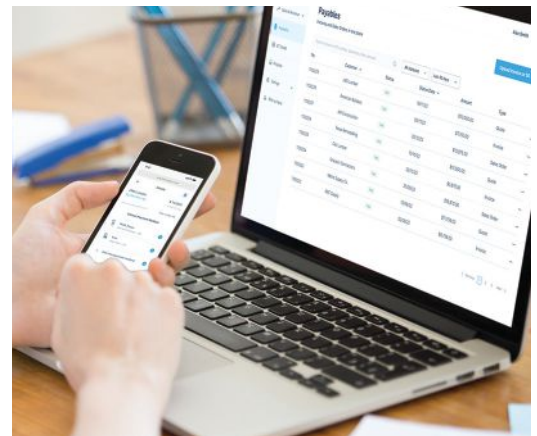
According to ECI, its e-commerce platform, which includes an expanded product data management solution specifically customized for home and building supply businesses, is designed to deliver the model of the traditional LBM dealer online, where everything previously done in-store with highly labor-intensive processes can now be delivered more efficiently, with a 24/7/365 sales presence.



**RIGHT:** With the latest release of BisTrack, Epicor has introduced a completely new desktop user experience and technical uplift of the entire system, along with several enhancements to specific functionality to help warehouse staff better manage inventories, yards, and deliveries.



**FAR RIGHT:** BlueTape's most recent developments include the functionality required to provide trade credit to projects paid by a financier such as a bank, giving builders more flexibility for large projects and commercial endeavors.



And while technology investments can be daunting for the LBM dealer, the benefits technology can bring aren't just long term. "The current market cycle is driven by the rapid rise in interest rates—the cost of capital to run our business, the cost of mortgages, and equity lines of credit slamming builders and homeowners," explains Valerie Hansen, founder and chair of BuyMetrics. "Interest rate-driven cycles are not new or even rare. Industry veterans are quick to focus on cash flow, reinforce core strengths, while differentiating themselves from the competition. Ideally, in a capital constrained market, investments in technology will enhance areas of strength and provide near-term benefit to cash flow, the bottom-line, [and] pay for themselves in weeks versus years."

**E-COMMERCE IS HERE TO STAY**

When it comes to technology solutions, industry experts consistently point to one rising star: e-commerce. Embraced at a near-rapid pace during the advent of the pandemic, e-commerce shows no signs of receding, and in fact can bring unlooked-for benefits.

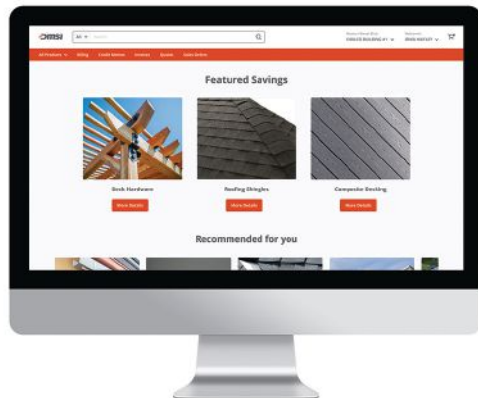
"Now that we're past the initial 'e-commerce explosion' from the pandemic where we witnessed digital commerce take off as a result of

social distancing and changing consumer preferences, our engagements with LBM leaders suggest broader expectations of digital technologies that can help them further adapt to the market," explains ECI's Maiuri. "For example, at the center of every modern e-commerce strategy there needs to be a focus on data and how it leads to insights that can improve opportunities for business growth. Many dealers are struggling with generic e-commerce solutions that do not address the specifics of LBM and hardware & home center customer engagement. In addition to high-quality product data, ease of administration and real-time data connections to the dealers' point of sale system have become crucial pillars of success for every successful e-commerce strategy and more LBM dealers are looking for the proper technology to deliver on trade and consumer expectations."

Simon Sikora, director of e-commerce for DMSi Software, points out how effective e-commerce sites can serve as a powerful, dynamic marketing tool. "When users visit, they should see relevant products and information. Creating user journeys for different customer segments helps customers find what they need more easily. It makes the site more enjoyable and helps grow sales, a win-win."

Marc Hamer, executive vice president and chief information and technology officer at Orgill, also sees the demand for e-commerce and online ordering as a growing trend. "Ever since COVID-19, more and more customers are opting for online ordering and delivery of building materials," he says. "As a result, LBM dealers have had to invest in e-commerce platforms and digital storefronts to meet this demand. Some LBM dealers have opted for contactless payment methods such as Apple Pay, Google Pay, or contactless credit and debit cards. This change has required some to upgrade their payment systems and equipment." ▶

According to DMSi, its new Agility Commerce Cloud e-commerce solution is a comprehensive and mobile-responsive sales and service platform that's easy to manage. It is designed to have unlimited APIs, allowing dealers to integrate with the third-party tools of their choosing. The built-in content management system makes it easy for anyone to create custom pages with rich content, meaning dealers can create high-quality online experiences without hiring a special web team.





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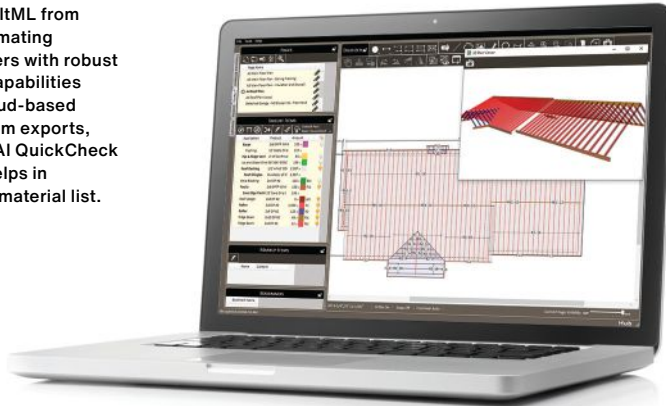


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**RIGHT:** PrebuiltML from Precision Estimating provides dealers with robust list-building capabilities along with cloud-based storage, custom exports, and a built-in AI QuickCheck feature that helps in validating the material list.



1. Where is the building located? \*

Select the state/territory in which your building is located. You may start typing the state/territory name to filter this list.

2. What is the type of building? \*

Single Family Detached    Single Family Attached    Mobile Home

Multifamily with 2-4 units    Multifamily with 5-10 units    Multifamily with 11-50 units    Multifamily with 51+ units

3. When was the building built? \*

Before 1940    1940-1979    1980 or later

4. What is the square footage of your building? \*

Less than 1000 sq ft    1000 to 2000 sq ft    Greater than 2000 sq ft

**FAR RIGHT:** The Advanced Building Construction Collaborative recently partnered with Buildxact to create a consumer-facing portal that compiles data based on decades of insights on the state of the U.S. building stock and then makes recommendations for a specific project or property. The results then link directly to a recipe within Buildxact, where the builder can access it, make adjustments, and then send the bill of materials to a supplier as a purchase order.

With the increased use of e-commerce comes the fees associated with credit and debit card payments, Ryan Ayers, CEO of Suppli, and it's an issue LBM dealers need to pay attention to. "Credit card usage has also increased (now over 60% of payments) and is only headed higher as economic volatility remains elevated," he says. "Dealers need to leverage technology to lower the cost of accepting cards—whether that's passing along a fee to customers, using software to optimize the interchange rates they're paying, or offering online ACH."

**THE RISE OF THE MACHINES**

While it may sound like science fiction, experts say the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) for the LBM industry is on the rise. "AI and ML are being used in various industries to automate and optimize business processes," explains Epicor's Rigby. "Building supply dealers can leverage these technologies to optimize their supply chains, improve logistics, and enhance customer experience. From smarter software to help manage and predict product demand and ordering to robots for inventory management, the presence of AI and ML will continue to expand.

Customers today are taking advantage of the opportunity to apply AI to intelligently learn and match information from multiple data sources such as emails, scanned documents, or network folders."

Orgill's Marc Hamer agrees with Rigby's insights. "AI and ML are already being used in various industries to improve efficiency and automate processes," he says. "LBM dealers could use AI and ML to optimize their supply chain, automate inventory management, and even provide personalized recommendations to customers."

While some view AI as a technology that's fraught with peril, there's no doubting its use is on a significant upswing. For example, according to a recent report by Global Industry Analysts, the global market for artificial intelligence was an estimated \$46.9 billion in 2020 but is now projected to reach a whopping \$341.4 billion by 2027. "Technology is the link between data and automation," says BuyMetrics' Hansen. "Machine learning and predictive analytics are not new. What's new is the pace of innovation. New products, new AI automated tools, new methods of production, are bubbling up all across the construction industry." ▶

Yesler Storefront is a seller's personal digital marketplace where they feature their products, their company, their reputation, and the value they create for buyers. With the Mobile! QR code, sellers can instantly share their Storefront, and buyers can review seller inventory and product offers while walking the yard, after hours, or on jobsites.

Steve Coppola  
LENCO Supplies  
https://app.yesler.com/SteveCoppola

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DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	LOCATION	Request Quote
2x4 SPF Stud 92-5/8	1 TL PROMPT	Buffalo, NY	Request Quote
2x4 EURO SPF #2&8tr Prem 92-5/8	1 TL PROMPT	Buffalo, NY	Request Quote
2x4 SPF Stud 104-5/8	1 TL PROMPT	Buffalo, NY	Request Quote
2x6 HemFir #2&8tr 92-5/8	1 TL PROMPT	Buffalo, NY	Request Quote
2x4 SPF 165DF MSR 14 ft	1 TL PROMPT	Buffalo, NY	Request Quote
2x4 SPF #1 No-S 104-5/8 (ODS stock)	4 TL PROMPT (\$ FOB origin)	Lackawanna, NY	Request Quote
2x10 SPF #2 No-S (Toko Stock)	1 TL PROMPT (\$ FOB origin) 2/8 2/10 3/12 3/14 3/16	Lackawanna, NY	Request Quote
2x10 SPF #2 No-S (Toko Stock)	1 TL PROMPT (\$ FOB origin) 2/8 2/10 3/12 3/14 3/16	Lackawanna, NY	Request Quote
2x6 EURO SPF #2 Prem 10'	1 TL PROMPT (\$ FOB origin)	Baltimore, MD	Request Quote
2x6 SPF Stud 104-5/8 (Pleasant River Stock)	1 TL PROMPT (\$ FOB origin)	Lackawanna, NY	Request Quote
2x4 EURO SPF #2&8tr Prem 14'	2 TL (\$ FOB origin)	Wilmington, NC	Request Quote
2x4 EURO SPF #2&8tr Prem 10'	5 TL (\$ FOB origin)	Wilmington, NC	Request Quote
1x4 EURO SPF #2&8tr Prem 8'	3 TL (\$ FOB origin)	Cape Canaveral, FL	Request Quote



# PREBUILT ML

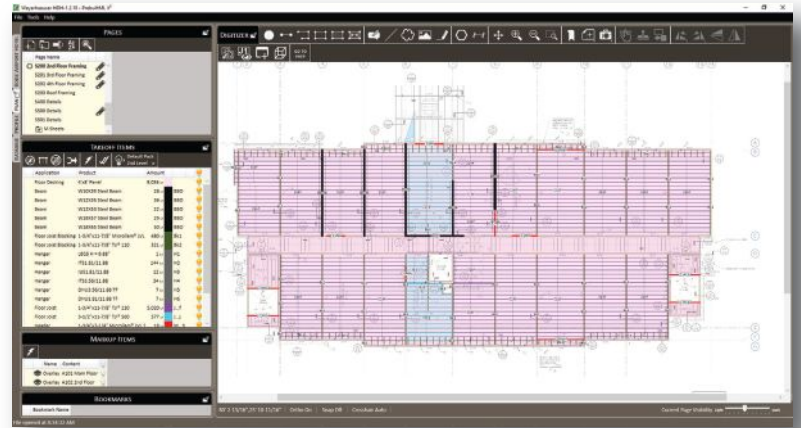
Specialized Takeoff Solutions for the Building Industry

## Do more, better.

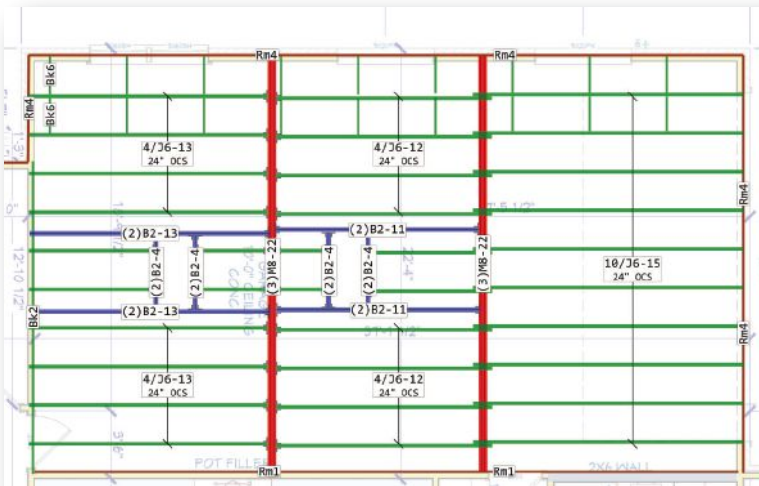
Ready to Ship material lists

Item	Quantity	Product Description	Product Application
1	1	4" x 8" Joist	Roof Deck
2	1	2" x 8" Joist	Roof Deck
3	1	2" x 10" Joist	Roof Deck
4	1	2" x 12" Joist	Roof Deck
5	1	2" x 14" Joist	Roof Deck
6	1	2" x 16" Joist	Roof Deck
7	1	2" x 18" Joist	Roof Deck
8	1	2" x 20" Joist	Roof Deck
9	1	2" x 22" Joist	Roof Deck
10	1	2" x 24" Joist	Roof Deck
11	1	2" x 26" Joist	Roof Deck
12	1	2" x 28" Joist	Roof Deck
13	1	2" x 30" Joist	Roof Deck
14	1	2" x 32" Joist	Roof Deck
15	1	2" x 34" Joist	Roof Deck
16	1	2" x 36" Joist	Roof Deck
17	1	2" x 38" Joist	Roof Deck
18	1	2" x 40" Joist	Roof Deck
19	1	2" x 42" Joist	Roof Deck
20	1	2" x 44" Joist	Roof Deck
21	1	2" x 46" Joist	Roof Deck
22	1	2" x 48" Joist	Roof Deck
23	1	2" x 50" Joist	Roof Deck
24	1	2" x 52" Joist	Roof Deck
25	1	2" x 54" Joist	Roof Deck
26	1	2" x 56" Joist	Roof Deck
27	1	2" x 58" Joist	Roof Deck
28	1	2" x 60" Joist	Roof Deck
29	1	2" x 62" Joist	Roof Deck
30	1	2" x 64" Joist	Roof Deck
31	1	2" x 66" Joist	Roof Deck
32	1	2" x 68" Joist	Roof Deck
33	1	2" x 70" Joist	Roof Deck
34	1	2" x 72" Joist	Roof Deck
35	1	2" x 74" Joist	Roof Deck
36	1	2" x 76" Joist	Roof Deck
37	1	2" x 78" Joist	Roof Deck
38	1	2" x 80" Joist	Roof Deck
39	1	2" x 82" Joist	Roof Deck
40	1	2" x 84" Joist	Roof Deck
41	1	2" x 86" Joist	Roof Deck
42	1	2" x 88" Joist	Roof Deck
43	1	2" x 90" Joist	Roof Deck
44	1	2" x 92" Joist	Roof Deck
45	1	2" x 94" Joist	Roof Deck
46	1	2" x 96" Joist	Roof Deck
47	1	2" x 98" Joist	Roof Deck
48	1	2" x 100" Joist	Roof Deck

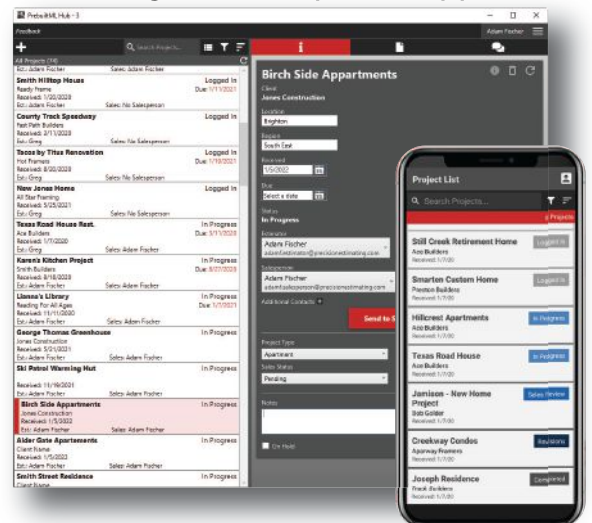
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Trimble MAPS has created a web-based scheduling application within its Appian Suite giving LBM dealers the ability to plan routes by asset or driver, effectively replacing the traditional white board seen at many pro desks. Users can also access a reservation system that creates placeholders for future deliveries.



And rather than being used as a replacement for people in the workforce, technology experts see AI as a tool used in conjunction *with* the human element. “ChatGPT and other AI are finally breaking toward the mainstream,” explains Matt Meyers, CEO and founder of Yesler. “Applications for LBM beyond the novelty of a conversational bot are coming. AI will supplement the work of the people in our industry, not replace

them. The key question is not, ‘When can I replace my human employees?’ The question is, ‘How can I increase the capability and capacity of the people in my operation?’”

**DELIVERING SOLUTIONS—LITERALLY** Being able to provide product to your customers is one thing; getting the product to them while enabling them to track where their orders are in pro-

cess is another. While traditional fleet management can bring a world of logistical headaches for the LBM dealer, today’s technology tools hold the promise to ease the process.

“Consolidation in the industry has left LBM fleets struggling with the best way to share resources across multiple locations in single geographic regions,” says Steven Kalnitzky, senior product manager of Appian from Trimble. “Software vendors should be able to account for this complexity allowing seamless ways to move resources between locations within a region and automatically account for transfer orders and multi-domicile pickups and deliveries. This allows LBM distributors to get the most out of their assets and drivers.”

Orgill’s Marc Hamer agrees. “There is an increased demand for an integrated solution that connects the supply chain from the customer who owns the project to the contractor that is building to the LBM dealer that is providing the materials. This end-to-end integration will allow a much more efficient and cost-effective building experience.”

It’s thanks to the Internet of Things—the interconnectivity of physical devices, vehicles, and buildings via embedded electronics—that enables this connectivity says Epicor’s Rigby, and it’s an area that LBM dispatch and delivery can benefit from. “The use of geofencing capabilities can help builders understand when deliveries have happened and notify the yard when a truck has left or is returning so the team can prepare for the next reload, saving time and driving efficiency by prioritizing the work and alerting employees when they need to get started on the next pickup.”

**SEEING THE BIG PICTURE**

Rather than thinking of technology tools as silos, each providing a single solution for a single problem, industry experts recommend taking a more holistic approach through systems integration, part of which comes from being able to easily access data to build business.

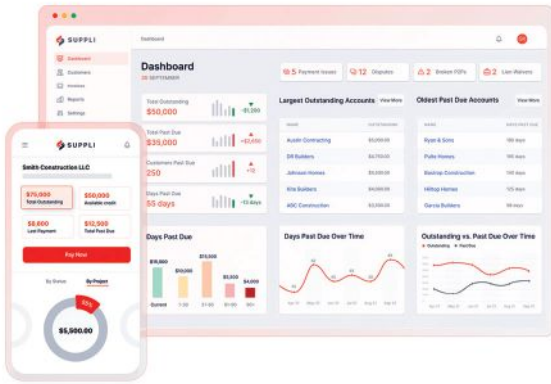
“Access to data and the technology to access it has made finding customers, understanding their activities,

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According to Suppli, its platform allows dealers to offer an online, mobile-first customer account and payments experience that rivals the big box and national brands. It enables dealers to fight back against credit card fees by implementing a card convenience fee (which can be charged based on whether invoices are past due or above a certain dollar amount), interchange optimization, and one-click ACH payments.



According to BuyMetrics, its business intelligence tools create multi-layered visual representations of data, automatically comparing purchase dollars to quoted market dollars, quoted price spread, and measuring the depth and breadth of market coverage. As well, it gives users the ability to correlate a purchase price and market measures to externally produced market reports.


reaching them, and providing them the right support easier and smarter,” Buildxact’s Yates comments. “This is definitely the aspect that we find most dealers focusing on—they are hesitant to embrace technology because they think that it takes away the human touch and the value that they can deliver. However, many of them are starting to understand that with strong leadership and good management of the technology, it can offer the right path to deliver value more effectively and efficiently than ever before.”

Access to data—both for the dealer and the customer—brings a growing imperative for security, and LBM dealers need to be prioritizing privacy and data protection. “With more business conducted online, building supply dealers need to ensure that their customers’ data is secure and that they are compliant with data privacy regulations,” Epicor’s Rigby points out. “This requires the implementation of robust cybersecurity measures and the adoption of data privacy policies and practices. Many of

our customers are implementing multi-factor authentication processes and rolling them out to their employees to increase security and reduce the likelihood of a cybersecurity event.”

The big picture, technology experts say, is in seeing how to make processes easier for both staff and customer rather than more cumbersome. “Programs or systems that improve customer experience are more important than ever,” says Orgill’s Hamer. “Since the pandemic, supply chains are improving but are still not where they were or need to be. To mitigate this, LBM dealers have had to adopt more sophisticated inventory management systems to track supplies and manage their supply chains more efficiently.”

The technology front is a constantly changing space, and the growing trends touched on here only scratch the proverbial surface of the benefits LBM dealers can reap. Still, the best technology alone won’t bring wins; it ultimately rests with the LBM dealer. As Buildxact’s Yates reminds us, “Even with all this opportunity at technology, it doesn’t mean that dealers are embracing and adopting the technology. If dealers don’t start to evolve with technology soon, it’s certain that they will find themselves ‘flying through the windshield,’ especially considering that there are others out there that are leaning in and dominating because they understand technology and are leveraging it.” ■







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### M-Pwr Smart Doors

Masonite's M-Pwr Smart Doors are said to be 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 available for renovation, repair, and remodeling applications. Battery backup keeps the door functioning in the event of a power outage, and the M-Pwr App offers lighting control, customization of settings, and the ability to check if the door is open or closed. Options for the door include both single and double sidelight configurations. residential. [masonite.com](https://www.masonite.com)



### TREX RainEscape

New from Trex, the RainEscape under-deck drainage system is designed to provide under-deck protection from the elements while optimizing the usability of the space beneath an elevated deck. Using an integrated network of troughs and downspouts applied above the joists of the substructure, the system captures and diverts water away from the deck to create dry space underneath. Once protected, this space can be used for storage or outfitted with furnishings and accessories to create an additional outdoor living area. According to Trex, gas and electrical lines can be safely and discreetly run between the deck surface and soffit ceiling below to power lighting, ceiling fans, grills, appliances, electrical components, and more. In addition, RainEscape is warranted against defects in materials or workmanship under normal and proper use for 25 years from purchase. [trex.com](https://www.trex.com)



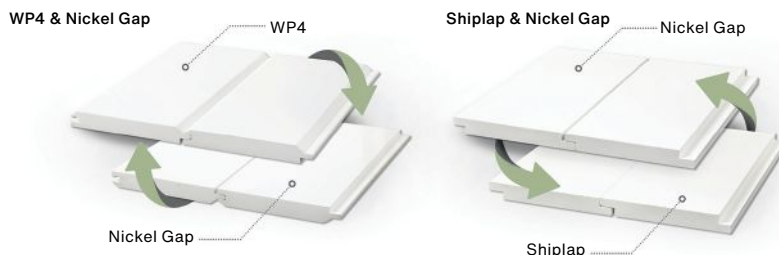
### New Colors for Westlake Royal Building Products

New from Westlake Royal Building Products, its Royal Haven Insulated Siding and Exterior Portfolio CraneBoard Solid Core Siding is now available in new colors. Inspired by popular trends in exterior home design, Royal Haven Insulated Siding will add three rich, dark shades to its Board & Batten profile: Urban Bronze (shown here), Ironstone, and Marine Blue. Exterior Portfolio's CraneBoard Solid Core Siding will also add three dark colors to its Board & Batten profile: Indigo (also shown here), Canyon, and Peppercorn. Royal Haven Vinyl Siding and Exterior Portfolio Vinyl Siding lines also feature the company's Chromatix technology color protection to resist fading so dark colors stay true. [westlakeroyalbuildingproducts.com](https://www.westlakeroyalbuildingproducts.com)



### New Profiles from Wolf Trim

Wolf Home Products has recently released two new products to its premium Wolf Trim lineup of tongue and groove profile. The new additions—WP4 & Nickel Gap and Shiplap & Nickel Gap—each features a tongue and groove profile and offers a reversible design to suit a variety of on-trend, modern design preferences. Made of lightweight, high-cell density PVC, the manufacturer says these profiles won't absorb moisture, making them easy to work with and helping to streamline installation. Just like wood, they can be cut, drilled, mitered, nailed or glued without the use of any special tools. Both new offerings are available in 18' lengths and come in 1x6 and 1x8 sizes. [wolfhomeproducts.com](https://www.wolfhomeproducts.com)





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**Silvermine Stone Mortarless Stone Pillar Kits**

According to Silvermine Stone, its new Mortarless Stone Pillar Kits feature a simple, quick, and cost-effective installation that enhances the look of exterior posts and pillars. The system allows you to integrate decorative pillars into any project, and the kits provide nearly everything needed to construct an 18" x 18" stone pillar with either 36" or 48" height without any measuring, cutting, or calculating. For added curb appeal, the pillar stones match the Silvermine Stone Belterra Collection of stone siding and are available in five of the most popular and on-trend color palettes. [silverminestone.com](http://silverminestone.com)



**StoneCoat FUSION System**

According to StoneCoat, its new FUSION system consists of a single panel that replaces four layers of materials (exterior insulation, OSB sheathing, waterproofing/vapor barrier, and metal lath). FUSION's structural insulated sheathing and integrated masonry backing panels are compatible with most exterior claddings. Their R10 insulation helps meet new energy code requirements, and FUSION also offers up to R30 insulation with a 6" thickness. The panels also resist cracking, rotting, and mold compared to traditional building materials. In addition, the panels are lightweight, making installation faster and easier, and are a sustainable, carbon-neutral product, as the laminate is made from recycled petroleum products, making it easier for builders, developers and architects to meet environmental requirements and gain LEED points. [stonecoat.com](http://stonecoat.com)



**FastenMaster MVP Multipurpose Wood Screw**

FastenMaster, a division of OMG, Inc., recently launched its MVP Multipurpose Wood Screw that the manufacturer says is designed for framing, interior remodeling, cabinetry, and more. The fasteners feature FastenMaster's exclusive double-lead SureStart point for a fast start, and the TORX ttap drive system provides a stable, wobble-free installation. MVP fasteners also feature a proprietary ProjectLife Coating that FastenMaster says delivers superior corrosion protection for the life of the project and a SureSink Head that countersinks into the wood without compromising clamping force. MVP fasteners are available in six sizes from 1-1/2" through 4" in half-inch increments, and come packaged in small packs of 100, project packs of 250 to 500 depending on the length, and in bulk quantities of 1,250 to 2,000 fasteners depending on the length. A free TORX bit is provided in every box. [fastenmaster.com](http://fastenmaster.com)



**MILGARD AX550 Moving Glass Walls**

New from the MITER Brands family of window and door products, the Milgard AX550 Moving Glass Walls blend luxury, expansive size, and smooth operation with aesthetic charm, says the manufacturer. They let in optimal natural light and blur the line between where your indoor space ends and outdoor living begins. Available in sliding, pocket, and bi-fold configurations in four colors, these oversized doors are reported to glide effortlessly and operate with ease in sizes as large as 10' tall and 20' wide. [milgard.com](http://milgard.com)





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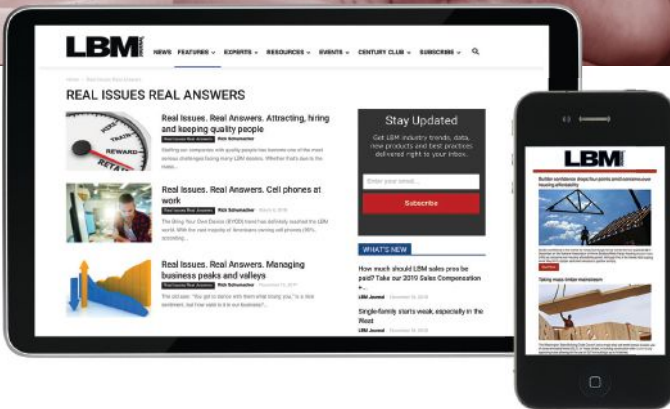
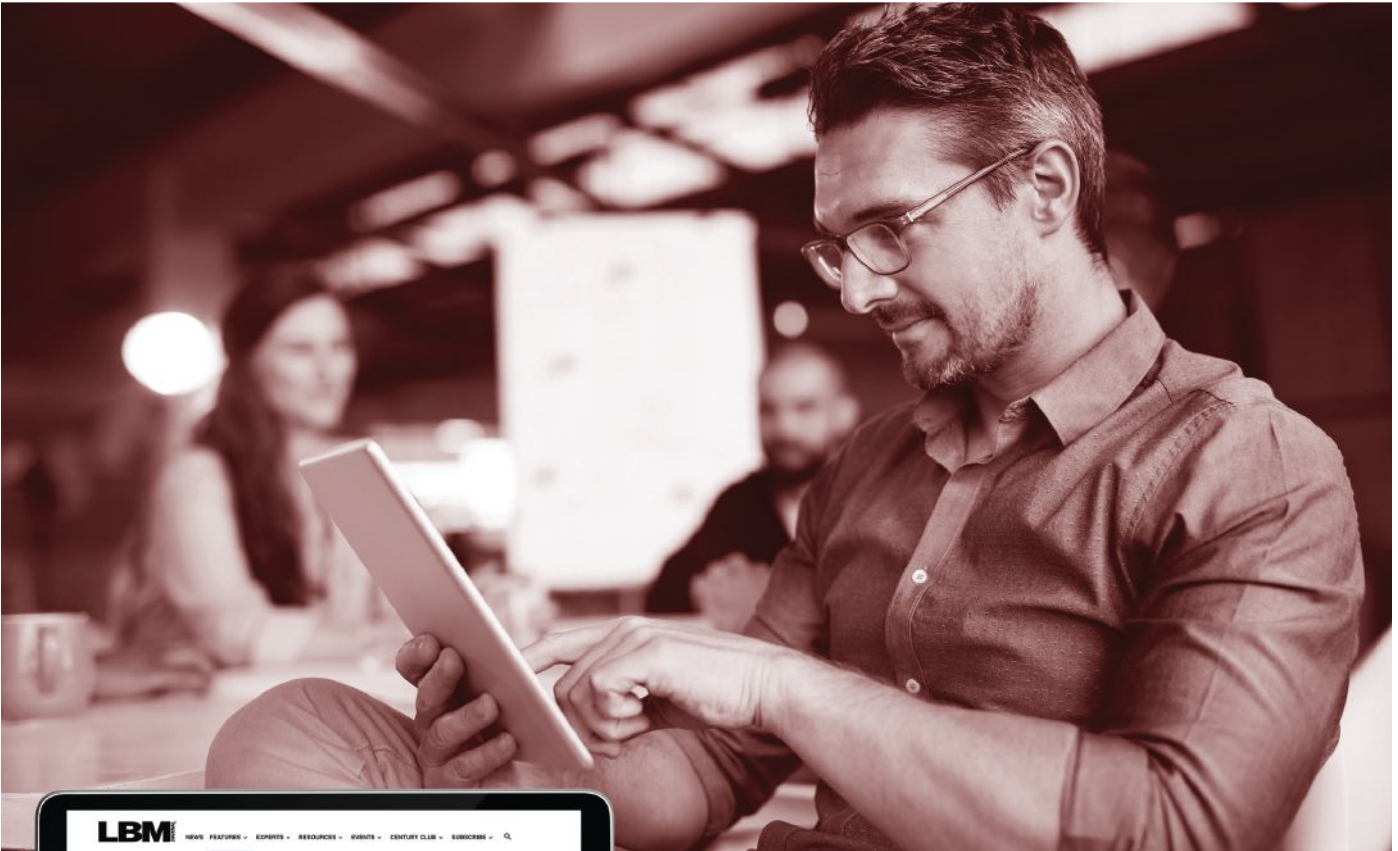
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**AS A RECENT COLLEGE GRAD** with a four-year degree in business, you set your sights on going to work in an industry with actual growth potential, one that will be around for the long haul, and one that offers a genuine opportunity to earn a healthy income, and possibly even own your own company. You did your due diligence—attending job fairs, studying the industry trends, talking with guidance counselors and successful family friends.

The industries that look the most exciting, especially technology, are very sexy on the surface, but technology moves so quickly, you're unsure how to find a company that has staying power. A friend's older brother took a job at a company that does website security for some of the country's biggest retailers. When you visited him at his office, you were amazed to see foosball tables, pinball machines, a fully stocked kitchen, and even two kegs of beer on tap! A year later, after the company went through a massive round of layoffs, you learned from your buddy's brother that, while it looked uber cool, it was an awful place to work.

A family friend is a homebuilder, and he recommended you consider working at a lumberyard. "As long as people need to build new homes or repair their existing ones, there will be a need for lumberyards," he explained. "Plus, since lumberyards aren't great at attracting young people, there's a real opportunity for you to learn the business, build a solid career, and possibly earn some serious money."

You liked what you heard, so you followed up with a lumberyard that was at one of your school's job fairs. "We are definitely looking for sharp young pros to join our team," the owner gushed, "and you will be the one and only person on track to join our management team!"

The pay was fair and the benefits were solid, so you hitched your wagon and your hopes for a bright future. After tours of the yard, introductions to the heads of the different areas, you were given a desk and a title, Management Trainee, and told to learn the business from your new colleagues. Looking back, that's where it went wildly off-track.

Since the company didn't do a lot of hiring, they had no formal training in place. It's true that many of your co-workers had been there for decades...but getting them to share their decades of experience was next to impossible. You get the feeling that they gained their "tribal knowledge" the hard way, and they weren't going to do you any favors.

Nearing the end of your sixth month of full-time employment, and you still feel that you're flying blind. You did well in school, worked your way through both high school and college, but this experience is making you question your abilities, and decision to join the lumber industry.

You desperately need training, but the owners have made clear that you're smart enough to find your way, and if you're not, the LBM business isn't for you. What would you do?

## CAST YOUR VOTE ONLINE AT: [LBMJOURNAL.COM](http://LBMJOURNAL.COM)

- **WALK.** There are LBM companies that are a good place to learn and build a career, but this isn't one of them. When you put in your notice, wish the owners the best of luck. They'll need it.
- **SPEAK UP!** Tell the owners that you understand business, and truly want to learn the LBM business, but your co-workers aren't helping. Unless they provide some training, they're wasting their money and your time.
- **PATIENCE.** Accept that LBM businesses don't always operate like the companies you studied in school. Earn the trust of your coworkers, and eventually they'll share their secrets.
- **ENGAGE WITH BUILDERS.** Since your coworkers won't help, get permission to spend time with builder customers. Learn their pain points and what they want from your company, and your training is underway.

## SOMETHING ELSE?

If you'd take a different plan of attack, email your suggested solution to [Rick@LBMJournal.com](mailto:Rick@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](http://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](http://lbmjournal.com/lbm-century-club).

### THE MOST RECENT INDUCTEES INTO THIS EXCLUSIVE CLUB INCLUDE:

HERMANN LUMBER COMPANY Hermann, MO	est. 1922	WOODS LUMBER Independence, KS	est. 1889
BARDEN LUMBER Boyne City, MI	est. 1922	BIG JOHNS BUILDING SUPPLY LLC Cedaredge, CO	est. 1904
MAZE LUMBER Peru, IL	est. 1848	POWELL ACE HOME CENTER Covington, IN	est. 1886
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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