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REAL ISSUES. REAL ANSWERS.
EFFECTIVE TRAINING OPTIONS

We asked readers for their advice for a fellow lumber dealer who is struggling to find the right training for new hires.



LBM JOURNAL[®]

20

YEARS



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A builder is convinced he can nearly double his completed homes and his purchases—if you're willing to work with him and his aggressive schedule. What would you do?

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Leading Suppliers Council



FROM THE PUBLISHER

20 YEARS AND COUNTING

FOR THIS ISSUE, contributors were asked to share what's changed in the past 20 years. From my perspective, the answer is a lot. In case you're interested in the twisted tale of how (and why) *LBM Journal* got its start back in 2003, you can read all about it in "A Credit Card, a Cell Phone, and a Computer" (p. 42). As the title of that interview implies, this company launched with the full financial might of a shoestring. Considering that it's not inexpensive to operate a media company (especially one with a still strong print magazine), everything we've done over the past two decades has happened because of the companies listed on pages 52 and 53. Since subscriptions to the magazine, the daily e-newsletter, and webinars are free, there's no LBM Journal without their advertising support.

As fun as it is to look at where we've been, it's much more exciting to look ahead at where we're going. Here are some things to watch for as we embark on our next 20 years:

Fresh new design. After months of Creative Director Rich Hart's hard work analyzing, experimenting, and testing new designs, this issue features a fresh new look that's both reader friendly and lifestyle inspired.

More practical, tactical insights. For the magazine and webinar content, we're going to take lessons learned from the LBM Strategies Conference, which has grown every year since its launch in 2016. Specifically, watch for more interviews and insights from LBM pros who have found creative solutions to your toughest business challenges.

News you can use. Instead of just reporting the news, we're going to refine our focus on what today's headlines mean to you and your business. Again, we'll aim to deliver street-level insights from LBM pros who have knowledge to share.

Connecting the LBM community. In my view, there's nothing more powerful than what happens when LBM pros connect live to share ideas, to discuss successes and lessons-learned, and build the relationships that enable us to move forward together. It's this concept that fuels my passion for this industry, and that runs through the core of everything we do.

Thank you for allowing the LBM Journal team and I to be a part of the LBM community. Here's to working together to serve our people, our customers, and our industry.



— Rick Schumacher,
Executive Editor & Publisher



HAVE A QUESTION FOR RICK?
RICK@LBMJOURNAL.COM

First we went above.

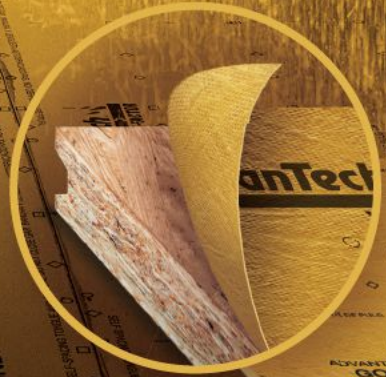
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3 Ways A People-First Window Supplier Can Help Your Business

Sourcing windows and doors that your customers trust is only part of running a successful business. That's why it's important to choose a supplier that can act as a true partner and help drive more value for your business, from planning to offering support at every step.

As a nationwide supplier of high-quality windows and doors, MITER Brands™ knows the importance of building great relationships. Anthony Matter, Vice President of Marketing at MITER Brands, discusses what it means to run a company that puts people first, and how that can translate to tangible benefits for your business.



TEMPERANCE, MICHIGAN – 2022 EXPANSION

1 WORKING WITH INTEGRITY

It's easier to make better business decisions when you know that your supplier has your best interests in mind. "It's important that our teams work with integrity and do what they say they're going to do, when they say they're going to do it," Matter says.

Putting customers first and empowering team members to make decisions is one of the key ways that MITER Brands approaches business, Matter continues. "Building strong, mutually profitable relationships is the most important thing we can do to create long-term success for our customers and our business."

2 LOCAL EXPERTISE

Companies with local teams and decision-making are able to listen closely to customer issues and insights, then apply that feedback to improve their products and services. Matter notes that MITER Brands also has the benefit of deep regional expertise in their product brands, MI and Milgard, which serve the Eastern and Western United States respectively. "Our regionally focused product lines and decades of experience working in these specific areas allow us to confidently help customers across the country."

3 INVESTING IN QUALITY AND CAPACITY

MITER Brands also makes continual investments in their production capacity and operational efficiency to meet customer demand. "We have tens of millions of dollars going into new equipment in our facilities," says Matter, which ensures they can fill orders on-time and complete. But it's not just about equipment. Adequate staffing and building a positive company culture is what really helps keep quality levels high. "Machines don't build great businesses, people do," Matter continues. "It's important for us to give teams the room to find ways to innovate and improve our processes. We do that by investing in equipment that makes the physical job of making the windows easier, so our team can focus on making a better business for themselves and our customers."

Finding a partner that puts their customers and their team members first in every decision can lead to better outcomes for your business. That's why the investments that a people-first window and door company like MITER Brands makes in their culture are so important. Those investments help ensure customers receive all the products they need, when and where they need them, and helps them build mutually beneficial relationships where everyone wins.

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EXCELER BUILDING SOLUTIONS

BY THE YARD

Robbins Lumber has acquired two sawmills from River Lumber Co. in Maine.

Builders FirstSource raised over \$1.2 million for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society through a charity golf tournament.

Ward Lumber staff members have completed local leadership training.

Dazey's Supply held a grand opening event for its new location in Bluffton, Indiana.

Gillman Home Center celebrated its new Muncie, Indiana location.

GILLMAN HOME CENTER



175-year-old **Hancock Lumber** was recognized by the Maine House of Representatives on its anniversary for its contribution to the state's economy and environment.

McCoy's Building Supply held a groundbreaking ceremony for its new Lockhart, Texas location.

In an open letter, **Kodiak Building Partners** CEO, Steve Swinney, is rallying support for **Tunnel to Towers Foundation**. American flags are available to those who donate \$50 or more to Tunnel to Towers Foundation.

Gulfeagle Supply has announced its newest branch in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Kodiak Building Partners' Barton Supply is celebrating its 50th anniversary.



SEND NEWS AND UPDATES ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION TO rick@lbmjournals.com

INDUSTRY UPDATES

Exceler Building Solutions has opened a Hazelton, Pennsylvania manufacturing facility.

Simpson Strong-Tie has partnered with **MOSO North America** on deck planning software.

Huber Engineered Woods announced plans for a new mill in Noxubee County, Mississippi.

Allied Building Material Agency (ABM) has rebranded to **Green Tree Risk Partners**.

Building Industry Partners has joined forces with **Building Talent Foundation** to help attract and retain talent in the industry.

ASSOCIATIONS

Mark Torrissi, president of **Jackson Lumber & Millwork**, has been elected as chairman of the **LMC** Board of Directors.

Single-family construction slowdown less pronounced in lower density markets

While single-family home building has slowed significantly from pandemic-fueled highs because of higher interest rates and construction costs, the slowdown is less pronounced in lower density markets. Meanwhile, multifamily market growth remained strong throughout much of the nation, according to the latest findings from the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Home Building Geography Index (HBGI) for the first quarter of 2023.

CORRECTION:

Dustin Byars' name was incorrectly spelled in our LBM 40 Under 40 feature in the June issue. We apologize, and again congratulate Dustin for his accomplishments.



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DISTRIBUTION NEWS

Boise Cascade has expanded its Birmingham distribution center.

MRS has partnered with **Advanced Building Products** and **Tamlyn**.

Tando has announced that **Riverhead Building Supply** is its flagship dealer for Long Island.

Cameron Ashley has expanded its **LP Building Solutions** partnership in Louisiana.

Snavelly has Introduced **RISE** siding and trim in the Denver market.

Logan Lumber Company will distribute **Black Label** in Florida.

MERGERS + ACQUISITIONS

Sherwood Lumber has acquired **Middle Atlantic Wholesale**.

PEOPLE IN LBM

Mike Elmore will manage the Southern market, **Brad Marks** will manage the Northeast market, and **Jim Powell** will manage the Midwest market at **Culpeper Wood Preservers**.

Simpson Manufacturing announced new board members **Chau Banks** and **Felica Coney**.



Cameron Ashley has hired **Bob Sellers** as VP of insulation sales.



Baxter Reimer is the new director of sales at **Belco Forest Products**.



JELD-WEN named **Jas Hayes** its new executive vice president and general counsel.



Jason Lewis has joined **DSI** as territory manager.

TOUGH CALL ANSWERS

THE MAY 2023 ISSUE SURVEY RESULTS FROM LBMJOURNAL.COM

Rebuilding Trust

Your predecessor excelled at driving away business. You've been tasked with regaining it, but customers' memories run deep. Here's how readers would handle this Tough Call.

INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Reach out to your former best customers individually and ask for a meeting. Your goal is not to sell, but to listen and learn, and begin the slow process of re-earning their trust.

70.8%

"WHAT WILL IT TAKE?"

There's a reason that question works. It can make people truly stop and think about what it would take to get them to give you another chance. Give it a try.

18.6%

2.7%

LOWER YOUR PRICES

If there's one thing that gets people's attention, it's the opportunity to save a buck. Slash prices on some key items, and once they're in the door, win them over.

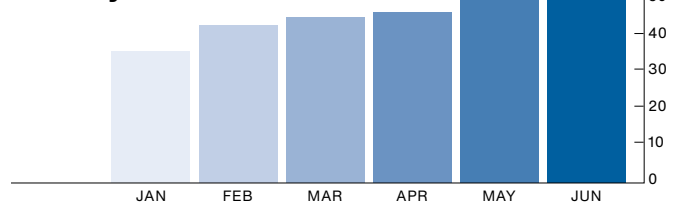
TAKE IT BACK

Study your market and identify an unmet opportunity; then, innovate with your team and your vendors to outperform your competition, and make builders want to work with you.

7.9%



Builder confidence moves into positive territory in June



Solid demand, a lack of existing inventory, and improving supply chain efficiency helped shift builder confidence into positive territory for the first time in 11 months.

Builder confidence in the market for newly built single-family homes in June rose five points to 55, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI).

This marks the sixth straight month that builder confidence has increased and is the first time that sentiment levels have surpassed the midpoint of 50 since July 2022.

LET'S GET GROWING

“
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Kenny Trujillo and Richie Tabet
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”

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INDUSTRY EVENTS

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 | lbadvantage.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 | lbadvantage.com

NOV 6-8, 2023

LMC EXPO
Philadelphia, PA | lmc.net

FEB 27-29, 2024

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

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CARL



FRANK



JAY

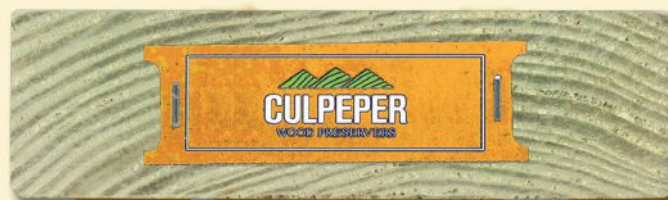


SAM



ATHENS, NY
BELCHERTOWN, MA

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COME TOGETHER
GETTING BETTER
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2023 SPEAKERS



JENNIFER CASTENSON
VP of ambassador &
industry partner programs
Buildxact



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.



KARI GAVIRIA
President
Madison Wood Preservers



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
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JIM SOBECK
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BY BILL LEE

IN CELEBRATION OF LBM JOURNAL'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY, WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE FUN TO REVISIT WITH BILL LEE HIS VERY FIRST COLUMN WITH US FOR OUR VERY FIRST ISSUE 20 YEARS AGO.

BUSINESS owners and managers are busier than ever. As their businesses grow and become more complex, they find that they don't have the time to be all things to all people. In the early stages of a business, the owner or manager waits on customers, does the buying, collects past due accounts, supervises just about everyone on staff, and may even stay late to stuff the monthly statements.

At each stage of business growth, managers must muster the discipline to delegate more and to personally perform fewer job functions in order to give them time to think and plan. This is not easy. After all, the business is their baby. They gave birth to it and have nurtured it to this point, so trusting someone else to assume accountability for key jobs can often feel somewhat like separation anxiety.

PASSION FOR PROFITS

An observation I have made from performing over a hundred consulting assignments in our industry, is that most owners, managers, and salespeople in our field are quite good at the things that they're most passionate about. If managers are passionate about profitability, I've noticed that they almost always generate a top-notch bottom line.

If salespeople are passionate about new business, they bring in a lot of new customers. Or if they're passionate about producing above-average gross margins, they find a way to effectively deal with pricing issues, upgrading sales, selling related items, optimizing margins on special order sales, and more.



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

When executives and salespeople are passionate about golf, skiing, tennis, travel, or community and church activities, then they tend to excel in those areas (and sometimes to the detriment of their accountabilities on the job). If you are serious about excelling at something—anything—then the main question you need to ask yourself is, “Where does my passion lie?”

I have one client whom I especially admire. He is extremely passionate about two things: his business and his family. He spends the great majority of his waking hours dedicated to these two passions.

Like many owners and general managers in our industry, he often puts in 10- to 12-hour days. But he rarely misses any of his kid's activities. Whenever possible, he manages his business appointments around his family and their needs. On several occasions I've heard him make appointments around hockey games, school plays, and Little League baseball games. But when it comes to business, he is incredibly passionate about earning a satisfactory return on his investment. To show you just how profitable he has been, over the past five years he has funded the assets required to support in excess of 20% compounded annual growth out of internally generated profits. Wow! Quite an accomplishment, wouldn't you agree? Here are some other examples of how this owner's passion for success has resulted in so many achievements.

- Each of the years I have worked with this entrepreneur, he has asked me to recommend several pro-oriented lumberyards that do an overall better job than his company does. “I want to visit operations that can teach me a better and more profitable way to service our customers,” he will always say.
- One year he told me that he thought he could benefit from gaining more exposure to businesses outside our industry. I recommended he join a local TEC (The Executive Committee) chapter. He allocates one day each month to meet with his TEC group. Then last year he joined Young Presidents Organization (YPO) to even further expand his exposure.
- A couple of years ago he invested in a right-hand man to take over the operations end of his business so he could concentrate on another of his passions—sales. He would be the first to admit that his business could not continue to grow if he resisted delegating authority.

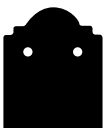
The moral of this story is to concentrate primarily on doing what you love to do—which is usually what you do best—and then delegate the rest.



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BY RICK DAVIS

SALES 20 YEARS LATER

AS WE CELEBRATE the 20th anniversary of *LBM Journal*, it's a good time to consider the many changes that have occurred in the sales profession during that time. My problem is that I can't figure out what has really changed.

Prospecting is Still Job #1

I remember urging salespeople to prospect 20 years ago. The plea fell on deaf ears because the construction boom was at a record pace and it was hard enough to keep up with existing demand, let alone find new customers for strained LBM branch operations. Of course, by 2008 it wasn't difficult to convince anyone about the importance of prospecting.

Here it is 20 years later and we're coming off another boom. Once again, salespeople are feeling the sudden need to prospect as the housing economy experiences a mild retraction. Clearly, we do not expect another crash in proportion to 2008. That being said, it's always better to err on the side of safety. The salespeople who prospect assertive even in times of abundance insulate themselves during the downturns.

The Thing That Hasn't Changed: Prospecting is not a state of time; it's a state of mind. Prospecting is the thing to do in all economic conditions.

Technology Hasn't Replaced People

20 years ago at the International Builders Show (still branded as the NAHB show at the time), e-commerce vendors were snarfing up booth space in 5,000 square foot chunks. Not

surprisingly, none of those companies are around today and have been replaced by companies who've timed their entries much more effectively.

Technology has dramatically changed the operational side of LBM management but is only now on the cusp of new traction vis-à-vis sales transactions. It is true that sales practices are influenced by CRM, customer transaction software, and contractor software to integrate with supplier systems.

The Thing That Hasn't Changed: CRM inputs are only as good as the salesperson who writes them, just like paper 20 years ago. Customer transactions may be sent online, but the salesperson still needs to keep the buyer aware of pricing trends, service capabilities, and even training on software.

We're a Working-Class Industry

The beauty of the LBM industry is that most people enter by happenstance. Outsiders to our industry look in and see salespeople earning significant income and creating wealth while rising through the ranks. Today we are seeing the entry of young, ambitious people ready to take the mantle of leadership for the next generation.

The Thing that Hasn't Changed: Attend any industry event or talk to any long-term contributor to our business. They will describe a career path that few other industries offer, many of whom conclude their careers as long-time outside salespeople in this great industry. The people who rise in our industry usually share the common characteristic that they weren't particularly wealthy when they joined. It's the thing that makes it a great place to be.

It's Still the Sexy Industry

Show me an industry in which you don't need a college degree to build a career. Show me an industry in which the core product of our goods will never be shipped overseas. That is the construction industry in which the LBM dealer is the supplier of the most important products in our society—the buildings we work in, live in, play in, and pray in. That's as sexy as an industry can get.

The Thing that Hasn't Changed: Manufacturing jobs shift, frequently out of the country. Corporate headquarters come and go. In the LBM industry, we're here to stay. All commerce is local. We need boots on the ground and provide stability for those seeking job and career security. We actually pay employees to learn a profession on the job!

Perhaps the more things change, the more they really do stay the same.

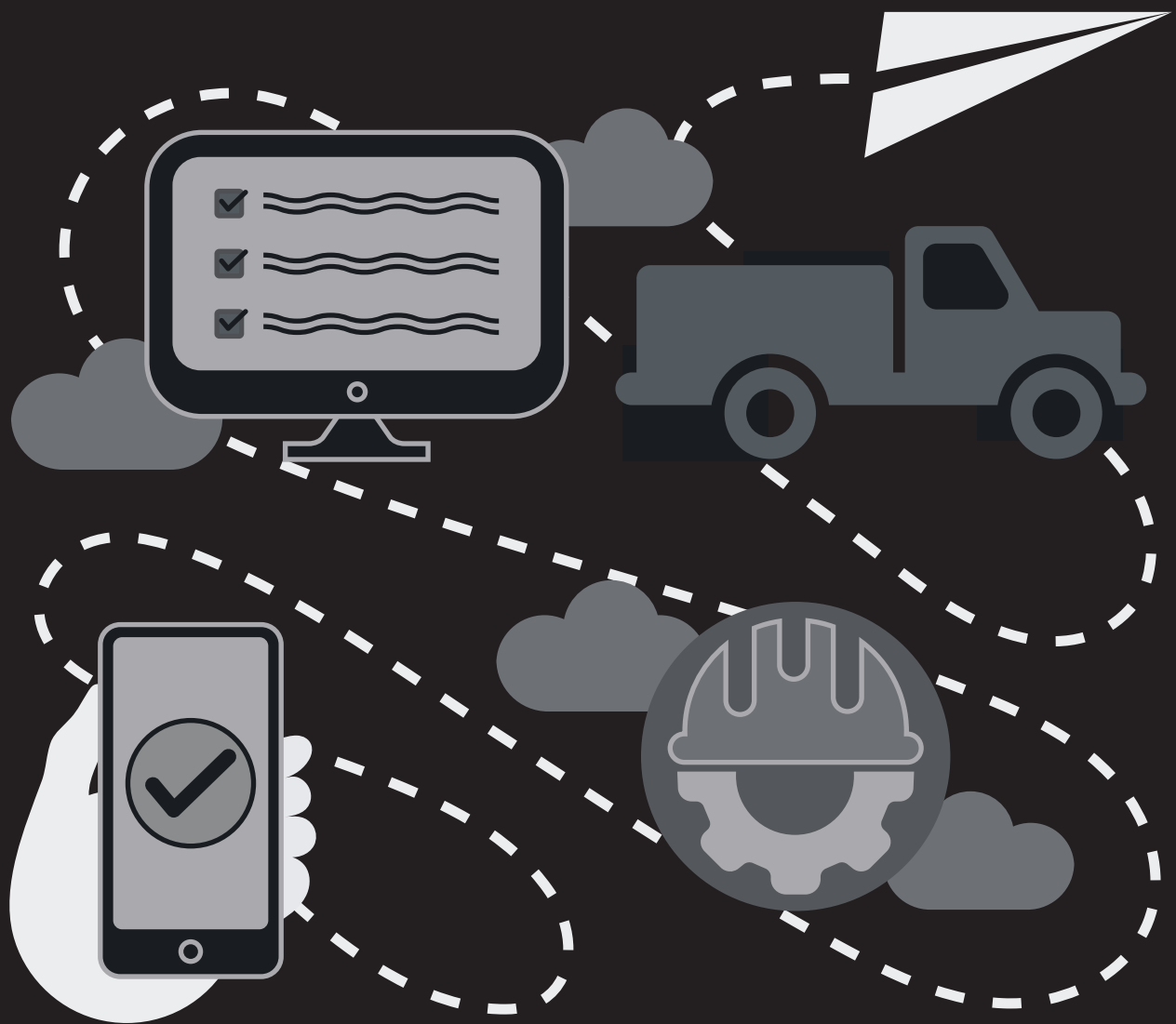


Rick Davis is the Sales Education Leader for ABC Supply and the President of Building Leaders. You can buy his books or learn more about his online sales training platform at buildingleaders.com.

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Keep things moving.

BY DENA CORDOVA-JACK

AS THE SAYING GOES, those who do not remember the past are doomed to repeat it. Our industry learned some tough lessons over the last 20 years that forever altered how we operate today.

In 2003, our industry was on top of the world. The U.S. was closing in on 2 million housing starts annually. Inflation was somewhat in check, lumber was easy and inexpensive to purchase, the labor force was plentiful, independently owned companies were the norm in LBM, and technology was becoming standard in our operating platforms.

LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD

Fast forward to 2023, and the landscape has changed drastically. The Great Recession of 2007-2009 altered various states of our existence. The first indicators of the recession appeared in late 2006, and the ripple effect lasted through 2012. Lines of credit were sharply reduced or closed, AR became a desert, cash flow became non-existent, and many independent lumber companies closed their doors.

Before the recession, banks were our industry's primary funding source. 20 years later, holding companies drive acquisitions, absorb independent operations quickly, and are backed by private equity. Banks have taken a back seat to how we fund our operations, providing less than 40% of LBM company funding today.



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.

Lumber has undergone its own metamorphosis. A large part of dimensional lumber is imported from Canada, mainly from British Columbia and Saskatchewan, and most homes in the United States have been built with it since the U.S. government closed logging operations on federal land in 1993. The export of building materials overseas continues to impact the supply chain. British Columbia fought a pine beetle infestation beginning in 2006, and extreme forest fires continue to plague the west, decimating timber harvests.

While the housing market continued to recover after the Great Recession, our inability to produce enough building materials to support the recovery has played havoc with supply. Mills closed, never to reopen. The upward spike in demand during the pandemic set the stage for one of the most volatile commodity markets in history, and although prices have moderated, our nation still faces supply issues.

Inflationary pressures, land costs, regulatory increases, and building materials have hit home affordability hard. Housing costs have risen exponentially. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average price of a home in the United States in 2003 was \$258,000. Today, the average cost is \$429,000.

Technology has also had an enormous effect on our industry. In 2003, less than 7% of the world was online, and Apple wouldn't launch its first-generation iPhone until 2007. Now, over half of the world's population has access to the internet. The rise of social media and e-commerce began, and 96% of Americans now make purchases online.

The labor force has undergone a generational transition in the last 20 years. Boomers have retired or are preparing to, Generation X is aging, and Millennials are now the most significant segment of the labor force. The newer generations have very different expectations of their careers, and leadership styles are evolving to connect with those new workers. Today's younger generations expect their employers to invest in them personally and professionally, and career pathing is critical. The culture of the company, along with community involvement, is high on the list of priorities, and the demands on employers to provide mental health resources have become more prevalent.

Looking back to look forward gives us guidance for future direction. Investing in technology, ensuring your company's operating capital is solid, succession planning, and employee development programs are priorities.

In the environment of accelerating change, the most essential tool a company can develop for future success is to become organizationally agile. The ability to react quickly to rapidly changing market conditions ensures forward momentum and success for future state.



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BY JOHN WAGNER

WHAT'S CHANGED IN 20 YEARS?

TO CELEBRATE the 20th anniversary of *LBM Journal*, my editor asked me to focus on what's changed in the last 20 years. Surely, the last two decades have brought innovative technologies: "5G" was a parking space label, and now it is a cellular network; The cloud used to be strictly something floating in the sky, and now it's made of microprocessors; and machine learning was when your old lawnmower responded to a swift kick of the carburetor, but now computers learn from their own mistakes (and they have a better memory of your past mistakes than your spouse).

Instead, I'm going to take a contrarian approach and focus on what's not changed, even as technology has zoomed ahead. The reason for this approach? No matter how business data is monitored and analyzed, the basics of running a business, and of valuing that business for acquisition to a new owner, has remained largely unchanged.

For business values, the most enduring misconceptions are two-fold. They have not changed in 20 years, and they won't change in another 20: Sellers will rarely be paid for as-yet-unearned EBITDA, no matter how fast the company is growing. Acquirers will pay for recent performance in a valuation formula, but they won't pay "now" for money you say you'll make "then," unless it's in an earn-out, where you are paid for future performance as it is achieved.

Secondly, knowing that businesses are acquired as a multiple of EBITDA, sellers of businesses sometime expect that the multiple of EBITDA should be applied to the highest historical EBITDA they have ever achieved rather than a recent normalized figure. If your EBITDA during a housing peak with soaring lumber prices was \$5 million,



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but it's cooled to, say, \$3.7 million, don't expect an acquirer to share your nostalgia and say, "Well, you hit a high of \$5 million 15 months ago, so I'll pay a multiple on that, even though you're now down 35%. Heck, we just hope you can do it again." The acquirer will more likely take a cold-eyed approach, examine the trailing 12 months' performance (after normalizing lumber prices), and apply a multiple to that.

The other things that have remained consistent are the KPIs that offer a telling profile of how well your business is performing. These tried-and-true indicators are:

1. EBITDA, which is the earnings unencumbered by expenses after you back out interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization.
2. EBITDA margin, which is the percent of net sales that ends up on the EBITDA line. It is an indication of how efficiently your company creates profit.
3. OPEX as a percent of sales, especially when tracked over time, which indicates if you are overspending on operations. Remember that every dollar you lop off OPEX becomes a dollar of EBITDA, and every dollar of EBITDA has a multiplier effect in the value you attain in an acquisition.
4. Historical revenue growth (especially in a trailing 12 month perspective), which shows how fast you're acquiring incremental or new business. You need solid cash flow to feed these other KPIs, and an acquirer will plot your revenue growth over time as the basis for estimating how big you could grow in the future.
5. Pay close attention to the relationship between gross profit margin, OPEX as a percent of sales, and EBITDA. Your company can be delivering great GPMs, yet you could be overspending on OPEX, leaving you to stare mystified at the EBITDA line, wondering where the heck all those gross profit dollars have gone!

Examining these KPIs doesn't take AI, or the cloud, or machine learning (although those technologies can be great management tools), because a close examination of these KPIs—whether you were selling deck space on Colonial Era ships headed to the New World 300 years ago, or selling polyisocyanurate thermoset insulation panels this morning—have always remained the gold standards for gauging business performance.

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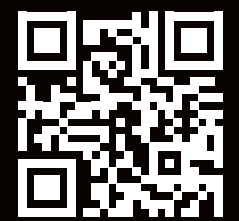


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BY THEA DUDLEY

HAPPY 20TH ANNIVERSARY, *LBM Journal*. Traditionally speaking, the 20th anniversary is known as the “China” anniversary, with the typical gift being some form of—you guessed it—china. It’s supposed to represent the delicate, beautiful, and elegant relationships that have been built after 20 years together. Not the usual words used to describe the lumber and building materials industry, but in reflecting, they seem oddly appropriate.

Our industry has changed. The way we interact has changed. What hasn’t changed? Us. All the technology hasn’t made your job stress- or trouble-free, just different. Technology may have changed the way we work; it hasn’t changed who we are. Just like the products that go into building a house, some things have changed, but at the core, building that house requires the same basics.

Over the past 20 years I have seen people become successful, grow their business, and become incredible leaders, as well as some who haven’t. I have a love-hate relationship with the term “old school.” If we are talking in terms of being old school for morals, ethics, and the golden rule, I am 100% behind it. Standing up in a room proudly proclaiming you are “old school” as a way to explain away the lack of adapting to evolved methodologies (such as using email or refusing to support the new company app) is a cop-out and just plain rude to your co-workers.

As someone who could easily fall into the “I am old school and proud of it” category for shunning the tech provided by creative minds, I am thrilled to be able to leverage the tools that now allow me to get an account open within a few minutes versus days or weeks.

I can now find out more about a business and its ownership in less time than it takes me to mainline that morning cup of coffee. What hasn’t changed? My need or desire to know who I am doing business with. While I appreciate that I can check credit history, learn how their business started, and the “who’s who” of their team with a few keystrokes, I miss the face-to-face. Not that Zoom isn’t a great tool, but nothing replaces the insight of an in-person meeting and the relationship that comes with it. All hail paralinguistics, matching the words and the body language! Hard to see that on a Zoom screen or computer file.

**EVOLUTION AND CHANGE
DO NOT AFFECT THE REALITY
THAT AT OUR CORE, WE
ARE PEOPLE WORKING ON
BUILDING THOSE ELEGANT,
DELICATE, AND BEAUTIFUL
RELATIONSHIPS.**

What else hasn’t changed? Walking a yard. I can tell more about a customer’s business from walking their yard than I can from a balance sheet. No amount of AI can replace walking the yard with the customer and listening to them talk about their team, the beginning of the business, where they are, and where they see their future, along with seeing soft skills such as teamwork, empathy, critical thinking, effective communication (some of us are still working on that one),

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE...



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.

and basic interpersonal skills. I never want my customers to feel like they are just a number. Do you really want to live in a world with no emotions? And let’s not forget the camaraderie. You can’t beat our industry for community. As a competitor I may want to kick your hiney in business, but we will absolutely pull together with a level of generosity seldom seen when someone needs help.

The more things change, the more they stay the same. Evolution and change do not affect the reality that, at our core, we are people working on building those elegant, delicate, and beautiful relationships. Cheers to 20 and to the next 20. Ruby marks the 40th anniversary; it symbolizes passion and devotion, and sums up our industry. My ring size is eight.



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BY RUSS KATHREIN

LOOKING BACK 20 years ago, times were pretty good in the building materials industry. We had come out of the dot com crash and suddenly the housing industry was starting to go on a tear. Inflation was 1.3%, and unemployment was around 6%. And while it was getting harder to find good workers, we were starting to make up for it by being more productive by using technology.

SOME THINGS NEVER GO OUT OF STYLE

For example, the Nokia 1100 “candy bar” phone was cutting edge. Cell plans finally let you make long distance calls without being charged extra for “roaming.” The construction industry had embraced Sprint’s push-to-talk phones, so now you could have real time chats, like on a walkie talkie. Texting was rare, but lots of people still had a pager, so you could at least let them know to give you a call. Salespeople were relied upon for product knowledge because they went to training and had a library of manufacturers reference books at their offices. We lived and died by our office phones because you never knew when a customer would finally get back to you.

Flash forward to today, and all of those technological marvels now seem downright primitive. Today, we have phones that are more powerful than the computers used to send men to the moon. Thanks to the internet, product knowledge is available at our fingertips. Phone, text, and email all make communication seamless and instant, along with the expectation that someone will be available to respond immediately.

So while everything moves faster, it still comes down to the people you have around you, and how well they are trained and led. Customer service still comes down to how quickly we can respond and how pleasant we can make the experience. Smiling before you pick up the phone has been expanded to using the right language in an email (DON’T SHOUT. Oh wait, that’s for us old-timers used to green-screen terminals), or adding a reinforcing emoji on a text message. Some people come to this naturally, but most need feedback and guidance. A prolific texter in college needs to be trained that spelling and grammar matter in business. That is how we create our first impressions. Simply sending an email does not mean that you have communicated with your customer. It might have gone to the junk mail folder or just been overlooked. We have to remind our teams that multiple forms of communication are important. Emails are good, but a phone call is better, and an in-person conversation is the best way to build a relationship.

How does one learn that, with the mass amounts of information we can give to our customers, quality matters over quantity? Everyone in our industry knows what our acronyms mean, right? Wrong. Don’t assume that your customers live all day in your world and are fluent in the language of it. Speak or write clearly, and don’t be afraid to affirm what things mean. Most customers don’t want to admit that they don’t understand something.

So how do we make sure that our people—young and old—know and remember these things? It comes down to good, solid leadership. The captain of the ship doesn’t actually sail or steer the ship. The captain sets the course, but then spends time making sure everything that goes into getting the ship to its destination is working soundly. This means knowing how every job functions—not being an expert, but understanding them enough to know when they aren’t being done correctly and then teaching the person the right way. That is what leadership is, and that will never go out of style.



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



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EFFECTIVE TRAINING OPTIONS

BY LBM JOURNAL READERS

Perhaps just as critical as finding new employees for your company is the task of training those employees to properly contribute to your business. With the growing costs of recruiting, onboarding, and retaining team members, effective training plans are more important than ever to your lumberyard's operations. This month, we asked readers for input in a question submitted from a fellow lumber dealer who is struggling to find the right training methods for new hires.

First, we asked readers to how satisfied they are with their company's current training plan. Of the more than 150 readers who responded to the question, "Satisfied" and "Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" each garnered 28.8% of the responses. "Dissatisfied" followed closely behind with 27%. Just shy of 12% of respondents indicated that they were "Very satisfied" with their company's training options.

Next, we asked readers to share advice directly for the LBM dealer who wrote in asking for advice.

"Our biggest issue can be summed up in one word: Training! It takes decades to learn all that's needed to be successful in this industry. We don't have effective training programs for our team members that do a good job covering all the bases. We'd love to learn how other LBM dealers are getting their newer hires and future leaders all of the tools, knowledge, and access needed to thrive and grow."

Responses from lumberyards, full-line building material dealers, specialty dealers and distributors:

"We start everyone in the lumberyard pulling orders, loading customers, receiving inventory, and riding with drivers as a helper. After a few months we cross train in our main trim warehouse, and pre-hung door shop. About a year in, our newer employees will ride with a salesman to walk through projects in the framing and trim stages (they love this part). By the end of the first year, we know, and the employee knows, if they prefer the yard, warehouse, door shop, or maybe try the front counter taking calls and assisting customers. Some people want to be a driver, and some want to go into sales."

"Look for the handymen, plumbers, and electricians that are close to retirement age. Pay them well. Assign them as a mentor to the younger employee. Find the employees that you are interested in or impressed by and go after them."

"Use your vendors for product training."

"Training, training, training. We need more specific training for the LBM industry."

"We use computer-based training through a third-party platform coupled together with in-person and online product knowledge seminars."

"I think every dealer struggles with this. Not just training programs, but also new hires' desire to learn."

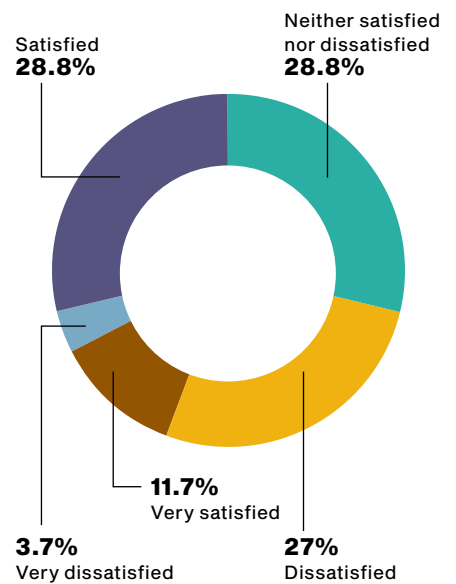
"We make printed training materials readily available and make sure that anyone responsible for training always has a good attitude and is readily available to help employees as needs arise. This keeps new employees engaged and not afraid to come to anyone with any questions that come up."

"You need to invest a lot of time, energy, and money to get them trained properly. You have to set that as a very high priority for your company."

"Teach the lingo. Teach some basic Spanish for the lingo. Teach basic knowledge of the steps from beginning to end. All of these help with better communication with the customers."

"Set expectations for employees to watch at least one relevant webinar a month, like the ones presented by this magazine. They are always insightful and have helped me on my journey."

"As a small business it is difficult and somewhat impractical for us to have a formal training program. Most of our training is forced to come through on-the-job experience."



"Attack from every angle: webinars, virtual training, PK seminars, etc. One of my favorites is teaming a younger employee with built-in tech skills with a seasoned veteran who has product knowledge but often struggles with newer tech devices. Both come out better off."

"Training is the most underrated and underappreciated aspect of our business. Decades of experience are exiting and being replaced with well-intentioned, undertrained, and inexperienced team members. Concentration is on 5 minute or less sound bites that are designed to get the team member through the sale (good luck). The lost art of mentoring and providing solid experience from shadowing sales professionals is where it is at. New hire training is available from various associations and for purchase. If you are looking to harvest the benefits of a well-trained experienced team member you needed to plant the seed and raise the crop quite a while ago."

"We don't do a very good job here either, so I'm interested in seeing responses. We match a new staff member with a seasoned person, run them through our software platform's training, and try to check in every so often, more in the earlier period of employment." ▶

“Job shadowing, winter and spring in-house training sessions, one-on-one meetings for discussions about career development.”

“I think that it takes all members of the company to sit down and be open with each other about the shortcomings that exist within their business when it comes to passing on the knowledge or means to acquire that knowledge to be a more effective business.”

“You can be successful in less than decades. Hire someone with sales experience like lawn mowing or retail.”

“Take advantage of LBM Journal seminars and opportunities provided by your buying groups to expand your knowledge.”

“TAKING THE TIME TO DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES IS KEY TO FOUNDATIONAL EXCELLENCE. IT IS PAINFUL TO DO IN THE SHORT-TERM BUT CAN PAY OFF IN THE LONG TERM TO GIVE PEOPLE TOOLS THEY NEED TO LEARN PARTS OF THE ROLE.”



“He is spot on. Training in every position.”

“Utilize the entirety of our industry. Too many times I’ve seen companies try to do it all themselves. Vendors love putting on demonstrations and talking through what makes their products superior, POS systems prefer to train new employees instead of in-house training so they can minimize future mistakes, mills encourage visits and tours to show how it’s made, and contractors will gladly have a couple people come walk their builds to show off their work and give feedback about what works and doesn’t. Don’t get caught in the trap that you are training your employees by yourself and when they are able to see not only how it’s made but how it’s used. They will be 100 times better salesman in your store!”

“Join a co-op like LMC and enroll your team in their programs.”

“I start them from the bottom up. They spend some time in the warehouse and delivery. They then move into inside sales. Then train with outside sales for a year before going out on their own.”

“Our people and perhaps our culture allow our more experienced members to interact, share and help our newer members. Formal training could be an improvement, but we don’t do much of that except for our salespeople getting product training from our manufacturer reps.”

“We are in exactly the same situation. Experienced staff is a difficult thing to replace.”

“Forget looking at what other dealers are doing. Instead, get with a group of your own people, experienced and new, and find out what they need. Then put together your own program combining the best online education sources, take advantage of training from vendors, and round it out with your own. Put together a cohesive development plan that demonstrates a career path for new and existing employees. They’ll respond. No one is doing that.”

“Develop a ‘mentor’ mentality vs. a ‘trainer’ mentality. Also, have a robust onboarding program that goes beyond the basic safety videos and build product and industry knowledge into the onboarding program that should last days (not hours) and schedule regular follow-up sessions. Easier said than done for sure.”

“We took the time to create a unique training outline for every position in the company. We also hired a full-time training coordinator, who is responsible for ‘curating’ the training for the outlines, consulting with the managers and employees on additional training needs, keeping the managers accountable for progress, and reporting the overall training completion rates for the company to the leadership team on a weekly basis.”

“Make training a priority for both new hires/promotions and continuing education for employees. It is an investment, not an expense.”

“Product training! Experience with products. Encourage your employees (with discounts or underwriting or sending to jobsites) to use the products they are supposed to be selling. It makes a huge difference, especially with new products. Ordering and management areas are harder to train for but ask a retiring person to dictate/write/verbally record all the little things or tips they can think of for up to a year.”

“I do not have the answer, we need help with this as well.”

“Repeat training sessions, whether yearly or quarterly.”

“I agree training new members takes a lot of time. I think it is an ongoing process of 3-5 years depending on the knowledge of the person hired and position you are training. Training has to be personalized and can’t be done in a one-to-two-day workshop.”

“Expose your people to all the training that is available. With 47 years in this industry I have found the best way to learn the business and be comfortable is for sales associates to wait on customers and ask for help when they need it, don’t just send a customer to a more experienced associate. You can only learn so much in training classes; you have to do it and learn as you go along. Have experienced employees mentor the new employees.”

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"We have our new team members mentored by the experienced team member before they retire, with continuing mentoring by the other team members afterwards."

"Find and use a Learning Management System (LMS). There are many available in the marketplace. A key function is your ability to customize the content you provide to your employees. Building the content requires considerable time and iterations but is worth the effort for the long-term."

"Buddy up newbies with those whose jobs encompass skill sets necessary to the job. Exposure to pitfalls, historical mistakes with lessons learned are essential. Ultimately the new people will have to make their own mistakes and learn to profit from them in a forgiving environment."

"When I began my job as a coordinator, I spent a lot of time training with other coordinators watching their systems and processes but also with different divisions of our company to cross train."

"I feel the same as this person. We just started some training but would like some help."

"Smaller pieces. It takes decades to become proficient enough to start shaping the process. Learning is never complete. With that in mind, focus on the areas where your people naturally excel."

"Taking advantage of distributors, online product courses is a plus. Unfortunately, this industry is a hands-on one, so don't be scared to ask questions. Really lean on your contractors' knowledge."

"You can only learn so much from a book or training program. Much of what we senior operators have learned came to us through experience. Quit micromanaging your young recruits and give them a chance to learn like you did. Delegate while watching from afar and follow up to take advantage of a teaching moment as necessary. We are our own worst enemies because of course nobody can do it as good as we can. Ask the question, would I want to work for me? Expect a lot, get a lot. Expect little, get little."

"Try a combination of OJT and job training."

"Be the difference."

"Time...hands-on experience is the best teacher. There are no shortcuts."

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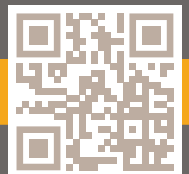
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“Implement a disciplined mentorship program where your veteran employees have dedicated times each day to provide guidance and training to new employees. These times have to be scheduled and supported by senior management to ensure they happen and sustain. They need to have tangible milestones and expectations of topics covered, with a roadmap showing expected progress by both the mentor and new hire. Monthly check-in meetings with both the veteran and the new hire happen separately to gauge progress.”

“On the job training has been the crutch of this industry for many decades. The key is effectively passing knowledge from a more tenured employee to the new or future leaders. This should be changed to a more standard and repeatable training, but it is difficult. We have had general supervisor training for a number of topics from how to have a tough conversation to HR 101 but most of these topics are a general training and not industry specific. We have been considering a product knowledge course for our material handlers but haven't nailed it down.”

“Online training and product knowledge is great to get them a basic understanding of concepts, but I love mentors. Encourage the new employee to tackle tasks they feel are over their head and allow the mentor to critique and guide them. I learn best from mistakes I have to fix myself. We just need to control the environment, so it is positive learning.”

“Create a structured, realistic plan for your new hires. Implement it, update it, what works what doesn't. Be willing to invest in their training. Far too many LBMs rely on current staff to train. Especially on ERPs. I cannot tell you how many yards I have been in where this very critical function of business is completely skimmed over. Often there is tribal knowledge one doesn't think to share. Some take the road of 'nobody showed me, so I am not going to show you.'”

- 1. Develop a comprehensive training program:** Create a training program that covers all the essential aspects of the hardware industry. This program should be designed to teach new hires the basics of hardware, including product knowledge, customer service, and sales techniques.
- 2. Partner with manufacturers:** Partner with manufacturers to provide product training for your employees. These manufacturers can provide training on new products, installation techniques, and maintenance procedures.
- 3. Create a mentoring program:** Develop a mentoring program that pairs new employees with experienced team members. This will allow new hires to learn from seasoned employees and gain hands-on experience.
- 4. Utilize online training:** Use online training resources to provide training to employees. There are many online resources available that offer training courses on various aspects of the hardware industry.
- 5. Provide ongoing training:** Ensure that ongoing training is available to employees. As technology and industry trends change, employees need to be kept up to date with the latest developments.
- 6. Measure effectiveness:** Develop metrics to measure the effectiveness of your training program. This will help you to identify areas where improvements can be made and to track the progress of your employees.

Responses from wholesale distributors, manufacturers, and service providers:

“Mentorships—nothing makes someone more successful than when you have mentors in place that are working with people that can be groomed into that role in the future. Seasoned professionals have so much knowledge that cannot always be put into a manual, but you can create presentations for future use but working side-by-side with them is the most beneficial.”

“We try, but things get busy, and everything falls apart until someone screams. Not the way to business.”

“You have to offer incentive to senior leaders to buy in and participate in the program. Too often the attitude of ‘let them learn it the way I did’ leaves new hires feeling thrown to the wolves. Make someone responsible for business development internally.”

“Pair someone up with a seasoned guy and let him shadow for a while. The knowledge that you can gain from someone who has spent decades in the industry simply cannot be duplicated in a training manual.”

1. Good needs analysis.
2. Prioritize.
3. Locate and employ internal resources (mentors, coursework, etc.).
4. Locate and employ external resources (vendors and other business partners, colleges, seminars, and books).
5. Locate online resources (YouTube, webinars, articles /publications).
6. Commit time to train each day, week, month, quarter, etc. that fits the role.
7. Hold employees accountable for training.
8. Hold supervisors accountable for training, time allocated, debriefing, on-the-job usage, and feedback on usage.



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“I have been in the aluminum industry for 53 years and it is difficult to communicate everything, so I focus on integrity, honesty, and listening. Listening goes both ways, and in today’s culture it’s hard to keep everyone’s attention. But lack of listening means lack of learning...and I know the demands are large with massive SKUs to work with and a push on a different product every week.

“Our manufacturing process is well tuned, with a heavy concentration safety and training, and our automation has been a big help in bringing new people up to speed in a safe and effective way. I think getting folks to slow down, spend 20-30 minutes without phones when meeting with a vendor, customer, or a peer allows you to get to know the person, and then you get to know what you did not know, that person could be a huge asset in your day-to-day product life.”

“You need to find someone who is good at putting the information together, whether it be with the help of screen shots, camera images and/or short training videos. But give them dedicated time to do this—you can’t put together training materials when you are constantly being interrupted. Have them sit down with your ‘subject matter experts,’ kind of like how celebrities get their ghost writers to polish things up.”

“Generalist vs. specialist is an ongoing challenge. Cross-training takes time; experience takes time. And sometimes new young minds see a new approach. Encourage them to ask why and why-not.”

“We continually look for people within our industry who would be a good fit for us, and already have more than the basic skill set we are looking for. I have been with the company 33 years out of our 78 years and the owners were doing the same thing before they hired me, and I have continued the same and it works. Only hire ‘green’ at entry level warehouse jobs. Why hire a car salesman when you offer building products?”

“As a former staff member for NAWLA, I was heavily involved with Caliper Management, out of New Jersey. They had thousands of personality tests from which they gleaned inferences about candidates based upon their responses relative to others who had taken the test (and their long-term results as an employee were known). I don’t know what a test costs today (was \$250 for a NAWLA member 30 years ago), but having taken this test myself, I can testify to the accuracy. Due to the cost, this analysis would probably only be used for mid-level management or above, but the results from NAWLA members was very positive. Regarding entry-level personnel, they should show an intense desire to learn and be coachable. As entry-level employees, you don’t need ‘know-it-all’s’ with attitude, which we seem to have plenty of these days.”

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“The new reps coming in need to team up with a seasoned rep for a period of time, and after a month or so let them go. Bring them back together after a month to see if there is any progress.”

“We are in the process of developing and testing a three-year training/mentoring curriculum for our new associates. It combines industry experience with highly recognized sales training programs to complement each other.”

“There’s no ‘one size fits all.’ We utilize a combination of existing experienced employees, online LMS, and consultants with experience working in lumberyards.”

“Shadowing senior employees and spending the time on new recruits is key. Spend time with them.”

“Be open to change. Don’t be so guarded. Let the younger men speak up.”

“We don’t have effective training programs for our team members that do a good job covering all the bases. This becomes more evident as the older generations retire and the knowledge leaves.”

“Training one day at a time.”

“Technology needs to be at the forefront of any new hire engagement. It’s hard to recruit new talent using older methodologies.”

“Contact the LBM Journal team. They’re a great knowledge resource.”

“We pair up our new hires with our seasoned veterans and have them work together for a few weeks.”

“As a retiree with 43 years of experience in the industry I agree that training is the most important job of management. In general, I think the industry does a good job with the technical process type of training. However, I suspect that real leadership training is something that most companies are lacking. Although it is a very broad and far-reaching subject, I suspect that most companies never take advantage of qualified retiree’s experience and their ability to be effective mentors to people who are interested in becoming more effective leaders. Most retirees would welcome the chance to stay involved in the industry and provide younger people with their perspective and experience. Companies should take full advantage of this largely untapped resource.”

“Spend as much time with a veteran of this industry and once you find one that fits your style, use them as your mentor. Observe their ways and methods, don’t be pushy or overly aggressive with them. Veterans of this industry may not be used to someone shadowing them and becoming a teacher may be uncomfortable. There is never a dumb question; answers may be troublesome to understand at the time, but it too, will sort itself out.”

Set obtainable goals, be happy with singles, doubles, and occasional triple...they all score runs, and not everyone will hit a home run at each at bat. Be prepared and don’t waste a person’s time with nonsense meetings. Be respectful of their time and be gracious for the time you are given. Bring supportive suggestions and think out the box at times. Be yourself, set your own style and don’t judge others when they disagree. Control what you can—the stuff between your ears.” ■

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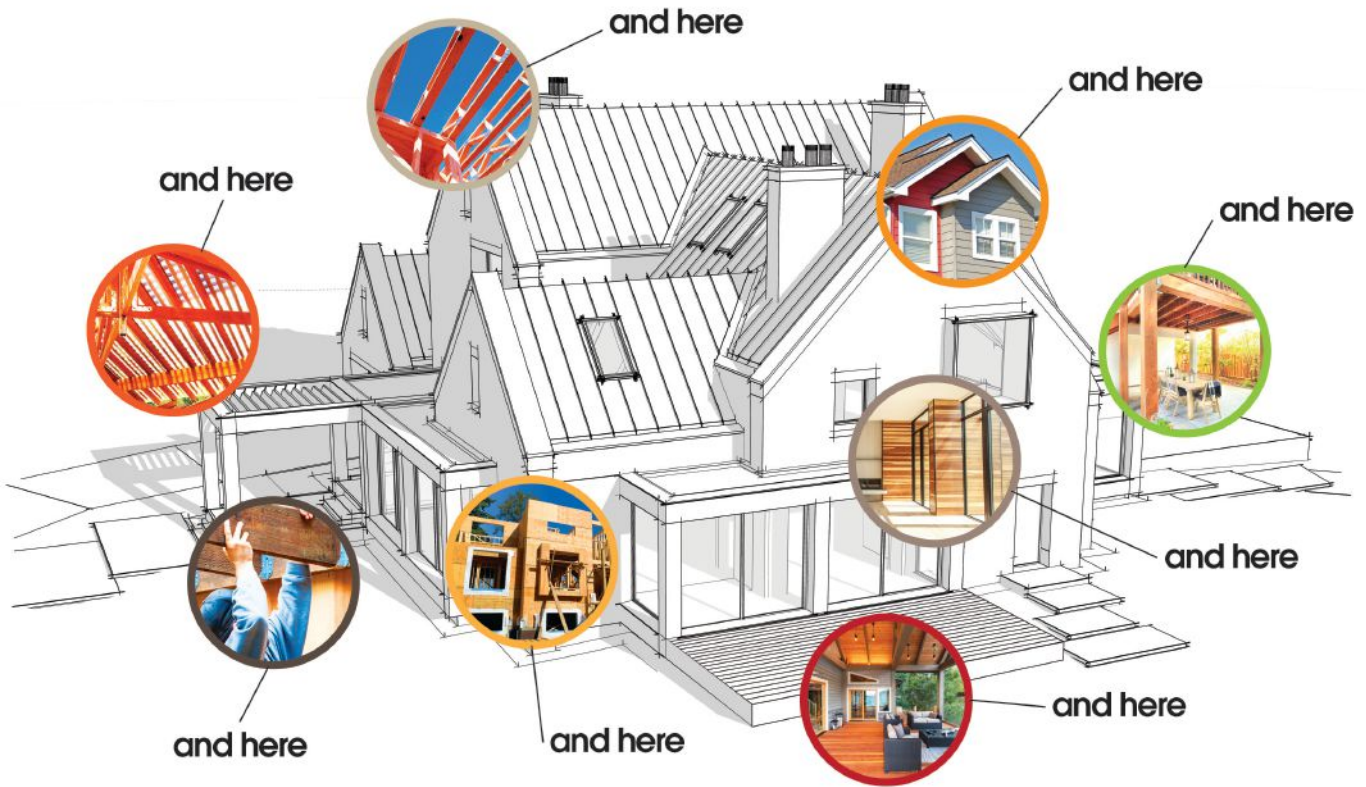
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A CREDIT CARD, A CELL PHONE, AND A COMPUTER

In the chaotic world of publishing, it's a true milestone when a magazine reaches its 20th anniversary. Rarer still is when the people who founded it remain behind the wheel. *LBM Journal* is proud to shine a spotlight on the magazine's three founders: Publisher and Executive Editor Rick Schumacher, Media Consultant Jodie Cook Redwood, and Creative Director Rich Hart.

INTERVIEWED BY MIKE BERGER

MIKE: This issue marks the 20th anniversary of *LBM Journal*, and I've heard it said that the magazine was founded on nothing more than a credit card, a cell phone, and a computer.

RICH: [laughing] That's how I remember it.

MIKE: What was the impetus? Why did you think starting a magazine about the LBM industry was a good path to go down 20 years ago?

RICK: Well, we didn't necessarily know that it was a good path, but it's the only thing I knew how to do at the time. Back then, we all worked for another magazine called *Building Material Dealer*, which went out of business in early 2003. I saw it coming, updated my resume, and sent it out to one place that I thought had the perfect job for me, but I didn't get an interview. From that, I realized if I wanted a new job, I was going to have to provide it myself. So once *Building Material Dealer* went out of business, I brought the team together and told them that as of that day, we're in Chapter 7. When you leave today, turn in your key card, take home all your personal stuff, because there's no coming back, there's no vacation, there's no anything. We're completely done here. "But," I said, "we have a great team, and a solid reputation in the industry, so I'm going to launch a new magazine and run it from home. Since there's no money for office space or computers, and no investors, there's no guarantee anyone will ever get paid. So who's with me?" Thankfully, Jodie and Rich rolled the dice. And here we are.

RICH: That's pretty much how it started. I had moved back to Minnesota from California, and I didn't want to work for a big corporation again. It was still in the days when you answered employment ads in the newspaper, and I saw a little ad for a national trade publication needing an art director and offering all the free Caribou Coffee you can drink. So I met with Rick who said, "I can't pay you what you want, but what if you just did it on a contract basis?" Then, after about a year, *Building Material Dealer* folded. I had

other freelance clients, so my income was fine, and I said, “I’m in on the new magazine. Let’s give it a shot and see what happens.” There was no pay for a few months, but Rick did buy me a new computer.

RICK: I did have a credit card. I remember that. And that maxed out pretty quickly.

JODIE: Rick pretty much leveraged his house to get us through the first year.

RICH: For printing and everything! And it was just me and Jodie, plus a part-time production person and an editor. And that was it, so we all jumped in.

JODIE: It was a no brainer for me because I had quit my job at an advertising sales rep firm to go out on my own, so I was in. It totally made sense to me.

MIKE: Besides making a paycheck, what was it that you all hoped to accomplish with launching *LBM Journal*?

RICH: I really liked the vision for the magazine. It was at that time of my life where I wanted to take a chance. So that was all I needed. It was really interesting to see how we could start this from scratch and have a good-looking book with really strong content that would stand up against the bigger magazines, which there were only a couple.

RICK: Yeah, there were two. And we were by far the little tiny guys that weren’t expected to survive.

RICH: We were the underdog. I love a good underdog story.

JODIE: Yeah, me too. I was in it for the same reason.

RICK: We competed against two really big publishers. One, the clear leader at the time, has stopped printing its magazine. The other one is still around, although it’s changed names a few times. But we’ve managed to grow steadily over the years and are now the leading brand serving the LBM market.

MIKE: The magazine industry as a whole is a pretty volatile place, and many magazines have come and gone over the past 20 years. Did that scare you?

RICK: When the Great Recession hit, we were still working out of my basement. Our sales took a huge hit, but luckily our overhead was low. We just barely survived through that. But was I scared? It was more a feeling that this is simply what we’re going to do, and we’re going to survive. I don’t remember even really questioning it.

JODIE: We had such major support from our advertisers from the get-go. When Rick launched *LBM Journal* in July of 2003, we didn’t have anything. We didn’t have a media kit, a circulation list, or a prototype of what we were creating. But I called all of our advertisers from the old magazine, and Rick made calls on his end, and we asked everyone to please have faith in us. Thankfully, many of them did. Some even pre-paid their contracts for the year so that we could pay

our print bill on our first issue. So when 2008 rolled around, everybody just had to buckle down. We just had to make it through because these people have had faith in us.

RICK: Jodie was our one sales person. She had nothing to sell, yet she went out there. And, based on the relationships she had built with advertisers, she made it happen and made enough sales for us to publish. But that first issue! We got lines of credit for everything, from the printer to all the different suppliers. But you know who doesn’t give you a line of credit? The Post Office. You have to prepay your postage, which would cost us about \$15,000 to mail 40,000 copies. Because my credit card was maxed, I didn’t know how I was going to come up with the money. But then I got a call from Activant, which is now Epicor, and they prepaid a one-year, every issue full-page advertising agreement. We were able to mail the first issue, and without that I don’t know what would have happened. ▶





JODIE: I remember Rick and I talking about what we were going to name it. What's this company's name going to be? He came up with Custom-Built Publishing really fast, and we just became *LBM Journal* 30 seconds after that.

MIKE: Hearing about Epicor prepaying for a year really shows the level of trust that the industry had in what *LBM Journal* stood to become. Looking back, how has that trust evolved?

RICK: When we started the magazine, we all agreed that the only way we're going to succeed was by helping our readers and our advertisers succeed. If we can make a difference for them, we're going to be fine. If not, then we don't deserve to survive. The decisions we make aren't always the most lucrative, but they're the ones that make the most sense for our industry. This is a community and we're committed to it.

JODIE: I agree. Some of these people that advertise in the magazine have been with us since day one. They might not be the exact same marketing managers, but the companies have been there and the relationships have been there. When you're talking about advertising sales, you're not talking about just selling pages in a magazine. There's so much more to their branding and our branding. Where does that money come from? Where does it go? And who's getting parts of the pie and all that kind of stuff. Having the relationship of the trusted advisor is really important, and we started that really, really early. We could not just take somebody's money and not give them something in return. And because that's been our core value since the beginning, I think it's really stuck with us, and people know it.

RICH: The word "relationship" keeps coming up, and that's what I always think of with us. We have great relationships with the advertisers and we go the extra mile for them. Some of them are big, but some are small, too. They don't have an ad agency, so we create their ads for free, or give them trade, or something like that. We don't make the most lucrative decisions, but they're long-lasting with a lot of these advertisers. It seems like we always come off as being the good guys in the industry, and I like that.

MIKE: Obviously, 20 years is a major milestone. Where do you see *LBM Journal* going from here, and what do you hope to still do?

RICH: Go on vacation?

RICK: [laughing] For Rich to not have to work every single weekend.

JODIE: I want to keep growing the brand and the relationships. Like we just said, everything's changing. Now, you've got social media, and you've got events, and you've got all these different things. There's so much possibility for us to partner with people and just keep growing. That's the fun part.

RICH: It has been fun, starting from scratch and just seeing how far we've come. I'm really proud of us for getting this far, and it just seems like it keeps growing and growing.

JODIE: The magazine 20 years ago was just a magazine. There wasn't digital. There wasn't anything. The paper was different; the cover stock was different. Revenue-wise, we were one fifth of what we are now. So that's been a lot of growth over 20 years, which has been fun.

RICK: And the thing is, none of this would have happened without Jodie and Rich. They were there at the beginning and through the whole thing. When the recession hit, Jodie took a cut in pay so that we could keep going. And Rich just continues to be the best art director that I've ever worked with. We've got a team of people who really care, and without that, there is no *LBM Journal*.

MIKE: If there was one thing, one detail that you could go back and change, what would that be?

RICK: That's a really, really good question. ▶



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MIKE: Maybe the answer is you wouldn't change anything?

RICK: From my perspective, I don't think so, because the lessons we've learned have made us who we are today. If we hadn't learned those lessons, they would still be waiting for us. As a result, at least we're smarter than we were. The journey was what it had to be.

JODIE: All our learning experiences have put us where we are. I think it has made the integrity of our product even better, because what Rick will tell you, is that we're always going to try to use our power for good. It's really nice to work with someone who has that attitude. So I'm with Rick—I don't know that I'd change anything, even the bad stuff.

RICH: Which is why we're still here. If I had to go back, of course I would change any design bombs I tried, but the fun thing about doing a monthly magazine is that I get to create something new each month. It's always exciting to see how we can make it better.

MIKE: Interestingly, the growth of the magazine somewhat mirrors the career path of someone entering the LBM industry. Looking at the magazine's success, what advice would you give to a young professional just coming in to the world of LBM?

RICK: My advice to young people would be to ask questions and then shut up and listen. One thing that we're doing at *LBM Journal* goes back to that. I was at a conference in Texas, and Chuck Pool from Main Street Lumber asked me what other lumber dealers are doing about the high cost of gasoline and how it's impacting free deliveries. I said, "I have no idea, but we can find out." So we did a quick email survey asking LBM dealers how they were dealing with the issue, and we got over 800 responses! I read through them all, and I realized this industry genuinely wants to help each other. That question turned into a feature called "Real Issues. Real Answers" that now runs every month in the magazine. It's based on our readers' responses and always carries the byline of "by *LBM Journal* readers." It's all about them.

JODIE: Agreed, and I have to go back to the integrity thing. This is a handshake industry. It always has been, and I don't think that's going to change. You just need to be honest and do good by people and word travels. Don't think you can't make this a career, because there's all sorts of pathways in this industry that you can go.

MIKE: My last question then is what's in the future? What do you hope to see?

RICK: We're just going to keep doing our thing and see where it goes. The latest thing we launched was our LBM 40 Under 40 awards, celebrating and recognizing the young leaders in the industry. I'm really excited about what they represent, what they're accomplishing, and the potential to support and nurture that community. That's the future.

JODIE: I agree. It's going to be really fun to be a part of putting all of those things together because it is going to be the future of the industry. I came into this as a pretty young person. Now, I'm sort of in the middle and I see the older generation leaving, and all of the new people coming in. It's a new wave of the next chapter.

RICK: Jodie was 22 when she came onboard, and responsible for 100% of the revenues of this start-up. No pressure.

JODIE: [laughing] No big deal.

RICH: I can't believe you were that young.

RICK: When Jodie was first on with the new magazine, one of our longtime advertisers sent me a fax (because faxes were still a thing) saying Jodie was by far the best sales rep he'd ever worked with. He was a seasoned old media buyer and she was a 22 year-old!

MIKE: I noticed no one responded with, "I want lots of minions." I expected someone to say that.

JODIE: Minions are too much work.

RICH: Minions are overrated! I think we just all want to still enjoy it. That's as simple as it gets for me.

RICK: Do your thing, do good work, have fun, and that's it. The story of *LBM Journal* is a fun one to tell, and it's great to have the three of us still here after 20 years. I'm so proud to be a part of this amazing industry. I hope to see us continue helping people grow their business. ■



RICK



JODIE



RICH

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TWO DECADES OF CHANGE

As the ubiquitous title character from the movie “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off” opined at the end of the film, “Life moves pretty fast. If you don’t stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.” We couldn’t agree more. In the 20 years since *LBM Journal* was launched, a lot has happened, both in the world of LBM and in the world at large. These events—some small and others global—have helped shape not only who we are as a culture, but how the LBM industry functions. Here’s a snapshot of just some of those moments.



A small, determined team of publishing pros launch *LBM Journal*, the magazine that is destined to become the leader in providing information, networking, and community for lumber and building materials dealers across the country.

Facebook launched and changed the social media landscape. While other social media sites such as MySpace already existed, Facebook rewrote how the world functions and interacts. Founded by Mark Zuckerberg, Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes, all of whom were students at Harvard University, Facebook would become the largest social network in the world, with nearly three billion users as of 2023.

On August 29, Hurricane Katrina strikes the Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama coastal areas. In an attempt to provide shelter for the over 400,000 people who were left homeless, government agencies brought in “Katrina Cottages” as housing. Measuring in at around 300 square feet in space, these structures helped spur the post-Katrina tiny-house movement. Home improvement retailers such as Lowe’s even offered pre-packaged Katrina Cottage kits.



The enactment of the 2006 Softwood Lumber Agreement (SLA) ended the fourth major lumber war between the United States and Canada. Both countries had been engaged in a series of domestic and international legal challenges for decades regarding the tariffs imposed on imported softwood lumber, which had impacts down the supply chain to U.S. lumber consumers and caused overall tension between the two neighboring countries.

Apple released the very first iPhone in January, forever changing how we communicate. Unveiled during one of Apple co-founder Steve Jobs’ famous keynote addresses, the touch-screen mobile phone had been in development since 2005 and reportedly cost over \$150 million to create. Apple’s first iPhone was originally exclusive to AT&T, and thousands of people lined up outside of stores in anticipation of its release. Originally priced at \$599, more than one million units were sold within less than three months of its release.

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008

In the wake of multiple bank failures earlier in the year, Pres. George W. Bush unveiled on September 24 a \$700 billion bailout plan called the Paulson Package. Within days, Congressional leaders revealed their own bill: the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008. While that bill failed to pass, the Senate created its own version that passed by a margin of 263 to 171. The bailout marked the most significant instance of government control of the economy since the Great Depression. In November of that same year, the automotive industry bailout made headlines, and on December 1, the National Bureau of Economic Research announced that the United States is officially in a recession.



2009

While its beginnings can be traced back to 2007, the Great Recession would come to be seen as the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, causing house prices to decline and unemployment to increase. In 2009, the United States government, as well as others around the world, pumped trillions of dollars into the financial system and into economies hoping to avert another Great Depression. By the end of 2009, markets had recovered and most experts thought the worst was over, although unemployment continued to increase.

2010

The first commercial space flight of the Dragon spacecraft took flight in December. Created by Elon Musk's Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (commonly referred to as SpaceX), the Dragon capsule launched off of a Falcon 9 rocket and became the first privately created spacecraft to successfully return from low-Earth orbit. The unmanned Dragon capsule, designed to carry cargo and crew, was launched and made two orbits around Earth before landing. The achievement marked a milestone moment for SpaceX and put them closer to achieving their goal of creating a commercially viable space transport program.



2011

On March 11, a 9.1-magnitude earthquake and subsequent tsunami hit the east of Japan, killing 15,840 and leaving another 3,926 missing. More alarming was the damage that occurred at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, where contaminants were released into the environment and a meltdown was narrowly averted. What would come to be called the Tohoku earthquake would also cause significant damage to the northeast coast ports of Hachinohe, Sendai, Ishinomaki, and Onahama—so severely damaged that they wouldn't return to operational condition for years. Because those ports primarily served the container shipping industry, availability of goods around the world and the global supply chain were significantly impacted.



2012

In October, Hurricane Sandy devastated the East Coast and the Caribbean and killed over 300 people. What began as a tropical storm in the Atlantic Ocean became a hurricane two days later as it spiraled into the Caribbean Sea, hitting Jamaica, Cuba, and the Bahamas. By October 29, the hurricane curved north and hit New Jersey and New York City, causing over \$50 billion in damages. Hurricane Sandy qualified as the second most costly hurricane in the history of the United States and was registered as a Category 3 storm at its peak.





For the very first time, the International Builders Show (IBS) and the Kitchen and Bath Industry Show (KBIS) combined forces to run simultaneously, forming Design and Construction Week. While still operating in two separate halls of the Las Vegas Convention Center, the new co-located trade show enabled attendees to see everything that was new in both the world of building materials and in kitchen and bath offerings. And rather than requiring separate registrations, attendees had access to both shows and their educational seminars with just one show pass.

2013



In January, an extreme weather event that would come to be known as the 2014 Polar Vortex hit the U.S., bringing the country to a frozen halt. An Arctic cold front initially associated with a nor'easter tracked across Canada and the United States, resulting in heavy snowfall, dangerous road conditions, and brutally cold temperatures. Business, school, and road closures were common, as well as mass flight cancellations across the country. The weather event played such a significant role that it caused a 2.9% drop in GDP.

2014

Lumber exports from Canada reached an eight-year high in 2015 when sawmills there took advantage of the strong U.S. lumber market. A combination of a sluggish U.S. economy and a weak currency allowed those lumber mills to ship 9.2% more product to the U.S. than in the previous year. In comparison, lumber shipments to China declined by over 13% to its lowest level since 2010. Russia, however, became the largest supplier of lumber to China and had a market share of 52%.

2015



President Obama declared a state of emergency for the city of Flint, Michigan. Less than two years prior, the local government switched the city's water source to the Flint River, causing an unprecedented public health crisis that officials were slow to recognize. The resulting corrosion of the water pipes meant the residents of Flint were drinking lead-contaminated water day after day. By the time President Obama approved the FEMA aid, at least 100 children had already tested with high lead levels, and many more cases were feared.

2016



Stanley Black & Decker acquired the Craftsman brand from Sears Holdings Corporation. In a deal worth approximately \$900 million value in cash, the agreement gave Stanley Black & Decker the right to develop, manufacture, and sell Craftsman-branded products outside of Sears stores—the longtime sole outlet for the Craftsman name.

2017

2018

In 2018, I Build America (IBA) founded the National Construction Appreciation Week to honor the men and women of the American construction industry and how instrumental they are in the development of our infrastructure and facilities. Held the third week in September, National Construction Appreciation Week was launched by Mike Rydin, then CEO of the construction software company HCSS, and aims to inspire a national conversation about construction and how vital it is to American infrastructure and the economy.



2019

Thanks to rebuilding efforts from natural disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Wilma, and Dennis, along with U.S. tax reforms, investments in infrastructure, interest in green building, and overall optimism in the direction of the economy, 2019 would bring significant gains for construction. After taking a hard hit in 2008 thanks to the Great Recession, the U.S. construction industry was predicted to reach a value of \$1.4 trillion by 2021.

2020

With the advent of a global pandemic and the enforced shutdowns that the COVID-19 virus brought, LBM dealers were forced to find new ways to do business. And while some would say the LBM industry is slow to change, they were proven wrong when dealers quickly embraced curbside service, promoted BOPIS (buy online, pick up in store) and ramped up their e-commerce capabilities. As a result, the industry developed capabilities that more closely resembled other online consumer purchasing portals.



2021

After timber companies warned that wildfires in Western Canada were hurting their business, the price of a lumber futures contract jumped by more than 10%, triggering circuit breakers designed to halt trading. At that point, a contract for 1,000 board-feet of lumber was going for \$647 US, up by more than \$60. Prices continued to spike as Canadian softwood suppliers scaled back operations due to the wildfires.

2022

On September 8, millions around the world mourned the death of England's Queen Elizabeth II, the longest-serving British monarch, died at Balmoral Castle in Scotland. Her death ended the longest reign in the history of the United Kingdom, and one of the longest by any head of state. Elizabeth II, who became Queen on the death of her father King George VI in 1952, reigned for 70 years, seven years more than Queen Victoria did. She was 96 and suffering from age-related health issues.



2023

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FIVE MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN SUCCESSION PLANNING

BY SAM BROWNELL

Through our work with business owners, we've learned many lessons that can guide us in what to do—and what not to do—to ensure a successful ownership transition for all stakeholders in a company. Below is a list of our top five succession planning mistakes to avoid.

1. WAITING TOO LONG TO START PLANNING

It is common to be so involved working *in* the business that you have difficulty finding time to work *on* the business. A successful transition has a foundation in the ability of the owner to mentor the next generation of leadership. Unfortunately, many owners wait until an event such as a heart attack forces them to focus on ownership transfer. No one wants to sell their life's work without thinking through all the implications. Therefore, engage with your trusted advisors now because your business will experience an ownership transition regardless of whether or not you planned for it.



2. NOT RECEIVING AN OBJECTIVE VALUATION

To be a business owner, you must be optimistic. However, that can lead business owners to have unrealistic expectations about the value of their business. Without having an objective valuation of your business by someone who understands the LBM industry, it can be difficult to answer these important questions:

- a. Will the business value plus my other assets be able to fund my post-ownership goals?
- b. What transition options are available to me?
- c. Is an offer from a potential acquirer realistic?
- d. How do I mitigate taxes?
- e. Can my cash flow be used to finance the buyout of my company?

3. DISREGARDING THE EMOTIONS

As an owner, you have poured your heart and soul into the business. Further, you are an important member of your community because you provide stable employment and support causes that matter to you and your neighbors. Therefore, it is critical to find trusted family, friends, and/or advisors to speak honestly to about what a business transition means for you personally. Having a plan to provide all stakeholders a chance for transparent communication is the best way to avoid costly interpersonal disagreements.

4. NOT PRODUCING CLEAN FINANCIALS

Many owners also own the property where their business operates, and often charge themselves less than market rent. While a common practice, it needs to be amended as you approach a transition. For example, if you are charging yourself 50% of current market rent, begin charging market rent and restating your historical financials. Any buyer wants to know if your business can support paying market rent.

5. NOT CONSIDERING ALL YOUR OPTIONS

While the number of businesses that are sold to the next generation has decreased, don't rule out a family member being interested in the business. But just because your kids don't want the business does not mean that you are out of luck if you can't find a competitor or private equity-backed buyer. Look at your management team and consider if there are members who have ownership potential. Another option is to consider a partial or full sale to your employees using an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) or Worker-Owned Cooperative (Coop). In both instances, you can receive fair market value for your business, and you leave the company in the hands of the people who know it best, your employees.

It can be daunting to think about giving up ownership of your business. An ownership transition, however, is going to happen regardless of whether you are prepared. Therefore, reach out to a trusted succession planning advisor to begin the conversation. Good transitions can take 3-5 years because it takes time to maximize value and transfer responsibilities. Done right, proactive succession planning can help you to run a more efficient and profitable business that will leave a legacy in your community for years to come. ■

PHOTO: ©ISTOCK.COM/MIKOLETTE

Stratus Wealth Advisors owner and founder Sam Brownell helps independent dealers by quarterbacking a comprehensive succession planning process to provide clients with essential data and advice to make the best decisions for their company and their family. Reach Sam at sbrownell@stratuswealthadvisors.com.



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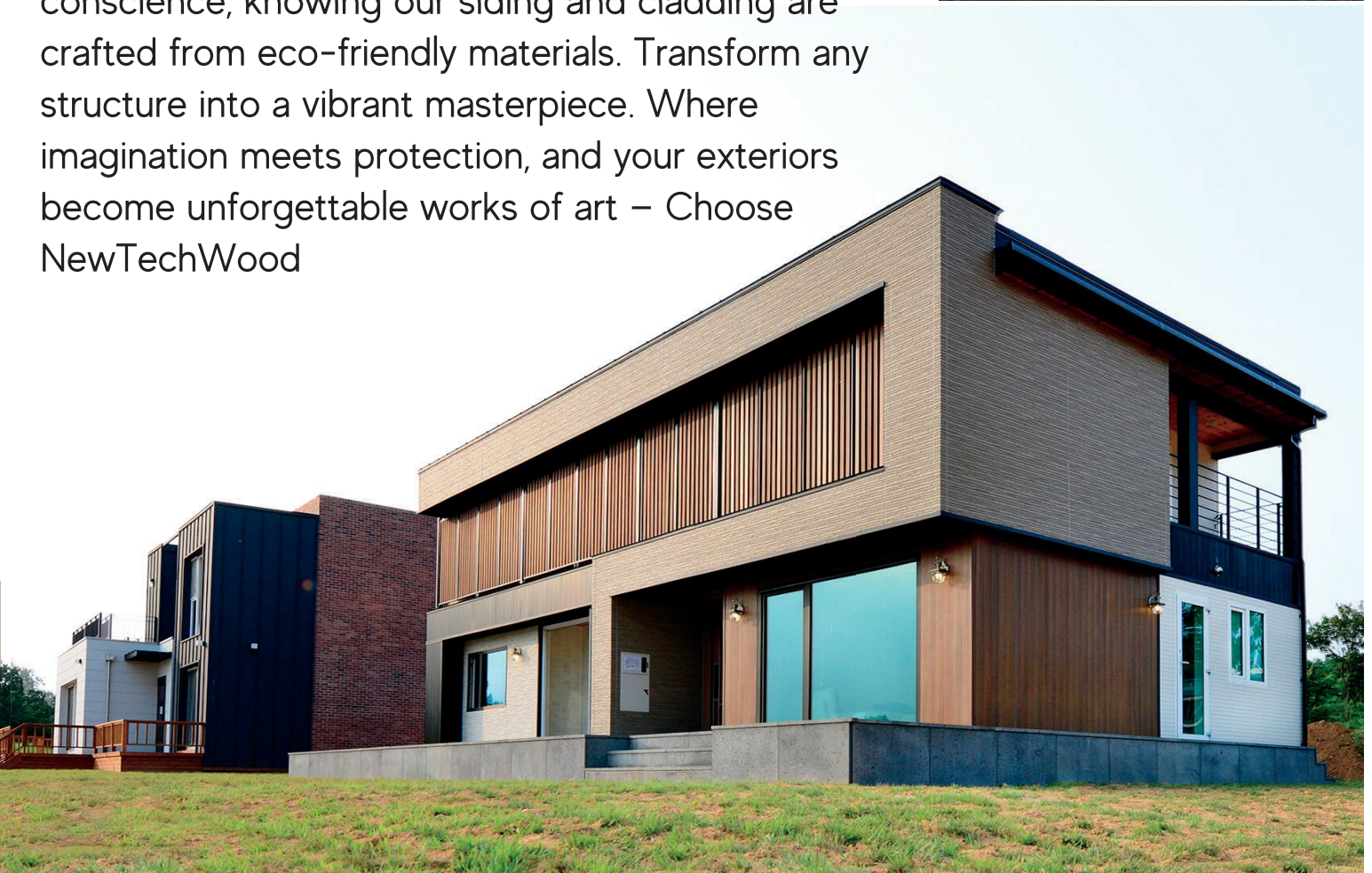
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IN DEPTH

SIDING

A return to normal means more options for builders and homeowners alike.

BY MIKE BERGER

Did you know that siding started as a very “green” product? As far back as the Neolithic period, our ancestors used thatch as a wall covering. Made from dry vegetation such as straw, water reeds, or combed wheat reed, the strands of plant matter were overlapped and weaved into patterns that deflected and directed water away from the homes of ancient humans. Even in more modern times, thatch is still commonly used as a wall covering. For example, in Bali, temples are often sided with thatch constructed from the black fibers of the sugar palm, and traditional Hawaiian hale structures are still sided with pili grass.

While thatch has served us well over the centuries, other materials (thank goodness) have taken the place of plant matter as our preferred siding. These choices—from wood and vinyl to metal, composites, and other synthetic choices—provide superior protection against the elements for our homes, businesses, and other structures. And like our homes, the siding segment as a whole has endured some pretty tough weather the past few years, with record demand spurred by the COVID-19 remodeling boom dampened by shortages in labor and raw materials. The result is a landscape that industry experts see as challenging in the near future but overall as a long-term positive.

“I believe growth will be flat or down in many regions of the country as both manufacturers and builders are much closer to being ‘caught up,’ a stark contrast to the last two or three years,” says Jon Lapp, siding product manager for ProVia. “One way to look at it is that we are tracking much closer to something like ‘normal’ in the post-pandemic environment. Looking at the 5-year growth trend, I expect 2023 to be a good year for the siding and trim segments.”





UFP Edge Thermally Modified Wood Collection cladding is modified with an all-natural heat and steam process that alters the wood's fiber cells. This process bakes the wood, making it rich in color, resistant to rot, dimensionally stable, and lighter in weight with improved thermal insulation properties.

Darker colors, more textures

When it comes to siding, anyone who has been paying attention to color trends over the past few years has no doubt marked the increased popularity of dark colors. Charcoal grays, dark greens, and deep tones of blue remain in vogue. These darker colors bring more than just visual appeal; they can allow light- or bright-colored elements of a home's exterior such as the front door to stand out, help make landscaping more prominent, and even aid in keeping homes warmer in winter.

"Darker color combinations are becoming much more popular as of late," says James Alpeter, siding marketing manager for ProVia. "The combination of dark siding, dark roofing, and dark windows is becoming increasingly popular."

That isn't to say that a lighter palette isn't popular. "Dark colors' popularity is still on the

rise," says ProVia's Lapp, "but as with every trend that goes mainstream there is an opposing but more subtle trend towards softer colors with warm or neutral tones. Sherwin Williams and Benjamin Moore point towards various shades of green, olive, and forest."

Chris Fox, category marketing manager for UFP Edge, points to the pairing of dark and light colors as a growing consumer interest. "Black and tan as well as black and white color combinations have been very popular over the past few years," he points out.

Kim Guimond, chief marketing officer for Modern Mill, also sees the pairing of light and dark tones as rising in popularity. "From a color perspective, other than natural, we see color blocking—adding a darker, moodier color as a trim or accent—creating a bold look without the commitment of painting an entire house dark," she explains. ▶

OPPOSITE PAGE:
Now available in a new 8" profile, Westlake Royal's Cedar Renditions Board & Batten siding is a non-flammable, moisture-proof, and non-combustible siding that the manufacturer says is easy to install and is virtually maintenance-free.

RIGHT: Evolve Stone's Monument Gate stone veneer is a mortarless, color-throughout stone product that the manufacturer says is a fraction of the weight of the competition and is designed to install up to 10 times faster.



FAR RIGHT: Distributed exclusively by G Wood Pro, ThermoWood Oak is the newest product offered by Tantomber. Sustainably sourced, this hardwood is manufactured using an exclusive process unique to ThermoWood that is both chemical-free and non-toxic.



And while the bold use of color is on trend, so too is the use of different styles and sizes of cladding. Mix and matching is nothing new, but today's modern homes are using combinations of materials, profiles, and textures to create unique visual appeal.

Whether it's by combining horizontal and vertical siding, using multiple lap profiles, or mixing disparate materials, homeowners have become increasingly creative with aesthetics. To meet that aesthetic, builders and remodelers are utilizing varied, multi-textured facades that differentiate the home's exterior, says Kriss Swint, director of marketing communications for Westlake Royal Building Products. As she explains, "This may be accomplished by blending materials (such as stone with vinyl), profiles (such as lap siding with board-and-batten gables), or geometries (traditional forms with modern bump-outs and roofing components)."

Part of the mixing of textures comes from the increasing use of wood—whether real, faux, or a wood alternative that delivers the visual

appeal of wood. "We're seeing demand for adding wood accents (or wood alternatives that genuinely look like the real thing) and other natural textures to a home's exterior," says Modern Mill's Guimond, "using a mix of different textures (e.g. stone, siding, and wood/genuine wood looking alternatives) to create depth, add visual interest, and WOW factor to the front of your home and neighborhood."

Says UFP Edge's Fox, "I see an uptrend on real wood and faux wood siding. Wood colors and textures are important to achieve an on-trend aesthetic. Thermally modified wood siding has gained acceptance and we have seen significant momentum in the last two years."

Similarly, Ralph Bruno, CEO of Tando Composites, points to the increased use of cedar shingles. "The demand for cedar shingles continues to outpace the supply, he explains. "This disparity is even greater when looking at natural (uncoated) cedar shingles." He points to Tando's Beach House Shake composite shingle as a new category that was developed to specifically meet this demand, adding, "Beach House Shake has the undeniable appearance of individual natural cedar shingles, so much so that it is being mainstreamed in 'cedar shingle-centric' markets such as Cape Cod, Long Island, the Jersey Shore, and Atlantic Canada."

Alternatives on the rise

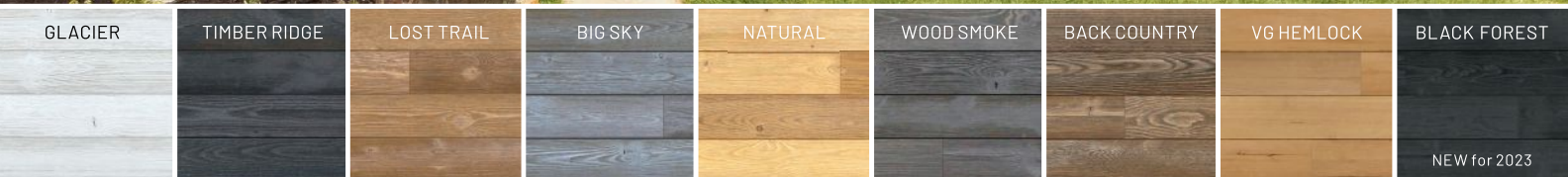
According to a recent report by Market Research Future (MRFR) entitled "Siding Market Information by Material, Application, and Region - Forecast till 2030," the siding market is expected to be worth between \$101.7 billion and \$126.3 billion by 2030. Interestingly, The Freedonia Group forecasts demand for composite siding in the US to increase 1.8% annually through 2025 to 48,000 squares valued at \$172 million—proof positive that consumer interest in siding materials outside of traditional wood and vinyl is on a significant rise. ▶

ProVia's new Harbor Mill shake and shingle siding profiles were modeled after authentic cedar pieces using laser scanning. They're available in 7" rough-sawn shingle and 8" hand-split shake profiles and come in over 25 colors.



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UltraShield Composite Siding from NewTechWood is a composite wall cladding that features a co-extruded cap and a composite core. According to the manufacturer, because the siding utilizes tongue and groove boards, it creates a true rainscreen that prevents water from penetrating between the boards while still appearing to create a 1/4" gap between the boards.



Part of this rise can be attributed to an easing of product availability, explains Lapp. “One product subcategory to watch for growth is the composite, or ‘alternative’ cladding scene,” he says. “During the worst of the pandemic supply and demand crunch many consumers had little choice when it came to choosing a particular product, they were left with what was available to them in the time afforded.”

Steve Booz, vice president of marketing and product management for Westlake Royal Building Products, also sees an increase in the demand for composite siding as a trend LBM dealers need to pay particular attention to. “As a category, cellular PVC has advanced and grown into one of the industry’s most notable wood alternatives, with realistic looks alongside high performance,” he explains, pointing to the unique properties of composite materials. “For example, our Celect Cellular Composite Siding offers the timeless look of real wood yet absorbs a miniscule amount of water, so there’s no need to worry about swelling, cracking, chipping, or degradation.”

Ralph Bruno, CEO of Tando Composites, agrees. “Much like the decking category in the 1990s, we see similar composite technology growing rapidly in the siding segment. The improved performance and durability of a composite combined with the undeniable appearance of traditional wood and stone siding products uniquely positions composites to meet market demands.”

And while composite siding and other alternative materials come at a higher price point, manufacturers see homeowners willing to pay a premium for it, thanks in no small part to its

longevity and “green” nature. “We’re seeing growing interest in eco-friendly siding options as customers are becoming more interested in green building practices,” says Derek Blank, corporate and siding marketing director for LP Building Solutions. “While today, green options are more of a tiebreaker in the buyer’s decision process, Millennials and Gen Z have expressed they’re willing to pay up to 10% more for sustainable options.”

Richard Lam, director of sales and marketing for NewTechWood America, also sees an increased willingness from consumers to pay extra for products that deliver longer life. “The emergence of composite siding is a trend that is coming up and is slowly taking over the industry,” he says. “People are always looking to buy something once and never change it. So if a product was able to withstand whatever mother nature threw at it people would buy that. I think people only buy on price because it is something they don’t need or want it to last a lifetime, but when we are talking about building materials people are willing to spend a little more for the added durability of the product.”

Simple installation spells sales

According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, workforce participation remains below pre-pandemic levels. Its data shows there are 1.97 million fewer Americans working today compared to February of 2020. That’s a statistic that shouldn’t come as a surprise to anyone in the LBM industry, and to offset the lack of labor, siding manufacturers suggest offering product lines that are easy to install or require fewer hands. ▶

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Product Page



Demo Video

Made with upcycled rice hulls, ACRE siding from Modern Mill is a sustainable, durable alternative that the manufacturer touts as having the look and feel of real wood. It's an ideal material for outdoor applications because it is water-, weather- and pest-resistant, and is guaranteed not to rot or splinter.



“We all know time is money in the building industry, and labor challenges continue to be a significant issue in the industry,” LP Building Solutions’ Blank points out. “In fact, with an aging labor pool we are seeing one new person entering the industry for every five people that retire. This makes it critical to deliver solutions that are both simple and efficient to install, without giving up beauty and durability for the homeowners.”

Ease of installation, however, is only as good as what lies behind the siding, points out John Chamberlin, director of product management for Georgia-Pacific Building Products, and he recommends looking for products that are part of a complete system. “I think siding and trim will continue to reflect current design trends in terms of color and texture, but real change and growth will happen behind the cladding,” he says. “Already we’ve seen codes change to include good design practice such as exterior

insulation and exterior drainage behind certain claddings. These types of code and design changes are likely to continue which could create more complexity using current construction practices. To simplify construction, and prevent siding and trim from having to compromise aesthetics, we’ll expect to see further adoption of labor saving, simpler to install products such as integrated WRB sheathings.”

Siding products touted as easy to install bring with them unique issues, Chamberlain explains. “Those products are going to bring up questions about things like continuity of WRB systems and tested, approved accessories that are compatible with those products. Simply put, LBM dealers will more often need to focus on systems rather than products and when thinking about siding and trim in particular they’ll want to understand how the systems work behind the siding as complete wall assemblies. The best solutions will include those complete systems that are proven behind the siding and trim to minimize challenges during construction in the field or to the performance of the building.”

Product knowledge is paramount

With so many new siding products either in the market now or poised for launch, it can be more than a challenge for builders and remodelers to stay up to date on product features and benefits. That’s where LBM dealers can really shine, say industry experts, by serving as knowledge providers for their customers. “Dealers who position themselves as a resource and an expert for customers, armed with product knowledge and ideas, can help match customers with products that truly address each project’s unique challenges and, as a result, build stronger relationships and loyalty,” Westlake Royal’s Booz points out. “Understanding the products they sell and understanding how they compare to other siding and trim materials, both those at the yard and those sold by competitors, can be a huge advantage. Manufacturers are here to help with product education and materials, onsite support, and other training resources.”

This product knowledge serves not only the LBM customer at the time of purchase, manufacturers say, but also helps installers and homeowners alike understand what to expect over time from their siding choice. “Have some focus on product education to help manage expectations of the substrate,” says UFP Edge’s Fox. “It’s important for siding contractors ▶



According to Tando Composites, the technology used to create its Beach House Shake and Tando Stone creates a product that has the authentic and architecturally precise appearance of natural materials with a new level of performance and ease of installation.

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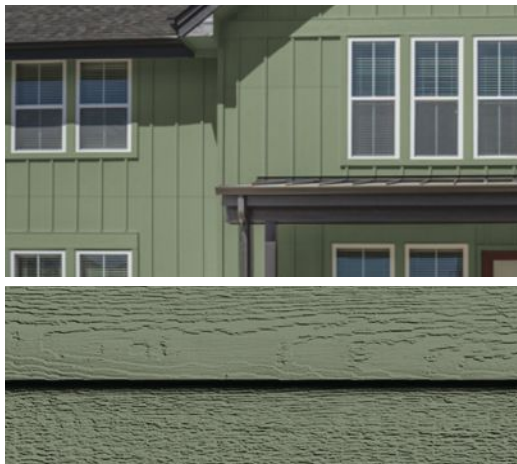
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Anthony Forest Products is part of the Canfor Group of Companies

LP Building Solutions has introduced three new colors to its LP SmartSide ExpertFinish Trim and Siding line: Garden Sage (shown), Harvest Yellow, and Midnight Shadow.



and homeowners alike to have a clear understanding on what to expect before and after installation (expansions and contraction cycles, UV fading, general maintenance needs, etc.).”

Product knowledge without product, however, is nothing but a tease. Loosening supply conditions are making it easier for LBM dealers to get product, and manufacturers stress the importance of LBM dealers positioning themselves to deliver on the products they tout. “I recommend dealers focus on having product on the ground and readily available for their builders,” says LP Building Solutions’ Blank. “With such a focus on efficiency and reduced build cycles, it is important to be able to get product when and where they need it quickly.”

Tando’s Ralph Bruno also shares Blank’s thoughts on the importance of LBM dealers being able to quickly provide siding products to

their customers. “Products need to be easy to buy and turn quickly,” he says, using a few of Tando’s offerings as examples. “A product like TandoStone complements any type of siding used on a project—fiber cement, engineered wood siding, vinyl, or natural wood. A stone knee wall for a mixed material exterior is a perfect fit for TandoStone. Historically, this portion of the job would go through a hardscape or masonry yard, but with TandoStone, the LBM dealer can supply its siding installer with the stone portion of the project.”

Along with product availability, siding manufacturers point to the importance of product support as part of the success recipe for LBM dealers. “I think when LBM dealers identify vendors, they need to be considering not just the products or even the system, but also the support that the manufacturer is able to provide,” Georgia-Pacific Building Products’ Chamberlin explains. “A good manufacturer should be expected to offer guidance around proper handling and installation of their systems and will likely have a knowledgeable technical services department that can help to identify watch-outs before construction as well as help to troubleshoot challenges during construction.”

Rather than being a stagnant product segment, the past few years have proven that siding continues to be a dynamic opportunity for LBM dealers, one that’s filled with innovation and growth potential. New design trends, new materials, and new installation techniques are requiring dealers to hone their skills, and the ones who bring the best solutions for their customers’ needs are the ones who will see the biggest gains.

As Modern Mill’s Kim Guimond explains, it’s all about offering innovation. “Today’s homeowners are more educated, more influenced, coming to builders having done most of their own research on Pinterest and Houzz, have high environmental standards and seek companies with purpose. LBM Dealers can offer more value to their builders by arming them with innovative new products that tick clients’ boxes for innovative, sustainable, new options for their homes—especially important after the pandemic when homeowners are doubling down on investments to make their homes more comfortable and attractive.” ■



Available in 9" Board x 2" batten strip x 10' length, Westlake Royal's Select Cellular Composite 11" Board & Batten siding is designed for larger homes to accentuate sections of the house including full walls, gables, and bump-outs.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS



WE'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY

With this issue of *LBM Journal* being our 20th anniversary, we thought it would be a great opportunity to take a look at how the siding segment has changed in the past two decades, and who better to ask than the industry experts themselves.

STEVE BOOZ WESTLAKE ROYAL BUILDING PRODUCTS

The siding industry has seen tremendous innovation over the past two decades, with materials continuing to get more durable, longer lasting, and more fade resistant. Technology has also helped to elevate aesthetics, with manmade materials featuring grains, textures, and profiles that are often nearly indistinguishable from wood while meeting growing consumer demand for low maintenance. Enhancements in materials and finishes have allowed for darker colors.



CHRIS FOX UFP-EDGE

There are more material options than ever: metal, fiber cement, engineered, recycled, and real wood. There are also more pre-finished siding options, which comes with key benefits like a better and more consistent finish and reduced project delays due to bad weather.



JON LAPP PROVIA

The one thing that stands out to me is how homeowners have placed themselves at the forefront of choosing a product for their home as opposed to relying on a contractor or distributor to tell them what to purchase. Today's homeowner in many cases is well-informed and requests specific products based on the findings of their own research.



DEREK BLANK LP BUILDING SOLUTIONS

Homeowners and building professionals today have a lot more options, not just between siding cladding types, but also different types of exterior cladding in general. And those products must stand up to different or evolved challenges versus the products of 20 years ago.



KIM GUIMOND MODERN MILL

The industry has moved more to composite products as they offer performance, longevity, less maintenance, and less stress on the environment. Also, technology has improved aesthetics to the point where some composites, like ACRE, are nearly indistinguishable when compared to wood. Sustainability is no longer a marketing bonus. It's now an imperative driving new product innovation and customer demands.



JOHN CHAMBERLIN GEORGIA-PACIFIC BUILDING PRODUCTS

One of the biggest changes over the past 20 years has been the growth of knowledge and understanding of building science and the importance of proper building envelope design and construction behind the siding.



RALPH BRUNO TANDO COMPOSITES

The siding and cladding sector has advanced in leaps and bounds, not just with better performance, but amazing aesthetics that offer authentic substitutions for traditional materials. Weather-related advancements are also a great example—coating technologies that prevent color shift like KAPGUARD with Kynar, a factory-applied, high-performance protective coating for composite exterior building products.



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

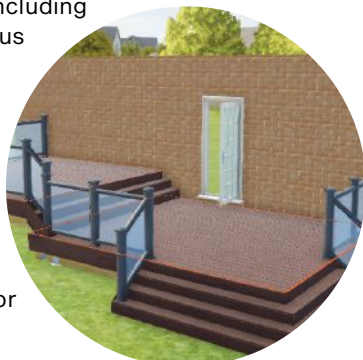


EPICOR BISTRACK

Built on 50 years of industry experience, Epicor BisTrack Global is a powerful management software for lumber and building materials businesses. 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. BisTrack’s functionality includes analytics and reporting, eCommerce, mobility, inventory and warehouse management, delivery and dispatch, value-added services, customer and sales management. epicor.com

SIMPLIFIED BAMBOO DECK BUILDING

Simpson Strong-Tie and New Jersey-based MOSO North America (a developer and creator of bamboo products) have recently partnered on products and software to enable customers to plan and design their deck projects using Simpson Strong-Tie Deck Planner Software. The free-to-use online deck building software allows contractors, deck builders, and homeowners to design their own custom deck rendering using MOSO Bamboo X-treme decking, along with structural products and technical knowledge from Simpson Strong-Tie. In addition, the deck planner has features that are unique to a MOSO Bamboo X-treme deck, including the ability to select various widths of deck boards. The software can then estimate quantities for all MOSO bamboo decking products, and can even age the designed deck to show users how the bamboo will naturally change color over time.



moso-bamboo.com

PROVIA BARREL TILE METAL ROOFING

ProVia has recently expanded its roofing lineup with the addition of Barrel Tile Metal Roofing. The 26-gauge metal roofing system is galvanized on both sides and fortified with a GalvaTec coating that ProVia says protects against mold, mildew, and harsh UV rays. It’s engineered to withstand 130-mph winds, and it has a Class 4 impact rating and Class A fire rating. Compared to traditional Spanish clay tile, Barrel Tile Metal Roofing offers several advantages for dealers and installers including an easier installation process, lighter weight, increased durability, resistance to damage from hail and wind-borne debris, and a 50+ year lifespan that’s backed by a Limited Lifetime Warranty with unlimited transfers. provia.com



PASLODE CORDLESS POSITIVE PLACEMENT METAL CONNECTING SYSTEM

New from Paslode, its fuel-powered Cordless Positive Placement Metal Connector Nailer features the brand’s proprietary Positive Placement nose probe, which helps the user to quickly and accurately find metal connector holes and drive nails with precision and speed without the need of a hose or compressor. According to Paslode, the new nailer is designed for optimal performance when using Paslode Positive Placement Fuel and Nail Packs, which are offered in 1-1/2" lengths in both .131" and .148" diameters and come in brite or mechanically galvanized finishes. The fuel cells are reported to last 800 shots, and when fully charged, the battery lasts for approximately 9,000 nails. The nails are ICC-ES code recognized (ESR-2126 & ESR-3326), and the galvanization meets ASTM B695 Class 55 recognized for use in ACQ and all pressure treated lumber. paslode.com

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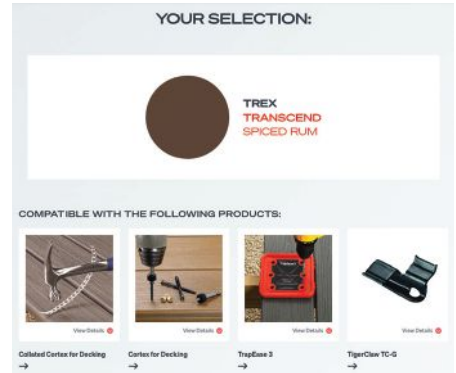
NEW STONECOAT PRODUCTS

StoneCoat has introduced three new limestone-based veneer products. As the manufacturer describes, StoneCoat SMOOTH offers the same flexibility as traditional stucco, but with the benefit of a breathable, water- and mold-proof material. StoneCoat CARVE is for exterior and interior applications and delivers significant savings in installation time and cost savings when compared with conventionally installed products. StoneCoat SHIELD (shown) is a penetrating water repellent that protects against water intrusion, stain damage, freeze/thaw spalling, efflorescence and rust damage. stonecoat.com



FASTENMASTER ONLINE DECKING COLOR MATCH TOOL

Just in time for the heart of the decking season, FastenMaster's new online color match tool for composite decking is reported to be simple to use, with intuitive drop-down menus and instant results. Professional contractors select the brand of decking, the board collection, and the board color that they are working with, and the tool then provides a list of matched FastenMaster products including fastening with Cortex and TrapEase as well as any compatible hidden clips. In addition, the list includes the SKUs and packaging information for the fastener and clip options, making ordering a smoother process. The decking color match tool includes products from 28 composite deck manufacturers, including their collection names, and specific color names. fastenmaster.com



Storage Systems for LBM Dealers

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



Cantilever Drive-Thru System



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COMPOSITE DECK SCREWS

New improved thread design drills easier with **LESS MUSHROOMING** in composite lumber.



T-20 Star Drive eliminates driver bit camout

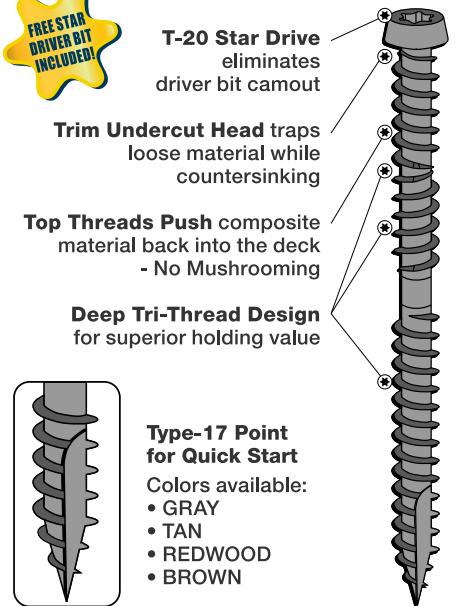
Trim Undercut Head traps loose material while countersinking

Top Threads Push composite material back into the deck - No Mushrooming

Deep Tri-Thread Design for superior holding value

Type-17 Point for Quick Start

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- GRAY
 - TAN
 - REDWOOD
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AMP WORK SANDAL

Georgia Boot's new AMP sandal is based around the footwear manufacturer's AMP Insole that's used in other styles of the company's footwear. The slide-on sandal features dual-density EVA and polyurethane outsole, a contoured midsole made from a proprietary memory polyurethane that provides excellent arch support to reduce foot fatigue, and a synthetic slide strap that provides for an easy on and off. georgiaboot.com

FISCHER POWERFULL II FULL-THREAD SCREW

New from The Fischer Group of companies, the latest generation of PowerFull II full-thread screws are designed for permanently and securely connecting or reinforcing supporting wood constructions for applications such as main and secondary beam connections, false beam edges, shear tension bracings, or shear connections. According to the manufacturer, PowerFull II screws are suitable whenever timber connections or reinforcements are subjected to particularly high requirements and carry a European Technical Assessment (ETA-21/0751) that covers several updates as well as the future Eurocode 5 on the design and construction of timber structures. The screws feature a proprietary geometry that the manufacturer says significantly improves the pullout load capacity, while the higher thread pitch reduces the screw-in torque for simple and easy installation. fischer-international.com



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PACKOUT MODULAR STORAGE SYSTEM

Milwaukee Tool is adding eight new shop-focused solutions to its PACKOUT Modular Storage System, all featuring modularity with the manufacturer's PACKOUT Wall Plates. The new additions include: a Magnetic Rack for storing hand tools and fasteners; Magnetic Bins that can be hung on wall plates and feature a quick access magnetic dish for organizing small items; a Compact Wall Basket for quick access to stored items such as gloves and bit cases; a 4" Single Straight Hook and a 7-Hook Rack; a Belt Clip Rack constructed with reinforced metal for storing anything with a belt clip; and a Long Handle Tool Holder for storing outdoor power equipment. milwaukeetool.com



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1934 Designs and Launches Ring Shank Nail Product Line

1955 Develops Exclusive Stormguard Double Hot-Dip Galvanizing

1996 Founded S.S.E., our Collating Division

2006 Earns Miami-Dade County Approval on Selected Roofing Nails

2008 Certified by Scientific Certification Systems for Recycled Content

2011 Fifth Hot-Dip Galvanizing Production Line Installed

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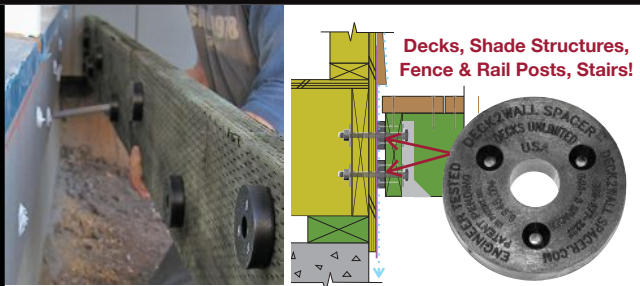
With up to a reported 14 hours of runtime, the new DEWALT DCR008 Rechargeable Mini Bluetooth Speaker is built for jobsite listening and features a rugged housing and an IP67 rating for dust and water protection. Powered by USB charging using a 5V 1A power supply (not included), DEWALT says the speaker can be charged in as little as two hours, and users can link two speakers for stereo-style sound. The carry strap and buckle allow for convenient transportation and storage, and the speaker fits standard cup holders. dewalt.com



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ABOUT RICK

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

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

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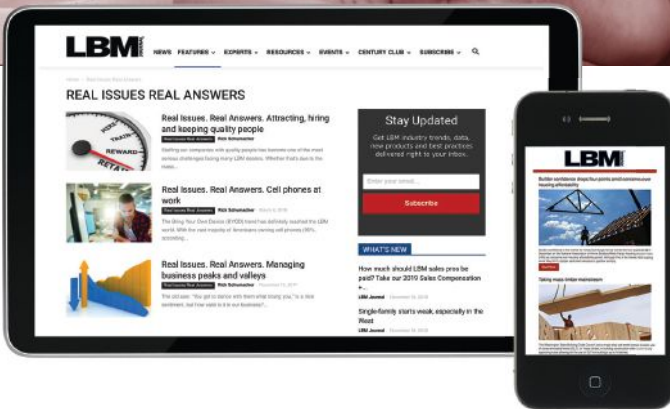
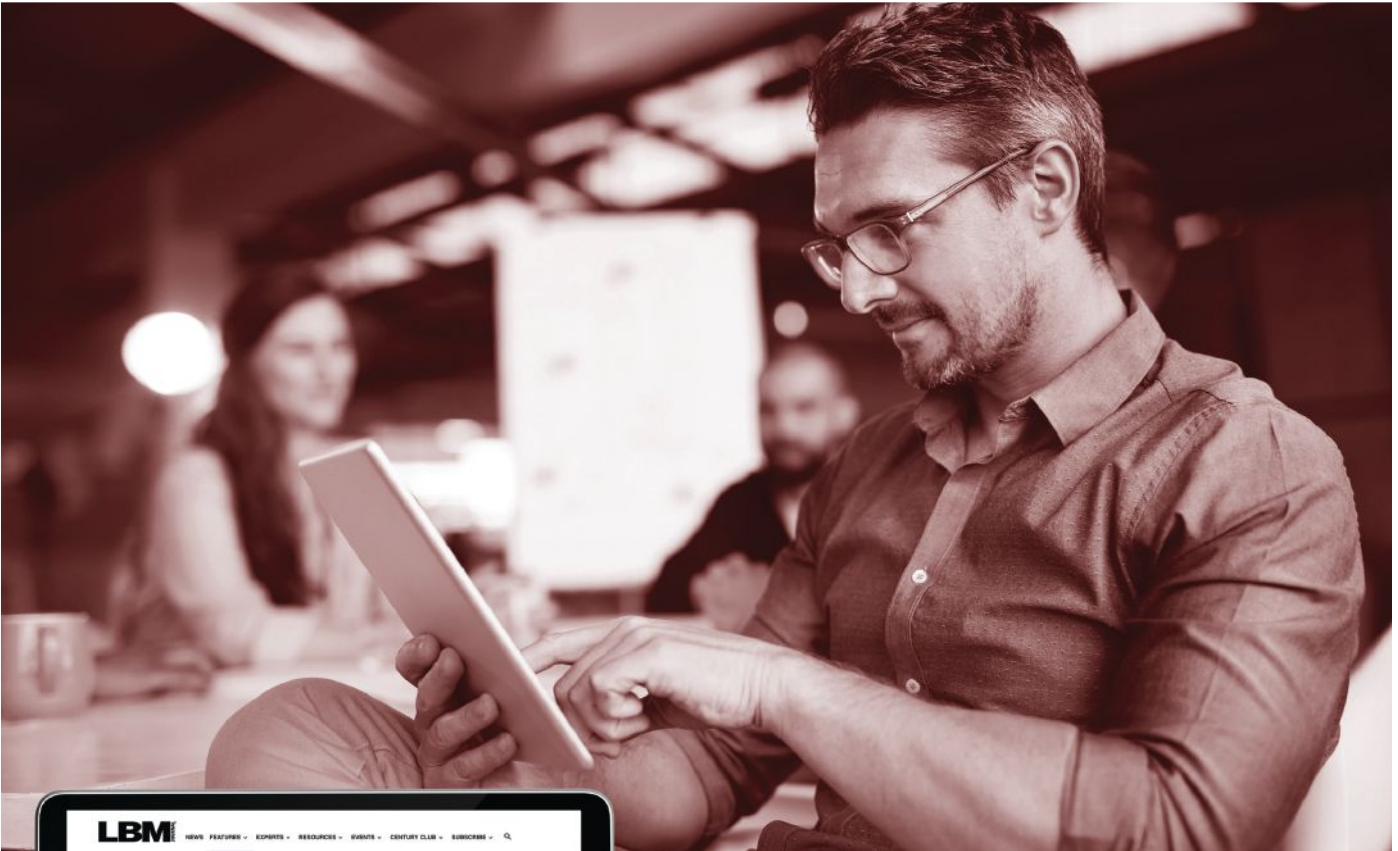
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LBM Strategies Conference 2023	14-15		lbmstrategies.com
* Manufacturers Reserve Supply	BB, 9	973.373.1881	mrs lumber.com
Maze Nails	73	800.435.5959	mazenails.com
Midwest Fastener Corp	27	800.444.7313	fastenerconnection.com
MITER Brands	6-7	717.365.3300	miterbrands.com
NewTechWood America	56-57	866.728.5273	newtechwood.com
Orgill	35	800.347.2860	orgill.com
Paslode	63	800.341.0744	paslode.com
ProVia	47	800.669.4711	provia.com
ProWood	23	844.529.5882	prowoodlumber.com/dealer
* Rollex Corp.	9	800.251.3300	rollex.com
Schweiss Doors	38	507.426.8273	schweissdoors.com
Simpson Strong-Tie	17	800.999.5099	strongtie.com
* Starwood Rafters	72	888.525.5878	starwoodrafters.com
Sure Drive USA	71	800.951.2222	suredrive.com
Thermally Modified Wood Products	IFC-1, 40-41	201.572.1807	gwoodpro.com
* TruWood Siding Trim	9	800.417.3674	truwoodsiding.com
UFP-Edge	61	844.529.5882	ufpedge.com
Versatex	37	724.857.1111	versatex.com
Westlake Royal Building Products	OBC	800.521.8486	westlakeroyalbuildingproducts.com
Weyerhaeuser	25	800.525.5440	weyerhaeuser.com

* Denotes regional distribution.

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

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



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THE CASE OF THE DISRUPTIVE BUILDER

A builder is convinced he can nearly double his completed homes and his purchases—if you're willing to work with him and his aggressive schedule. What would you do?

LIKE MANY OF YOUR PEERS in the LBM community across the U.S., your lumberyard isn't the biggest in town, and it's not the lowest priced. Instead, you've built a business based on providing unmatched service and products to your builder customers. You don't use the phrase "unmatched service" flippantly. You back it up with an "On Time In Full" delivery promise. Deliveries aren't just dumped at the jobsite. Instead, they're placed where the builder wants them, to enable their crew to work more efficiently. You and your team have worked hard to put back-office operations in place that make it easy to do business with. For these reasons and more, your company is the go-to supplier for the leading custom builders in your market.

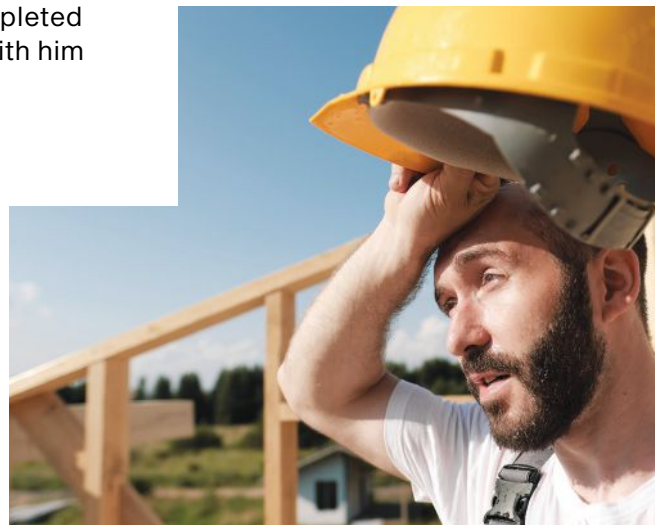
One of those builders stands out from the others. Where other builders can be somewhat less than organized, he has spent his career tweaking his processes and his scheduling. As a result, his team manages to start and complete custom homes in far less time than his competition. What he's doing is impressive, but he wants to take it to another level. To make that happen, he needs your buy-in.

You know from talking with the salesperson on his account and your yard team that he's already more demanding than other builder customers. "He's not unreasonable," they've explained, "and he understands that we're taking care of lots of builders. His jobs are scheduled out further than anyone we've worked with, and the schedules are very detailed. With many of our builders, we're nudging them to see when we can get products out of our warehouse and onto their jobsite. He's the opposite...it's like he's nudging us to up our game."

Their assessment lines up with what he told you this morning. "I'm convinced that I can build more homes than I'm building now, which means I could be buying more materials than I'm buying now. To do that, your team and mine

would have to work closer throughout the process—starting with the blueprints and the takeoffs. If this works the way I envision it, we'd coordinate on delivery scheduling, material purchasing, vendor selection...virtually everything. This would require closer collaboration between your team and mine, but I'm confident that the result will be worth it."

You like how this builder thinks, and you really like the idea of providing the materials for him to build more homes in less time. However, with labor issues being what they are, your current team is stretched thin. The way he describes it, his process sounds like working smarter, not harder. But he made clear that it would take your team out of its comfort zone. The way you see it, this could be a big success, or a big waste of time. What would you do?



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Stay the course. Tell the builder you'd love to sell him more materials to build more homes, but you've got a well-trained team with systems in place that work for you, and he'll need to bend to fit how you do things.

Baby steps. Your market is hungry for more new homes, so if you can help affect that while selling more materials, it's worth being open to change. Take it slow and see how it goes.

Embrace it. You've got a top builder who's not concerned about price, who wants to build a closer relationship with your company, and to buy more materials from you. What's not to love?

Wait and see. It's true that this could be good, but it would also mean making some changes. You've got a great team, but they don't always love change. If he doesn't partner with another lumberyard, revisit it in the future.

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SOMETHING ELSE? If you'd take a different plan of attack, email your suggested solution to 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 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.

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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