

LBM JOURNAL[®]

MARCH 2025 | \$15 U.S. | LBMJOURNAL.COM



DEALER OF THE YEAR 2025

CATEGORY: \$10MM-\$50MM

LUMBER KING

HOT PRODUCTS FROM IBS

INNOVATIONS ABOUND AT
THIS YEAR'S SHOW

JOHN KAYEA, STEVE PHILLIPS, AND WILLIE BOYATT
OF LUMBER KING

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HOT PRODUCTS 2025

NAHB IBS™



FEATURES

32 REAL ISSUES. REAL ANSWERS.
THE EMPLOYEE BALANCING ACT

36 LBM JOURNAL DEALER OF THE YEAR
CATEGORY: \$10MM-\$50MM

Over the past 65 years, Lumber King has transformed itself from a small lumber processing operation to a multi-location building center chain across five cities and two states.

40 IN DEPTH | ROOFING

Durability and sustainability dominate today's roofing market.

48 HOT PRODUCTS FROM IBS

Innovations abound at this year's show.

DEPARTMENTS

8 THE BUZZ

LBM updates, news, and events. Plus, the latest from lumberyards across the country, and responses to our January issue Tough Call survey.

30 FIVE QUESTIONS

Paul Casseri from Atlas Roofing Corporation, shares roofing innovations for weathering industry challenges.

64 TOUGH CALL

A truckload of mistakes from your window/door vendor has seriously delayed several high-end homes and infuriated your affected builder customers. What would you do?

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DEALER OF THE YEAR 2025

CATEGORY: \$10MM-\$50MM



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Leading Suppliers Council



INDUSTRY LEADERS

18 BUILDING SALES

Fear or learning—what's your environment?

RICK DAVIS

20 SALES + OPERATIONS

The key to profitability lies with how the numbers relate.

BILL LEE

22 CREDIT Q+A

Reservation rights.

THEA DUDLEY

24 MERGERS + ACQUISITIONS

Take the money and run?

JOHN D. WAGNER

26 LEADERSHIP

Learning the finer points of becoming a leader.

RUSS KATHREIN



LBMJOURNAL.COM

FROM THE PUBLISHER

YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED SOMETHING called LBM Talks when paging through the magazine, in our enewsletter, or on social media. Here's the story: Thea Dudley has built a loyal following with her Credit Q&A column in each issue, and with her monthly credit-themed webinars. If you know Thea, you know that she won't rest until every business has access to smart credit advice. We'd been talking about launching a podcast featuring the Credit Overlord herself, but didn't have the staff in place to pull the trigger.

Enter Sally Lacey. We initially hired her to manage our social media presence on a very part-time basis—just 10-15 hours a week. She did a great job right out of the gate, and it turned out that we needed her far more than we anticipated, so she earned full-time status just a few months later. Anxious to grow and learn new skills, she embraced the opportunity to produce Thea's podcasts, which we call LBM Talks Credit.

Our social media presence has been generating a lot of positive buzz since Sally took over. So, we talked about her hosting a podcast where she talks with members of our audience about their company's social media journey. What they're doing, what works, what doesn't, and advice for other LBM companies thinking of growing their social media presence. While this fledgling podcast is still very new, LBM Talks Social Media is finding a welcome audience. It's clever, fun, and insightful—and available on Spotify and Apple, and viewers can watch the episodes on YouTube. I encourage you to check it out.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Rick Schumacher'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Since print is alive and well in the LBM industry—52% of readers prefer print only, 34% prefer print and digital, and 14% prefer digital only—our editors continue to do an excellent job creating compelling content every month. A couple of can't-miss items in this issue are:

Hot Products from IBS (p. 48). Our products guru, Senior Editor Mike Berger highlights some new products that deserve a look by LBM dealers looking to refresh their offerings. This listing includes the eight products selected as finalists for the "Best of IBS: Most Innovative Building Material" award.

Lumber King: LBM Dealer of the Year (p. 36). This four-page profile shares the story of Kentucky's Lumber King, which earned top honors in the \$10MM-\$50MM category. For this piece, Managing Editor Wendy Sturges interviewed the company's leaders to learn what they do to set themselves apart. While they mention investments in a truss shop, rental center, building renovations, and social media marketing efforts, the key to their success lies in the headline: Employees Fuel Growth for Kentucky Lumberyard.

The Buzz (p. 8). I believe this is, hands down, the best written and designed collection of bite-sized facts about our industry. Period. Wendy Sturges and Creative Director Rich Hart absolutely kill it.

And in closing, let's just say that I couldn't be prouder of the work the LBM Journal team does on behalf of the LBM community.

— Rick Schumacher
Executive Editor & Publisher

HAVE A QUESTION FOR RICK?
RICK@LBMJOURNAL.COM

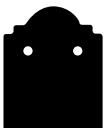


Fresh ideas for home improvement.

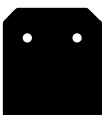


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Outdoor Accents



Mission



Avant

Strength and selection go together with Outdoor Accents® decorative hardware from Simpson Strong-Tie. We're always expanding our Mission Collection® and Avant Collection™ lines with new products and accessories, making it easy to enhance outdoor structures and living spaces. Both feature an innovative hex-head washer and fastener combo that looks like a bolted connection but installs as simply as a screw. It's the only approved fastening solution for Outdoor Accents connectors. Plus, our code-listed connectors and fasteners are rigorously tested for performance. So whether your customers are building a planter box or a pavilion, it will be strong, safe and beautiful for years to come.

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Improving Rebate Management for Roofing and Siding Companies with Epicor ERP Solutions



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Optimize your rebate management process

Rebate management may seem like a mundane financial process, but for roofing and siding businesses, it's a crucial one. How contractors navigate the administration of complex contractual agreements with customers and vendors can significantly sway profitability and cash flow.

Yet rebate mismanagement is all too common, needlessly leaving money on the table or even jeopardizing future business. Intricate calculations and complex contract terms frequently lead to manual inefficiencies, errors, and blind spots. These challenges are compounded by the dynamic nature of prices and other market forces.

Fortunately, there's a solution—*enterprise resource planning (ERP) software*. Modern ERP solutions can streamline your rebate management, optimize your financial processes, and ultimately unlock greater profitability and efficiency in your roofing and siding business.

The Problem with Traditional Rebate Management:

Traditional rebate management *can be complicated*. Gathering, reviewing, cross-referencing, and organizing relevant data from various sources like invoices, purchase orders, and sales reports is time-consuming. Complex agreements with varying rates, tiers, and conditions make it easy for anyone using manual calculations to unknowingly make errors. And monitoring compliance with these agreements requires constant attention.

Enhancing and Automating Rebate Management with ERP Software

ERP software helps provide the holistic visibility and seamless automation needed to overcome persistent rebate management challenges. It integrates and documents data across different systems using a centralized cloud-based platform.

Epicor ERP solutions help transform rebate management from a complex, error-prone process into a streamlined, efficient, and accurate operation:

Automating Cumbersome Processes

Epicor ERP solutions automate tedious and error-prone rebate management processes like data entry, manual calculations, and payment processing. Automation standardizes rebate calculations according to agreed terms, accelerating processing and payouts to strengthen customer relationships.

Gaining Real-Time Insights

Epicor ERP gives your business up-to-the-minute visibility into rebate management operations, enabling you to track rebate performance as transactions occur. This offers on-demand insights into profitability and cash flow, while *advanced analytics tools* help forecast future trends to optimize rebate programs. At Epicor, our approach is proactive. We equip roofing and siding companies with tools to manage rebates and address issues before they escalate.

Bolstering Compliance and Audits

ERP systems facilitate better adherence to contracts and regulations by supplying a clear audit trail for all transactions. This transparency simplifies compliance verification while recording retrieval during audits, reducing non-compliance risk, and strengthening overall governance.

Some 29% of businesses choose to adopt ERP solutions to support their compliance processes, including tracking contractual and regulatory rebate responsibilities. At Epicor, we prioritize supporting accuracy and compliance in rebate management, so roofing and siding companies can do business with confidence and precision.

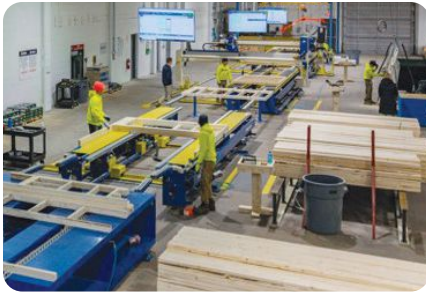
Improving Rebate Management with Epicor BisTrack

Managing rebates, contracts, and payments in roofing and siding businesses is complex, time-consuming, and error-prone. But with BisTrack, it doesn't have to be. Epicor automates rebate calculations, payments, reporting, and compliance checks, eliminating inefficient, error-prone manual processes.

Because our BisTrack solution is curated for the building supply industry, Epicor prepares your business with predictable margins, data-driven decision-making, and error-free incentive payments.

Through close collaboration within the roofing and siding ecosystem, we build best practices directly into BisTrack—it becomes the brains behind rebate management so your teams can focus on nurturing customer relationships and pursuing new business.

Why not reach out for a BisTrack demo from the number one building supply software provider? Contact Epicor today to learn how we can simplify and manage your rebate process and boost your revenue.



84 LUMBER EXPANDS IN BLOOMSBURG



S&L LUMBER LAUNCHES NEW DIVISION



DO IT BEST GIVES BACK AFTER LA WILDFIRES

BY THE YARD

Issaquah Lumber, a Pacific Northwest specialty building products supplier, announced that it received a Group Chain of Custody Registration certificate verifying that forest-based materials are produced according to the rigorous standard set by the Forest Stewardship Council.

S&L Lumber has announced the launch of its newest division: **S&L Window & Door**. This new addition expands the company's offerings to provide a dedicated resource for high-quality windows, exterior doors, and interior doors to serve both builders and homeowners. The company has also announced Dublin Millwork, a provider of custom millwork, doors, and trim in central Ohio, will rebrand to **S&L Millwork**; Lumbercraft, a leading manufacturer of pre-engineered building components, will rebrand to **S&L Truss**; 5th Ave. Lumber Company will rebrand to **S&L Lumber—5th Ave. Location**; Linworth Lumber will rebrand to **S&L Lumber—Linworth Location**; and Strait & Lamp Lumber will rebrand to **S&L Lumber—Hebron Location**.

84 Lumber is expanding its component manufacturing plants after acquiring a new facility in Bloomsburg, PA. The company's newest truss plant is a 29,016-sq.-ft. building which sits on 8.8 acres. 84 Lumber acquired the facility, formerly Tri-County Truss, which will primarily construct roof trusses, because it was needed to keep up with demand and market growth in eastern and central Pennsylvania.

DISTRIBUTION NEWS

New Castle Steel has announced a strategic partnership with **BlueLinx**. This collaboration will significantly enhance New Castle Steel's product distribution capabilities in Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Colorado.

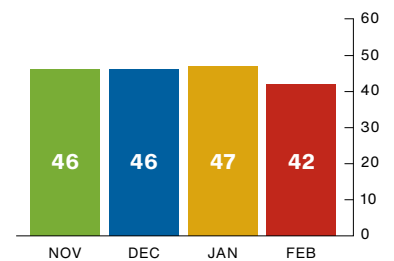
Digger Specialties Inc. (DSI) is proud to announce the expansion of its distribution network into the Colorado market through a strategic partnership with **Monsma Marketing Corporation**. Headquartered in Grand Rapids, MI, Monsma has distributed building products across the Midwest since 1930.

BlueLinx Holdings Inc. and **Louisiana-Pacific Corporation**, announced the expansion of their distribution partnership. This strategic move expands BlueLinx's stocking footprint of LP SmartSide to 17 locations.

CO-OP & BUYER'S GROUPS

Do it Best and **True Value** have announced a combined \$110,000 donation to aid in the disaster relief and recovery efforts for communities impacted by the devastating fires in Altadena and surrounding areas. Do it Best and the Do it Best Foundation will donate \$100,000 to the American Red Cross to provide vital resources such as shelter, food, and emergency supplies for displaced families.

LMC has added **Franklin Homes** to its Modular Division. This partnership marks a significant step in LMC's mission to expand across the U.S. Founded in 1969 in Russellville, AL, Franklin Homes is a manufacturer of high-quality manufactured homes.



Builder confidence falls amid tariff, housing concerns

Builder confidence in the market for newly built single-family homes was 42 in February, down five points from January and the lowest level in five months, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI). While builders hold out hope for pro-development policies, particularly for regulatory reform, policy uncertainty and cost factors created a reset for 2025 expectations in the most recent HMI. Uncertainty on the tariff front helped push builders' expectations for future sales volume down to the lowest level since December 2023.

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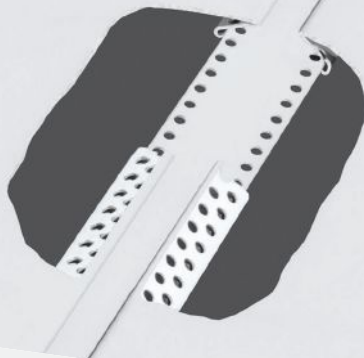
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PEOPLE IN LBM



Kodiak Building Partners announced two additions to its continuous improvement (CI) team: **Lance Grimm** as senior vice president of CI and **Robert Doshi** as vice president of CI training and development.

Snavelly Forest Products has announced the hiring of **David Yessian** as general manager of its Dallas location. Yessian brings a total of 35 years of experience in the building materials industry to this role, most recently serving as vice president of supply chain at US LBM.



Do it Best has announced the appointment of **Dan Clymer** as divisional merchandise manager. Clymer brings over 20 years of experience in retail and wholesale merchandising, planning, and allocation, along with a proven track record of driving results through innovative strategies and team leadership.



ECl Software Solutions, announced the appointment of **Brian Hildebrand** as chief information officer. As CIO, Hildebrand will be responsible for developing and implementing ECl's comprehensive IT strategy, overseeing the organization's entire technology infrastructure.



Boise Cascade announced **Jeff Strom** as its new chief operating officer. This new role will oversee the operations for its Wood Products and Building Materials Distribution divisions.



Tibbetts Lumber announced the promotion of **Joe Sanchez** to chief operating officer, assuming day-to-day leadership of the company. Sanchez, a lumber industry veteran, joined Tibbetts Lumber in January 2024 as regional manager for the southern region of Florida.

LMC has announced the promotion of several of its team members: **Lauren Stout**, director of logistics; **Jon Benhaim**, director of panels; **Brid O'Leary**, buyer—kitchens and baths; **Rachel Hoops**, senior manager-components & B2B sales; **Deirdre Garland**, senior manager of kitchens and baths

Georgia-Pacific announced that **David Neal**, previously president of gypsum, has transitioned to become the company's executive vice president of building products.

Envision Outdoor Living Products, manufacturer of Envision composite decking and Fairway deck railings, has appointed **Adam Caplinger** to director of sales.

Kendrick McBride, **Casey Redwine**, and **Brent Siegel** have been named plant managers at three **Roseburg Forest Products** mills.

BlueLinx Holdings Inc. announced **Andrew Wamser** is resigning from his position as senior vice president, chief financial officer and treasurer. **Kimberly DeBrock**, BlueLinx's vice president and chief accounting officer, will serve as interim principal financial officer.

LP Building Solutions announced the appointments of **Jean-Michel Ribieras** and **Ty R. Silberhorn** to its Board of Directors.

Benjamin Obdyke has promoted **George Caruso** to the role of president.

TOUGH CALL SOLUTIONS

THE JANUARY ISSUE SURVEY RESULTS FROM LBMJOURNAL.COM AND LINKEDIN.

The Sinking Flagship

As an outsider brought in to troubleshoot, you've discovered that the family-owned company's flagship yard is suffering from clueless management by a family member. Here's how readers responded to this Tough Call.

Take a field trip. Instead of reporting what you learned, arrange for board members to tour each location, so they can see for themselves what's going right, and what's going wrong.

29%

Identify challenges and opportunities. As an outsider in a family business, you're in a delicate position. Be sure to point out pros and cons about each operation, and ways for each to improve.

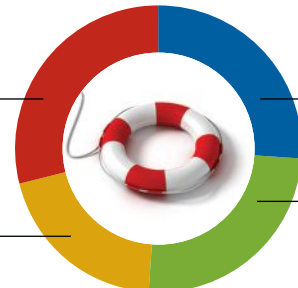
26%

20%

Be blunt. They didn't hire you to sugarcoat the truth. Report what you saw and learned, the good, the bad and the ugly. Then hope that they don't shoot the messenger.

Present the facts. Stick to the numbers and objective observations, and let the members of the board draw their own conclusions.

25%



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INDUSTRY UPDATES

Simpson Strong-Tie is donating \$100,000 to the American Red Cross to support disaster relief efforts in affected areas. This contribution reflects the company's ongoing commitment to aid in disaster relief and recovery efforts around the world.

Digger Specialties Inc. (DSI), a leading manufacturer of outdoor living products, is enhancing its Westbury Pro Rewards program by incorporating two innovative products into its extensive aluminum railing lineup: the new Westbury Bella Cavo horizontal cable railing and Westbury Sorrento mesh railing, alongside the complete range of Westbury Aluminum Railing products.

UFP Retail Solutions, a leading manufacturer and distributor of treated lumber products and premier building materials, announced that it will be phasing out its UFP Retail Solutions

customer-facing identity—making way for an expanded **ProWood** business unit to better serve customers.

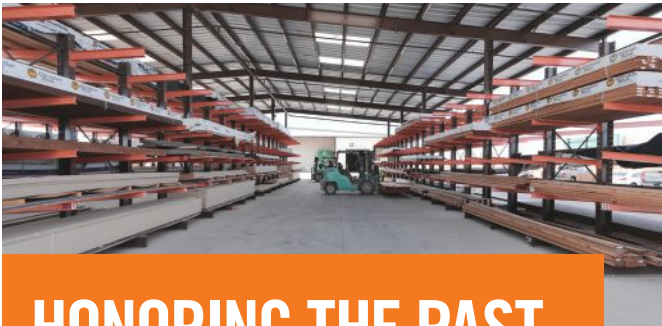
MILGARD Windows and Doors—part of the MITER Brands portfolio and manufacturer of vinyl, fiberglass, and aluminum windows and patio doors for builders, dealers, and homeowners—recently announced the launch of the new AX450 Aluminum Moving Glass Wall. The new product will join the brand's existing AX550 Moving Glass Walls line, which includes the VX350 that launched late last year.

Georgia-Pacific continues its investment in its plywood mill located in Prosperity, SC through \$14 million worth of upgrades and improvements to mill operations. One of the major focuses will be to upgrade the existing boiler, which will increase fuel efficiency, reduce environmental

impact, and help boost the local economy through the jobs the project will create during the renovation.

Wolf Home Products, a PrimeSource Building Products brand and maker of premium outdoor living and building solutions, announced the launch of Gallery Railing, a new product line designed to transform outdoor environments.

Pella Corporation celebrated its 100th anniversary with team members, leadership, retirees and community members, honoring a century of innovation, craftsmanship, and commitment to people on Feb. 4. During the event, held at the company's headquarters in Pella, IA, leaders shared remarks on the company's growth from a small, local operation in 1925 to a national leader in windows and doors.



HONORING THE PAST. BUILDING A FUTURE.

After 75 years in the same location—providing quality lumber, building materials, and expert advice to Cheyenne contractors and do-it-yourselfers, it was time to grow, and for the old site to go. Learn how CT-Darnell and Sunbelt Rack helped employee-owned Mead Lumber design and build a brand-new yard with more covered space, more SKUs, and maximized efficiency for an onsite experience that proves there's no place like (a new) home.



Read about all of our projects at sunbelt-rack.com/stories/ or scan this code.



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CULPEPER
TREATED LUMBER

WHAT'S TRENDING

These stories topped the charts in the past month. To see these stories and more, head to LBMJournal.com, and sign up for our daily newsletter.



LMC dealers support relief efforts in North Carolina, California



US LBM acquires Walker Lumber & Supply



Concerns heading into 2025

INDUSTRY EVENTS

MAR 10-12

LBM ADVANTAGE 2025 ANNUAL BUYING SHOW
Lake Buena Vista, FL | lbmadvantage.com

MAR 21-23

DO IT BEST SPRING MARKET
Orlando, FL | doitbestonline.com

APR 27-30

LBM ADVANTAGE NEXTGEN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
Grapevine, TX | lbmadvantage.com

SEPT 5-8

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

SEPT 24-26

CONSTRUCTION SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATION 2025 CONFERENCE & TRADESHOW
Miramar Beach, FL | gocsa.com

OCT 15-17

LBM STRATEGIES 2025 CONFERENCE
Nashville, TN | lbmstrategies.com

OCT 20-22

LBM ADVANTAGE FALL PLANNING CONFERENCE
Indianapolis, IN | lbmadvantage.com

OCT 26-29

2025 WMA MILLWORK CONVENTION & TRADESHOW
Cleveland, OH | worldmillworkalliance.com

MERGERS + ACQUISITIONS

Westlake Ace Hardware will acquire **Augusta Ace Home Center**, a family-owned retailer in Augusta, Kansas. Augusta Ace Home Center will be rebranded as Westlake Ace Hardware after the acquisition is finalized. The store will retain current management and personnel.

Curtis Lumber announced the acquisition of **JAY-K Independent Lumber Corp.**, located in New Hartford, NY. JAY-K has served its local community for 87 years through three generations.

White Cap has acquired **JLA Supply**, a distributor of sealants, waterproofing and concrete accessories, serving non-residential and residential end markets throughout the Pacific Northwest and West Coast. Founded in 1974 in Portland, OR, JLA Supply has grown to six locations across Oregon, Washington and Idaho, and is known in different markets under three business brands: Sealant Specialists, SECO Construction Supply or Cascade Construction Accessories.

US LBM has acquired **Walker Lumber & Supply**, a top building products distributor in Nashville. Founded in 1949, Walker Lumber & Supply offers an extensive line of specialty lumber and hardware to residential and commercial builders, contractors and DIYers, across Central Tennessee. The company has also acquired **Goodrich Brothers, Inc.** located in Pewamo, MI. Founded in 1984, Goodrich Bros. provides millwork, stairways, interior and exterior doors, windows and hardware to residential and commercial builders throughout Michigan. Tony Goodrich, who joined the organization in 1990, will continue running day-to-day operations.

Sunpro Corporation, a subsidiary of Clyde Companies, Inc., has acquired **Building Services Group**, expanding the company's insulation operations in Utah and extending services into Colorado. Building Services Group and its six member companies will operate under the Sunpro name.

Builders FirstSource has acquired **O.C. Cluss Lumber & Building Supplies**. Founded as a local lumber company in 1918, O.C. Cluss has built a reputation for excellence as a leading supplier of lumber, building materials, and installation services in its four locations in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia.

PrimeSource Brands has acquired **Keylink**, a leading provider of aluminum railing systems. The transaction represents PrimeSource Brands' eighth acquisition since partnering with Clearlake in December 2020. Based in New Holland, PA, Keylink provides aluminum railing and other outdoor aluminum products for residential and commercial installations.

Woodgrain Inc., a millwork and building products company, has closed on its acquisition of the Towanda, PA plant from **JELD-WEN Holding, Inc.** Woodgrain now assumes full ownership of the Towanda plant. The Towanda plant manufactures molded interior door skins, as well as wood composite MiraTEC exterior trim and Extira exterior grade panels. Woodgrain also announced an asset purchase agreement to acquire **Kelleher Corporation**. Kelleher Corporation specializes in the distribution of moulding, lumber, and doors, serving customers in California, Nevada, and Hawaii with warehouse facilities in Northern and Southern California, as well as Hawaii.



LISTEN NOW!

Did you know LBM Journal has a podcast? Subscribe today for weekly episodes about credit management and social media utilization for the LBM industry.

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RAILING WITH A VIEW:

Elevating Outdoor Spaces with Westbury® Aluminum Railing

Outdoor living spaces are no longer just patios and decks—they are extensions of our homes. The key to enhancing these spaces is ensuring that views remain unobstructed while maintaining safety and style. Westbury® Aluminum Railing from Digger Specialties, Inc. (DSI) offers solutions that meet these needs beautifully.

The Westbury® Advantage

Westbury® Aluminum Railing is renowned for its commitment to quality, innovation, and style. Each product in the lineup is designed with the customer in mind, offering features that make installation easier for contractors and maintenance simpler for homeowners. Here are some reasons why Westbury® Aluminum Railing stands out in the industry:

Durability: Made from powder-coated aluminum, Westbury® railings resist rust, corrosion, and fading, even in harsh weather conditions.

Aesthetic Appeal: The variety of styles, colors, and finishes ensures that there's a Westbury® railing to complement any architectural design.

Ease of Installation: Westbury's railings are designed for straightforward installation, saving time and effort for contractors and installers.

Transforming Outdoor Living Spaces

The choice of railing can significantly impact the overall look and feel of an outdoor space. Westbury® Aluminum Railing, with its versatile styles, allows homeowners to customize their decks, porches, and balconies to suit their preferences and lifestyles.

For Scenic Views: Bella Cavo™ and Veranda are ideal for properties with stunning landscapes, as they minimize visual obstructions and let the scenery take center stage.

For Safety and Style: VertiCable® provides the perfect balance of safety and design, making it suitable for families with children or pets.

For Modern Elegance: Veranda and Bella Cavo™ cater to homeowners seeking a contemporary look that elevates their outdoor living experience.

Bella Cavo™ Horizontal Cable Railing with Contemporary Elegance

Bella Cavo™ is a modern marvel that combines sleek design with robust functionality. Its horizontal cable railing system is engineered to provide a minimalist look while offering superior durability. Ideal for contemporary and modern homes, Bella Cavo™ complements a wide range of architectural styles.

Why Choose Bella Cavo™?

Unobstructed Views: The slim horizontal cables minimize visual barriers, allowing homeowners to enjoy their surroundings fully, whether it's a scenic mountain range, a serene lake, or a lush backyard.

Options for Customization: Bella Cavo™ offers two design options—a single top rail or a dual rail with both top and bottom rails—to meet various aesthetic and functional preferences.

Durability: Made with high-quality aluminum rails and stainless-steel cables, Bella Cavo™ resists weathering, corrosion, and wear, making it a lasting investment for any outdoor space.

Bella Cavo™ not only provides a modern aesthetic but also ensures safety without compromising the view, making it a popular choice among homeowners looking to enhance their outdoor experience.

VertiCable®: Vertical Cable Railing for a Timeless Appeal

For those who prefer a more traditional look with a modern twist, VertiCable® Vertical Cable Railing delivers the perfect balance. It's an innovative system that uses vertical cables instead of traditional balusters, creating a unique design that suits any style of home.

Benefits of VertiCable®

Clean Lines: The vertical cable design maintains a clean and open appearance, enhancing the aesthetic appeal of decks, porches, and balconies.

Ease of Installation: VertiCable® is designed for efficient installation, making it an attractive option for contractors and builders.

Low Maintenance: The durable materials ensure that VertiCable® requires minimal upkeep, offering peace of mind to homeowners.

VertiCable® seamlessly blends into any setting, providing a timeless option for homeowners who value both aesthetics and practicality. Its versatility and durability make it a standout choice in the Westbury® Aluminum Railing lineup.

Veranda: Glass Railing for a Crystal-Clear View

When it comes to maximizing visibility, nothing compares to the elegance of Veranda Glass Railing. This style is perfect for homeowners who want to eliminate any obstructions to their view while maintaining a sleek and modern look.

What Sets Veranda Apart?

Unmatched Clarity: Veranda glass panels provide a seamless view, making it an excellent choice for waterfront properties, high-rise balconies, and other locations with breathtaking scenery.

Enhanced Safety: The tempered glass panels are designed to meet safety standards while maintaining their visual appeal.

Modern Design: The combination of glass and aluminum creates a contemporary aesthetic that enhances any outdoor space. With Veranda, homeowners can enjoy a luxurious and open feel, creating a sense of connection to the surrounding environment without sacrificing safety or style.



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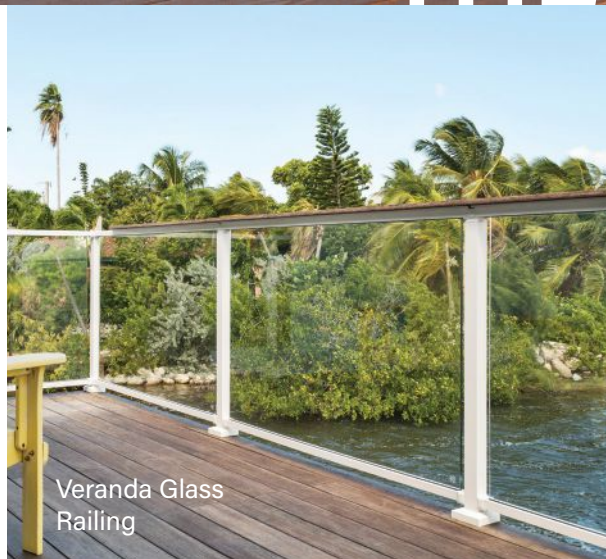


Bella Cavo™ Horizontal
Cable Railing

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Bella Cavo™, VertiCable®, and Veranda.

BY RICK DAVIS

FEAR OR LEARNING— WHAT'S YOUR ENVIRONMENT?

IS YOUR SALES CULTURE one of fear or is it a learning environment? Most managers would insist that they are enlightened leaders who foster the perfect environment for safe learning. My experience has been that sales cultures are usually the opposite, where the singular objective of managers is to apply pressure in a variety of ways.

These types of sales managers fall into three categories: the data junkie, the criticizer, and the take-over artist. The first pressures salespeople to achieve better results; the second strives only to point out performance flaws; and the last is a manager who believes they are the best salesperson in the room.

The data junkie is a remote manager who rarely, if ever, observes a salesperson in action and, instead, evaluates salespeople with spreadsheets and data. The tacit, false assumption is that the salesperson knows how to do the job correctly with no constructive coaching. In reality, many salespeople need guidance and performance coaching, something the data junkie is unable or unwilling to provide.

The criticizing leader finds time to evaluate actual performance but strives to expose mistakes and criticizes salespeople as the primary means of motivation. Rather than inspire, the criticizer expects obedience and adherence to the chain of command. The false assumption is that constant criticism of little flaws will add up to big productivity in overall performance. The end result is instead a loss of motivation and, worse yet, a breakdown in constructive communication.



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.

The take-over artist is usually a former salesperson who has been promoted to a new role as sales manager. The expectation is that sales performance skills will automatically translate into sales leadership skills. The take-over artist persistently usurps control of sales calls as the means to close deals while falsely presuming that demonstrations of performance will produce, by osmosis, performance improvement for the observer.

In Simon Sinek's book, *Leaders Eat Last*, he provides a compelling argument that the best learning environments are "safe." Robert Mager's put forth a similar postulate in his book, *What Every Manager Should Know about Training*.

Fear-based leadership produces chemical reactions in the nervous system which release adrenaline and cortisol, hormones that impede learning. Tension triggers primitive fight-or-flight survival responses, which also impede learning and therefore prevents productive dialogue.

Enlightened sales leaders foster an environment of safety that produces optimum performance patterns and constructive communication. I've always liked to think of it as "permission leadership."

Permission leadership begins by focusing on the development of career skills. This means literally curating the performance that gives the salesperson skills that endure for a lifetime. We have a saying in my profession that it is better to train a performer properly and have them leave than not train them and have them stay.

Of course, the goal of sales is results. Nothing in the aforementioned thesis should suggest that anything other than sales growth is the goal. The assertion I'm putting forth, however, is that merely pressuring for results is not the same as managing the performance and the statistics that produce results.

Enlightened leaders measure prospecting quality and quantity as predictors of future outcomes; fear-based managers solely measure sales results, often without knowing the metrics that predict them. Enlightened leaders systematically build sales performance focusing on the scientific skills of selling as the foundation for growth before emphasizing the artistic skills of selling; fear-based managers randomly criticize.

It is true that there are times for coercive leadership tactics during a crisis or a persistent lack of adherence to performance standards. But in normal circumstances, enlightened leadership usually creates the best long-term results.

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6 Reasons to
Partner with ProVia
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BY BILL LEE

AT WHAT POINT should business managers accept the fact that they have allowed personnel-related expenses to creep up into the danger zone? This is the kind of thing that is easy to allow while you sit back and attempt to manage a relatively people-intense business.

Many owners I have worked with over the years have used the previous 12-month's year-to-date people expenses compared with the current year as their benchmark. Old-timers just watched for when too many of their people were not busy.

If you are serious about reducing operating expenses, the place to begin is by making some tough decisions about the number of people on your payroll.

Even in the best of economic times—at least for highly profitable building supply businesses—managers strive to hold personnel-related expenses to no more than 45% of the gross profit the company is generating. But in years when the housing economy is less than robust, it's easier for managers to let their emotions cloud their judgment and to allow people expenses as a percentage of sales and gross profit to get out of control.

THE KEY TO PROFITABILITY LIES WITH HOW THE NUMBERS RELATE



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

Since every expense on an income statement is best measured as a percentage of sales, it's critical to reduce operating expenses by at least the same percentage as sales have decreased. And since people-related expenses make up the great majority of all lumber companies' total operating expenses, it just makes sense to prune people when the forecast for increased housing activity does not look promising for the next 12 months.

Over the years, I have noticed the closer personnel-related expenses (salaries, commissions, group medical, payroll and workers comp) come to 70% of total expenses, the nearer the company is to just breaking even or even losing money. Looking at personnel-related expenses as a percentage of total expenses isn't as good a measurement as looking at them as a percentage of gross profit dollars, I still believe it is a worthwhile benchmark to consider.

One of the primary reasons managers give for their reluctance to downsize the work force to be more in line with the company's overall productivity is that they feel responsible for their people. This can even be true for employees who are not pulling their weight in the organization.

Whether you call it "downsizing" or "rightsizing," it's an action step that must take place if a business is to remain profitable in spite of what's going on in the local housing market.

An early mentor straightened me out on this issue, especially with employees who are falling far short of management's expectations. "Bill," he said, "you're not doing these people any favors by not terminating them. Just think about it ... by keeping employees on the payroll you've given up on, you're depriving them of the opportunity to get a job with another company where they might have a bright future."

This advice is just as applicable today.

Most sectors of the North American economy are performing quite well. Many industries are in a hiring mode, so the people who may not be in your company's future will not likely be out of work very long.

Many of my clients were highly profitable several years ago when their sales were only a fraction of what they were at the peak of the housing market. Whether you call it "downsizing" or "rightsizing," it's an action step that must take place if a business is to remain profitable in spite of what's going on in the local housing market.

If history has taught us anything, it's that the housing industry will likely always go through periods of feast and famine. The good news is that regardless of what's happening to your company's sales, you can still make a satisfactory bottom line profit by controlling operating expenses to the same percentage of sales.

The place to begin is with people-related expenses.

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BY THEA DUDLEY

**Hi Thea,
Can you send preliminary notice for projects on American Indian reservations? I have heard horror stories and I'm not sure how to safely sell on tribal land.**

— I got nothing, do I?

RESERVATION RIGHTS

Dear Nothing,
You can send as many as you like. Send them to your heart's content. But Notices of Intent (prelims) on tribal lands have absolutely no legal teeth. Conversation-starting wallpaper and a false sense of security, but that's it. Have you heard of Tribal Sovereign Immunity? Congress enacted this sovereign authority to protect tribes from state and federal laws. That authority extends to tribal courts, which handle matters relating to Indian affairs.

Since this is not a new challenge and tribes are aware of it, ways to sell comfortably have evolved. Tribal entities sometimes work with banks to be the facilitator of payments, acting as a de facto project manager, other times the tribal entities will require a general contractor to post a bond for the projects or they will post one themselves, but not always.

Channel your inner five-year-old and ask questions. Open-ended questions, not the yep and nope variety. Get specific. The devil is in the details in this transaction. The more information you can gather, the easier it is to make the best decision for your company.



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.

1. Start with your customer. Are you selling directly to the tribe or to a customer who is doing work on a tribal project?
2. Pull a credit report on whoever you're selling to.
3. Google the tribal entity. How have previous projects gone?
4. If your customer is contracted with the tribal entity, ask to see the contract.
5. What is the project? What is the timeline?
6. How much credit is needed from your company for the project?
7. What are the terms on the project? Are extended terms requested?
8. Who is issuing payment on the project? Is there a third party check issuer?

Once you have this information, you can make an informed assessment. Depending on the dollar amount, the timeline, the scope of project, and your customers' ability to pay (in the event something goes awry, this will be important), you can lay out the risk/reward with your team and make the business decision.

Going into the opportunity understanding both the reward (we get the sale and get paid) and the risk (if something goes wrong we have no lien rights, a suit has to be brought in tribal court if you are direct with the tribe or the account.) Either way, you are waiting for your money.

The thing that freaks credit people out about selling tribal projects is our utter lack of options and perceived ability to protect and collect. All our usual "go to" moves are shut down. But, we sometimes extend credit to people who can't afford a candy bar, let alone the credit line we gave them. Yet we do it. Is it because we have options? Or believe we do? Sure we can "lien 'em and sue 'em," doesn't mean we'll get paid. It's the perception!

The thing that freaks credit people out about selling tribal projects is our utter lack of options and perceived ability to protect and collect.

If your perception is your reality, then it's all about options. You may not have the usual, but you have some. Ask if the tribe will waive their right to sovereignty. They may laugh, or they may not know if they can, but it's worth the ask. How about a percentage down? How someone responds to a request can be an indication of how they will be to work with. How willing are they to work with you? Credit operates in some vast open plains. Don't let fear run you off the reservation.



CEMENT YOUR NAME IN HISTORY



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BY JOHN D. WAGNER

LET'S SAY THAT you're *just itching* to get a second shift going for a value-added production facility in your lumberyard. Or you've already got a second shift running at your facility, but it's been running only for, say, three months. In this example, the value-added production facility is a truss plant, a door/window shop, a wood-treatment plant, a mill-work operation, etc.

The reason you're eager to get that second shift going? Well, you've already made the capital expenditure in the facility for the first shift. It's going great. You've hired the right staff, and there's a market for what you will produce. So, adding the second shift is a no-brainer.

But there's another reason you want that second shift producing those extra earnings. No one around the shop knows it yet, but you've been talking with a potential acquirer, and you want the Adjusted EBITDA contribution from the second shift to get full consideration in the total enterprise value (TEV) paid for your company.

In this example, assume that each shift adds \$1.2M in Adjusted EBITDA. This potential acquirer is offering 6X of the trailing 12-month (TTM) Adjusted EBITDA as an acquisition price for your company. Also assume that you're already generating \$4M in Adjusted EBITDA, without the second shift fully contributing. When the second shift is fully up and running, your Adjusted EBITDA moves from \$4M to \$5.2M.

Here's the dilemma: From a TTM perspective, the second shift has been running just three months, contributing three-twelfths of the EBITDA it would deliver over a full year. In this case, that portion is equal to \$300,000. You, the seller, are rightfully worried you'll be leaving money on the

table if you sell now, because you're getting just 6X \$300,000 for the new second shift, when you want 6X \$1.2M for the full year's credit!

You could wait for the second shift to run a full 12 months, but you're not sure the acquirer will hang around that long. He's insisting that 6X is a premium ... and you know he's right. He wants to ink an LOI now.

The various scenarios are:

1. The company acquisition value without the second shift in the mix: 6X \$4M = \$24M.
2. The company acquisition value with the second shift running one full year: 6X (\$4M + \$1.2M) = \$31.2M.
3. The company acquisition value *with* the second shift running just three months: 6X (\$4M + \$300,000) = \$25.8M. That's a \$5.4M drop in acquisition value just because the plant hasn't run a full year!

Risking an *extraordinary* dinner and flower bill for the upcoming weekend, the seller complains to his wife that he's losing sleep over this. She says, "Stop taking your problems to bed." The seller says, "But I'm married to my company!"

What's the best way forward?

If this seller were our client, we would first counsel patience. Wait for the full year's performance on the second shift, and then sell. Other acquirers will emerge. Heck, you may get more than 6X with that increased Adjusted EBITDA.

If the seller insists, the second thing to do is ask for a higher multiple from the acquirer, on the promise of the second shift. The "ask" would be 7X of the \$4.3M TTM Adjusted EBITDA figure, essentially achieving what the company would be worth with the second shift fully contributing.

But the acquirer says 7X is a no-go; he's already on his tippy toes at 6X.

Well, as uncomfortable as it is for the eager seller (since it's not money in hand at close), the seller should consider taking a purchase price of 6X the \$4M Adjusted EBITDA, and an earn-out. The seller would get \$24M at the closing (minus the required 5% escrow) and get the 6X multiple on the second shift actual Adjusted EBITDA 12 months after the close.

All sellers in this situation will say, "But what if the second shift doesn't perform as expected?"

But that's what the earn-out is designed to do: the acquirer limits their risk by paying on performance, while the seller—who very likely becomes an employee under new ownership—is highly motivated to make everything work as expected, because that's when, and only when, he'll get paid 6X on that second shift premium.

TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN?



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

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BY RUSS KATHREIN

FOR SOMEONE JUST STARTING out in a leadership position, the job in front of you can seem daunting. Just when you figure out how to do one thing, you find out that you are doing something else incorrect that you didn't know about. Then when you work on that thing, you let the thing you just learned slip and you have to go back and address that again. You might say to yourself that you do not know how anybody can keep up with all of the small details, let alone ever become good at it. The truth is that it takes time to master each skill and eventually, you will become good at that skill and not even think about it. It takes humility and determination, but it can be done.

I recently experienced a similar situation that reminded me of how absolutely impossible mastering a new skill can be, and that in reality, you never really become a master. You just become better and better as you apply yourself, and as you seek outside guidance and help.

LEARNING THE FINER POINTS OF BECOMING A LEADER

I was invited by some high school friends to join their group that goes fly fishing for bonefish every year. Bonefish are saltwater fish that live in the flats outside of the Keys and the islands around the Bahamas. They are very hard to see and very fast. It really isn't fishing, rather it is hunting. You sit on the bow of a boat as it is poled through a salt flat, or

you wade through the flats. When you spot a bonefish you throw your fly in front of it and when it grabs your fly, you bring it in. Pretty simple, or so I thought.

First, you have to be able to see the fish. Bonefish are nearly invisible in the water that sharks cannot see them. From on top of the water they are masters of camouflage. Then when you see them, you have to cast your fly out to them. There could be high winds, long-distance casts, or a drifting boat. And I won't even get into the finer points of making an effective cast. The reality is at the start, your line comes piling off your pole and falls well short of the fish, almost every time.

I couldn't help but be reminded of when I started out in my first leadership job. I worried more about what everybody thought of my leadership actions than I did about concentrating on executing them so that they accomplished the desired results. Any beginner golfer who has ever teed off on the first tee in front of a crowd knows what I am talking about. You worry more about what will happen if you don't do a good job, rather than focusing on actually doing the job well.

I finally realized that I was not going to be a great bone fisherman right off the start. I was going to have to get up in front of people ... and mess up. However, I made myself open to instruction and critique. Then I took those instructions to heart and decided to incorporate them into my next cast ... and I messed up again. Muscle memory is tough, and it is the same way in leading people. You will have the best of intentions of changing up the way you do things, but then when you get in the heat of the moment, you go back to what your muscles, or at least that big muscle in your head, remember how you did things in the past.

Mike Tyson said, "Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the face." Whether it is the wind starting to blow as you start your cast, or someone barging in your office as you try to have that meaningful conversation with an associate, you will always have something that derails your plan. The trick is to carry through and get a little better every time. After a while, those insurmountable changes will be gradually overcome, and your new muscle memory will make you completely forget about having any difficulty with that task. You will then move on to mastering the next task, and the next task, until you look back and wonder why you thought any of those tasks were difficult. As you move to each level, if you seek out input along the way, you will become better and better. And eventually, you will find yourself succeeding, or in my case catching some fish. I just wish I could do something about that darn wind.



Russ Kathrein is the Vice President of Lumber & Building Materials at Do it Best based in Fort Wayne, Indiana.



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¹ Can be used to comply with the Cool Roof Requirements for steep-slope residential buildings of 2022 Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations and the Green Building Standards Code of Los Angeles County.
² 25-year StainGuard Plus™ Algae Protection Limited Warranty against blue-green algae discoloration is available only on products sold in packages bearing the StainGuard Plus™ logo. See *GAF Shingle & Accessory Limited Warranty* for complete coverage and restrictions, and qualifying products.

Design Trends for 2025

DISCOVER THE HOTTEST TRENDS DRIVING SALES THIS YEAR

Wondering what your customers are dreaming about for their interior spaces? Let's explore four of Kerrie Kelly's 2025 design trends that are inspiring how we live, work, and play.



Heritage-Inspired Personalization

Homeowners are moving beyond neutral designs, embracing cultural influences and personal stories in their spaces. Heirloom-quality materials, artisan craftsmanship, and globally inspired details are shaping interiors, from custom millwork to vintage textiles. This shift highlights the growing demand for unique, high-quality building materials that add character and longevity. Feeney's DesignRail® Collection brings a personalized touch to functional indoor and outdoor spaces with versatile railing solutions.

Seamless Indoor-Outdoor Living

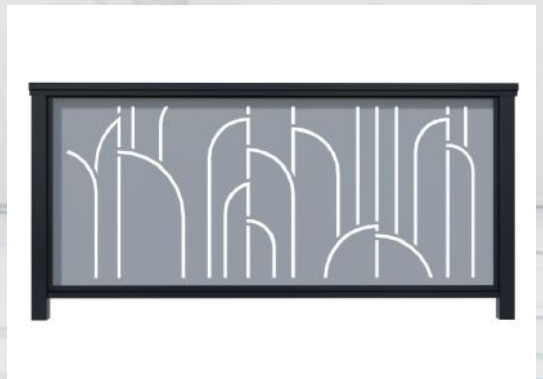
Blurring the lines between indoors and out remains a top priority. Retractable walls, covered patios, chic railing systems and performance-driven outdoor materials are transforming how homeowners extend their living spaces. As demand for weather-resistant surfaces and versatile furnishings rises, builders and designers are turning to durable, sustainable solutions that enhance year-round usability.

Bold Design for Joyful Living

Expressive color palettes, playful textures, and nostalgic influences are redefining interior aesthetics. Homeowners are embracing personality-driven design with unexpected material pairings, vintage accents, and biophilic elements that promote happiness and engagement. Builders and suppliers catering to this trend will find demand for distinctive finishes and customized designs. Feeney's ColorEasy™ palette ensures a customer can choose a shade to match the desired color family, with custom color matching available for the most demanding clients.

Sustainability as a Standard

Eco-conscious decision-making is now a mainstream priority, with homeowners seeking durable materials that balance efficiency, aesthetics, and well-being. High-performance windows, energy-efficient appliances, and low-VOC materials are among the top investments, as consumers focus on holistic sustainability without compromising quality or design.



Be on the lookout for the **Feeney x Kerrie Kelly** LaserCut Collection, new for 2025!

Check out all the rest of the trends and learn how design-forward Feeney can help you achieve them:

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Roofing innovations for weathering industry challenges

PAUL CASSERI

ATLAS ROOFING CORPORATION

With economic uncertainty dominating the headlines these days, what do you see as the greatest potential opportunity in the roofing segment for LBM dealers?

The current economic climate, characterized by high inflation, elevated interest rates, and increased costs of goods, is impacting home improvement project spending. However, reroofing projects continue to outperform these trends. While the roofing market is expected to soften compared to the past couple of years, new products and innovations can help distributors and contractors maintain their strength.

Investing in sustainable products and services presents a great opportunity, addressing homeowner concerns while creating value for both distributors and contractors. Some of these products and services include:

- Sustainable Class 3 and 4 impact-rated asphalt shingles.
- Smog-reducing technology shingles.
- Cool roof technology shingles.
- Superior algae protection shingles.
- Shingles designed for quicker installation, requiring fewer nails.
- Maintenance services/contracts for reroofing: Offering maintenance services keeps contractors front and center with homeowners, including annual roof inspections, gutter cleaning, and repairs.
- Extended system warranty offerings.

The flipside of that question: what's the biggest challenge?

I believe the biggest challenges for the asphalt shingle market will be labor shortages, changing insurance strategy and costs, code changes, and economic uncertainty. Maintaining a sustainable workforce is key.

Extreme weather and fire events seem to be on the rise, putting pressure on structures to withstand the elements like never before. How are roofing products meeting these challenges?

There has been a significant emphasis on the practical performance of asphalt shingles, particularly in their ability to withstand extreme weather and fire events. All asphalt shingles and asphalt shingle systems are designed to meet the UL Class A fire rating, ensuring high standards of fire resistance.

Recent technological advancements in the raw materials used in asphalt shingles, including improvements in fiberglass, asphalt, and modified asphalt formulations, have greatly enhanced their performance. Compared to a

decade ago, these innovations have enabled manufacturers to introduce products that offer increased durability and lighter weights while maintaining rigorous standards and performance.

Sustainability is no longer a "nice to have," but rather a growing requirement. How is the roofing industry meeting the needs of a sustainable structure?

The asphalt roofing industry is actively embracing and advancing recycling efforts for both industrial and post-consumer waste. We are collaborating with recycling companies and developing initiatives to repurpose this waste material across various industries, thereby reducing the amount of shingle waste that ends up in landfills.

Asphalt shingles are recycled and processed in several ways. Recycled shingles can be used in asphalt paving, enhancing the durability and cost-effectiveness of paving projects. Shingles can also be processed into aggregate for use in construction projects. Finally, chemical processing methods can deconstruct asphalt shingles back into raw materials, which can then be used and blended back into the manufacturing of new shingles.

In a world where builders are constantly dealing with diminished workforces, how can today's roofing products help builders work smarter or faster?

Atlas has designed shingles with the contractor and installation crew in mind. Atlas HP Technology, integrated into every Atlas laminate shingle, enables contractors and crews to complete jobs more quickly, more efficiently, reduce waste, and save money. This is a great combination to keep a diminished workforce loyal. ■

Paul Casseri is the director of product management and business development at Atlas Roofing Corporation. With a wealth of experience in the roofing industry, Paul has played a key role in driving product innovation and expanding business opportunities for the company. His strategic vision and leadership have significantly contributed to Atlas Roofing's growth and success.





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THE EMPLOYEE BALANCING ACT



BY LBM JOURNAL READERS

In unpredictable economic times, it seems almost impossible to know how many people you're going to need on your payroll. Too few salespeople and you risk burnout during busy times or lost revenue due to long wait times. Too many and you risk having to make difficult layoff decisions when times get tough. And to make matters worse, it seems like these metrics change before you even have the chance to act.

This month's Real Issues. Real Answers. question deals with how employers make these difficult decisions, whether it's through hard data, holistic methods, or a combination of the two.

Nearly 120 readers responded to our Real Issues survey email (let us know at operations@lbmjournal.com if you'd like to be on the list). **THE QUESTION:**

Q We find it hard to gauge where we should add or cut employees. Our company looks at productivity by individuals, as well as overall sales per employee. Neither give us a good thesis. My question for other dealers is where do you sit on total sales per employee? Or what other metric do you use to determine the right number of employees?

TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE TOP ANSWERS FROM THIS MONTH'S SURVEY.

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

"I go off of the amount of work that rolls over."

"We try to keep labor around at 12% of sales. This was a difficult metric when prices inflated. We haven't made the metric yet, but are working on a metric that will measure amount of 'work' instead of dollar of sales."

"Salesman are between \$1 million and \$2.5 million each."

"EE cost/gross profit dollars."

"We use personnel to sales ratios by location (and sometimes department), as well as sales per FTE as our primary indicators. Neither tells the whole story, but it can paint a picture of productivity and efficiencies."

"We often look at our overall payroll as a percent of sales. Depending on your operation, the percent could vary between 8% and 15%. Then we analyze overall profits. If our payroll as a percent of sales is higher than normal and we are losing money, hard decisions must be made."

"If they are in a high skill set, we'd be hesitant to let them go but otherwise comparing the last two years of labor versus sales percentage."

"Seasonal changes here in the Northeast dictate a lot for us. We haven't found an ironclad method but keeping in constant contact with team leaders has helped. Sales dollars are part of it but in the end overall profitability is the real measure. Trust team leaders and give them ownership to keep their department and people working as efficiently and productively as possible."

"Read the book called 'Simple Numbers' by Greg Crabtree. It had the perfect ratio on how you know when to increase or decrease your employees."

"We use personnel to sales ratio as an indicator of staffing levels."

"Employee salaries should be 10% of your gross profit. Any more than that and you have to look at performance and forecasting."

"We have set roles in each location—dispatcher, warehouse supervisor, etc.—that are the main responsibilities and we cross train so they can fill in at the counter or even out on a truck so the business can always keep operating smoothly. Ratios such as sales to employees will always have you chasing your tail from a good year to a bad year. You also risk losing good employees if you are constantly adjusting your headcount as the wind blows. Operate lean and it's not an issue."

"We have looked at sales per employee, but it is very hard to gauge. We are looking at PIP and quotas for inside sales staff in 2025."

"I like to see \$500,000 per employee."

"This is not something we can attach a KPI to that precisely. For us it's more of a look at, 'are we satisfied with our production and efficiency being produced by the team.' Looking into the aspects of how much downtime is being wasted or used efficiently when it occurs. As a full-service lumberyard, tying it to sales offers too much variance—a truckload of dry lumber for a new home takes more time to build and might generate less income than a decent to large PVC deck, which might take a fraction of the build cost. If you meant this question for strictly salespeople, then that's another subject that we are tying to goals and tracking production and effort."

"We use total sales per employee; however, we use this metric as a guideline, because we factor in other variables such as area of coverage that may take more employees." ▶



“We review payroll as a percent to sales; however, that is not always a good indicator either. We are currently trying to utilize technology to assist us with the same question as well as to assist with coverage/scheduling in each area.”

“We look at, ‘Is the job getting done on time?’”

“Break down the metrics further then look at them combined, i.e. deliveries (outgoing and incoming) per week for drivers and yard staff; sales per employee for o/s and i/s; at what ratio is profitable to have support staff and management positions? Then look at downtime versus missed sales. Are we missing sales from lack of sales staff or long lead times on delivery? Or do our employees have an abundance of downtime?”

“We are a ‘foot on the gas,’ type of company—aggressively growing. We’ve made ourselves scalable while always looking to grow. Always. Growth is a defensive strategy to layoffs.”

“Sales per employee is not a great gauge for our company. Typically, we assess how busy we are and whether we are able to service our customer needs safely.”

“I am not a fan of revenue by employee as a sole driver for staffing decisions. Consider including a profit and/or efficiency metric. Top line revenue growth without a corresponding positive profit impact is not sustainable.”

“\$420,000 per employee.”

“This is a constantly moving target. It seems some days you have too many and other days you don’t have enough. We try to make sure we have enough staff to provide the level of customer service we expect. We are very fortunate that our staff does a good job of keeping busy, they can always clean and straighten and reorganize. You keep the good ones that stay busy year round and the weaker ones will weed themselves out.”

“Sell a minimum amount or cut them loose.”

“We look at total sales per employee as only part of the assessment. It is important to also look at the trends in the market, are interest rates going up or down. There is not just one factor, it is the big picture and all the different pieces.”

“We use the old school eye test—no magic formula. If it looks like we need additional help in an area, we address it accordingly. We’re proud of our track record in never having to lay anyone off during a slower time. We may be slow to hire after someone moves on. If some employees take on extra work or go the extra mile for the company during a period of ‘should we or shouldn’t we,’ add someone, they are rewarded for their effort at their yearly review.”

“We don’t have a great gauge on this. Generally, it feels like \$500,000 per employee is a good baseline, with \$600,000 per employee being very good, \$700,000 per employee being excellent and anything over that leading to burnout.”

“\$600,000-\$700,000 per employee.”

“We find it difficult to base number of employees on sales dollars, there are too many variables there. In our various branches, there are multiple factors that influence the number of employees we need at each one, and each one is different. The most important factor is the level of service we are providing our customers. We lean heavily on our individual yard managers to determine how many employees they need to accomplish that level of service. We also give them the flexibility to manage their staff numbers accordingly. We also try to cross train our employees as much as possible so that in leaner times we can move people around in jobs and/or locations to keep from having to cut good employees.”

“It depends on what’s your mix of business. We have 11 yards and the overall sales per employee is about \$750,000. But it varies from a high production yard at \$1,200,000 to about \$500,000 in a small town mostly will-call yard. A better way to measure is by using gross profit dollars per employee. Our range is between \$175,000 and \$250,000.”

“Customer wait times.”

“I think it should be based on sales per hour; our yard likes to send load builders home early in the morning. However, our sales team continues to take orders through the day. This often leads to our yard being under staffed during the last few hours of the day. If our leadership could see sales per hour, they would see we continue to push sales long after our yard empties.”

“Though sales have some bearing, so do transaction numbers and ability to create and maintain relationships. We have found that the ability to find those that can build and maintain those relationships are more invaluable and better gauges than just the cold analytics.”

“\$1,000,000 per employee.”

“PPR.”

Responses from wholesale distributors, manufacturers, and service providers:

“Analyzing productivity and efficiency at the department level.”

“Work load.”

“Referral business is my keynote; this encompasses both added business to existing dealers, and distributors, but more importantly NEW business thanks to current partners complimenting us!”

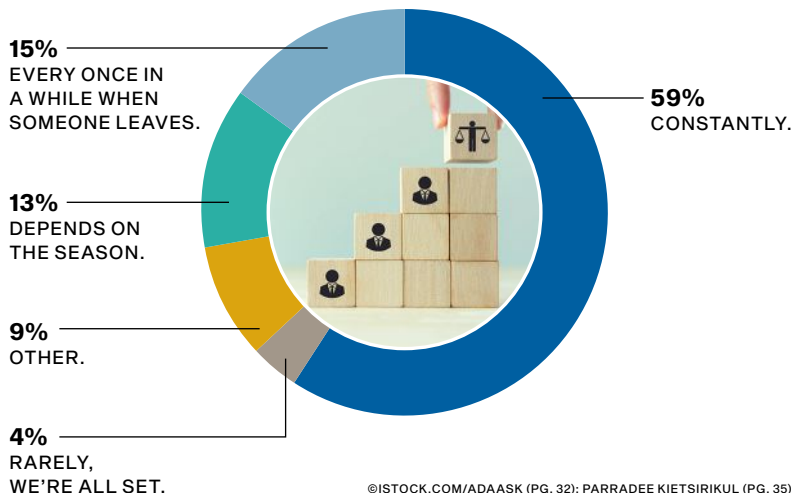
“Difficult to gauge, but for 79 years we’ve tended to look at the bottom line, not at individual sales or productivity due to all the variables between delivery, manufacturing, warehousing, etc. Not an exact science, but we have been profitable each of those years!”

“Sales per employee.”

HAVE A REAL ISSUE?
Send it to Rick@LBMJournal.com.
The reader who suggests the “Real Issues” topic will receive an LBM Journal prize pack.



How often are you assessing staffing levels?



Comments from dealers:

"We have had a very disappointing sales year and must make some cuts. We're chopping all our expenses in all areas and are looking at potential reduced hours for staffing until sales improve."

"We assess every six months."

"Monthly."

Comments from vendors:

"We assess monthly, unless there is a sudden drop or increase in business which also includes adjusting inventory levels, which normally takes six weeks minimum due to rail transit time or longer is coming outside North America could be eight-12 weeks." ■

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EMPLOYEES FUEL GROWTH FOR KENTUCKY LUMBERYARD

The Lumber King executive team. From left to right: Willie Boyatt, VP of Operations; Carmen Perry, CFO; John Kayea, President; Steve Phillips, CEO; Bill Singleton, Former President

LBM JOURNAL'S DEALER OF THE YEAR AWARDS recognize LBM companies of different sizes that epitomize the entrepreneurial spirit. By our definition, a Dealer of the Year describes a company in which leadership excels at identifying underserved—or emerging—markets, satisfying customers, and constantly working to grow and improve business. While these companies represent vastly different operations, the common thread is their fierce commitment to finding ever-better ways to serve their customers and their communities.

BY WENDY STURGES

Over the past 65 years, Lumber King has transformed itself from a small lumber processing operation to a multi-location building center chain across five cities and two states.

Originally founded as King Lumber Company in 1960 by the Stearns Coal & Lumber Company and Ronald King in Stearns, KY, the business initially processed and sold lumber in Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, and Ohio. Before the decade was out, the company had also formed King Building Materials, its first retail location in Oneida, TN.

In the 1970's, Ronald's son, Dwayne King, took over the company and merged the two businesses and soon after relocated the company's headquarters to its current location in Whitley City, KY.

"In 1978 when Ronald passed away, Dwayne took the helm of the company. At that point, in 1980 we decided that it was time [to expand

since] we'd outgrown everything in Stearns," said Willie Boyatt, vice president of operations for Lumber King. "We really needed to open up a retail center. So we opened up this facility that we're currently in, in 1980, and we did some re-organization of the company, and we changed the name to Lumber King."

Since then, Lumber King—also led by President John Kayea, CEO Steve Phillips, and Vice President Bill Singleton—has added three more Kentucky locations in Somerset, Danville, and Mount Vernon and expanded its services to include cabinet design, truss design and manufacturing, estimates, special orders and more.

Employees drive success

Over the years, one constant through all that growth has been the dedicated employees who work at Lumber King's locations, many of which have been with the company for decades, Singleton and Boyatt said. ▶



LBM
DEALER
OF THE YEAR
2025
 CATEGORY: \$10MM-\$50MM

In 2020, the company announced Lumber King had become officially 100% employee-owned following a purchase of remaining company shares. The move has had a profound effect on not only how the company operates, but also how employees view their careers with Lumber King.

"It's always been about our people," Singleton explains. "We have an [Employee Stock Ownership Plan], and that affects our employees in different ways, but they all have what I would call, 'skin in the game.' We have very, very little turnover—I think we have more people retire than we have quit. And that's very unusual in this industry; our people are our strength. I tell my salespeople, there's very little difference between my stick of lumber and anybody else's, with the exception of the person that's selling it. Our people make all the difference."

Phillips said the ESOP program also allows employees to benefit long after they've left the company.

"We spent a lot of time educating our folks about the fact that they own the company, and if they stick with the company long enough, they can very well become the next millionaires locally and that's beginning to happen," Phillips said. "It absolutely thrills my soul to work with an employee who is a cashier, and they have \$1.4 million in a retirement plan.

They feel like they're working for themselves, not for a family or person."

In addition to longtime employees, Boyatt said the company has also found avenues to hiring younger employees.

"One of the things I think we've been very successful at is we try to hire either college kids or high school kids during summers to work as seasonal help. These kids may not be looking for a future in college, they might be looking for something else," he said. "When these kids come on, a lot of these managers and sales staff take them under their wing and help guide them."

For existing employees, Lumber King also offers continuing education opportunities, such as additional training and classes through Do it Best's Pro School. Boyatt said the company hopes to grow those programs for wider opportunities in the future, while still keeping the focus on each location's existing reputation.

"We still have that community-owned type of hardware store feel. When you come in, everybody feels friendly and talks to one another. We've always tried to be a big presence in our communities, participating in things and helping fund things within the community. The community feels like a part of us and that's been part of our business strategy for the last several years."

Company leaders said Lumber King has been fortunate to have several dedicated employees who have stayed on for decades, and credits its ESOP program as a driver of retention.



Continued growth

One thing that has changed in recent years has been marked investments in various aspects of the business, including adding a truss shop and rental center, and additional social media marketing efforts and renovations.

Lumber King has also dramatically increased its outside sales staff to reach markets beyond its immediate store locations, which the company's leadership team points to as a big driver of success.

"I think the biggest change is that we've enlarged our outside sales program, and that really drives a lot of our volume," Singleton said. "We've enlarged our market area from South Lexington to the North Knoxville, and we do really well against all of the competitors in the national, regional and local inland areas."

The company has also committed to investing in its retail operations, from remodeling its Mount Vernon location with help from Do it Best to partnering with companies like Milwaukee to expand tool sales.

"We have branded ourselves as a destination for Milwaukee Tools at all of our locations, and we've grown that business over the last three years," Boyatt said. "We really didn't have a lot of power tools previously, so we took this and ran with it, and we've seen an increase of roughly about \$800,000 to \$900,000 in sales [company-wide]."

The company credits Do it Best for their help with managing inventory and implementing new tools like online ordering, ship-to-store shopping, and same-day and curbside pick-up.

"We've been very pleased with the response we've gotten from Do it Best. They're very responsive to any needs that we have," Singleton said. "They're a crucial part of our supply chain, and they're going to become increasingly important because of all the consolidation that's taking place within the industry."

The co-op has also been instrumental as the company moves forward with new location plans. In the near future, Lumber King will move its Danville store—currently on a property the company leases—to another location in the same area that the company will own, allowing the company to create a more accessible store with a larger showroom and lumberyard, Phillips and Singleton said.

Moving forward, Lumber King will continue serving not only its local communities, but the growing areas surrounding their markets. That strategy, Singleton said, will allow the



company to grow beyond their footprint to serve the needs of builders and homeowners alike.

"The idea is to try to move more and more of our business into areas that were economically diverse," he said. "I can't move the store, but I can move our salespeople, and so we've been moving further and further into those diverse markets, and I hope that insulates us against any kind of downturn in the market." ■

One thing that has changed in recent years has been marked investments in various aspects of the business, including adding a truss shop and rental center, and additional social media marketing efforts and renovations.



GET TO KNOW LUMBER KING

Founded:	1960
Ownership:	Employee owned
Locations:	Five locations, plus one truss plant
Employees:	75
Buying group/Co-op:	Do it Best
Customer Breakdown:	70% pro / 30% retail
ERP Software:	Epicor BisTrack

LumberKing
BUILDING SUPPLIES

Durability and sustainability dominate today's roofing market

BY MIKE BERGER

YOU'D BE FORGIVEN if you thought roofing was a boring, stagnant segment of the LBM world. There are, however, examples from all over the world that prove otherwise, structures that use unconventional roofing materials such as glass, gold, reeds, sparkling ceramic tiles, and more to create singular statements.

For example, the Wat Rong Khun temple in Thailand uses a mix of white plaster, mirrors, and glass to form a glittering roof structure. The roof of the New York Life building in New York City is covered in 22-carat gold leaf tiles, while the Waldspirale building in Darmstadt, Germany sports a living green roof, with soil deep enough to grow trees and shrubs along with grasses and vegetables.

While residential homes are unlikely to use gold in their roofs, there are nonetheless a myriad of roofing choices and trends LBM dealers need to be aware of. And the near future of the roofing segment looks to be a busy one, say industry experts.

ProVia has enhanced its metal roof offerings with darker grey and matte black finishes, which the company says pairs sleek design with the durability and low maintenance that homeowners value.

ROOFING



EARTHEN SHADOW



OLIVE BARK

According to a recent report from the market research and industry consulting firm Spherical Insights, the United States roofing market was valued at \$27.46 billion in 2023, with a compound annual growth rate of 4.5% from 2023 to 2033. Additionally, the market is expected to reach \$42.66 billion by 2033.

Of course, the roofing industry is highly dependent on raw materials such as asphalt, metal, and tiles. These material prices can be volatile due to supply and demand imbalances, regulatory changes, and other factors such as natural disasters and geopolitical tensions. And not surprisingly, raw material price volatility can raise the prices of roofing services for consumers, resulting in decreased demand. This could stifle the growth of the U.S. roofing market.

Still, manufacturers are feeling pretty bullish about the near future of the roofing segment. “The roofing segment is poised for steady growth in 2025, driven by an increased focus on sustainable, durable, and energy-efficient materials,” says Chance Shalosky, roofing product manager for ProVia. “Homeowners and businesses are leaning toward roofing solutions with better long-term value and lower environmental impact, which is fueling demand for metal roofing. This growth is bolstered by rising raw material costs, making long-lasting options like metal more attractive when evaluated over their total lifecycle cost.”

James Cito, senior director of residential shingle marketing for GAF, also sees indications of positive growth for roofing. “In 2025, the construction industry is expected to grow by 8.5% due to the positive economic outlook and strong government spending. At GAF, we also anticipate to see this growth across our business this year,” he says.

Terry Secrest, executive vice president of manufacturing and product sales for RoyOMartin, sees a two-tiered forecast for 2025. “We see the first of the year demand being similar to the last half of 2024,” he explains. “Builders and homeowners are waiting to see how the new administration will affect the economy, inflation, housing cost, and mortgage rates. If these items go in the direction we expect, the second half of 2025 should see increased demand due to rising housing starts as there is significant pent-up demand.”

Westlake Royal Building Products has expanded its Newpoint Concrete offerings with recent regional launches. In Northern and Southern California, it offers Earthen Shadow (shown), a sophisticated grey, brown blend infused with orange streaks, Tree Bark Blend, Urban Driftwood, and Platinum Peak. For the Arizona and Nevada markets, it has launched new colors including Olive Bark (shown), Ashen Cove, and Auburn Ridge, bringing together the warm earthy tones of orange and brown.



Summit 60 from Atlas Roofing is a lightweight synthetic roof underlayment designed as an alternative to #15 asphalt-saturated felt. It features a woven polymeric scrim for increased strength and reduced slippage between the underlayment and the roof sheathing. A textured top surface fabric improves walkability during installation. According to Atlas, Summit 60 can be mechanically fastened to various substrates, making it an excellent underlayment for new and re-roofing applications.

MFM Ultra HT Wind & Water Seal is a 45-mil, self-adhering roofing underlayment composed of a white, non-slip, cross-laminated polymer film, laminated to a high-temp rubberized aggressive asphalt adhesive. According to MFM, it can be used under shingle, tile, shake, and metal roofing systems. It bonds to the substrate and seals around fasteners to limit damage caused by water penetration or leaks.



In addition, a more educated consumer is driving potential growth, says Eric Miller, vice president of sales for Westlake Royal Building Products. “Consumers are increasingly doing research on roofing products, with an emphasis being placed on severe weather resistance, product longevity and energy efficiency,” he says. “This presents an opportunity for con-

tractors to pair their expertise with consumers who are already educated in offering higher-quality premium products. While there are some uncertainties around tariffs, insurance, and labor shortages, this educated consumer base is helping drive growth in both reroofing and new construction segments.

Durable and sustainable

When it comes to what consumers are looking for in roofing, durable, sustainable, and resilient options top the lists of growing trends. Not surprising, considering the rise of severe weather and disaster events. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the number of billion-dollar disasters in the U.S. has increased from an average of 3.3 per year in the 1980s to more than 17 per year from 2014-23. “Weather-resistant materials are gaining traction, with significant research and development underway,” Westlake Royal Building Products’ Miller points out. “We’re currently working with Tile Roof Institute as they work to conduct benchmark studies that compare metal, clay, and concrete materials against asphalt for 10 different climate conditions. Studies like this are crucial as we have noticed a greater shift in ‘home resiliency’ messaging resonating strongly with consumers.”

Says GAF’s Cito, “As many regions across the United States experience increasingly severe weather events, homeowners are seeking more durable roofing systems to help protect against turbulent winds, hail, and hurricanes. In response to this trend, metal roofing has emerged as a top choice for homeowners.” ▶

Timberline Solar from GAF Energy boasts the world’s first available solar shingle as part of a solar roofing system. According to the manufacturer, a Timberline Solar roof is both strong and appealing, and it generates clean energy.



RoyOMartin’s OSB roofing product is designed to withstand the snow loads that roofs experience in the winter, but without adding any weight or additional costs. According to the manufacturer, the panel is 7/16" thick, so it’s lighter than the full 1/2" that is currently required. The product meets the same testing requirements and installs the same as the typical 1/2" OSB roofing panel.





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The TimberSteel premium metal roofing system from GAF is a nail gunnable metal shingle. Available in a range of colors, select TimberSteel system components are eligible for a 15-year Limited Wind Warranty with no maximum wind speed limitation and a 15-year limited warranty against leaks caused by hail, and are eligible for a 30 year paint, finish, fade, and chalking limited warranty.



Cito goes on to explain how sustainability is a growing trend along with increased durability. “Sustainability remains a top focus with residential construction, with traditional roofing materials evolving to meet new demands. Homeowners now see their roof as a key component in their home’s energy efficiency and environmental impact, rather than just as protection from the elements. Solar-integrated roofing systems, like GAF Energy’s Timberline Solar are leading this trend. Unlike traditional solar panels, these systems seamlessly integrate solar technology into the shingles themselves, providing both function and convenience. The GAF Energy Timberline Solar ES 2 shingle provides best-in-class solar efficiency, having the capacity to generate 57 watts per energy shingle.”



Westlake Royal Building Products recently launched Dryroll, a universal ridge vent and weather block system that installs in roll form. According to the manufacturer, it creates watertight seals with built-in butyl strips, and provides superior attic ventilation without requiring special tools or traditional vents.

Selling more amid challenges

LBM dealers face many challenges when it comes to selling roofing products. From the aforementioned volatility of raw material costs to the wavering state of the housing market, many factors can potentially stand in the way of selling success for LBM dealers. One of the greatest issues, however, remains the ongoing labor shortage, say roofing materials manufacturers. Says Westlake Royal Building Products’ Miller, “Labor shortages continue to be an ongoing obstacle for many contractors, which in turn affects businesses’ ability to operate efficiently in addition to its impact on both the installation and manufacturing sectors.

As a result, manufacturers are taking steps to help alleviate the situation. Says ProVia’s Shalosky, “A lack of skilled labor impacts installation timelines and quality, prompting the need for systems that simplify installation, such as mechanically fastened options or modular designs.”

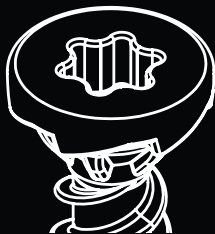
GAF’s Cito agrees that skilled labor has been an ongoing challenge across the roofing industry, and he points to efforts GAF is making to help ease the labor shortage burden. “At GAF, we’re working to help address this issue by developing the next generation of roofing professionals through GAF Roofing Academy, our national, tuition-free training program that teaches the basics of roofing,” he explains. “Through GAF Roofing Academy, we’ve seen how providing access to educational resources and opportunities for career growth can help attract, engage, and retain the future skilled workforce. Since 2020, more than 3,400 individuals have been trained through GAF Roofing Academy and 2,000 have been placed into jobs.”

So considering the challenges of a diminished labor force and unknown variables such as raw material costs, how can LBM dealers best position themselves to sell more roofing products? The strategies are relatively simple, say roofing industry experts. ▶

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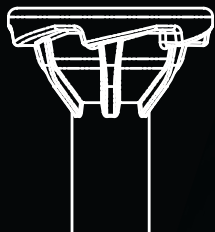
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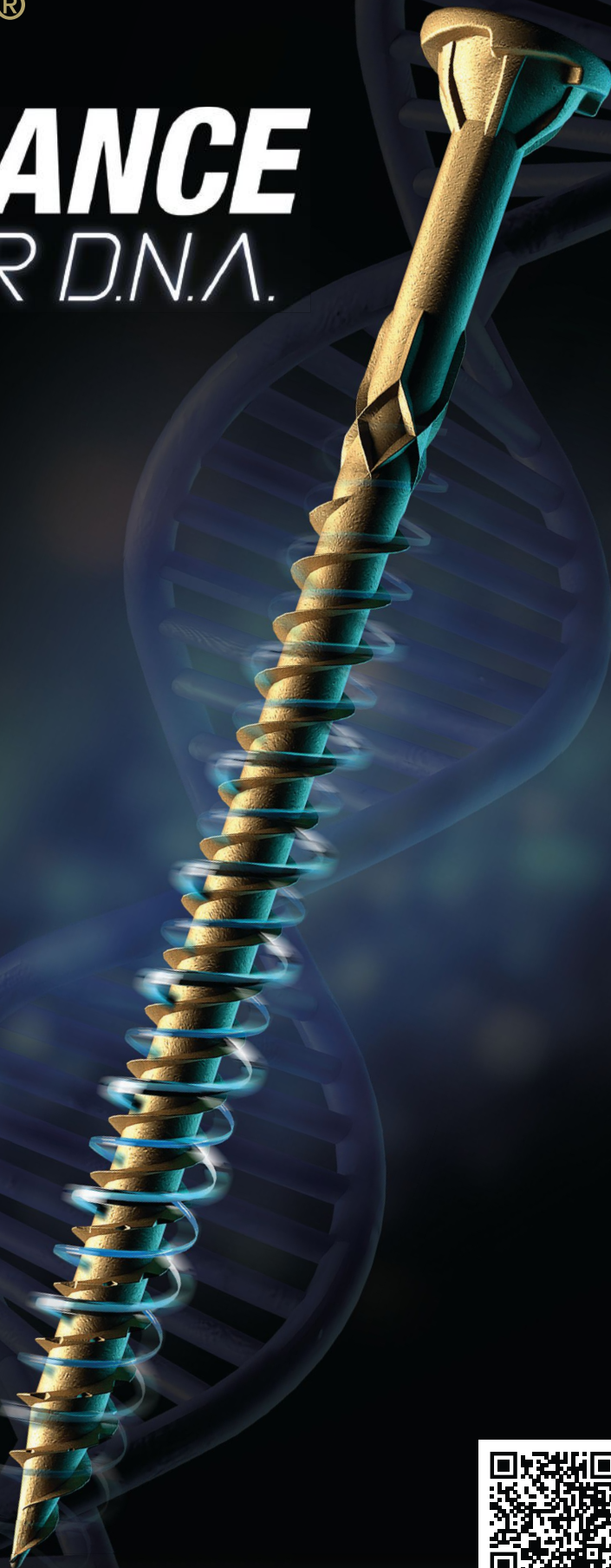
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ROCK RIDGE

Westlake Royal Building Products has expanded its DaVinci Single-Width Slate Nature Crafted Collection offerings to include two new colors: Aurora, which the company says captures the swirling greens and purples of the Northern Lights, and Rock Ridge, which replicates the dark gray and black hues of Vermont and New York quarried slate.

According to ProVia's Shalosky, LBM dealers should start by highlighting total lifecycle costs. "Show homeowners how one metal roof outlasts three asphalt shingle roofs, with significantly lower maintenance, lower

insurance premiums, and higher resale value," he says. Shalosky goes on to recommend LBM dealers provide tools for ROI analysis such as calculators that can help customers visualize cost savings over time. As well, he says, educate customers on emerging trends, emphasizing sustainability. "Promote the appeal of modern aesthetics like matte black finishes and the sustainability of metal roofing," he says. "And with growing consumer interest in eco-friendly materials, underscore the recyclability and energy efficiency of metal roofing."

With consumers doing more research independently, dealers have the opportunity to position themselves as important educational partners in the decision-making process, says Westlake Royal Building Products' Miller. "Messaging that focuses more on home resiliency in tandem with durability as opposed to solely durability, tends to resonate more effectively with consumers. This knowledge can be used to sell higher-performing materials, highlighting their insurance benefits, durability and energy efficiency features."

"Additionally, utilizing technologies like Westlake Royal's e-commerce platform, which offers real-time inventory visibility and order adjustments, enables business scaling without significant resource addition," Miller adds. "Dealers may emphasize quantifiable benefits from new research on energy efficiency and weather resistance when selling premium materials."

WHILE NOT as overwhelmingly eye-catching as the New York Life building or the Wat Rong Khun temple, there's still a lot to catch the eye of the savvy LBM dealer when it comes to roofing. While factors such as labor availability, the housing market, and material costs may be out of your control, the ability to provide better service through education can set your LBM dealership apart from the competition. And that is worth its weight in 22-carat gold leaf roofing. ■

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The 2025 International Builders' Show (IBS), held Feb. 25-27 in Las Vegas, NV, featured more than 1,800 exhibitors and covered more than 720,000 sq. ft. of exhibit space. Judging from the strong attendance, IBS 2025 delivered on its reputation as the place to see all the latest and greatest building products, tools, and technologies. While the majority of the 70,000+ attendees are builders and contractors, IBS has also become known as the single biggest event for LBM dealers to connect directly with manufacturers and to learn about the latest product innovations. As we do each year, the following pages include a sample of products that our team believes may help make a difference for you and your company moving forward. The listings are in no particular order.

— The Editors

ATLAS ROOFING ENERGYSHIELD XR CONTINUOUS INSULATION

Atlas recently introduced EnergyShield® XR Continuous Insulation for both residential and commercial projects, the only polyiso continuous insulation board designed for both above- and below-grade applications. This single product allows for a more simplified and continuous insulation strategy while providing more versatility than XPS, with a strong sustainability profile, and a higher R-value per inch, allowing you to provide better thermal protection and streamline your wall profile. xr.atlasrwi.com



2025 FINALIST BEST OF IBS MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

WESTLAKE ROYAL BUILDING PRODUCTS GROVE COLLECTION

According to Westlake Royal Building Products, its Grove Collection combines the timeless charm and rich look of stained wood planks and trim with the performance benefits of cellular PVC, perfect for dressing up outdoor living spaces, porch ceilings and soffits. The manufacturer says the Grove Collection offers the authentic aesthetic of stained wood but is low-maintenance, long-lasting, moisture and insect-resistant, and easy to install due to its hidden nailing hems. Along with the original 6" V-grooved plank, 6" beadboard, crown and bed mould, a new line extension adds column wraps with caps and bases, a 6" nickel gap profile and flat trim. royalbuildingproducts.com

DIGGER WESTBURY SORRENTO MESH RAILING

New from Digger Specialties, Inc. (DSI), the Westbury Sorrento Mesh Railing offers a modern twist with its powder-coated aluminum frame and durable welded stainless steel mesh panels, available in 2-3/8" and 3-5/8" mesh sizes. According to DSI, the clean, minimalist look pairs perfectly with any architectural style, while the robust construction ensures long-lasting beauty and performance. Available in a variety of textured and gloss finishes. diggerspecialties.com



LDCWOOD THERMOWOOD THERMALLY MODIFIED WOOD

LDCwood ThermoWood is a sustainable, 100% natural, thermally modified wood available in various species and profiles. According to the manufacturer, it's ideal for both indoor and outdoor applications, such as cladding, decking, furniture, or accent walls in interior spaces. Its exceptional durability, moisture resistance, and dimensional stability ensure its suitability for any climate. Additionally, it's reported that LDCwood is an excellent choice for those seeking a low-maintenance, highly durable, and aesthetically appealing material, providing construction professionals with outstanding performance and design flexibility. ldcwood.com



SIMPSON STRONG-TIE QUIK DRIVE PROJECT PRO

Simpson Strong-Tie is expanding its Quik Drive lineup of tools and fasteners with the addition of the Project Pro screw driving tool. Reported to be affordable and easy to install on nearly any cordless drill or driver without an adaptor, the Quik Drive Project Pro is an ideal screw driving tool that enables advanced DIYers to build or repair decks, fences, porches and flooring up to four times faster. strongtie.com

MODERN MILL ACRE V-GROOVE AND NICKLE GAP SIDING

ACRE Nickel Gap and V-Groove Siding are sustainable, durable alternatives with the reported genuine look and feel of real wood. According to Modern Mill, ACRE is lightweight, strong, water-resistant, and guaranteed not to rot or splinter. ACRE is easy to cut, fasten without pre-drilling, rout, and thermoform, and accepts paint or stain without primer. modern-mill.com



2025 FINALIST BEST OF IBS MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

HENRY BLUESKIN VPTECH PANELS

Henry, a Carlisle Company, showcased its Blueskin VP Tech, a product for residential construction that is reported to deliver energy efficiency and labor savings in one integrated solution. Blueskin VP Tech combines a weather-resistive barrier (WRB), continuous insulation, and seam sealing in a single, integrated panel, which the manufacturer says significantly improves energy efficiency, and reduces installation time and associated labor costs by up to 30%. Featuring an airtight thermal envelope, Blueskin VP Tech assists in lowering a home's HERS (Home Energy Rating System) Score and contributes to ENERGY STAR and ZERH (Zero Energy Ready Home) program requirements. henry.com



BOISE GLULAM BEAMS AND HEADERS

From Boise Cascade, Boise Glulam beams and headers, now in new 3-1/2" and 5-1/2" full widths sizes, are reported to be manufactured to create cost-efficiency and versatility in single and multi-family projects. A broader range of glulam widths and depths helps bring value and proven performance to projects. Beams and headers fit flush with standard wall framing, which means a simple installation process and reduced labor costs. bc.com



FEENEY DOCKRAIL

Feeney's new DockRail is a sleek, weather-resistant dock railing system designed for marine environments. Engineered for durability and style, Feeney says DockRail allows homeowners to seamlessly extend the aesthetic of their home railings to their boat docks, creating a unified and contemporary look. Constructed with 316-grade stainless steel and AAMA-2604 powder-coated finishes, DockRail is reported to deliver superior weather resistance, impact durability and long-lasting color retention. It is available in Textured Black, Bright White, and Silver, complementing a range of architectural styles while requiring minimal maintenance. feeneyinc.com



2025 FINALIST BEST OF IBS MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

EXACT COLOR TINTABLE CAULK

eXact Color tintable caulk from Sashco Sealants is a high-performance caulk that Sashco says allows installers to customize the color to match a project's specific needs. It's reported to be ideal for use in a variety of both indoor and outdoor applications, including sealing around siding, filling in gaps in baseboards and trim, caulking cabinets, and more. sashco.com





HILLMAN POWER PRO WOOD SCREWS

According to Hillman, Power Pro Wood Screws are precision-engineered fasteners that deliver faster install speed, driving efficiency, and a durable finish, meeting the pro-grade demands of contractors and builders. Supported by a limited lifetime guarantee, Power Pro Wood Screws feature a reported 30% faster installation time vs. competition, have higher pullout values, are corrosion-resistant ICC ESL-1284, and require no pre-drilling. power-pro.com



GAF ENERGY TIMBERLINE SOLAR SHINGLES

Timberline Solar from GAF Energy boasts the world's first nailable solar shingle as part of a solar roofing system. According to the manufacturer, a Timberline Solar roof is both strong and appealing, and it generates clean energy. Timberline Solar is made up of shingles, not panels or heavy tiles. These shingles are water-shedding, strong and warranted to withstand winds up to 130 mph. gaf.energy



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FASTENMASTER CORTEX FASTENERS FOR THE PAMFAST TOOL

FastenMaster's Cortex fasteners are now compatible with the stand-up PAMFast Tool for use on advanced PVC decking from TimberTech. According to the manufacturer, the PAMFast autofeed system is designed to provide smooth consistent fastener installation, prevent jams, and provide maximum fastener engagement and torque to prolong bit life and reduce cam outs. The countersink system is adjustable to 1/64", and each strip of Cortex fasteners holds 50 screws for more time driving and less time reloading. The Collated Cortex Fasteners are packaged in boxes of 1,050 screws on 21 collated strips that will enable pros to install 300 sq. ft. of decking, assuming two fasteners installed 16" on center. fastenmaster.com



IG SWITCH GLASS RAILINGS

IG Railing showcased its IG Switch railing system at the 2025 International Builders' Show. According to the manufacturer, IG Switch leverages advanced Polymer-Dispersed Liquid Crystal (PDLC) technology that enables an effortless transitions between privacy and clarity, seamlessly integrating with IG Lighting and other IG Railing components. igrailing.com



DECKORATORS SUMMIT DECKING

Deckorators Summit Decking is the newest line of decking from the manufacturer, featuring mineral-based Surestone technology. According to Deckorators, it's designed to deliver a practical blend of performance and value, available in three new on-trend colors. Summit Decking is warranted for water and ground contact installation and features a low-gloss surface finish and flatgrain variegation. deckorators.com



VERSATEX XCEED 16' PVC SIDING

Versatex has released its XCEED Lap Siding, an advanced cellular PVC cladding for residential construction and remodeling, and the first 16' Cellular PVC Lap Siding. According to the manufacturer, the siding reduces butt joints and assures 16' on-center nailing. XCEED comes with a realistic woodgrain surface texture in traditional white or a selection of fade-resistant colors: Sequoia Green, Heritage Blue, Mojave Tan, Monument Gray and Centennial Stone. versatex.com



2025 FINALIST BEST OF IBS MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

TYPAR CLEAR ACRYLIC FLASHING

TYPAR is introducing the industry's first Clear Acrylic Flashing, developed in response to evolving builders' needs and emerging building code changes requiring better visibility of the nail and screw fin patterns on windows during window installations and inspections. According to TYPAR, unlike opaque alternatives, TYPAR Clear Acrylic Flashing is the only flashing on the market that allows the pattern on the window nailing fins to be completely visible upon installation, ensuring proper attachment and preventing costly callbacks. This is especially advantageous on large-scale multi-family and commercial projects where approval of numerous window openings is required. typar.com





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NEWTECHWOOD ULTRASHIELD DECKING AND SIDING

UltraShield Composite Decking and Siding from NewTechWood is a composite product that features a co-extruded cap and a composite core made from a mix of high-quality recycled materials with dense hardwood and softwood fibers. According to the manufacturer, because the siding utilizes tongue and groove boards and fasteners, its All-Weather system creates a true rainscreen system that prevents water from penetrating between the boards while still appearing to create a 1/4" gap between the boards. newtechwood.com



ODL FIRE-RATED DOORS

ODL unveiled its fire-rated fiberglass doors, certified with the Warnock Hersey Mark and designed to meet most national and local code requirements for multi-family and residential house-to-garage entries. ODL's 20-minute fire-rated doors are rigorously tested to withstand fire exposure at temperatures over 1,400°F and feature a Category B positive pressure rating without a hose stream. Built with an enhanced 4" full-length engineered lumber lock stile, they are reported to provide increased rigidity and security, and they're ideal for high-traffic environments. odl.com



2025 FINALIST BEST OF IBS MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

UNIFIED STEEL STONE COATED ROOFING

Unified Steel Stone Coated Roofing from Westlake Royal Building Products offers five distinct profiles, all of which provide Class 4 Hail Impact Resistant rated performance, the best rating available for roofing products. The roofing material is warranted for hail up to 2-1/2" in diameter and winds up to 120 mph. It's fire resistant, lightweight at 1.5 lbs./square foot, and comes with a 50-year limited warranty. westlakeroyalroofing.com



2025 FINALIST BEST OF IBS MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

LP BUILDING SOLUTIONS LP SMARTSIDE NICKEL GAP

According to LP Building Solutions, LP SmartSide Nickel Gap Siding uses LP SmartGuard technology to offer advanced durability and efficient workability. Nickel Gap siding is reported to showcase a unique locking flange that provides a flush surface, allowing the installer to conceal fasteners and helping to ensure a contemporary design appearance. LP SmartSide Nickel Gap Siding is available in 8" nominal width with a 7" reveal, in brushed smooth and cedar texture in 16 prefinished LP SmartSide ExpertFinish colors, and in primed LP SmartSide cedar texture. lpcorp.com



CAMO COUNTERSINKING DECK SCREWS

This year, CAMO showed off its new Countersinking Deck Screw, which features reverse upper threads for reported superior pull-down power and a countersinking head for a clean, flush finish. camofasteners.com





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LEVEL.UP ADJUSTABLE DECK PEDESTAL JOIST SUPPORT SYSTEM

Bison Innovative Products, in collaboration with DAP Global Inc., has launched its Level.Up Adjustable Deck Pedestal Joist Support System that eliminates the need to dig, pour, and level concrete footers and posts. The Level.Up Adjustable Deck Pedestals attach to wood joists to build plank decks. According to the manufacturer, they can be installed over existing stable concrete slabs or pavers, without the need to demolish and remove them, as well as over compact soil or gravel. The Level.Up Pedestal System consists of four components that stack and nest together to support the deck's joist substructure. The telescoping Adjustable Pedestal can be raised or lowered by twisting by hand to adjust for height. Each deck pedestal can adjust from 2-1/2" to 5-1/2" in height. level-updecking.com



2025 FINALIST BEST OF IBS
MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

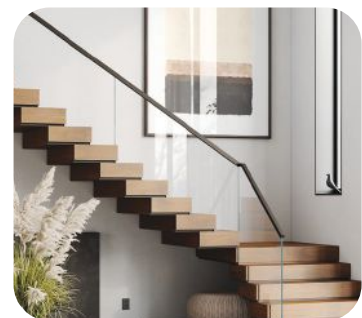
LUMON GLAZING RETRACTABLE GLASS PANELS

Lumon Glazing's Glass Panel System is a fully retractable glass wall system with no frames to obstruct the balcony or patio, delivering an unimpeded panoramic view of the surrounding scenery. The frameless design also reportedly makes for easy use and maintenance. The Lumon glazing system consists of two horizontal aluminum profiles located at the top of the ceiling and at the bottom on a parapet or on the floor, depending on which solution is most suitable for the project. lumon.com

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VIEWRAIL FLIGHT STACK

Flight Stack from Viewrail is a stair system that incorporates a closed riser design incorporated with completely hidden stringers. Available with dimmable, dotless LED lighting for the treads and handrails provide discreet illumination, the stairs are custom crafted for each installation. viewrail.com



CORDLESS CSF SIDING & FENCING NAILER

According to Paslode, its Cordless CSF Siding and Fencing Nailer is the first cordless tool for siding and fencing applications. It utilizes Paslode's 0-degree siding platform, which reportedly jams less than 15-degree siding nailers—76% fewer jams than competitive nailers. It also reportedly offers 12 times faster set up and tear down, drives 800 shots per full fuel cell and 4,500 nails per full battery charge. It's high capacity/easy loading 200ct. magazine features easy side loading. paslode.com



MAXIMO THERMO CLEAR RADIATA THERMALLY MODIFIED WOOD

Maximo Thermo Clear Radiata is an advanced wood that comes from a proprietary thermal modification process, combined with the company's proprietary OPX anti-termite treatment. According to the manufacturer, it is ideal for walls, ceilings, and decking, and it is reported to deliver unparalleled durability indoors and out, weather resistance, and termite protection—all in a clear, knot-free wood. maximowood.com



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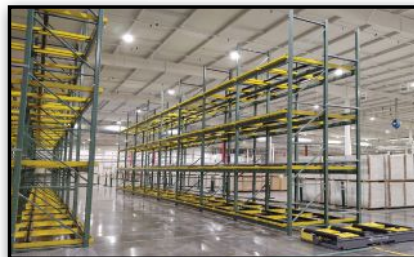
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ULTRA HT WIND AND WATER SEAL

Ultra HT Wind & Water Seal, from MFM Building Products, is a 45-mil, self-adhering underlayment for use in steep-slope roofing and re-roofing applications. The product features a cross-laminated polyethylene film with a traction coating for excellent walkability. The high temperature mastic is rated up to 250°F for use under metal roofing systems. Ultra HT received a UL Listing as a Class A fire resistant barrier when used in conjunction with 24 GA minimum steel or 16 oz. copper UL listed roofing panels per UL 790. mfmbp.com



THERMA-TRU VERIS DOOR COLLECTION

According to Therma-Tru, the Veris Collection of doors brings together high-end style and unique functionality to create contemporary openings that become experiences. The doors are reported to be engineered for easy, worry-free operation and designed with aluminum, stainless steel, and polymer components which provide long-lasting operation and are backed with a 1x transferable lifetime limited warranty. In addition, the finish is covered by a balance-transferable 10-year limited warranty. thermatru.com

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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 over 215 members, with more coming in each month. In all, the companies have provided 27,136 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.

THE MOST RECENT INDUCTEES INTO THIS EXCLUSIVE CLUB INCLUDE:

DAVIS-HAWN Dallas, TX	est. 1923	A. H. ANGERSTEIN, INC. Wilmington, DE	est. 1924
SMITH LUMBER COMPANY Valley City, ND	est. 1923	CHRISTENSEN LUMBER CO. Fremont, NE	est. 1923
PAGE LUMBER, MILLWORK, & BUILDING SUPPLIES Poughkeepsie, NY	est. 1924	CAROLINA LUMBER & SUPPLY COMPANY Atlanta, GA	est. 1900
HAMILTON BUILDING SUPPLY Hamilton, NJ	est. 1924	LEARNED LUMBER Hermosa Beach, CA	est. 1924
KEEP & MARTINSON LUMBER, INC. Tekonsha, MI	est. 1875	CLARK LUMBER Herington, KS	est. 1925

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* Starwood Rafters	56	888.525.5878	starwoodrafters.com
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Uline	35	800.295.5510	uline.com
Unified Purchasing Group (UPG)	53	801.784.8744	upg.org
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SHATTERED



A truckload of mistakes from your window/door vendor has seriously delayed several high-end homes and infuriated your affected builder customers. What would you do?

HAVING RECENTLY CELEBRATED your 10th year as GM of Trusted Lumber, you've weathered challenges like product shortages and lumber price volatility. But today's situation is different in that it directly impacts only you and your clients.

Since Trusted Lumber has earned a niche as the go-to LBM dealer for the custom home builders in your market, a healthy percentage of your business is comprised of special orders. One reason you've earned this business is because you and your team focus on tightly scheduling what materials need to be delivered when. With labor costs what they are, and with the backlog of projects in your market, downtime is not an option. And it hadn't been a problem, until your latest delivery of custom windows and doors was riddled with mistakes.

The first angry phone call went something like this: "The homeowners were on site to watch my crew install the massive trapezoid windows on the wall facing the lake. The windows are not only the wrong size—they're the wrong shape. This is going to delay my project by WEEKS! How can you explain this?"

As you hung up the phone, the next call came in. "After my team finished installing the windows and doors on that high-end custom home on the golf course, they discovered that some of the windows are antique bronze and some are black. We're on a tight schedule with this house—now we're going to have to wait for you to get us what we ordered, then push back our next project until we can fix YOUR PROBLEM! This is not acceptable!"

After three more calls from furious builders, it didn't take long to isolate the issue to the latest delivery from your custom window and door supplier. "I'm so sorry about this. We're not sure how it happened, but we're going to find out. Then we'll put new Standard Operating Procedures in place

to make sure it doesn't happen again. In the meantime, we'll put a rush on the replacement products, and you should have them within the month."

Thrust into full damage control mode, you've authorized your team to do whatever it takes to help your builders navigate this nightmare with their clients. Based on a couple of the calls, you know it's very possible that you'll lose some business due to your vendor's mistake.

Your grandfather used to say, "Trust takes years to build, seconds to break, and forever to repair." The trust you had with your longtime window/door manufacturer of choice is shattered. What would you do?

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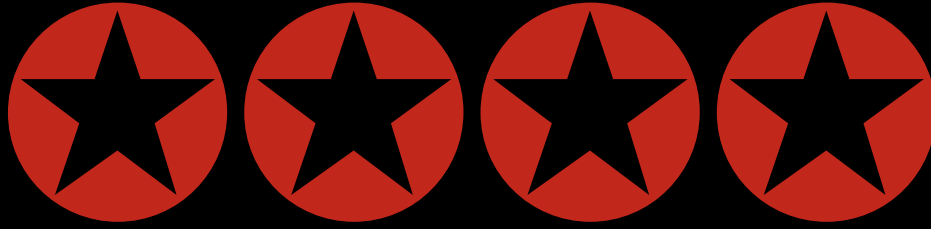
Just switch. Your vendor created massive problems for your builders—which they blame on you. You simply can't afford to work with this vendor anymore.

Slow down. Once the crises pass, you'll have a clearer picture of the damage. Then reach out and negotiate a fair outcome for you and your builders.

Add a vendor. Test drive another vendor with your next special order of windows and doors. Give them an opportunity to earn your trust—and your business.

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



CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER

There's no question that the entrepreneurial spirit is alive in the lumber/building material industry. A hearty congratulations to **LBM JOURNAL'S 2025 DEALER OF THE YEAR** award winners.

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