

LBM JOURNAL[®]

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THE DECK ISSUE

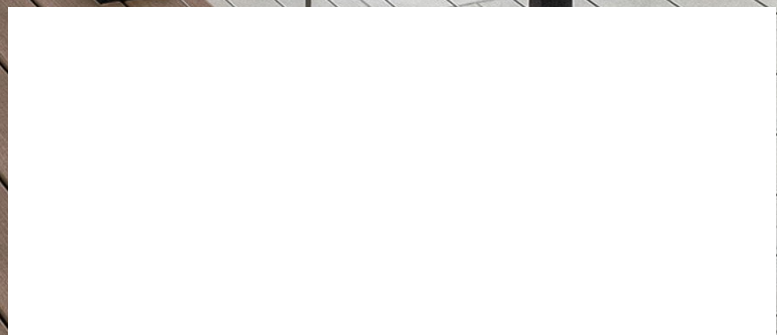
THE LATEST PRODUCTS AND TRENDS IN
DECKING, RAILING, AND ACCESSORIES

SELLING THE DECK PROJECT



2025 DEALER OF THE YEAR
MIAMI LUMBER IN PAOLA, KS
ANNUAL SALES: \$10 MILLION

TREX ENHANCE IN HATTERAS AND TREX SIGNATURE
X-SERIES CABLE RAILING



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MoistureShield
DECKING • RAILING

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APRIL 2025



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CATEGORY: \$10MM
When you first hear the name "Miami Lumber," you might be inclined to think of a lumberyard located near the beach. Add in the palm trees and sunset pictured on the company's logo, and you'd be sure think you were in southern Florida. You'd be wrong, but luckily, Owner Pete Peterson and his family are in on the joke.



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Leading Suppliers Council



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EPICOR

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.



FROM THE PUBLISHER

WHEN WE BUILT OUR HOME IN 2016, I had one item on my wish list: a big, beautiful deck facing the lake that we were fortunate to build on. The initial deck design was an 8'x12' rectangle. We explained to the builder that we planned to spend a lot of time outside, and we wanted a large deck that would give us plenty of space with friends, family, and dogs. He responded with a slightly larger rectangle, measuring 12'x16'. Since this was the first and last home we'd likely ever build, we encouraged him to think way outside the box, and to design the biggest deck he could imagine. After another slightly bigger rectangle, we decided to look in a different direction.

We reached out to a professional deck builder for his thoughts. He envisioned a deck running the length of the house, with the outside perimeter mirroring the lakeshore. As much as we loved the concept, the finished project exceeded our expectations. For us, it came down to finding the right decking pro who listened to what we wanted, and had the vision and skill to make our dream deck happen.



Our April Deck Issue has been *LBM Journal's* biggest issue every year—by a wide margin—for the past 20 years. Given the emotional connection that a deck can provide, that's no surprise. As Senior Editor Mike Berger points out in "How to Sell the Deck Project" (p. 74), outdoor living structures represent a multi-billion dollar market in 2024—a number that's expected to continue growing. As an LBM dealer, this represents a tremendous opportunity for you.

That's why this issue is packed with photos and details on the leading decking, railing, and accessories—along with insights from decking pros to help you become the go-to resource for all things decking. I've talked with LBM dealers who use our annual Deck issue to train and update their sales teams on the trends shaping this growing niche.

If you're serious about being the decking and railing supplier of choice in your market, I urge you to get acquainted with the North American Deck & Railing Association (NADRA) at NADRA.org. With membership comprised of top decking pros, suppliers, and manufacturers, this organization truly represents the decking community. You can learn more about this fine association's mission and goals in the NADRA update on page 12. Then turn to page 46 to see some of the top award-winning projects from NADRA's National+ Deck Competition.

As something of a deck fanatic, I was honored to serve on NADRA's Board of Directors a few years back. I'm a big fan of Mike and Margie Beaudry, the genuinely good people who launched NADRA in 2004, and appreciate their work connecting our industry. Intrigued by the potential for the outdoor living market? Stay tuned ...

Lastly, since celebrating the LBM Community is at the heart of what we do, turn to page 82 to read about Miami Lumber, a family-owned company in Paola, KS, which earned LBM Dealer of the Year honors for sales of up to \$10mm.

— Rick Schumacher
Executive Editor & Publisher

HAVE A QUESTION FOR RICK?
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Are you failing at railing?

Use this 3-Step Strategy for Stress-Free—and Profitable—Railing Discussions with Clients

When people look at a deck, what is the first thing they see? It's not the footings or even the deck boards that get noticed first. Odds are it's the railing that catches the eye before anything else. So, why is it that railings are so often an afterthought?

The reality is most homeowners don't think about railing selection until very late in the deck building process. By that point, they are likely to be mentally spent from decision making, and their budgets similarly depleted, leaving little energy or financial resources to put toward this critically important and highly visual aspect of their outdoor living space.

Railings provide the decorative frame to a backyard masterpiece, making them an aspect where homeowners may be more likely to splurge, but only if selections are made before they've allocated their budget elsewhere. For the best results—both for your clients and your business—railing selections should be addressed early in the design process, ideally along with the decking as a purposeful pairing.



Simplifying the Selection Process

Research has shown that when homeowners see railings next to deck boards, it opens their eyes to combinations they may not have otherwise considered. This can be complicated considering the number of railing options available to today's consumers. Between metals, composite, vinyl and wood, the offerings are vast and can be overwhelming.

That's why the design team at Trex has created a formula for simplifying the railing selection process based on three strategic approaches. Coined the **"Three Cs,"** these pairing techniques focus on coordinating, contrasting or customizing railing selections according to a client's preferences, level of design confidence and the setting of their outdoor space.

Coordinate

You can never steer a homeowner wrong by suggesting railing in the same shade as their decking—e.g., Trex Transcend® railing in Vintage Lantern paired with Transcend decking in the same color. This creates a cozy, well-coordinated look and is a great approach for risk-averse homeowners.

Contrast

If there's no perfect match for the decking, or if you're working with a homeowner who is open to trying something different, consider proposing a contrasting but complementary railing color.

White looks crisp and clean against deep brown and darker grey deck boards and is ideal for highlighting a deck's design and features. It also exudes a more traditional style aesthetic.

Alternatively, black railings provide an appealing visual contrast to lighter decking colors and give a deck a more modern look and feel. Black is also a good color choice for clients looking to showcase their home's natural surroundings since dark railings tend to blend into the background.

Customize

For design-savvy homeowners looking for something distinctive, let the creative juices flow. Encourage them to mix colors and materials to create a completely customized look that reflects their personal tastes and lifestyle.

Find the Perfect Match

At Trex, we've recently expanded our railing portfolio to mirror our industry-leading decking line. From classic composite profiles to sturdy steel, sleek aluminum and contemporary cable—Trex has them all!

Delivering affordability with the improved aesthetics and performance of Trex are two new railing collections—**Trex Enhance™ Steel Railing** and **Trex Select™ Aluminum Railing**. Combining strength, sophistication and simplicity, these fully panelized solutions come with pre-assembled posts with pre-mounted hardware, making them easy to specify, order and install. Trex Enhance Steel Railing is offered exclusively in Charcoal Black and carries a 15-year limited residential warranty, while Trex Select® Aluminum Railing panels are available in a choice of Charcoal Black or Burnished Bronze and come with a 25-year limited residential warranty.

Offering elevated sophistication and design flexibility for higher-end builds, **Trex Signature® Railing** is engineered to deliver effortless style and exceptional strength. Made with premium-grade aluminum, this line is offered in three finishes and a choice of trend-forward infill options including traditional balusters, horizontal rod rail, mesh or glass panels. This collection also houses our new **Trex Signature® X-Series™** specialty railing options, including cable and frameless glass styles that blend in-demand profiles with simplified installation.

For clients who prioritize ease of maintenance, we offer a robust selection of composite railing options. Our **Trex Enhance®** and **Trex® Select** railings offer fashionable alternatives to wood, vinyl and PVC railing with composite posts and rails combined with sleek aluminum balusters. New to both of these collections are white-only All-in-One Post Kits that feature a composite post sleeve, cap and skirt packaged together to simplify the railing purchase and installation process.

Like the decking that shares its name, **Trex Transcend® Railing** boasts industry-leading durability and design flexibility. Made from high-performance composite, this versatile line offers timeless design you can tailor with a choice of round black aluminum or square composite balusters in a choice of four top-selling colors.

As professional deck builders, it's impossible to expose your clients to every single railing option available to them, but you can make the selection process easier by giving them some direction. A little guidance can go a long way and pays off not only in greater client satisfaction but in higher-margin projects. That's what we call a perfect pairing!

For more information about Trex decking and railing, visit [Trex.com](https://www.trex.com).



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Whether you're stocking, selling or building, Trex engineers everything to be easier with decking and railing systems for every budget and material choice. Learn more about how our Performance-Engineered™ products outperform all others at [trex.com](https://www.trex.com).

*Featuring: Trex Transcend® Lineage® in Biscayne, Trex Signature® X-Series™ Cable Railing and Trex Pergola.
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Trex[®]
DECKING & RAILING

NADRA: CONNECTING THE DECKING INDUSTRY

THE NORTH AMERICAN Deck and Railing Association (NADRA) is the unified voice for the deck and railing industry. As codes and regulations continue to evolve, NADRA actively advocates for fair policies and standards that benefit both professionals and consumers. Through participation in committees, industry discussions, and regulatory meetings, members have a seat at the table when important decisions are made. Members contribute to shaping the future of the industry while staying informed about key changes before they happen.

In an industry where trust and reputation matter, membership serves as a badge of credibility. Members adhere to a strict Code of Ethics, demonstrating a commitment to high-quality workmanship, safety, and professionalism. From industry briefings to certification programs, webinars, and in-person training, NADRA ensures that members stay updated on best practices and building codes.

Continuous learning is essential to success. As a member, you gain access to certification programs, which can help differentiate you from competitors and boost consumer confidence in your expertise. Do you ever wonder if you are providing the right materials for a safe deck or porch and offering everything you should be selling to the homeowner, contractor, or deck builder? Don't rely on a material list that someone found on the internet or a material list from some software program. The NADRA Decks Done Right education provides you with the confidence to inform your customers what they need to build a safe, strong deck or porch.

Building strong industry relationships is one of the most important aspects of business growth. NADRA hosts regional and national events, including the NADRA Awards Summit, networking meetups, and is the sponsor of Deck Expo. These events bring together professionals from all corners of the

industry, providing a platform for collaboration, partnership opportunities, and sharing of best practices. If you can't attend an event, the NADRA Connect online platform allows members to engage in industry discussions, ask questions, and exchange ideas with peers. Whether you are looking for new business partners, seeking advice from seasoned professionals, or exploring innovative solutions, NADRA's networking opportunities are invaluable.

NADRA goes beyond education and networking by offering practical business development tools. Members receive a dedicated profile page on the NADRA website, increasing their visibility to potential clients and partners. Additionally, members have the opportunity to share press releases and company news, boosting brand exposure at no additional cost.

By using the NADRA logo, members can showcase their affiliation with a trusted industry organization, enhancing their marketing materials and build consumer trust.

Programs like "Check Your Deck" and "Deck for a Soldier" also provide members with opportunities to give back to their communities while gaining positive publicity.

Safety is at the heart of NADRA's mission. The association is a leader in advocating for proper deck construction, inspections, and maintenance. By joining, members align themselves with an organization dedicated to promoting deck safety awareness, reducing structural failures, and improving consumer education.

In the competitive world of outdoor living design and construction, deck building, railing installation, and outdoor living spaces, staying ahead of industry trends, best practices, and networking opportunities is crucial for success. NADRA offers dealers and distributors a unique opportunity to grow their business, refine their skills, and establish themselves as trusted leaders in the industry.

CONTRIBUTED BY NADRA



Take the next step in your professional journey and become part of the NADRA family. Learn more and join at NADRA.org.

Help your customers design a backyard dreamscape.



Deck Planner Software™

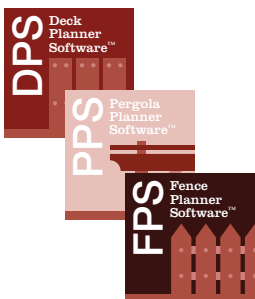


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Fence Planner Software™

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Smart and easy outdoor project design software. Many homeowners see the backyard as an extension of their house. Now you can help them make the most of it. Outdoor Living software from Simpson Strong-Tie makes it easy to plan a deck, pergola or fence in minutes. Our suite of apps — Deck Planner Software™, Pergola Planner Software™ and Fence Planner Software™ — guide customers to design safe, strong and beautiful outdoor structures. Every app provides a materials list so your sales team can offer quotes on the spot. Tiered licensing programs are available, giving you greater brand visibility and website traffic, weekly usage reports with detailed lead information, and integrated SKUs and pricing.

To see a free demo and learn more, visit go.strongtie.com/outdoorliving or call (800) 999-5099.





LEZZER LUMBER RECEIVES ELITE LOCATION AWARD



GATES LUMBER MARKS COMPANY MILESTONES



SHERWOOD LUMBER EXPANDS DISTRIBUTION

BY THE YARD

Lezzer Lumber has announced that its Reading, PA location, managed by Kaethe Huber, has been named the first-ever recipient of the company's Elite Location Award. This new initiative recognizes the Lezzer Lumber location that exemplifies excellence in operations, facility organization, and overall performance, ensuring they are "Grand Opening Ready." The Elite Location Award evaluates each location based on key criteria, including store merchandising, cleanliness, signage, showroom organization, and overall yard and warehouse efficiency.

Shaw Lumber Company is celebrating 95 years of service to Sumter, SC, and the surrounding communities, marking nearly a century of growth since its founding on July 1, 1930. The company has remained family-owned through three generations. As a comprehensive building materials supplier, Shaw Lumber Company serves both contractors and homeowners with an extensive inventory of lumber, building materials, hardware, and specialty items.

84 Lumber has opened its latest Andersen window and door showroom in Annapolis, MD, further strengthening its collaboration with Andersen. The 1,350-square-foot showroom features an extensive array of Andersen products. The showroom also highlights various replacement window configurations, catering to homeowners, builders, and designers seeking quality and customization.

Gates Lumber announced the company will celebrate a year of milestones. Owner and CEO George Buzard recently celebrated his 90th birthday marking a lifetime of leadership, service, and commitment. This year also marks his 70th anniversary with Gates Lumber, where he has played a pivotal role in the company's legacy of quality and service. All of this comes in the same year that Gates Lumber commemorates 105 years as a cornerstone of the Memphis community.

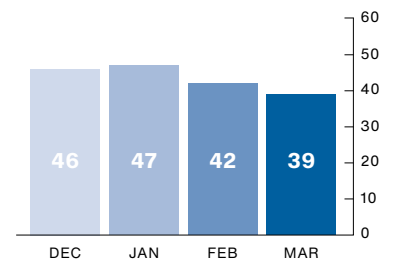
Sherwood Lumber has announced its new partnership with **Westlake Royal Building Products** to distribute Kleer PVC Trim in the Mid-Atlantic region and Skytrim PVC Trim in the Northeast. This strategic expansion underscores Sherwood Lumber's commitment to providing innovative, durable, and high-performance exterior building products to its customers.

Alabama-based **Wholesale Wood Products** announced in February the company has partnered with **Roseburg Forest Products** to begin distributing Armorite Exterior Trim, the company's line of exterior trim for doors, windows, and more.

DISTRIBUTION NEWS

Deckorators, an outdoor living brand of UFP Industries, Inc., announced a new partnership with **Wausau Supply Co.**, an employee-owned, national manufacturing and distributor leader established in 1947. Wausau Supply Co. offers high-quality brand products spanning a broad geographic footprint to retail centers across the United States.

SEND NEWS AND UPDATES ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION TO WENDY@LBMJOURNAL.COM



Builder confidence falls again amid cost uncertainty

Builder confidence in the market for newly built single-family homes was 39 in March, down three points from February and the lowest level in seven months, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI). Economic uncertainty, the threat of tariffs and elevated construction costs pushed builder sentiment down in March even as builders express hope that a better regulatory environment will lead to an improving business climate.

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- Excellent choice for decks, boardwalks, pergolas, covered porches and demanding environments such as bridges, highway sound barriers, railroad cross ties, and floating docks.
- 25-year warranty from the treater.



Anthony Forest Products is part of the Canfor Group of Companies

PEOPLE IN LBM

Kodiak Building Partners announced the addition of **Kevin Prosser** to the operations team as area vice president, LBM Idaho and Wyoming. This appointment allows Kodiak to move its growth initiatives in the Northwest forward while continually improving operations.



US LBM has named **Alex Anzures**, design manager at **Texas Building Supply**, as its 2025 Humanitarian Award Recipient for his dedication to mentoring and supporting at-risk youth through his nonprofit boxing gym. The US LBM Foundation has awarded a \$10,000 grant to Anzures Boxing Team to help further its mission.



Members of the **National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)** elected their senior officers to top leadership positions within the federation at the conclusion of NAHB International Builders' Show in Las Vegas:

Buddy Hughes: chairman of the board.

Bill Owens: first vice chairman of the board.

Bob Peterson: second chairman of the board.

Gary Campbell: third chairman of the board.

Carl Harris: immediate past chairman of the board.

Jim Tobin: NAHB president and CEO.



HUGHES

OWENS

PETERSON

CAMPBELL

HARRIS

TOBIN

Landon Tarvin, president of **UFP Retail Solutions**, has announced that **Ryan Kemp** has been named executive vice president of Deckorators. With over 20 years in the building and lumber industry, Kemp joined UFP in 2001 as an account manager in Windsor, CO.



Boise Cascade announced that **Joanna "Jo" Barney** will be the new executive vice president of its building materials distribution (BMD) division. In this role, Barney will oversee the company's 40+ distribution facilities, including millwork and door shops, across the U.S.

Benjamin Obdyke has hired **Keaton Smith** as its new market development manager for Oregon and Southwest Washington. In the role, Smith will support architect, builder, and dealer customers.

Owens Corning announced that **Gina Beredo** has been promoted to the newly created role of executive vice president, chief administrative officer, and general counsel of the company.



MORRISON



LOPREST



PIEPER

Do it Best has added a dedicated Member Operational Excellence Manager and has hired **Scott Morrison**, an industry expert with deep experience in process optimization, facility layout design, and manufacturing efficiency.

Do it Best has announced the appointment of **Matt Loprest** and **Tim Pieper** as directors of operations. These strategic hires follow the promotions of Ty Sordelet to Do it Best Vice President of Logistics in December 2024 and Steve Rose to True Value Vice President of Distribution in November 2024.

IN MEMORIAM

Minnesota-based **Stenerson Lumber** announced that third-generation family member **Robert "Bob" Stenerson** died on Feb. 22, 2025. Stenerson worked his entire life for the family business, according to the company, following in the footsteps of his father, Gordon, and grandfather, Gunder, and upon retirement turned it over to his two sons, John and Leslie.



INDUSTRY UPDATES

Westlake Ace Hardware announced it has signed an agreement to open a new store in Papillion, NE. The new store will feature approximately 18,000 sq. ft. of retail space. A soft opening is tentatively planned for the fourth quarter of 2025.

IG Railing announced the launch of its cutting-edge smart glass railing, IG Switch, which is designed to seamlessly transition between privacy and transparency at the touch of a button.

Kebony North America announced the introduction of Kebony Textured with Color (TWC), the company's first-ever prefinished cladding product line, according to Kebony North America Managing Director Andy Hehl. Kebony TWC saves cladding contractors' time and labor with its factory-applied stains, which are Stormy Gray and the darker Midnight Sky and ensure uniform color throughout the façade.

Tando Composites has debuted TandoStone ProBrick, which can be installed quickly and easily in any weather by siding installers using traditional tools. ProBrick also features Tando Composites' state-of-the-art KAPGUARD with Kynar coating technology to ensure color longevity. The ProBrick is available in two colors: Madeira, a rich, classic red and Racinette, a deep, earthy brown.

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.



U.S. Lumber Coalition responds to enforcement of new duty rates on Canadian lumber



New tariffs on steel and aluminum expected to drive up housing costs, per NAHB



Single-family home permits gaining momentum



Westlake Ace Hardware to build new store in Shawnee, KS

TOUGH CALL SOLUTIONS

THE FEBRUARY ISSUE SURVEY RESULTS FROM LBMJOURNAL.COM AND [LINKEDIN](https://www.linkedin.com).

The Master Demotivator

After working in the LBM industry for the past 15 years, you just completed your first full year as the general manager of a lumberyard/design center. Like many LBM dealers, 2024 was not a banner year for topline revenues. While your location didn't set any new revenue records, you had a standout year in other areas. After a year of showing mostly solid results, the owner of your company downplayed your accomplishments, telling your team that, "You're all liabilities." Now what? Here's how readers responded.

Move on.

Since your values don't align with the owner's, you don't have much of a future here. There are lots of smart LBM operators. Find one and build your career.

62%

Educate.

Acknowledge the importance of top-line revenues while showing him how the big changes you and your team implemented boosted the bottom line.

18%

Effect change.

Since 2024 sales were down company wide, and the other two GMs are dealing with the same fallout, arrange a meeting with the owner and try to work it out.

18%

Accept it.

Instead of working to improve KPIs and overall performance, focus exclusively on growing sales. He's the boss, give him what he wants.

2%



WANT TO SEE MORE TOUGH CALLS? CHECK OUT PAGE 96 OF THIS MONTH'S ISSUE, OR FIND MORE AT: lbmjournals.com/category/tough-call

MERGERS + ACQUISITIONS

White Cap has acquired **Kris-Con**, a supplier of specialty construction supplies and equipment rentals to commercial contractors serving the Houston and Austin metropolitan areas.

US LBM has acquired **Beach Window and Door** in Calabash, NC. Serving the Myrtle Beach area since 2010, Beach Window and Door provides a wide range of exterior and interior doors, windows and specialty building products to homeowners, builders and contractors. Harvey Sutton and David McPherson, who founded Beach Window and Door, will continue running day-to-day operations.

Westlake Ace Hardware announced that it has agreed to acquire **Edgebrook Ace Hardware**, a family-owned retailer based in Chicago, IL. The 8,700-sq.-ft. store will keep its Ace branding and will retain much of its current product mix and personnel. It is anticipated that the acquisition will be completed on June 1, 2025.

Woodgrain, a millwork and building products company, has closed on the asset purchase of **Kelleher Corporation**. The acquisition includes distribution locations in Sacramento, Ontario, Carneros and Blackpoint, CA along with Honolulu, HI, a manufacturing location in Bear Valley, OR, and an office in San Rafael, CA.

QXO, Inc. and **Beacon Roofing Supply, Inc.** confirmed that the companies are in discussions about a potential combination in which QXO would acquire Beacon for \$124.35 per share in cash, or total consideration of approximately \$11 billion. QXO is engaging in customary due diligence regarding Beacon's business, and QXO and Beacon are negotiating a definitive agreement. There can be no assurance that these discussions will result in a transaction, and an agreement had not been reached as of press time.



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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LBM TALKS





Wilson Lumber Company has reached an agreement to acquire **Nashville Lumber**, a well-established supplier of lumber and building materials located near Nashville, TN. The acquisition expands Wilson Lumber Company's ability to serve builders, contractors, and construction professionals in this region while maintaining exceptional service and quality products.

SEND NEWS AND UPDATES ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION TO WENDY@LBMJOURNAL.COM

INDUSTRY EVENTS

2025

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

NOV 3-5

LMC EXPO 2025
Philadelphia, PA | lmc.net

2026

MAR 7-9

DO IT BEST SPRING MARKET
Denver, CO | doitbestonline.com

MAR 10-12

LMC ANNUAL 2026
Chicago, IL | lmc.net

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For dealers and distributors looking to stay ahead of the competition, Eva-Last offers a product lineup that combines performance, stunning aesthetics, innovation, and affordability. Whether you're seeking an entry-level solution, a high-performance board, or the most natural wood-like composite decking available, Eva-Last has the answer.

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Apex Plus: Engineered with a Glass Fiber-Reinforced (GFR) PVC core, Apex Plus sets itself apart with its aesthetic quality and superior structural integrity. The addition of glass fiber minimizes expansion and contraction, ensuring straighter boards and enhanced span and stability—an industry-leading advantage over conventional PVC decking. What's more, its advanced decay-resistant coating protects against fading, scratches, stains, insects, moisture and all the elements.

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GFR | GLASS FIBER
REINFORCED



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SOLID PROFILE
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GFR | GLASS FIBER
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COMPOSITE

GFR | GLASS FIBER
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BY RICK DAVIS

IN HIS BEST-SELLING book, “Outliers,” Malcolm Gladwell made famous the thesis that 10,000 hours of practice were required to achieve greatness at a task.

I read “Outliers” with great interest many years ago. Gladwell serendipitously discovered that the majority of professional hockey players were consistently born early in the calendar year. As a result, he made the conclusive leap that children born earlier in the scholastic year had a physical advantage that was magnified at a young age. Consequently, the slightly older children got more playing time and therefore had more opportunity to hone their skills and thus became the elite players in the NHL.

Q.E.D. (*Quod erat demonstrandum*) ... *thus it is proven*. Or is it? Since the writing of that book, there have been various attempts to debunk Gladwell. One notable criticism, albeit subtle, came from Jim Collins in the appendix of his book, “Great by Choice.” Another came more blatantly from Anders Ericsson based on the research he conducted to produce his brilliant book on achieving performance excellence, “Peak.”

10,000 HOURS

So, why is a sales columnist bringing up the controversy over 10,000 hours? What has a debunked theory got to do with the sales profession? My answer: Everything!

A salesperson can take one year of experience and repeat it 30 times throughout a 30-year career, or the salesperson can experience 30 years of growth. Ericsson proved through clinical research defined in “Peak” that achieving expert levels of experience requires more than repetition. In fact, the repetition must evolve and become *purposeful*. His research includes professional musicians, Olympic athletes, and other top performers, and, in fact, he concluded that thousands of hours of purposeful practice are necessary to achieve expertise.



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.

Ericsson proved that random rehearsal produces random results. In fact, my own research as a hack golfer has proven that random rehearsal for 10,000 hours is certainly no guarantee to create expert performance. I’ve been flailing away at a golf ball for decades with at least 25,000 hours of practice and I’m still pretty mediocre.

As an example of building performance, consider the Olympian who isolates those skills of arm strokes, kicking, breathing, and turns in the pool. Only when each skill is mastered to the very highest level of expertise will the performer make the Olympics. A virtuoso pianist similarly must master arpeggios, pedaling, rhythm, and all the corresponding skills of technique before becoming concert ready.

It’s been my experience that many salespeople escape the learning curve of virtuoso sales performance for a variety of reasons. Take the skill of prospecting and recognize that many veterans inherit accounts over the span of a career and never really master the art of cold calling. Consider also that the pool of selection in music, athletics, acting, and other performance arts eliminates 99.9% of would-be participants. There are millions of salespeople, and the selection is hardly competitive. All that being noted ...

It’s been my claim for decades that lots of salespeople succeed by accident. This is no criticism of them, but merely a call to action. A professional golfer must master every aspect of the game including the short game, putting, course management, the long game, and even hone mental discipline in the face of adversity. In the same way, truly elite salespeople, those who can build a book of business from scratch, master every aspect of the profession including prospecting for new customers from scratch; listening like a consultative leader; presenting prescriptively; managing the experience with internal customers; and so on.

Accidental success is a wonderful thing if it can earn you a career of bestowed high income. However, if you want to achieve dramatic success on purpose you must master, just like a pro golfer, all the skills in your bag of tricks.

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BY BILL LEE

THE METHODS AND APPROACHES leading to a sale on a new account are increasingly becoming a science. No matter what you may believe, *salespeople are not created equal*. Those that follow the proven disciplines are significantly more productive.

When a salesperson has mastered the art of selling new accounts, they will avoid losing sales as a result of factors they cannot control. Examples include the economy, bankruptcies, bad credit, interest rates, availability of capital, etc. Selling prospects, however, requires a different skill set.

My first job in sales was as a salesperson for GAF Corp. I was assigned to train in a territory that had set a record the previous year. The next year when I was given responsibility to manage that territory, the U.S. experienced a “cut off” of FHA and VA financing. This caused a decline in the sales volume of virtually every sales territory because our industry depended so heavily on FHA and VA programs.

My territory was an exception. I didn’t actually realize how much my accounts had increased by that year until my sales manager and I sat down and analyzed my territory. That year—when it seemed everything was falling apart—I had opened 14 new accounts. These new accounts brought me business at my competitor’s expense.

PART 1 OF 2

INCREASE MARKET SHARE BY INCREASING YOUR NEW ACCOUNTS



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

When I realized the value of these new accounts as a means to more rapidly increase my sales volume, I began to analyze what I had done and how I had done it. I also talked with other sales representatives who had experienced a similar degree of success in selling prospects.

If you can have success at bringing in fresh new business, you can protect yourself from the attrition of your accounts caused by death, bankruptcy, credit disasters, defection, retirement, etc.

I began to realize that at our level of inflation it might take even one of my larger customers maybe five to eight years to double sales, but I could pick up that volume of business in just one year if I could take that much business away from my competitors.

Rule #1

Identify and list all viable prospects. Go to your computer and list every potential account under the heading of building materials. You might also want to make a friend of a local contractor and ask him to check your list to make sure you haven’t overlooked any good prospects.

Rule #2

Before you make your first call, touch base with your company credit manager to make sure each of your prospects are creditworthy. Never make a sales call on a prospect until their credit appears to meet your company’s criteria.

Why is Rule #2 important? Because if an account has poor credit today, he may improve his credit rating in the years to come. If he should give you an order and you cannot ship it because of the prospect’s credit rating, he most likely will not regard you or your company very favorably when you go back in at a later date.

As a new salesperson, I was unfamiliar with this rule. On multiple occasions I would make sales calls on what appeared to be excellent prospects, but when I mentioned the name of my company the buyer would often say, “No, thanks.” And he would proceed to tell me that he would never forget that my company would not extend them credit when they opened their business. Be sure your credit manager is crystal clear with you as to precisely the credit information you are to submit on each prospect.

The First Call

As a rule of thumb, the first call you make on a prospect is the most important call you will make. In the next issue of *LBM Journal*, I will begin with how to get the most mileage out of the first call.

You can't stop time,
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BY THEA DUDLEY

Hey Thea,
I have a customer who is not paying their bill and we are ready to send them to collections. We do not have a signed credit application. Can we still charge them interest and the cost of collections?

— I can, can't I?

COLLECTIONS COSTS

Dear Can I?,

One of my favorite games to play during my workday: “Is my headache from dehydration, caffeine withdrawal, lack of proper nutrition, my ponytail, stress, lack of sleep, not wearing my glasses, a brain tumor, my favorite sales rep, or finding out that I have no credit application on a past due account?”

My headache usually ties back to something to do with the last two items. Everyone has an opinion of what we can do to an account after there is an issue and we have to take an action. Then everyone is full of Yoda-like wisdom. “Lien the job, sue them, turn them to collections, we can collect interest, finance charges, and the collection fees.” Well thank you Becky, why didn't I think of that?

Oh, that's right, O' Spewer of Knowledge, it depends on what we have in the customer file and contrary to what everyone else in the company believes to be the solve-all, “lien and sue” is not a flag we can always waive.

Typically, if the customer didn't agree to your terms and conditions, you just can't slap any old rando charges on the account. When you sue an account, you can ask for pre- and post-judgment interest and the judge may or may not grant it depending on the laws in your state.

If the customer didn't agree to pay collection costs or attorney fees, you are at the mercy of the laws in your state and the judge who is presiding in the event you take to the lawsuit level. If you sue and win, the judgment may contain the thumbs up for pre- and post-interest and possibly attorney or collection fees.

It all starts and ends with that all important document, the credit application. Skip this step on any account and those are always the ones that come back around to take a bite out of your profit.

Like anything in life, you can choose to roll the dice. Go ahead and include the charges. If they pay them, awesome. If they refuse, you can huff and puff but in the end without a judgment granting you those fees, they can tell you to go pound sand. Whichever they choose, you may get a call from them sharing their viewpoint. If they do, try to turn the conversation into a settlement discussion. Don't get so hung up on winning and getting every dime. Collection action isn't free, so do some back-of-the-envelope math and try to put this thing to bed.

However, all this debate may be a useless preponderance of what could be as the subject of our attention is past due to the point you are ready blow it up. Additional fees won't cause fear and accountability to suddenly make your wayward account find their checkbook.

Slapping interest and collection fees—along with the cost of whatever therapy you need as a result—on the derelict account when you are empty file and hella frustrated can be a cathartic credit manager move. If they are not going to pay, then let's just up the ante. I usually find myself sitting at my desk at this point pondering if I am going to start something or let it slide. At the end of the day, you have to pick your battles. Decide if this is the hill you want to die on.



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

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BY JOHN D. WAGNER

DEPENDING ON your corporate structure, most company owners—who are also employees of their own company—will take a salary and bonus. These two types of expenses should be logged as OPEX in your P&L.

Like any OPEX, the salary and bonus have a dollar-for-dollar impact on the Adjusted EBITDA. If you reduce a dollar of OPEX, you pick up a dollar of Adjusted EBITDA. For example, let's say that you, the owner/employee, take \$200,000 in salary, reported on your W2. If you give yourself a raise to \$250,000 in the next fiscal or calendar year, that \$50,000 will reduce the EBITDA for that time period by \$50,000.

From the point of view of a potential acquirer, you should be paying yourself “fair and customary” compensation, salary and bonus combined.

W2 SALARY & BONUS VS. DIVIDENDS

But what is “fair and customary” compensation? It's sensitive to your responsibilities, sales revenues, and location. To find yours, go to Perplexity.AI and ask for the “fair and customary” comp rates for your circumstances and location. Perplexity will send you to ZipRecruiter or similar sites, where you'll find the “swim lanes” for your all-in comp.

If you are seeking an acquirer, and you are either over or under the “fair and customary” rate for your position, it could result in either a negative or positive adjustment to EBITDA.

Let's say you are in pricing negotiations for the sale of your company, and the acquirer is using “dynamic pricing.” This means the acquirer has offered a multiple of Adjusted

EBITDA that will be applied to the trailing-12-month Adjusted EBITDA from the financial statements closest to the closing date. Let's say that multiple is 6X.

During due diligence, the acquirer will examine the total comp of the owner/employee. If it is too *low* compared to “fair and customary,” the acquirer can ask for it to be raised in the Adjusted EBITDA model. For instance, if you are paying yourself \$100,000 and you should be paying yourself \$250,000, that \$150,000 difference will be *deducted* from the Adjusted EBITDA. Here's why: That additional \$150,000 is what the acquirer will have to pay for your role under new ownership, or what they'd pay to hire your replacement. That \$150,000 Adjusted EBITDA *reduction* times 6 means a lowering of the purchase price by \$900,000! Hate to break it

to you, but the acquirer has you *dead to rights* that the Adjusted EBITDA on which the acquisition value is based had not been reflecting fair compensation for your role. You, the seller, will get dinged as a result.

If the owner/employee comp, is too *high*, the reduction in that compensation will *raise* Adjusted EBITDA; however, don't always count on the acquirer to point that out. In fact, it's your investment banker's job to do that, well in advance of reviewing LOIs. Adjusting owner/employee's comp that is too high is a widely accepted adjustment to EBITDA. Say you *add* \$50,000 to Adjusted EBITDA, if you were overpaying yourself that amount in a “fair and customary” review. This will juice the Adjusted EBITDA, and your purchase price would increase by 6X \$50,000 for that adjustment alone. *Ka-ching*.

For owners of privately held companies, there are several corporate structures that allow you to take dividends. The corporate structure can influence how dividends are distributed and taxed. The IRS requires that you take “reasonable compensation” as a company employee, and the salary should be in line with what similar companies pay for comparable services. Qualified dividends may be taxed as preferential capital gains rates, at 0%, 15%, or 20%, depending on your tax bracket. Unlike the “W2 comp” (salary and bonus) that you report as OPEX on your P&L, dividends come off your balance sheet (usually distributed after year-end books are closed). Dividends are *not* OPEX on the P&L.

Worried that you are leaving cash on your balance sheet when selling your company? Don't. Almost all deals are sold on a “cash-free/debt-free” basis. So, the cash and cash equivalents on the balance sheet at the time of sale are the seller-owners' to “sweep” before the closing, as long as the net working capital peg is satisfied.



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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CUSTOMER SNAPSHOT

Facing stagnant sales and an outdated layout, **Morrison's Hardware & Building Supply** partnered with Orgill to do a customized reset, enhance their assortments and refresh the store's branding. The result? More customers, better selection, and a fresh new look driving growth.



Get an
inside look.

MORRISON'S
HARDWARE & BUILDING SUPPLY

Mandy Arnold
General Manager of Morrison's
Hardware & Building Supply
Nashville, Georgia

BY RUSS KATHREIN

MY RECENT COLUMN on Underrated Career Skills generated a lot of responses. People wrote back to me to say how much they agreed and offered additional ideas, and others suggested skills from industry experts that they thought would be helpful.

Listening and being genuine in your response.

— Jayne Moyer

Whether communicating with a co-worker, customer or pretty much anyone, someone will often share the good or bad they may be experiencing. Listen and show empathy or joy (depending on the situation). First and foremost, show that you genuinely care about them as a person. Everyone is busy, but people will recognize that you are genuine with them if you take the time to leave them feeling like you care.

Being the last to respond in a meeting, rather than the first.

— Jim Cavanaugh

“Pioneers draw all the arrows,” is the analogy for being the first to offer an opinion and then having people quickly make counterpoints or even argue with you. Taking one’s time and seeing what everyone else has to say can weed out redundant opinions and also give you a better idea of the temperature of the group regarding the specific topic. Additionally, if you practice being the last to reply on a regular basis, people will start to pay more attention to what you say because 1. you don’t bring up the obvious points that everyone voices first,

and 2. when you do finally speak, you bring up opinions or observations that no one else has thought of because you rarely say anything that has already been said.

Introducing yourself with your vision rather than your title. — Simon Sinek

We often introduce ourselves with our name and our title. We then might add what we do. What if, instead, you talked about why you do what you do? Hi, I’m Russ Kathrein. I have been in our industry for most of my life, and I am passionate about helping new and future leaders figure out how to be successful. Let people hear what drives you. Make yourself stand out from the crowd.

Seeking clarity rather than agreement. — Dennis Prager
Seek to understand first before making yourself understood. — Steven Covey

Too often in our social media-driven world, we want to seek out people who agree with us and argue with, or even ostracize, those with whom we disagree. Having the ability to ask questions and empathize with those who have different opinions or beliefs is a superpower that can neutralize a toxic environment. Asking questions and showing a desire to understand where the other side is coming from often opens them up to do the same with you. Sometimes, as the other side tries to answer your questions, the fallacy or absurdity of their proposition gets clarified not just to you but also to them. Thus, you may end up swaying their opinions without having to express your own.

Be a good listener. Encourage others to talk about themselves. — Dale Carnegie

The best way to get a person to open up is to ask them questions about themselves. Most people would rather talk about themselves than they would listen to you. So leverage that. This is especially useful when you are in a situation where you really would prefer not to talk about yourself. I once had the privilege of meeting and having dinner with Ned Johnson, who owned and ran Fidelity Investments. There were three of us at the table with him, and before we could ask him a single question, he started peppering us about our lives, our families, what we did, what we thought, etc. It went on all night. It wasn’t until later that I realized that he probably would meet hundreds of people every year, and they probably would ask him the same questions over and over, which after a while would probably be pretty boring. Instead, he took control and made the entire dinner more engaging.

I’m sure there are more career skills out there that you might think are underrated. As before, feel free to share them with me at russ.kathrein@icloud.com.

MORE UNDERRATED CAREER SKILLS



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

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Humboldt



UNDER THE DECK

For homeowners looking to elevate the look of their outdoor living space, the details matter. A beautifully finished deck isn't just about the decking or railing—it's about the entire structure, including what is underneath. Often overlooked, the support posts of a second-story deck can detract from the overall aesthetic, leaving an unfinished or unsightly appearance. That is where Westbury® Column Wraps from Digger Specialties, Inc. (DSI) come in, offering a refined and durable solution to complete the look of any elevated deck.

Finishing Touches with Westbury® Column Wraps



Transforming Under the Deck Spaces

A second-story deck creates a functional outdoor area above, but it also leaves behind a space below that, if not finished properly, can look neglected. Traditional wooden posts may warp, crack, or simply not align with the polished look of the rest of the deck. Westbury® Column Wraps provide a sleek and sophisticated way to upgrade these posts with durable aluminum, ensuring they match or complement the railing on the deck. Available in a variety of styles and colors, column wraps offer versatility to suit any design aesthetic.

looking for a seamless match for their Westbury® Aluminum Railing or a bold accent color to complement their deck, the wide range of Westbury® finishes ensures they can achieve the perfect look.

Beyond aesthetics, column wraps can help define under-the-deck spaces for additional functionality. Whether used to support a covered patio, an outdoor kitchen, or a lounge area, Westbury® Column Wraps add an architectural element that enhances the usability and appeal of the space below.

Why Choose Westbury® Column Wraps?

Durability: Aluminum construction ensures longevity and resistance to weathering.

Low Maintenance: No sanding, staining, or repainting required.

Quick Installation: Designed for easy wrapping around existing or new posts.

Versatile Design: Complements Westbury® Aluminum Railing for a cohesive look.

Premium Aesthetic: Creates a sophisticated, finished appearance for under-deck spaces.

The Final Touch for a Complete Deck Design

For deck builders, contractors, and lumberyards, offering Westbury® Column Wraps means providing homeowners with a complete deck solution—one that ensures every aspect of their outdoor space is as beautiful and functional as possible.

By transforming unsightly posts into sophisticated architectural elements, these wraps help create outdoor living spaces that are polished from top to bottom.

Enhance your next project with Westbury® Column Wraps and give homeowners the refined, finished look they desire.



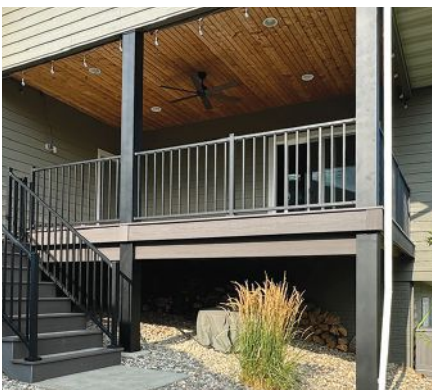
A Seamless, Low-Maintenance Solution

Westbury® Aluminum Column Wraps are engineered for durability and ease of care. The aluminum construction is powder-coated for superior weather resistance, ensuring the wrap maintains its finish for years to come.

Additionally, these column wraps are designed for quick and easy installation, making them a perfect choice for deck builders and contractors who need a time-saving yet high-quality solution. The wrap-around design allows for installation around both existing and new posts, providing flexibility in both new construction and deck renovations.

Elevating Outdoor Aesthetics

By incorporating Westbury® Column Wraps, deck builders can offer their clients a premium aesthetic that enhances the entire backyard space. These wraps not only hide structural posts but also create a finished, polished look that elevates the overall design. Whether homeowners are



Westbury® Aluminum Railing & Column Wraps—
Transforming Outdoor Living Spaces One Detail at a Time.



Transform Outdoor Living Spaces with **COLUMN WRAPS**



BEFORE



AFTER



Transforming the Outdoor Living Experience®



Transform Your Clients' Outdoor Spaces Today!
Scan the QR code to learn how Westbury Aluminum Column Wraps can elevate your installations and deliver long-term value to your clients.

FIVE QUESTIONS RYAN STOVER

SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER | TREX COMPANY

How does Trex see the growth of backyard living, and how is it positioning itself in the market?

“Backyard living” is an ever-evolving concept. This idea, for many, was sent into hyperdrive during the pandemic and has been gaining steam each year. What does this mean for Trex? The answer is simple: opportunity. As a leading global outdoor living brand, Trex has worked to position ourselves as a one-stop shop. Complementing our industry-leading composite decking selection, we’ve expanded our railing portfolio to offer products in every category, at every price point. We have also expanded our fastener offerings to round out each and every decking project need. Once a decking project is finished, Trex offers all the options to make a space “yours.”

Many LBM experts are concerned about potentially rising interest rates. With that in mind, what do you see as the greatest potential opportunity in the decking segment for LBM dealers?

Record low interest rates are a thing of the past, and as history has proven, not sustainable. Over the last 12 months, consumers have started to experience some stabilization in the markets and with associated rates. These results do tend to change buyer behaviors. One common theme is people remaining in their homes for longer periods of time. As homeowners make the decision to “stay put” they also begin looking for ways to improve their homes. For the decking segment, this drives R&R (repair and remodel) activity (versus new construction) and continues to produce decking projects and material needs for the channel. The greatest opportunity for the channel is to capitalize on decking projects that revamp and revitalize homes. Offering new decking and railing products with industry leading aesthetics and benefits will help entice homeowners and close opportunities.

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

Higher interest rates and project costs can also slow building project growth. The challenge here is keeping a strong project pipeline in an aggressive and competitive market. The key to success is differentiation in your offering. Trex is actively working in each step of the market to help our associated teams stand out from the competition. We have developed programs for contractors and channel partners to go “all-in” with Trex, offering extended warranties and benefits with these actions.

FIVE QUESTIONS GIVES LBM BUSINESSES THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE THEIR EXPERTISE BY ANSWERING RELEVANT ISSUES IN THE LBM INDUSTRY.

Sustainability is no longer a “nice to have” but rather a growing requirement. How is the decking industry meeting the needs of a sustainable structure?

Sustainability is engrained in the Trex culture. Our decking products are made of 95% recycled materials, keeping post-consumer plastics and wood scrap out of landfills and waterways. Similarly, Trex composite railing touts a 40% recycled content claim, further reinforcing our sustainability efforts. We are committed to checking all boxes related to environmental policy and sustainability.

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

Every Trex product development over the last three+ years has been done with this in mind. How do we educate the distribution and dealer network, eliminate unwarranted product complexity, and get contractors on and off the job in record time? Trex has gone to great lengths to address these concerns, including:

- Reviewing and revitalizing decking install practices to make these as simple as possible.
- Launching a “for Trex by Trex” line of fasteners engineered to perform better than any competitors in the market.
- Re-imagining cable railing and frameless glass with our minimalistic SKU-efficient approach and improved tensioning system available in our Trex Signature X-Series Railing.
- Offering panelized railing systems and posts with pre-mounted brackets, proven to save over 50% in installation time.
- Developing and launching a revamped Trex Select Classic and Select T-Rail railing option with a simply configured All-In-One Post Sleeve Kit, meeting vinyl railing price points with the installation ease and product benefits of our structural composite.

These, along with many more products to come, will continue to focus on the needs of customers in each step of our network. ■

Ryan Stover is a senior product manager at Trex and has been with the company for nearly seven years. Stover has spent much of his professional career working in the manufacturing industry, initially in finance and excelling to finance manager of reporting and analytics. His cross-functional background and expertise has played a pivotal role in shaping innovative product strategies and enhancing overall business performance.



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It's the right thing to do.



DOORS | WINDOWS
SIDING | STONE | ROOFING

5 Reasons to
Partner with
ProVia for
Vinyl Siding



THE VALUE OF WORKING WITH A SINGLE MANUFACTURER FOR DECKING, RAILING, FRAMING, & FASTENERS

A deck is one of the biggest investments a homeowner will make in their home. Creating a space that combines beauty, functionality, and performance relies on a great builder as well as an ideal set of materials. TimberTech® offers a broad range of outdoor living options that deliver on style and durability, backed by the support and resources to make sourcing and installation easier up and down the channel.

In fact, aligning with TimberTech® as the single manufacturer for all decking, railing, fasteners, accessories, and aluminum framing offers a number of benefits to both your contractor and homeowner customers in addition to knowing they offer proven performance across the deck.

Contractors working with products manufactured by TimberTech® across all categories can enjoy labor warranties, rebate benefits, and customer support and training, along with the benefits of working with a single manufacturer on warranties.

For homeowners, choosing TimberTech® for their outdoor oasis brings a broad range of product styles, colors, and price points while delivering reassurance on performance and fire resistance. Plus, working with a TimberTech®-certified contractor brings peace of mind that the job will be done right the first time.

What else sets TimberTech® apart?



BEAUTY OF WOOD WITHOUT THE UPKEEP

The true selling power of TimberTech® decking is that it combines beauty, innovation, and practicality.

TimberTech® offers both composite and PVC decking, which means more options to meet the unique needs of homeowners. These two high-performance alternative decking products come in a wide and growing collection of styles to deliver on the looks your customers want most—rich grains, authentic textures, and designer colors. And while the beauty of TimberTech® will sway a customer, it's the benefits that seal the deal.

TimberTech® Advanced PVC Decking and TimberTech® Composite Decking are designed to look as beautiful as real wood, but that's where the comparison ends. Engineered to outperform and outlast traditional wood decking, TimberTech® boards maintain their just-installed beauty day after day, year after year. Both products offer the added benefits of unparalleled durability with industry-leading warranties, no-hassle maintenance, insect resistance, sustainability—and long-term cost savings.

TimberTech® Advanced PVC Decking

With a core of approximately 60% recycled material and a super-durable protective cap, TimberTech® Advanced PVC Decking is the manufacturer's most durable and best performing product. Advanced PVC decking is backed by an industry-leading lifetime limited product warranty and a 50-year fade and stain limited warranty.

TimberTech® Composite Decking

Innovative TimberTech® Composite Decking offers realistic wood looks that go way beyond traditional composite decking. The boards are engineered using a blend of up to 85% recycled plastic and wood fibers along with a proprietary polymer cap that helps protect against fading and moisture. Each collection carries a 25- or 30-year fade and stain limited warranty along with a generous limited warranty.

FIRE RESISTANCE

Two of the TimberTech® Collection proprietary Advanced PVC decking collections—Vintage and Landmark—combine authentic wood looks with unparalleled performance while also offering an Ignition Resistant designation, a Class A Flame Spread Rating, and WUI Compliance.

TimberTech® ensures safety and compliance with its Class B Flame Spread Rating and WUI compliance in the Harvest and Porch collections. Additionally, the Reserve collection (limited to fire-resistant SKUs) and the Premier collection (square-shouldered boards only) also meet WUI standards, providing extra peace of mind.

SUSTAINABILITY

Though sustainability isn't usually the top concern for homeowners, it provides an added value they'll be proud to brag about.

The TimberTech® Advanced PVC and Composite lines are made from up to 60% and 85% recycled material, respectively, and the company's commitment to sustainable practices doesn't end there. In fact, the company has diverted 500 million pounds of waste from the landfill since 2001. In addition, 96% of water is recycled in their closed-loop production facilities.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOU AT EVERY STEP

TimberTech® support begins the minute you introduce their products to your customers. Start online with the decking overview to easily highlight the key benefits and differences of the Advanced PVC and Composite options, then leverage the available deck plans and inspiration gallery to guide the design process.

REACH OUT TODAY

Weyerhaeuser Distribution is committed to delivering the reliable, consistent outdoor living products you—and your customers—can rely on. Connect with your Weyerhaeuser representative today about the decking, railing, fastening, and framing solutions available in your market.

TimberTech®
BY AZEK®

Photos compliments of AZEK company.

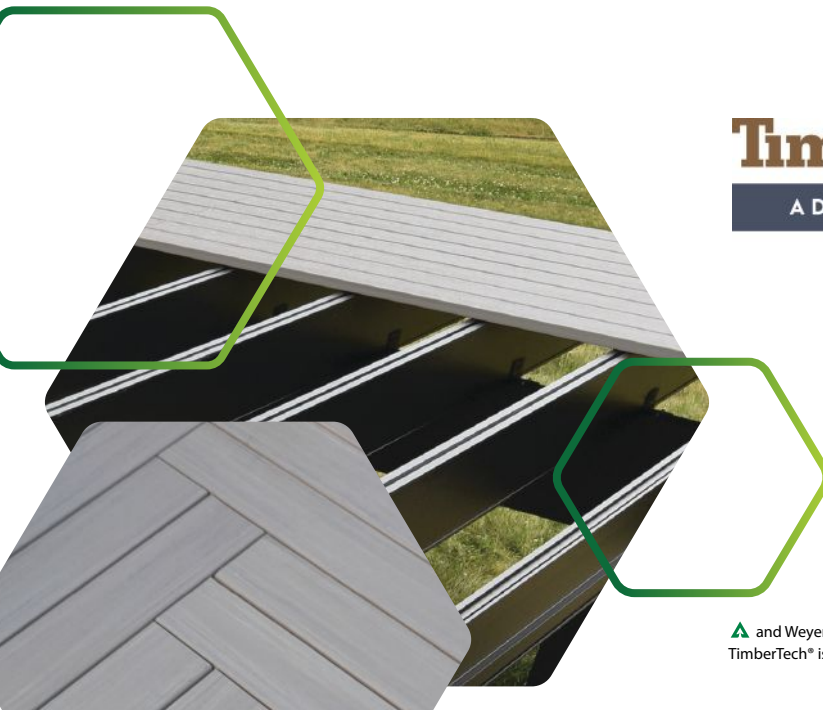




DETAILS ON DECK

Grow your outdoor living business through Weyerhaeuser's extensive TimberTech® Advanced PVC by AZEK portfolio.* With endless style options, long-lasting durability, low-maintenance upkeep, and the industry's leading warranties, you and your customers can trust in TimberTech outdoor living products.

*Product portfolios may vary by geographic market.



TimberTech®
ADVANCED PVC
BY AZEK®

TimberTech®
COMPOSITE
BY AZEK®

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REAL ISSUES. REAL ANSWERS.

This month's Real Issues. Real Answers. question deals with how to keep inside sales reps motivated by adding incentives for better performance.

From the fresh-faced newbie to the veteran rep, everyone can appreciate an incentive, especially in the current competitive job market.

MOTIVATING INSIDE SALES REPS

BY LBM JOURNAL READERS

More than 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:**



What insights would you share with the LBM dealer who posed this scenario: We are trying to figure out some sort of incentive pay for our inside sales associates to motivate them to grow their sales. Hourly pay alone is not cutting it. We're looking for something that will work for a pro-yard that has outside sales reps on commission already. Should we have assigned customers, overlap with outside sales programs, offer increased margins on special orders, or something else?

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:

"Metrics to use: margins, sales, gm percentage, stock returns, nonstock special order millwork and LBM (accuracy) calls received, product knowledge."

"This is difficult to manage, as the best window salesperson will always win the best window sales. Perhaps a contest of sales improvement over average sales per person, on targeted product lines. Whoever gets top sales percentage improvement, or GMD improvement for the month on targeted lines ... millwork, grills, decks, etc."

"Create incentives for the number of tickets written, combined with average transaction size. What about a sales incentive based off gross margin percentage?"

"Incentivized payouts from metric based margin targets and nonstock returns."

"We switch accounts from OSRs to ISRs if the account only produces a certain amount of sales. OSR should only be focused on home builders."

"A form of profit sharing could incentivize your sales staff as well as other positions. I have seen this done both on a monthly basis and on a quarterly basis."

"Pay them a commission based on percentage of booked gross profit and/or make them a coordinator for an outside sales rep and pay them a percentage of gross profit on those assigned sales. Offer incentive pay to increase their average gross profit margins also."

"Our inside sales people get an hourly rate and then we also pay around 1% to 1.5% of the gross profit dollars on all of the tickets they write, even if it is for an account that we are paying a commission to an outside salesperson."

"Inside sales associates work with phone calls and walk in sales. Need to increase ads and reach out to new customers."

"Check with Ganahl Lumber, they have a nice inside incentive program. The key on building this out is many times customers cross from outside to inside and you as a dealer cannot afford to pay twice for the same sale. We pay outside a commission on total sales if that account under his/her name came into the city desk and bought something they would get commission on that inside transaction so paying the counter staff would raise your overall commission payout."

"We have a commission based on a percentage of the gross profit dollars they individually write for the month. Pretty standard, some help coordinate orders for outside sales, so those gross profit dollars have a double dip against them since the salesperson still receives a commission."

"We pay a commission on gross margin to all salespeople, both hourly and salary. They like it and it moves relative to the business for the year."

"In addition to hourly pay, we offer a graduated bonus schedule that is paid annually."

"Assign specific customers to inside sales associates to foster accountability and relationship building. This can create a sense of ownership and encourage proactive sales efforts. Implement a system where inside sales can earn bonuses for supporting outside sales reps. This could encourage teamwork and collaboration, ensuring both teams work towards common goals. Increased margins on special orders: Offer a higher commission rate or bonus for special orders. This not only motivates associates to push for larger sales but also enhances the overall profitability of unique deals."

"Offer spiffs on certain products you are looking to move—but understand that may result in more time spent with a customer trying to push an additional sale. If a sales associate can get a customer to sign up for an account (cash, credit, etc.) attach their name to it. Helps speed up checkout and quoting on your end and can throw a few bucks to the employee at the end of the quarter or year. Plus, a customer is more likely to return where they are recognized and feel welcomed."

"Our inside sales reps have a base and then get a percent of the gross profit for every ticket they write."

"We compensate our inside salespeople with profit sharing bonuses at the end of every fiscal year. While the total amount of bonuses is derived from the net profit of the fiscal year, the amount each employee receives is based on performance, not necessarily longevity." ►

“A gas or grocery gift card or bonus to whoever has top sales for a week or month depending on how many staff members you have.”

“Probably the most critical measure I see is the effective handling of leads—prompt, relevant, and genuinely focused on the client’s business not on ‘making the sale’—but the quality of leads can be a real challenge. So making sure the inside team is provided great leads is super critical.”

“Yearly commission. Percent of sales.”

“Our company pays a small commission on sales to accounts that are assigned to an outside rep and a larger commission on sales to customers that are not assigned to an outside rep.”

“Profit sharing has worked for our stores.”

“We pay our inside sales team well and provide clear expectations. A good culture, a close-knit team, and a focus on customer service have been crucial.”

“Set a goal for number of tickets or sales volume. Set the goal at \$450,000 per month—pay on gross profit dollars.”

“We assign certain accounts to inside sales reps and pay them a commission.”

“I would like to give a consolidated bonus every month based on company profit split between all inside and delivery personal but haven’t figured it out.”

“We have hourly plus commission for our inside sales. They get a minor commission for all sales of accounts that are already assigned to an outside salesperson, and a larger more standard commission on all sales for non-account holders or accounts that don’t have an outside salesperson on them.”

“Our program encourages that they help their outside sales rep grow their sales. The outside sales rep sets the percentage and it is taken out of their commission.”

“We offer to inside counter sales a percentage of gross profit on orders entered, but that created a problem with people helping customers in front of them then trying to intercept inbound calls in order to get credit for those as well, we are still wrestling with it.”

“We pay our inside sales hourly and 1-3% of the gross profit as well.”

“We do several things. Spiff on growth over previous year on units with windows, squares on siding, etc. Also, if any manufacturer offers spiffs, we direct that to the inside teams. Railing and doors, sometimes windows or siding throughout the year. This helps with focus on certain products. Margin growth is key as well. We recognize the top facility and salesperson every month for highest margins. If you perform and ask for it, you can get it. It is a balancing act because the inside teams always feel the outside teams are treated better. However, the outside team can’t survive without the inside team.”

“We pay a monthly incentive based on gross profit shipped. Being based on profit, the ISR helps the operation to push outside sales to get more margin.”

“Various incentives based on orders entered.”

“Don’t get too wrapped up in creating something complicated. A flat-rate or graduated-rate commission add-on to their regular pay works, and it can be applied easily across many employees, and can be tracked easily as a long-term incentive. I would track the margin itself on all of their sales that they complete rather than specific customers as much of the inside sales rep’s customer base most likely falls under an ‘assigned customer’ type of recordkeeping system.”

“We have a modest hourly rate plus a commission. Some, not all inside sales go for the commission. They also have their own assigned accounts.”

“Part of yearly bonus.”

“We use a percentage of GM, which increases with volume and/or profitability.”

“Our outside team is focused on project management. We encourage them to be involved in the builds along with our customers—job site visits, troubleshooting, take-offs and a hands-on approach. Our inside team is the support mechanism. They process the orders, they place special orders, they take questions, and communicate delivery commitments—all in addition to answering the phones, taking care of walk-in customer, stocking shelves, doing cycle counts and entering tickets into the dispatch portal and processing payments and, oh, by the way ... learning new products.

As part of the ‘team,’ we compensate our inside team on every transaction they touch. In my 30 years of experience, I’ve seen the push to get inside folks to ‘drive’ sales when in actuality, they don’t. And in many cases the efforts to put these programs in place fall into the ‘flavor of the month’ category and can simply be a waste of everyone’s efforts.

Instead, compensate them for their existing contributions and support. In this context, they are now incentivized to say, ‘What else can I get you? Do you need this? Have you tried that?’ This is their sales lane. If you try to have them drive business by hitting the phones, trying to activate old customers or assign them accounts, well guess what? Spring comes, and we get busy and the phones start ringing and the foot traffic increases. Guess who now doesn’t have time to drive sales?

Focus on the number of line items per ticket and add-on sales. This is entirely in their wheelhouse and provides them an opportunity to increase our customer satisfaction levels because now they have a stake in the game and their interactions with our builders becomes more consultative and relationship-oriented, and the customers keep coming back.

It’s kind of like this. The outside team plants the field, and we pay them handsomely, so why would we ask the inside team to weed and hoe the field for free? If you do, well, the field will still have some weeds. If they are rewarded for this effort, the field will be close to weed free and the yield will be increased.”



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Responses from wholesale distributors, manufacturers and service providers:

“MUST relate to profit NET as well as value-added services, on-going and credit terms suggest quarterly incentive to include above parameters!”

“I suggested a smaller commission for your inside sales in addition to their hourly wage. Definitely assign customers to the inside sales person. Outside sales person teamed with the same inside sales person to try to create a team approach to sales.”

“As a distributor selling to lumberyard retail customers, we do truck calls. The day before our truck will deliver we call and ask if they need anything. If they get an order we pay some commission on gross profit.”

“We have tried several different commissions plans in addition to the hourly rate for inside sales with very limited success. We are pivoting our focus to the correct person not a general compensation plan as no sales manager can motivate an employee, we can only coach, train and ultimately reward motivated individuals. Revamp how you hire and separate inside sales from customer service then put the inside sales individuals that want to grow on a career path. If every dealer/wholesaler supports growing the correct individuals the entire industry will win in the long run.”

“Yes I am in agreement with commissions for the inside staff.”

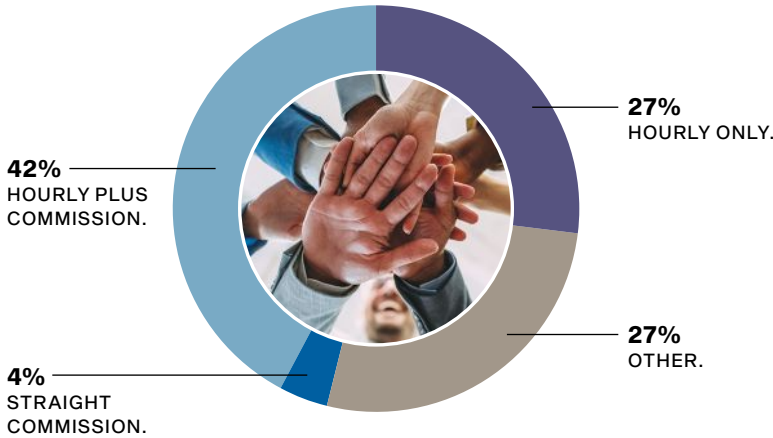
“I give yearly guaranteed small increases in pay every year. Never let a quality person think they are stuck in a pay rut. Give them a chance at outside sales if they earn it with their own merits.”

“Avoid channel conflict with outside sales. It’s important to ensure the incentive program for inside sales doesn’t create friction. Incentivize the inside reps to prospect smaller accounts, walk-in customers, or specific product categories that outside reps don’t prioritize.”

“Inside sales is an order taker. Salary plus defined bonus inclusive of sales goals/margin goals or other key indicators.”



How do you compensate your inside sales reps?



“Hourly plus bonus based off of gross profit.”

“Salary base, plus commission.”

“Our inside sales reps are compensated weekly as hourly employees, but also are given profit sharing bonuses at the end of every fiscal year.”

“Salary.”

Comments from dealers:

“Hourly plus year-end bonus.”

“Hourly but we encourage our assigned outside sales rep to compensate them with a commission for helping them grow their sales.”

“Salary plus commission.”

“Hourly plus an ‘attaboy’ approximately every 3 months of \$100. Just more or less a thank you.”

“Salary plus profit sharing.”

Comments from vendors:

“Salary and benefits.”

“Salary.”

“Salary plus bonus.” ■

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 **MIDWEST**[®]

One of the most anticipated events among deck builders, dealers and manufacturers is the North American Deck and Railing Association's (NADRA) recognition of outstanding deck, porch and outdoor projects. This year, NADRA celebrated the winners of the National+ Deck Competition on January 3 in Clearwater Beach, FL. Deck building pros from across North America (and beyond) entered this 15th annual competition. The projects were judged by a panel of experts (including LBM Journal Senior Editor Mike Berger) based on use of space, functionality, creativity, use of materials, and overall visual appeal. Of the many notable projects, pictured here are an assortment of first place winners. See the complete gallery of winners at [NADRA.org](https://www.nadra.org).

AWARD WINNING DECKS

CATEGORIES

Alternative Decks: \$71k-\$150k

Pool Deck

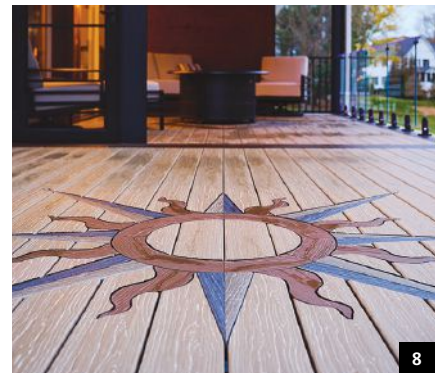
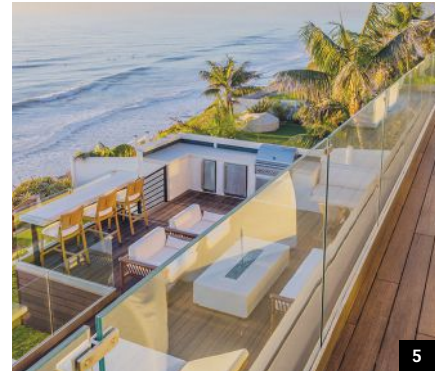
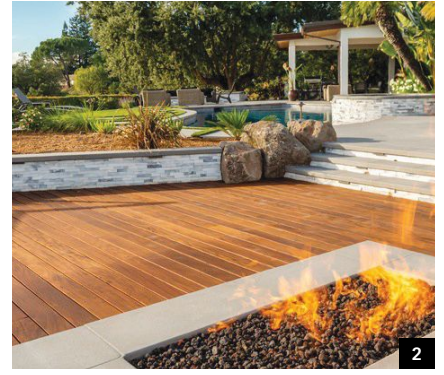
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Austin Deck Company

PARTNERS

Deckorators,
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- 1** **CATEGORIES**
Unique Feature
Illumination
COMPANY
Northern Outdoor Living
PARTNERS
in-lite, Millboard Inc.
- 2** **CATEGORY**
Wood Decks: \$26k-\$50k
COMPANY
SG Construction
- 3** **CATEGORY**
Open Porch
COMPANY
ICOR Building & Remodeling

- 4** **CATEGORY**
Alternative Decks \$36k-\$70k
COMPANY
Ravin Builders
PARTNERS
CAMO Fasteners, Eva-Last,
Fortress Building Products, in-lite,
Owens Corning Lumber
- 5** **CATEGORY**
Railing on a Deck
COMPANY
Fraser Decks and Patio Covers
PARTNERS
FastenMaster,
MOSO North America Inc.

- 6** **CATEGORY**
Wood Decks Over \$50k
COMPANY
Deck Remodelers
PARTNER
in-lite

- 7** **CATEGORY**
Limitless Creation
COMPANY
Custom Vinyl Works
PARTNER
Keylink
- 8** **CATEGORY**
Inlay on a Deck
COMPANY
Hen-House Decks
PARTNER
MoistureShield



A photograph of a wooden deck with a wicker chair and potted plants. The deck is made of dark wood planks. In the foreground, a wicker chair is positioned on the left, with a large potted plant on top of it. To the right, another potted plant is visible. In the background, a wooden chair is visible on the deck. The scene is set outdoors, with a house wall on the left and trees in the background.

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DECKS



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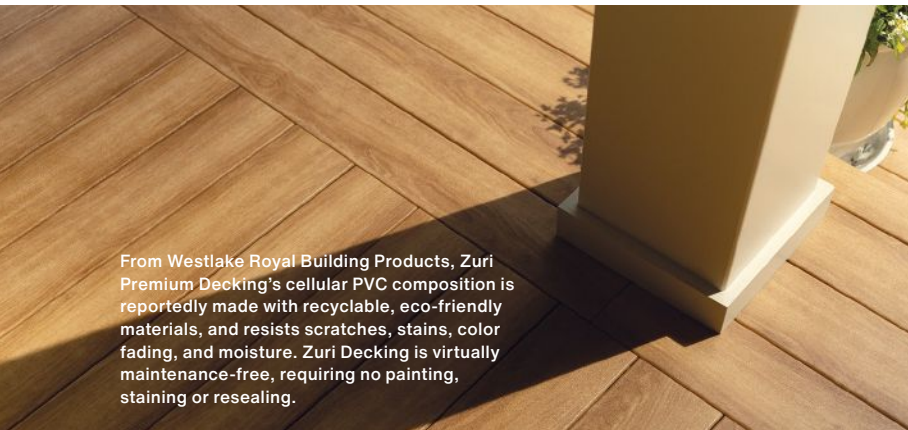
THE 2025 PRODUCTS & TRENDS
DECK ISSUE

When it comes to growth, outdoor living remains the hot spot for LBM dealers

BY MIKE BERGER

The date was May 5, 1961, and Alan Shepard became the first American in space. Piloting the Mercury spacecraft Freedom 7, he flew a 300-mile, 15-minute suborbital flight. Also poised to launch was the popularity of the backyard deck. Coinciding with the space race, people began to desire more outdoor living space in their backyards, and not just to watch the stars; essentially, the deck became a replacement for the porch for many homeowners.

Unlike Freedom 7, the popularity of decks would not soon come down. If anything, the desire to create personalized outdoor spaces has done nothing but grow. Fast forward to 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, people flocked in droves to the concept of outdoor living. With travel limited and homeowners confined to their houses, more and more invested in their outdoor spaces in record numbers. And while that level of spending has somewhat cooled, investment in outdoor spaces remains robust. According to Grand View Research, the U.S. outdoor living structures market size was estimated at \$892.9 million in 2024 and is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.3% from 2025 to 2030. ▶



From Westlake Royal Building Products, Zuri Premium Decking's cellular PVC composition is reportedly made with recyclable, eco-friendly materials, and resists scratches, stains, color fading, and moisture. Zuri Decking is virtually maintenance-free, requiring no painting, staining or resealing.

"A backyard isn't just a yard anymore," says Michelle Hendricks, category marketing manager for Deckorators. "Outdoors spaces are increasingly being seen as a way to upgrade a homeowner's total living experience, increasing demand for high-quality, long-lasting and attractive decking materials. Up and down the market, homeowners are looking at the exterior of their home as an opportunity to maximize and give variety to their living space, while also adding tremendous value to their property."

Chase Moritz, director of marketing for Envision Outdoor Living Products, also sees positive indications for the deck market. "We continue to see steady demand for outdoor living spaces and expect that trend to continue," he says. "Homeowners have gotten very savvy about how to maximize their deck areas to fully suit their needs. This includes everything from visually designating different areas of the space for specific purposes—such as sitting areas, dining areas, and relaxation zones—similar to the inside of the home. Installers are using different color composite decking to picture-frame or otherwise differentiate these sections; furniture, fire features, planters, and other elements also are serving this purpose. Homeowners also aren't afraid to make their outdoor spaces cozy and reminiscent of interior rooms, with nicer (yet still weather-resistant) furniture, storage, lighting, heating, shading, and more, which also expands the amount of time they can spend outside."



A shortcoming of wood alternative decking is that these synthetic materials tend to get hotter on extreme days versus traditional wood. Trex has responded to that dissatisfier with the introduction of SunComfortable heat mitigating technology. Launched initially in its premium Transcend Lineage line, Trex vows to make this feature available at all price points over time.

With homeownership and home sales predicted to rise in 2025, Westlake Royal Building Products also anticipates growth in the decking segment, says Steve Booz, vice president of marketing. "As homeowners continue to prioritize outdoor living spaces, decks have become a cornerstone of new builds and renovations, valued for their functionality, design appeal, and ability to enhance property value with a strong return on investment. With the ability to extend livable space, decks are seen as a valuable investment that can improve the quality of life—providing a versatile setting for relaxation, entertainment and socialization—and increase the overall appeal of a home."

This anticipated growth may not be equally spread across the entire decking segment, however, experts caution. "Wood alternative demand is forecast to grow 6.2% annually through 2025, compared to wood, which is projected to see flat growth after an elevated year in 2022, and other decking, which is expected to see a double-digit decline by volume," explains Chris Brown, executive vice president of Culpeper Wood Preservers. "Wood share by volume is expected to decrease slightly through 2025, losing to wood alternatives as the period of inventory destocking has passed and a preference for durable, low-maintenance products continues to drive homeowner product decision-making. Demand in the Southwest, Southeast, and West is projected to grow faster than in the Midwest and Northeast. Southwest will continue to be decking's fastest-growing region, rising more than 2% by volume through 2025."

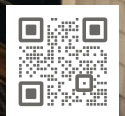
Still, there's an air of caution. With the looming effects of tariffs and uncertainties about the state of the economy, some decking experts are recommending caution. Says Jessica Hewitt, director of marketing for Humboldt Sawmill Company, "We believe 2025 is hard to predict for any big-ticket item, like a new or remodeled deck. There are many unknowns with the new administration in Washington D.C., inflation remains sticky, and home prices remain high, impacting affordability for younger buyers and those with growing families. Some of these concerns may be offset by stock market gains or inheritances that are part of the so-called 'Great Wealth Transfer', but in general, it is hard to imagine decking sales reaching the same heights as the years between 2020 and 2022. We are, however, hopeful that decking sales will surpass 2024 levels." ▶

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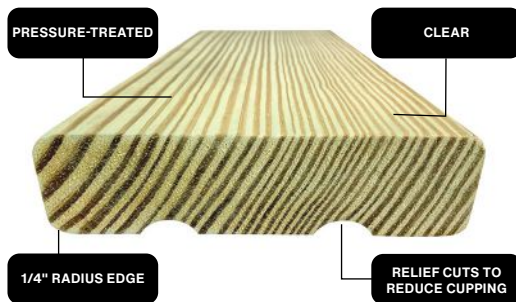
SHEETS

MILLWORK

Pioneer decking from Eva-Last is a reinforced bamboo PVC composite that the manufacturer says elevates the look of outdoor spaces without jeopardizing the health of forests. Pioneer's composition combines the strength of sustainable bamboo with low-maintenance foamed-PVC. This deck which features a custom inlay was built by Ravin Builders.



To make Culpeper Prodigy, Culpeper Wood Preservers starts by using Culpeper Clear and adds relief cuts that run the entire length of the underside of the board. According to the manufacturer, this unique profile helps reduce cupping, warping, and splitting.



Matt Bruce, vice president of sales for building products distribution for MoistureShield, also expresses some concerns when it comes to the coming year and supply chain issues. “The sector has been heavily impacted by the fluctuating prices of materials such as lumber, composite materials, aluminum, and other metals used in railings,” he says. “Ongoing supply chain disruptions and economic uncertainty have made it very difficult to maintain consistent pricing and profit margins. Manufacturers and dealers must carefully monitor and maintain their inventory levels to the best of their ability and be sure to communicate with customers as soon as possible should an issue arise.”

Advancing aesthetics and personalization

So amid this potential for growth, the question arises as to what exactly is in demand by the consumer in both design and appearance. First and foremost, decking manufacturers say, is the desire for a personalized

Summit Decking is the newest line of decking from Deckorators featuring mineral-based Surestone technology. Reported to be designed to deliver a practical blend of performance and value, Summit decking will be offered in three new on-trend colors.



space that integrates wellness into outdoor living. As Deckorators' Hendricks puts it, “With rising interest in amenities such as hot tubs, outdoor showers, cold plunges, and saunas, it's clear that homeowners are designing their backyards with health and well-being in mind. This shows a growing commitment to investing in long-term physical and mental wellness through thoughtful outdoor design.”

Part of that investment in wellness is the growing interest in biophilic design. According to Westlake Royal's “Annual Trends Report: The Best In Home Design,” biophilic design continues to be a dominant trend, with homeowners looking to bring elements of the natural world into their living spaces. “Biophilic design not only fosters a deeper connection to nature, but also contributes to improved well-being and productivity,” explains Westlake Royal's Booz. “Growing wellness and environmental concerns play a driving role in the demand for outdoor living space improvements and the integration of nature into both interior and exterior design. As a result, interior and exterior design trends are becoming increasingly interconnected, with homeowners seeking complementary aesthetics to blur the line between indoors and out. For decks, homeowners are coordinating their decking colors with interior hardwoods to create a harmonious, expansive feel.”

“Our contractors are noticing a clear trend: clients are choosing deck features that reflect nature,” says Deckorators' Hendricks. “Homeowners are opting for lush greenery, abundant natural light, and gracefully curved shapes to create an immersive, nature-inspired atmosphere that helps them feel more connected with their outdoor space.”

Jennifer Johnson, business development manager at DAP (which collaborates with Bison Innovative Products in the decking space), agrees with these viewpoints and sees the desire to enhance the aesthetics of outdoor spaces with decks and the demand for low-maintenance decking options as growing trends in outdoor living. “Consumers are increasingly prioritizing the aesthetic appeal of their outdoor spaces, leading to demand for stylish and customizable decking options,” she says. “Easier and more flexible ways to build ground-level decks to expand outdoor living spaces are key—along with overcoming challenging terrains and being able to build without digging holes and pouring concrete to install footers and posts.”

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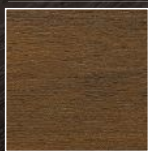
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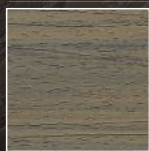
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According to the manufacturer, Accoya Color Grey is an ultra-high performance decking product that combines the beauty and benefits of 100% real wood, but without the drawbacks. Colored through completely from surface to core, the Color Grey delivers premium looks and performance.



It's something Humboldt Sawmill Company's Hewitt describes as "quiet luxury," a new term that emphasizes timelessness, understated elegance, and natural materials over splashy opulence and potentially toxic man-made products," she says. "LBM dealers incorporating 'quiet luxury' into their decking inventories should focus on timeless, quality materials and tried-and-true colors over new products or colors that are untested in the marketplace."

And while quiet luxury may be on the rise, so is budget consciousness. With the unknown future of the economy, more and more homeowners are being cautious with how they're spending their home improvement money. "Homeowners and contractors alike desire easy to install and low maintenance product," says Grace Bilbrough, director of marketing for ProWood. "At the same time, economic conditions are driving them towards more budget-friendly options. We believe our customers shouldn't have to choose between these factors and we will continually work at ProWood to stay current with product innovations and competitive pricing."

According to Humboldt Sawmill Company, premium wood decking, in particular redwood, fits the bill as a natural material that has been used for decades and offers beauty and long-lasting durability. Redwood is also easy on the environment with a negative carbon footprint and status as a renewable resource, an important consideration for many consumers concerned about greenhouse gas emissions.



PHOTO COURTESY MAX OBATA

Color trends

As with other aesthetic values, colors are swaying towards lighter, more natural tones. As Culpeper Wood Preservers' Chris Brown explains, "Decking is personal. The beauty of wood is that it can be made into almost anything you choose. Whether you want a knotty look, a clear look, or something in between, there are options. The current treatment allows the homeowner to enhance the natural wood with their choice of color through stain, paint, or sealer."

And while natural and classic wood colors remain popular for their ability to serve as a versatile backdrop for a variety of design styles, modern designs incorporate a diverse range of wood tones, says Westlake Royal Building Products' Booz. "Light colors are prominent in minimalist, Scandinavian and coastal aesthetics, creating a sense of airy openness that can make even a small space feel large. Dark and gray-toned woods are a sought-after choice for homeowners looking to make a bold statement, seen in the increase of modern, high-contrast home exteriors."

Envision Outdoor Living Products' Moritz also sees warm tones as being more in demand. "Within the composite decking space, exotic hardwood looks will probably always be popular, but we've seen an uptick recently in trends toward warmer greys and browns," he says.

Mike Onderko, director of product marketing for Trex Company, echoes Moritz's comments. "In decking, we're seeing a continued trend toward the lighter tones as well as much more subtle aesthetic preferences overall (streaking and embossing/graining)."

Challenges to growth

Like any segment of the LBM industry, deck building faces unique challenges. First and foremost, labor shortages continue to plague the industry. So with fewer people available to do the work, it's become more important than ever for decking manufacturers to create products that save installation time. "As seasoned contractors retire and fewer young professionals enter the trades, labor shortages have become a challenge for the construction industry at large," says Westlake Royal's Booz. "Straightforward, easy-to-install products are an impactful way to help tackle this challenge, saving valuable time and effort for building professionals." ▶



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Envision Outdoor Living Products now offers Cool Tread Technology within its Distinction capped composite decking collection. This decking, available in three colors, boasts a surface that's reported to be up to 25% cooler with 25% better traction and 61% less moisture absorption than average leading competitors.

MoistureShield's InstaDeck is an outdoor flooring system that comprises heavy-duty plastic tiles that snap together to create a foundation for a freestanding, ground-level deck. InstaDeck is now available in two new tiles that allow for picture-frame and breaker board designs. Picture framing adds a professional touch and the option of using additional colors. The breaker board eliminates the need for butt joints when the deck length exceeds the board length.



Envision Outdoor Living Products' Moritz also sees labor shortages as an issue LBM dealers need to pay attention to. "As has been the case for a number of years, labor is a challenge, and contractors are seeking ways to get jobs done more efficiently," he says. "Manufacturers have been responding in multiple ways, including providing on-site and virtual training as well as creating products that are easy to install. For example, our composite decking's non-repeating grain helps contractors avoid sorting or orienting planks on the jobsite, saving time."

Culpeper Wood Preservers' Brown agrees. "The amount of skilled labor for decks and porches and the labor to do the work remains challenging," he points out. "This transcends many industries, but the trades also need focus. Outdoor projects, especially deck building, are a growing business that provides years of enjoyment for the person it is being built for."

Beyond the labor issues, decking materials themselves pose challenges that LBM dealers need to be able to address for their customers. "Exposure to elements combined with the movement of lumber over time creates a unique challenge for deck builders," explains ProWood's Billbrough. "While alternative materials aim to alleviate the pain, there is also increased material cost and a workability learning curve. And with increased investment in outdoor spaces, decking products need to perform in a wider range of climates and conditions. Consumers want products that are low maintenance but also perform (and last) in continually varied conditions."

Consumers also are wanting products that have evolved in performance and aesthetic refinement, as they demand more from their decking, says Trex's Onderko. "As the decking category has evolved in performance and aesthetic refinement, consumers expect more from the products. A shortcoming of all wood alternative decking is that these synthetic materials tend to get hotter on extreme days versus traditional wood. Trex has

responded to that dissatisfier with the introduction of SunComfortable heat mitigating technology. Launched initially in our premium Transcend Lineage line, Trex vows to make this feature available at all price points over time, as demonstrated in including it into two recent color additions in our entry price Enhance decking lineup (Honey Grove and Tide Pool)."

As well, manufacturers point to the fact that too many decking products lack differentiation and are becoming ubiquitous, making it difficult for LBM dealers to compete in a crowded market. "If the product is available at every big box and every lumberyard, competition is more difficult for dealers and often leads to price compression," says Kim Guimond, chief marketing officer for Modern Mill. "Newer products that have a buzz and are quickly a fan favorite like ACRE by Modern Mill keep people coming back and give dealers an edge on having the 'must have' product that's unique and buzzworthy."

Knowledge is power

So considering these challenges, how can LBM dealers set themselves apart, and in the process, sell more decking? It begins, decking manufacturers say, by thoroughly understanding the product lines they sell. "The vast range of options for decking, railing, and accessories is a huge benefit for consumers—but also can feel overwhelming," Envision's Moritz explains. "Dealers can best position themselves by understanding the products they sell as intimately as possible and know how to apply those products to the customer's decision-making process. Being able to walk the buyer through their selections to determine what is the best fit for their lifestyle, tastes, and climate can not only help put them at ease, but could lead to more upgrades, repeat business, and positive word of mouth."

One of the best methods for learning as much about the products as possible is by relying on the manufacturers themselves and taking advantage of the resources they offer. "Lean



The new Monarch series UltraShield Composite Decking from NewTechWood features a mottled woodgrain finish on one side of the board and is capped on all four sides for enhanced weather resistance. It carries a 25-year fade and stain warranty as well as a 25-year product warranty.

on your decking and railing vendors,” recommends Stokes Wallace, director of independent sales for ProWood. “They can help identify market relevant products at multiple price points. Product knowledge sessions for your team can allow vendors to showcase new products and trends, while also providing education and resources to better position your team to close more sales.”

Westlake Royal’s Booz agrees with taking advantage of the manufacturers as a knowledge base. “LBM dealers can position themselves for success by taking full advantage of the comprehensive resources that manufacturers provide,” he says. “At Westlake Royal, we go beyond our diverse product portfolio to offer a robust suite of online resources for dealers, distributors and building professionals. Additionally, our national sales team is always on hand to support distributors and installers, offering expert guidance whenever needed.”

The education doesn’t stop with the dealer, decking manufacturers say. Rather, it extends to the salespeople and customers as well, going the extra mile to educate them on the options available. “Many manufacturers offer plant tours for LBM dealers and their salespeople to learn more about their products,” says Humboldt Sawmill Company’s Hewitt. “Humboldt Sawmill Company offers ‘Redwood University,’ a chance for LBM dealers and distributors to visit our Northern California timberlands and sawmills and learn more about our products. Ongoing product knowledge support and the ability to answer customer questions is also important even after the sale is made.”

WHILE NOT AS monumental as the space race, the 2025 deck building season has nonetheless launched with significant momentum. Despite economic unknowns, by partnering with decking manufacturers to leverage their educational opportunities and by passing that knowledge onto their customers, LBM dealers can position themselves for significant wins in the decking space. After all, decking is the foundational element of helping homeowners create a new, updated living experience in their existing home. As Deckorators’ Hendricks puts it, “For customers looking to fall in love with their home all over again, extending their indoor living space to the outdoors can be a cost-effective and convenient way to give a home the feel of a full make-over.” ■

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS

WHAT LIES BENEATH

There’s more to decks than decking these days. Alternative framing materials provide unique benefits when compared to traditional lumber. For example, deck framing that is true and flat helps eliminate callbacks due to movement or warping of deck boards. In addition, alternative framing can be lighter, and it comes with warranties that are often times equal to, if not greater than, deck board warranties.



According to the manufacturer, New Castle Steel offers several advantages for deck framing: Class-A fire-rated, rot- and termite-resistant, 100% American-made, has 25% recycled content, is fully recyclable, and contributes to LEED points. The triple-galvanized coating provides reported exceptional consistency and longevity, significantly reducing maintenance and repair needs, and it’s backed by a 50-year warranty.



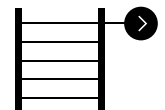
Pacific Woodtech (PWT) recently introduced its manufactured treated LVL that it reports is the only one on the market, offering superior strength and uniformity. Utilizing TRU-CORE technology, a heat press system evenly distributes treatment chemicals throughout the wood for lasting durability. This process creates a durable product that is protected against damage caused by fungal rot, decay, and wood-destroying insects, and it comes with a 25-year warranty.



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Coming mid-2025, Deckorators Glass Rail Post Kits will feature a post-to-post glass design with line, end, and corner post configurations. Available in Textured Black, the kit is adaptable to 6- and 13-mm glass.

Outdoor living continues to drive sales for LBM dealers

BY MIKE BERGER

Jules Henri Poincaré, the famous French mathematician, theoretical physicist, engineer and philosopher of science, once said, “It is the harmony of the diverse parts, their symmetry, their happy balance; in a word it is all that introduces order, all that gives unity, that permits us to see clearly and to comprehend at once both the ensemble and the details.”

Those words hold just as true when it comes to deck railings and accessories as they do for science, as it’s those details that help create both visually stunning outdoor spaces and opportunities for LBM sales. For it’s the ongoing interest in outdoor living and cohesive, integrated outdoor spaces that continues to add fuel to the fire of growth for the deck railing and accessory categories. It’s a trend, industry experts say, that is not showing signs of significantly slowing down. “Homeowners are still all about creating personalized outdoor spaces—places to relax, entertain, and unwind,” says Kym Nosbisch, senior marketing director for Feeney. “The indoor-outdoor living trend isn’t slowing down anytime soon, and railings play a big role in tying those spaces together. Products that deliver both great looks and low maintenance will stay in demand as people continue investing in their homes.” ▶

Feeney’s new DockRail is the company’s newest railing system made just for waterfront environments. It’s built with marine-grade 316 stainless steel and powder-coated finishes, so it reportedly can handle the elements.





New from Keylink is its Keylink Black Cable with the Chesapeake Aluminum Flat Rail Cap. According to Keylink, the cable and flat rail cap are ideal for residential and commercial projects and combine durability, elegance, and versatility.

Luke Guittar, vice president of sales and marketing at Absolute Distribution Inc. (ADI), also sees solid growth for deck railings and accessories in 2025, driven by a few key factors. “First, the continued focus on outdoor living is pushing homeowners to invest in stylish, functional spaces, and railings are a big part of that,” he says. “Renovation projects are also playing a role, as many older decks need updates, including modern, low-maintenance railing options. Customization is another driver—homeowners want railings that fit their style, whether that’s cable systems, glass panels, or mixed materials. Plus, safety standards and code compliance are encouraging upgrades, especially for families and aging homeowners. Lastly, premium materials like steel and aluminum are in demand because they’re durable, attractive, and easy to maintain. Overall, the combination of lifestyle trends, safety needs, and material innovation is fueling growth in this category.”



Trex has been very active in the railing space with the introduction of numerous new products both in its premium and entry-priced ranges, including the Signature Frameless Glass Rail (shown) and X-Series Cable Rail.

Like Guittar, Lawrence G. Boyts, vice president of sales and marketing for Digger Specialties, Inc. (DSI), also predicts growth due in part to the continued interest in outdoor living. “Growth for us in railing and outdoor living is planned at 8-10% in 2025,” he says. “2025 is a transition year for larger companies trying to get a return on their investment to publicly held and stock values/EBITA. DSI is privately held and laser focused on our railing category. We are planning for growth in columns and fencing as well.”

There is, however, some caution driven primarily by the unknowns of the economy. But even with fewer rate cuts expected in 2025 and new construction cost increases, experts still see growth in deck railings and accessories, driven by an improve-in-place mentality in the housing market.

“We see decking and deck railing continuing to grow based on replacement needs from end-of-life decking inventory from previous builds during prior decades,” says Mike Kunard, owner of IG Railing. “In addition, outdoor living—the demand to create entertainment space at home for young and older families to gather, share, and relax—is nowhere near out of style. Backyard saunas, smaller footprint swim spas, all which promote a healthy lifestyle, are very on trend. Deck and deck railings are complements to this environment promoting a healthy lifestyle—including frameless glass railings that allow clear views of natural settings.”

It’s that continued desire for outdoor living spaces that potentially spells wins for the LBM dealer in 2025.

“Homeowners have gotten very savvy about how to maximize their deck areas to fully suit their needs,” explains Chase Moritz, director of marketing for Envision Outdoor Living Products. “This includes everything from visually designating different areas of the space for specific purposes—such as sitting areas, dining areas, and relaxation zones—similar to the inside of the home. Installers are using different color composite decking to picture-frame or otherwise differentiate these sections; furniture, fire features, planters, and other elements also are serving this purpose. Homeowners also aren’t afraid to make their outdoor spaces cozy and reminiscent of interior rooms, with nicer (yet still weather-resistant) furniture, storage, lighting, heating, shading, and more, which also expands the amount of time they can spend outside.”



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DSI has launched two new Westbury Railing products, Bella Cavo Horizontal Cable and Sorrento Mesh, both in 12 colors. According to DSI, consumers, deck builders, and lumber dealers are looking for “open” type railing options, allowing customers to sit on their decks and capture a better look at nature and their surroundings.



Heightened aesthetics tops trends

Certain trends play more than others into the growth predictions of deck railings and accessories. For example, there’s a growing emphasis on design, whether it’s bringing interior design concepts to the outdoors or focusing on pulling the outdoor world into the living space (a concept known as biophilic design).

“We’re seeing more interior design influences making their way outdoors,” Feeney’s Nobsisch points out. “Homeowners want their decks, patios and docks to feel like natural extensions of their indoor spaces. Black railings are still hugely popular because they work with so many styles—modern, rustic, coastal, you name it. Plus, with more people embracing waterfront living, there’s growing interest in marine-grade materials that can handle harsh environments.”



Deckorators Continuous Top Rail, available mid-2025, is compatible with contemporary cable railing and glass railing. According to Deckorators, this versatile rail enhances the overall look of any outdoor space.

“Color palettes for residential homes change each year,” comments DSI’s Boyts. “DSI offers 12 beautiful colors that can complement many of these changes. The continual movement to textured surfaces as well as lighting also continue to grow.”

Mike Onderko, director of product marketing for Trex Company, sees a refinement of the color palette as a growing trend. “In railing, we’re seeing a trend headed back to the basics in terms of color (white, black, and brown), not the multitude of color options as seen in the past,” he explains. “I see the aluminum category continuing to be a trend amongst homeowners, driven by its diminutive design, workability, timeless aesthetic, weatherability and overall value.”

IG Railing’s Kunard shares similar insights when it comes to design. “In the deck railing space, two trends complement each other quite seamlessly: biophilic design and better-view railing products,” he explains. “Biophilic design is increasing homeowner connectivity to the natural environment with nature. The more nature you can see, feel, and touch, the higher connectivity rate and quality of experience.”

It’s a growing design trend that includes keeping health and wellness top of mind when it comes to deck accessories.

“Homeowners are increasingly integrating wellness into their outdoor living spaces,” says Michelle Hendricks, category marketing manager of Deckorators. “With rising interest in amenities such as hot tubs, outdoor showers, cold plunges, and saunas, it’s clear that homeowners are designing their backyards with health and well-being in mind. This shows a growing commitment to investing in long-term physical and mental wellness through thoughtful outdoor design.”

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- Zero stripping



This January, Envision Outdoor Living Products expanded its Fairway Railing Collection with the launch of E-Fit Railing Innovations, a series of new aluminum and vinyl railing products with pro-focused innovations designed for efficiency and speed. When used together, the new components—FastFit Posts, FastFit Panels, and LockFit Balusters—allow for installation times reportedly up to 300% faster.



And while many of these accessories and deck railing components will ultimately be pro-installed, LBM dealers need to be prepared to offer options to the DIYer as well. “Customers are doing their research and are looking for easy-to-install outdoor living solutions as they look to complete a lot of home improvement projects on their own,” says Don Douglas, associate director of railing and lighting for Fortress Building Products. “That’s where panelized railing systems have big play. Compared to a traditional railing system, where contractors or homeowners have to assemble every single piece, panelized railing systems are pre-welded and pre-assembled at the factory to save valuable time. Posts with pre-attached

brackets further support a quick and easy installation process. The nature of a panelized option also maximizes system strength and lowers the risk of missing parts, contributing to a safer deck, patio or balcony. Plus, avoid the “wind chime” effect and other issues commonly associated with component-based railing systems.”

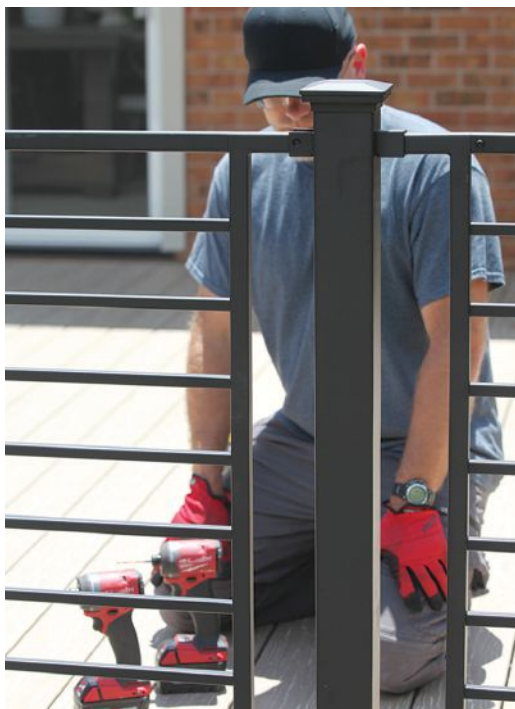
Value is key

As the deck railing and accessory category has grown, so too have the product options. As a result, there can be a lot of confusion for LBM dealers, experts caution. “The deck railing segment is grappling with challenges tied to market oversaturation and pricing pressures,” explains ADI’s Guittar. “The sheer volume of similar products available makes it increasingly difficult for LBM dealers to determine which vendors and brands to partner with. This leads to added complexity in training showroom associates to become knowledgeable experts, leaving consumers confused by the overwhelming array of choices. As a result, the customer experience can suffer, and dealers may miss opportunities to differentiate their offerings.”

“At the same time, pricing continues to erode as manufacturers adjust materials and craftsmanship to meet the growing demand for lower cost options, which can sometimes come at the expense of quality and durability,” he adds. “Combined with a persistent shortage of skilled labor, particularly for more intricate systems like cable and horizontal rod railings, the segment faces mounting pressure to deliver value while maintaining standards. To overcome these challenges, dealers must focus on streamlining product selections, prioritizing quality, and investing in education.”

It’s a task that’s easier said than done, says Feeney’s Nosbisch. “The challenge we keep hearing about is balancing aesthetics, durability and easy installation. Homeowners want sleek designs that stand up to the elements with little upkeep, while builders want products that install smoothly without headaches.”

It’s because of these reasons that it’s more important than ever for LBM dealers to understand the value proposition of the product lines they carry. “It’s a tale as old as time, but customers, builders and designers alike are always looking for the best value—what will give that special touch of luxury and durability for the lowest possible cost?” says Deckorators’ Hendricks. ▶



Fe²⁶ Axis horizontal steel railing from Fortress Building Products is the newest infill option for the company’s Fe²⁶ steel railing system. In addition to Axis, Fortress offers a variety of infill options to accommodate different project design visions, from traditional steel posts to steel cables that can be oriented vertically or horizontally to glass balusters to ornamental inserts.

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IG Railing recently launched its IG Switch glass railing, delivering privacy glass that can toggle between 91% transparency and 88% privacy of the glass railing with a simple click of a switch.

Show more to sell more

So amid all the competition, how can LBM dealers set themselves apart from the competition to sell more deck railings and accessories? Industry experts recommend a “show, then sell” strategy. “LBM dealers can boost sales by becoming a go-to resource for outdoor transformations,” says Feeney’s Nobsisch. “Create displays that showcase not just railings, but full outdoor setups, so customers can really picture the finished look. Dealers who offer product knowledge and training to their teams can also stand out—when contractors know you have solutions that save them time, they’re more likely to come back for future projects.”

Envision Outdoor Living Products’ Moritz agrees with the importance of selling beyond just the deck and railing. “Homeowners want to use their outdoor living spaces for more activities and well into the evenings and the colder months,” he points out. “Offering lighting, shading, drink rails, and other accessories, as well as having general knowledge of more specialty

options such as outdoor heating, furniture, entertainment, and fire features, can help provide the full package they’re seeking.”

LBM dealers can increase deck railing sales by focusing on curated product offerings, enhancing showroom displays, and providing expert guidance to simplify choices for customers, says ADI’s Guittar. “Partnering with a railing vendor that offers comprehensive support—including product catalogs, marketing materials, displays, streamlined quoting with takeoffs, and reliable, well-packaged shipping—can be a game-changer.”

By being a go-to resource, the LBM dealer can become a true one-stop shop for their customers. “Dealers can remain competitive and sell more by stocking product for the entire backyard package, and with it, railing,” says Fortress Building Products’ Douglas. “If a customer walks onto a yard to purchase decking but can’t complete the job with railing, they will spend their money down the street.”

In the end, it’s about building partnerships with vendors, recommends industry experts. “Investing in partnerships with vendors who professionally consult with dealers and provide tailored solutions to solve consumer problems and needs is crucial,” says ADI’s Guittar. “These partnerships help dealers offer products that meet both style and functionality demands while addressing challenges like skilled labor shortages through resources such as pre-construction meetings and onsite installation assistance.”

BY FOCUSING ON the details to be found in deck railings and accessories, LBM dealers can set themselves apart from the competition by offering integrated components that serve to create the outdoor spaces their customers crave. It’s only then that you will become known as the go-to spot for all things decking related. As IG Railing’s Kunard puts it, “Create your brand to include decking and railing as a core service area. Back up that brand position by taking a position of expertise with training, merchandising, and displays using local manufacturer representatives and distributors to teach the knowledge in which you claim expertise. At the sales level, ask questions. Understand what the true goal of the use of space is going to be and fit the design and materials to achieve those goals. Differentiation is key!” ■



Absolute Distribution Inc.’s DekPro EFFEX Low Voltage LED Lighting continues to provide attractive and affordable lighting solutions, enhancing safety and ambiance with options like post cap and under-rail lighting that seamlessly integrate with railing systems.

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HOW TO SELL THE DECK PROJECT

BY MIKE BERGER

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WHEN IT COMES TO TODAY'S deck building environment, knowing the market's growing trends and having available inventory to meet them is only part of the equation in making the decking sale. While decks have been a consistently growing part of the American backyard landscape for decades, the larger trend of outdoor living has been on the rise for some time—especially since the advent of COVID-19—and all indications point to that trend continuing in this post-pandemic world.

In its recent “Outdoor Living Structures Market Trends” report, Grand View Research reported that the global outdoor living structures market size was estimated at \$2.32 billion in 2024 and is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.2% from 2025 to 2030. According to its findings, people have realized, post-pandemic, the importance of open spaces and a healthy lifestyle, hence becoming a driving factor for the market's growth of outdoor living structures.

Since COVID-19, increasing health consciousness and mental well-being have led a larger part of the population to prefer outdoor activities such as physical exercises and meditation in outdoor spaces. Plus, with the rise in remote work, people prefer comfortable outdoor working spaces with a fresh atmosphere and natural light. In addition, social media is a major factor in the popularity of beautiful outdoor spaces, encouraging homeowners to enhance their houses.

For the LBM dealer, being able to translate those outdoor living trends into sales is where the proverbial rubber meets the road, and who better to share insights on how to close those sales than the deck building pros themselves. We interviewed some of the top deck experts from across the country to bring you these top 10 tips on how to better sell the deck project.



COURTESY OF DECKORATORS

1 BE THE EXPERT

In today's complex outdoor living world, it's no longer enough to just have staff that can sell decking boards. Rather, they need to be fluent in all things outdoor living. From biophilic design that focuses on making connections with the outdoor world to outdoor room or kitchen creation, it's important to have someone on staff who can address those nuances.

“By having a dealer's staff up to date on decking products, they can best serve the contractors and homeowners who walk through their door,” Bill Lecorchick, regional product specialist for BlueLinX. “I've noticed that dealers who have at least one outdoor living-minded salesperson, have much higher sales in this arena. As with any category, the more answers you can provide, the more indispensable you become to your customers. By being able to guide your customer to the product that will best serve their needs, you will see that they return more often and purchase more products through you.”

2 OFFER DESIGN SERVICES

Being able to offer 3D drawings and take-off services would enhance the customer experience and drive repeat business, deck building experts suggest. Many off-the-shelf solutions from a variety of sources already exist that LBM dealers can take advantage of.

For example, TimberTech offers a 3D Deck Designer as does Deckorators, and Trex offers a variety of tools including a Deck Designer, a Decking Comparison tool, and an Augmented Reality (AR) Visualizer that allows you to virtually “build” a deck in your backyard space. Fortress Building Products offers its Fortress-View visualizer that enables end users to envision framing and railing in a 3D setting, and Simpson Strong-Tie has its Deck Planner, Fence Planner, and Pergola Planner software.

As well, Seljax offers estimating and 3D design software including 3D House, 3D Deck, 3D Stud Frame and more, while Feeney has its 360-degree Visualizer for interior and exterior projects. ▶

“LBM dealers could provide more access to design tools, like interactive online design software, that let customers build and visualize their deck ideas before committing to materials,” suggests Mike Miller, director of outdoor living products for Talbert Building Supply. “Offering detailed, easy-to-understand guides or training sessions for homeowners and builders on the latest deck building techniques would also be very valuable. Product samples (not just brochures or catalogs) allow builders and homeowners to physically interact with materials, ensuring they feel confident in their selections.”

“I LIKE HAVING [SAMPLES] FOR OUR HOMEOWNER BECAUSE IT STARTS THAT DREAM PROCESS WHEN THEY CAN TOUCH AND FEEL THE PRODUCT AND IMAGINE HOW IT WILL ALL COME TOGETHER.”

—Sean Collinsgru | Premier Outdoor Living

3 PRESENT PACKAGE DEALS

It’s not enough to simply offer decking materials, builders say. A deck has become so much more than a patio replacement. From lighting and outdoor kitchens to fire features, the successful LBM dealer needs to be able to put together a cohesive package of elements that create a comfortable and personal outdoor living space so that builders can present those packages to their customers.

“We’ve been offering more of a package deal in recent years,” says Sean Collinsgru, owner of Premier Outdoor Living and a Deckorators Certified Elite Pro. “Combining all of the decking elements needed for a successful project within a feasible timeline helps our team stay connected to the holistic goals of the project and gives the homeowner a clearer picture on pricing, timeline, and the overall look.”

Daniel Stendeback, president of Valer Builders, also recommends offering bundled packages for typical deck projects. “The packages would include all materials, hardware, etc. and could have upgrade options. This would simplify procurement, reduce the chance for errors in ordering, and provides transparency for both client and contractor.”

“As we are seeing it now, the concept of outdoor rooms will continue to grow, with decks and patio areas being designed as an extension of indoor living spaces,” he adds. “This might

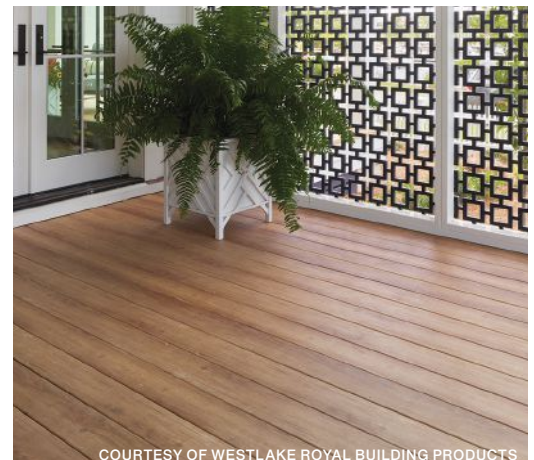
involve integrating retractable doors and walls, outdoor kitchens and appliances, fireplaces, audio-visual, lighting, storage, or small spa and sauna areas, making a deck or outdoor space multi-functional areas for entertainment and relaxation.”

4 PROVIDE EDUCATION

One of the best methods to cement the deck sale is by providing education, both for the contractor and for the homeowner. For the contractor, LBM dealers can arrange learning opportunities through manufacturers, many of which offer educational courses either at the LBM dealer, on the jobsite, or at the manufacturer’s facility.

Don’t forget the homeowner, deck building pros encourage. Today’s consumer is more keyed in to product knowledge, and they want to know that what they are purchasing is the best option for their project. Likewise, contractors want to know that the product they’re recommending to the homeowner will perform as promised and not lead to callbacks.

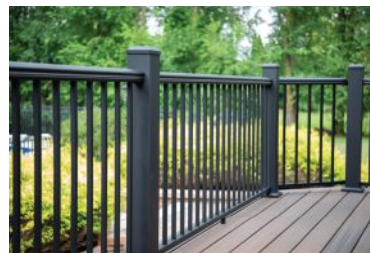
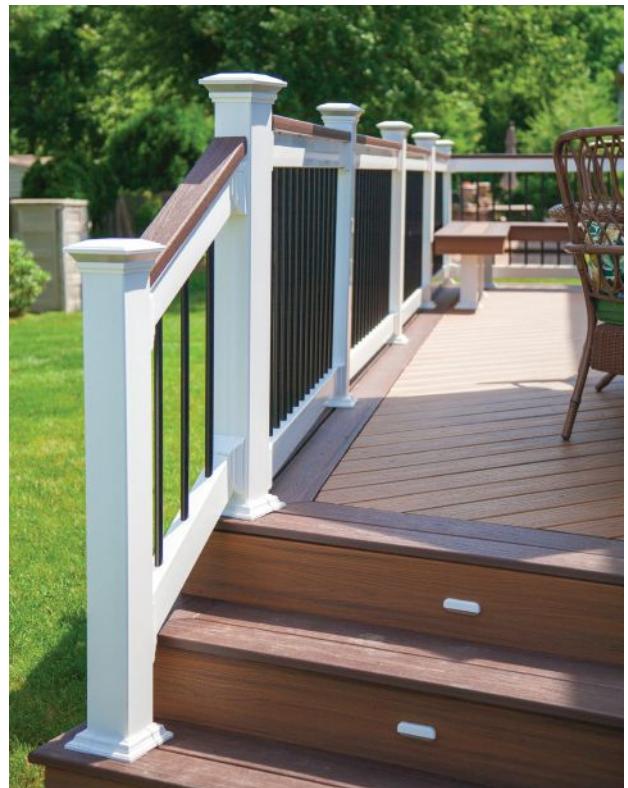
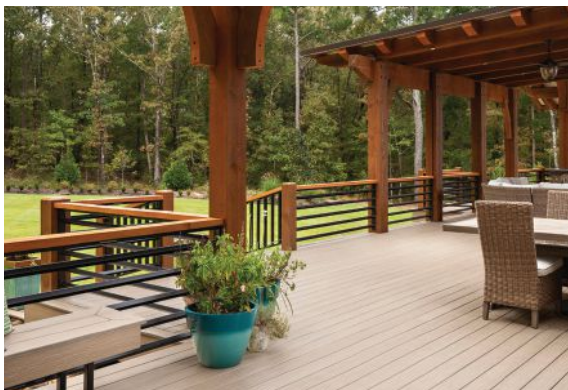
“Something that has been a big shift post COVID-19 is the time we build in for the educational process,” says Premier Outdoor Living’s Collinsgru. “Homeowners want to feel and touch the product more than ever. This means we must ensure we have our Deckorators samples always on hand and can leave those samples with the client to help inspire how their full deck project will come together. I like having these tools for our homeowner because it starts that dream process when they can touch and feel the product.” ▶





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5 FOCUS ON VISIBILITY

During the busy deck building season, being able to instantly know inventory levels and availability of materials at your local LBM dealer would be a real value say deck building experts. “A customer relationship management tool that gives access to inventory and availability of materials would be a real benefit,” says Valer Builders’ Stendeback. “This would improve inventory tracking and notification systems for stock levels, especially for popular or seasonal items. This ensures we have materials when needed, reducing delays and the need for multiple store visits or last-minute substitutions.”

6 THINK LONG TERM

Today’s decking materials are in it for the long haul, and we’re not just talking about the deck boards. With deck board lifespans now in the decades, it’s important for LBM dealers to offer deck framing options that are equal in longevity, deck builders point out.

As Talbert Building Supply’s Miller explains, “As consumers spend more on decking and handrail products that have extended warranties, and life spans of 50-plus years, it doesn’t make sense to build the substructures with limited life spans of less than 10-15 years. People are wanting their ‘forever deck’ that requires minimal maintenance and will never need to be replaced. Currently alternative materials are offered in the forms of PWT Treated LVL, Owens Corning composite framing lumber, and aluminum or steel framing. These products should become more widely utilized as they become more accessible through greater distribution and costs come down.”

BlueLinx’s Lecorchick agrees. “The lifespan of a composite deck is 50-plus years, and the framing should last just as long. With a decline in the life span of pressure treated lumber, I think alternative framing solutions will become more popular.”

7 PROJECT PLANNING IS KEY

Having a deck built is an exciting endeavor, and both contractor and homeowner can be over-anxious to get started. In that eagerness, however, details can get missed, and it’s often up to the LBM dealer to serve as the project manager. It’s an extra level of confidence for the deck contractor when they know their LBM dealer has their back and is watching for those details. And for the homeowner, that level of attention to detail can ensure the deck project doesn’t turn into a disaster.

“While many homeowners are eager to get started, there’s often a lack of professional resources available for detailed project planning,” Talbert Building Supply’s Miller points out. “Without guidance on things like ideal material selection, structural integrity, and proper installation methods, consumers may end up with a deck that’s not suited to their needs, environment, or it may not even uphold the manufacturer warranties. Proper planning is essential for achieving a deck that will stand the test of time. Often overlooked elements—like adding joist or beam tape to protect wood framing—should be standard practices in deck construction, not optional upgrades.

Additionally, many homeowners don’t realize how much custom features can elevate their outdoor space, so they’re missing out on opportunities to create a truly unique, functional design. For example, deck and landscape lighting should be integrated with most outdoor living projects. Lighting makes the space more inviting and aesthetically pleasing, can highlight certain features, and provides a safer environment by illuminating level changes and stairs. It also extends the time your outdoor living space can be used.”

Miller goes on to recommend LBM dealers adopt a practice of clear, organized communication right from the start. “LBM dealers should make it easy for customers to get everything they need for a deck project in one place—materials, tools, and advice,” he says. “Offering a project checklist that includes steps for planning, budgeting, and construction would help clients stay on track. Demonstrate to your customers that you’re committed to being a true partner in their business, with a genuine dedication to their success.”

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8 BE MORE THAN AN ORDER TAKER

For the LBM dealer, it can become easy to slip into the role of a mere order taker. In today's world, however, the pro customer and the homeowner alike require a more consultative approach, and the most successful LBM dealers will be the ones who can help guide their customers through the purchase process based on customer needs—not just on closing the order.

“A big pain point is the inconsistency in material quality across different brands,” says Miller. “Many builders struggle to find reliable suppliers that offer high-quality, consistent products. Additionally, price fluctuations on decking materials—especially lumber—can make it difficult to quote projects accurately, leading to margin pressures for builders. Homeowners also often feel overwhelmed by the sheer number of product options available, making it harder for them to make informed decisions. I think dealers should be more than order takers and get more involved in the selection process by recommending products that would be the best fit for their customers. Dealers need to keep up with changes in the industry and the latest innovative products and construction techniques. Decks are no longer a transition from the home to the yard or just a place to throw the grill on; they are high-end extensions of the homes' living space with specific designs and functions.”

9 BE TRANSPARENT WITH PRICE

Nothing can sour or derail a deck project more quickly than discovering extra hidden costs. Considering the state of tariffs and continuing economic unease across the building and remodeling sectors, it's more important than ever, experts stress, that LBM dealers be as transparent as possible when it comes to pricing on all aspects of the deck package.

“Our clients are more conscious about the cost of the overall project, especially compared to the last couple of years,” says Premier Outdoor Living's Collinsgru. “With demand during COVID, clients knew they had to decide quickly, or they might get pushed back another three or six months on our schedule. Now that things

“I THINK DEALERS SHOULD BE MORE THAN ORDER TAKERS AND GET MORE INVOLVED IN THE SELECTION PROCESS BY RECOMMENDING PRODUCTS THAT WOULD BE THE BEST FIT FOR THEIR CUSTOMERS.”

—Mike Miller | Talbert Building Supply

have returned to a normal demand level, clients are taking their time a lot more. They are trying to understand all the project costs, and they're more concerned about the overall budget. Our projects aren't necessarily getting smaller, but people go into the process with a bit more hesitation. But once they get into the process and start to understand the cost and get a full picture, they're not scaling back, but it's taking them a little bit longer to get to that point where they're all in. They kind of open up a bit more once they've digested that overall budget that they're going to be investing into the project.”

10 FOCUS ON WHAT'S BEST FOR THE CUSTOMER

Rather than making the immediate sale, deck building experts recommend LBM dealers take the time to truly get to know their customers' needs when making product recommendations. All too often, the purchase decision is driven by proliferation of internet ads, Google searches, or television placement, and rather than take all of that at face value and simply sell the product asked for, LBM dealers should spend time determining what is actually best for their customer.

“The customers are not being educated by installers, as installers are not really experts in products,” explains Adam Rought, CEO of Green Shield Deck Builders. “What happens is lumberyards push the one brand they carry regardless of value for customers. The boards are large and expensive to store and easily damaged. Customers get 100 different options when Googling, all claiming to be the best thing since sliced bread, and they eventually come to the conclusion they want ‘X’ brand and builders will just try and fulfill that request. Can you imagine if a doctor just gave a patient what they asked for? Or imagine the doctor just gives a patient what the supplier tells them? The deck builder needs to focus on the customer and give them what is in the best interest of the consumer.” ■

CONTRIBUTING EXPERTS



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KANSAS DEALER GOES THE EXTRA MILE

The Peterson family took ownership of Miami Lumber, located near the Kansas-Missouri border, in 1983, and it is still operated by Pete Peterson, along with his wife Kenna and their children.

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

WHEN YOU FIRST HEAR THE NAME

“Miami Lumber,” you might be inclined to think of a lumberyard located near the beach. Add in the palm trees and sunset pictured on the company’s logo, and you’d for sure think you were in southern Florida. You’d be wrong, but luckily, Owner Pete Peterson and his family are in on the joke.

“When my mom, dad, and I bought [the yard] in 1983, it was called Miami County Lumber” he said of the store, located in Miami County, KS. “The gentleman we bought it from wouldn’t sell

us the name. So we dropped the ‘county’ and embraced the idea of Miami, FL, and my wife came up with the palm trees idea. We just kind of ran with it.”

While Miami Lumber has been around now for more than 40 years, the Peterson family has been in the lumberyard business a lot longer. In 1942, Pete’s grandfather, Earnest Peterson, Sr. began as a foreman at a nearby lumberyard. Little did he know that his three sons would all go on to each own or operate their own yard in the Kansas City area. ▶



LBM JOURNAL

DEALER OF THE YEAR 2025

CATEGORY: \$10MM

“As they got older, Ernie, the oldest brother, bought in 1966 Lansing Lumber in Lansing, KS; my dad went to work for CMI, Construction Materials Incorporated with five different yards, and he became general manager of that company; and then Uncle Mike, the youngest brother, took over Gardner Lumber, so all three brothers were in it. My cousin, Pat, now runs Lansing Lumber as Lansing Lumber & Feed. The family legacy has been placed into our hands and we’re carrying it forward.”

Peterson’s yard, located near the Kansas-Missouri border, has since become a thriving family business where Pete’s wife Kenna, his son Tyler, his daughter Sydney, and her husband Grady Wolford now work.

Standing out in KC

Alongside Peterson’s family, Miami Lumber is staffed by a small-but-mighty team of full- and part-time employees, many of which have been with the company for several years.

“As the owners, my parents originally did a lot on their own—the early struggle years are

always hard for small business—but once we got developed enough, I just decided that I can’t do this on my own, I have to have good help,” he said. “I hoped to have dedicated people that stay with me for generations. I’ve just been lucky and blessed there: our folks are nice people with families and kids, and so I’ve just made sure I’ve paid them good living wages, the same they can find anywhere else in Kansas City. Since day one, I have tried to treat our employees the same way I’d expect my own kids to be treated—cared for, like family. Luckily, they’ve all stayed.”

After establishing a strong foundation for the business, Peterson said the company has been focusing on modernizing some aspects of the company by leveraging online tools for marketing and recruiting.

“We struggled a lot with marketing, advertising and having the time as a small team to dedicate to it. Our son, Tyler, has taken over that part of the business and now we’re really out there with digital advertising, social media, new brochures and in-store promotions.”

With a staff of just over 20 employees, Miami Lumber offers a wide selection of building materials for pros and also helps DIYers with consultations and by connecting them with local contractors.

From being available for on-site deliveries to engaging with the community, Miami Lumber’s longevity comes in part from the relationships the company has developed over the years with its customers, Owner Pete Peterson says.



In addition to offering hardware and building materials for a range of projects, the company also carries a wide selection of doors and windows as well as decking and roofing materials from a number of major brands like GAF, Deckorators, James Hardie, Therma-Tru, and Masonite. Miami Lumber also helps DIYers with consultations and by connecting them with local contractors.

When asked what makes Miami Lumber a strong competitor with the big-box stores in the area, Peterson was quick to respond with the genuine interest the company takes in each of the lumberyard's transactions.

"I'd really hope and like to believe that it's our service," he said. "We're as competitive as anyone else when it comes to price. We've been up against every large lumberyard in Kansas City. We care, we aren't just delivering lumber, we're delivering either someone's dream home or helping a contractor remodel or build a spec home. But it's not about pricing and it's not about making money. It's about helping the person and trying to take care of their needs and developing a relationship with them to carry out through the years."

Customer, local commitment

Those relationships have proven to be key, as contractors and builders account for about 70% of Miami Lumber's business. Peterson said it's through taking extra care with each customer that the company has built those long-lasting partnerships.

"I think once they do business with us and see our service—like how we will deliver to a job site multiple times every day, even if they're little loads—we just do whatever needs to be done to take care of them or to keep their problems away."

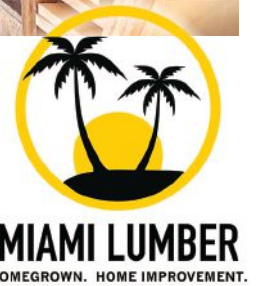
In addition to Miami Lumber's everyday customers, the company also makes efforts to inspire and teach the next generation of DIYers and contractors.

"As part of our marketing and community outreach, we started our own workshop for kids, called DIY for Little Doers. We provided pre-fab kits for kids to build, paint and decorate their own birdhouses—plus lunch and an ice cream truck. With the kids and the parents coming in, it's just another way of getting to meet people and showing them who you are and the advantages of relying on a local yard." While Peterson said the company has had opportunities to expand over the years, he and



GET TO KNOW MIAMI LUMBER

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Founded: | 1983 |
| Ownership: | Family |
| Locations: | 1 |
| Employees: | 11 full-time, 12 part-time |
| Customer Breakdown: | 70% pro / 30% retail |
| ERP Software: | ECI Spruce |



his family have ultimately focused on making Miami Lumber's location the best it can be.

"Years ago, we had an opportunity to buy a number of lumberyards," Peterson said. "The owner ultimately decided not to sell and things end up the way they are supposed to. I came to the realization that maybe I'm better off just focusing on my one yard and servicing and taking care of the people the best I possibly can. We've had lots of other small towns call and ask me to come take over the lumberyards, and we have just decided to pass on it and focus on ours."

However, that commitment to staying local doesn't limit Miami Lumber geographically, Peterson said. "We deliver anywhere. We deliver 100 miles north, 100 miles east or west and south, as many times as needed in the day."

By literally going the extra mile for their customers, Peterson and his family have created an environment he hopes will set the company up for success in the next generation and beyond.

"Our bottom line is that we just want to treat people the way we want to be treated. And hopefully that's one of the reasons why our employees have stayed with us for so long, and hopefully those are the reasons why we're still around in business." ■

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



EARTHEN SHADOW

NEWPOINT CONCRETE ROOF TILES

Westlake Royal Building Products has expanded its Newpoint Concrete Roof Tile brand to include seven new colors from its California, Arizona, and Nevada manufacturing facilities: Ashen Cove, Auburn Ridge, Earthen Shadow (shown), Olive Bark, Platinum Peak, Tree Bark Blend, and Urban Driftwood, along with extensions of two existing colors, Cherrywood and Apple Bark, to additional profiles from Arizona and Nevada. westlakeroyalroofing.com



CERTAINTEED URBAN RESERVE

CertainTeed has officially launched Urban Reserve, a new line that expands the brand's siding portfolio into the metal category. According to the manufacturer, Urban Reserve is a low-maintenance solution that's resistant to rotting, cracking, peeling, and even extreme weather—making it ideal for homes in any climate, from the coast to the mountains. The innovative metal siding line is available in nine smooth fade-resistant and contemporary solid colors to complement a wide variety of aesthetics. In addition, it's 100% recyclable and made of more than 90% recycled content. certainteed.com

TREX SELECT DECKING

This spring, Trex Company is rolling out new colors in its Trex Select line featuring elevated aesthetics and performance—including what the manufacturer says is the industry's first mid-priced board with heat-mitigating technology. Joining the existing shades of Saddle and Pebble Grey are three on-trend hues featuring a new grain pattern with subtle streaking and refined embossing: Malted Barley, Millstone, and Whiskey Barrel. Further differentiating these new offerings is the fact that they will be the first mid-tier options in the industry to feature Trex's proprietary SunComfortable IR technology. Advanced heat-mitigation properties engineered into the shell of the boards reflect the sun and keep the surface cooler than other composite decking offerings of a similar color, Trex says. trex.com



GRK FASTENERS AUGERBOLT THROUGH BOLT FASTENING SYSTEM

With GRK Fasteners' AugerBolt Through Bolt Fastening System, you can now drill the installation hole and install through bolts in one simple step. It simplifies code-approved through bolt installation by combining the drilling of an auger bit and the installation of a through bolt all in one easy step for greater productivity. The patented recessed tip revolutionizes through bolted installation, simplifying the notched 6x6 connection for pro deck builders. The bit and bolts are available in one grab-n-go package for a quicker shopping experience and eliminates loose components on the jobsite. grkfasteners.com



IG ARMOR

IG Railing has launched IG Armor, an advanced ultra-low maintenance glass treatment designed to create a durable barrier to enhance clarity and weather-resistance. Developed using a patented two-step application process, IG Armor creates an ultra-low maintenance hydrophobic barrier that repels water, ice, snow, dirt, and debris. Unlike traditional treatments, which rely on wax-based chemicals that cause streaking and yellowing over time, IG Armor molecularly bonds to polished glass, delivering reported long-lasting performance without compromising aesthetics. Applied with a simple spray-and-wipe process, IG Armor takes IG Railing from low maintenance to ultra-low maintenance on average less than a dollar per square foot. igrailing.com



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BUILDING PRODUCTS

ENVISION FAIRWAY RAILING

Envision Outdoor Living Products, manufacturer of Envision composite decking and Fairway railing, announced new railing products and an enhanced product line focused on clarity and simplicity for both pros and consumers. With a robust lineup of wood alternative railings, including railing systems in Aluminum, Vinyl, Composite, and Steel, Envision has taken the complexity out of choosing railing for any project and simplified it down to three easy steps:

1. **Railing Style:** Choose a Modern, Designer, or Traditional rail style, railing material, and infill.
2. **Posts:** Residential or commercial heights with slim or large structural post and post sleeve options.
3. **Accessories:** Add style and function with lighting, drink rails, ADA handrails, and more.

Envision's Fairway Railing Collection includes Designer Aluminum, Designer and Traditional Composite, Modern Steel, and Modern, Traditional, Designer, and TimberLux Traditional Vinyl (shown), reported to be the industry's only wood-look vinyl deck railing. It's available in two variegated colors, Native Chestnut and Silver Birch, and three infill options, including new Cable and Horizontal Baluster infills. envisionoutdoorliving.com



IQ VISE SYSTEM

New from Work IQ Tools, the IQ Vise System is a heavy-duty, all-terrain vise that the manufacturer says grips stronger, adjusts faster, and withstands tough conditions while improving efficiency, precision, and overall job site workflow. The IQ Vise System includes the IQ Vise—a high-performance articulating vise that locks in multiple positions; the IQ Vise Jaws—swappable jaw inserts designed for different materials and shapes, keeping workpieces secure and minimizing damage; and IQ Connect—plug-and-play accessories that provide extra functionality, freeing up hands and making complex tasks simpler. workiqtools.com



SPAX POWERLAGS

According to SPAX, its PowerLags line of engineered fasteners offer builders the largest selection of code-compliant structural screws for wood-to-wood framing. With features such as patented thread serrations that reportedly eliminate the need for pre-drilling, PowerLags claim to reduce installation time and labor costs by up to 40%. The fasteners' low-profile, large-diameter T-STAR Washer Head provides superior clamping force, while excellent corrosion resistance ensures long-lasting durability. spax.us

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BlackTalon's hidden deck fastening system works with wood decks, composite decks, or other decking materials, and is reported to be easy to install while allowing for easy maintenance. If a board cracks or warps, simply loosen the clips on either side and slide the damaged board out. Then slide a new board in and tighten the clip's screws. Other features include being manufactured from 301 full hard stainless steel alloy that allows clips to stay tight with the deck board during expansion, contraction, and sub structure movement, a proprietary leg design that holds the clip in place during installation while setting a consistent gap between boards, and an alternate leg design that allows for installations not parallel to the joist or for joist larger than 2" nominal.

blacktalonuniversal.com



KERRIE KELLY x FEENEY LASERCUT COLLECTION

Feeney, a manufacturer of quality architectural products and pioneer of cable railings, has unveiled its Kerrie Kelly x Feeney LaserCut Collection, a design-forward series of laser-cut panels created in collaboration with award-winning designer and Feeney brand ambassador Kerrie Kelly. Designed for indoor and outdoor applications, the Kerrie Kelly LaserCut Collection offers nine intricate panel designs inspired by architectural icons, global textures, and timeless patterns. These laser-cut panels can be used as decorative accents, privacy screens, or partitions, empowering architects, builders, and homeowners to elevate spaces effortlessly.

feeneyinc.com



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HOME VISUALIZER TOOL

LP Building Solutions has launched its all-new Home Visualizer Tool on its website. This enhanced tool comes with numerous improvements over the previous version, which the company says will help provide a better digital experience for its builders and homeowners. With its upgraded features, the Home Visualizer allows users to explore products in an interactive way, enhancing their decision-making process.



Sample Projects: Choose a project similar to yours and experiment with products and colors.

AI Instant Design: Upload a photo of your project and instantly see how LP products will look.

Design Services: Send a photo of your project and a team of experts will prepare your image for the LP Visualizer for a nominal fee.

lpcorp.com

TIMBERTECH RELIANCE RAIL

The AZEK Company, Inc. has released its new premium vinyl railing collection—TimberTech Reliance Rail. Reliance Rail is crafted with a recycled PVC core and an advanced PVC cap reinforced with aluminum for enhanced strength and resilience.



It delivers versatile design options perfect for residential and commercial projects alike—all at an entry-level price. According to the manufacturer, this railing collection is low-maintenance, easy-to-install, and cost-effective, and is modeled after some of TimberTech’s most popular railing collections, ensuring a familiar look and feel that consumers have trusted for years. Reliance Rail is available in Matte White and Khaki and is compatible with TimberTech Composite Railing accent lights or can be paired with TimberTech Composite Railing post sleeves for added lighting options. **timbertech.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:

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| 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 |
| A. H. ANGERSTEIN, INC. Wilmington, DE | est. 1924 | ORGAIN BUILDING SUPPLY Clarksville, TN | est. 1921 |

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#Factcheck

A local company is using your social media channels to take credit for creating a community service program you'd launched years earlier. What would you do?

SINCE LAUNCHING your own business 20-some years ago, you and a small but mighty team have worked hard to earn the trust of builders and remodelers in your market. You knew it wouldn't be easy, and you were right. But it has been rewarding, and you've tried to always use your power for good with your team, your clients, and your community.

That's why your company decided to create a special focus on first responders in your community. After all, when there's an emergency in the market you serve, the police, firefighters, and emergency medical services personnel are the first to arrive on the scene to help people in times of crisis. Along with your colleagues, you wanted to do your part to give back.

Back in 2016, you started First Responder Fridays, where first responders were invited to stop by for a free lunch and a thank you for all they do. The idea took off, with local restaurants working with you to provide the food, and manufacturer partners stepping up to help as well. It may not change the world, but sometimes small, positive touches can make a difference in people's lives. Nearly 10 years later, it's become part of the local culture.

You've encouraged your social media manager to use Facebook and Instagram to help spread the word in your community, and to let first responders know they're welcome. Most of the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, but your social media manager called your attention to a strange comment on a recent post that showed more than 100 hungry first responders enjoying lunch at your yard.

"If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery," read the comment, "we're downright chuffed. We've been doing this since 2019. Some call that innovation. Others call it 'wait, let's do that too.'"

Unsure how to respond, your social media manager said, "I can't tell if they're angry, or need attention, or are just trolling us for sport? The strangest part is why they state that we're imitating them—when we've been doing it for years. What's their point?"

You're baffled as well, notably because the company that posted the comment has approached you several times in the past about possibly working together. So, do they want to work with you, or troll you, or ... ? It's awesome that they're doing something similar, but you can't fathom how they'd benefit by claiming to have been there first.

What would you do?

CAST YOUR VOTE ONLINE AT: LBMJOURNAL.COM

Do nothing. First Responder Fridays is not a competition about who did it first. It's something positive you do for your community. If they want to compete on this, let them.

Correct them. Have your social media manager post publicly that you've been doing this since 2016, which predates 2019, and congratulate them on following your lead.

Delete & ignore. They're poking you to get a public response. Delete their comment, and don't give this any oxygen.

Red flag. If they view doing good for others as something to brag about and poke others, they may not be the kind of company you'd want to work with.

PHOTO: ©ISTOCK.COM/PATPITCHAYA

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.



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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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