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MARCH 2026 | \$15 U.S. | LBMJOURNAL.COM



76
**PETER
LUMBER CO.**
USDOT442267
GVW54,000

DEALER OF THE YEAR 2026

CATEGORY: \$10MM-\$50MM

PETER LUMBER

HOT PRODUCTS FROM IBS

INNOVATIONS ABOUND AT
THIS YEAR'S SHOW

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MARCH 2026



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HOT PRODUCTS 2026

NAHB IBS™



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BY RONN LEVINE

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**DEALER
OF THE YEAR
2026**
CATEGORY: \$10MM-\$50MM

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Leading Suppliers Council



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF



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DAVIS



ELLSWORTH



WAGNER



LEVINE

Rick Davis

Be a Players' Coach | P. 18

Rick Davis is the contributing sales editor for *LBM Journal* and regarded by many as the leading sales trainer and consultant in the LBM industry. He has been the owner of Building Leaders, Inc. for 20 years and trained tens of thousands of salespeople in our industry.

Thea Dudley

Avoiding Credit Drama | P. 22

After working for her subcontractor Dad but realizing manual labor wasn't for her, Thea Dudley moved to the power seat, granting credit and collecting cashflow. With over 35 years of experience, including as a VP of finance, she has worked with manufacturers, dealers, and contractors to improve cashflow. She hosts the "LBM Talks Credit" podcast, LBM webinars, and has written three books on the subject.

Bradley Hartmann

Leading a Team that Doesn't Rot Under Pressure | P. 20

Bradley Hartmann has written 15 books and hosts both "The Construction Leadership", and "The Craft of LBM Sales" podcasts. He advises LBM dealers, distributors, and manufacturers across the country and trains thousands of commercial and residential construction leaders annually through his executive coaching and consulting, online training programs, custom workshops, and keynote speeches.

Russ Kathrein

Why Relationships Matter | P. 24

Russ Kathrein is vice president of lumber & building materials at Do it Best, based in Fort Wayne, IN. He is passionate about the art of leadership and the human element of business. He has successfully led operations by first getting the people part correct and aligning the team, then focusing on fundamentals.

John D. Wagner

Book Value vs. Market Value | P. 24

John D. Wagner is a managing director for 1stWEST Mergers & Acquisitions, which has transacted \$1.5 billion+ in deals with a specialty in distribution and LBM sectors. John is the author of 25 books and 2,600+ articles published in several major outlets. His most popular book is "M&A Basics For People in a (BIG) Hurry!".

Ronn Levine

In Depth: Roofing Systems | P. 38


Ronn Levine is an award-winning writer and editor who has covered sports and arts (for *The Washington Post*), architecture, and the media. He is publisher of The ArtHouse, a DC group with 14,000 members, and owns two Super Bowl rings from a PR stint at the Washington Commanders.

Heidi J. Ellsworth

In Depth: Roofing Systems | P. 38

Heidi J. Ellsworth has worked in the roofing industry since 1993 and has held positions with Malarkey Roofing, Carlisle Construction Materials, and EagleView Technologies. She is currently the president/CEO of RoofersCoffeeShop® and the owner of HJE Consulting.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL OUR EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS



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CULPEPER
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FROM THE PUBLISHER

AS I WRITE THIS, four members of the LBM Journal team and I are heading home from Orlando as the 2026 International Builders' Show winds down. Instead of trying to summarize this massive event in the short space here, I want to share two key takeaways from the last few days.

Non-stop innovation. I had the opportunity again to serve as a judge for the Best of IBS Awards: Most Innovative Building Material. This year, some of the finalists came from established, proven innovators like Westlake Royal, Sherwin-Williams, and LP Building Solutions. These industry leaders are companies we're all familiar with, and all have a sizable presence on the show floor. Other finalists came from companies on the other end of the spectrum: small, scrappy startups in much smaller exhibits. Those booths are often manned by the product's inventor, along with a friend or family member. Given LBM Journal's own start as an underfunded startup, I love learning about these companies and sharing their innovations. Serving as a judge allows me to meet the founders of companies like Muddskip, J'd Out Flashings, and Highwood Timber, and learn about their practical, inventive solutions to jobsite challenges. You may not have heard of them yet, but by this time next year, they may be generating sales for you and saving your customers time and money. Check them out in our annual Hot Products from IBS roundup (p. 44). And I encourage you to check out the YouTube video by Social Media Manager Sally Lacey, where a representative from each finalist shares their product's unique story.



Our building community. As passionate as I am about building, supporting and celebrating our LBM community, that's how Sashco champions the trades. We were invited to experience their "Night of Trade Support," where the company brings together teachers and students from trade schools throughout the U.S. to network, form meaningful connections, and to present scholarships. The energy in the packed room was electric, and speaker Matt Risinger let everyone in the room know how important they are—and set the stage for attendees to connect with peers in their part of the U.S.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Rick Schumacher'.

While we are all members of the LBM community, Sashco's event hammered home that we're also part of something bigger: the building community. In a nation with serious shortages of both housing and skilled labor, we have the power to make a difference. If your company is doing something to support the trades, or working to attract young people to the LBM community—or the building community at large—we'd love to hear about it. The more we share our ideas with each other, the more of a difference we can make. It is truly rewarding to work with so many people and companies determined to use their power for good.

— Rick Schumacher
Executive Editor & Publisher

HAVE A QUESTION FOR RICK?
RICK@LBMJOURNAL.COM

SERIOUS ABOUT BUILDING YOUR BUSINESS? WE ARE.

LBM JOURNAL[®] **DEALER** OF THE YEAR **2026**

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER

There's no question that the entrepreneurial spirit is alive in the lumber/building material industry. A hearty congratulations to **LBM JOURNAL'S 2026 DEALER OF THE YEAR** award winners.



CATEGORY: \$100MM+

CARTER LUMBER

Kent, OH

CATEGORY: \$50MM-\$100MM

RED RIVER LUMBER

Texarkana, TX

CATEGORY: \$10MM-\$50MM

PETER LUMBER COMPANY

Pleasantville, NJ

CATEGORY: \$10MM

ISSAQUAH LUMBER

Issaquah, WA

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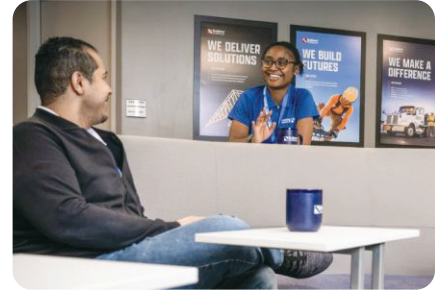
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BIG CREEK LUMBER



84 LUMBER



BUILDERS FIRSTSOURCE

BY THE YARD

Big Creek Lumber hosted its 11th Annual Contractor Conference, bringing together over 200 attendees including contractors, construction industry professionals, vendor representatives and Big Creek Lumber employees. The event coincided with Big Creek Lumber's 80th year in business and highlighted the company's long standing commitment to education, innovation and partnership within the construction and building materials industry.

84 Lumber has opened its newest store in La Mirada, CA. The new location will also serve as a resource for rebuilding and recovery efforts in the Palisades and surrounding communities affected by wildfires. The 26,500-sq.-ft. store carries lumber, windows, hardware, interior trim, timbers, outdoor living packages and more. The location also features a 42,900-sq.-ft. lumberyard.

Hancock Lumber announced the company has completed renovations at its Brunswick, ME location. Improvements include a fully-stocked hardware store, drive-thru warehouse, kitchen design showroom, and revamped lumberyard.

Harbin Lumber Company announced the lumberyard recently partnered with a local nonprofit to provide beds to children in Oconee County, SC. The Harbin Family Foundation was able to provide support to the Westminster, SC chapter of Sleep in Heavenly Peace with the assembly, transportation, and delivery of beds.

Builders FirstSource announced the organization has been included in a list of "Companies Who Support Employee Health & Wellness," by Comparably, a rating platform for workplace culture insights.

INDUSTRY UPDATES

Annandale Millwork and Allied Systems Corporation and Frogale Lumber Supply, a family-owned manufacturer of structural building components and millwork, will invest \$11.5 million to expand operations in Newport News, VA. The new Newport News facility will manufacture roof trusses, floor trusses, prefabricated structural wall panels, and custom and stock millwork, including interior and exterior doors, to support residential and commercial construction projects.

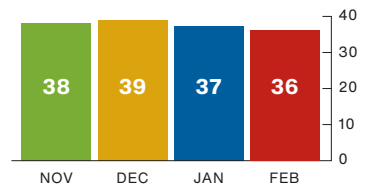
MITER Foundation, the charitable arm of MITER Brands, recently announced it is deepening its philanthropic impact in 2026 with the renewal of two partnerships: the Phoenix Children's Hospital and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Simpson Strong-Tie marked the grand opening of its newest manufacturing plant, located in Gallatin, TN. The 500,250-sq.-ft., \$125 million facility will test and manufacture a range of anchors, fasteners and Quik Drive fastening tools. The facility opened with 227 employees, including machine operators, maintenance technicians, heat treat techs, and process and product engineers, and is expected to create an additional 20 jobs in 2026.

ABC Supply Co. recently opened three new locations in Fremont, OH, San Juan Capistrano, CA, and Shelby, NC.

Builder sentiment edges lower on affordability concerns

Builder confidence in the market for newly built single-family homes fell one point to 36 in February, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI). Persistent affordability challenges, including high housing price-to-income ratios and elevated land and construction costs, helped push builder confidence lower for the second straight month to start the year.



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PEOPLE IN LBM

Hancock Lumber is welcoming **Rebecca McCrohan** as its new general manager of the Damariscotta location. McCrohan brings over 15 years of retail management experience, most recently at Home Depot where she led large teams and highly dynamic operations.



84 Lumber has promoted **Dave Rumbaugh** to vice president of purchasing. Rumbaugh began his career at 84 Lumber as a manager trainee in North Versailles, was promoted to co-manager in Murrysville, and then served as store manager at the Harmarville location.



Building Products Inc. has announced the addition of **Ben Rivera** as director of commercial millwork sales. Rivera brings more than three decades of experience in commercial sales, dealer development, and building materials manufacturing, with a strong concentration in commercial and architectural applications.



BROESCH

Boise Cascade Company recently announced four executive leadership promotions:

Angella Broesch was promoted to senior vice president of human resources.

Chris Forrey was promoted to senior vice president of finance and investor relations.

Dennis Fringuelli was named vice president of sales and marketing for the company's building materials distribution (BMD) division.

Jeff Dracup was named vice president of sales and marketing for engineered wood products (EWP).



FORREY



FRINGUELLI



DRACUP

Modern Mill announced that it has named **Matthew Tevelde** as the new executive vice president of national sales. In this role, Tevelde will lead the company's national sales organization and support the continued growth of Modern Mill's ACRE product portfolio across residential and commercial markets.



IN MEMORIAM

Franklin, TN-based **Huskey Building Supply** announced via social media that CEO **Austin Huskey** died. Huskey, who was a third-generation owner, was recognized as an LBM Journal 40 under 40 recipient in 2025, highlighting the value he brought to Huskey and the building supply industry.



CO-OP & BUYER'S GROUPS



MOYER



COLLINS

LBM Advantage announced that its NextGen Steering Committee has elected new leadership, naming **Alex Moyer**, owner of A.D. Moyer Lumber as chairman and **Adam Collins**, manager at S.W. Collins Company as vice chairman.

LBM Advantage has announced the appointment of **Steve Stone** as member sales manager for the West. Based in Southern California, Stone will support LBM Advantage's strategic growth initiatives across the Western United States.

LMC has announced the promotion of **Geoff Hesselton** to director of technology delivery. In this role, Hesselton will oversee the business applications that enable LMC to deliver new capabilities to its customers. He will also lead the company's transition to and ongoing management of the LBMX platform, while continuing to guide the Project Management function.



Do it Best shared that **Chad Ruth** announced his retirement. Ruth served as President & CEO of United Hardware Distributing Co. prior to and during the early stages of the combination with Do it Best.



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DISTRIBUTION NEWS

Wausau Supply Company, a national leader in manufacturing and distributing innovative exterior building materials, has announced its entrance into the New England market. With the establishment of a new Drop & Hook distribution location in Chicopee, MA, Wausau Supply Company will now service Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

Envision Outdoor Living Products, manufacturer of Envision composite decking and Fairway Railing collection, has added **Wallace Distribution Company** as its newest distributor. From its headquarters in Morristown, TN, Wallace will sell Envision's Designer Aluminum Railing to dealers throughout most of Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, all of West Virginia, and northern Alabama and northern Georgia.

Cameron Ashley Building Products has announced the opening of a new distribution center in Greensboro, NC. The location will stock fiberglass insulation, spray foam, mineral wool, sheathing, Canopy housewrap, and all supporting accessories to better serve residential and light commercial customers throughout the region. The company has also announced the opening of a new distribution center in Fort Worth, TX. This location will stock fiberglass insulation, spray foam, cellulose insulation, Canopy housewrap, and all necessary accessories to support customers throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth market.

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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.



LBM TALKS:
How Red River Lumber leverages social media



Ganahl Lumber announces acquisition of Pine Tree Lumber



Five lessons learned from a top sales shark



QXO acquires Kodiak for \$2.25 billion





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CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY #3

A STORY ABOUT CONTINUING A LEGACY

When people ask what makes Morris Hardware special, I start with our story. Founded in 1845, our store has served McConnelsville for 180 years and is one of the oldest family-owned hardware businesses in the country. Today, Tom Schanken—our founder's sixth-generation descendant—and I are committed to carrying that legacy forward.

We've endured wars, depressions, pandemics, and the rise of big-box competitors, but our small-town spirit and commitment to neighbors have never wavered. Our customers — contractors, farmers, and DIYers—are the heart of Main Street, and we're proud to serve them.

Still, even a historic business must adapt. When our previous supplier could no longer support our needs, we sought a partner who shared our values. We found that in Orgill. I first met the company through our rep, Jake Thompson, whose genuine, no-pressure approach made the decision easy when it came time to change.

Orgill helped modernize key departments, update assortments, and refine pricing while respecting our independence.

At 180 years and counting, Morris Hardware is stronger than ever—proof that personal service and community connection remain timeless, and that we've found the right partner to help us continue that legacy.

Shayna Roberts

Shayna Roberts

Co-Owner, Morris Hardware | McConnelsville, Ohio

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MERGERS + ACQUISITIONS

QXO, Inc. announced it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire **Kodiak Building Partners** for approximately \$2.25 billion. The move triples QXO's existing market opportunity and positions QXO into the lumber, trusses, gypsum, and construction supplies market, with complementary fabrication, assembly, and installation capabilities, according to the company.

Ganahl Lumber announced the company has acquired **Pine Tree Lumber** in San Diego County, CA. The acquisition brings Ganahl's locations to 13 throughout the southern California region.

R.P. Lumber Co. has announced the acquisition of **Bender Lumber** in Indiana. The acquisition of Bender Lumber marks a major milestone for R.P. Lumber, bringing its total store count to 99 across seven states.

US LBM has acquired **XO Windows**, a regional supplier and installer of windows and doors, serving residential and commercial builders across the Phoenix and Las Vegas-Henderson metro areas. Founded in 2008, XO Windows provides a wide range of product offerings, including vinyl, aluminum and specialty-shape windows, as well as exterior, interior and sliding glass doors.

Britton Lumber Company, a distributor of building materials throughout New England and Upstate New York and a manufacturer of Eastern White Pine boards, announced its planned acquisition of **Denison-Cannon Company**, a Billerica, MA based distributor of building materials. Founded in 1920, Denison-Cannon serves packaging and pallet manufacturers and lumber dealers throughout the New England region and offers a wide range of forest products and building materials.

Johnson Paint | A Ring's End brand will acquire **Somerset Paint** with locations in Swansea and North Dartmouth, MA. As part of this transition, Johnson Paint will move its New Bedford, MA operations to Dartmouth, MA.

White Cap has signed an agreement to acquire **Colony Hardware**, a regional U.S. distributor of tools, equipment, supplies, safety products, and tool repairs and rentals serving residential, commercial and industrial contractors. Colony is headquartered in Orange, CT, and operates locations across the Central and Eastern United States supported by more than 1,100 associates.

Pacific Avenue Capital Partners, a global private equity firm focused on corporate carve-outs and other complex situations in the middle market, announced that an affiliate of Pacific Avenue, alongside **Cameron Ashley Building Products**, has acquired **Therm-All** from Incline Equity Partners, a fabricator and distributor of metal building insulation and related products serving commercial and industrial end markets.

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TOUGH CALL SOLUTIONS

JANUARY 2026 ISSUE SURVEY RESULTS FROM LBMJOURNAL.COM AND LINKEDIN.

TARIFF WHIPLASH

Your attempt to stock up and save was blown up by a sudden, massive tariff that left you with a warehouse full of overpriced inventory. Now what? Here's how readers responded.

- Work through it.** 71%
There's nothing you can do now, except play the hand you've been dealt. Come up with a plan to work through the inventory with minimal losses.
- Fight back.** 20%
Tell your fastener vendor that this is on them—and demand that they cover half of the unexpected tariff.
- Call your congressman.** 6%
You can't be the only casualty of this trade war. Call your representative and see if the government may be willing/able to help make you whole.
- Own it.** 3%
Sit down with the owner and explain how what happened was unforeseeable and beyond your control. And agree that stocking up on inventory in the future is a risk not worth taking.



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.

Find us @LBMTalks on Spotify and Apple Podcast, and on our YouTube Channel.

LBM TALKS



INDUSTRY EVENTS

MAR 10-12

LMC ANNUAL 2026
Chicago, IL | lmc.net

MAR 11

IDEAS SHOW
King of Prussia, PA | ideasshow.net

APR 26-29

NEXTGEN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
Kalispell, MT | lmadvantage.com

SEP 14-16

2026 WMA MILLWORK CONVENTION
& TRADESHOW
Orlando, FL | worldmillworkalliance.com

SEP 14-18

BCMC 2026
Columbus, OH | bcmcshow.com

SEP 23-25

CONSTRUCTION SUPPLIERS
ASSOCIATION 2026 CONFERENCE &
TRADESHOW
St. Simons Island, GA | gocsa.com

SEP 25-28

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

LBM STRATEGIES 2026 CONFERENCE

OCT 14-16

Milwaukee, WI | lbmstrategies.com

OCT 28-30

LMC EXPO 2026
Philadelphia, PA | lmc.net

NOV 4-6

NAWLA TRADERS MARKET
Anaheim, CA | nawla.org

NOV 9-11

FALL PLANNING CONFERENCE
Everett, MA | lmadvantage.com

NOV 17-19

DECK EXPO
New Orleans, LA | deckexpo.com

2027

FEB 2-4

2027 NAHB INTERNATIONAL
BUILDERS SHOW
Las Vegas, NV | buildersshow.com

MAR 5-7

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

MAR 23-25

LMC ANNUAL 2027
Tampa, FL | lmc.net

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Why Contractors Trust Westbury Aluminum Railing

In today's outdoor living market, contractors are asked to deliver more than just code-compliant railing. Homeowners want clean sightlines, durable materials, design flexibility, and confidence that their investment will last for years. For contractors, that means choosing products that install efficiently, perform reliably, and reflect their craftsmanship.

That's why contractors across the country continue to choose Westbury Aluminum Railing, a complete railing solution engineered for performance, backed by industry-leading support, and designed to elevate every outdoor living space.

Designed with Contractors in Mind

Westbury Aluminum Railing is manufactured by Digger Specialties, Inc. (DSI), a trusted leader in outdoor living products. From the first post to the final section, Westbury is designed to simplify the build process without compromising aesthetics.

Contractors appreciate consistent quality, precision engineering, and installer-friendly design. Box kits, preassembled sections, easy-to-follow installation instructions, and compatibility across product lines help reduce jobsite guesswork and save valuable time. Whether installing on a residential deck, porch, or balcony, Westbury delivers a smooth, predictable install project after project.

Strength, Style, and Versatility

Westbury Aluminum Railing offers the strength of aluminum combined with refined design options that appeal to today's homeowners. Available in a wide range of colors, infill styles, and profiles, Westbury complements everything from classic to contemporary architecture.

Popular options include traditional railing, sleek glass infill system, and cable railing solutions allowing contractors to meet varying design preferences while staying within a single trusted brand. Durable powder-coated finishes resist fading, scratching, and corrosion, even in harsh climates, ensuring long-term performance and reduced callbacks.

A Smarter Choice for Outdoor Living

Outdoor living spaces continue to be one of the strongest growth areas in residential construction and remodeling. Railings play a critical role in both safety and design, making product selection more important than ever.

To help simplify that decision process, DSI recently introduced the Reference Guide to Railing for Outdoor Living Spaces.

Designed as an educational tool for homeowners and contractors alike, the guide walks readers through key considerations such as material selection, design preferences, infill options, and performance expectations.

Contractors can use the Reference Guide as a conversation starter helping homeowners understand why aluminum railing is a smart, long-term investment and why Westbury stands apart. It reinforces professionalism, builds trust, and supports informed purchasing decisions.

Supporting Contractors Beyond the Jobsite

Westbury's commitment to contractors goes beyond product performance. The Westbury Pro Rewards Program is designed to recognize and support professionals who specify and install Westbury Aluminum Railing.

Pro Rewards members gain access to training resources, marketing tools, and exclusive program benefits that help grow their business. From educational materials to brand support, the program reinforces Westbury's role as a true partner not just a product supplier.

For lumberyards and dealers, Pro Rewards adds another layer of value by strengthening contractor relationships and encouraging repeat business through a proven, professional-grade railing system.

A Brand Contractors Can Stand Behind

When contractors recommend Westbury Aluminum Railing, they are not just choosing a product, they are aligning with a brand known for quality, innovation, and reliability. Westbury railing systems are code-compliant, thoughtfully engineered, and supported by a company that understands the realities of the jobsite.

For contractors looking to differentiate their work, reduce installation challenges, and deliver outdoor living spaces that stand the test of time, Westbury Aluminum Railing continues to be the clear choice.





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BY RICK DAVIS

LIKE SO MANY salespeople, sales managers in my career were frequently types who pressured me and my teammates for results. They were quick to criticize “lost” sales and deficient short-term results. I learned to deflect the criticism and chose to focus on the tasks that I knew would create results rather than strive to appease managers (I had a few) that had never been salespeople.

By the time I was offered my first sales management role, I took it because I wanted to do something different than those managers I had worked for. I wanted to become a “players’ coach,” the type of manager who truly inspired salespeople and helped them forge a career. The goal wasn’t short-term results with the offer of job security; it was crafting a consistent performance to produce results and long-term career security for my team members.

The focus on short-term results by managers leads to frequent laments of not getting the reporting they need to lead. They have salespeople driving around, wasting time. The results aren’t coming. Their frustration grows. To them I say, if you’ve got a sales problem, then fix it, fire it, or ignore it; but for Pete’s sake, stop whining. Sales results and performance are leadership issues. Players don’t get fired—coaches do.

BE A PLAYERS’ COACH

The problems begin immediately with poor talent selection. Managers strive to hire experienced salespeople with the presumption that past results will naturally recur in a new environment, which they don’t. Every salesperson during an interview promises the world and boasts of past results, many of which they didn’t necessarily create, but instead inherited.

The behavioral interview process identifies performance traits that a leader seeks in an individual. The various performance traits you are looking for include grit, organizational skills, leadership, teamwork, decision-making, and a

few more. If you get the right DNA, then coaching and leading a willing performer becomes simple, albeit not easy.

The way we as leaders create results is by knowing the behaviors that predict future results. As an example, take the frequent question of managers regarding a lost sale. They ask, “What happened? What went wrong?” The answer is that nothing went wrong, except the manager is simply blaming the salesperson for not getting the desired result in an isolated case.

To [managers] I say, if you’ve got a sales problem, then fix it, fire it, or ignore it ... Sales results and performance are leadership issues. Players don’t get fired—coaches do.

The fact is that some sales just don’t close when you want them to. The correct questions are, “What is the next step?” “Is there still a chance on this lead or is it time to find better ones?” This is a powerful coaching moment whether you’re a manager or a salesperson managing yourself.

Credible leaders and salespeople realize that we are not in a close the deal business but instead are in an open the relationship business. It can take weeks, months, and even years to garner that first order. The sales secret is that closing the sale is an incremental process of creating a series of productive meetings.

Another problem for managers (and salespeople) is the false belief that there is always some answer or problem to solve that will earn the sales you want. The profession doesn’t work that way. The law of averages is called a law because it is one. Successful selling means getting a percentage of the sales you pursue.

Instead of pressuring for a single sale or criticizing a lost one, take a more global approach by managing the quantity and quality of prospects. A salesperson who is serious about their career should be able to prove it by consistently tracking their list of leads. This means constant review of prospects to continually build momentum in the relationship and stocking the pipeline with enough opportunities to justify the majority of predictable losses that will occur.

Instead of pressuring for results and expecting accountability to you, try coaching to performance standards that lead to predictable results. Then you can observe if the salesperson is self-accountable and disciplined. In this way, you get the sustainable results you want and become the players’ coach that salespeople will follow into battle.

Manage the “next meeting.” Manage the “prospect quantity.” Manage the “prospect quality.”

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

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BY BRADLEY HARTMANN

LEADING A TEAM THAT DOESN'T ROT UNDER PRESSURE

(LOOKING AT YOU, MICHIGAN)

FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS, University of Michigan football packed the Big House while letting its foundation rot. While interim head coach Biff Poggi (yep, real name) is now gone, his assessment remains: “Everything has to be re-evaluated ... let’s just call it what it is, a malfunctioning organization, where there’s something every year.”

Behind the scenes were false standards, misaligned incentives, and accountability failures—proof that strong results can exist within a dysfunctional climate.

Climate is the set of conditions leaders create that shape how people behave. For sales leaders these climate elements are far more revealing than last quarter’s revenue.

1. Standards

Standards define what “good” actually looks like. Michigan’s performance standards were elite on the field. Off it, they were optional, masking all sorts of problematic behavior.

Companies make a mistake when revenue becomes the only standard. If a salesperson can exceed their goal without prospecting or opening new accounts, you’re not focused on selling—you’re focused on account management.

Relevant question: If growth is the priority, how am I paying for incremental new business?

2. Flexibility

Flexibility reflects how free people feel to innovate within boundaries. The issue in Ann Arbor wasn’t creativity, it was the near-complete absence of constraints.

In sales, flexibility shows up in how reps allocate time. When salespeople are paid the same for maintaining mature accounts as they are for opening new ones, they don’t innovate around growth—they optimize for comfort.

Relevant question: How have I made it easier for sales reps to protect existing business than to grow new business?

3. Rewards

At Michigan, winning produced immediate rewards. More wins meant more money and more power. The simplest way to reward new business is to pay more for it. But the best leaders combine monetary and non-monetary rewards to show which behaviors matter most.

Relevant question: How do I reward salespeople with status, recognition, and opportunity?

4. Responsibility

Responsibility reflects ownership for outcomes—good and bad. When Michigan imploded, assistants protected the program. Jim Harbaugh collected the trophies and left others to clean up the flaming bag of crap on the front porch.

When LBM sales are soaring, leaders can cite specific reasons. As growth stalls, the reasons become vague. People stop protecting the organization and start protecting themselves.

Relevant question: What sales strategy shifts have I implemented and what results did they actually produce?

5. Clarity

Clarity reflects how well people understand what the organization truly stands for. Michigan’s espoused core value was integrity. The actual value was winning at all costs.

Few LBM firms wish to compete on price. Yet many sales teams struggle to articulate how they are better or different.

Relevant question: Can every sales rep articulate your unique differentiation?

6. Commitment

Commitment is the emotional bond to something larger than self-interest. Michigan’s players showed cohesion despite chaos above them. Some sales teams do the same when leadership fractures—others don’t.

Relevant question: Do my salespeople feel compelled to achieve our company’s top goal?

The Takeaway: Climate Control

I graduated from the University of Illinois. So yeah, I’m biased—but not wrong. You can win with an unstable climate, at least for a while.

But just as continuous improvement compounds over time, so do small fractures. Results are posted on the scoreboard today, but climate decides how long you stay on top.

Bradley Hartmann was raised in a lumberyard, worked in area purchasing at PulteGroup, and is passionate about helping LBM sales teams make it easy for builders to buy. You can email him at bradley@bradleyhartmannandco.com.

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BY THEA DUDLEY

Hi there Thea,
 Long time reader, first time emailer! I work in sales. All I hear from my credit department (which is two people) is how payments are slowing, bankruptcies are up, money is getting harder to collect, and credit scores are declining. They make it sound like we are in the midst of the zombie apocalypse. As a salesperson, it is debilitating, depressing, and demotivating. How am I supposed to keep positive and bring in sales when it is all doom and gloom?

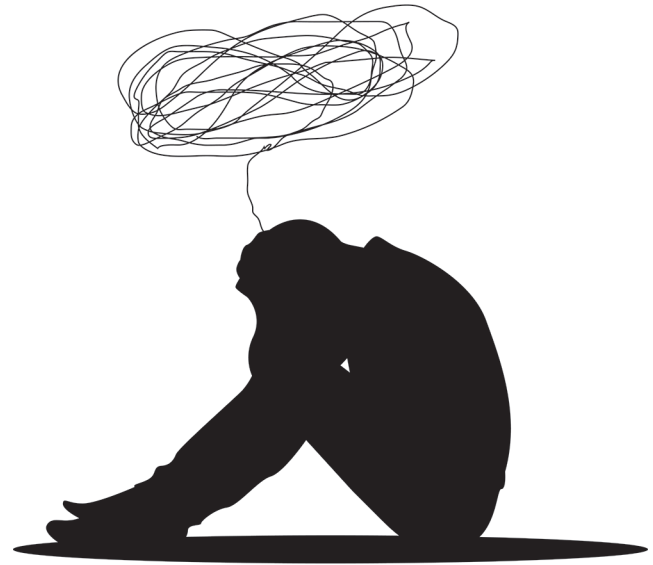
— Sucking the life out of me

Dear Life Sucker,

I'm not too crazy about your energy right now, Life Suck. Welcome to sales and credit in the building materials industry—where we make easy, hard. Maybe your credit team wouldn't give the zombie update at every possible opportunity if they were actually heard. Every sale is great, until it isn't. Every customer is great, until they aren't.

Invoices roll into one bucket after the next—30+, 60+, 90+—I could go on, but you know the roll progression. They hang on like they're waiting for an anniversary party. Memories fade, sales move on to the next big deal, and that past-due account hangs on the AR, becoming the credit manager's unwanted tale to tell. One we could have avoided had anyone listened to credit.

Nobody wants to be "that person." Sometimes I wish my job was like a TV show. Where I could say anything I want, in any turn of phrase, and not have the background noise in my head of "is this what pushes HR to finally fire me?" To back slap someone and not be arrested for assault or told



"it is against company policy" to do so. What if credit and sales were like a TV show? My pick would be "Landman."

If you haven't seen it, check it out. Never having been a huge Billy Bob Thornton fan, his character converted me. Every time I see the cartel kick the stuffing out of him, my credit manager soul relates to how it is another day at the office. I lay the facts out on a customer and then the posturing and whitewashing begin. I am left wondering what exactly do you hear when I say, "ONE order at a time?" That means they get one order and have to pay it off before we ship another. Not, "hey go sell them another," and pretend we didn't have this conversation.

Ole Billy Bob is challenged time and again with working miracles when no one listens to him, but at least he gets to lay it out there in any colorful, blunt, and unvarnished way he chooses, and no one runs to HR to tattle. Some days I am left to wonder why the company employs a credit position when they really don't want to hear about the "dark side" of humanity.

At this point, you're asking yourself why you emailed me. That I'm not any better than what you have at your camp. Ask yourself, "Is it me?" Take stock. Why is this the messaging coming out of your credit corner? Have you, or your compadres, done some shady stuff that your credit manager clearly remembers? Darn! I hate it when memories are good! Then again, it is hard to forget when the remnants of an account gone wrong are staring you in the face every day as you review the AR and you're being grilled by your boss about it.

Wanna turn both your frowns upside down? Sit down with your credit manager and have a candid conversation. Take a little interest in why the dire warnings of world destruction. How can we help each other without the drama? Sometimes people just want to feel heard.

Let me leave you with a little credit manager proverb: "A sales rep who can't answer my questions without getting angry or defensive is hiding more than the answer." Remember that.

AVOIDING CREDIT DRAMA

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.

LET'S BUILD SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL



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Premium redwood shines on UC Berkeley campus.

Built on the University of California, Berkeley campus more than 100 years ago, Creekside Center underwent an extensive renovation to become the new home for the university's Disabled Students' Program (DSP). The renovated building is clad in a durable, pre-finished redwood heartwood grade board and batten profile. Help your customers complete their projects with premium redwood boards, pattern stock and timbers. **Let's work together. Let's build something beautiful.**



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Project Case Study

BY JOHN D. WAGNER

INVESTMENT BANKERS will sometimes run a “book value” calculation for what your company is worth. Book value can be used in a “net asset value” calculation, which is done if the company is 1. underperforming; 2. distressed; or (most often) 3. if the multiple of EBITDA approach to valuing your company is below the book value, and the multiple of EBITDA method won’t be used in the sale of this particular business.

In the broadest sense, the book value is calculated as tangible assets minus liabilities. Tangible assets include AR, inventory, prepaids, accumulated depreciation, and fixed assets. Let’s focus on the fixed assets today.

BOOK VALUE VS. MARKET VALUE

On paper, the fixed assets can look impressive. Millions of dollars in rolling stock, inventory, and equipment are recorded, and boy oh boy, it looks great, all neatly entered in the general ledger. But for lumber and building material dealers, that fixed asset figure often represents something more conceptual than real. The moment an outside party starts to examine the physical assets behind the balance sheet, the gulf between “book value” and “market value” becomes evident, and it can be dramatic.

For instance, rolling stock—trucks, forklifts, trailers, and other yard machinery—often depreciates far faster than accounting tables predict. While the balance sheet may still list each truck at tens of thousands of dollars, an on-site inspection can quickly reveal dents, worn tires, expired warranties, outdated hydraulics, and maintenance schedules that were not adhered to. Once a buyer or appraiser starts pricing those units at current market conditions, they may be worth half or less than half of the recorded value. And even if the condition is fair, the resale market for specialized equipment is thin. Finding a buyer for a 10-year-old delivery truck or a boom loader can take months, further eroding its value.

Inventory poses a similar challenge. It’s one thing to report \$10 million in stock on the shelves and in the yard. But it’s another thing entirely to convert that material into cash. Everyone reading this column knows that your yard carries a mix of high velocity items, including dimensional lumber, EWP, drywall, shingles, and insulation. But there are slow-moving, unsaleable, or obsolete products in there as well. Stuck in your “boneyard,” you’ve likely got some SKUs that have lingered, maybe for years, losing value to weather, obsolescence, or design changes.

Another asset class in fixed assets includes office equipment like chairs, desks, computers, phones, printers, and partition walls. Individually, they look substantial on paper. Collectively, they might add thousands of dollars to book value. Yet when it’s time to sell, those items have minimal resale appeal. Once it sees the light of day, with scratches and ink stains, a desk that once cost \$500 new might fetch \$100 at auction—if there’s a buyer at all. Most acquirers view such items as expendable and factor them into the purchase price at a steeply reduced or nominal value.

For LBM business owners, the fixed assets category of a book value calculation is an accounting construct, not a realistic market price. It serves useful internal functions, such as helping to track depreciation, manage taxes, and understand long-term capital investments. But it rarely aligns with what those assets would fetch if actually sold.

The moment an outside party starts to examine the physical assets behind the balance sheet, the gulf between “book value” and “market value” becomes evident, and it can be dramatic.

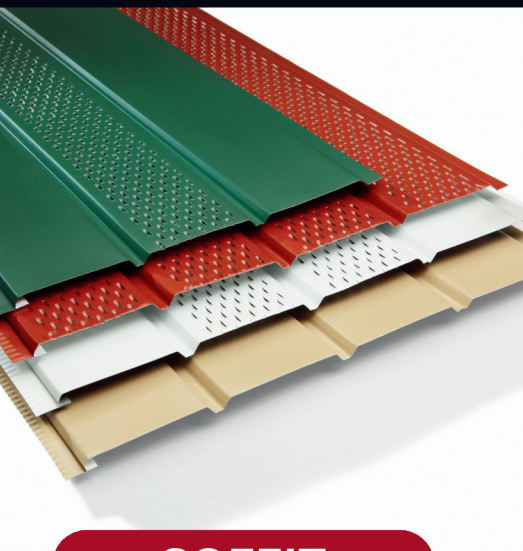
Recognizing this distinction can sharpen financial planning and expectations in both daily operations and during M&A discussions. When evaluating your company’s true worth, where a multiple of EBITDA approach falls short of the value you expect, bolster your value by emphasizing the cash-generating side of the business, along with customer relationships, minimally-aged AR, service efficiency, brand reputation, and recurring revenue. If you rely too heavily on the theoretical worth of your tangible assets, you’ll be disappointed in the value of those assets ... to say nothing of how personally you will take it when a buyer looks around your office and yard and makes a comment about how you have overestimated the fixed assets of the business.

Sure, the book value may tell a great story on paper, but the market takes up the pen to write the final chapter in cash.

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



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BY RUSS KATHREIN

WHY RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

EARLY IN MY CAREER, I was taught to be cautious about getting too close to vendors. The reasoning was simple. Relationships can cloud judgment, weaken objectivity, and make difficult decisions harder. Several well-known companies are often cited for intentionally discouraging close or personal relationships with vendors, including Walmart, Amazon, and Costco. Their intent is clear. They want decisions driven by data, price, efficiency, and scale.

There is truth in that approach. However, most of us do not work in organizations that can leverage the scale of Walmart, the depth of data available to Amazon, or the operating efficiencies of Costco. Experience has taught me something equally important. Success in business, especially long-term success, is built on trust. Trust is difficult to establish without relationships.

I was once invited to an event by a large vendor we did business with. At the time, the relationship was professional but shallow. We worked together, but I did not really know the key people inside the organization. The event itself was well done and enjoyable, but that was not where the real value was created. The most important moments were the conversations outside the formal agenda. Meals, side discussions, and unstructured time allowed me to get to know the people behind the company.

I learned how they thought, how they made decisions, and what they valued. More importantly, they learned the same about me and our business. The time invested felt useful, but not critical, until circumstances changed.

Not long after, that vendor was acquired by another company. Anyone who has lived through a supplier acquisition knows what often follows. New leadership, new priorities, and decisions made far away from the customer. During that transition, the people I had built relationships with went well beyond what was contractually required. They advocated for us internally, helped us navigate uncertainty, and worked to protect our interests during a period of disruption. They did

that because of trust. Trust that had been built through personal connection, not spreadsheets or scorecards.

That experience reinforced a lesson many seasoned leaders share. It is harder to make decisions that harm someone you know and respect. Just as it is harder to deliver bad news face-to-face than by text or email, it is harder to make detrimental business decisions when there is a real human relationship involved. That does not mean tough decisions disappear—it means they are handled with more care, transparency, and balance.

Trust does not come from socializing alone. It comes from consistency, honesty, and mutual accountability. Relationships do not replace performance expectations. They strengthen them. When trust exists, conversations are more direct. Problems surface earlier. Commitments carry more weight. Both sides are more willing to invest in solutions rather than argue over responsibility.

For newer leaders, this is an important distinction. Building relationships with vendors does not mean lowering standards or avoiding difficult conversations. In fact, strong relationships make those conversations more effective. When respect and trust are present, feedback is more likely to be heard and acted upon.

The same principle applies when you are on the other side of the table. As a vendor, you want strong relationships with your key customers for the very same reason. When you know your customers, understand their pressures, and have earned their trust, conversations become more productive and outcomes more balanced. When challenges arise, and they always do, customers who know you are more likely to engage, listen, and work toward a solution rather than default to a purely transactional response. Relationships create context. They turn problems into discussions instead of ultimatums.

There is also a leadership responsibility to manage relationships properly. Guardrails matter. Ethics matter. Objectivity matters. But avoiding relationships altogether in the name of objectivity can be just as risky. Business is still done by people. Decisions are still made by people. Trust still matters.

In the end, strong relationships with vendors are not about favoritism. They are about understanding. Understanding how your partners think, what pressures they face, and how they will behave when conditions change. When trust is present, both sides are more likely to do the right thing, especially when it is hard.

That is when relationships prove their real value.

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



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 227 members, with more coming in each month. In all, the companies have provided 28,855 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:

CAROLINA LUMBER & SUPPLY COMPANY Atlanta, GA	est. 1900	DELAWARE COUNTY SUPPLY COMPANY, INC. Boothwyn, PA	est. 1924
LEARNED LUMBER Hermosa Beach, CA	est. 1924	GEORGE M HALL LUMBER West Homestead, PA	est. 1893
CLARKS LUMBER Herington, KS	est. 1925	SAN ANTONIO LUMBER COMPANY San Antonio, FL	est. 1923
ORGAIN BUILDING SUPPLY Clarksville, TN	est. 1921	MILTONVALE LUMBER CO. Miltonvale, KS	est. 1900
ISSAQUAH LUMBER Issaquah, WA	est. 1889	LUMMUS SUPPLY COMPANY Acworth, GA	est. 1925
SCHOLL LUMBER Houston, TX	est. 1845	ATTICA LUMBER CO. Attica, OH	est. 1925

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For a complete listing of LBM Century Club members,
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PASSING THE BATON

This month's Real Issues. Real Answers. question has to do with the issue of losing longtime employees to retirement. Most employers have likely seen news stories warning of a wave of retirements headed for the workforce in the next five years as one of the largest segments of the U.S. population reaches age 65 and older.

BY LBM JOURNAL READERS



What insights would you share with the LBM dealer who posed this scenario: “In 2025, we lost several long-time members of our team to retirement, and it hurt. In 2026, we’re anticipating at least double that number. We’ve had some success recently bringing on younger pros, and have experimented with mentorship programs, but the institutional knowledge that we lose with the retiring pros is leaving big gaps in our company’s knowledge base. We’d love to hear how other dealers are navigating this issue—which isn’t going away.”

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:

“Try to use the older employees to be more of a teacher in their final years and not so much an active full-time salesperson. We’re hoping that they also learn from watching and interacting with their customers and coworkers of the older employees.”

“Continue the mentorship by bringing new employees up. Ask your best most knowledgeable employees if they are willing to maintain a consulting relationship after leaving.”

“Open your eyes to reality and maintain bench strength in anticipation of the inevitable. It is difficult for me to understand how some leaders got to where they are in our industry with their total lack of awareness. This is just one issue that seems just too simple to have become a problem for so many.”

“We have our young guys job shadowing and getting on-the-job mentoring with the experienced members.”

“I am the guy leaving in a year or two. I feel it is my job to pass on my knowledge before I go. And will make myself available for questions as I exit.”

“Mentorships are very important for us.”

“We have been hiring younger folks now for the past three years to help with the growing issue. Depending on the positions, start creating standard operating procedures to assist but start the hiring and training process fast.”

"The thing about retirement of longtime team members is that these retirements should not come as a surprise to an organization. However, what I often see happen is organizations failing to prioritize and invest in replacement of these individuals until they are on their way out the door. We identify not only the individuals who we suspect are leaving the organization in the next five years, but also either hire or identify their replacements in that timeframe as well. Once we do, we share the career path with that individual and trust our youth. Some of our highest performing yards are led by individuals in their mid-twenties and are exceeding the performance of some of our more veteran managers. What they lack in knowledge, they often make up for in grit and determination, and perhaps their naivety emboldens them to innovate without fear of failure. We lean on our senior leadership team to provide mentorship as needed but I have been amazed at how many will rise to the level required when we give them the tools to succeed and stay out of their way. Sometimes success looks different than 'the way it has always been done.'"

"We are working on an in-house training program. Also, we have older more experienced employees mentoring younger employees before they retire."

"Retain retiring pros as part timers or 1099s to help with mentoring and training. Ask the retiree to document duties—yearly, monthly, weekly, and daily. Assign the replacement early and have the retiree mentor them for as long as possible. Also have administration give as much support and training as possible as early as possible focusing on the areas where the retiree was less than satisfactory so the new person can start early with change and obtain positive result for themselves and their new staff."

"We just had two of our younger employees go to a 3-day training through our lumber association to learn how to do material take-offs. They came back energized and excited to take some of the projects off the retiring pro's desk. We are looking forward to seeing how it goes!"

"Our best solution to this problem is the mentoring program. We keep a very open dialog with employees that are coming up on retirement so that we can let that employee help train their replacement. The best way to use that soon-to-be gone knowledge and experience is to get them to share as much of it as possible before they leave. In some positions it does require carrying two employees for that one position during the training time, which can go into months, if not a year, but it is worth it. We also find the retiring employees enjoy showing someone else what they know and have experienced."

"If critical knowledge exists only within aging personnel, that knowledge leaves with them. It wouldn't surprise me if the future demands intentional systems that preserve institutional knowledge and eliminate gaps in experience during workforce transitions. It has a cost to it but we have anticipated our gaps and brought on additional staff, even when it wasn't in the budget, with the hopes of those exiting training and passing on their years of knowledge before they retire."

"The key is selecting new employees that are 'relationship' builders rather than just workers. It is more expensive but relationship builders will value working with older teammates and in turn, the older teammates will enjoy passing along their 'tribal knowledge' and customer relationships."

"Employees that are nearing retirement do have a wealth of knowledge and experience, but tend to slow down in the final years. While many customers have a comfort level with an older salesperson or manager, there can also be an equal amount of customers that are newer and don't have a long term relationship with the older employees. Younger, newer employees can have the hunger and enthusiasm that new customers are looking for. Encouraging employees who are nearing retirement to take on a mentorship role is not only recommended but entirely necessary if the younger employees are going to be able to serve not only the new customers but the older, legacy customers who may represent the bulk of revenue."

"Hire a headhunter for critical positions. Start early. I recently brought in an accounting executive almost a year in advance to make the transition smoother. Now we have new software and a better attitude to go with it. Change is hard but needed at times. Fresh ideas are good. It's always difficult to justify the expense incurred in hiring the next leaders but crucial to plan ahead and place the new people alongside the mentors with enough time and focus to preserve the tribal knowledge that every company possesses and is crucial to the identity and culture of that company. To lose that culture could easily result in the loss of the company. Try to incentivize those leaving to help mentor incoming new employees. Reach out to those people that are in the local education systems that have students that are seeking career opportunities in other industries. Seek out vocational career centers for people interested in skills aligned to our industry."

"One strategy that has served us well has been building relationships with high school trade programs. We recruit seniors with interest in the trades and bring them on early. Over the past decade, that pipeline has become a meaningful source of talent. The advantage is that we get young people who are humble, hungry, and smart, and we have the time to shape them into our culture. We also recognized that replacing institutional knowledge takes more than a new hire. About five years ago we developed a structured training program for future leaders, specifically targeted at the next generation of high-performing employees, many of whom are college graduates. That program hasn't been free; it's an investment you make now so that the job gets done right later."

"We are not the type of business that young people gravitate to. Plus the amount of knowledge the younger pros need to obtain, especially with all the different product lines and demands on the amount of CRM reporting or training, is not allowing basic skills to be expressed or taught. We are still a highly face-to-face relationship-type sales organization, though it is changing." ▶

“We started about six years ago with an in-depth manager trainee program. Some of the people that go through the program spend as much as two years navigating through the various positions to find their ‘fit.’ We have found it very beneficial for the pupil to see many sides of the business and find what interests them. To date, we have not had anyone that went through the program leave the company. It is a position that is always open and accepting applications. Create an inside/mentorship program that assigns a dedicated inside sales member to facilitate star performer behind the scenes needs. They will be your longtime sales members in the future.”

“We have simplified our message on our culture. We then hire more for attitude than aptitude and watch closely to see how the new, younger people develop their own institutional knowledge.”

“Making younger employees feel like they are part of the big picture of the company’s future helps with retention. Cross training also helps as they better understand how important their role is to the success of the company. Finally, you may be surprised how talented and knowledgeable some of your yard staff are, they may want to come work at the contractor desk but are too shy or may feel they are not qualified.”

“Reach out to trade schools. Talk to students on job offerings in our field.”

“We are fortunate enough to have a close relationship with our retirees and can contact them in situations that require some knowledge from experience. Ever since I started in this industry, I have tried to pay close attention to the ‘old timers’ and learn as much as I could knowing some day they would be gone.”

“Documenting the tribal knowledge and information that the Boomer generation has is a good first step. Also looking at the next generation, Gen X to fill these rolls and learn the last little bits from the Boomers they have worked for and with for decades.”

“Most vendors offer training sessions, either on site or via remote. Additionally, membership groups (LBM, NRLA) have online classes available at a cost. As a whole, having to hire to replace is always going to cause a gap in knowledge, having a career path program for any staff member you hire should be in practice. It doesn’t matter the level they are hired for, have a plan to develop your current staff. We made it a practice to teach every yard worker the counter. Five years ago one transitioned inside, two years later took over our dispatch, and two years after that became our hardware manager.”



Storage Systems for LBM Dealers

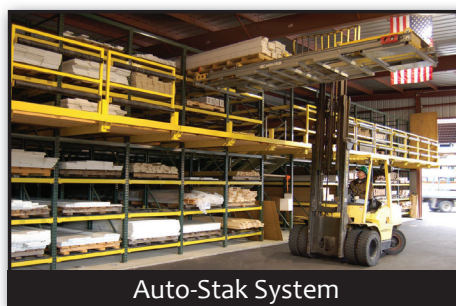
- The Auto-Stak System
- Cantilever Rack Systems
- Metal Buildings
- Drive-Thru Systems
- Millwork Storage Systems
- Pallet Rack Systems
- A-Frame Systems



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DRAWN: 2/1/06
 CHG: [unclear]
 SCALE: 1/32" = 1'
 CAD FILE: [unclear]

Responses from wholesale distributors, manufacturers, and service providers:

“Institutionalize knowledge before key pros leave—with technology. With today’s customizable tech platforms, your pro can define and capture key elements of the business process, shifting knowledge previously held in that pro’s head into company knowledge. Transform a core process (such as procurement) into a measurable, manageable, teachable process.”

“We are trying to cross-train everyone in the office and warehouse so in case of retirement or long term illnesses there is a ‘bullpen’ to pull from and all positions are covered.”

“Invest in more training in those you would like to retain and explore digital options that can help close the knowledge gap.”

“Bring in interns over college breaks. Have them work and make joint calls in the market with the seasoned vets. A few of the interns are likely to catch the lumber industry bug. Open your search and secure solid potential candidates and have them get close to the ones leaving. Beware of titles and allow the new potentials to learn all the business. It goes back to starting this before the person retires. So that knowledge base doesn’t walk out the door with them, transfer that knowledge to the younger staff. Also, I’ve had customers that paid a small consulting fee to the outgoing employee to be willing to take calls from their replacement so that knowledge can be passed down if something was missed during the transition.”

“We have had success offering the retiring employee a schedule for partial retirement reduced hours along with reduced days and letting them pick both. We only offer this to employees that want to mentor and share their knowledge.”

“Always be building bench strength in anticipation of someone on your team winning the lotto or retiring out. Continuously invest in training and developing your people and you will never be placed in a position where you don’t have the talent you need to grow.”

“This has been a lifelong problem only we never put this kind of focus on it. If you have the ability ask your grandfather what he did, I am sure he was faced with the same issues. Quit whining and toughen up!”



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How significantly is the retirement of experienced or high-performing team members affecting your company?



Comments from dealers:

“I have two key employees at retirement age.”

“We just had a 40-year veteran salesman retire. You cannot replace that experience, it takes time to fill that slot and bring the rookies up to speed.”

“All of our outside salesmen are just about ready to retire.”

“Twenty out of 34 employees will be gone in the next five years with no one to replace them.”

“We have had a lot of experience retire over the past five years and the impact has seriously affected our operation, but in a surprisingly positive manner. While we lost some experience, we gained exponentially in enthusiasm from young ‘up and comers’ to prove themselves and innovate. The result has been increased sales, and profitability. Innovation and positive change is at an all-time high.”

“I have some retirement-age people working but they are looking to only cut hours and not leave completely.”

“As of right now we’re doing a good job training younger workers to fill in the gaps of retiring workers. The business will evolve over time. Technology is better and they are better at it. The struggles are with culture.”

“In most cases newly-trained employees are ready to set in to the roles.”

“We are proactive and maintain a diverse mix of age and experience in our staff.”

“Several employees have retired over the past ten years. We followed a game plan and the impact was minimal.”

“Honestly, I see the retirement of the older generation as a net positive. Our industry has lagged behind in adopting technology, automation, and AI—often due to resistance to change. While there have been short-term challenges, we’re now in an era where those who understand and leverage technology have unprecedented access to opportunity.”

“About 20% of our sales force will retire in the next 5 years.”

“We have about four employees that we wonder when they will retire. One is a boom truck driver which is hard to fill.”

“Over the last five years, we made a concerted effort to lower the average age of the employees, some by attrition and some by just hiring the younger generation. Don’t let anyone tell you they are not great workers and fun people.”

“We are retired builders who opened an Ace Hardware 11 months ago with a lumberyard. Most of our employees are young.”

“We have allowed retiring staff to work part-time and work remotely.”

“We allow long-tenured staff to take a long runway to retirement. We have several working half days, two working four days a week, and one highly specialized equipment mechanic on a five hour per week ‘retainer’ so we can call him when we have a problem. These folks are training the lesser tenured staff and fielding questions that arise when they are not at work. Sometimes it’s tricky managing these schedules, but in the long run we think it’s beneficial to our customer service and retention.”

“We have many employees with 30-40 years of experience. Seven have retired in the last few years. You can fill the position, but not the shoes.”

Comments from vendors:

“Some are okay with sharing their knowledge and some want to take it to their grave, which has more impact.”

“About 40% of the current management and engineering will retire in 4 years.”

“Finding younger people to takeover for experienced OSRs and ISRs is challenging. Most younger adults want to sit at home in front of a computer and work.”

“The three owners are retiring soon. They have been hands-on owners for over 40 years and have had a hard time letting the reins go. They are now starting to pass on knowledge and will not go until everything has been transferred to upper management, but the long-term relationships they have are so important to the business.”

“The knowledge transfer is a big concern. We’re hoping to fill some of that gap with technology.”

“In the last month we have lost to retirement four employees with a combined 139 years of service. While this stung we have another wave coming soon which will hurt just as bad.” ■

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LBM JOURNAL[®]
DEALER
OF THE YEAR
2026
CATEGORY: \$10MM-\$50MM



Congratulations Peter Lumber!

Since 1932, Peter Lumber Company has been defined by a simple promise: quality materials, good service, and sound advice at the right price. Three generations of family leadership have transformed that vision into a respected, multi-location operation known for integrity, dependability, and value. With one of the widest product selections in the area and a team committed to helping customers find exactly what they need, Peter Lumber continues to earn its place as the "supplier of choice" for builders, contractors, and homeowners.

This award recognizes Peter Lumber as a high-performance independent dealer, distinguished by long-standing family stewardship, operational excellence, and an unwavering focus on doing right by its customers and communities. Backed by the strength of the LMC network with 1,900+ locations and billions in buying power, Peter Lumber leverages its connections to offer customers unparalleled value, premium products, and trusted expertise.

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PETER LUMBER BLENDS TRADITIONAL APPROACHES, MODERN TOOLS

PHOTOS BY PAULA CELLA PHOTOGRAPHY

LBM JOURNAL'S DEALER OF THE YEAR AWARDS, sponsored by DMSi, 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 asked to reflect on Peter Lumber Company's history over the past nine decades, President Ben Peter came to the conclusion that the one constant in the company's past has been its continual evolution.

"When we look back at the early days of Peter Lumber, one theme stands out: this company has always been a work in progress," Ben said.

Started by his grandfather, Hugh M. Peter, Sr., in 1932, Peter Lumber Company began in Pleasantville, NJ with the simple goal of offering affordable building materials and sound advice. Now with seven locations, and headed by third-generation family members, Peter Lumber is still following that mantra.

"For over 90 years, our family has faced more than a few challenges, whether economic, operational, or industry-wide," Ben said. "Nothing about our success was ever guaranteed. But throughout those decades, we've been fortunate to work alongside some truly remarkable

people. Their talent, work ethic, and character helped guide the business through its toughest periods and, just as importantly, helped shape the vision we continue to build on today."

Continuing a legacy

Before taking over from his father—and now working alongside his brother, McLane, who serves as chief financial officer—Ben said he wasn't always sure he'd end up at the family business, which ended up being a blessing in disguise.

"It was never a certainty that our generation would one day take over the business, and that uncertainty ended up being a strength," he said. "We were encouraged to gain outside experience, see different approaches, and understand how other organizations operate. Bringing those broader perspectives back to Peter Lumber has allowed us to modernize thoughtfully, refine our direction, and stay grounded ▶



FROM LEFT: Tyler Sheehan, Ben Peter, Annemarie Hartman, Ed Evans, Mark Higbee, Patty Shultz

in the values that carried the company through its first nine decades. In many ways, we stand on the foundation created by those who came before us, and our focus now is to honor that legacy while continuing to evolve and prepare the company for the future.”

From its small start, the company has grown to add windows, custom pre-hung doors, decking, roofing, siding, and more, in addition to special orders, kitchen design, showrooms, and delivery. And the growth doesn’t stop there—Ben said the company is working to add more services via the company’s website, expected to come online this year.

“Our online portal currently allows account customers to review orders, track invoices, and choose from multiple payment options. By the

second quarter of 2026, this access will expand to include order payments for non-account customers. By the third quarter of 2026, we will further enhance the platform with quoting capabilities and full e-commerce functionality.”

Ben said the company has invested in additional tools, like upgraded POS and inventory software, as well as AI technology to improve workflow.

“Our philosophy is to embrace both the traditional tools that have served our customers well for decades and the modern technologies that allow us to support them even more effectively today. We don’t see technology as a replacement for the personal, relationship-driven service that defines Peter Lumber—we see it as a way to enhance it.”

As the business closes in on nearly a century of operation, Ben said one thing that won’t change is the company’s philosophy on how it treats its people.

“Success in any business begins with the right people. At Peter Lumber, we’ve built a workplace where employees are respected, valued, and given opportunities to grow into fulfilling careers. By fostering a positive environment, we ensure our team is not only happy but also motivated—creating satisfied customers and lasting relationships that stand the test of time.”



Company President Ben Peter said Peter Lumber has built a workplace where employees are respected, valued, and given opportunities to grow into fulfilling careers. Fostering a positive environment ensures the team is not only happy but also motivated.



Building unique locations

With seven locations across New Jersey and Pennsylvania—Limerick, Hammonton, Pitman, Kennett Square, Medford, Millville, and the company headquarters in Pleasantville—Peter Lumber has made it a priority to make each location as unique as the communities it serves.

“Rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach, we empower our managers and staff to respond to the needs of their communities





in ways that feel authentic and impactful. The result is that every Peter Lumber location is not just a place to buy materials, it's a contributing member of the community, invested in the success and well-being of the people we serve."

That approach goes beyond the walls of Peter Lumber, Ben said. Each location works to participate in community events and to give back through charitable efforts as well.

"Because every location has its own personality, each one supports its community in different but equally meaningful ways. Our teams participate in local builders' associations, civic groups, and community events. Depending on the town, that can include everything from marching in Main Street parades, organizing food drives, and supporting local nonprofits to partnering with scouting groups, schools, and trade programs. We believe that being a good business also means being a good neighbor."

For both customers and employees, Ben said Peter Lumber has developed a variety of resources for ongoing training and support.

"Many of these programs are developed in partnership with our vendor community, allowing us to deliver unique opportunities that go beyond a traditional lumberyard visit."

As for what the future holds for the company, one thing is for sure: despite changes in the LBM industry, Peter Lumber's values will always stay the same.

"At Peter Lumber Company, we believe the future will judge us not by what we say, but by what we do. Our commitment is simple: to provide outstanding, dependable service, nothing less, nothing more. And the rest, you'll just have to wait and see." ■



GET TO KNOW ...

FOUNDED	1932
LOCATIONS	7
EMPLOYEES	90
CUSTOMER BASE	60% Pro / 40% Retail/DIY
OWNERSHIP	Family
PRIMARY BUSINESS SOFTWARE	ECI Spruce
PRIMARY CO-OP/ BUYING GROUP	LMC
TOP 3 BRANDS OF BUILDING MATERIALS SOLD	Andersen / Timbertech/Azek WindsorOne



Amid challenges in the economy and labor force, roofing manufacturers point to the importance of aesthetics, energy-saving construction, new technology, and education—for contractors and customers—on today's road to success.

Up on the roof, technology, relationships, and training create harmony

BY RONN LEVINE

SIXTY-TWO YEARS AGO, The Drifters sang these Carole King and Gerry Goffin lyrics: "Right smack dab in the middle of town, I've found a paradise that's trouble proof (up on the roof)." Fast forward to today and, while not quite paradise and trouble proof, the roofing industry remains strong and vital, with new technology, sustainability products, detailed training, and private equity all having their influence.

ROOFING



ProVia modeled its metal shake roofing after classic cedar shake shingles, providing metal roofing that looks like shingles, but with enhanced durability and long-term beauty.



SYSTEMS

Heidi J. Ellsworth, president and CEO of RoofersCoffeeShop—which will celebrate its 25th anniversary next year—has seen a lot of these positive progressions in her years from that lofty viewpoint. But along with those come challenges.

“Contractors and associations are working very strongly on workforce development, getting back into the high schools, the vocational schools, and thinking, ‘How do we get more skilled labor?’” she said. “Roofing is very difficult because it’s a harder trade to be out in the elements. Combine that with what has gone on this year with immigration, and it is causing problems for the contractors.”

Equally challenging, Ellsworth said, is the advancement of private equity firms, especially in roofing. “The mergers of many companies into regional and national players, along with the influx of private equity funds, has changed the competitive marketplace,” she said. “Contractors are now competing on a different level with technology, so local relationships become even more important for success than ever before.”

Despite elevated interest rates and concerns over tariffs, Ellsworth said that the top 20% of wealth in the country is still investing in roofing. “They tend to buy more luxury, higher-end items, so you’re seeing growth in metal roofing. We’re also seeing a big push towards barndominiums [buildings that combine a barn-like structure with residential living quarters].”

Lastly, Ellsworth said that new technology is a huge driver for contractors across the industry. “How is all that going to work?” she asked. “If you look at distributors, they’re providing customers with e-commerce, CRMs, delivery on apps, call centers, and sales presentations. Customers at lumberyards are going to want the same things. Contractors are getting used to that and driving it now.”

Atlas’s Summit and Gorilla Guard synthetic underlayments are premium quality synthetic roof underlayments that provide 10 squares per roll. Woven scrim synthetic roof underlayment enhances tear resistance and lays flat while guarding against moisture and mold growth.



Unified Steel stone coated steel roofing from Westlake Royal, shown here in the Pinecrest Shake profile in the Harborwood color at the Summergate condo complex in Orlando, FL, is designed to deliver the look of traditional shake, shingle, or tile roofing, and carries a 50-year transferable limited warranty.

Benjamin Obdyke just launched AeroNet, a roof and wall ventilation mat that combines the installation benefits of a rolled rainscreen with the compression resistance of a grid/mat system.



“We are seeing a trend of emerging third-party companies offering online services in this industry, but it’s not clear as to how this will fully work with current roofing ordering software and CRMs,” said Gary Davel, director of sales/roofing at ProVia.

Luxury takes the lead

The premium product trend that Ellsworth spoke resonated with multiple company leaders.

“Demand remains strong across all product tiers, but there is a clear shift toward premium, high-performance options,” said Jack Gottesman, marketing and brand director at IKO North America. “‘Better’ and ‘best’ shingles continue to grow faster than entry-level products, driven by homeowners prioritizing durability along with aesthetics.”

“At IKO, our shingle portfolio spans four main collections: Performance Designer, Performance, Architectural, and Traditional. With-

in that mix, higher-performance products such as Dynasty and Nordic are seeing increased interest, alongside continued strong demand for Cambridge, as contractors and homeowners look for solutions that balance performance, appearance, and long-term value.”

Aesthetics are playing a bigger role in homeowners’ choices, Gottesman said. “Many are moving toward timeless palettes that complement natural textures and materials on their homes. Natural, earthy tones, stone-inspired shades, and soft greys are growing in popularity, while sustainability is increasingly important. For LBM dealers, offering a balanced mix of products that combine durability, performance, and sustainability is key to meeting these evolving customer expectations.”

Sarah Lograsso, director of marketing & product management for Westlake Royal Building Products, said that they don’t typically qualify their products in “good, better, best” terms. “Each brand has its own unique attributes that make it the preferred product for specific installations and needs,” she said. “As extreme weather events continue to grow in both frequency and severity, more attention is being paid toward roofing materials like ours that offer greater durability and longevity, such as our stone-coated steel composite tiles and concrete tiles. Not only are homeowners seeking greater peace of mind, but in some cases, they’re saving on insurance costs.”

She pointed to two recent examples: A condominium complex in Orlando was recently reroofed with Westlake’s Unified Steel stone-coated roofing, resulting in approximately 25-30% savings on their insurance premiums. And



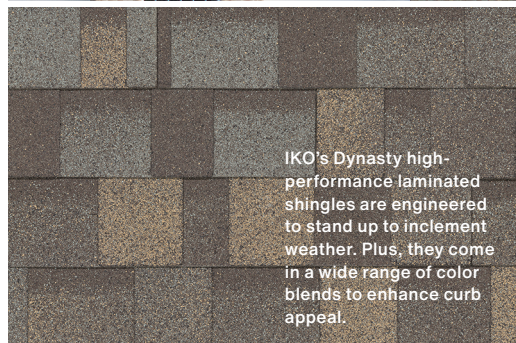
a home in Minnesota that was just named a recipient of the 2025 DaVinci Masterpiece Contractor Projects of the Year saw a 50% reduction in its home insurance rate after it replaced its aging cedar shakes with Westlake's DaVinci composite shakes.

"There's no better time for dealers to educate customers about the ROI of products that last," Lograsso said. "A bit more of an upfront investment in roofing materials that will last 2-3 times longer and potentially reduce insurance costs can mean savings—and peace of mind—down the road. Strong manufacturer warranties and performance guarantees help reinforce that value, too. In addition, in NAR's 2025 Remodeling Impact Report, a new roof was one of three project categories to receive a perfect 10 for 'Joy Score,' which measures homeowner happiness with renovations."

ProVia's Davel said that they only have a "Best" product category and offer three profiles—slate, shake, and barrel tile. He also offered advice for LBM dealers. "Sustainability is rapidly becoming a core buying driver for homeowners and builders," he said. "Metal roofing is becoming more prevalent as the entire industry moves away from raw materials that degrade over time and are not good for the environment."

"Offering environmentally certified and high-performance products can differentiate your stock and satisfy evolving building codes and consumer demand," Davel continued. "Metal roofing with high reflectivity reduces heat gain and can lower energy costs. Government and insurance incentives and codes support installation of energy-efficient roofing systems."

He advised dealers to offer roofing as a complete system, not SKUs on a rack. "No need to stock the ProVia metal roofing system—it is shipped within two weeks of order. Get training in using our online ordering tool to streamline the ordering process."



IKO's Dynasty high-performance laminated shingles are engineered to stand up to inclement weather. Plus, they come in a wide range of color blends to enhance curb appeal.

GAF's David Ellis, VP for residential marketing, said that they have widened their offerings of roofing products to include three distinct options, "fitting the good, better, and best categories, with significant overlap in the better/best space. Our Quix roofing products offer basic roofing accessories designed to help protect the roof and the bottom line."

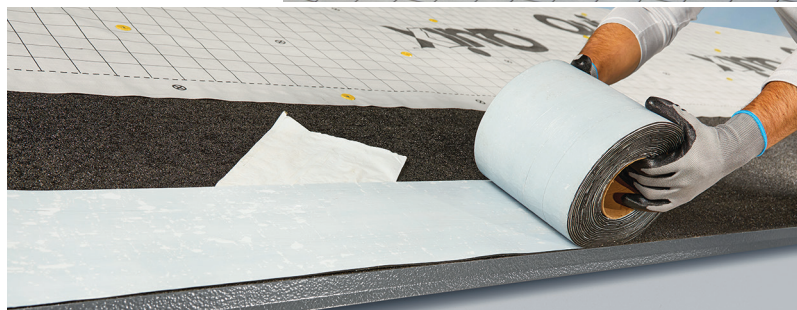
"GAF offers complete roofing system solutions designed to work together to keep moisture out and energy costs down, and provide our widest variety of products," Ellis said. "FT Solutions, our best category, offers premium-quality roof underlayments and leak barriers designed to protect against the elements."

Jeff Key, director of marketing for Atlas Roofing Corporation, said that they are seeing "an upward trend of people investing more in the total building envelope, building things that are going to last for a very, very long time, with a focus on high performance. We're seeing growth in products that combat smog and help reduce damage caused by hail—all products designed to increase the lifespan of a home."

Training becomes even more valuable

With labor shortages continuing for contractors, "lumber dealers can play a key role alongside manufacturers in providing education and product support," said Kaylen Handly, technical innovation manager at Benjamin Obdyke. "Many manufacturers offer hands-on training and resources that both dealers and their customers can leverage. For example, Benjamin Obdyke provides both customer-specific virtual training sessions and in-field experts to help customers understand product and system options, navigate tricky building envelope challenges, and hone installation skills and efficiencies." ▶

GAF's Quix Underlayment is designed to protect the roof deck against moisture and to stand up to roofer foot traffic. Quix Starter Rolls are engineered to reduce the risk of shingle blow-offs at the eaves and rakes.



Benjamin Obdyke just launched AeroNet, a roof and wall ventilation mat that combines the installation benefits of a rolled rainscreen with the compression resistance of a grid/mat system. “It features a lightweight, flexible design,” said Handy. “Simply roll onto the roof and fasten. Because of its grid-system style, AeroNet offers higher compression strength versus entangled net matrix products. And compared to traditional wood-furring strips, AeroNet is faster to install and creates a larger uninterrupted drainage plane and air gap for moisture to escape.”

Brian Cross, operations manager of Rocky Mountain Snow Guards, said that, because part of the challenge for snow retention is roofers knowing where to place snow guards on a roof, his company goes beyond basic training. “There’s a load strategy involved. That’s why we offer a free layout and design quote system. A roofer or LBM dealer can send us an architect’s blueprint, an aerial takeoff, or even a hand-drawn sketch, and we’ll create a professional design for snow retention on a structure. All within a few business days, all for free.”

To help retain snow on a roof, Rocky Mountain Snow Guards has recently launched the Everest (EG10 and EG16) snow guards. The most important aspect of this product, said Cross, is that it’s stackable. “So it’s easier for roofers to carry many of these pieces up onto the roof at the same time. This speeds up jobsite efficiencies.”

In an effort to help with workforce shortages and training, IKO has partnered with TalentLift, a Canadian non-profit international recruitment agency. The company currently operates a large-scale initiative to recruit and relocate talent from refugee populations, Gottesman said. “They mostly start as production operators, helping to address skills shortages while providing opportunities to displaced workers. We also maintain ongoing partnerships with apprenticeship and education programs to support skill development in the roofing industry across North America.”

Additionally, IKO’s Blueprint for Roofing YouTube series walks viewers through each step of the roofing process in a clear, step-by-step format and is available in three languages. And IKO University offers access to a vari-

ety of courses and training resources at reduced tuition rates, along with an extensive resource library and an experienced team of reps supporting dealers and contractors in the field.

At Westlake Royal, the company’s Installer Program offers expert-led, hands-on training designed to elevate contractors’ skills, efficiency, and jobsite performance across every product line, said Lograsso. “We’re also unveiling new resources to help the architectural community with product education and spec adoption and investing in new tools and support for our channel partners.”

ProVia’s Davel believes that when it comes to training, dealers must evolve from “product suppliers” to “roofing solutions partners.” That means educating, not just stocking, he said. “This is key to success in the metal roofing industry. Hands-on training is offered at our facility in Ohio. Contractors, installers, and distributors may attend a three-day training session. Account manager training with inside and outside sales reps is ongoing.”

Atlas Roofing’s Key also said that education is essential. “The more that lumber dealers educate themselves not just on mainstream products, but on the specialty products available, the more valuable they become to their vendors and customers. When a customer steps forward with a specific issue, it adds value to the relationship for the lumber dealer to know immediately where to turn for the perfect solution.

“Enhanced training for Atlas sales representatives to our distribution and roofing contractors is becoming more readily available and is growing in popularity,” Key added.

“Emerging roofing products don’t fail because of performance; they stall because of complexity, cost perception, and risk aversion,” said Davel. “LBM dealers who simplify decisions, de-risk adoption, and educate both contractors and homeowners will capture higher margins, stronger contractor loyalty, and longer-term differentiation in a commoditizing market.” ■

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS



ABOVE: Rocky Mountain Snow Guards installed in a Soldier Row Pattern on roof help provide barriers so that melting snows on roof do not release all at one time.

RIGHT: DaVinci Single-Width Slate roof with Everest EG16 snow guards in Dark Bronze placed in a Soldier Row pattern on the roof to help break up snows as they slide and melt off the composite roof.



7

KEY ROOFING TRENDS FOR 2026

Industry experts identify market shifts LBM dealers should know.

Metal roofing is becoming more prevalent as the entire industry moves away from raw materials that degrade over time and are not good for the environment. It is also considered the last roof to be installed on a home because of its long life and durable composition. Asphalt shingles may be less expensive but need to be replaced every 15-20 years. Metal roofing with high reflectivity reduces heat gain and can lower energy costs.

— ProVia's Gary Davel



Energy savings are top of mind with homeowners, so dealers should consider products that can be installed as Cool Roof systems, which combine elements like reflective roof colors, components, and installation methods that provide superior insulation, ventilation, and longevity to improve a home's energy efficiency. Also, over the past year, we've expanded with new colors that respond to trends while delivering timeless appeal.

— Westlake Royal's Sarah Lograsso



Customers are embracing energy-efficient roofing products like Pinnacle Sun from Atlas that reflect heat and keep a home cooler, and shingles constructed with 3M™ smog-reducing technology. Shingles with a Class 4 rating can help withstand hail and high winds. Super insulated roofs are growing in popularity, as maintaining energy efficiency within a home remains paramount. We're seeing a growth in popularity of our ACfoam, CrossVent, and Nail Base products for these applications.

— Atlas Roofing's Jeff Key



Demand has increased for impact-resistant shingles in regions that historically experienced fewer severe hailstorms. IKO recognized this shift early on when it pioneered the Performance Shingle category, and last year we reached an important milestone: All our laminate shingles are now rated Class 3 and above, with Nordic shingles offering the highest Class 4 impact resistance rating.

— IKO's Jack Gottesman



Reflectivity is popping up around the country. Beyond California's building codes, reflective roofing is surging in popularity across the U.S. as homeowners seek to combat rising energy costs. Modern "cool roof" technologies, like Timberline HDZ RS with our enhanced EcoDark® granule technology, offer shingles with specialized pigments that reflect infrared light without sacrificing traditional aesthetics. These products can reduce roof surface temperatures and the load on HVAC systems during peak summer months.

— GAF's David Ellis



There is a growing prevalence of conditioned attics, as homeowners seek to increase their homes' energy efficiency. These spaces are often not designed with proper vapor permeability nor adequate ventilation, which can lead to trapped moisture, condensation, and eventually mold and rot on wood sheathing, causing premature roof failure. For homes with conditioned attics, a vapor-permeable underlayment, like our VaporDry SA, can allow moisture to escape to help keep the roofing system dry.

— Benjamin Obdyke's Kaylen Handly



The need for snow retention products rises as solar panel installation increases on homes. In areas where significant snow comes down in winter, snows will slide off those panels quickly. Products like our Drift Solar are needed to stop snow from avalanching off roofs and causing danger to people and property below the solar panels.

— Rocky Mountain Snow Guards' Brian Cross



HOT

PRODUCTS

2026

NAHB

IBS™

The 2026 International Builders' Show (IBS), held Feb. 17-19 in Orlando, FL, featured nearly 1,650 exhibitors filling 679,000 square feet as well as more than 120 educational sessions. Judging from the strong attendance, IBS 2026 delivered on its reputation as the place to see all the latest and greatest building products, tools, and technologies. While the majority of the nearly 75,000 attendees are builders and contractors, IBS has also become known as the single biggest event for LBM dealers to connect directly with manufacturers and to learn about the latest product innovations. As we do each year, the following pages include a sample of products that our team believes may help make a difference for you and your company moving forward. The listings are in no particular order.

— The Editors

TREX SELECT WITH SUNCOMFORTABLE IR TECHNOLOGY

Described as the industry's first mid-priced board with heat mitigation, Trex Select® featuring Trex's proprietary SunComfortable™ IR technology is engineered to reflect the sun and reduce heat build-up to keep the surface cooler than other composite offerings. It is also fully submersible and WUI-compliant, making it suitable for marine applications and areas susceptible to wildfires. Manufactured from 95% recycled and reclaimed content, Trex Select features a solid board profile that can be curved and comes with a 35-year residential or 10-year commercial warranty. trex.com



2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

FLANGEFLASH FROM TYPAR

TYPAR FlangeFlash is designed for flashing non-flanged doors and windows, forming a permanent mechanical bond between the window or door frame and the exterior wall. Engineered to provide a verifiable air and water barrier, this double-sided, self-sealing flashing tape combines the strength of TYPAR® Commercial building wrap with a high-performance all-temperature adhesive. FlangeFlash is said to provide 12 months of UV resistance, and a wide application temperature range from 0° to 180°F/-17° to 82°C. TYPAR FlangeFlash adheres to AAMA standard 711-13 for flashing tapes and requires no additional primers or adhesives. typar.com

DMSi FRAMEWORKS

DMSi Frameworks is a web-based ERP platform designed for LBM dealers to manage core business operations, including retail POS, contractor sales, delivery and dispatch, purchasing, inventory control, accounting, and reporting. The system supports access through standard web browsers and mobile devices, including smartphones and tablets. Frameworks includes automated purchasing, real-time pricing through EDI and catalog integration, and tools for managing multi-job projects. Embedded data analytics support performance tracking across daily operations. The platform is engineered to provide a centralized system for operational and transactional workflows in LBM businesses. dmsi.com



2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

TRUEXTERIOR 5/8" LAP SIDING

An exterior cladding product designed to replicate the profile and shadow lines of traditional cedar lap siding, Westlake Royal's TruExterior® 5/8" Lap Siding features a true 5/8" butt profile and 16' lengths. Manufactured using TruExterior's poly-ash technology, the siding is engineered for dimensional stability and resistance to moisture, insects, rot, warping, cracking, and splitting. It can be used in ground-contact applications and does not require end sealing. TruExterior 5/8" Lap Siding can be cut with standard tools, fastened close to edges without pre-drilling, and painted in a wide range of colors. westlakeroyalbuildingproducts.com



KEYSTONE IMPACT LITE FROM ODL

ODL, Inc. showcased its portfolio of wind-borne debris-rated and HVHZ-rated fiberglass doors alongside the Keystone® Impact Lite frame, which features enhancements and higher performance ratings for 2026. ODL also previewed several new decorative glass offerings that expand both daylighting and design flexibility. The display included new stylized glass designs focused on light and maximum light, along with new privacy and textured glass options that balance visual interest with light control. odl.com



2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS
MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

FORTE URETHANIZED ACRYLIC BY SHERWIN WILLIAMS

Designed for use on both vertical and horizontal surfaces, Forte™ Urethane Acrylic by Sherwin Williams is described as a high-performance coating that applies directly to metal and concrete—no primer required—and is engineered to deliver versatility, durability, and productivity. According to the manufacturer, Forte™ provides excellent adhesion on challenging substrates while protecting against corrosion, chemicals, weathering, marring, and abrasion. Its quick dry time allows foot traffic to resume after just four hours, and forklift traffic after 24 hours. sherwin-williams.com

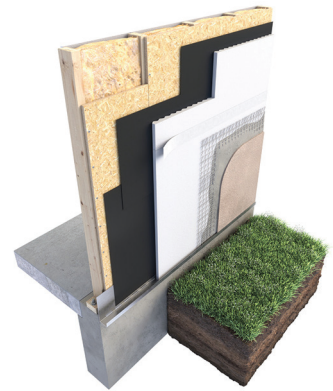


MAXIMO PRE-FINISHED

Maximo Pre-Finished is a factory-applied finishing system designed to provide greater control over color, texture, and performance, backed by a 20-year warranty. Built on the foundation of Maximo Thermo™ technology, Pre-Finished is offered in four thermally modified species—Thermo Ayous, Scandinavian Thermo, Thermo Clear Radiata, and Thermo Ash—and in textures that include Rough Sawn, Barnwood, Wire Brushed, and Charred. Available finishes include Teak, Oak, Ebony, Walnut, White Oak, and Bangkirai, as well as a Deep Black Opaque option. maximowood.com

THERMALSTAR DRIPWAVE

ThermalStar® DripWave® from Atlas Roofing is an energy-efficient expanded polystyrene (EPS) high-performance insulation for exterior one-coat stucco applications. The patented, vertically-oriented wave pattern (at 2" OC) is engineered to increase air space between the water-resistant barrier and foam insulation providing an integral drainage plane for accumulated moisture to dissipate or escape.



Consisting of first generation closed-cell, lightweight, and resilient expanded polystyrene (EPS), ThermalStar DripWave is available in 2'x8' and 4'x8' tongue & groove panels. It is approved for use in residential, multi-family residential, and commercial structures that are less than six stories in height. atlasroofing.com

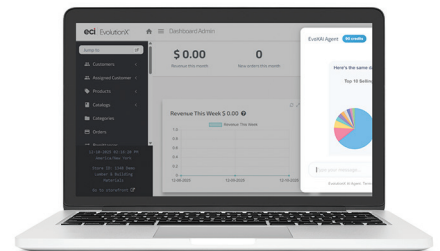
WESTBURY BELLA CAVO FROM DIGGER SPECIALTIES

Westbury® Bella Cavo from Digger Specialties is an aluminum and stainless-steel cable railing system featuring thin horizontal cables between aluminum posts. It is available in 4', 6', and 8' sections in either 36" or 42" heights, with matching adjustable gates in 36" and 48" widths. The system includes built-in leveling features on posts, pre-built tension posts, cable tensioning components, and an installation template for mounting. Westbury Bella Cavo railing is available in 12 colors with the option of textured or non-textured surfaces. The railing is powder coated using a proprietary 10-step AAMA 2604 powder coating process, and is backed by a lifetime limited warranty. diggerspecialties.com



NEW TOOLS FROM ECI SPRUCE

ECI Spruce has introduced new tools designed to solve everyday problems at LBM dealer yards. Updates to Spruce Analytics provide visibility into sales activity, inventory movement, and margin performance without manual reporting or spreadsheets. A new AI Agent within Spruce eCommerce is designed to help identify customer purchasing trends, product listing gaps, and order status issues. An upcoming Spruce Mobile Delivery App is intended to improve delivery tracking, communication between yards and drivers, and order visibility for customers. Together, these tools support operational oversight across sales, eCommerce, and delivery workflows. ecisolutions.com





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100 CHURCH ST., PERU, IL





EZSHEATH FROM OWENS CORNING

Described as a new type of wall sheathing, EZSheath™ from Owens Corning unifies structural reinforcement, continuous R-5 insulation per inch, and a code-compliant air and water barrier into one integrated step. Plus, at 50% lighter than OSB while offering the same racking strength and nail retention, the panels are easier and faster to carry, stage, and position. When joints are sealed with EasySeal® and FlashSeal® tape, the system becomes the air and moisture control layer, eliminating additional wrap or barrier steps entirely. EZSheath incorporates FOAMULAR® NGX® Extruded Polystyrene (XPS), a closed-cell, moisture-resistant, rigid foam board that is lightweight and durable. owenscorning.com



PWT TREATED LVL

Said to be the only Laminated Veneer Lumber (LVL) that is preservative treated during the manufacturing process, PWT Treated™ LVL from Pacific Woodtech is ideally suited for decking substructures and other exterior and interior applications. Utilizing TRU-CORE® technology, a heat press system is engineered to evenly distribute 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. pwtewp.com

ALTITUDE FROM DECKORATORS

Featuring a natural wood-grain finish and fire-resistant core with a Class B flame-spread rating, Altitude decking is designed to meet evolving performance and safety standards. According to the manufacturer, it is Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) compliant, making it suitable for regions with heightened fire safety codes. Capped on three sides, the Altitude line offers the premium look and low-maintenance benefits of composite decking, and is available in three colors, Sequoia (red-brown), Highland (brown), and Trailstone (gray). Made from 95% recycled plastic and renewable sawdust, Altitude boards span 16-in. on-center and are designed to resist splintering, cracking, and rotting. deckorators.com



2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS
 MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

PAPYRUS ARTFORMS BY BELGARD, AN OLDCASTLE APG BRAND

Papyrus Artforms™ is a modular concrete panel system featuring Belgard's Papyrus texture. Designed for outdoor wall applications, the system supports configurations such as seating walls, planters, fire features, outdoor kitchens, privacy walls, and water elements. Unlike traditional masonry, Artforms's factory-engineered components are designed to reduce installation time and labor demands. The panels are manufactured from concrete for exterior durability and measure 18" x 36" x 3". Papyrus Artforms panels are available in two colors—Hickory and Scandina Gray—and are intended for residential and light commercial outdoor living applications. belgard.com



2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS
 MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

LP SMARTSIDE EXPERTFINISH TRIM & SIDING NATURALS COLLECTION

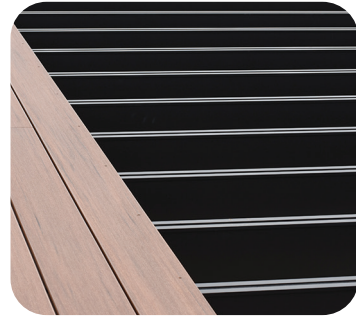
Featuring six prefinished, nature-inspired colors designed to resemble stained wood, LP SmartSide® ExpertFinish® Trim & Siding Naturals Collection™ is available in cedar and brushed smooth textures, with a proprietary finish for consistent color and fade-resistance. Manufactured with LP's SmartGuard® process for protection against moisture, termites, and fungal decay, the Naturals Collection is compatible with LP SmartSide siding and pairs with the core ExpertFinish color lineup. Backed by a 5/15/50-year limited warranty, it is designed for residential exterior trim and siding applications. lpcorp.com





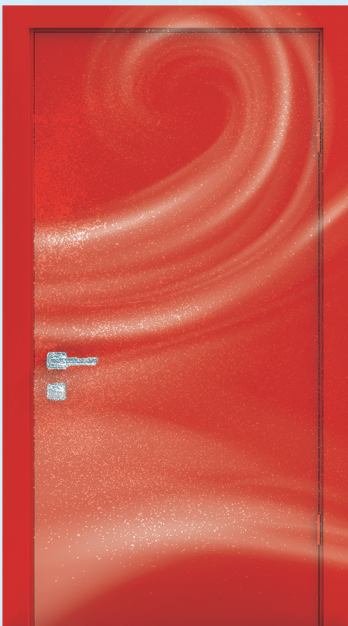
INFOR CPQ

Described as a configuration, pricing, and quoting platform designed for highly configurable building products, Infor CPQ is engineered to support rule-based product configuration, pricing logic, and availability checks to generate quotes. The platform includes visual configuration tools to present options and support customer decision-making. According to the manufacturer, the cloud-based platform works with ERP and other enterprise systems. infor.com



TIMBERTECH ALUMINUM FRAMING

Designed as an alternative to traditional wood framing for decks, TimberTech's Aluminum Framing is a deck substructure system that will not split, rot, or decay. The system includes engineered components designed to work together and install easily. Manufactured in part from recycled aluminum, it can be reused or recycled at end of life. Plus, it is backed by a 25-year limited warranty, and is intended for use in residential deck applications, including in regions where non-combustible framing is preferred. timbertech.com



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TIMBRA TECH THERMALLY MODIFIED HARDWOODS

TIMBRA Tech® offers thermally modified FSC- and PEFC-certified hardwood decking in long-length formats for exterior applications. The products are manufactured through a controlled thermal modification process to enhance dimensional stability and consistency. TIMBRA Tech includes a range of wood species beyond traditional decking options and is available with fire-retardant treatments provided by Burnblock. The product line is intended for architects, designers, and builders seeking certified hardwood decking options that meet performance, sustainability, and safety requirements for residential and commercial projects. timbratech.com



TITEBOND UA 920

A professional grade sealant designed for interior and exterior applications, Titebond UA 920 is engineered to provide adhesion and flexibility to accommodate movement around windows, doors and siding. Formulated to fill wider joints, tool smoothly and clean up with water before curing. Once dry, it is paintable with most water based latex paints. UA 920 features low VOCs, freeze thaw stability, UV resistance and is available in 12 color options. titebond.com

TRUEFRAME JOIST FROM PROWOOD

Featuring ProWood’s proprietary pressure-treating technology that utilizes micronized copper azole (MCA), TrueFrame Joist is Kiln Dried After Treatment (KDAT) to arrive on the jobsite dry and dimensionally stable. The kiln-drying process is said to make the lumber lighter than laminated veneer lumber (LVL) or steel and helps reduce cupping, twisting, and warping while producing cleaner cuts and less culling. Backed by a Limited Lifetime Warranty, TrueFrame Joist meets UC4A Ground Contact standards, and is color-infused for lasting beauty and is ready to be enjoyed on day one, with no staining or sealing required at installation. prowood.com



2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS
 MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

GATOR GUARD BY GATOR GUARD
 INNOVATIVE FLOOR PROTECTION

Designed to give builders a cleaner jobsite, with safer footing, and less waste, Gator Guard is a multi-layer floor protection system that’s described as waterproof, water absorbent, cushioned, reusable, and recyclable. The top layer features the company’s Hexa Grip Anti-Slip Technology—a patterned surface texture engineered to provide strong traction so crews can walk safely without slippage or movement. The material is said to roll out flat, stay flat, and won’t curl back or shift during work—no more wasted time re-taping or replacing damaged sections, saving end users both time and money. Unlike disposable boards, the company designed Gator Guard to be reused multiple times without losing strength or integrity. gatorguardus.com



TERRA GRIP ANCHORS

Terra Grip® Anchors are a concrete-free footing system for decks, sheds, fences, and other outdoor structures. Manufactured from galvanized steel, the anchors are designed to engage surrounding soil to provide load support without poured concrete. Installation can be done by one person, and is performed using a standard impact driver, with no excavation or curing time required. According to the manufacturer, the patented anchor and rod system is pre-engineered for structural consistency across soil types. Terra Grip Anchors are intended for residential outdoor construction projects where reduced site disturbance and removable or relocatable footing solutions are required. terragripanchors.com



LED LIGHTING FOR FEENEY DESIGNRAIL MODERN

Feeney® Quick Ship LED Lighting Kits are designed to deliver high-output linear lighting solutions for indoor and outdoor applications, including integration within railing systems. Shown here with Feeney's DesignRail Modern, the kits feature a snap-in diffuser lens for soft, even downlighting, designed to distribute light evenly into railing assemblies. Operating on a 24V system, the lighting uses weather-resistant materials and LEDs rated for up to 50,000 hours with a CRI of 80+ for accurate colors. The system supports dimming when paired with compatible 24V magnetic dimmable driver kits and dimmer switches. feeneyinc.com



2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

HIGHFLOW STRUCTURAL RAINSCREEN FURRING STRIP

Described as the first structural LVL rainscreen batten designed specifically for modern high-performance wall systems, HighFlow™ is engineered to offer what the company says is a simpler, stronger, and far more reliable way to manage moisture. Unlike traditional rainscreen assemblies that rely on multiple products, inconsistent installation, and materials that can degrade over time, HighFlow is said to solve all three problems at once with a patented, precision-cut LVL batten that delivers a continuous ventilation path, superior durability, and fast, repeatable installation. highwood.co

CERTAPLANK PRO FROM CERTAINTEED

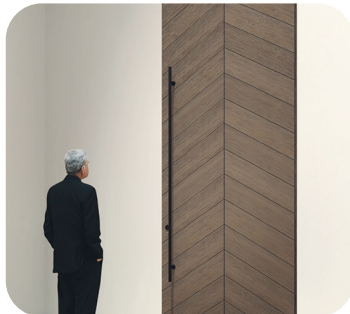
CertainTeed's premium composite siding, CERTAplank® PRO features wide-board profiles and TrueTexture™ finish to replicate authentic cedar grain. Available in 14 curated colors with PermaCOLOR™ fade protection, the manufacturer says it doesn't require painting, caulking, or refinishing. In addition, it incorporates Resilient Composite Reinforcement technology and a dual-layer construction to support impact resistance, rigidity, and wind performance. Panels are 10 feet long with a .092" thickness and carry a Class A fire rating. CERTAplank PRO is compatible with standard 3/4" trim accessories and CertainTeed's InvisiPro+® system and is backed by a lifetime limited warranty. certainteed.com



2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

LARGE-FORMAT FIBERGLASS DOOR BY MASTERGRAIN

The large-format fiberglass entry door is designed for oversized residential openings, with panel sizes up to 9-ft. tall and 4-ft. wide. Engineered to address the inherent challenges of oversized wood, steel, and aluminum doors, its structural stiles are made of LVL reinforced with steel which the manufacturer says help ensure long-term rigidity, alignment, and operational reliability. The door incorporates recycled PET, contributing to a more responsible use of materials while also enhancing panel stability. Finish options include Walnut, Rift Cut Oak, Flat Slice Oak, Mahogany, and Smooth. The door is compatible with concealed hinge systems for modern residential applications. mastergrain.com



PIONEER INDIGENOUS COLLECTION

Eva-Last's new Pioneer® Indigenous Collection is a composite decking line featuring True Ipe and Weathered Ipe color options designed to reference the beauty of natural hardwoods. The boards use high-resolution digital imaging to replicate the woodgrain variation in color and texture of Ipe decking. Constructed with a bamboo foamed-PVC and glass fiber-reinforced core, the decking is engineered to support increased strength and span capability while reducing expansion and contraction. eva-last.com/us



2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS
 MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

INSULAIR BY ADVANCED BUILDING PRODUCTS

Designed to create a continuous 95% open air space between the roof deck and the spray foam insulation or between the roof deck and batt or spray foam in cathedral ceiling applications, Insulair® is said to prevent deterioration to the wood sheathing from condensation moisture by drying and venting the air in these applications. Made with polymers that are stable and do not deteriorate when in contact with moisture, Insulair® is applied to the interior side of roof assemblies in residential and light commercial construction. The product has an open filament waffle core design with filter fabric on the interior side to assure a clear vented path free of insulation intrusion. advancedbuildingproducts.com



THERMA-TRU 3/4-LITE SHAKER STYLE DOORS AND SIDELITES

Debuted at IBS 2026, Therma-Tru's new 3/4-Lite Shaker Style Doors and Sidelites expand the company's Shaker portfolio with flush-glazed 3/4-lite designs. Available in the Fiber-Classic and Smooth-Star collections, each unit incorporates Tru-Guard composite technology for six-sided protection against water, warping, rot, and insects. The products are backed by a lifetime limited warranty and are intended for residential applications including Craftsman, Coastal, and contemporary home styles. thermatru.com



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2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS
 MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

J'D OUT KICKOUT BY AMERICAN FLASHINGS & ACCESSORIES

Aiming to replace inconsistent homemade kickouts that do not perform, J'd Out Kickout is engineered to be a reliable shield against water infiltration that works with all types of siding, including vinyl, fiber cement, cedar, and more. By directing water away, J'd Out Kickout is designed to prevent water from soaking into a home's side walls, which can cause rot and mold damage. americanflashings.com



2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS
MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

MUDDSKIP BY MUDDSKIP LLC

When mixed with standard joint compound, Muddskip® drywall additive is engineered to change how drywall finishing is performed. According to the company, its patented bonding technology allows wet-on-wet application of multiple coats without waiting for full dry times, and reduces or eliminates sanding between coats. The technology is said to increase compound cohesion and bonding, resulting in denser seams and surfaces. Described as ideal for controlled-dust environments, Muddskip is said to reduce downtime and result in cleaner jobsites. muddskip.com



NOVUS DECKING FROM FIBERON

Fiberon Novus fused decking pairs what the company describes as a photo-realistic wood appearance with a new-to-the-industry thermoset shell designed to prevent scratches and dents in new composite decking backed by a 50-year warranty. Available in three colors, Weathered Ipe, Natural Ipe, and Golden Cedar, Novus is manufactured from recycled plastics and reclaimed wood. The company says that Novus is its most slip-resistant board ever. fiberondecking.com

2026 FINALIST BEST OF IBS
MOST INNOVATIVE BUILDING MATERIAL

LP BURNGUARD FRT OSB

LP® BurnGuard™ FRT OSB is a fire-retardant OSB sheathing panel with protection integrated throughout the board during manufacturing rather than applied as a surface treatment. According to LP, embedding the fire-retardant treatment in the entire board helps ensure consistent performance, durability and reliability. It meets ASTM E84 standards and is approved for 1-hour and 2-hour fire-rated assemblies, as well as Type I, II and III construction applications. LP BurnGuard is designed to provide a single-source option for product and fire-retardant treatment. Available in standard panel sizes and multiple thicknesses, it installs like standard OSB using conventional tools and fasteners. lpcorp.com



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* Capital Lumber Company	52	602.381.0709	capital-lumber.com
* Culpeper Wood Preservers	5	800.817.6215	culpeperwood.com
Digger Specialties, Inc.	16-17	800.446.7659	diggerspecialties.com
* Firelands Hardware, Inc.	49	888.321.7550	firelandshardwareinc.com
Great Southern Wood Preserving, Inc.	IFC-1	800.251.0836	yellowood.com
Humboldt Sawmill Company, LLC	23	707.764.4141	getredwood.com/dealers-distributors
* IWP - International Wood Products	8	800.875.9663	iwpllc.com
Klauer Manufacturing	25	563.582.7201	klauer.com
Krauter Auto-Stak	30	800.992.2824	ks-ka.com
LMC (Lumbermens Merchandising Corporation)	33	800.218.0043	lmc.net
* Manufacturers Reserve Supply	8, BB	973.373.1881	mrslumber.com
MAX USA CORP	15	516.741.3151	maxusacorp.com
Maze Nails	47	800.435.5959	mazenails.com
MFM Building Products Corp.	21	800.882.7663	mfbmp.com
* Milgard by MITER Brands	BB	800.645.4273	milgard.com
MITER Brands	19	717.365.3300	miterbrands.com
NewTechWood America	31	866.728.5273	newtechwood.com
Orgill	13	800.347.2860	orgill.com
* Rollex Corp.	5	800.251.3300	rollex.com
* RoyOMartin	5	800.299.5174	royomartin.com
Schweiss Doors	53	507.426.8273	schweissdoors.com
* Soleno	11	888.363.1471	soleno.com/en/
* Starwood Rafters	52	888.525.5878	starwoodrafters.com
Uline	12	800.295.5510	uline.com
Westlake Royal Building Products	OBC	800.521.8486	westlakeroyalbuildingproducts.com

* Denotes regional distribution.

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

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



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— Bill Lee, Founder of Lee Resources

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“YEP! Bill and Tom wrote those words independently without any prompt from me. These are great books for mastering the science of LBM Sales.”

— Rick Davis, The Guy who Wrote the Books

WHEN OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS...

An industry friend wants to team up on a new venture for a fast-growing market segment. But conditions aren't ideal and your staff is already stretched thin. What would you do?



WHEN YOU WENT into business for yourself as Bootstrap Lumber more than 20 years ago, you knew that building relationships was crucial to your survival and ultimate success. So you joined the rotary and the local HBA chapter, and went to work seeing how you could serve those groups and build some connections along the way.

One of your earliest connections, with a young guy named Pops, has worked out to be among the strongest. You had a few things in common; most notably, neither of your companies were expected by others to succeed. In fact, while skeptics were busy proclaiming your demise and giving all the reasons why your companies can't possibly prosper, you and Pops quietly went about building your companies into market leaders. Maybe it's because you were mutual underdogs or because your values align, but for whatever reason, your friendship is solid.

Several months back, Pops approached you with an idea to partner on a new startup that would leverage his connections in the community with your expertise in buying quality materials at fair prices. You approached your small team with the idea, and they're all for it. However, with interest rates remaining higher than you'd like, and with

your small staff already stretched thin, you can't get yourself to pull the trigger.

Meanwhile the niche your new venture would serve continues to grow, and Pops is anxious to move forward before other competitors step in. You're the bottleneck. What would you do?

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Dive in. Genuine opportunities don't present themselves that often. This is a genuine opportunity. Don't blow it by overthinking it or waiting for conditions to be perfect. Just do it.

Hold off. You've gotten this far by trusting your gut. Tell Pops you're out but encourage him to move forward on his own. Offer to support his efforts however you can. Then do it.

Another path. Creating a new venture from scratch is expensive and time-consuming. Explore with Pops how your companies could team up to serve this growing market.

Test it first. Instead of going all in, propose a 90-day pilot with clear goals and limited investment. If it works, you go all in. If not, you walk away with minimal risk.

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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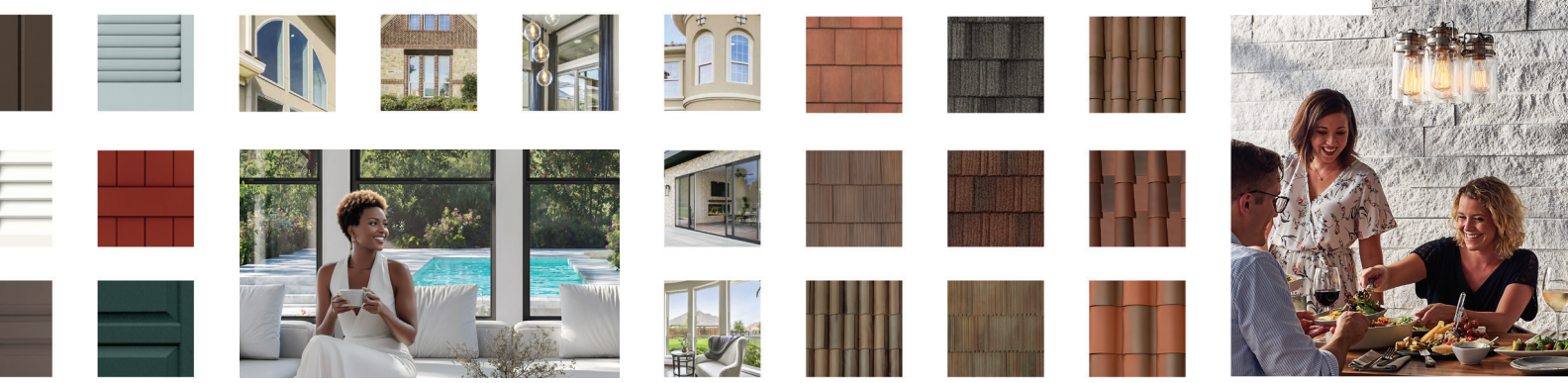
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