

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

Greater Houston Edition
themetropolitanbuilder.com



RobRyan Focuses on Quality While Growing

RobRyan Builders | Houston, Texas



RobRyan Focuses on Quality While Growing

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Ryan Harris knows something about growth. From its 1999 origins as a builder of backyard amenities, his company, RobRyan Builders, is now the second largest custom home builder by volume in Houston.

Building more than 50 pre-sold and speculative homes in 2019, RobRyan plans to continue its growth by 20 percent or more each year, according to Harris, co-founder and president. “We try to grow at a pace to make sure our quality stays the same.”

Although oil prices are at rock bottom and Covid-19 is disrupting the economy, Harris is optimistic. “We try to position ourselves as a company carefully to make sure we can weather storms.”

RobRyan Builders focuses its work inside or close to the 610 Loop it but also builds occasionally around the I-10 corridor and north as far as Conroe. “We meet a lot of different price points, from \$300,000 to \$3 million or more,” Harris noted.

“A key feature that we can offer is that we will procure a lot for customers if they sign a contract and provide a deposit. We can then design for that lot and even get the job funded until closing because many buyers don’t want two house payments and are counting on the equity in their current home to fund their new home. I don’t know of any other custom builder who does that.”

Harris considers customer satisfaction essential to the company’s growth. Adding two architects – Paul Andre LaGrange and Eric Nimitz – to its staff allows the company and its customers to have more control from the idea phase to the permitting phase.

“We can talk about design and pricing at the same when we start a project. The customer gets empowered knowing the cost of each line item.” Customers immediately can adjust the design with the architect to stay within budget, which gives greater satisfaction to both sides and reduces frustration, Harris explained. “We can save time and money.”



“We can provide a quick turnaround for a custom homer. It’s very common for us to complete a house design in 30 days.”

Because they depend solely on referrals for sales, controlling complaints is important to the RobRyan Builders team members. “A big complaint is that ‘my builder is always late.’ We hear from people that their home was promised in June, but it’s December until they close.”

The RobRyan solution? They utilize a customized interactive scheduling application! “It tells the customer what’s going to be going on week by week from the day we start the house. It also tells them what decisions they need to make each week to stay on track. Instead of guessing if we’re on schedule, the customer has a security blanket in knowing what’s going on,” Ryan continued.

Having a lot of control over its subs also allows RobRyan to stay on schedule. “A lot of our subcontractors work exclusively for us because our volume keeps them busy. We can internally move our guys around from house to house, say a painter going from one to another in a day or two. A smaller builder may have to wait three or four weeks for a painter to become available.”

Also because of its building volume, RobRyan Builders can save its customers time and money in other ways. Because it has a warehouse, it can order materials in advance and store them. And thanks to its volume, the company has negotiated deals with many vendors to allow more “bang for the buck” for fixture allowances unlike other builders who get a kickback from vendors.

But Harris emphasized that his company does not limit

customers to purchases from a few sources. They can buy light fixtures, door knobs, faucets or whatever from any source, but “nine out of 10 go with our suppliers for those items because their allowances go further.”

Natalie Hahn, the office manager/procurement coordinator, also helps customers find the best deal for their allowances. They may find a light fixture on Pinterest, for example, that they love. Hahn often knows a source where they can buy the same item for hundreds of dollars less.

Ryan said the company will refer customers to several interior designers when they want help with more features, such as color and furniture selection.

Having experienced project managers is a foundation for the company. “Our size and experience allows us to give quality supervision to each house,” Harris said. He has found that a ratio of 10 houses for one project manager works the best. Continuing to grow means adding and training additional project managers.

After the retirement of co-founder Bob Newsome a few years ago, RobRyan added three more partners. Patrick Cochran, a project manager for 15 years, and Brandon Kines, a project manager for 10 years, “earned the right to be partners,” according to Ryan Harris. Another partner is Ryan’s brother, Brent Harris, who handles day-to-day operations and sales; he joined the company after a long career in sales with Grainger. Ryan also functions as project manager for higher-end clients in addition to managing some operational and sales aspects.

Other staff includes project managers Neil Aussenberg, Sam Followwill and Raul Alva.

There’s no doubt this is a family-focused business. Rhonda Harris, Ryan and Brent’s mother, is the face of RobRyan. She works at the front desk greeting visitors in addition to handling the permitting process. Glenda Cochran, Patrick’s mother, manages the accounting functions.

“I’m really proud of all of our staff. They were slowly hand-picked. We’re a tight group. We have a complete staff of people who really care,” Harris bragged.



*To contact RobRyan Builders,
call 713-812-8800,
email info@robryanbuilders.com
or visit www.robryanbuilders.com.*

*The office is located at
4715 Pinemont Dr., #8, Houston, TX 77092.*



Handcrafted, Elegant, one-of-a-kind wooden surfaces made to perfection



- wide selection of*
- *wood species*
 - *edge treatments*
 - *construction styles*
 - *textures*
 - *distressing*



*When it comes to High Quality Custom Wood Flooring & Rugs
There's only place to go - **International Flooring***



713-895-7562 office
richard@ifhouston.com
www.ifhouston.com

