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Luxury Builder Upgrades



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# THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER

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*Feature Story*

## **04** Adelle Design + Build Marries Beauty and Function

**By Kathy Bowen Stolz**

## **03** As Cases Surge, NAHB Calls for Another COVID-19 Safety Stand Down

## **08** Bring Joy Home With Luxury Builder Upgrades

**By Linda Jennings**

## **12** Color Marketing Group® Announces 2022+ North American Key Color - New Day

## **14** Ashley Norton Launches Online Custom Hardware Design Tool

## **16** If a picture says a thousand words then a Virtual Marketing Tour can express... you can only imagine!

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# Housing Starts End 2020 Strong; Risks Ahead

While housing starts ended the year on a strong note, rising lumber prices and increasing regulatory cost concerns could affect future production. Led by a solid, double-digit gain in single-family starts, overall housing starts increased 5.8 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.67 million units, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The December reading of 1.67 million starts is the number of housing units builders would begin if development kept this pace for the next 12 months. Within this overall number, single-family starts increased 12.0 percent to a 1.34 million seasonally adjusted annual rate. The multifamily sector, which includes apartment buildings and condos, decreased 13.6 percent to a 331,000 pace.

Total housing starts for 2020 were 1.38 million, a 7.0 percent gain over the 1.29 total from 2019. Single-family starts in 2020 totaled 991,000, up 11.7 percent from the previous year. Multifamily starts in 2020 totaled 389,000, down 3.3 percent from the previous year.

“Builder concerns about a changing regulatory landscape may have triggered many to move up their plans to pull permits and put shovels to the ground,” said Chuck Fowke, chairman of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and a custom home builder from Tampa, Fla. “Our

latest builder sentiment survey suggests somewhat softer numbers ahead due to rising building costs and an uncertain regulatory climate.”

“The 1.34 million single-family starts pace in December is the highest since September 2006,” said NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz. “And while NAHB is forecasting further production increases in 2021, the gains will be tempered by ongoing supply-side challenges related to

material costs and delivery times, a dearth of buildable lots and regional labor shortages that continue to exacerbate affordability woes.”

On a regional and year-to-date basis (January through December of 2020 compared to that same time frame a year ago), combined single-family and multifamily starts are 13.2 percent higher in the Midwest, 7.5 percent higher in the South, 6.2 percent higher in the West

and 2.8 percent lower in the Northeast.

Overall permits increased 4.5 percent to a 1.71 million unit annualized rate in December. Single-family permits increased 7.8 percent to a 1.23 million unit rate. Multifamily permits decreased 3.0 percent to a 483,000 pace.

Looking at regional permit data on a year-to-date basis, permits are 7.4 percent higher in the Midwest, 7.3 percent higher in the South, 2.1 percent higher in the West and 5.2 percent lower in the Northeast.







# Adelle Design + Build Marries Beauty and Function

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Alison McMurtrey, owner of Adelle Design + Build, is a rare bird in the Houston market, for she is actually the designer and the contractor on her dozens of projects refining, renovating and restoring homes. She can talk design or talk building with her clients and then “grind it out” with the plumber on where to put the drain, she said.

“Sometimes I just do design work or just interiors work, or I just consult. With consultations I’m kind of a liaison between the client and the builder, which is an aspect I really enjoy,” she noted. “At times, it’s very hard for people to look at plans and envision what it’s going to look like. I can help them see the vision with my hard-line drawings.”

As a liaison in a new construction project, she serves as an advocate for the client. Her clients find it valuable to work with their own designer in the midst of the many meetings, questions, decisions and deadlines required by architects and builders.

Alison also said she loves working with architects. “My

preference is to work alongside an architect from the beginning of a project. I’m good at space planning and programming, that is, fleshing out what spaces are needed and how spaces should be used. This process is aided by the creation of schematic designs and sketches. In a home design, you don’t have to resolve everything with the architect, such as moving a door.

“I enjoy walking through all the architectural phases to ensure clients’ needs are met in kitchen and bathroom layouts, cabinetry design, lighting and plumbing fixture selections and placement, and the selections of paint colors and other finishes that help customize a home. I hope to make the architect’s and the builder’s jobs easier.”

She said about 60-65 percent of the company’s business is design, with the rest contracting, although there’s a blurred line where design ends and contracting begins, she admitted.

“I’m very practical; I like to make design decisions that are





both practical and beautiful, using refined details that aren't fussy. I will take the design one step further [than many builders]. No detail is too much for me. I love getting in the weeds."

Many of her clients are 35-45 years old with relatively young families who are building or remodeling a house. Maximizing storage and incorporating built-in cabinetry are important to her clients, according to Alison.

Being both a mother and a cook helps her understand the practical nature of kitchens, baths, mudrooms and overall living spaces. "I can provide the perspective of a consumer or user of these types of spaces." For example, she knows that frameless cabinets with pull-out shelves work better in small spaces. In most kitchen remodeling projects she can significantly increase the useable space with lots of recessed cabinets where there used to be voids. She knows where to put shelving for cereal boxes and cookies. "If you design effective, smart and organized spaces, kids will put their stuff away," according to this mother of four.

"Women seem to appreciate my approach that things can look pretty and still work. At Adelle Design + Build we call it the marriage of beauty and function. I will use color in a fun way, such as on hand-painted tiles or an unusual countertop material in small, unexpected spaces."

Encompassing "all things house," Adelle Design + Build's typical projects include kitchen and bath renovations, built-in cabinetry, custom painting, flooring and finishes as well as outdoor projects with cabanas, outdoor kitchens and landscaping. In the last few years, McMurtrey said she has progressed to full-house remodels and additions.

During the spring of 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic shut down many businesses, McMurtrey completely renovated and "flipped" a house for resale. In the future she thinks it would be a fun challenge for her to build a spec house "where I can be my own client," but it would have to be the "right scenario."

*Continued on page 6*





*Continued from page 5*

Alison’s evolution into residential design and contracting was unexpected but not necessarily unpredictable. Growing up in the midst of design and creativity, thanks to her father’s work as a golf course architect and her mother’s influence in all aspects of making a home, she cultivated her interests in creative and artistic pursuits in art, music and writing during her youth in Shreveport, La. She was admitted into Louisiana State University’s nationally ranked interior design program but found its “tunnel vision” to be too restrictive. Expecting to attend law school, Alison transferred to Baylor University the next year to pursue a liberal arts degree. However, life interfered.

During the following years she worked in public relations/marketing. She had the opportunity to work for a progressive architecture firm where she learned about modern architecture, art and design. She then worked for a custom home builder and kitchen/bath designer in Shreveport where she learned about kitchen and bath design while at the same renovating her own home.

After a move to Houston, McMurtrey responded to a friend’s request to remodel her kitchen. “One thing led to another, and by referral I started getting busy.” She found

the work conducive to having a family and formed Adelle Design + Build in 2009, using the middle name of her youngest daughter for the company’s name because it had a French flair evoking her Louisiana roots.

At first, she was designing kitchens, then started building them, seeking out subcontractors who understand her designs and processes. Alison spent years putting her team of tradespeople together, selecting them because of their craftsmanship and artistry. They have traditional, old-school pride in their work and a strong work ethic, according to the company website, [www.adelledesignedbuild.com](http://www.adelledesignedbuild.com)

Alison, along with Deb Turner, the firm’s project manager, coordinate work for as many as a dozen clients at a time since the projects are all at different stages. As the point person for logistics, Turner is the day-to-day scheduler and works at the job sites while McMurtrey provides more of the big picture perspective, creating drawings and working with clients on selections.

McMurtrey admitted that, at times, building can be more





gratifying than designing. “Design can be a very long, tedious process. When you tile a bathroom or paint a room, you see results right away.”

*To contact Adelle Design + Build,  
call 713-818-1281 or  
email [alison@adelledesignbuild.com](mailto:alison@adelledesignbuild.com) or  
visit [www.adelledesignbuild.com](http://www.adelledesignbuild.com).*



# Bring Joy Home With Luxury Builder Upgrades

By Linda Jennings

Adding architectural charm to the kitchen and bath is a great way to bring warmth and function to the busiest rooms in the house. As you are making decisions on

home fixtures, we invite you to consider these leading products that offer style, function and a wonderful investment in the home.



Custom Incline Sink from MTI Baths

## DRAMATIC LENGTHS

The Custom Incline Sink from MTI Baths is a dramatic undermount rectangular basin notable for its sharply sloped bottom which runs from the front to an integrated slotted drain along the back of the sink bottom. The custom sink allows for bespoke sizing for unique size applications and retrofit. The sink is handcrafted of solid SculptureStone for a molded stone look that is durable, eco-friendly and easy to maintain. This undermount sink is seamlessly constructed, with the bowl depth offered as either 13" or 15", and the width can be customized up to a generous 50". It is offered in white or biscuit in a soft matte or hand-polished deep gloss finish.



Ruvati Dual-Tier Workstation Sink

## IMPRESSIVE FUNCTIONALITY

Ruvati uses an ingenious two-track system with sliding accessories to expand the functionality of their kitchen Workstation sink. A versatile mix-prep station allows cooks to prepare and organize an entire dinner party -- all in the space of the sink. A solid-wood platform holds a five-quart stainless steel mixing bowl with non-slip bottom and a matching colander and lid with grater/slicer attachments. Other accessories that come with the Workstation are a cutting board that converts to a tray, two stainless steel colanders, a three-container panel, and a rolling rack. The two-tiered Workstation is crafted from premium 16-gauge

*Continued on page 10*



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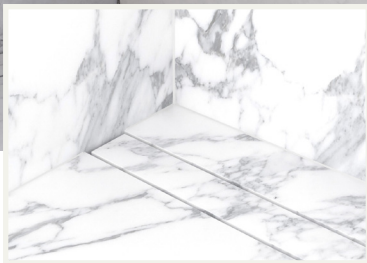
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**Easy Drain's Modulo  
Stone Flex linear drain**



*Continued from page 8*

stainless steel and comes in three sizes: 33", 45" and 57" wide.

## SEAMLESS IN STONE

Easy Drain's amazing new Modulo Stone Flex is a nearly invisible linear drain that allows on-site size adjustments to ensure a precise fit and flawless performance. Developed especially for natural stone and marble floors, the Modulo Stone Flex is a smart choice for today's luxurious bathrooms when it comes to wall-to-wall installation scenarios. It's frameless design allows for up to 4-inches of adjustment, providing installers with the flexibility they need to finish the job the first time when unforeseen issues arise. The drain is offered in a range of lengths from 19 3/4" to 82 3/4". Expert engineering ensures efficient water management for a safe and hygienic shower environment.

## HANDS FREE

With the current emphasis on hygiene, hands-free technology is getting a lot of attention. Gessi has a new line of no-touch Sensor Taps that automatically trigger water flow as hands approach the spout. Shown here is the Goccio, inspired by the fluid and natural shape of water.



**Goccio Sensor Tap from Gessi North America**

These high-tech faucets are available in an array of elegant, modern designs with sleek arches and gentle curves. The faucets may be ordered as deck- or wall-mounted installations in a range of fashion-forward finishes. The water sensor may be incorporated into the tap body or the spout and can run off electric power or a discretely placed lithium battery.

## HEAVENLY RETREAT

BainUltra found inspiration in the heavens for its newest collection of freestanding baths - the Celestia 6233 soaker tub. The new Celestia is extraordinary in the fact that this



**BainUltra Celestia 6233 tub**





**K503PC faucet from Lenova**

tub is the first to be offered in FineStone, the brand's new high-quality solid surface material comprised of refined minerals and pure liquid acrylic. It offers exceptional insulation properties and is extremely durable, light, and color resistant, and has a non-porous surface that is naturally hygienic and easy to clean. The Celestia has generous accommodations that allow bathers to stretch out and features two integrated armrests, a comfortably angled backrest, and a beautiful satin finish.

## INDUSTRIAL DRAMA

Dramatic faucets are one of today's most requested upgrades in kitchen design. Lenova combines form and function to create focal-point faucets that are also true work horses in busy kitchens. Their beautiful brass design is done in a sleek, contemporary style with elegant high-arch spouts and gleaming metallic finishes. The K503PC faucet has a softened industrial look with a modern pull-down faucet, single lever flow control, a two-function sprayer, and a spout with a full 360-degree swivel complete sink access. The faucet is crafted in no-lead solid brass, with superior Kerox ceramic cartridges, Neoperl aerators, and available in a chrome or polished nickel finish.

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# Color Marketing Group® Announces 2022+ North American Key Color – New Day

Transition, evolution and moving forward will continue to define the world and its population as 2022 emerges. Questions of trust and truth have been debated with many answered, but still more to come. Color Marketing Group's North America 2022 Key Color, New Day, is the color response for a time still in transition.

New Day suggests confidence and familiarity to greet 2022 with a sense of comfort. A light, fresh blue with red influences, New Day is an inspiring color designed to convey the classic connotation of hope and new beginnings.

The gentle nature of New Day conveys the desire for a compassionate, civil emergence from the pandemic of 2020. Conditions were overcome and the expectation for 2022 is a strong move into a decade of happiness, economic growth, and wider spread prosperity. Optimism and perseverance are key elements to those goals, underscoring the design and definition of New Day as the representative key color.

As calming as New Day may appear, its red undertone is a stimulation aspect of the color, making it ideal for practically any product application. From commercial to residential spaces, consumer goods to fashion, and graphic design, New Day is a color that stands for truth and hope.

For interior spaces, whether office, retail, or home, New Day will instill a breath of freshness. It is a color that inspires trust with its connection to nature so is well suited to create interiors that are welcoming and energized. Painted walls and ceilings appear more expansive, furnishings suggest friendliness and innocence, all when wrapped in the lightness of New Day.

Whether a phone cover, hairdryer, or polo shirt, fashion and personal items are set to embrace New Day as a color equalizer. New Day presents a color that is not only new but suggests familiarity and ease. Genderless and ageless, it is a hue to blend with others, as well as allowing it to stand on its own.

New Day will also be found in graphic and industrial design as it takes well to different materials and easily accepts various sheen levels or special effects to create new aesthetics. Whether on interior textiles or coatings, fashion fabrics, and accessories, or plastics and metals, it doesn't really matter. The key message of New Day stands true no

CMG 2022+ KEY COLOR



NEW DAY, IS THE COLOR  
RESPONSE  
FOR A TIME STILL IN  
TRANSITION  
CONFIDENT  
AND FAMILIAR  
WITH A SENSE OF  
COMFORT



Color Marketing Group, the leading international association of color design professionals, introduced the organizations' forecasted key colors at the 2020 Virtual Summit mid-November. The Color Marketing Group's 2022+ North American key color "New Day" is a light, fresh blue with red influences. New Day is an inspiring color designed to convey the classic connotation of hope and new beginnings.

matter how it is presented, it is a color to be trusted.

Hardships and devastating events can be endured as truths and progress emerge to reveal a New Day.

## About Color Marketing Group's World Color Forecast™

Color Marketing Group's multi-industry color design professionals collaborate globally to arrive at their directional color palette of 64 colors. These forecasted colors are supported by color stories that contain each color's drivers and influences two years ahead. Each of the four global regions identifies their Key Color from their 16 forecasted colors. Product designers across all industries have been influenced by Color Marketing Group's World Color Forecast for over 58 years.

## About Color Marketing Group®

Color Marketing Group®, founded in 1962, is a not-for-profit international association of color design professionals who forecast color directions and is a forum for the exchange of all aspects color. Members represent a broad spectrum of designers, marketers, color scientists, consultants, educators, and artists. Color forecasting events are held throughout the world and the results from these events become part of the global World Color Forecast™ revealed at the annual International Summit. More information is available at [www.colormarketing.org](http://www.colormarketing.org).



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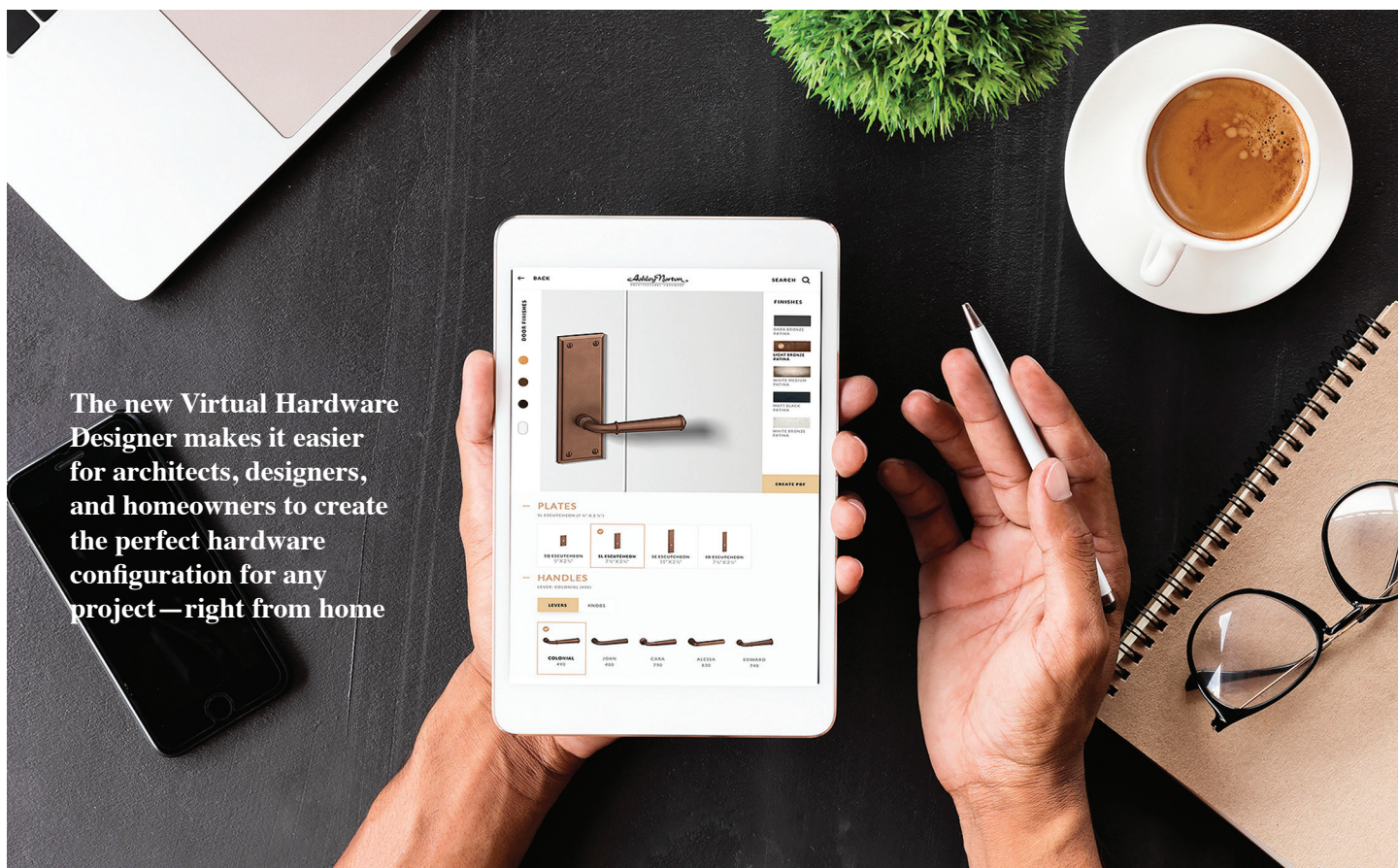
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The new Virtual Hardware Designer makes it easier for architects, designers, and homeowners to create the perfect hardware configuration for any project—right from home

# Ashley Norton Launches Online Custom Hardware Design Tool

Architectural hardware designer and manufacturer Ashley Norton makes it easier than ever to make a cohesive design statement throughout any project. The company's new Virtual Hardware Designer on [www.ashleynorton.com](http://www.ashleynorton.com) allows anybody to create their own custom interior hardware configuration from countless combinations, all of which could never be displayed in the catalog or online. From an industrial-inspired urban loft to a sprawling suburban colonial (and everything in between), the online tool lets users pair any plate with any handle, in any available finish, to create their ideal look. Rather than leaving the final results to the imagination, the tool allows designers and end users to visualize their combination, leaving nothing to chance.

"The Virtual Hardware Designer gives our customers the ability to experiment, create their own custom looks, and essentially shop the innumerable combination possibilities right from home," says Ashish Karnani, Vice President of Ashley Norton, who adds, "Our design tool is especially

helpful now with so many people working from home due to Covid-19."

To create the perfect statement-making combination, users start by selecting the Solid Brass or Solid Bronze collection. From here, they can choose their desired plate profile. In the brass collection, they can select from square roses, round roses, or back plates. The bronze collection offers a variety of profile suites including Urban, Rectangular, Angular, Curved, Arched, and Round/Oval. Next, users pick the desired lever or knob profile from the company's uniquely flexible hardware line. With five bronze finishes and nine brass finishes available, designers can select the one they envision for each unique project. To create the most accurate interpretation, users can place their creation on an oak, walnut, wenge, or white background and choose the finish that most closely matches their door. Finally, custom combinations can be saved as PDF files to be shared or printed as needed.



The Virtual Hardware Designer includes indoor hardware only. To create your own cutting-edge designs, visit [www.ashleynorton.com](http://www.ashleynorton.com).

### About Ashley Norton

Established in 1987, Ashley Norton offers a vast collection of handcrafted architectural hardware to suit even the most discerning designers and homeowners. Using only the finest art quality Solid Bronze and Solid Brass, our highly skilled craftsmen produce each piece in the collection, including interior handlesets, entry handlesets, cabinet pull handles, cabinet knobs, appliance and door pulls, bath hardware and other home accessories. The resulting one-of-a-kind texture and patina makes each individual element a personalized work of art. From contemporary to traditional, the array of designs, finishes, and styles we offer allows one to make a cohesive design statement throughout the entire residential, commercial, or hospitality project. We're proud to offer one of the most diverse collections of architectural hardware in the industry, always with a focus on environmental responsibility and impeccable customer service. In addition to today's finest homes, our products can be found in Wynn Las Vegas, Wynn Macau, Treasure Island, The Bellagio, Beau-Rivage, and The Ritz-Carlton Naples. For more information about Ashley Norton call 1-800-393-1097 or visit [AshleyNorton.com](http://AshleyNorton.com).



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# If a picture says a thousand words then a Virtual Marketing Tour can express... you can only imagine!

When you've completed a new spec build, remodeled or need to showcase any real estate properties, Pro Virtual Marketing is the company assisting in conveying your completed projects to the prospect's eyes.

You can use your fancy cell phone camera, which is not to be underestimated in the newest models, but still imagery is nothing more than a boring slide show and most video is dizzying! Instead, give your project the proper marketing it deserves with a navigatable 360 tour that "places" the viewer in the space at any given time and position.

You may ask why PVM over other 360 tour companies. When I started this company I was determined to be the outfit that offers more details and functionality than just a "Walk Through". Building on a software platform based out of Denver I am involved with the development team continually adding new features, most of which derived from my client's requests for a specific need.

The key to grabbing & keeping prospects' interest is to convey many comprehensive details in a short viewing session!

Keep it simple and clear! A glimpse of the many features built into the Virtual Tours include your logo and branding, links to other URL's & info boxes, map position, floorplans, and one of the most impressive is gyro navigation on a mobile device – you move and

it moves! Elevation angles and property detail text blocks are usually the starting perspective of most tours guiding the viewer from the curb or parking lot. The more data and realism compared to a showing, the better the experience.

## **You bought the images!**

If you contract PVM to handle your marketing photography then I believe you deserve the right to

own the images taken to utilize in your other marketing plans or social media. Still photography is included with the tours so you get those along with any captured

***The key to grabbing & keeping prospects' interest is to convey many comprehensive details in a short viewing session!***

angles from a 360 sweep image.

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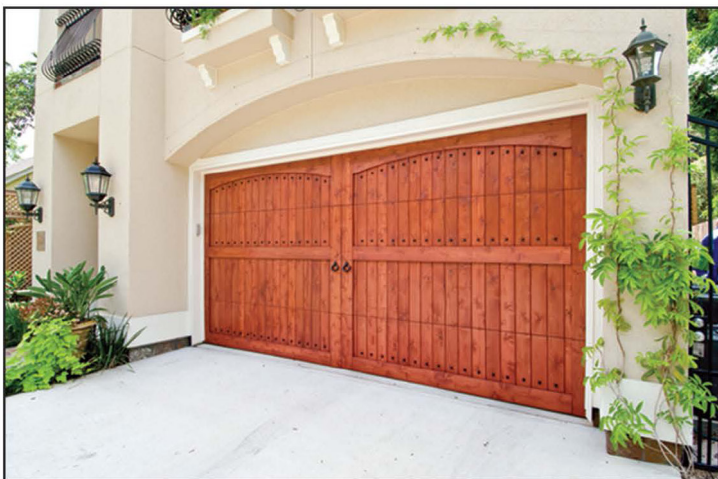
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**THOMAS**





The Metropolitan Builder  
5161 San Felipe Street #320  
Houston, Texas 77056



# Community HOME GUIDE

## 7 Reasons to Advertise on Community Home Guide.com

### 1 Cost Effective

You work hard for your money. That's why we keep our advertising rates as low as possible. A listing on our directory website is much less expensive than other advertising methods giving you more bang for your buck!

### 2 Measurable Results

Unlike traditional marketing methods where it's hard to track success, we offer key metrics and real-time traffic stats so you know exactly how many people are seeing your listing.

### 3 Locally Focused Marketing

By focusing exclusively on the local market, we're able to target the customers that matter most to you - local customers.

### 4 Get More Traffic

A listing on our directory website is a great way to get more visitors to your website and more customers to your business.

### 5 Increase Brand Awareness

Let's face it - the more exposure your brand gets, the better. That's why a listing on our directory website is a critical component to an overall healthy marketing strategy.

### 6 Always Accessible

Our mobile-friendly website allows potential customers to search and find your business 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from any device - including desktop, tablets and smartphones.

### 7 Your Competitors are Advertising

If you're still on the fence about advertising on our directory website, consider this one very important fact: your competitors are doing it. Each day that passes when you're not taking advantage of advertising on our site is another day you're losing market share to someone else.

*Finally...a fast, easy and affordable way to grow your small business online.*



## Welcome to the Community Home Guide

Houston's newest digital marketplace; connecting homeowners with the local home builders, remodelers, renovation specialists & small home service companies.

We believe that Small Business is the backbone of our great country; therefore, the directory focuses on supporting our local, small

businesses. The very same businesses that are often the character of our neighborhoods and communities.

It is time to make buying from small businesses a conscious part of our routines, just like physical exercise — something you do because of the many benefits it brings.

**Get Started Today: [www.communityhomeguide.com](http://www.communityhomeguide.com)**

**Phone: 832-317-4505 • Email: [Gbernard43@aol.com](mailto:Gbernard43@aol.com)**

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