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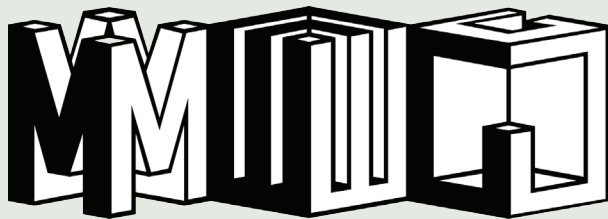
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PUBLISHER'S *note*



Giselle Bernard, *Publisher*

Why should business owners seek to do business with vendors referred for integrity? Dealing with vendors known for their integrity increases the likelihood of fair and transparent transactions, timely deliveries, and reliable support, leading to a smoother and more productive business relationship. Moreover, collaborating with reputable vendors reflects positively on the business owner's reputation, demonstrating a commitment to ethical conduct

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Leader vs. Manager:

Balancing Roles for Business Success

by Sheles Wallace

Let's dispel the misconception that business owners should abandon their managerial responsibilities in favor of solely enhancing their leadership skills. Leaders inspire, and managers control. To run a successful business, you need both.

Let's delve into understanding the difference between a leader and a manager. These roles often overlap, especially in small businesses, but they encompass unique elements and skills. As a business owner, it's crucial to strike a balance between both to propel your business toward success.

Leadership: Inspiring, Envisioning, and Influencing

Leadership is about setting a course for the future. A leader is a visionary, someone who sees the big picture and sets the strategic direction for a company. Leaders inspire and motivate their team, fostering a culture of innovation and encouraging everyone to strive towards the company's goals.

Leaders influence others, instilling a sense of purpose and passion in their team members. They're not afraid to challenge the status quo and always seek new growth opportunities. Leaders create an environment where creativity and innovation can flourish.

Management: Organizing and Executing

While leadership is about setting direction and inspiring others, management is about ensuring the work gets done. Managers focus on the day-to-day operations of the company. They plan, organize, and monitor processes to ensure the company's goals are achieved efficiently and effectively.

Managers are responsible for maintaining structure, managing resources, and handling administrative tasks. They ensure that the team adheres to standards and meets their targets. While leaders set the direction, managers ensure the journey is smooth and successful.

Balancing Leadership and Management as a Business Owner

As a business owner, you must wear both hats: the leader and the manager. These roles are not mutually exclusive; they're two sides of the same coin. Both are essential for



the success of your business.

As a leader, you must define your business's vision, values, and long-term goals. You'll inspire your team, foster a positive culture, and guide your business through change and uncertainty. As a manager, you'll implement these plans effectively. You'll handle the practical aspects of running your business, such as planning tasks, managing resources, and monitoring performance.

Balancing these roles is a challenging but essential task. Too much focus on management without enough leadership can result in a rigid, stagnant business that struggles to adapt to change. On the other hand, all leadership with no management can lead to a lack of structure, inefficiency, and unmet goals.

Here are a few tips to help you strike a balance:

1. **Delegate Consider:** Delegating management tasks to trusted employees as your business grows. This will allow you to focus more on leadership.
2. **Create Clear Goals:** Clear, measurable goals will help keep everyone aligned and provide a clear direction for your management activities.
3. **Invest in Training:** Invest in leadership and management training for yourself and your team. This will improve your business's overall capacity to lead and manage.
4. **Regular Reviews:** Regularly review your business's performance and culture to ensure you're maintaining a healthy balance between leadership and management.

Remember, the most successful business owners can inspire their teams with their vision and lead them forward

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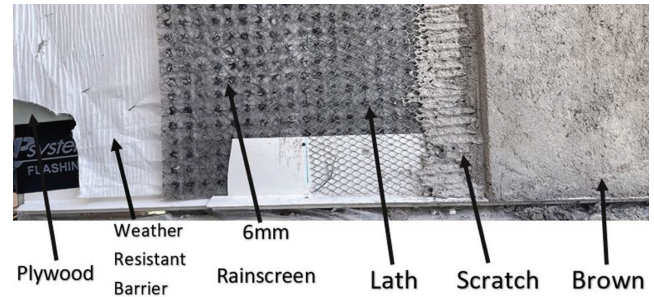
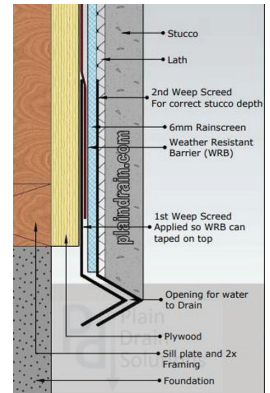
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Lippold Custom Homes Embraces The Power Of Customer Service

By Mary Lynn Mabray, ASID

“Professional and personable customer service is built on communication,” states Neal Lippold, president of Lippold Custom Homes. The company specializes in new construction and remodeling. As Neal says, “We might be small, but we are mighty when it comes to guaranteeing that a client’s custom build experience is based on personable proficiency along with quality workmanship and communication, from day one. Our motto is to always do what we say we will do for a client and new homeowner. That is the way to build and secure not only a legacy but a solid reputation”.

Lippold Custom Homes is a family-owned company that began in 2003 with dad Paul and his two sons, Neal, and Ryan, as a venture to remodel homes and then sell them.

Over the years, the company gradually expanded its focus, becoming one of Houston’s most recognizable custom home builders and an expert in residential renovation.

Neal and Ryan lost their dad four years ago, but the company’s goals and business model have never drifted away from communication and excellent customer service. Neal handles the nuts and bolts of the business, as well as client development and accurately bidding the jobs. Ryan and team, Moses Galvan, and Jose Hernandez, are the company’s men in the field.

Equally important is the selection of materials and finishes. Tara Brown works with clients and designers to help them achieve a cohesive and beautiful look. There is always



someone with the company either following a client's home building needs or asking questions regarding their lifestyle as it relates to their project.

Lippold Custom Homes want their clients to be happy and endeavors to keep them as lifelong friends. Many projects are, in fact, referrals from former satisfied customers.

Lippold Custom Homes works with customers' own architects and designers. There are weekly meetings with a team member to make certain everything related to the construction of the house is followed to the client's satisfaction. Lippold Custom Homes is experienced in

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building any style, whether it be traditional/rustic, French or English Country or Transitional/Modern. Most custom builds have spacious open plans, welcoming entries, foyers, spacious primary suites, chef-style kitchens, and lots of storage. Whatever the request, an experienced construction crew is ready to fulfill all plan requests.

Sub-contractors are very important to the success of any project. The same foundation crew, framers, electricians, plumbers, roofers, carpenters, cabinet makers, and detail specialists have been with Lippold for years. These craftspeople know the level of detail that goes into every Lippold home, and they deliver house after house on budget and within the scheduled time frame. Every punch list is carried out with careful precision. Lippold Custom Homes also continues to follow up with their customers long after the final punch list.

Lippold Custom Homes builds homes in the range of \$950,000 to four million dollars as well as full gut remodels and additions. The company currently has eight custom homes in progress and numerous renovations.





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BEYOND MINIMALISM

These New Design Trends Celebrate Texture, Fabulous Finishes And Hidden Assets To Elevate The Space!

By Linda Jennings

Whether you're looking to renovate an existing home or new construction, one of the biggest decisions is the overall decor direction. A minimalist space is timeless and appeals to all. But to keep the room interesting and uniquely yours, investing in well-appointed fixtures is

a great way to make a statement. Here are some bold choices when it comes to kitchen and bath design. From golden finishes in the bath to kitchen sinks with hidden assets, these brands deliver big style reaching beyond minimalism.



Counter-sinks from MTI Baths



Ibiza Collection with built-in glass rinser from Ruvati

SEAMLESS SENSATION

MTI Baths brings a distinctive design twist to the bathroom with an extraordinary collection of custom counter-sinks. Their clever fusion of sink and countertop results in a sleek, seamless look that is impressively adaptable and always a perfect fit. Personalized designs are offered in a variety of configurations and may be made to order according to counter length, depth and height as well as bowl style and placement. This amazing versatility makes counter-sinks a smart choice for small powder rooms where a wall-mounted design can maximize space, as well as luxurious master baths with ample room for double bowls and a generous expanse of countertop. The counter-sinks are crafted from the brand's proprietary SculptureStone material, a mostly organic blend of natural stone and minerals that gives the look and feel of molded stone. Each piece is completely solid all the way through with a smooth-to-the-touch surface that is non-porous, easy to clean, and resistant to stains, mold and mildew. All MTI counter-sinks are made in the United States and are meticulously finished by hand for years of lasting beauty.

RINSE AND REPEAT

Ruvati just added an innovative new model to their line of workstation sinks for the wet bar. Imagine the convenience of having a sink with a built-in glass rinser to quickly clean everything from coffee mugs to wine goblets. The new Ibiza Collection features a patent-pending design with dynamic jets that can easily and efficiently rinse drinkware to save time and effort when doing the dishes. The Ibiza sink is designed to maximize efficiency in a small space. In addition to the built-in glass rinser, the sink comes with a beautiful wood cutting board that spans the width of the basin to increase prep area and a rinse grid to allow glassware to drip-dry safely. Measuring 22" wide and 20" long with a 10" deep bowl, the Ibiza brings impressive productivity to compact workspaces. It's perfect for a home bar, RV or tiny house setting.

INFUSING FASHION INTO THE BATHROOM

Gessi conflates the worlds of fashion and home design into the extraordinary Habito Collection. Inspired by the



Habito from GESSI

concept of “private wellness tailoring,” Habito makes use of woven metal as a tailor would fabric for a suit, carefully fitting and shaping to create elegant silhouettes. The three-dimensional texture of the metal invites one to touch. The Habito collection features five distinctive patterns, each a masterpiece of intricate detailing that mimics a classic textile. Select from a variety of mixers for the basin, tub and shower as well as shower heads, sprayers and body jets, wall-hung bidets and toilets, and towel rails, robe hooks and soap holders.

A NEW LOOK FOR LEVERS

Viaggio Hardware has just introduced a new Contempo Fluted Lever. This beautiful design feels as good as it looks



Viaggio Hardware’s Fluted Levers

with a subtle linear groove pattern that adds an unexpected tactile element to every encounter. Crafted from solid forged brass, these distinctive levers are substantial to the touch and appealing to the eye. The Fluted Lever is the latest

addition to Viaggio’s popular Contempo Collection. The lever can be paired with any of the brand’s square or circular rosettes for a truly custom look. Levers are offered in five trend-setting finishes: Bright Chrome, Satin Black, Satin Brass, Satin Nickel and Titanium Gray. Viaggio hardware is built for lasting beauty and performance. Each element is precision-polished for a flawless finish. All sets feature a Concealed Screw Mechanism which neatly hides installation hardware for a seamless finished look with no visible fasteners. An impressive 28-degree latch radius ensures smooth use and reliable operation.

MODERN JAPANESE BATH

Inspired by the rich cultural traditions of the Japanese

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Elevate Your Lifestyle With An Aspire Custom Home

Nestled in the vibrant city of Houston lies a realm of architectural dreams brought to life by the masterful hands of Aspire Custom Homes, a remarkable gem among the many custom homebuilders that grace this bustling metropolis. With unwavering commitment to unparalleled craftsmanship and a deep-rooted passion for superior construction, this award-winning custom home builder, under the visionary leadership of David Gordon, stands tall as a paragon of elegance and ingenuity.

Embarking on a journey that was destined to be extraordinary, Aspire was conceived in 2004 with a profound desire to redefine the art of custom building. As a child, David Gordon found himself captivated by the mesmerizing dance of home construction in his neighborhood, kindling an insatiable curiosity that would later propel him to pursue a degree in construction management from the University of Houston.

Upon graduating, David's ambition manifested itself in the establishment of Whitestone Builders, an endeavor

dedicated to crafting high-end custom homes. Yet, it was through the challenges encountered on this path that a phoenix of innovation was born, and thus, Aspire Custom Homes emerged, heralding a new era of creativity in custom home building.

At the heart of their philosophy lies an unwavering commitment to the clients they serve, and a deep desire to transform the custom home building experience through developing a proven 9-step process that makes the journey smooth and enjoyable, allowing their busy-lived clients to easily manage what can be an over daunting process. With industry-leading guarantees, the process of building a custom home becomes an enchanting journey rather than a daunting odyssey. From on-time guarantees that honor the sanctity of schedules to fixed prices that bring peace of mind, and even money-back assurances, Aspire's approach is a symphony of assurance, ensuring that clients savor a smooth and positive experience throughout the entire process.



The hallmark of Aspire’s excellence lies in their meticulous attention to every aspect of construction. From the close oversight of framing to their use of “best of breed” materials products, every element is woven into a tapestry of architectural brilliance, ensuring that each home is not only a testament to craftsmanship but also an embodiment of a family’s dreams.

Today, Aspire Custom Homes stands as a beacon of unparalleled service and impeccable taste, rightfully adorned with numerous accolades and awards. Admiring gazes have followed them through time, with Best of Houzz awards consistently adorning their mantle since

2014, alongside numerous GHBPA Prism Parade of Homes Awards and the famed Texas Association of Builders Star Awards. The allure of their creations has graced the pages of esteemed Houston design and builder magazines, a testament to their peerless prowess.

Yet, beyond their architectural eminence, Aspire also embraces a spirit of community and compassion. Exemplifying their commitment to giving back, they have played a vital role in making Houston’s first “no-kill” shelter a reality, embodying their dedication to animal welfare. Moreover, they remain actively involved in local

Continued on page 14



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Continued from page 13

efforts to enhance municipal projects, forever ingrained in the fabric of their beloved community.

Exuding an aura of warmth and amiability, the team at Aspire Custom Homes weaves together an experience that is as inviting as it is enchanting. Throughout the journey, they ensure that the client remains an integral part of the process, assuring that every step is understood and approved, a partnership defined by trust and transparency.

Aspire proudly stands among the elite Houston Heights premier builders, their legacy gracing the neighborhoods of the Heights, Garden Oaks, Spring Valley, Highland Village and Memorial West. From the time-honored allure of traditional designs to the contemporary charm of modern farmhouses, Aspire’s diverse portfolio captures the essence

of every style, etching timeless memories into the very foundations of these homes.

Ready to embark on a journey to redefine your lifestyle? Aspire Custom Homes awaits your call at **713-304-5330**, or you can visit their sanctuary of architectural dreams at **927 Studewood in the Heights**. For those seeking to explore their visions from afar, their digital portal at **www.aspirecustomhomes.com** beckons, inviting dreamers from all corners of the world to experience the magic of Aspire.



Continued from page 11

soaking bath, Acquabella adds a modern twist with their Elko bathtub. Measuring 27” tall, this tub is generously sized to allow for total submersion, while its ergonomic shape gently cradles the body in utter comfort. The Elko has a compact design with a relatively small footprint, making it a smart choice for smaller bathrooms with limited floor space. The Elko is seamlessly sculpted from the brand’s signature Dolotek, an eco-friendly mineral composite that forms a flawless, silky, smooth-to-the-tone finish. With an inherent ability to retain heat, Dolotek elevates the bath experience by helping to keep bathwater warm longer. Its antibacterial surface is amazingly durable and easy to maintain. Elko is generously sized at 55” x

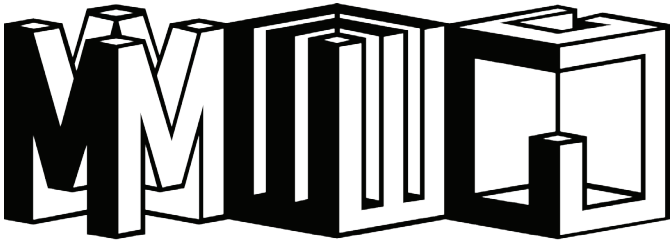
31” and is available in Snow white (gloss or matte), Brown Matte, Light Grey Matte, Dark Grey Matte and Black Matte. Always with a Snow White interior.



Elko by Acquabella

To find out more about the hardware and fixture products mentioned here, visit their websites:

- www.mtibaths.com • www.ruvati.com**
- www.gessi.com • www.viaggiohardware.com**
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Photos courtesy of Fairmont Custom Homes

Customer Reviews

Matt Sneller -
Sneller Custom Homes

We are a custom builder/remodeler and have been working with Esvin/MWG for about 4 years now. They are one of our best trade partners that we have. Esvin is extremely creative and great around our clients, but he also does what he says he's going to do and is great about staying in communication. He has done everything from simple framed glass shower doors to very detailed shower enclosures to custom cabinet doors to a custom metal and wood table for our new conference room. I would highly recommend working with MWG!

Michael Pelletier
President/Owner Fairmont Custom Homes

We have been working with Esvin Tista and MWG Innovations for over 5 years. Esvin is our go to for shower glass and mirror work. I am proud to say that we have been able to set market trends with the help of MWG Innovations and his excellent customer service. Rarely, do I find an individual that is as reliable as Esvin in our world of building custom homes. Esvin has been a great partner for Fairmont Custom Homes bringing excellent value to our customers and helping us become the number one builder in Fulshear, TX. We look forward to our continued relationship with MWG Innovations.

Brandon Kraut -
Construction Project Manager at Urban Craftsman
The MWG team does beautiful work, has great customer service, communicates clearly, and provides a great experience! I am a project manager for a custom home builder and we exclusively use MWG for our shower enclosures and glass work. I had them do my new shower enclosure at home as well. You can't go wrong with MWG!

Sales Professionals



Esvin Tista - *Esvin@mwginnovations.com*

In his 12 years of experience in the glass industry, Esvin found himself wanting to do more than install glass. As a true Texan, he believes everything is bigger in Texas and decided to open his own business in 2018. Esvin is talented and has the passion and vision for designing and fabricating unique pieces of art for metal, wood, and glass consisting of shower doors, vanities, mirrors, handrails, and more. He credits his passion to his loving family and success to his professional team. When his not working, you will find Esvin enjoying the beautiful Houston weather fishing, hoping to catch more than a cold breeze on a sunny, rainy day, all in one trip to the bay!



Lilian Tista - *ltista@mwginnovations.com*

Lilian is experienced in management accounting. In search of a better balance between work and family time, she joined Metal Wood Glass Innovations LLC in 2021. Her commitment is to provide excellent service, helping the corporation to create and build a better business. She enjoys the opportunity to serve customers on a personal level and the originality behind each project. She spends her free time with her son. She loves to run, and occasionally you will find her running marathons and obstacle course races.



Dialogue with a Designer

Diana Martin

MWG INNOVATIONS - With a passion for designing and working with glass, Esvin Tista founded MWG Innovations in 2018 on the idea that offering custom bath glass and mirrors for new construction and remodeling projects should fall in the line of an exquisite art job. Esvin takes great pride in creating unique pieces of art designed to bring life to the ideas given to him by the builders, designers, and trades he partners with. His work includes intricate designs of fabricated unique custom metal, wood, and glass pieces for shower doors, vanities, mirrors, handrails, and more. MWG Innovations is committed to providing all clients with high-quality products and services in which yield outstanding customer satisfaction.

This month MWG INNOVATIONS speaks with – Diana Martin of Diana Martin Interiors.

Being immersed in aesthetics began for Diana Martin at an early age. As the daughter of an architect and art lover, design is woven into her spirit. The journey led Diana to obtain a degree from the University of Texas in Interior Design. Diana's work career started at Index Design Group, specializing in hotel and restaurant design, working on numerous projects across the country over an eight-year stint there. Then with newborn in tow, she began taking on

small projects of her own and exploring new opportunities in residential design.

Flash forward almost thirty years to Diana's portfolio of interior design projects comprised of new builds and remodels, mainly residential with a few small offices when needed. Of course, being based in Houston implies many hometown projects, but also many notable projects in Austin, Aspen, Jackson Hole, Atlanta, Chicago, Paris, Dusseldorf, and a transatlantic vessel.

Diana works with her sister Janet Dowlearn with Habicon Interiors and on her own as Diana Martin Interiors.

MWG INNOVATIONS: What motivated you to enter interior design?

DMI: My father is an architect and designed and built both of my childhood homes. When you grow up in that environment, it is natural to be interested in design.

MWG INNOVATIONS: How has the field of interior design changed since you graduated?

DMI: When I graduated from the University of Texas, all design students had to know how to draw because there was no such thing as Auto Cad. Now most all plans,

Continued on page 18



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Jeff Steiner -
jsteiner@bathsofamerica.com

Jeff has always enjoyed working with people and being able to offer them his exceptional services. No matter the size of the job, Jeff makes sure that the customer is satisfied and that the job he started gets his full attention until completion. After sales, Jeff also follows up with clients to ensure they are aware of the functions of the products they have purchased and if he can assist in any product demo in person. Jeff, along with his assistant, Hillary Ratliff, started the appliance builder sales division at Baths of America. He has been in the appliance industry for 30 years now and has led Baths of America to one of the largest appliance dealers in Houston, TX.



Hillary Ratliff -
Hratliff@bathsofamerica.com

Hillary has been in appliance builder sales for the past four years and has no plans to go to another industry. Assisting Jeff with his builders, Hillary makes sure that products are ordered, scheduled for installation and the logistics of jobs are handled sufficiently. Hillary enjoys the appliance category as it is a very niche, and the relationships that she's made in this industry. Helping builders and meeting new clients and industry partners has become a reason why Hillary plans to keep continuing her plans to grow in the appliance industry.



Chadney Alvarez-
chadney@bathsofamerica.com

Chadney has been in plumbing and hardware sales for 25 years now. Starting as a bookkeeper at EXPO Design Center at age 18, she has developed herself into one of the leading salespersons in the plumbing and hardware industry. Developing customer relationships is very important to Chadney and a key reason why she's been very successful in maintaining her business. Starting from the beginning, when plans are just on paper, making selections, and seeing the final projects come to fruition a year or so later makes me love what I do.

Customer Reviews

Brian Phillips - Cayson Graye/Alair Homes

As a custom home builder, we have specific needs when it comes to appliances for our projects. Jeff and his team offer not only the selection we need for our clients, but also the expertise, competitive pricing and professional installs. Baths of America is a vendor with whom we are very proud to partner.

Courtney C - Client

After having a horrible experience at another appliance dealer, we stopped into Baths of America on a whim and were paired with Vincent. We told him about our situation and the terrible experience we had been having with the other company, and he was able to get us our appliances in a reasonable time. Not only was he upfront with us, but he was in constant communication with us throughout the whole process. We had some issues with installation on our end due to our contractor's mistake, and Vincent was even able to help us remedy the situation. Thank you, Vincent for helping us 100% through the whole process and always being in constant communication. True customer service!

Coraline Wheeler - Designer Details

Love! Love! Love this place. You will be pleasantly surprised to enter a beautifully designed showroom with a lot of exciting eye candy!! Every time without fail, the customer service has been excellent. Their knowledge and quick turnaround with quotes are always impressive, especially given the current environment. The range of products is a visual delight as well as impressive to take clients to when sourcing appliances, faucets, hardware etc. A must-visit! You won't be disappointed.



Continued from page 16

elevations, and perspectives are done on the computer, which is great, but something was lost there.

On the flip side, there is so much more interest in good design now and many more great products and innovative ways of doing things. The added help of seeing and accessing products via the internet and social media is incomparable.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *How can an experienced interior designer help a custom home builder or a remodeling contractor with their building or remodeling projects?*

DMI: An Interior Designer can bring new ideas to the table and share relevant experiences, good & bad, to make the project and the process better and more efficient.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *What sets you apart from other designers?*

DMI: I am very detail-oriented, introspective, and hands-on. I respect my client's intentions and always try to educate & keep them informed on the way to

accomplishing a beautiful space that is theirs.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *What has been your most challenging project and why?*

DMI: I worked with a client that moved from Chicago to Dusseldorf, Germany. The first hurdle was determining which furnishings she could take from her Chicago home using a floor plan in metric scale. Once she moved in (and yes the things we brought over did fit, thank goodness), I then traveled to Dusseldorf, and we charted new territories to find furnishings and accessories to fill in the blanks. It was a challenging but fun and rewarding project.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *How do you begin the materials selection process when working with builders' and remodelers' clients?*

DMI: The interior should speak to the exterior, so I start by looking at the architectural style and layout of the structure as well as the exterior materials specified. After studying, I determine how the interior finishes relate and interface with the exterior. I usually begin with the flooring and any

Continued on page 20



international flooring

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Richard Arnold -
richard@ifhouston.com

Richard Arnold is the proud co-founder of International Flooring and is based in Houston, TX. With over 25 years of experience in the building industry, Richard has worked his way up from Construction Manager overseeing over 200 home builds to becoming the CEO of three construction companies: International Flooring,

Texas Treads, and Karina Homes. His robust construction knowledge qualifies him to solve a variety of building needs, from product sourcing to installation, crew management, and more. Richard takes a hands-on approach with clients through multiple job site visits and straightforward advice. Working with Richard means connecting with Houston's top custom builders, designers, and remodelers

Customer Reviews

David Herzog, CEO - Herzog Homes, LLC

Herzog Homes has built over 2,000 on the east coast. When we opened our Texas division, we learned of Richard Arnold, owner of International Flooring, by way of a very strong recommendation from our construction lender. Any referral from a construction lender is extremely credible. We met with Richard and the rest is history. They installed the flooring in our first home over 5 years ago, and they have done every home since, including two of my personal homes. Accordingly, we have given Richard and his company abundant referrals to customers, friends, designers, and builders alike. Additionally, we strongly recommended them to the CBUSA builder chapter for membership. This is a very selective organization, comprised of over 50 regional builder who work with our internally approved trade contractor and suppliers. After membership vetting, they were accepted, and we are elated to have them as part of the CBUSA team. Richard and International Flooring have executed expertly, their employees are professionals, and we cannot say enough great things about this company. They are regularly voted favorite quarterly trade by our team, and we look forward to decades of continued partnership. I am happily available to discuss our superb relationship with International Flooring. I can be reached at David@HerzogHomes.com or 832-314-9000.

Selena MacKay, Owner of The WM

International Flooring is my go to source for flooring. The selection is outstanding. Richard is very knowledgeable and is able to always meet our budget with quality products that make my clients super happy!! The service is excellent and overall a great experience working with him.

Steve Gulledge, Gulledge Homes

I highly recommend using International Flooring for all your flooring needs. Richard Arnold, an owner of International Flooring, knows his product inside and out. He can explain the different wood species and flooring options to my clients, so they are well-informed in making their flooring decisions. Richard bids on the job and walks the jobs, overseeing the jobs closely. He communicates daily and closely with his project manager, Eduardo Trigo with whom I really enjoy working. International Flooring provides my clients and I with outstanding service. If there are issues with punch items, they take care of it right away. I must add that Richard has built an island butcherblock countertop for me that turned out fabulous.



Continued from page 18

special architectural elements such as beams, unique doors, fireplaces, surrounds, etc., and then move to plumbing, hardware, and countertop material selections. The goal is to make the interior and exterior cohesive. It's also very important to consider the interior finishes as a whole and how one selection will affect another.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *What are some common mistakes builders and homeowners make?*

DMI: Often people need to be made aware of the immense number of decisions that need to be made in a construction project and how one decision can adversely affect another until it is too late. Then when mistakes are made or things do not turn out the way the owner had intended, it can be costly to correct and frustrating for the builder.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *Speaking about staying current, how do you keep yourself up to date with all the design trends happening in the industry today?*

DMI: Social media is an obvious way and easy to look at what is going on currently, but I also enjoy looking through actual paper design magazines. I am a licensed Interior Designer and a member of ASID, so I have access to many presentations, continuing education seminars, and product introduction events to keep current.

Continued from page 4

while ensuring their daily operations run smoothly. So, embrace your leadership and management roles, and watch your business thrive!

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MWG INNOVATIONS: *What is your favorite design style?*

DMI: I love clean, edited, livable spaces that mix old and new. I try to avoid passing trends and include one's treasures in a fresh way to create a timeless interior.

MWG INNOVATIONS: *What fascinates you, and how have you incorporated that into your designs?*

DMI: I love fine art and antiques and how including them in a space can make it so special.

"I value the uniqueness of each client and strive to make the design theirs. My design objective is to create warm, inviting, and livable spaces, trusting a keen balance of old and new into a true, evolved, and timeless interior."

– Diana Martin



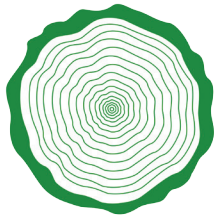
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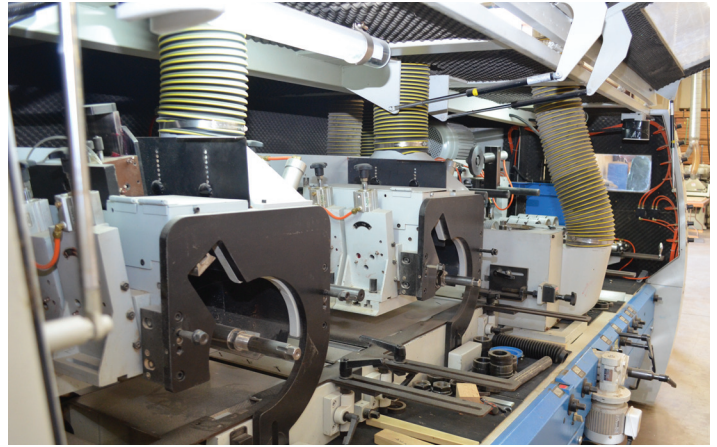
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Customer Reviews

Cullen Franz - Savannah Grace Homes

“Hardwood Products has gone over and above to source the best quality materials for the best price to help me grow my business. Kenny Francis and the HWP team has provided me with outstanding customer services that leaves other competitors in the dust. I can't say enough about the value that I have received in partnering with HWP. My custom homes have never looked so good !! Thank you Kenny and HWP !!”

Matt Sneller – Sneller Custom Homes and Remodeling

“I have known and worked with Kenny/Hardwood Products for over 15 years. We consider them to be one of our most loyal and trusted trade partners. We are a custom builder/remodeler and use them for a lot of our interior and exterior trimwork/materials. Their pricing is fantastic, but even better than that is their customer service. Kenny is always easy to get a hold of and super responsive to any issue that arises. We would highly recommend using them!”

Rick Davis - DC Kitchens & Remodeling

I can't say enough about working with Hardwood Products. I've been in business for about 35 years and have been working with Hardwood products for as long as I can remember. I find their entire staff trustworthy and extremely professional, especially Kenny and Laura. The entire staff has a full understanding of their extensive line of hardwood products. I find that they are extremely dependable, and their customer service is outstanding. They always go out of their way in providing the very best in high-quality materials and for the best price. Not only that, I find them to be very dependable. I can trust that they will always be on top of things. I feel more comfortable working with them than anyone else.



**Charlie Molloy -
cmolloy@hwp.us**

Charlie has over 30 years of experience in the building material industry, dating from 1992 to the present. He has expert knowledge of most building products, including hardwood lumber, plywood, cabinet hardware, plastic laminate, and custom moldings. In his previous years, he was a manager in the grocery industry for Eagle Discount Supermarkets and Randall's Food markets in the Houston area. His strengths include managing employees, customer service relations, logistics, and outside sales. He has lived in the Houston area since 1968 and spent his childhood in Spring Branch, graduating from Spring Woods High School. He went to the University of Houston where he majored in Music, Hotel and Restaurant Management, and Business management. Hobbies include playing the National Anthem with his trumpet at professional baseball games, hiking in the Big Bend area, and woodworking. Charlie has been married 39 years and has one son, a daughter, and two grandchildren.



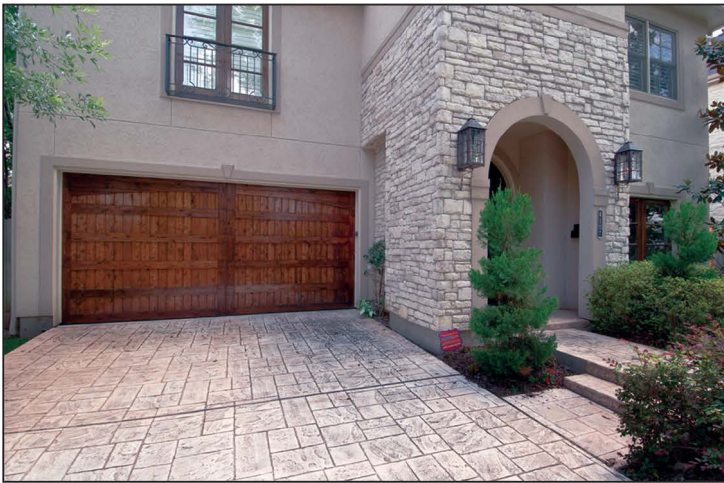
**Kenny Francis -
kfrancis@hwp.us**

Kenneth has 32 years of experience in the building industry from 1990 to present. He started at Wilsonart in 1990-2001 in the Houston area. He was employed as the operations manager of over 27 employees. He decided to take his sales knowledge & expertise to Hardwood Products 2001 - present. Kenny enjoys working with companies & building relationships. From commercial millwork shops and remodelers to Custom Builders. Every day is a challenge, from supply & demand to rising costs. Providing innovation & service for the customer is the bottom line. Kenny has lived in Houston his entire life & knows the area well. His hobbies are anything outdoors, from hunting and exercise to sports. He has a wife of 17 years & two beautiful daughters.

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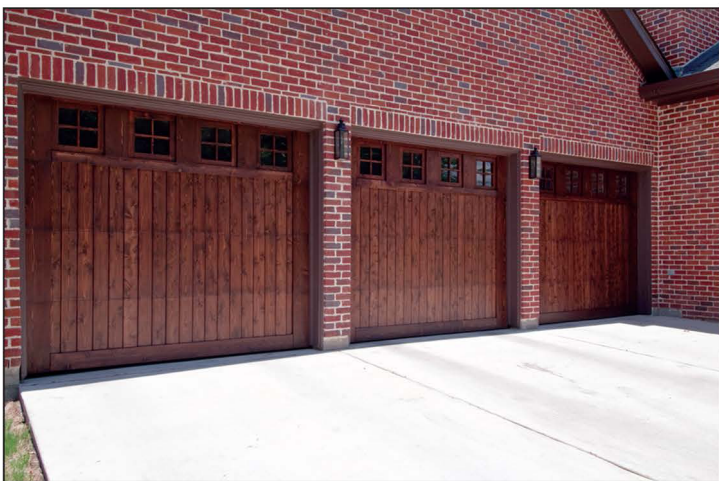
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