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Elevare Developments: 1+1+1 = Success



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By Kathy Bowen Stolz

For Elevare Developments, the formula for success in the Houston speculative home market is the collaboration among its three principals – Richard Simses, Jonathan Newton and Jordan Newton.

“The architectural design is a collaborative effort between the three of us. While Jonathan and Richard spearhead the plans, we all look at things from a different perspective, which is a plus,” Jordan said. Jonathan’s construction management background blends well with Richard’s engineering background and with Jordan’s interior design skills, they agreed.

“We hit the ground running with our combination of skills,” Richard added, saying they each have a lot of transferrable skills from their training and previous employment. “We truly care about detail and design and focus on elevating people’s lives.”

Elevare, which formed in 2017, builds custom spec homes in the \$1.4 to 3 million range. It is always buying older homes to demolish as well as vacant lots to quicken the transaction process.

The company typically constructs three to six homes each year in the original suburbs right outside Houston’s inner loop with a focus on highly rated public schools. “Our target is a professional family. Many of our clients are in the oil and gas industry because we are close to the energy corridor,” Richard continued.

“We pride ourselves on taking the time to achieve a custom look at the right price point. People like what we’re doing. We pay attention to the details. Fortunately, we haven’t struggled to move the homes,” he stated.

The company’s marketing depends on signage at construction sites and branding in addition to high-end photography to use on social media and its website, www.elevaredevelopments.com. Because Richard is also a realtor, the company markets itself, listing homes 30-60 days before completion. “One thing that differentiates us is our willingness to explain anything to prospective clients on a personal scale,” he said. “It’s important to us who we sell to.”

“Our projects sell very quickly. Our intention is to build a



great house for a family to live and thrive in,” Jordan added. “We pride ourselves on designing for function to elevate your life,” echoed Richard. He cited providing adequate space between a kitchen island and dishwasher as an example.

Jordan, who also works independently with outside clients through her company Jordan Newton Interiors, said her interior design background sets Elevare apart from its competitors because she brings a high-end look to their homes. Richard noted that the company moved into the \$1 million-plus market because of Jordan’s designs, adding that most spec builders don’t have an interior designer in-house.

She added that she “curates” a design specifically for each





house. “I hate to do the same thing twice, so every house essentially is new house designed by me.” Although the trio has learned some floor plans work especially well, they have never used the exact plans twice, she continued. “We tweak them each time.”

Richard agreed that they may re-utilize plans that work well; however, the lots are never the same, and their goal is to utilize the lot to the fullest. “Our plans are very well thought out for the lot.”

While they typically don’t install swimming pools, they plan for a pool on each property, even producing a rendering to help a buyer visualize where a pool may go.

The Newtons and Simses, a newlywed, even live in their houses, often moving to take advantage of improvements. “We build for ourselves. We get to learn things and transfer the lessons we’ve learned,” Richard said.

With his degree and experience in petroleum engineering and private equity investment, Richard focuses on logistics, budgeting, planning and working with multiple vendors. Jonathan’s degree in construction management provides assurance that the workmanship is done to the highest quality and standards. While both are on-site at each build, Jonathan is the more technical person while Richard keeps the process on track, Simses said. “They both work extremely hard and push each other to set goals and achieve them,” Jordan commented.

Building on its success, Elevare Developments plans to grow its team later this year, adding project managers and doubling the number of homes it builds within a year. “We’re reinvesting everything in ourselves,” Richard stated.





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