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AVANT Custom Homes' Ndiaye Ready for Growth





By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Alioune Ndiaye is an ambitious young builder. He has a strategy to grow his business, AVANT Custom Homes, and the knowledge and energy to make that growth possible.

Reading the book “Rich Dad, Poor Dad” by Robert T. Kiyosaki and Sharon Lecter in 2019 helped him shift his thinking to see how he could do more with his construction

knowledge. A mentor told him he had everything he needed but that he didn’t know what he didn’t know.

To expand his building and business knowledge, after earning a degree in construction science from Prairie View A&M University, he worked as a project manager for a custom builder in the Houston area, then transitioned to working for a developer on the east side of Houston for the next four years.

While many people sat back during the COVID lockdown in 2020, he saw an opportunity to start his own company, originally focusing on high-end remodeling projects with interior designers. He chose the company name “AVANT” for its reference to the French term “avant garde,” meaning new, unusual and innovative.

A year later Ndiaye pivoted from remodeling to all-new construction projects because he found it easier to maintain a budget and time schedule with new construction. Typically, he completes 10 projects in a year, with his current projects including seven town homes as a





speculative venture, plus a 4,600-sq.-ft. custom home in Spring Branch. His speculative town homes are in the \$450,000 and above price range inside Houston's city limits, and his custom homes are typically \$800,000 and above. In addition, he also provides consulting services as one of his strategies for growth.

He focuses on the neighborhoods in the 610 Loop, where he might squeeze a 2,000-4,000 sq. ft. home onto a 5,000 sq. ft. lot. He also works in the Heights and Independence Heights to help limit his travel to job sites to about 10-15 minutes. Alley is also building a home on a 7,000-sq.-ft. lot in Spring Branch with a group of investors that he has worked with before on a previous project.

With ownership of two companies – AVANT Custom Homes and AVANT Real Estate and Development – he hopes to expand toward real estate development, especially apartment complexes, town home communities and subdivisions in the future. He got started in development with smaller projects by replatting 5,000-sq.-ft. lots



into two or three lots for town homes and then selling them. Also holding a real estate license, Ndiaye said he occasionally buys property. “If I see a good deal, I’ll make a move on it.”

Despite his ambition, his quick success surprised even himself. “I did not envision the company to take off as it has. I was expecting it to be five, 10, 20 years in the making.” He said he hopes to grow AVANT at an accelerated rate by having a mix of investors for spec builds and a constant pipeline for custom build clients.

He entrusts his two project managers to handle most of the job site issues on his projects because they are self-driven towards achieving a common goal and they have plans to follow, allowing them and the subcontractors to work efficiently. “It’s not beneficial for me to be on the site all day when I can provide more value by focusing more on clients and the business, which makes a difference in client relations and running the business effectively and efficiently.”

However, with custom homes, he said he thinks about every small detail, such as the rounded end of a corner because a he wants to create a home with the finishes, hardware and fit for the client’s lifestyle. Most of his custom home clients are young families or males ranging in their late 30s to late 50s, primarily because of the price point and type of housing he builds. Town homes attract buyers in their late





20s to early 30s and a lower price point, he noted.

Ndiaye's consulting service offers construction guidance and expertise for investors who want to control their building process better. Ndiaye provides services as a package or as an hourly rate to his clients by providing guidance for passing inspections, selecting contractors and vendors, problem solving and critical thinking and meeting code requirements. Adding consulting as a service in 2023, he said he now spends about 20-25 percent of his time on consulting and 75-80 percent of it on straight contracting.

While he outsources bookkeeping and administrative work, Ndiaye himself handles the sales, marketing, business development and client relations aspects of owning his own company. Referrals come from architects, interior designers, bankers and previous customers.

Moving toward the future, he sees plenty of opportunity in the Houston market. He said he is here to stay in the Houston metro area and to continue building high quality homes while maintaining a very reputable brand. "The sky's the limit!"





*For more information on
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