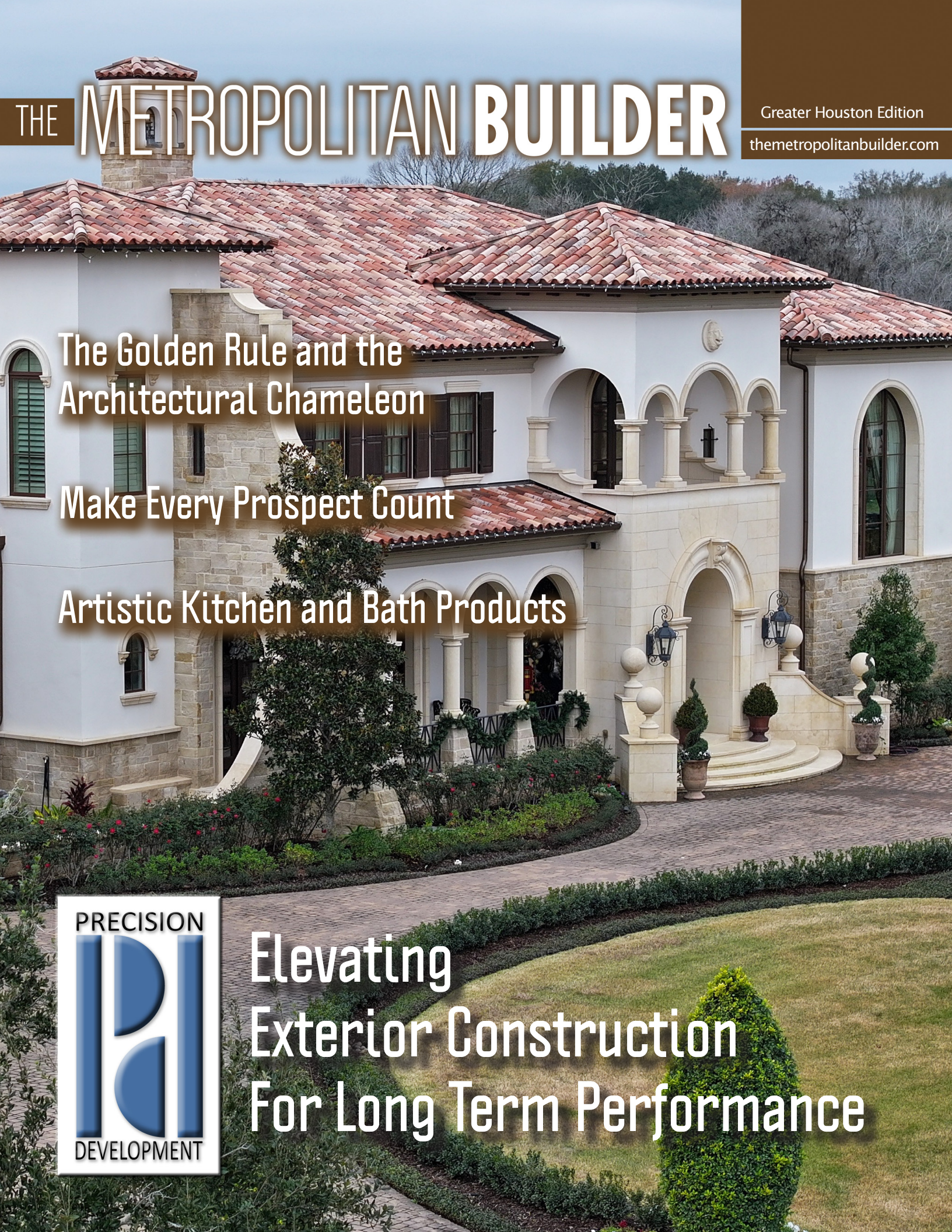

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Greater Houston Edition
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The Golden Rule and the Architectural Chameleon

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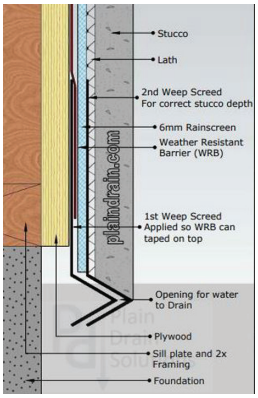

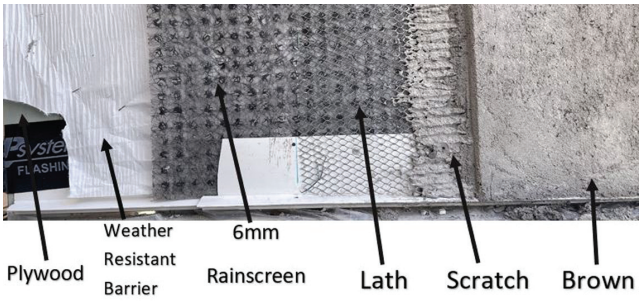

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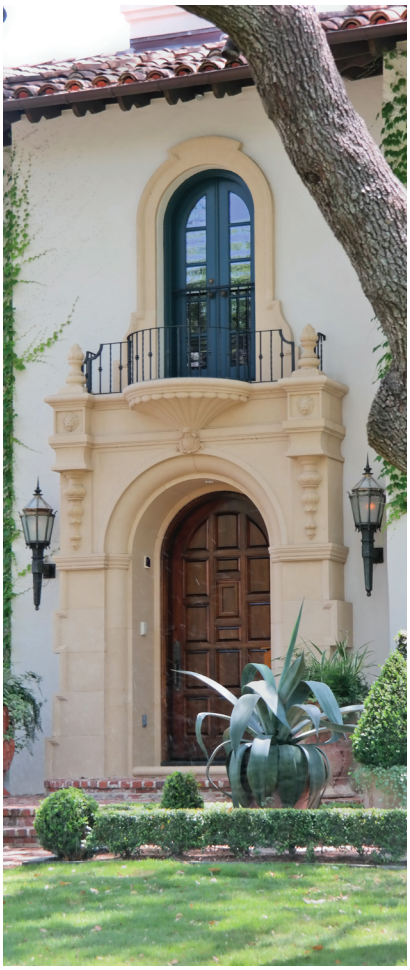

THE METROPOLITAN **BUILDER**

An Industry Trade Publication | March 2026

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Website
www.themetropolitanbuilder.com

Printed in the USA
by Marathon Creative

The Metropolitan Builder is a local trade publication published monthly in an informative and positive manner. Copies are mailed, free of charge, to building professionals throughout the greater Houston area. The opinions and facts expressed in The Metropolitan Builder magazine are those of the authors or columnist and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher, nor do they constitute an endorsement of products or services herein. The Metropolitan Builder strives to ensure the accuracy of the magazine's contents. However, should inaccuracies or omissions occur, we do not assume responsibility. The Metropolitan Builder reserves the right to refuse any advertisement. This publication may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, without the expressed prior written permission of the publisher.

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PUBLISHER'S *note*

Giselle Bernard
Publisher

Profit vs Principle

In every industry, there is a quiet test that surfaces again and again: Will we choose profit first—or principle?

In the residential building industry, where projects are complex, timelines are tight, and investments are significant, the temptation to prioritize monetary gain over integrity can be subtle. It doesn't always show up as something dramatic. Sometimes it looks like cutting a corner. Overpromising to secure a contract. Failing to disclose critical information. Choosing short-term margin over long-term trust.

But here's the truth I've witnessed over 25 years of working alongside Houston's custom builders, remodelers, designers, and vendors: when money is placed before integrity, the cost is always greater than the gain.

Reputations erode. Relationships fracture. Referrals disappear. Teams dissolve. And in an industry built almost entirely on word-of-mouth and trust, that loss is difficult—if not impossible—to recover.

The most successful professionals featured in The Metropolitan Builder share one defining characteristic: they stand by their word. They communicate transparently. They take responsibility when mistakes are made. They protect their trade partners. They value relationships over transactions. And as a result, their businesses grow steadily, sustainably, and with loyalty that cannot be bought.

Integrity is not a marketing strategy. It is a discipline. It means doing the right thing when no one is watching. It means honoring contracts even when it costs more. It means admitting missteps quickly and correcting them without defensiveness.

Money fuels a business. Integrity sustains it.

In uncertain markets especially, it can be tempting to operate from fear—chasing revenue at any cost. Yet history shows us that those who lead with character, who protect the trust of their clients and partners, are the ones who endure.

Our industry does not just build homes. We build reputations. We build communities. We build legacies.

Let's choose to build them on a foundation that will last.

The Golden Rule and the Architectural Chameleon:

The Dual Legacy of Winfrey Design Build

By Jacob Dow

For Bruce Winfrey, the path to becoming a premier custom homebuilder in Houston's most prestigious enclaves began not with a blueprint, but with a pile of scrap wood. As a child, he spent his days constructing playhouses and clubhouses, a hands-on apprenticeship that sparked a lifelong fascination with how structures come together. This early passion eventually led him to Texas A&M, where he earned a degree in construction science, followed by 37 years of refining his craft in the Houston market. Today, as the founder of Winfrey Design Build, Bruce has built more than just luxury residences in River Oaks, Tanglewood, and Memorial he has built a reputation for being the ultimate partner to both homeowners and architects alike.

The Golden Rule of the Inner Loop

In an industry where high-stakes projects can often lead to high-friction relationships, Bruce remains anchored by a simple, timeless principle: The Golden Rule. "Treat people the way you'd want to be treated," Bruce says, distilling his approach down to a single guiding philosophy. For him, this means more than just meeting a contract; it means building every project as if it were his own personal home, a standard he has personally tested by building and living in five of his own homes before selling them.

This personal investment is physically represented in the company's logo, a house nestled within a "W," symbolizing a name and a reputation that are inextricably linked to the quality of every build. This commitment to a family's legacy is perhaps most visible in a signature tradition unique to Winfrey Design Build: the installation of a custom plaque with the company's logo set directly into the concrete of the driveway. For Bruce, it is a permanent mark of ownership and a way to signal that a house has officially transitioned from a construction site to a sanctuary.

An Architectural Chameleon

While his personal values are fixed, Bruce's construction style is remarkably fluid. He describes himself as a

"chameleon," a necessary trait when working alongside Houston's top-tier architects and designers. Rather than imposing a singular aesthetic, he adapts his expertise to fit the specific vision of the design team.

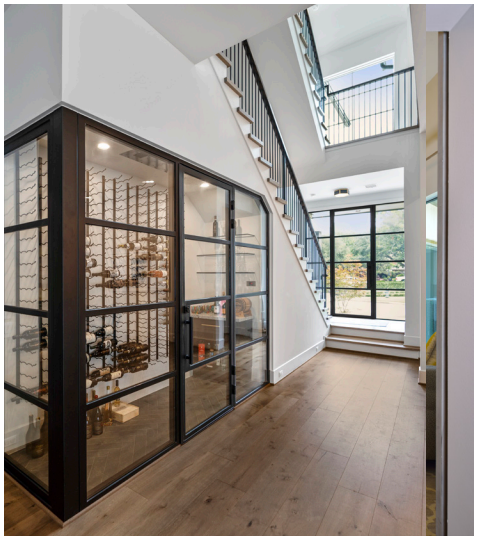
"We work with a bunch of different architects and designers... we're flexible," Bruce explains. This flexibility is put to the test in real-time. Bruce recalls a project in River Oaks where the client decided to pivot from a stucco exterior to brick halfway through the build. Where other builders might have balked at the logistical shift, Bruce and his team pivoted with a smile, applying the brick veneer over the stucco to fulfill the client's changing vision.

His role is to serve as the bridge between architectural imagination and construction reality. During the framing stage, Bruce often suggests "advice and ideas" such as adding custom niches or dedicated pet spaces that enhance a home's functionality without overstepping the architect's aesthetic boundaries.

Precision through "The Winfrey Way"

To maintain high standards across his limited portfolio of four - seven homes per year, Bruce utilizes a proprietary system known as "The Winfrey Way". This involves a rigorous checklist of procedures and best practices designed

Continued on page 6



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to minimize mistakes and ensure every subcontractor delivers their best work. This process is bolstered by his "no surprises" communication policy: every Friday, clients receive an update detailing what was accomplished that week, what is scheduled for the next, and any upcoming decisions required from the homeowner.

Transparency is further enhanced through the use of Buildertrend, a digital portal where homeowners can access project documents, view progress photos, and track selections in real-time. This blend of old-school craftsmanship and modern management allows Bruce to handle the complexities of projects that now average $3-$6 million.

Building for the Future

As Bruce looks toward the next decade, his vision for Winfrey Design Build remains focused on quality over quantity. With his son now working alongside him, the company is embracing the next generation of home technology. Bruce anticipates that AI will play an increasingly vital role in home automation from energy-efficient lighting systems like Lutron to advanced climate and security controls.

Despite these technological shifts, the core motivation remains the same. For Bruce, true success is measured by the feeling of driving through Houston and seeing the homes he has built, not just as physical structures, but as the enduring backdrops for the lives and memories of the families within.

Ultimately, the story of Winfrey Design Build is one of enduring partnership between builder and architect, and between a craftsman and his community. While the scale of his projects has grown to include some of Houston's most significant estates, Bruce Winfrey's motivation remains as grounded as it was when he first picked up a hammer as a child. He continues to find profound satisfaction in the "after" seeing a house fully realized with furniture, window coverings, and the personal touches that transform a structure into a home. With no plans to retire and the next generation of the Winfrey family already on-site, the company is poised to continue its 37-year tradition of building Houston's finest sanctuaries, one brick, one plaque, and one "Golden Rule" at a time.

For more information contact

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Artistic Kitchen and Bath Products

Bring A Fresh, Refined Energy To The Luxury Home Builder Market

By Linda Jennings

Unique kitchen and bath fixtures reflect a home's style and can transform even the most dull dwellings into something spectacular. From a gorgeous English vanity in a stunning verde marble to a beautiful sea inspired blue basin, the right product can bring the design vision to life. Create a vibrant interior that celebrates classic traditionalism with a modern, sophisticated vibe... each product showcased here offers fresh interpretations for the home space. Fascinate your family and friends with a home that brings out your inner artistic flair!

Greenwich Vanity from The Sterlingham Company

Stunning Verde Marble Vanity

British manufacturer, The Sterlingham Company Ltd. is proud to add the Greenwich to its line-up of sleekly engineered washstands. Beautiful and practical, the artisan-quality washstand is crafted from solid brass, and features a stunning marble top with upstand and is finished with a British-Made White Vitreous China Bowl. Supported by the new two leg Eden washstand, which features Bamboo inspired joints and feet. It is shown in a stunning new marble Verde Guatemala, but available in all of the brand's standard brassware and marble finishes. All stands include a support angle for supporting the marble slab against the wall. Discover more at sterlingham.co.uk.

Italian Seaside Charm

The RC2035SS Siracusa joins Nantucket Sinks' Regatta Collection, bringing Italian craftsmanship and coastal

Siracusa Distressed Blue undermount sink by Nantucket Sinks

charm to the modern bathroom. Handcrafted in Italy, this undermount sink captures the timeless allure of Siracusa, the historic seaside city in Sicily, through its distinctive distressed blue glaze. Designed to celebrate individuality, each piece reflects the subtle variations and artisanal charm of hand-applied finishes, offering a one-of-a-kind character that elevates any bathroom setting. With its elegant coastal inspiration and thoughtful design, the Siracusa sink seamlessly bridges classic European aesthetics with modern functionality. Its 20" x 12" bowl and integrated overflow ensure practicality while maintaining a sophisticated, curated look. Perfect for both contemporary and traditional bathrooms, the RC2035SS Siracusa brings a touch of European coastal elegance to daily routines. Discover the entire collection at nantucketsinksusa.com.

Vivid Vessel Handmade in Italy

Add a beautiful focal point to the bath with the Murano collection from Ruvati. With flowing lines and gentle curves, this stunning sink collection offers two distinctive

Continued on page 10

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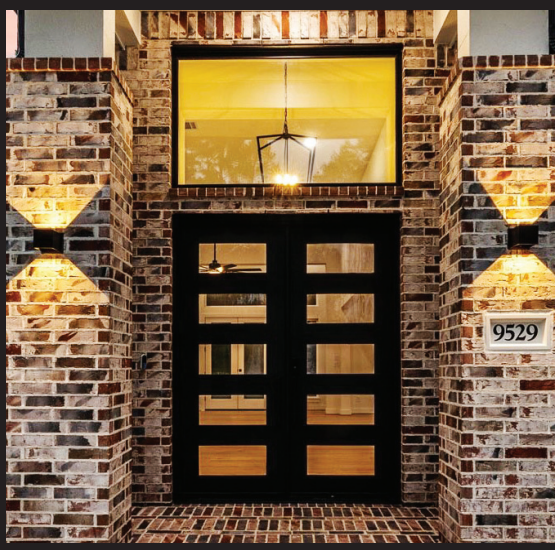

19" Murano Glass Seashell Vessel in Spira Luxe Pearl White from Ruvati

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options - including a sleek round bowl or the elegant arc-shaped Seashell bowl shown here. Handmade in Italy, these artistic vessel sinks are designed to draw the eye and elevate your bathroom. In addition to the exquisite color, the unique seashell shape adds to the dynamic style of this one-of-a-kind sink. Handblown Murano glass infused with colorful paint creates a beautiful gradient design highlighted with a Spira Luxe Pearl White glossy finish. Measuring 18-1/2" (wide) x 13-3/4" (front-to-back) x 5-7/8" (height), the Murano Seashell Vessel Sink is a colorful addition that captures the beauty of the ocean right in your bathroom. For more information, visit ruvati.com.

The K225 Kitchen Faucet from Lenova

Double The Function

The K225 faucet from Lenova's Design Series brings a multi-tasking masterpiece of performance to the kitchen with its innovative dual-spout design. Its sculptural, modern shape complements any decor, making it the centerpiece of the kitchen design. The faucet features a two-function spray head, a magnetic docking system, and a rotating pot filler spout for enhanced efficiency. Crafted from type 304 stainless steel with zero lead content, it ensures durability and drip-free performance. Measuring 23-3/4" overall, it comes in Matte Black with Brushed Brass and Brushed Nickel finishes. Lenova's proprietary PVD process creates a matte finish that is both durable and easy to maintain. Discover the entire collection at lenovagroup.com.

Diamond Spas Fraser cold plunge pool

Kitchen Faucet Celebrates Pantone's Cloud Color

The Zest kitchen faucet combines style and practicality with a pop of Pantone's Color of the Year, Cloud Dancer, making it an ideal addition to any modern kitchen. With its minimalist design, it looks fabulous while providing exceptional functionality. Crafted from durable stainless steel, the faucet features a dual-function sprayer and an 18" pull-out hose that easily reaches around the sink. Shown here in Cloud Dancer White, Zest is available in standard metallic finishes as well as 20 thin-film, oven-cured, ceramic-based finish options to really amp up the drama. Additionally, a matching soap dispenser is available, or add a Touch Sensitive Solenoid Box to Zest for easy one-touch on/off operation. See the entire Zest Collection at flussofaucets.com.

To find out more about the brands featured here visit their websites at:

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Making Every Prospect Count in a Tightening Market

By Burk Moreland

When the market is booming, sales teams can sometimes afford to be a little less disciplined. Leads are plentiful, buyers are motivated, and a steady stream of traffic walks through the door. But when markets tighten—as we are experiencing now—the number of prospects inevitably shrinks. That reality changes the game. Every single prospect becomes more valuable, and as business owners, it's our job to make sure our teams are equipped, trained, and mentally ready to capture as many of those opportunities as possible.

Equipping the Team With the Right Resources

Prospecting doesn't begin and end with a sales conversation—it starts with preparation. If our teams don't have the proper tools, they'll always be playing catch-up. That means having a reliable CRM system that tracks every lead and follow-up, model homes that are maintained and inviting, marketing materials that reflect the current product, and websites that are not only up to date but designed to convert. Outdated brochures, broken links, or missing information online signal to a prospect that we aren't prepared for their business. In today's market, we simply can't afford those gaps.

Putting the Right People in the Right Seats

Resources are only part of the equation. We must also be confident that we have the right salespeople in the right places. That doesn't just mean filling a position—it means ensuring that our people are motivated, trained, and positioned to succeed. The best sales professionals aren't just closers; they're guides who can help buyers navigate an overwhelming amount of information, competing offers, and constant noise. Our job is to give them the tools and the confidence to do just that.

Training to Cut Through the Noise

Today's buyers are bombarded with information—some accurate, some misleading. Without the right training, salespeople can get lost in the same noise their customers face. Continuous training is critical. It's not enough to host a seminar once a year or hand out a new script. Training must be ongoing, practical, and focused on the real-world challenges prospects face. That means equipping sales teams to ask better questions, to listen with intent, and to reframe the conversation toward solutions instead of distractions.

Reinforcing Follow-Up Discipline

One of the easiest places to lose a prospect is in the follow-up. Too often, salespeople stop after one or two attempts, assuming a lack of interest. But in reality, the majority of sales happen after multiple touches. In a tight market, follow-up is no longer optional—it's a core discipline. As leaders, we must not only remind our teams to follow up but also give them compelling reasons to do so. Whether it's a new incentive, updated pricing, or a fresh piece of content, we should constantly be arming our teams with opportunities to re-engage with prospects in meaningful ways.

Removing Excuses

At the end of the day, the best way to maximize prospecting is to eliminate excuses. If a salesperson says they don't have the tools, we provide them. If they say they don't know what to say, we train them. If they claim they don't have time, we make sure their schedules align with priorities. In a challenging market, excuses cost sales. By proactively addressing barriers, we create an environment where the only thing left for the sales team to do is perform.

The Bottom Line

Tightening markets test the strength of an organization. They reveal whether systems are truly built to support success or whether we've been coasting on momentum. By sharpening our focus on prospecting—equipping our people with the right resources, putting them in the right mindset, and ensuring follow-through—we position ourselves to thrive even when others falter. In times like these, every prospect matters. The companies that recognize that truth and act on it will be the ones still standing strong when the market inevitably rebounds.

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Precision Development Elevates The Standard Of Exterior Construction For Long Term Performance

By Lesley Bercegeay

In high-end residential construction, the exterior is more than a protective shell—it is the architectural introduction to everything that follows. Before a client experiences the interior design, before they feel the flow of the floorplan, before they notice the millwork or lighting details, they see the façade. It communicates permanence, craftsmanship, and intention. For custom home builders and interior designers who understand that first impressions shape lasting value, the choice of exterior partner is not simply another trade decision. It is foundational.

For more than 30 years, Precision Development has elevated the standard of exterior construction throughout Houston's most distinguished neighborhoods. Their longevity is not built on volume or speed. It is built on performance, prevention, and partnership.

In an industry where exterior failures often stem from poor coordination rather than poor materials, Precision approaches every project with a system-wide mindset. Stucco itself is not the problem in most failures—improper moisture management is. That distinction matters. Rather than merely meeting minimum code requirements, Precision exceeds them, integrating the Plain Drain 6mm rainscreen system and utilizing polyurethane sealants throughout the entire stucco assembly—not only at windows and doors. These measures may increase upfront cost, but they dramatically reduce long-term risk. For builders, that means fewer callbacks and stronger reputations. For designers, it means the exterior aesthetic they envisioned will not be compromised by cracking, staining, or moisture intrusion years later.

Texture plays an equally significant role in defining the character of a home. It influences how light moves across the façade, how architectural lines are perceived, and how stucco integrates with brick, stone, trim, and landscape elements. Precision Development understands that texture is not a commodity—it is craftsmanship. Whether applying a classic #3 Sand Finish, a #4 Poquito, Skip Trowel, Torpedo Sand, or elevated options like a #4 Smooth/Flat or Steel Trowel finish, every surface is applied with intention. The upgraded finishes slow the process deliberately, removing excess surface variation to achieve a cleaner, more contemporary aesthetic when the design calls for it. The goal is not speed. The goal is consistency. Every texture is applied the right way, not the fast way.

Hairline cracking is one of the most common frustrations in traditional stucco systems. Because stucco is thin and rigid, environmental forces—temperature swings, moisture changes, structural movement—create stress that can exceed tensile capacity. While typical, these cracks diminish visual appeal over time. Precision addresses this proactively through the Precision Crack Shield system, a reinforced basecoat embedded with fiberglass mesh that distributes stress across a stronger, more flexible layer. The result is dramatically reduced surface cracking and improved long-term durability. In fact, reinforced mesh systems are recognized by the Stucco Manufacturers Association as an accepted alternative to traditional control joints in certain applications. For design-driven homes, fewer visible joints mean cleaner architectural lines and uninterrupted

Continued on page 16

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elevations. For performance-driven builders, it means a stronger exterior envelope.

Beyond stucco, Precision Development's expertise extends to custom cast stone, brick treatments, and cut limestone—each approached with the same emphasis on coordination and accountability. Cast stone is rarely one-size-fits-all. Manufactured at Precision's Bellaire facility, each piece is made to order. With more than 85 stock fireplace designs and an extensive profile library, fireplaces, entries, and architectural details can be customized in size, color, and texture to suit the proportions of each home. Installation is completed using stainless steel clips and pins to ensure long-term durability and corrosion resistance. Whether supplying materials only or delivering turnkey installation, Precision provides a single point of responsibility. That clarity eliminates sizing errors, sequencing delays, and confusion between trades—protecting both schedule and design intent.

Cut limestone remains one of the most timeless materials in luxury architecture, valued for its organic movement and subtle variation. Precision supplies and installs limestone for entries, surrounds, fireplaces, and architectural accents, carefully sequencing installations from roof-level elements downward to maintain jobsite efficiency. Every fastener is stainless steel. Every detail is considered. Execution, not just material selection, defines the outcome.

Brick finishes have also evolved from simple applications to deliberate design choices. Whether applying a painted brick finish for uniformity or a slurry, smear, or wash treatment for an Old-World European aesthetic, Precision educates builders and homeowners on the long-term performance characteristics of each approach. Rather than selling a trend, they clarify expectations. That transparency

protects designers from unrealistic assumptions and shields builders from future dissatisfaction.

What consistently distinguishes Precision Development is its collaborative approach. Communication gaps between architects, builders, designers, and trades are one of the most common sources of project frustration. Precision addresses this through detailed, line-itemed proposals, pre-installation walkthroughs, flashing verification, and coordination with other trades before installation begins. Their team identifies potential conflicts early—long before they become expensive corrections. This proactive planning saves time, money, and stress.

Builders frequently commend Precision for foreseeing challenges before they surface on the jobsite. Designers value the team's respect for proportion, scale, and architectural integrity. In an industry where shortcuts are often hidden behind surface beauty, Precision Development focuses on prevention. They recognize that exteriors are interconnected systems. Drainage, flashing, sealants, texture, reinforcement, stone attachment—all must work together.

For custom home builders committed to delivering homes that perform as beautifully as they present, that system-wide expertise is invaluable. For interior designers who understand that exterior craftsmanship sets the stage for the entire living experience, alignment with a technically capable partner protects their creative vision. Precision does not operate as a transactional subcontractor. They function as a long-term partner invested in the integrity of the project.

Over three decades of collaboration with Houston's leading architects, designers, and builders stand as proof. The homes they contribute to are not simply built to impress on day one. They are built to endure.

If you are designing or constructing homes where architectural detail defines value, where performance matters as much as appearance, and where coordination between trades protects your reputation, Precision Development offers more than materials and installation. They offer prevention, craftsmanship, and partnership.

Elevated exteriors do not happen by accident. They are engineered, coordinated, and executed with precision.

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Dialogue With A Designer: Geraldine Boyer

Welcome to The Metropolitan Builder, Houston's premier trade publication, dedicated to showcasing the finest building professionals in the industry. Each professional featured has been personally referred by trusted vendors and subcontractors who collaborate with them, selected for their unmatched talent and unwavering integrity.

As Houston's leading resource for consumers looking to build, buy, or remodel, we provide a window into the exceptional craftsmanship, innovative designs, and unparalleled quality that define our city's top builders. Let The Metropolitan Builder inspire your next home or renovation project and connect you with the experts who can make your vision a reality.

This month, THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER sits down with Geraldine Boyer.

With roots spanning the vibrant cultures of Mexico City and Paris—and proudly calling Houston home for more than two decades—Geraldine Boyer's passion for design has been a lifelong thread woven through every chapter of her life.

Although her professional journey began in banking and retail, her creative spirit never took a back seat. No matter the career path, she found herself designing on the side, continually drawn to spaces shaped with intention, elegance, and meaning. Seven years ago, she fully embraced what had always been calling her—returning wholeheartedly to the world of Interior Design.

Today, Geraldine's greatest joy is guiding projects from the blueprint stage through construction and into the final, layered details of furnishings and décor—thoughtfully curating each element until a house becomes a home that reflects the spirit and story of its homeowner.

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER: What motivated you to go into the interior design field?
Geraldine Boyer: Raised between two culturally rich cities and surrounded by design and art from an early age, I developed a deep appreciation for beauty, materials, and refined living. Even while working in finance and retail, I always had interior design as my creative anchor. Eventually, that passion became impossible to ignore – leading me to pursue design full-time and create spaces that feel elevated, intentional, unique, and personal.

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER: How can an experienced interior designer help a custom home builder or a remodeling contractor with their building or remodeling projects?
Geraldine Boyer: An experienced Interior Designer helps Custom Builders and Remodeling Contractors by streamlining the entire FF&E and Finish-selection process. We simplify client decisions, create construction-ready design packages, and provide clear documentation and visual tools that keep trades aligned and projects moving efficiently.

By managing selections, details, and procurement, we reduce delays, minimize change orders, and lighten the builder's workload – allowing the building team to stay focused on delivering exceptional craftsmanship. This results in a smoother build-out, a better client experience, and homes that feel elevated, cohesive, and aligned with today's buyer expectations

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER: What sets you apart from other designers?
Geraldine Boyer: What sets me apart from other designers is the combination of my design expertise and my background in finance and retail. I understand that every selection is both a creative decision and a financial one, so I approach each project with intention – respecting budgets, maximizing allowances, and ensuring that every dollar adds real value

Whether working on a custom home or a spec project, I always consider long-term appeal, market positioning, and sale or resale potential. My goal is to create beautiful, functional spaces that not only enhance daily living but also make smart investment sense for both builders and homeowners.

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER: What has been your most challenging project and why?
Geraldine Boyer: My most challenging project is always my next project. With every new build or home, I raise the bar for myself because I'm committed to exceeding expectations – both my own and those of my clients, whether they're builders or homeowners.

Each project brings its own complexities, and maintaining the highest standard in the final outcome is what drives me. That constant is what keeps me motivated and loving what I do.

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER: How do you begin the materials selection process when working with builders'

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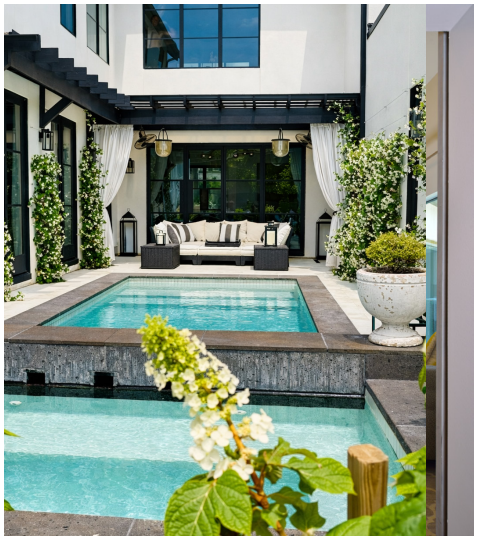

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and remodelers' clients?
Geraldine Boyer: When working with builders and remodelers – especially when no homeowner is involved – I always start by establishing the fundamentals: clear budgets, allowances, the overall style concept, and the target selling price point. At the end of the day, this is a business for all of us, and the design must align with both vision and financial goals.

Once the guidelines are set, I follow a process that mirrors the build's natural progression. We begin with exterior materials, then move into rough-in items like plumbing and electrical, followed by red lines, hard surfaces, and so on. This creates an organic, logical workflow where each decision supports the next. It ensures the selections are cohesive, efficient, and fully aligned with the construction timeline – keeping the entire project connected from start to finish.

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER: What are some common mistakes made by builders and homeowners?
Geraldine Boyer: A common mistake builders and homeowners make is navigating the building process without an interior designer. For builders, this means all the responsibilities a designer would normally manage- selections, coordination, specifications, and client guidance- end up on their plate, pulling attention away from what they do best: building.

For homeowners, the process often starts with excitement but quickly becomes overwhelming. There are countless decisions, endless options, and a real risk of delays, inconsistencies, costly errors, and overspending. What feels romantic at first can easily turn into a very stressful experience.

In reality, the best projects happen when everyone focuses on their strengths. Builders build. Designers design. And together, we create a smoother process, clearer communication, and a final result that simply feels totally right.

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER: Speaking about staying current, how do you keep yourself up to date with all the design trends happening in the industry today?
Geraldine Boyer: Staying current comes very naturally to me. I enjoy attending market events and workshops, and staying connected with fellow designers and builders in person and on social media. There is always something to learn from each other. But I must say that I find the greatest inspiration through travel. Every new country, city, hotel, and restaurant becomes an opportunity to explore fresh ideas, materials, and perspectives.

Travel exposes me to design at its source -culture, architecture, textures, craftsmanship- and those experiences continually refine my eye, expand my creativity, and keep my work relevant and meaningful for me.

THE METROPOLITAN BUILDER: What is your favorite design style?
Geraldine Boyer: My favorite design style is the one the project calls for. I believe every home has its own personality, shaped by its architecture, location, and surroundings – and, for homeowners, by the way they live and what truly feels like "home" to them.

Rather than imposing a single style, I aim to listen to the project and interpret its natural character, creating spaces that feel authentic, intentional, and aligned with each client or property.

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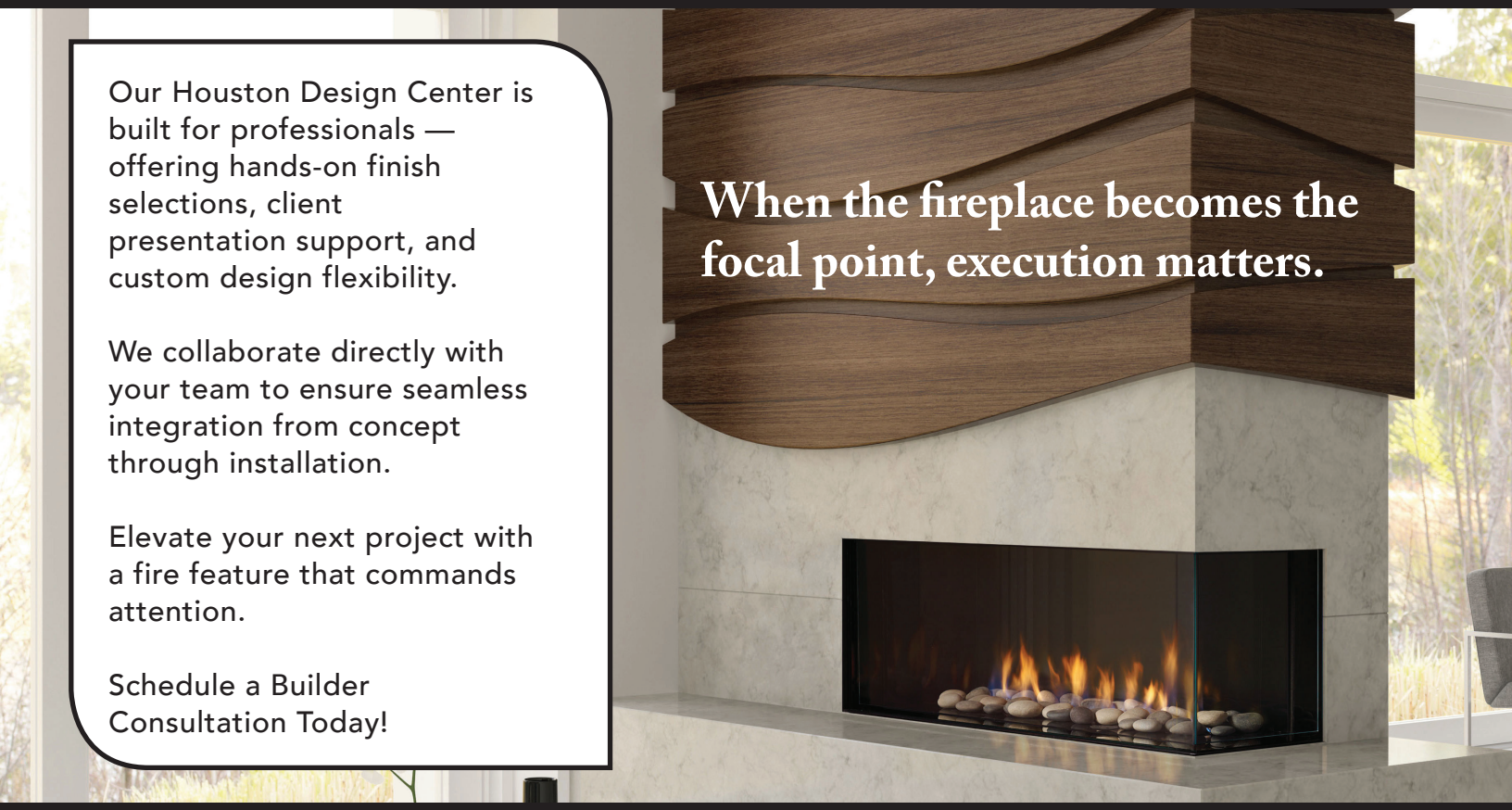

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