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Doug Doyle Considers Customers to Be Friends

D.L. Doyle Construction Company | Houston, Texas



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By Kathy Bowen Stolz

To Doug Doyle, president of D.L. Doyle Construction Company, customer service is paramount to his company's 22 years of success. He extends customer service years beyond the construction phase. "We're always happy to answer questions and to assist homeowners with maintenance needs and small project referrals long after they move in. For example, we'll call a hot water heater vendor on behalf of a customer. Our customers are our friends."

As another case in point, one customer wrote in an email recently, "We really missed you guys, so I decided to break something" and sent photos of a damaged piece of trim in her garage. Doug replied, "Garage fix will be cheaper than the car. That trim board came from a sawmill in Conroe, and it will take a few days to get one piece here."

The company's goal is to achieve complete client satisfaction, according to Doyle, by communicating with the homeowners, maintaining professionalism and paying attention to personal and accounting details.

"Our philosophy is that the quality of service establishes the quality of the finished project and ultimately the homeowner's satisfaction," he added. "It is very rewarding and satisfying to provide a product we are proud of and, more importantly, that our customers are pleased with and proud of."

His approach to customer service has paid off from the beginning when he established D.L. Doyle Construction Company in late 1996 after working as a municipal bond analyst, as an advance man for George H.W. Bush for three years in the early 1980s and then in commercial construction and commercial real estate for 13 years for a local company.

He has relied on word-of-mouth referrals, even in the early years. Although his initial jobs were very small, such as his first job of replacing a sidewalk, he had enough friends and their friends and their friends calling that the company grew without advertising.

"The first year I worked out of my house. It was just me. At



the end of that year, I hired my first employee, Kaye Stone as office manager and bookkeeper.” Soon after he hired his first project manager, Jim Bob Taylor and then Jim Wyatt as another project manager a few years later. That core staff has now worked together almost 20 years. “We just get along so well. I am very fortunate.”



The staff expanded again when Julie Stratton and John Boettcher joined the staff in 2012 as project coordinator and superintendent respectively. In addition, Sheryl Doyle, Doug’s wife, has assisted with bidding and estimating, contracting and scheduling, bookkeeping and office administration for 15 years.



Nowadays Doug handles all of the estimating and financial controls for every job, which is a natural extension for someone who has a bachelor’s degree in business administration in finance from the University of Texas – Austin. He also runs the business side of D.L. Doyle Construction Company, focusing on accounting, insurance and personnel.



He earned Certified Graduate Remodelor™ and Graduate Master Builder certifications from the National Association of Home Builders. He is also a member of the Texas Association of Builders, the Greater Houston Builders Association (GHBA) and is a licensed broker with the Texas Real Estate Commission.

Vice President Jim Bob Taylor is also involved in the



need in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey increased the company's project load for the last six months, Doyle said the company will be back to a normal workload in June. "We typically have 12 to 15 jobs in process each year, with half in new construction and half in major renovations." He noted that new construction projects average \$1.5 million and range from 5,500 to 7,500 square feet.

Common remodeling projects include total interior and exterior reconstruction, second-story additions, garage/game room additions and partial living / kitchen makeovers. The remodeling projects run from half a million to more than one million dollars.

Although Doyle got his start in the construction field by building light, single-use commercial buildings for his previous employer, he said that his company does very little commercial construction these days. "I found that I enjoy working with homeowners more than with office administrators."

While houses have become more energy efficient and some building products have improved over the years, Doyle said his process for building a house hasn't changed, whether it's the homeowner or the architect that initially approaches him.

Doug meets with every potential client to discuss the homeowner's vision, budget needs and plans. He then presents to the homeowner a schedule of values and a construction contract. At this point the project manager takes the day-to-day responsibility of managing the project and meeting with the homeowners, architects and designers, but Doyle manages to personally review

GHBA, currently serving as vice chairman of its Custom Builders' Council.

Although taking on remodeling projects for friends in



every project regularly and is always available for client questions and meetings.

D. L. Doyle Construction Company uses a stable of subcontractors but most frequently works with two or three in each trade. While Doyle said he has used most of his subcontractors for more than 10 years, he'll try other tradespeople on smaller jobs if they come highly recommended. Over the years the company has worked with 600 to 700 vendors and tradespeople, he added.

When he's not working, Doug Doyle is still busy. "I love the outdoors. I hunt and fish, play tennis and work in the yard. I have also been involved in the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo for 30-some years." Although he is just one of the 33,000 volunteers needed to produce a parade, concert and rodeo over a 20-day period in February and March each year, he has been in leadership roles as a committee chair, a vice president and a member of the board of directors at one time. He proudly noted that the show and rodeo generate enough revenue to provide \$27 million in scholarships and grants to youth and education in Texas.

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