Special Features
A Historical Icon: Andy Trivers
David Payne, Payne Family Homes
Mike Lewis, Lewis Homes, LLC

At Home With Anthony F. Sansone Jr.
JOIN HORTON and THE MAYOR IN THE FIGHT AGAINST GLOBAL WARMING.

Horton and The Mayor understand how important it is for each of us to do our part. We can all fight global warming by making easy changes in our homes, at school, and at work. Learn more at energystar.gov.

NAME:
The Mayor

FIGHTING GLOBAL WARMING BY:

With my friend Horton lending a hand
We helped all the Whos across the land!
We insulated homes and changed lights.
They’re now fluorescents—so very bright.
ENERGY STAR® showed us the way
To make a difference every day.

SAVINGS PER HOME:

• $400
• 11,000 kWh
• 5,800 lbs. CO2

Dr. Seuss’ Horton Hears A Who! © 2007 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. Dr. Seuss, Horton Hears A Who! and Dr. Seuss Characters ™ & © 1994, 2007 Dr. Seuss Enterprises, L.P. All Rights Reserved.

ENERGY STAR
CONTENTS

JUNE 2009

4 COVER STORY
AT HOME WITH ANTHONY F. SANSONE JR.
The history of the Sansone Group’s next generation of developers: At home with Tony Sansone Jr. discussing his new endeavor, Sangita USA

10 FEATURE
THE ART OF AUTOMATING THE HOME
In these difficult times, consumers are more interested in saving those extra pennies and getting more bang for their buck, but that doesn’t mean they can’t be awed by home automation technology! Read on to see how you can add that “awe” factor to your home without breaking the bank.

14 SPECIAL FEATURE
A HISTORICAL ICON: ANDY TRIVERS
An in-depth interview with Andy Trivers, who is still making history, from his humble beginnings in a small rented office from former mayor A.J. Cervantes up until now

20 SPECIAL FEATURE
MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE
Second-generation award-winning electrical contractors venture into home building.

26 SPECIAL FEATURE
OLD STYLE MEETS MODERN CONVENIENCE
Mike Lewis discusses quality home building in St. Louis’ historic Kirkwood.

26 COVER STORY
ON THE COVER
Anthony F. Sansone Jr. at home in the aficionado’s cigar room

28 FEATURE
BOOSTING EXTERIOR APPEAL WHEN BUDGETS HAVE BEEN KICKED TO THE CURB
Don’t let the extra challenges the economy has brought to curb appeal get you down. Builders are now looking for simpler, inexpensive ways to make your home stand out from the crowd!

32 Staying up During Down Times

DEPARTMENTS
2 from the publisher
3 consultant’s corner
13 product showcase
18 building green
24 the business of building

PHOTO BY TOM WARWICK
from the publisher

Twelve years before the birth of our nation, a 15-year-old by the name of August Chouteau and a band of men arrived off of our limestone bluffs on the Mississippi and began building what friend Pierre Laclede thought might be “the finest city in America.” Well, since that Valentine’s Day in 1764, St. Louis has flown the flags of six different countries and has been influenced by the peoples of at least as many more.

St. Louis is truly a multicultural city with generations of history. The reincarnation of Builder/Architect in the St. Louis market mirrors our history in and of itself — from historic city renovations like Andy Trivers’ architectural perspective of the Old Post Office to the “generational articles,” as in our cover story with Anthony F. Sansone Jr.

At Builder/Architect we aim to provide insight into the leaders in our field and to provide a monthly “must read for all in our industry.” While Pierre Laclede was correct about “one of the finest cities in America,” it is up to us and future generations to continue this effort. As far as publishing is concerned, you may notice in this photo an 11-year-old potential publisher, my daughter, Grace Judith Cervantes. We’ll see.

With checking the pulse on the market in several arenas daily, I am receiving positive feedback about increased business all around. We at Builder/Architect believe that business is trending up as spring arrives. If we can be of any assistance, please don’t hesitate to contact us. Build on, St. Louis!

Brett D. Cervantes
Publisher
Marketing Your Firm During a Downturn

From the auto and health care industries to construction and design firms, the current economic downturn is having a domino effect on the methods companies are using to reach their respective communities. However, there are ways to turn the downturn in your favor.

Many construction firms are bringing in less revenue now than they did before the recession. Construction projects have been put on hold and fewer jobs are being planned. The drop in revenue for these firms creates the need for budget cuts, and marketing budgets are among the first cuts firms make.

“Simply put, there is less business to go around than there was before,” says Scott Campbell, owner of Impact Marketing in Alpharetta, GA. “Even in tight times, firms are still vying for business using a variety of tactics. It is important to continue marketing efforts to gain existing business as well as to position yourself favorably when the market does come back.”

A CHANGING STRATEGY

Located in Pewaukee, WI, VJS Construction has been serving the state of Wisconsin since 1947. Like firms across the country have been doing since the downturn, VJS Construction has been working to streamline their marketing strategy in order to ensure the company gets optimal mileage out of every marketing dollar.

The getting-back-to-basics mentality the firm has adopted is helping VJS Construction stay competitive during the downturn.

“Firms must remember who they are and what they do best,” says Rick Andritsch, partner and Vice President of Business Development for VJS Construction. “Many firms are trying to do too much and stretching themselves too thin, but this strategy can lead to problems. Instead, let people know what it is you do best, and begin marketing to a broader area. If your firm currently markets to a 50-mile radius, consider marketing to those in a 100-mile radius or even a 150-mile radius.”

Those involved in marketing at VJS Construction have taken a proactive approach to spending their marketing dollars. Before each dollar is spent, marketers ask themselves whether or not they are getting any return on investment.

VJS Construction has reduced the number of tradeshow booths they sponsor and instead has purchased them in conjunction with a trusted architect. Representatives from the firm still work the floor, handing out business cards and networking with those in attendance in hopes of cultivating new business.

“We have been very critical of our marketing budget lately,” Andritsch says. “We look for opportunities to combine our efforts with a trusted architect or some of our clients. We also look for ways to trim the money we are spending on advertising so that we can either conserve that money or spend it in a way that makes the best possible use of our dollars.”

Beyond the conservation of efforts, VJS Construction is also using available connections in order to turn cold calls into warm calls.

“We call our top architects or our top clients to remind them of all of our services,” Andritsch explains. “We can gain leads through our former contacts, many of whom will allow us to use their name when we call new potential clients.”

GO AGAINST INTUITION

Construction firms that completely halt all efforts to market their business to the community during a recession face a much higher level of difficulty than they might expect when trying to get back into the market and be competitive when projects begin to become more readily available. Even if your firm is not in the position to staff a full-time marketing executive, a variety of other options — including consulting firms — are available and can be cost effective.

“What a lot of business owners might have missed is that in this same time period, marketing costs have decreased in similar proportion,” Campbell says. “Ad rates have gone down and there has been an emergence of relatively inexpensive marketing tactics, such as social media websites.”

OLD-FASHIONED RECOMMENDATIONS

Instead of pulling back marketing efforts completely, experts recommend marketing more intelligently and working existing networks, much like VJS Construction is doing with its former clients. It’s a simple way to market, given all the media outlets available to firms today, but referrals are still one of the primary ways many firms receive their business. There is a real, tangible value in keeping a solid reputation and handing out business cards at various networking events.

“A good strategy for marketing a firm includes an organized referral — or word-of-mouth — marketing program,” Campbell says. “A good referral program is one that doesn’t wait for business to come in. It is a proactive program where strategic partners are identified and pursued. Existing clients also are marketed on a consistent basis, both for referrals as well as add-on business. In addition to print advertising and an online presence, referral marketing is part of a strategy that builds results.”
At Home With
Anthony F. Sansone Jr.

By Laura Clark

Out of the cold spring rain, Anthony F. Sansone Jr. emerges into his office. Genuinely apologetic for keeping me waiting, he does not stoop to the downpour and rush hour traffic for excuses. A cozy fire and an endearing exchange between him and his 11-year-old daughter warm the room. Unidentifiable stuff is piled high in Sansone Jr.’s arms, including a little girl’s dress hanging in a dry cleaning bag. The successful commercial real estate developer is caught, red handed, in a harried father-of-seven moment as he asks his youngest daughter for help. Just before her face disappears behind the precariously balanced pile, she catches my eye and bursts into a giggle at the ridiculousness of her father’s expectation that she can actually carry this cumbersome load. And then she scurries away to do just that.

We move down into the softly lit cigar room off the wine cellar to talk. Sansone Jr. begins by describing how he was suddenly thrust into position of responsibility 32 years ago when, while completing his second year at St. Mary’s University in San Antonio, his mother called and asked if he would return home and assist his father with the family real estate business.

“My father was losing a key employee and was doing the job of several people. I came back and went to St. Louis University and worked during the day and went to school at night. It was a tremendous experience; when I look back it was a phenomenal opportunity.”

Sansone Jr. grins, “Although, it did skew somewhat my college social endeavor, it helped me from a professional standpoint and I certainly don’t regret ever doing it. I was given the opportunity and I was happy for it and grateful of it and hope I was able to contribute.”

Sansone Jr. became an integral part of The Sansone Group, a nationally recognized, family owned and operated commercial real estate firm in St. Louis. He and his four brothers worked...
alongside their father, Anthony Sansone Sr., for decades as the two generations forged a bond both personally and professionally that reads like a family business fairytale. The company’s close family and religious (Catholic) values have proven to be an effective formula for success. Even more impressive is how the family embraced big change when, in August 2005, Sansone Jr. decided to leave the family business.

“I had lost my wife and I was really looking for a fresh start. I was looking for new challenges and I was basically looking for the opportunity to just work on projects as I wanted to work on them. Not to suggest that the family business was something mundane or that didn’t interest me because today it still does, along with the personal success of my brothers and the well-being of my father.

“I have three-quarters of my life in The Sansone Group Company and I am still a very proud shareholder. I was just at a point in my life where I endeavored to do something different and they gave me the opportunity to do that and the exodus was very fluid and very complete. I think that’s a testimony to the relationship that we’ve all cultivated all these years. It’s worked out today in everyone’s best interest.”

Sansone Jr. started his own company, Sangita USA, the umbrella enterprise under which all his projects are held. With his master’s degree in management, decades of experience and a renewed perspective, he enjoys delving into new projects.

“The more complex, the more abstract, the greater the challenge; that’s what I prefer.”

He also seems to savor the challenge of procuring financing
for his projects in this unstable economic climate.

“There is no credit, so it’s entirely different now. You’re

either looking at using your own capital or using capital
from a syndicated standpoint, other individual capital or a

Dining fit for a feast
consortium of invested capital. There is money out there, but the money is based upon wealthy individuals or families who want to look for the best yields and highest returns given the fact that their money was normally in the stock market or some other financial class.

“But in order to be a candidate for that type of money, you have to have an unblemished record. Your record has to be such where you are a proven commodity and you are someone who has been in the business a long time. You are someone who has an untarnished image and you’re someone who is known to get things done.

“I’ve been fortunate enough to have earned some of those ‘credentials’ and for that I think we’ve been strategic in what we’ve looked at. We’ve been very cautious and, over the past several months, we’ve made some real good progress where in a different environment we would not have had the same opportunities and we may not have been able to achieve the high-yield results that we have been able to achieve. So, it’s opportunistic. You’ve got to be extremely cautious, but at the same time work a little bit harder, work a lot smarter and scrutinize and be very diligent in what you pursue."

Sansone Jr. politely and gracefully skirts when I ask him to discuss specific projects.

“We have as prospects four projects, three that are somewhat imminent. It takes tenacity and a high level of due diligence to consummate a transaction today and for me to disclose probably would be unfair to me — I certainly don’t need further competition or to give anyone any competitive advantages, so I’m electing to keep that internalized.”

He is, however, more than eager to discuss the philanthropic arm of Sangita USA.

“A Nigerian priest by the name of Father Roberto Ike has become the dearest friend to not only myself, but also to my fiancée, Dawn [Jensen]. He befriended me at a time when I needed it most. The initiative is to begin the construction of a school and a library in his home town of Owarre [Nigeria] for the sole purpose of educating young people.

“I had never seen poverty like I saw [there]. They had no clothes, were certainly malnourished and they had deformities of all sorts of their extremities. But there was always a smile on everyone’s face and I was stunned by it. Their spirituality and their mindset are such that they believe there is always hope and there is never true despair. We wanted to have an opportunity for them to grow beyond that state [of poverty] and build themselves. One of the few ways they can do it is through education. We’ll start construction the early part of the summer.

“Our interpretation of Sangita is ‘miracle.’ Based upon the passing of my wife and the raising of my seven kids as a single parent, if it was not for the inspiration of this dear priest, I truly don’t believe that I would be where I am today, good, bad or indifferent, without him. And on behalf of his blessings, the company name is a derivative of how special he is to Dawn and me.”

I ask Sansone Jr. if having willingness to evolve and reinvent himself are fundamental tenets of his business philosophy. As independent as he is, he is equally well rooted in family influences.

“I really do believe that has always been my way but due to the product of the environment. When I grew up, I had a tremendous admiration and respect and love for my grandfather. He was a robust man who was full of gaiety, love and joy. The only thing bigger than his physical stature was his heart. Not only was he a man of great passion, but also a man of great compassion. He was a tremendous influence on me. And, the strong influence of my father, who really grew what my grandfather had nourished.

“I’ll never forget the story, as a young boy, that my father told me. Not unlike many of that era, they had their financial struggles. As a young boy, my dad and my grandfather were driving in downtown St. Louis when my grandfather pulled over to give a straggler money. My father said to him, ‘Why would you do that? All he’s going to do is go spend it on a drink.’ My grandfather replied, ‘For the grace of God, there go I.’ And proverbs like that have stuck with me ever since.

“My grandfather’s philanthropic attitude was reflective of his humility and humanitarianism, qualities that I strive to embrace. That’s why, to this day, philanthropy is important to me. As my mother often says, ‘Much is received, much is expected.’ I don’t look at the so-called successes or what I have achieved. I believe much of this is a blessing. I strongly live in trust that my wife and grandfather are watching over me. Tomorrow everything could go bad, but I still have my kids, I still have the love of my fiancée, I still have the
love of family and that’s what’s really important to me.”

“Maybe I didn’t feel this way 10 years ago, but I truly feel it now. It’s not what is reflected on your net worth statement, it’s really what you contribute for the common good and that’s how I look at it.”

Sansone Jr. reflects on where he sees his business heading in the future.

“I don’t think I’m someone that wants to grow and enterprise for the sake of enterprise. I’m not building this company for the purpose of my sons or my daughters joining. They will blossom on their own. This is not a family business; this is my business. It’s something that I want to achieve for myself.

“So, where do I see it going? I can tell you this: I’ve been in business 30+ years and I’ve never seen a time in those 30+ years that is more opportunistic than it is today — that if you have liquidity and if you’re careful, there are many investment opportunities available. I definitely want to be poised to seize those opportunities.

“I’m not one that looks at himself as working the next 10 years as hard as I’m working now. I want to get to the point where I truly can back away. I don’t think right now my ambition is such where I really can back away. I see opportunity. I want to seize it. I want to achieve results. I don’t want to lose that chance. I might not see it again in my lifetime.”

I cannot help but marvel at how fortunate Sansone Jr. is for having experienced the best of both worlds: the supportive and nourishing close family business and now the opportunity to venture out on his own. He wastes no time in agreeing.

“It’s a wonderful thing for me. How it happened might be by default. Or it may be ... divinity. I don’t know that I would go that far, but I am better than where I was, for many reasons. It has not been an easy journey, but definitely a worthwhile one!”

As we are wrapping up the interview, it strikes me that Sansone Jr. is one of the few people I’ve met who enjoys true balance in life: success in business, strong family ties that endure through generations, an appreciation for life’s gifts and a strong sense of obligation to give back to those in need. I have not simply been sitting and talking with a successful man at his home; I have been sitting and talking with a successful man who is at home with himself.

For more information, visit www.sangitauusa.com.

Laura Clark, a native of St. Louis, is a freelance writer, author and publisher.
In these difficult economic times, consumers are keeping a close watch on dollars and thinking very carefully before making major spending moves. But that doesn’t mean they can’t be awed by home automation technology, and where they can be awed, they can be attracted to a particular home or builder.

David King, President of King Systems, a technology integration company in Lakewood, CO, describes two disclaimers that prospective customers who visit his showroom often use: “Regardless of how much money they plan to spend, they’ll either say they don’t consider themselves stereotypical audiophiles or they don’t want to be like the Jetsons,” he says. But after their visit, which typically lasts about two hours, “they usually leave overwhelmed by the concepts of what can be done.”

Adding to this customer “wow” factor today is a wider, more flexible range of entertainment options that support an increasingly home-centric lifestyle, as well as environmental systems that make homes as energy efficient as possible. The result is a delicious blend of temptations that must then be customized to need.

“Once you’ve sipped the ‘home automation juice,’ it’s so tantalizing to add more,” points out Chris Matthews, President of Acoustic Designs, Scottsdale, AZ. “While it does make sense to do as much as possible upfront, it’s our job as consultants to help customers decide what fits into their lifestyle and budget.”

**MUST-HAVE SYSTEMS**

Home automation is a great example of how quickly attitudes toward technology can change. For example, not long ago, having a modular telephone jack in every room was considered a luxury. Just a few short years later, however, a house without a distributed audio/video system, housewide Internet access and multipoint lighting and comfort controls might not draw a moment’s glance from a wide range of prospective buyers.

But while the sophistication of home automation overall has made one giant leap forward after another, widespread use often boils down to control, which is a factor too frequently overlooked.

“If the controls aren’t simple, all other things are secondary,” observes Mike Klein, CEO of Airoom Architects Builders Remodelers, Lincolnwood, IL. Klein adds that his target is to configure a control system that a house guest can operate on his or her own without fear of disrupting the owner’s settings. “If they can’t do that, I’ve failed,” he says.

Fortunately, control systems for media and other systems have evolved to the point where, at least for the average user, they are both remarkably simple and capable of doing almost everything, Klein adds. But they also need to be able to integrate.

“Few products can consolidate everything into one system,” Klein says. “Occasionally, you still have the problem of turning a device off while turning something else on. On the other hand, some systems now allow you to reboot things like cable or satellite boxes from the controller. That’s a big help when all those devices are consolidated in a single, out-of-the-way rack,” he says.

One of the newest weapons in the arsenal is a system by Savant that allows the controller to be an iPhone, which offers “a whole new element to this industry because people always have their cell phones with them,” says Matthews says. “The control applications are bidirectional, so owners can check and control thermostat, security and other systems from work, on vacation and anywhere else they can receive a 3G signal,” he explains.

Also, the growing emphasis on energy-efficient, environmentally sound living has added a new dimension to control system capabilities and needs.
“Green is definitely a bigger part of conversation,” explains David Knittle, owner of Automation Specialists, Tucson, AZ. “People want their lighting and shades to automatically adjust with the time of year and position of the sun,” he says.

However, it also adds another layer of challenge: writing software that is smarter than ever before, he adds.

King even recalls providing one customer with controls that would manage landscaping lights to prevent interfering with local insect reproductive cycles.

“The green movement is really important to a lot of high-end customers, and they don’t care how much they spend on it,” he comments.

CENTERS OF ATTENTION

One consideration with home automation is that the centerpieces of entertainment in the home are not following the “spend less” direction that many consumers are following. A widely recognized trend today is that people are cocooning — staying at home more. At the same time, most consultants also report that interest in high-definition (HD) television and distributed audio systems has largely defied the trend toward less consumer buying. And bigger is still considered better, which plays a role in designing the interior of the home to house those systems.

“The size of an HD display drives a lot of buyer decisions about whether they’ll get cable or satellite service,” King explains. “The emergence of Blu-ray picture quality and more functionality in video games are major considerations as well.”

But customers are also investing a great deal in home theater accoutrements, according to Don Adams of Allwired Technologies, Chattanooga, TN.

In homes that can afford dedicated areas to entertainment, “seating is the big thing,” Adams says. “There is a wide variety of seats fabrics and feels available, and many customers choose to design them around their favorite team’s colors.”

From the building angle, “It’s really important for the audio/visual consultant and the architect to work hand in hand” to ensure lighting highlights what the homeowner wants but also works to enhance visibility, and that the layout of the room can accommodate other home theater choices.

Still, Matthew wonders if dedicated home theaters will soon take a back seat to more multipurpose entertainment centers.

“Rather than just sitting and watching a movie, people are looking to have more interaction,” he explains. Driving that trend are Internet-based and stand-alone video games, and highly realistic sports simulators similar to those found in pro sports stadiums.

“They can still have a screen for the theater that rolls up to be replaced with a simulator impact screen,” Matthew explains. “Parents particularly like them because their kids are up and playing a sport rather than being sedentary,” he points out.

UPGRADING IN PLACE

Another recognizable trend in overall building today that is also affecting home automation and entertainment issues is that
people are remodeling more, and many builders are now focusing on that area.

However, this creates some unique implementation challenges.

“Wiring an existing home for these technologies isn’t easy, but we prefer it [as an integration company] over new construction,” King comments. This is because going into a home that’s already there “is not dependent on other trades,” so the integrator has better control over the schedule of when components must go in, he explains.

Wireless networks (Wi-Fi) are an option for distributing audio and video throughout both existing and new houses that also requires minimal disruption in scheduling, as well as minimum change to existing finishes. However, there are limits to Wi-Fi’s ability to handle the Internet, music and bandwidth-hungry HD video, integrators point out.

Yet, the technology is continually evolving. One increasingly popular wireless alternative is ZigBee, a simpler, low-cost mesh networking standard designed to use less power consumption, but with less data speed.

The advantage of the technology is that, because it is meshed, “unlike Wi-Fi, a ZigBee signal gets stronger as more devices are put on the network,” Klein explains. “That provides more capability for controlling not only audio and video systems, but also lighting, water heaters, appliances, heating and cooling and other devices,” he says.

The advantages/disadvantages of ZigBee and other types of technologies is a broad topic that few understand, but customers seem to be keeping up with it faster in many cases than builders, integrators say.

“The younger ones [builders] are more hip to what’s going on because they’ve grown up with automation,” Knittle says. “Older builders are more concerned about cost and look at these systems as more of an option.”

That can sometimes lead to issues such as insufficient power or ventilation of centralized servers and control units.

“Even a one- or two-rack system will have heat issues,” Matthew points out. For example, “Some people will install a vent for warm weather, but the heat problem will still be there during winter months. That’s why it’s best to have returns that circulate heat out of space.”

King adds that builders and architects don’t always think things through, particularly in renovation projects. He cites as an example the frequent instances when a homeowner wants to convert a basement into a home theater.

Those customers and their contractors often “overlook the need for sound isolation so that the home theater doesn’t disturb other parts of the house,” King explains. “That’s why it’s so important to have a home automation professional involved from the outset. The days of just having an electrician run some coaxial cable through the house are gone.”

**COMING ATTRACTIONS**

The need for education in home automation is particularly critical because there’s much more to come, with control via iPhone and other mobile devices leading the way.

“You can do almost anything with it [mobile technology] now, and I expect there are 20 or so more applications right behind [iPhone],” Adams says. “It’s going to restructure our world.”

Matthew agrees, adding that the convenience of go-anywhere control may lead to a phase out of the expensive in-wall touch panels.

As with most technology, “there’ll be a trend toward making systems more affordable, enabling more people to take advantage,” he adds.

The trend of using less energy will also apply throughout the home, which is why energy control systems will be an integral part of tomorrow’s smart home.

Knittle also forecasts “thinner HD TV panels that use less energy, and better server technology to accommodate the distribution of more digital and Internet-based content.”

The possibilities are vast, which is why Klein says everyone involved with home automation projects needs to consider education the first step in the process.

“You have to figure out the right starting point, but also where things are going,” Klein says. “It makes sense to set up a system for the next 10 years. A lot of things are going to happen, so you may as well prepare for it.”

Jim Parsons is a freelance writer frequently called upon to write about home building, construction and engineering. Reach him at www.parsonage.net/jimsworld.
SONY BLU-RAY BDV-E500W

As a leader in producing the latest home theater technology, Sony recently unveiled the BDV-E500W, a Blu-ray home theater system designed with enough amenities to greatly increase the viewer’s experience.

Equipped with S-AIR technology, the BDV-E500W can transmit audio to a set of wireless speakers more than 160 feet away. The resulting sound is similar to the quality produced by more complex surround sound systems. Outlets are available to connect other pieces of technology, including the latest iPods, to the system for optimal sound enhancement. Bluetooth adapters are also available for the BDV-E500W.

For more information, visit www.sonystyle.com.

IHOUSE SMARTFAUCET

With the new SmartFaucet technology by iHouse, users can take a soothing bath while answering e-mails or planning their next weekend getaway.

iHouse’s sleek new SmartFaucet, manufactured in Brazil, uses facial recognition to identify the user and their preprogrammed water preferences, so the bathtub will fill at the specific temperature the person likes. An internal heating coil also allows the water to heat at a faster rate. Water flow can be adjusted to the user’s liking. The SmartFaucet also features touch-screen technology, which allows the user to check their e-mail, calendar and even the weather.

For more information, visit www.ihouse.com.br.

GE SIMON XT WIRELESS HOME SECURITY SYSTEM

Looking for added home security without the hassle? Try the GE Simon XT Wireless Home Security System. Simon XT is a full-featured home security platform that’s installed in minutes, yet promises to deliver years of dependable protection for you and your family.

Simon XT uses advanced wireless technology, so installation doesn’t involve the mess and expense of running wires to sensors. With up to 40 wireless zones of protection, a built-in display LCD touchpad and status speaker providing visual and voice feedback messages, the Simon XT is suited for houses, apartments and condominiums. And whether your home was built yesterday or a century ago, thanks to Simon XT you now can enjoy the peace of mind that comes with knowing that your home and family are safe and secure.

For more information, visit www.gesecurity.com.

CRESTRON CHV-TSTATRF THERMOSTAT

A leader in both residential and industrial technology, Crestron offers a variety of solutions to meet the needs of clients who want to go wireless.

The CHV-TSTATRF is a wireless, networked thermostat featuring infi-NET wireless technology that allows temperature controls to be centralized from a single touchpad or remote. The CHV-TSTATRF is designed to be installed in place of a conventional thermostat without requiring additional control network wiring.

For more information, visit www.crestron.com.

CRESTRON C2N-RTHS TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY SENSOR

The C2N-RTHS temperature and humidity sensor uses the Cresnet control network to communicate with any Crestron 2-Series control system to monitor room temperature and humidity.

When mounted on the wall, the unit’s 1½” diameter face protrudes only 1/8” from the wall surface, making it easy to camouflage with paint or wallpaper. The unit possesses a temperature measurement range of -40ºF to 176ºF, and a humidity measurement range of 0-100% relative humidity (RH). The unit is accurate to within ±1ºF and 5% RH. The C2N-RTHS uses 0.25 watts of power.

For more information, visit www.crestron.com.

SAM’SUNG SP-A800B PROJECTOR

For the ultimate home theater experience, look no further than the Samsung SP-A800B projector. Boasting full 1080p resolution...
When Andy Trivers of Trivers Associates arrived circa 1970 to St. Louis city, he was impressed. Now, in 2009, St. Louis city is impressed with him. Trivers Associates is located on the 18th floor of the Bank of America building at 100 N. Broadway. He and his staff have the privilege of a spectacular view overlooking the Mississippi River to the east, and the Old Courthouse and a partial view of the infield of Busch Stadium to the south. Andy knows he sits on top of the world, miles from his firm’s humble beginnings in the 8x10 room he rented from Alphonso J. Cervantes, who as former mayor was quite the builder in his own right, for $60 per month at 52 Maryland Plaza in the Central West End in 1975. His current digs are spacious, modern and impeccably decorated, yet inviting with their deep salmon walls (Andy says they’re orange) and picturesque view. Upon meeting this soft-spoken, unassuming, gentleman who grasps your attention easily and maintains it raptly with his knowledge of the history of the city, it is easy to forget one is in the presence of a king of architectural renovation. His love affair with St. Louis is apparent as he retells the city’s history through its architecture as though he were a native; however, Andy was born in Chattanooga, TN. He first came to St. Louis to matriculate at Washington University Graduate School after having received a Master of Architecture degree from Tulane University and working in Cambridge, MA. He earned a Master of Architecture and Urban Design degree from Wash U.; after earning his degree, Andy took a detour to San Francisco, a “mecca for architecture,” and the place where he thought he was meant to spend his career. A weeklong job hunt in San Francisco, where frankly, Andy felt he was not particularly needed, was fruitless. He received a job offer with a small firm back in St. Louis, packed his bags and returned to the city, where he has been ever since.

Trivers Associates was founded when Andy was 29 years old; it was established on his desire to be involved in the rebuilding of the city he recognized as showing signs of stress. Residents were leaving the city in droves for suburbia, buildings were vacant and in disrepair and signs of vibrancy were severely lacking. The city was not demonstrating the ability to maintain an urban lifestyle, and Andy was enthralled by the prospect of being involved with the reconstruction of St. Louis. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the city had begun to look better with the glimmer of light turned on with the renovation of Union Station, the advent of St. Louis Center and other major initiatives to breathe life back into it, but these efforts...
were not enough to get a momentum of growth going, and none were ultimately successful. Twenty years later, a true resurgence began, and Trivers Associates has been an integral part of that resurgence, specializing in work important to the city. Andy had not anticipated that taking this direction with his firm would lead to what has become his lifelong work.

Trivers Associates, with its six specialized design studios, which include civic, cultural, education, health and wellness, housing and hospitality, focuses on historic preservation. Andy states, “Taking the existing building stock and reusing it is something we have focused on in many projects in downtown St. Louis, including the Westin Hotel, the Bi-State Development Agency Headquarters Building in Laclede’s Landing, the Continental Building in Midtown, the Old Post Office in the middle of downtown, as well as numerous other historic renovation projects that we’ve done over the years. Those projects are significant because they give St. Louis an identity that’s unique, unlike younger cities such as Houston, Dallas and Phoenix that have really grown up over the last 30 to 40 years. These younger cities, except for reasons of climate, don’t have any distinct character; whereas St. Louis has architecture and a character that is unique to the identity of the city. To lose that would be to lose that unique identity. It seemed somebody needed to be a champion of the preservation of that uniqueness.”

Trivers Associates has definitely established itself as such a champion.

Andy cannot remember wanting to be anything other than an architect. He just had this sense that was what he wanted to be. He grew up in a family of mathematicians, loving to draw and paint and cultivating his already creative mind. He explained, “I don’t really know where it came from, except to say that my mother always liked to be an artist. All I can say is maybe my becoming an artist and an architect was a reaction to not wanting to be that [a mathematician].” He also was being cultivated to understand and embrace urban living and what it would take to make such living desirable and functional. Andy thinks city living will be the “saving
grace of modern civilization.” He says that when cities were first formed long ago, people lived in close proximity to one another for a reason, and we could learn a lot from paying attention to the history of cities and why that was so. According to Andy, “City living is an environmentally friendly, better lifestyle. We no longer have the pollution problems of long ago that drove many residents away. Density, which used to be a bad thing, isn’t a bad thing any longer. Density should have a better name.”

Andy shared that he lives in a high rise overlooking the park, and when people ask why he doesn’t live in a single-family dwelling with a yard, he replies, “Why, What for? I’ve got the whole of Forest Park as my front yard; I have the zoo in my front yard, and an art and history museum. Why do I need a private yard when I can walk to Forest Park and enjoy its abundance?”

The city of St. Louis has become so much more attractive in the last few years. Businesses and population are growing. Goals of the city include attracting young families and empty nesters. Building renovation, employment, entertainment, viable and successful schools, effective transportation and a sense of convenience are all viewed as crucial to increasing the city’s appeal to those who left its boundaries for country living. Andy expresses the importance of face-to-face encounters with neighbors and other members of the community as part of the appeal of city dwelling.

A champion of renovations with a passion for architecture, design and urban planning, Trivers Associates also embraces the opportunity to be part of energizing the city through sustainable, Earth-efficient, urban growth by making environmentally minded decisions throughout each project a priority. The self-described environmentalist explains, “Sturdy old buildings from the latter part of the 19th century can be renovated and modernized to be used by today’s society. If you want to save historic buildings, you have to make them active participants in modern society. You have to bring that building up to current technology, heating and cooling, communications, usability,
convenience … and with a little love, that building will be around at least another 100 years.”

Andy identifies his company’s renovation of the Old Post Office as his favorite project to date because “it represents the best of historic preservation.” It is one of two remaining buildings of the Second Empire architectural style left in the country, the other being the Old Executive Office Building in Washington, DC, adjacent to the White House, now known as the Eisenhower Building; it is the location of the Vice Presidential offices. The 1872 Old Post Office building was erected following the Post Civil War Reconstruction and Revitalization Act at a cost of $5.8 million (current escalation value of $3.64 billion), so saving and reusing it is monumental. Andy also did the 1,100-car garage directly west of the post office, which he views as significant to the redevelopment of the downtown area.

The high-rise tower Trivers Associates is working on for the Roberts Brothers (native St. Louisans who are also champions of St. Louis city development and growth) is another building Andy identifies as “important.” He names the conversion of the old Cupples Station warehouses into the four-star Westin Hotel as the company’s most challenging project. Andy is also proud of his company’s use of universal design at the Central West Ends’ 6 North, an 80-unit, all accessible rental community and the first large-scale residential project of its kind in the country.

It is obvious that Andy loves his work. The award-winning Trivers Associates has worked on projects from Pennsylvania to Texas; St. Louis is fortunate to have his experience, talent and expertise, as he has envisioned a vibrant, exciting future for the city of St. Louis, and he plans to be as much a part of the city’s inevitable revitalization as possible.
LEEDing the Way in Sustainable Construction

Across the nation, interest is rising in energy-efficient and sustainable construction techniques. As environmentally sound building practices become more practical and commonplace, companies across the country are going green. Two such companies — JE Dunn Construction and GreenSpaces — are leading the way.

JE DUNN CONSTRUCTION

Headquartered in Kansas City, MO, JE Dunn Construction has been one of the top general contracting firms in the United States since opening in 1924. Today, JE Dunn Construction has extended this tradition of excellence by becoming one of the leaders in sustainable commercial construction practices.

With more than 300 Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)-certified staff members and more than $2.2 billion invested in LEED-designed construction projects, JE Dunn Construction is taking an active role in pursuing environmentally sound building programs.

Currently, JE Dunn Construction is beginning construction on a new 203,000-square-foot, gold-level LEED-certified office building — the first of its kind in Kansas City. The new office building will house 520 employees and utilize many sustainable features, including:

• Recycling 75% of construction waste
• Utilizing alternative energy sources and green power sources
• Using carpets composed of recycled content
• Following water use standards 40% under Environmental Protection Agency standards

“When it came time to build our new office, we knew that seeking LEED certification would illustrate our commitment to green building practices,” says Jenny Bloomfield, LEED AP, Manager of Sustainable Construction for JE Dunn Construction. “We hope this new building will serve as an example of our commitment as an environmentally responsible firm.”

GREENSPACES

Centered in Chattanooga, TN, GreenSpaces is encouraging a shift toward environmentally conscious construction in two ways:

• Providing incentive funding for LEED-certified commercial projects in the Chattanooga area

LEED Certification 101

Developed in 2000 by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification has become the national benchmark of sustainable residential and commercial construction. LEED certification serves as third-party confirmation of a structure’s adherence to sustainable standards and asserts that the building operates as it was designed. All new construction projects, including commercial, residential and major renovations, may apply for LEED certification.

Following an extensive application, review and commissioning process, LEED certification results in one of four recognition levels: Certified, Silver, Gold or Platinum. Each level of achievement corresponds to credits earned for specific design categories, including sustainable sites, indoor environment quality, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources and innovation in design.

LEED-certified construction projects offer a variety of environmental and fiscal advantages over traditional construction, such as:

• Energy and water conservation
• Healthier work and living spaces for occupants
• Increased press interest in construction projects
• Reduced landfill waste
• Tax rebates, zoning allowances and other incentive programs

To register a project for LEED certification, there is a fee of $450 for members of the USGBC and $600 for nonmembers.

Training for LEED projects, including technical workshops and introductory courses, is available through nationwide chapters and tradeshows.

Application materials, checklists, reference guides and additional information regarding LEED certification are available through the USGBC website at www.usgbc.org.
breaking the habit

For decades, American dependence on foreign oil imports has plagued policymakers. In 2007, crude oil imports to the United States reached 10,031,000 barrels per day, according to the Energy Information Administration. As these figures continue to rise, sustainable energy solutions are becoming more relevant in our nation’s quest for oil independence.

A Sustainable Solution
According to President Barack Obama’s energy plan, the solution to America’s oil-dependence issues requires a focused, long-term effort on the part of the government and the American people.

To spearhead this effort, President Obama has suggested a 10-year, $150-billion investment plan that will revitalize and encourage renewable energy resources, while creating 5 million new jobs.

Building the Foundation
Working with the U.S. Green Building Council, President Obama’s proposed plan will encourage green construction projects in various ways, including:

• Assisting in the construction of LEED-certified public projects through federal grants
• Requiring all new buildings to be carbon neutral or nonemission producing by 2030
• Setting a goal of improving energy efficiency by 50% in new buildings and by 25% in existing buildings to help achieve the 2030 goal

In terms of oil use, the green-construction requirements of President Obama’s energy plan will dramatically reduce the transportation cost of building materials. LEED projects and green construction encourage recycling and the reuse of scrap materials and allow for many materials to be purchased locally, drastically cutting transportation cost and oil use.

For more information about President Obama’s renewable energy plan, visit www.whitehouse.gov and select “Energy and the Environment” under the “Agenda” heading.

• Serving as a resource center for construction companies interested in using sustainable methods

“For from incentive funding to consulting, we try to offer a comprehensive resource for local companies and residents seeking to learn more about building green,” says Jeff Cannon, co-founder of GreenSpaces. “We work constantly to make sure we offer builders in the area the tools they need to complete LEED-certified, environmentally sound projects.”

In order to meet this goal, GreenSpaces provides service intended to increase understanding and use of green building practices.

“We offer specific product-related lectures and guest lectures, including LEED 101 classes, to help educate companies and residents on ways to transition toward sustainable construction,” says Anj McClain, LEED AP, co-founder of GreenSpaces. “Working as advocates of green construction and sustainable energy is a vital part of our mission. Spreading

and ensuring the viability of environmentally conscious construction is extremely important to us.”

FACING FORWARD
In spite of current market conditions, green construction is projected to become a $96-billion to $140-billion market within the next five years, according to McGraw-Hill Construction’s “Green Outlook 2009.” Alone, sustainable commercial construction is expected to account for $56 billion to $70 billion by the year 2013. As JE Dunn Construction and GreenSpaces have shown, sustainable commercial construction is proving to be a viable, profitable sector of the commercial industry.

For more information on green construction or LEED certification for your next commercial project, visit www.usgbc.org.

Building green
Making Dreams Come True
By Amy Harper

Exuberant. This one word is an apt description of the presence of David Payne, 100% stockholder, owner, President and CEO of PayneCrest Electric and Communications. Payne proudly speaks about the achievements of the company, which boasts a long list of awards including the American Subcontractor Association Safety Award in their category in April 2009 and three prestigious Associated General Contractors awards in a two-year period. The company met an incredible milestone in 2007; employees worked 1 million consecutive hours without a recordable injury by Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards, over 582 consecutive days. In the construction business, such a feat is remarkable. Payne explains, “PayneCrest has a commitment to safety. It is expected from each employee, every day, on every job. Safety is a culture here. Nothing less is acceptable.”

Quality of work, productivity, attendance, safety and attitude are the foundations of PayneCrest. Above all, attitude. Everything else can be learned, but I’m looking for a positive attitude because that’s what drives success for the individual, for the team and for the company.

— David Payne

Quality from the outside in
Payne began working for his father in 1971 at the age of 11. He learned the business, and it became a part of him. He took over the company from his father in 1985. The industrial electrical contractor, Payne Electric bought the commercial Crest Electric in the year 2000, becoming the new and improved organization equipped to meet any electric and communication needs. The company has grown from 75 to 600 employees strong in the past 24 years; it continues to expand. Once an automotive electric company in Flint, MI, the company moved to St. Louis in 1958, opening new horizons.

“Quality of work, productivity, attendance, safety and attitude are the foundations of PayneCrest. Above all, attitude. Everything else can be learned, but I’m looking for a positive attitude because that’s what drives success for the individual, for the team and for the company,” Payne expresses. He certainly would know. He has taken the company, already with earnings in excess of $10 million in volume to roughly $100 million in volume since he has been at the helm.

Payne describes his management style: “I am not one to micromanage. We hire the people we do because they are professionals who know what needs to be done and how to do it. Unless proven otherwise, we give our employees the opportunity to go in and get the job done. We don’t follow a typical corporate structure with a lot of limitations on how our employees do their job. It may not seem sophisticated to some, but it works for us, and it works well. My favorite expression about Payne Electric is, ‘We’re a small company on steroids.’ We have a lot of meetings and have determined that if something is not going to make us happier or be more profitable for the company, we’re not going to put it in place.”

Having completed wiring projects from St. Louis’ showcase Lumiere Place Casino and Hotels to Holcim Cement in St. Genevieve, MO, possibly the largest electrical wiring project since the Callaway Nuclear Plant, PayneCrest has established itself firmly as the third largest electric company in the state. Employing professionals from Union IBW Local No. 1, projects are completed utilizing anywhere from one person on small jobs to an average 25 to 100 workers on most jobs; the Holcim cement project peaked at about 450 employees.

As proud as Payne is of PayneCrest, PayneFamily Homes, his venture into the world of home building, is what is really exciting him these days. Established in 2006
Details, details, details!

PHOTO BY TOM WARWICK
through a 50-50 partnership with his brother-in-law, Allan Schroer, PayneFamily Homes is all about location. Home buyers interested in living in St. Charles County can turn to PayneFamily Homes for a myriad of choices in any one of six communities. Housing choices include condominiums, attached houses and single-family homes. Buyers can choose from three locations within a 2-mile radius of the Page Bridge to three locations within 2 to 3 miles of St. Charles Community College.

Payne says, “PayneFamily Homes is a custom builder. What we offer the home buyer is flair. We offer more significant, standard options appealing to those who want more than what is provided with a tract home. We’re willing to work with buyers to give them more choices; anyone thinking of building a home and upgrading their lifestyle couldn’t do so at a better time than right now, or with a better company than PayneFamily Homes. Our mission is to make a difference by having a unique look. It’s a buyer’s market; it’s never been better than this. This is the time buyers can make their dreams come true. This is a time of opportunity. Tax credits are available for the first-time home buyer. Anyone considering a housing change has to think about not only what their current house is worth, but also the value of what they would be buying.”

With a variety of new-home alternatives ranging from $120,000 to $450,000, PayneFamily Homes has something for everyone. Additionally, the builders offer energy packages creating homes ready for the 21st century. Packages include HVAC heating and cooling, insulation and low-E windows. Payne adds, “Who better to build a home than someone with our type of experience? Ken Kruse, formerly of the Jones Company, recently joined PayneFamily Homes as President. He comes to us with a wealth of home building, financial and management expertise. Scott Kerns, who was previously with Vantage Homes for 10 years, is our General Manager. Kerns draws on his extensive home building, construction supervision and management experience to lead the daily operations of the company.”

With a commitment to excellence and inimitable experience, PayneFamily Homes is equipped to help make your dreams come true.
Sigmetrix Releases a New CETOL 6 Sigma

There’s a new program on the market that interfaces with CAD, exceeds your expectations by going steps farther to help engineers and development teams conduct complex tolerance analysis studies on their products, and then saves your company both time and money.

Sigmetrix has released a new version of its CETOL 6 Sigma software. Version 8.1.2 promises to build on the brand’s already polished reputation for delivering user-friendly mechanical variation and tolerance analysis software.

Vendors and development teams across the nation use CETOL 6 Sigma to help guarantee a product that performs better, lasts longer and has fewer warranty issues. As customer designs become more complex and materials are expected to last longer and perform with greater variation, many businesses are turning away from simple spreadsheets or ledgers to software like CETOL 6 Sigma. CETOL 6 Sigma helps industry leaders:

• have more confidence in the performance of their product;
• save time and money by reducing the necessity of dozens of prototypes;
• get the most out of production manufacturing; and
• develop and support ongoing improvement.

CETOL 6 Sigma helps developers accomplish this through the use of precise analytical tools that interface smoothly with any of the major CAD systems. CETOL 6 Sigma helps developers accomplish this through the use of precise analytical tools that interface smoothly with any of the major CAD systems.

UNDERLYING TECHNOLOGY

The technology that forms the foundation of CETOL 6 Sigma is the Functional Interface Relationship Modeler (FIRM). FIRM features sensitivity matrices used by post processors to produce a comprehensive analysis that can be used to optimize tolerance design. This technology helps save time and money by reducing model development time and decreasing reliance on subject matter experts.

Designers, engineers and manufacturers using this software benefit from FIRM in a variety of ways. The interface allows for the development of three-dimensional models to determine tolerance analysis, which is helpful to both specialists working on product design and in the mainstream design development.
engineering organization. Assembly sensitivity results can be presented in several ways, including animated, graphical and list views. Within the three-dimensional model, precise statistical and worst-case tolerance analysis results are displayed and are easily edited in the event of a change in data.

**ANIMATION, REPORTING AND INTEGRATION**

Through the CETOL Sensitivity Animation Viewer, the development team is given a virtual prototype of how their model will perform given varying sets of critical features. These feature sets can be customized to reflect either variations in manufacturing or assembly or environmental factors. The software analyzes these varying conditions within the CAD system, and then animates how the assembly will adjust when a key element is altered within its tolerance range. Users can zoom in to resolutions with greater magnification than any typical inspection equipment can measure. This is a tool that allows a wide range of key players — architects, engineers, designers and manufacturers — to identify critical-to-quality elements that may need further adjustment before releasing the product into mainstream production.

The CETOL Tolerance Information Manager is a useful software element that’s used for fast review of stack-up data and the investigation of “what-if” scenarios. The View Wizard makes this process simple and user friendly by taking the user through the steps necessary to set up any view needed as part of the design-to-manufacturing process.

The CETOL Tolerance Information Manager can be utilized in a variety of functions in the Product Lifecycle Management process, including:

- Prototype teams can perform tolerance analysis and easily and seamlessly provide feedback to the design team.
- Manufacturing teams can ensure their ability to assemble a product by examining and evaluating each factory or supplier.
- Managers gain the insight provided by graphical overviews of tolerance analysis and the relative impact on the final product.
- Warranty managers are given the capability of viewing a product’s defects — before it is produced — to identify any fundamental design flaws and to potentially help avoid a full product recall.

For a full description of CETOL 6 Sigma capabilities, and for more information about how this software could help you, visit www.sigmetrix.com or call (872) 542-7517.
Established in 1853, Kirkwood, MO, prides itself on its characteristic charm, sense of community, an active business district and desirable public schools. Located in the suburbs of St. Louis, the much sought-after city of 27,000+ residents drew the attention of St. Louis County local Mike Lewis of Lewis Homes, LLC.

**BUILDER’S BACKGROUND**

The son of a real estate broker mother and a contract negotiator father, Lewis attended Chaminade College Prep School in St. Louis County, where he selected architectural classes that required drawing plans and building model houses. He also worked for local construction companies and gained valuable hands-on experience in various facets of construction from field supervision to sales. Assignments in his architectural classes and the construction work experience he profited from during his youth ignited a spark that would become a flame years later. After graduating from Chaminade, Lewis matriculated at Maryville University, one of the premier universities in the Midwest. Originally contemplating a career associated with the premed/biology education fields he found intriguing, in 2003 Lewis established Lewis Homes, bringing to realization his true calling. Although seemingly unrelated areas, Lewis explains that his interest in science and education really are connected to his work because the science background helps with the process of building while the education background assists with knowing how to work well with people.

**IT’S ALL ABOUT LOCATION**

Lewis is a resident of Kirkwood, and the majority of Lewis Homes homes are concentrated in Kirkwood; however, he has built homes in Frontenac, Warson Woods, Glendale, Chesterfield and Wildwood. The company’s focus on superior service and quality homes has twice earned it Kirkwood’s prestigious “Dignified Infill of a Residence” award. With a specialty in building new construction with a historical look and appeal, the difference in Lewis Homes is in craftsmanship and design. His niche is serving the home buyer who wants the attractiveness of an old house without its inevitable upkeep. He currently has five such houses for sale in Kirkwood with listing prices ranging from $650,000 to $1 million. “Each house is different; each house presents itself differently from the street. Each house is unique. I build quite a few specs every year, but the buyer does have a lot of say about the historical look, so there’s definitely personalization of the home,” Lewis explains.

**IT TAKES TEAMWORK**

Architect Kim Spurgeon has been working with Lewis for two years. Lewis and Spurgeon visit historical homes in several cities and towns throughout the United States to make firsthand observations and garner ideas. This is how they remain true to
the time period the new construction is replicating. Their plans are submitted to the Kirkwood Landmarks Commission for approval. Once approved, work begins. Employing anywhere from 200 to 400 laborers and specialists for each project up to an average of seven months, a house is born.

Lewis Homes has built approximately 35 houses in the past three-and-a-half years. B/A toured the Lewis Homes spec house at 526 E. Jefferson in the Jefferson-Argonne Historic District of Kirkwood. This 4,000-square-foot, story-and-a-half, unusually deep, narrow, Old World-style home boasts four bedrooms, four baths and a private aggregate courtyard with entrances from both the entry foyer and the master bedroom. Entering from the era-duplicating, off-center front door, the foyer delivers the first glimpse of the openness extended throughout the main floor. From the gorgeous hardwood floors, raised-panel walls, four-and-a-quarter butterfly casing (custom knives were used to create exceptional styling), box beam ceilings, five-panel doors with pediments (think 1930s and 1940s) and lots of trim and details, the house is stunning.

The ample 20x18 living room flows smoothly into the 14x13 dining room. This easy movement continues into a gourmet kitchen with custom-built cabinetry, granite counters and Bosch appliances, all adding an elegant touch. The breakfast nook at the back of the kitchen lends itself to what promises to be an extremely pleasant view of the yard. A three-car garage with bonus second-story living or office space mimics the primary structure.

A custom-made, hand-bent stairwell leading to the second floor brings to mind stairwells and landings from bygone times, as is the designer’s goal. The commodious, upper-level bedrooms, walk-in closets and a bath will meet the needs of children or guests; this level would be a great mother-in-law’s quarters.

The finished portion of the basement will make a splendid media center and recreation room with plenty of unfinished space awaiting the creative input of the buyer.

All Lewis Homes homes are designed to meet energy-efficiency standards with blown-in blanket in-wall insulation, vinyl siding with foam backer providing additional insulation and sound proofing and low-E windows, making the homes as energy efficient as they can be.

If you are yearning for old-home appeal but cannot live without modern conveniences, Lewis Homes glories in introducing customers to the ultimate marriage of these distinct time periods.
Boosting Exterior Appeal When Budgets Have Been Kicked to the Curb

By Cheryl Dangel Cullen

Although the economy has brought extra challenges to the quest for curb appeal, it has also made it more vital than ever.

“With an estimated 4 million existing homes on the market in 2008 [according to the National Association of Realtors], curb appeal is critical in selling a home,” says Mike Loughery, Director, Corporate Marketing Communications, CertainTeed Corporation, Valley Forge, PA.

Builders are looking for simpler, inexpensive ways to make the homes in their inventory stand out from the crowd because they are now competing with those existing homeowners who “are doing curb appeal makeovers to draw in more buyers,” according to Ralph Bruno, President, AZEK Building Products in Moosic, PA. They must do so because, in a tough market, “if they [buyers] see shabby or worn columns, rotted porch planks or peeling paint around windows or doors, they will assume that the inside is not much better,” he says.

Even homeowners who have chosen to stay in their homes instead of sell are forging ahead with exterior improvements right now. They want homes that will keep their value, but not cost a fortune to maintain, Bruno says.

What that translates to in terms of specific exterior products today for both new and used homes is that while “people recognize they need to stretch their dollar further, they are looking for value when purchasing products, not necessarily the lowest cost,” says Lance Premeau, Product Manager, Kolbe & Kolbe Millwork, Wausau, WI.

They have been helped along in that shopping effort by the plethora of information available on the Web and on television. “Homeowners today are very savvy in terms of researching and gathering information on product choices and performance,” Premeau says.

STRETCHING THE DOLLAR

Strategy plays a key role in making the stretched dollar pay off when it comes to exterior features, says Jim Lapides, Manager of Public Relations for the American Society of Landscape Architects, Washington, DC.

“When it comes to home additions or remodels, the best bang for your buck occurs when you upgrade or add a feature that is missing,” Lapides says. “If you don’t have a deck but every other house does, adding a deck will reap significant benefits,” he says. However, at the same time, “if you add a deck and nobody else owns one, the return is less,” he points out.

The opposite is true, however, with landscaping, which also adds a significant boost to curb appeal, Lapides says. “You get more return when your landscape is above and beyond the average, as opposed to just average,” he comments.

Landscaping is also a method of adding value that can be easier to put into motion than major structural renovations, says Julie Moir Messervy, principal, landscape design consultant, Julie Moir Messervy Design Studio, Saxtons River, VT.

“What [homeowners] can do is to bring a sense of the home outside onto the land … It’s often easier to do landscape projects as a layperson
ENTRY DOOR AND WINDOWS

Another place where value is easily added is the front door, as shown through a National Home Valuation Study commissioned by Therma-Tru Doors and conducted by independent research organization TNS.

The study asked more than 2,400 consumers from across the U.S. to estimate home prices based on homes’ exterior appearances. “The study found that an enhanced entryway can add as much as $24,000 to a home’s perceived value. This added value was as much as five times the cost of the entry system,” says Ashley Lumm, marketing communications specialist, Therma-Tru Doors, Maumee, OH.

One of the reasons for that perceived value is that the front door “is usually the first item that the prospective buyer comes in physical contact with,” says Premeau. The process of making it look good can be as simple as fancy hardware or intricate glass in the door, he says.

Nick Tsontakis, principal, Nick Tsontakis Architecture & Interiors of Scottsdale, AZ, says stone trim around windows and doorways is an excellent way to add that value, and there are many ways to add stone aesthetics today that are cost effective.

“We use a lot of synthetic or concrete stone,” Tsontakis says. “You can get a variety of profiles and they’re easily applied,” he says.

Those who do major remodeling or who are looking for a major impact on new projects are missing the boat if they don’t address the importance of the entry door or windows, Tsontakis says.

“It’s like getting all dressed up and wearing old shoes,” he says.

CHECK THE DECK, ETC.

Most home building experts today agree that because of the higher cost of gas, more people are staying home, which means more importance is being placed on outdoor living spaces, including porches, patios and decks.

Today, “people [home sellers] are expected to invest in upgrades to their outdoor living space at home,” says Chris Fox, Marketing Manager, Universal Forest Products in Grand Rapids, MI.

This added space, however, also adds square footage to the home, which adds to its value. And as far as decks, the new options mean decks that don’t resemble what many people remember from their youth — the high-maintenance, wooden decks that when neglected, turned an ugly gray.

Due to new materials, today’s decks “are easier to take care of and made of superior materials designed to last a long time,” Fox points out.

Porches remain a strong exterior design feature, but the return on investment is sometimes questionable, says Leslie Tippell, principal, LT Designs, Color Design Studio in Sonoma, CA. “Front-yard porches are generally positioned off the dining and living rooms, which in most environments are generally the least-used rooms in the home,” Tippell says. While they are still used as a design element in such a configuration, they are often standard in length, acting as an aesthetic feature instead of a useful amenity, she says.

However, if done right, porches can be a plus. “When homes on corner-lot conditions incorporate wraparound porches, they generally relate to interior spaces, such as nooks and family rooms. This indoor-outdoor feature adds an amazingly strong design and usability feature to the home,” Tippell adds.

DON’T LET SIDING SLIDE

When thinking in terms of adding value, one product that stands out today is siding, a material that has also gained great growth in ease
of maintenance, as well as in durability, over the years. According to a study conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2005, vinyl siding is the most-used exterior cladding material on newly constructed homes.

Loughery says this is because “materials such as wood and brick have decreased in popularity primarily due to the extensive maintenance required [with wood siding] and the hefty labor costs [in installing brick],” he says.

Tippell agrees and adds, “As builders and contractors are forced to cut costs to react to deceasing revenues, eliminating stone, brick and other exterior details are, in many cases, the first value-engineering steps taken.”

Beyond vinyl, fiber cement siding is growing in popularity because of durability (it resists the damaging effects of salt spray and UV rays and will not rot), as well as its fire ratings and the range of profiles available, Loughery says.

Tippell adds, “Shingles and lap siding made of fiber cement continue to be the preferred material from an environmental, code and maintenance standpoint. New profiles that provide deep shadow lines are popular.”

She also points out, however, that many materials today that may not be used to cover the entire house are used as accents.

For example, Tippell says, aluminum horizontal panels are being used on certain façades of farmhouses and modern buildings. “Adding this as an accent element can create a fabulous contextual contrast when combined with stone, brick or smooth stucco,” she points out.

So, too, can adding stone as an accent, though James Motarex, National Sales Manager, Real Stone Source, LLC, Lancaster, CA, says he also sees increases in the number of builders using natural stone as an alternative or addition to siding.

“Natural stone, specifically thin-cut veneers and modular systems, are on the rise because they offer the beauty and long-term durability that manufactured materials can’t deliver,” he says. “And with increasingly efficient installation, thin veneers and modular systems make installation costs competitive with manufactured materials,” he adds.

UP ON THE ROOF

Another important part of the home when it comes to curb appeal is the roof.

“The roof plays a significant role in a home’s curb appeal — in addition to exterior cladding, railing and landscaping,” Loughery says. This is so because, “on a typical home with a steep-slope roof, the roof represents approximately 40% of the visual area seen on the home,” says Loughery.

The latest trend in roofing materials is solar reflective shingles and other products that reduce energy costs, Loughery suggests. Utilizing an innovative cool-roof technology, solar reflective shingles feature roofing granules that bounce the sun off and radiate heat back out far better than traditional roofing shingles. During the summer months, these shingles can reduce the temperature of the home, thereby reducing air-conditioning bills. Meanwhile, they have the same aesthetic appeal as traditional shingles, Loughery says.

Another material increasing in popularity is metal, which is chosen because metal roofs offer new design aesthetics, yet are environmentally friendly.

“Finish steel panels and corrugated metal roofs can be applied to a variety of different architectural styles ranging from Modern to New England Colonial to Contemporary Farmhouse styles,” Tippell says.

As the popularity of these types of roofs grows, the ability to paint them with an endless array of colors and finishes creates an ideal opportunity to enhance the exterior color palette of the home,” she says. “This, combined with the lightweight nature of the product, the fact that in most cases the majority of the material is recycled, along with the longevity, makes it an easy choice for many people.”

SPRUCE UP THE DRIVEWAY

When considering how the home looks from the outside, one area receiving a lot of attention today that used to be ignored is the place where many people initially enter the property: the driveway.

“The use of interlocking pavers is increasingly popular, as they are becoming competitive with treated concrete applications,” says Tippell. “The maintenance costs are drastically less and the value added to curb appeal and resale is huge. Builders are also realizing the impervious benefits of the product when dealing with off-site drainage restrictions,” she says.

Tippell suggests that builders consider complementing an entry-level interlocking paver driveway with decorative aluminum garage doors along with upgraded fiberglass front doors, all of which “are great ways to boost curb appeal on a budget.”

ADD COLOR

So, with the focus on value, what is the least expensive way to add to a home’s exterior aesthetics? “Without question, great color schemes are the quickest and least expensive way to add curb appeal to any home,” Tippell states.

As budgets decrease the popularity of some of the more expensive finishes and trims, “the use of color becomes even more important” as “paint and roof tile become the overall palette,” Tippell says.

“There are countless examples of communities, some with very expensive finishes, that lack any level of curb appeal due to bland and repetitive color schemes,” she points out.

This is a shame because, she says, “I think the adage ‘You never get a second chance to make a first impression’ speaks volumes to how important curb appeal relates to the marketability and value of homes.”

Cheryl Dangel Cullen is a freelance writer based in Frankfort, Ill., who frequently contributes to Builder/Architect. Reach her at cullencommunications.com.
high-definition resolution, seven picture modes and 24-frame, true-film mode, the SP-A800B will turn your living room into the cinema of your dreams.

Equipped for HDTV signals, featuring two high-definition component video inputs and two HDMI inputs, the SP-A800B projects your favorite DVDs, VHS tapes, video games and other media like you’ve never seen before.

The sleek, powerful SP-A800B will take you from your couch right into the action of your favorite movies and sporting events. With the SP-A800B, forget buying tickets — you’ve already got the best seat in the house.

For more information, visit www.samsung.com.

LEVITON OSCXX-MOW OCCUPANCY SENSOR

Leviton’s OSCxx-MOW ceiling mount occupancy sensor combines all-digital architecture with multitechnology to deliver the most advanced sensor available.

Leviton’s multitechnology allows for maximum sensitivity and immunity to false triggering by combining the benefits of both ultrasonic and infrared motion technologies for the ultimate in reliability and performance. Its compact size and spherical shape make the OSCxx-MOW easy to install and virtually invisible. Offered in a wide range of area units from 500-2,000 square feet and operative in a variety of indoor environments from 32°F to 104°F, Leviton’s OSCxx-MOW is an excellent occupancy sensor for reducing energy and saving money.

For more information, visit www.leviton.com.

MAXAIR TRUE CYCLONIC CENTRAL VACUUM SYSTEM

Make cleaning the house easier with H-P Products’ MaxAir Cyclonic Central Vacuum System. Ideal for larger homes, the MaxAir is the perfect choice for homeowners who want the maximum level of cleaning power possible.

Utilizing the Cyclonic Separation process, the MaxAir removes 96% to 98% of dirt from airstreams without the use of bags or filters. Unlike other central vacuums using permanent cloth filters, the MaxAir does not decrease function due to dirt and dust buildup, allowing for maximum cleaning and performance every time.

For more information, visit www.vacuflo.com.
There is no doubt that the recession and market turmoil are changing your business. The first instinct is to protect profits, spend less and, yes, cut marketing as an expense when times get tough. It’s a strategy that we see in every downturn. It’s also a strategy that is much like being in a race and saving money by not buying fuel to get to the finish line.

The concept of cutting back on marketing to achieve the short-term result of bolstering a bottom line misses the long-term opportunity to take away market share from competitors who have adopted the “turn off the pump” strategy.

There is plenty of data from past downturns to show that companies that cut marketing budgets during a recession lose sales, lose market share and take longer to recuperate losses than those that maintain levels of spending. One study by McGraw-Hill Research analyzed 600 companies from 1980-1985. The results were conclusive. Firms that maintained or increased their marketing budgets during the 1981-1982 recession experienced significantly higher sales growth, both during the recession and for the following three years, than those that eliminated or decreased advertising. By 1985, sales of the companies that were actively marketing during the recession had increased more than 250% compared to those that stopped their communications efforts.

Another informative study, “Turning Adversity into Advantage: Does Proactive Marketing During a Recession Pay Off?,” published in 2005, is based on data collected during the last recessionary period of the early 2000s. The authors’ conclusion: There are always companies that survive these downturns by positioning themselves with the right marketing campaigns. This article also focuses on iconic advertising campaigns that were launched during challenging economic times, dating back to the Great Depression.

In tough times, increasing your marketing efforts pays off and ensures that you are well positioned during the recovery. Here are six marketing strategies to cope with today’s challenging environment.

1. Upgrade your website. Potential customers are looking for a better deal, and they’re researching online. Make sure that your site is easy to navigate and is always updated with your current information. Provide links directly to key managers in your company to optimize communications.

2. Softer pricing in media. Here is your opportunity to increase your share of voice in the marketplace. As weakened companies cut their ad spending, you may have the opportunity to renegotiate your existing contracts, consider other advertising vehicles or add promotional sponsorships to your media plans.

3. Improve your communications with your best customers. Use the data that you have from existing customers, and if you don’t have a database, start one. Nurture that relationship through low-cost e-mail campaigns and incentives. It costs more money to acquire new customers than it does to keep your existing customers happy.

4. Host industry events, workshops or informational forums. Position your company as an industry leader by offering an opportunity for customers and potential customers to gain knowledge and network with each other. You can also partner with some of your vendors to defray costs and draw a wider audience.

5. Make it easier for customers to find you. Invest in search engine optimization.

6. Contact former customers. They did business with you once, but do you really know why they left? So few companies make this effort, but with personal outreach and incentive to come back, you may be able to turn around the relationship.

2009 EDITORIAL CALENDAR

Each month, Builder/Architect's editor-in-chief creates themed features that focus on the most important topics of interest to our targeted professional readers. While advertising in every issue of Builder/Architect will increase the awareness of your company, you can achieve maximum impact by marketing your products and services in the issues with the most relevant editorial content. Contact your local Builder/Architect publisher today to discover how you can make your advertising work smarter to influence the buying power of our readers.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENTS

The Art of Architecture: Discussion from design specialists on the latest in interior and exterior architectural trends

Ask the Expert: In-depth answers to questions by builders or designers on broad or technical issues surrounding technology, building solutions, trends in construction, business practices and more

Building Green: Discussion and practical tips on how to build in a way that saves energy and the environment while keeping homeowners healthy

The Consultant's Corner: Insight from experts and vendors to the industry on the latest tools and methods for building and for running a construction business

News: The latest trends and developments in the building industry including reports on regulatory/legislative events, surveys and statistical data, industry breakthroughs and headlines that construction contractors or design firms are making

Product Showcase: Focus on products in the areas covered by each month's feature as well as other innovative products and services

Special to Builder/Architect: Coverage of specific reports; events of interest to the building industry, such as the International Builders Show and other meetings; economic forecasts; and other unique issues of concern to the building industry

The Business of Building: Advice on how to run a business more efficiently and effectively in areas such as operations, human resources, marketing, legal, financial and planning

JANUARY
Energy and Air Quality
Product Showcase: HVAC, solar, alternative energies, insulation, fireplaces, energy control, central vacuums, air filtration

FEBRUARY
Ingredients for a Delicious Kitchen
Product Showcase: Lighting, flooring and surfaces, cabinetry, fixtures, appliances, plumbing

MARCH
Windows, Doors and More: The Trimmings
Product Showcase: Windows and window hardware and trim, interior/exterior doors, roofing and trim

APRIL
Winning in a Competitive Market
Product Showcase: Software and efficiency construction tools, popular home extras, marketing and consulting services

MAY
On the Outside, Looking In: Exteriors
Product Showcase: Landscaping, fencing, decking, outdoor lighting, garage doors, exterior finishes, roofing

JUNE
The Technologies That Run Our Homes
Product Showcase: Home control, entertainment centers, wired and wireless technologies, security, lighting, appliances, central vacuums

JULY
New Rooms: Home Areas Buyers Now Demand
Product Showcase: Outdoor kitchen and living rooms, patios and decks, laundry and storage areas, home offices, wine storage, shelters

AUGUST
The Spa Treatment: Today's Bathrooms
Product Showcase: Bath surfaces and flooring, cabinetry, bathroom fixtures, plumbing

SEPTEMBER
When Green Is Gold: Today's Sustainable Building
Product Showcase: Green-building products and services

OCTOBER
New Ways to Build
Product Showcase: Building systems and components, new types of tools/equipment, moisture and heat barriers, framing, roofing, insulation

NOVEMBER
Four on the Floor: Style, Durability, Practicality, Taste
Product Showcase: Flooring and floor products, surfaces and surface treatments

DECEMBER
The Finishing Touches: Interiors
Product Showcase: Lighting, wall and floor treatments, cabinetry, staircases and elevators, fireplaces, trim

For more information about Builder/Architect magazine, please visit us at builderarchitect.com
When your presentation needs to be the best it can be

314.962.3222

Warwick Photography