



“Preserving the Past while Building the Future.”



Celebrating 127 Years of Service

Economy issues in the news....

Contractors – Sell benefits, not features

It's tough to convince some homeowners to build an addition or to undertake a renovation. Your prospects/customers will buy value when you sell value to them. Also, sell benefits, not features. The feature is the product or service and the components it is made up of. The benefit is what the customer gains (gets out of) the feature. People buy benefits. Every time that you tell a customer about a feature of your product, service, or business, shows them the benefits that they get from that feature.

Consumer Confidence Drops But Better Days on the Horizon

Consumer confidence unexpectedly decreased in May to the lowest level in six months as Americans grew concerned over the outlook for jobs and the economy. Other data showed home prices fell to the lowest level in nine years and manufacturing cooled.

Consumer finances have been squeezed by rising costs of food and fuel and erosion in home equity, causing spending to slow.

“The economy has slipped into a soft patch,” said Michael Feroli, chief U.S. economist at JP Morgan Chase & Co. in New York. “In the second half, we’ll do better than we’ve been doing. As economic activity picks up, the labor market will improve as well.”

(This article was found in the SBMA’s June 15th Management Newsletter)

Small Business Optimism

For the third consecutive month, The National Federation of Independent Business stated that small business optimism index fell. While the drop was slight - .3 points, with the index settling at 90.9 in May – the index makes clear that optimism is moving in the wrong direction: a recession-level reading for an economy fighting its way through a recovery. A leading cause of the low reading is the stubborn problem of weak consumer spending, which is especially problematic for services, a sector dominated by small businesses.

Bankruptcies Among Consumers Down 6%

A sign of less-worse household debt management—consumer bankruptcies are falling. On an absolute basis, the number of bankruptcy filings in the first three months of 2011 was 23,000 less than in the same period in 2010. Calculated Risk’s Bill McBride writes, “It is possible that consumer bankruptcy filings peaked in 2010, but they will probably stay elevated for some time.”

Contractor issues in the news....

Quick Tips to Prepare your Business for a Natural Disaster

Create a backup set of records electronically. You should have copies of bank statements, tax returns and insurance policies. Photograph items of higher value. If you use a payroll service ask the provider if it has a fiduciary bond in place.

If disaster strikes, an affected taxpayer can call 1-866-562-5227 to speak with an IRS specialist trained to handle disaster-related issues. (*Article in July SBMA Management Newsletter*)

EPA Considering Reforms in Lead Testing Requirements

President Obama announced the across the board regulatory initiative earlier this year, asking each agency of the government to establish a process for ongoing reviews of regulations. Each agency was also asked to identify rules and regulations that could be immediately streamlined or eliminated.

The White House officials emphasize that the regulatory reform process will be ongoing, and encourage the public to submit comments on specific regulations and reform efforts at www.whitehouse.gov/regulatoryreform.

Making the Customer Smarter.....

The Richmond Times Dispatch let the customer know ways to get a good contractor in their June 26th article. They should now know to always use a dependable contractor who is licensed (www.dpor.virginia.gov) and someone with good references (at least 3). They also should get at least 3 bids and have a written contract. These are just a few of the tips that were given in this article.

So how can you use this article to your benefit? First, stress you are one of the “Good Guys”. Encourage them to call and check on your contractor’s license. Have a list of references that you can give them. Go over the contract and cost with them. Remember you are the guy that has taken the classes, follows the rules and has a reputable reputation.

Use this article as a way to encourage them to hire you. Not just the cheapest contractor.

DID YOU KNOW?

Pressure treated wood products intended for residential & recreational use is manufactured with waterborne preservatives. The EPA, which evaluates and registers preservatives, has never found any unreasonable risk to human health and the environment in these products.

Earn NARI CEUs Online

Qualified Remodeler and NARI have teamed up to create a convenient way to earn credits toward your NARI recertification. As a NARI Certified Professional, your customers know you are a full-time, dedicated remodeling professional. (www.qualifiedremodeler.com)

Note: Some websites are time sensitive. If you have any problems opening the site or you wish to recommend an idea for a future story contact Lauren Fields at 358-2103 or email laurenf@siewers.com.

New to you....

Azek Decking: The Leader in Decking

Azek Decking is recognized as the #1 brand of stain resistant decking. Hamburger grease and spilled wine or coffees are no match for Azek decks. Some pesticides and suntan lotions may stain Azek decks, but a heat gun can easily remove the stain. Azek now has a tongue & groove porch flooring as well. Other prominent features of Azek Decking:

- * Scratch Resistant
- * Split Resistant
- * Mold & Mildew Resistant
- * Available in 13 Colors
- * Composite handrails available

Quick Contractor Tip

This idea is simple but very handy. It's just a cap from a Sharpie felt-tip pen taped to the side of the glue bottle. The hole in the cap holds a glue brush (both in the middle of glue-ups, and afterward) and the clip provides a handy storage spot for the bottle's little red cap, the one that always seems to get lost. Nick Obermire

How would you like to be published in a future issue of Siewers Newsletter?

Be sure it is a quick tip that can help another contractor and one that is simple to understand ("Even I need to understand it!") It also must be economical to create. Submit your tips to laurenf@siewers.com.



SAVE THE DATE.....Sept. 22, 2011 – 5:00 to 7:30 p.m.

SIEWERS 2011 ARCHITECTURAL PRODUCTS SHOW

Siewers is doing its' part for the environment! We are now recycling paper. Not only do we make our scratch pads out of used paper, we are now putting used paper in a recycling box which in turn goes in our recycling dumpster. We truly understand the need to save a tree. Thanks to Mark Smith for his great "GREEN" suggestion.



Check out the new Siewers Website.....

www.siewers.com



Economy Snap Shot.....

	<u>Unemployment Rate – Entire U.S.</u>	<u>Consumer Confidence (Indexed to value of 100 in 1985)</u>	<u>Total Housing Starts /Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate</u>
June 2011	9.2%	58.5	629,000
Prior Month – May 2011	9.0 %	61.7	549,000
Prior Year – June 2010	9.5%	54.3	539,000
	<u>Gallon (\$) Of Gas</u>	<u>Existing Home Sales (in Millions)</u>	
June 30, 2011	\$3.57	N/A	
Prior Month – May 2011	\$3.79	4.81	
Prior Year – June 2010	\$2.73	5.23	

Market Summary

	<u>July 18, 2011</u>	<u>1/01/11</u>	<u>6/30/10</u>
DOW	12,385	11,577	9,774
NASDAQ	2,765	2,653	2,109
500	1,305	1,257	1,030

Company Mission

To operate and maintain a genuine state-of-the-art lumberyard and mill for Richmond remodelers, with service that is second to none.



“Find a job you like and you add 5 days to every week.” H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

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**Hours:
Monday - Friday
7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**