

February 19, 2015



“Preserving the Past while Building the Future.”



Celebrating 131 Years of Service

A note from the Siewers Family...

Although we are cleaning up (and thawing out) following the “big” snow storm of 2015, we are thinking warmer weather at Siewers Lumber! Looking ahead to our Founder’s Day Celebration, we will host a Deck Expo on Thursday, May 7th. Look for details in the coming months about participating vendors, product knowledge opportunities, demonstrations and of course, the lunch menu. We have also set the date for our Architectural Products Show, October 1st. We will host Architects and Designers during the lunch hour and Contractors during the dinner hour.

In preparation for our Founder’s Day, we will be premiering a new segment in our March Newsletter written by Johnny Siewers. Johnny will share stories and experiences about Siewers Lumber during his 50 plus years with the company. We are very anxious to hear what bits of history he will share each month!

Finally, we wanted to thank all of you for your words of sympathy following the passing of Mary Ann Siewers, wife of Big Fred. She loved her extended family at Siewers Lumber and always looked forward to coming to the Architectural Products Show to catch up with all of you! Your kind words and prayers have comforted all of us during this difficult time.

-The Siewers Family

February 19, 2015

Contractor News

Business Etiquette Still Matters in a Casual New Business World by Barry Moltz

In recent years, business has become very casual. However, business etiquette still matters and can be a competitive advantage for you.

ATTIRE: How you look still matters. Appropriate attire choices also must be made for video chats. Keep a clean collared shirt in your vehicle for those one on one first meetings. **NOTE:** When it is not a planned meeting but the customer needs to see you without a previous appointment, explain that you are coming from a job.

WRITING: Since so much of communication is done in a short, informal manner, there is greater chance of miscommunication. Being able to write effective email communications is still an important skill and requires increased practice.

SOCIAL NETWORKING: Many small business owners have separate social media sites for business and personal use. However, their brand image on both sites needs to be consistent since customers will do a Web search that will cover all of them. Personal and professional lives can no longer be practically separated.

The Growing Popularity of Special-Function Rooms in Home Design

American Institute of Architects December 2014

As reflected in the graphic below, households are responding to the ongoing housing market recovery by continuing to add more space and special function rooms, which often disappeared during the economic downturn. Home automation features, as well as products that promote sustainability, are also reported to be gaining in interest.

% of respondents reporting popularity "increasing" minus % reporting 'decreasing'

	2014	2013	2012
Outdoor Living Areas	63	61	49
Home Offices	38	36	36
Mud Rooms	37	44	33
Exercise/Fitness Rooms	8	0	-15
Au-Pair/In-law Suites	39	26	n/a
Storm Rooms/Safe Rooms	6	7	-15

Business Conditions by Major Construction Sector *American Institute of Architects*

Business conditions at residential architecture firms began to accelerate in early 2013 and have remained at an elevated pace, according to the latest survey conducted by the American Institute of Architects. Various sectors of the market, however, have recovered unevenly. As reflected in the graphic below, the major home improvement sectors, including kitchen and bath remodels, have been improving consistently since early 2009, while new-construction sectors, including the townhouse/condo market and second/vacation homes, have been slower to recover.

February 19, 2015

% of Survey Respondents Reporting Sector 'Improving' Minus % Reporting 'Weakening'

	2014	2013
Additions & Alterations	70	64
Kitchen & Bath Remodeling	60	61
First-time Buyer/Affordable Home Market	17	15
Move-up Homes	33	35
Custom/Luxury Home Market	36	25
Townhouse/Condo Market	18	13
Second/Vacation Home	2	-8

Breaking Past \$1M at Your Remodeling Business: The Set Up By Shawn McCadden

Note: This is the first article in a series of articles written specifically for remodelers who want to successfully break past doing \$1M/year in installed sales.

As a remodeling business seeks to **grow past the \$1million a year threshold**, things can be very difficult for most business owners. Taking the jump can even be fatal for the business. I call it the **“Take-Off Stage”** because either the business takes off successfully, or it doesn’t.

In February this year **Mark Paskell** from the Contractor Coaching Partnership and I will be offering a **Construction Business Owner Education and Peer Group Program** created specifically for remodeling business owners looking for help making the \$1M jump. We purposely decided to target this volume demographic of contractors. **It’s the best time to introduce the structural and behavioral changes the business and the owner will both need to make.**



COMING IN FEB 2015

Construction Business Owner Education & Peer Group Program

Click Here to Learn More

Home Remodeling Growth Likely to Slow in 2015

Annual growth in big-ticket home improvement spending will decelerate to 1.6% by the third quarter of 2015 from 6.3% in the first quarter, says the latest Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity (LIRA) report from Joint Center for Housing Studies (JCHS) of Harvard University.

“Due in part to weakening home sales last year, growth in remodeling spending is expected to deflate somewhat in 2015,” says Chris Hebert, Managing Director of Joint Center. “Homeownership rates continue to slide as lending remains tight and first-time homebuyers are not yet returning to the market.”

The LIRA report focuses on home improvements that cost at least \$500. This also excludes spending on minor maintenance projects as well as all spending by landlords on their rental properties.

February 19, 2015

Website Helps Builders Comply with Environmental Rules

Construction contractors will have an easier time learning how to comply with federal and state environmental guidelines thanks to a new partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the private sector. <http://www.cicacenter.org>

Wolf Pro Road Show by Richie Siewers

During January, Wolf Decking provided training for 18 contractors on proper decking installation techniques and best practices within the decking industry. Upon completion of the training, the contractors were able to register with Wolf Pro and begin receiving the benefits of the Wolf Pro Program. <http://wolfhomeproducts.com/wolf-pro/>



Quick Contractor Tip

Baluster Spraying and Drying Rack by Anthony D'Agostino

Balusters present all kinds of challenges; the most frustrating was finishing and drying.

Take a sheet of 1" thick XPS foam insulation (Styrofoam), and use a hole saw to cut snug sockets for the turned tenons on the ends of each baluster. Then paint the balusters in the foam, spray on the finish and let them dry in place.

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 us at laurenf@siewers.com.

February 19, 2015

Feel Lucky!

Be sure and bring your business card next time you visit Siewers. Just drop it into the glass fish bowl on the counter to enter a monthly drawing. Good Luck!!!

Congratulations to *Richard Brown* our February winner!

NOTICE WHAT'S NEW

New in our Financial Page will be the National Average Mortgage Rates from Freddie Mac.



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>
January 2015	5.7%	102.9	1,065,000
Prior Month – December 2014	5.6%	93.1	1,087,000
Prior Year – January 2014	6.6%	79.4	897,000

	<u>Gallon (\$) Of Gas</u>	<u>Existing Home Sales</u>	<u>National Avg. Mortgage Rate</u>
January 31, 2015	\$2.05	N/A	3.66
Prior Month – Dec. 2014	\$2.29	5,040,000	3.86
Prior Year – January 2014	\$3.28	4,620,000	4.43

Market Summary

	<u>Feb. 18, 2015</u>	<u>1/01/15</u>	<u>1/31/14</u>
DOW	18,047	17,823	15,693
NASDAQ	4,899	4,736	4,103
S&P 500	2,100	2,058	1,782

February 19, 2015

Long & Foster Market Minute / January 2015

New Listings 2,084	Current Contracts 1,461	Sold Vs. List Price 97.7%	Months of Supply 7.4
Median Sales Price \$188,000		Days on Market 72	

Company Mission

To serve the needs of contractors and do-it-yourselfers.



“All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.” Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Siewers Lumber & Millwork
1901 Ellen Road
Richmond, VA 23230**

**Visit our website for product and general information.
www.siewers.com**

Phone: (804) 358-2103 Fax: (804) 359-6986

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

Share with others.

***If you know someone that would like to receive our
“Siewers Newsletter”, have them email us at
laurenf@siewers.com and we will add them to our
distribution list.***

....Next issue March 18th