
Letters



Marketing Inventions

To the Editor:

My letter is in response to your article entitled "Carpenters of Invention," (JLC, 1/90). I framed the cartoon of the article and hung it on the wall next to my patent document.

I too am a professional carpenter with a labor saving invention that I now have a patent on. My progress, though, has stalled. I do not have the time to manufacture and market like the inventors featured in your article. Perhaps you or a company who might have responded to your article might be of some help.

How can the "carpenters of invention" be connected with the companies that are willing to manufacture and market these new products that the industry desperately needs to progress?

Maybe I should ask for space from you to simply advertise my product not for retail customers but for a suitable manufacturer? What is your suggestion? Any assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Jon Bailey
Cincinnati, Ohio

We turned this query over to Gregory Mof-fitt, who is president of Jamsill, Inc., and one of the builders featured in "Carpenters of Invention." Here's what he had to say:

"My feeling is that there is no simple way to connect with companies to market a product.

"Manufacturers will not usually take on new ideas and market and produce them, until they are certain of a good return on their investment. Taking on a new product usually means expensive market studies and tooling and production costs, which can add up to a great deal of money.

"You will find that making your 'better mousetrap' more attractive to companies who could produce and market it will mean creating a demand for your idea. Your invention is a building-related product. I suggest that going directly to builders and conventions where products are exhibited would be a good way to start. If your new

idea is viable you will immediately see a favorable response. These builder conventions draw people who can help and will also give you an idea if your new product warrants more of your efforts. It can be worth it. Good luck!"—The Editors

Panelizers Shortchanged

To the Editor:

The article "Fast and Accurate Framing the Panelized Way" (JLC, 2/90) was of much interest to me, being a remodeler as well as a dealer for Harvest Homes, a panelized building company.

I feel as though Harvest Homes and our company, Gregory Folk General Contracting, Inc., have been misrepresented by the quality and quantity of panelized builders that you chose to feature in the article.

As for quality, our homes too are built with premium lumber, but we also use real plywood, not flakeboard and Homesote, for flooring, decks, wall, and roof sheathing. Also, our homes come with Crestline windows and Peachtree exterior doors which can be upgraded to just about any brand of the buyer's choice.

As for the quantity of references, the article leads me to believe you used just one source on which to base your article. Your source says it takes 2-1/2 days to frame the house. Our homes are erected in just one day. This includes two floors, exterior and interior walls, and roof system, installed and sheathed.

In my opinion, by not researching enough panelized builders, the writer did a great injustice to your readership as well as other companies in the panelization industry.

James A. Schools
Production Supervisor
Gregory Folk General Contracting Inc.
Setauket, N.Y.

The article follows one company because it is a case study intended to shed some light on how panelizing works in a particular

instance, from sale through design to construction. From a case study, builders can learn what potential a technique might hold for their own business. By the way, the panel manufacturer in our article will sheathe to a builder's specs—as the article states.—The Editors

Factory-Built Foe

To the Editor:

I am writing in response to the letter from Orjan Isacson (Letters, 1/90).

I own and operate a building and remodeling contracting business in Glassboro, New Jersey. We are typical second-generation building contractors. So of course, we are going to resist any type of factory-built, modular, component, or truss-system types of buildings. I do not believe these systems on a whole are good for a truly free economy. They threaten our way of life. They threaten the need for skilled site carpenters, electricians, plumbers, and drywall people. In the end, home-town general contractors would simply slip into being sales reps for these types of factories with a small, lesser-skilled installation crew. I can guarantee you that I will use the best on-site crews, equipment, and tradespeople to give factory-built housing a run for its money.

Just as with Swedish housing, reputation is everything and in Gloucester County we are among the finest. So, let's just compete with each other, and [stay away from] factory-built technology.

David Dougherty
Glassboro, N.J.

Clarifications & Corrections

Only a test: In "Nontoxic Alternative to CCA," a story about borate wood preservatives (Eight-Penny News, 2/90), the work "test" should have been used in

describing the borate-treated deck in New Hampshire. The deck is one of many outdoor test projects designed to gauge the leaching effects of rain, snow, and groundwater on borate-treated lumber. Borate-treated lumber is not yet recommended for such uses.

Scientists are also testing borate to see how well it penetrates different species of wood, and how that penetration varies with moisture content. Research and field tests show that many species of green wood immersed in borate achieve full cross-grain protection as the borate diffuses into the heartwood. Kiln-dried lumber can be pressure-treated to achieve the same results. The penetration characteristics of brushed-on and sprayed-on borate compounds on kiln-dried wood is not as yet well documented.

Phone mix-up: In the feature article, "Pre-Fab Products for Site-Built Homes," (JLC, 2/90), the phone number for InstaArch is incorrect. The correct number is 203/281-3270.

A better buy: In Builders' Library, 1/90, the price of the Builder's Bid Booklet was incorrectly listed at \$35. It is \$19.95. Order Builder's Bid Booklet from Tools of the Trade, P.O. Box 1216, Camino CA 95709. ■



Keep 'em coming... We welcome letters, but they must be signed and include the writer's address. The Journal of Light Construction reserves the right to edit for grammar, length, and clarity. Mail letters to The Journal, RR2, Box 146, Richmond, VT 05477.