

PARKER CHRONICLE

Business

DirectBuild a homebuyer's wholesale option

By Rhonda Moore, Staff Writer

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Courtesy Photo

DirectBuild is familiar with building departments across the metro area and can identify potential inspection problems in most jurisdictions before it creates a delay in the project.

While analysts point to the soft housing market as a forerunner to a predicted recession, one construction company is seeing sales increase with an option ripe for homeowners who want the biggest bang for their buck.

Michael New is the founder of the Parker-based company DirectBuild, which provides general contractor direction at wholesale prices. DirectBuild offers future homeowners nearly 20 years of experience in custom home construction on do-it-yourself projects, with access to a team of qualified subcontractors and reliable vendors at builder-direct prices.

The DirectBuild option guides clients through projects from a simple remodel to a turnkey custom home, with many customers seeing final discounts as high as 15 percent.

On a house worth \$500,000, those discounts can add up quickly.

"Building a home is a very fun process. It's nice to be able to look at what you've accomplished, and with DirectBuild behind you, anybody can do this," New said. "We have the expertise and guidance to help clients throughout the entire process. If you're looking to save some money and get into the home you're looking for, this is the way to do it."

The way to do it begins with a set of blueprints, provided either by the customer or available from DirectBuild inventory. DirectBuild consultants work with clients from the design stage forward, with a proprietary red line check list to ensure on-site plans match the client's design standards.

Along with the plans comes a line-item budget to establish the cost of the project up front. The budget lets the client know exactly what will be spent before the project breaks ground. DirectBuild provides clients access to its preferred pricing through its prescreened list of subcontractors and suppliers.

The preferred pricing is where clients see how they can begin to save money through DirectBuild, New said. Clients get the benefit of the best prices through the company's references and can be assured the subcontractors are reputable, will show up on schedule and will stand behind their work. DirectBuild clients get the benefit of all workman and manufacturer warranties, which come standard on new construction, New said.

And at a time when the market conditions have triggered a bidding war among subcontractors, the DirectBuild contact lists are invaluable, New said.

"There are a lot of subcontractors out there willing to take any work they can get and it's important to have somebody on your side," he said. "When a market is soft, you don't want to be overpaying for things. Getting our buying power is very important. Clients are coming out of the woodwork trying to take advantage of good pricing as much as possible. There is simply no better time than right now in a down market. You're never going to get prices like this again."

Once the design and cost estimates are complete, DirectBuild guides clients through startup of the project, providing a construction schedule complete with target dates for required inspections and 25 on-site consultations from a DirectBuild consultant.

Rather than having daily site supervision from a general contractor, the client makes regular visits to the job site, resulting in the greatest overall construction discount.

While an on-site DirectBuild supervisor is available at an additional cost, the savings from client-based site supervision is more than 10 percent on any given project, New said.

"We provide everything a general contractor provides, minus the daily project supervision," New said. "We make predetermined visits throughout construction at what I consider to be the most important times to visit the site. We don't allow you to get too far ahead on construction so we can identify a problem before it becomes a problem."

To prepare the house for inspection and ensure the client is on target to hit the critical deadlines, most of the on-site consultations from DirectBuild occur before the framing inspection. DirectBuild is familiar with building departments in Douglas County and throughout the metro area and can identify a potential inspection problem in most jurisdictions before it creates a cumbersome project delay.

Most clients can expect to spend up to 15 hours a week on site for the first three months of construction, 20-25 hours a week the second three months and 15 hours a week for the final few months. A typical house takes from eight to 10 months from start to finish.

The DirectBuild concept has taken off in recent months, with an outpouring of interest sufficient to launch a franchising arm and support operations in Florida, California and five offices in Colorado.

"A home is not only a person's most personal investment, but it's also their largest investment," New said. "They want to put their mark on it and stand back and have pride of accomplishment, to be able to say they contributed and put their mark on it."

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