

CUSTOMER SUCCESS PROFILE



HOME BUILDERS
& CONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATION OF
BREVARD



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- Travis Herring, director of membership
HBCA of Brevard

OVERVIEW

The Home Builders & Contractors Association (HBCA) of Brevard is a champion of affordable home ownership throughout Central Florida. Employing a staff of five professionals, the association provides networking opportunities for its membership of nearly 800 builders and contractors, and addresses their ongoing business concerns as the chief advocate of the home building industry in the area. The HBCA of Brevard also affords its members the opportunity to take part in a large and successful annual Parade of Homes event, which highlights the beauty and craftsmanship of association members’ homes and products.

CHALLENGE

According to Travis Herring, the HBCA of Brevard’s director of membership, prior to deploying BuilderFusion, association staff maintained three separate internal data systems: QuickBooks, for general bookkeeping and finances; Microsoft Excel, for basic tracking of member communications; and HAMMERS, a privately marketed Microsoft Access-based database meant to handle member payments and invoicing, as well as manage member registration for events and tournaments. Lack of integration among these systems created a lot of redundant manual data entry, which was a constant drain on staff resources.

Beyond this lack of integration, using HAMMERS as its primary member management tool presented a number of challenges. From the outset, the HBCA of Brevard’s staff felt they never received the training they needed. To get that training, HAMMERS required staff members to visit its company headquarters in North Carolina or a regional training event; but the trip proved too costly for the HBCA. A disappointing “lack of responsiveness” to customer feedback, such as suggested fixes and enhancements, also left much to be desired, according to Herring.

“Every time I made a request – a request based not only on my association’s immediate needs but one that would improve the software in general – I was told I would have to wait,” he said. Needless to say, the waits became many and long, with few requests ever being reflected in the software.

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SUCCESS AT A GLANCE

- ⌘ Dramatically simplified the process of creating and updating member records
- ⌘ One click to see all unpaid invoices
- ⌘ Intuitive interface makes BuilderFusion useful to every staff member
- ⌘ Customer support that has been “astounding”

CHALLENGE CONT.

Managing finances within HAMMERS was also difficult, particularly when attempting to process partial member payments. Because proper training wasn't readily available, invoices were entered incorrectly for many months. In turn, the HAMMERS system mistakenly categorized the date of payment, resulting in partially paid invoices that were labeled as unpaid. This situation led to frequent confusion and mounting frustration among both association staff and members. According to Herring, “I had to track down individual invoice numbers and then re-enter them to correct the dates, so we knew what members had paid, how much and when they had paid. Talk about tedious.”

BUILDERFUSION SOLUTION

Largely the result of his staff's growing disappointment and tangible frustration with HAMMERS, Franck Kaiser, the executive officer of the HBCA of Brevard, started to evaluate other technologies – hopeful that one might provide a better solution to his association's needs. Having had a brief introduction to the BuilderFusion system, and seeing the rapid growth of the product among HBAs nationwide, he asked BuilderFusion President Craig Weston to make a personal visit to Florida to pitch the technology to him and his staff. Quite pleased with what they saw – in Herring's words, “blown away” – the association adopted BuilderFusion in early 2005.

RESULTS

The decision to deploy BuilderFusion proved to be a big step forward for the HBCA of Brevard. Not only has the product dramatically simplified the process of creating and updating member records, but the partial payment fiasco, Herring's particular pain point, has been addressed. “Now all I have to do is hit one button and all unpaid invoices pop up,” he said.

In addition, the staff at the HBCA of Brevard has found the BuilderFusion system to be incredibly intuitive, making it a useful tool for everyone in the office – from the membership director to the office manager to the special events coordinator. Also helpful is BuilderFusion's powerful reporting engine, which allows association staff to generate virtually any membership report they want to see.

But perhaps most valuable is the level of customer service provided by the BuilderFusion support staff – service that “truly has been exceptional” and stands in stark contrast to the association's earlier experience with HAMMERS. Herring said, “Every time I ask, BuilderFusion's support staff answers my questions, listening to what I have to say and subsequently making the necessary changes in the software, often within a day and sometimes even within the hour. Truly, the technical support has been better than good, it has been astounding. I don't think I've ever encountered a company, let alone a technology firm, that puts the interests of its customers first, incorporating feedback quickly and thus improving the product greatly. They never make me feel like I'm bothering them and that fact alone speaks for itself.”