

A CONSTRUCTION PERSPECTIVE



Louie Morizio, centre, with Austrian homebuilder delegates.

Like any company in an industry with plenty of competitors, Geranium Homes is constantly thinking about ways to stay current. We need to adapt to new technologies, embrace advances in construction practices, adjust to our customers' expectations and ensure we deliver homes of lasting value. In our organization we depend a lot on the construction team to assist us in accomplishing this.

Louie Morizio heads up the construction team for Geranium Homes. He is a graduate of University of Toronto's Civil Engineering program, and has spent almost 30 years in the building industry. He believes that technological innovation has had the greatest impact on the new home

industry during his career. "The improvement in materials, tools, equipment, construction methods and better qualified trades people, all affect the speed and efficiency of how we build. New ideas and technologies about how to build better homes have influenced the way we build, and how we design our homes," says Morizio.

"Technology allows us to be streamlined in all aspects of our business. The likelihood of administrative errors that occur by duplication is reduced because of improved communication throughout the process. Today, we benefit from better turnaround time for pricing from trades, scheduling and more immediate updates from suppliers. On construction sites, our staff uses handheld devices to note items that require attention during construction, and to record service items following pre-delivery inspections. Access to digital tablets equates to faster distribution of items noted for service, and

helps to gain a quicker response from our various trades to ensure that we meet our buyers' expectations."

Geranium is one of the first new home builders to complete construction and to certify homes in 2012 under the new ENERGY STAR® performance standards. "Since 2009, we've been committed to building all our homes to ENERGY STAR for New Homes requirements. We do this because we believe in building a home that can provide up to 20 per cent energy savings and offers healthy living for homeowners," says Morizio. "It isn't easy to accomplish, and we rely heavily on our sub-trades and our site staff to do the job right. We invest the time in training each and every person who is going to help us achieve this best-in-class standard."

Morizio's advice for those who are looking to buy a new home, is to first check the builder's after sales service record, and their overall reputation. He also suggests finding out how many repeat buyers the builder has. "If a person is willing to buy a second or third home from the same builder, they must be happy with their choice," says Morizio. He also points out that the materials used on the outside of a home have a direct bearing on its lasting quality. "There are many products now available that require little to no annual maintenance. Over the long run, this saves homeowners both time and money."

Louie and I agree that buying a house is the biggest investment that you will most likely make during your lifetime. There are many variables to take into account, and it's important to choose wisely. ■

Boaz Feiner is President, Housing Division for Geranium Corporation.

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