

Divide & Conquer

Creating separate brands for design/build and handyman services

WHEN PENNSYLVANIA remodeler Craig Postlewait launched a full-service and a handyman company in 2010, he created two separate entities — each with its own brand. The industry veteran's idea with Pendulum Solutions Design/Build and Post Haste Handyman is to reach different segments of the market.

“People who want a big addition won't call a handyman, and people who want a handyman won't call a design/build company,” Postlewait says. However, when he meets with clients, he presents both companies.

In most cases, Postlewait says, it's the handyman side that gives him an opportunity to promote the design/build division. Handyman jobs provide the opportunity to meet personally with a homeowner, and then a crew visits the house to complete the service. This

way, “people get to know who we are,” Postlewait says. Though he doesn't try to upsell handyman clients, making them aware of the design/build division has led to larger projects.

Even if he uses a promotional special for the handyman market and doesn't make money on the first handyman service for clients, it's an effective marketing tool. That's why Postlewait personally meets with each handyman client and gives them both of his company cards.

20%
of Post Haste Handyman jobs lead to larger Pendulum Solutions Design/Build projects

Recently, he almost sent one of his crew on a sales call instead of going himself, but the office manager reminded Postlewait about his vow to do all handyman sales calls. It paid off: After completing the handyman job, Pendulum built the client a \$45,000 deck. “We wouldn't have had the opportunity if I hadn't gone,” the owner says. “My guys



For Pendulum Solutions Design Build, owner Craig Postlewait wanted a logo that was elegant, refined, and a little more formal. To strike a lighter, more informal note with Post Haste Handyman, he opted to use a fun character for the logo.

would have done a good job, but the client wouldn't have considered us for the deck.”

Postlewait spends 20 to 30 minutes with handyman clients, versus one to two hours for design/build consultations. For efficient scheduling, he groups together handyman appointments in a specific area, usually completing four calls in a half-day, and he recently started using Salesforce software to better manage leads and appointments. —Nina Patel



Efficiency Expert
A drawer in Matt Wright's truck holds useful items to cut down on hardware store trips.

Roving Remodeler

Taking your office and warehouse on the road

SINCE 2008 WHEN he opened HomeWright, in Carmel, Ind., Matt Wright has stayed busy, increasing sales each year, including a jump from \$475,000 in 2010 to \$640,000 in 2011.

Though excited about this growth, he has been reluctant to hire employees due to economic uncertainty. Instead, Wright — a remodeling company of one — wears many hats, handling sales and design and supervising subcontractors.

With crews of subs working on two to three projects at

a time, Wright depends on a mobile office and warehouse to make the most of his time. Being highly organized is key to the success of his business, so he's had to work on improving his time management skills.

Wright might spend a week on site during a crucial period of a job when subs are likely to have questions. He sets up his laptop in an area of the house and asks clients if he can use their wireless network. “[That way] I can answer questions on the spot, optimize my time,

and stay mobile,” he says.

With his laptop and phone, Wright can work on pricing, design, and correspondence for other projects. If he sends email on his iPhone, he blind copies himself so that he has a record of the interaction on his computer.

In addition to a mobile office, Wright relies on his mobile warehouse — a truck stocked with common items. “A guy like me, with no employees — that's the only way I can make it work,” he says. —Nina Patel

Photo: courtesy HomeWright