



BY JIM CORY

Remodeling is a complex industry. Contractors who provide remodeling services number 530,200, according to tabulations by the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. The Joint Center divides that number into 320,100 specialty trade firms and 210,100 general contractors. A handful are large, generating millions or even tens of millions of dollars in sales each year. Most are small, often sole-proprietor companies invisible outside their markets.

The diversity in the home improvement universe is enormous, ranging from operations that offer a full complement of services including design and construction to handyman companies whose business focus is the quick repair. And then there are the many home improvement companies that specialize in one or several types of jobs and are organized to

do large numbers of those jobs in a year. That business model sharply contrasts with the full-service remodelers who, at least before the current economic downturn, were often set up to do multiple trade jobs, such as additions or whole-house remodels, which typically ran to five or six figures.

The Remodeling 550, our first list of home improvement companies since we published the Remodeling 1,000 in the 1990s, takes into account the diversity of these types by grouping companies into four major categories: full-service, replacement or specialty, insurance restoration, and franchise.

Except in the case of national franchise organizations, they're ranked by volume. (Franchises are grouped by product/service offering and are ranked within the group by number of franchise members.) The list will be an annual feature of the magazine.

Remodeling 550 Full-Service Remodelers

Whether design/build or working with outside architects, whether focusing on historic restoration or a particular type of room (kitchens, baths, additions), full-service remodeling companies are almost always local, one-branch operations that rely to a large extent on referrals and repeat business, as well as their reputation, to keep crews busy.

The term "full-service" does double duty: not only are such remodelers often responsible for all aspects of a job, but their ability to bring in new business depends to a large extent on having highly satisfied customers. Their reputation *is* the brand.

Full-service remodelers are residential general contractors. The largest, when times

were more flush, tended to take on big projects such as whole-house or multi-room remodels, additions, or gut-and-pull kitchen or bath jobs. These days that's evolving, as six-figure projects are more scarce and many companies will take whatever type of work comes their way in an effort to sustain cash flow through a downturn.

	COMPANY NAME	LOCATION	2008 REVENUE	NO. OF JOBS	AVG. JOB SIZE	2009 REVENUE ^P	TYPE OF WORK
1	BOWA Builders	McLean, Va.	\$26,477,000	35	\$756,486	\$22,326,000	wh-kb-a-bt-ir
2	Neil Kelly Co.	Portland, Ore.	24,814,021	958	25,902	17,045,000	wh-kb-a-r-w-s-bt-ir-cl
3	Normandy Builders	Hinsdale, Ill.	23,000,000	191	120,419	16,000,000	wh-kb-a-w-s-bt
4	Marrokal Design & Remodeling	San Diego	17,712,596	76	233,060	13,500,000	wh-kb-a
5	Crawford Renovation	Houston	16,500,000	52	31,731	18,500,000	wh-kb-a
6	Benvenuti and Stein	Evanston, Ill.	12,475,000	116	107,543	10,500,000	wh-kb-a-r-w-s-bt
7	Lars Construction	La Mesa, Calif.	11,589,296	70	165,561	9,549,670	wh-kb-a-w
8	Mosby Building Arts	St. Louis	10,551,015	238	44,332	9,000,000	wh-kb-a-r-w-s-bt-cl
9	Legacy Custom Building & Remodeling	Scottsdale, Ariz.	10,157,460	50	203,149	5,725,000	wh-kb-a
10	Harrell Remodeling	Mountain View, Calif.	10,155,797	79	128,554	6,500,000	wh-kb-a-w-s-bt