

Version 5 - 01/15/2009

**Green Builders
FOCUS GROUP
January 22, 2009
Las Vegas, NV**

**MODERATOR DISCUSSION GUIDE
Green Builders**

I. WELCOME/PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION/INTRODUCTIONS: 00 to :20

Brief explanation of purpose of discussion: “Green” is becoming more and more of a factor in the decision making process of what a builder chooses to specify for their homes. This discussion will be to understand what you perceive as Green products based on either the application of the product in the field or the materials used to create the product, or both.

A. Explanation of process:

1. No right/wrong answers. Honest opinions encouraged
2. Room environment: Audio / video taping/mirror/observers
3. Privacy note – May be published

B. Respondent introductions: (Write answers on pads)

(NOTE - This is a warm up session – some limited probing here)

Builder
1. First Name Only
2. Position
3. Years in the Business
4. Home City / State
5. Is this “Green” construction movement a bunch of malarkey or is it real?
6. What percentage of all products you use in your homes would be considered Green products?
7. Are your clients asking for “Green” construction / “Green” materials?

II. GREEN PRODUCTS AND USE: 20 to 1:00

- A.** What makes a product “Green” in your opinion? Moderator lists on boards and then has participants rank independently on sheets in front of them. Moderator discusses and posts top 2 for group – Full ranking will be in report.
- B.** So how do I know if a vinyl, fiberglass or vinyl clad wood window is the most green? Write them on your pads from most green to least green. Probe.
- C.** Again, so what is more green – a 2 x 10 joist, a Truss Joist, or a steel beam? Write on pads and probe.
- D.** So is it the material formulation that makes a product “Green,” or is it the efficacy of the product in use? Or is it both?
- E.** Can anyone tell me about the NAHB program for Green Building? Do builders and manufacturers get what it means and understand it?
- F.** Can anyone tell me about the LEED program for residential construction? Do builders and manufacturers get what it means and understand it?
- G.** Has anyone built a “Green” house according to NAHB or LEED?
- H.** So let’s talk about Energy Star for a moment, do you look at doors and windows as far as energy efficiency in terms of energy star ratings or are you actually looking at performance systems and dp ratings, etc.?
- I.** Going down that same road, what specifically do you look for in door and window attributes as far as “Green?” What brands do you identify with those characteristics?
- J.** Do you think your clients are less likely to see the products you build with as “Green” because there are not specific, detailed standards as with some product categories touting they are “Green?” Which product categories does this apply to in particular?
- K.** Do you ever vet a manufacturer’s claim about being “Green?”
- L.** When you use “Green” products your clients can’t see as part of your construction, do you make them aware of their use?
- M.** Let’s take a specific example of a product that is said to be “Greener” than 20 years ago – treated lumber. Do you believe it is “Green;” and do you tell your clients about its being “Green?”
- N.** Of all the manufacturer’s brands of products you use – Please write down on your pads the “Greenest” and the “Second Greenest” product manufacturers. Also put a short reason as to why you chose them by their name. Discuss

BREAK – 1:00 to ~1:05

Moderator will briefly visit back room and take any further questions from sponsors relative to anything any participant has already stated in the first part of the session for clarification.

III. GREEN PRODUCTS TODAY: 1:05 to 1:30

- A.** Which product categories are the most “Green” today as far as you are concerned? Least “Green?”
- B.** Which product categories are the most “Green” today as far as your clients are concerned? Least “Green?”
- C.** In today’s economy, are “Green” / sustainable products and / or features taking a back seat in perceived value with your clients? Do they care about the issue?
- D.** Does anyone have an expectation of building products price decreases with lower fuel prices, inventory gluts and a slower market? Will this make “Green” products seem even higher in price?
- E.** Do you generally wait for your lumberyard, pro-dealer or other supplier in a category to propose and offer you new “Green” products or do you actively make them aware of new products they should consider carrying?
- F.** Where do you obtain most of your product information? Moderator to list on board. Discuss. Participants rank on pads.
- G.** Now I want you to list where you get your most “Green Product” information. Moderator list on board. Participants list on pads.
- H.** Is Green technical support from either suppliers or manufacturers easy to obtain? How do you obtain this information most often?
- I.** Is it true or not true higher performance products come with higher initial costs? Are clients willing to pay these higher upfront costs for a possible / probable lower cost future benefit? Do they understand the concept?
- J.** Is it ever possible to immediately downsize HVAC system designs with higher benefit rated fenestration and other “Green” products?
- K.** Has the “Green” movement lent itself to starting other product suppliers / distributors in specialties that you were not aware of 5 years ago? Can you name any categories?

III. GREEN PRODUCTS TODAY: 1:05 to 1:30 - Continued

- L. Have traditional distributors expanded their “Green” offer to help you directly or help your dealer support your “Green” product needs?”
- M. Is there a higher or lower value perception of the need for wholesalers and distributors in this type of market? Save on distribution costs to dealers? By local kind of thinking?
- N. With more and more local suppliers and chains in certain markets closing their doors, how has this affected your purchasing habits?

IV. GREEN MARKETING: 1:30 to 1:50

- A. Is green building a part of your future strategy to enhance your business? How?
- B. Do association endorsements of “Green” products prove useful to your selling strategy?
- C. Do the efforts of NAHB and / or LEED marketing “Green” programs help you sell?
- D. Is the consumer numb to “Green?” OR do they perceive every category a part of “Green Wash?”
- E. When you build with “Green Products” can you command an up-charge to your client and get it?
- F. Does anyone offer an add-on package called – “The Green Package?” Specifically what items or categories are included? Is it a good idea?
- G. Have manufacturers begun to pull back on model home, spiff and rebate programs or increased them in these times? Have they used a “Green Theme?”
- H. Some of you may be also involved in remodeling - Do you think the “Emergency Stabilization Act” of 2008 that extends tax credits for energy efficient home improvement will have a significant, positive impact on consumers who may be apprehensive to put money into home improvements based on the current financial situation? Has anyone brought it up to you when you leave a room or a future addition to be built?

V. WRAP UP : 1:50 to 2:00 -

- A. Does anyone have anything else to add to anything we have already discussed? Have we missed anything you consider important on the topic of Green Building? **Probes / Discuss**

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