

Normerica

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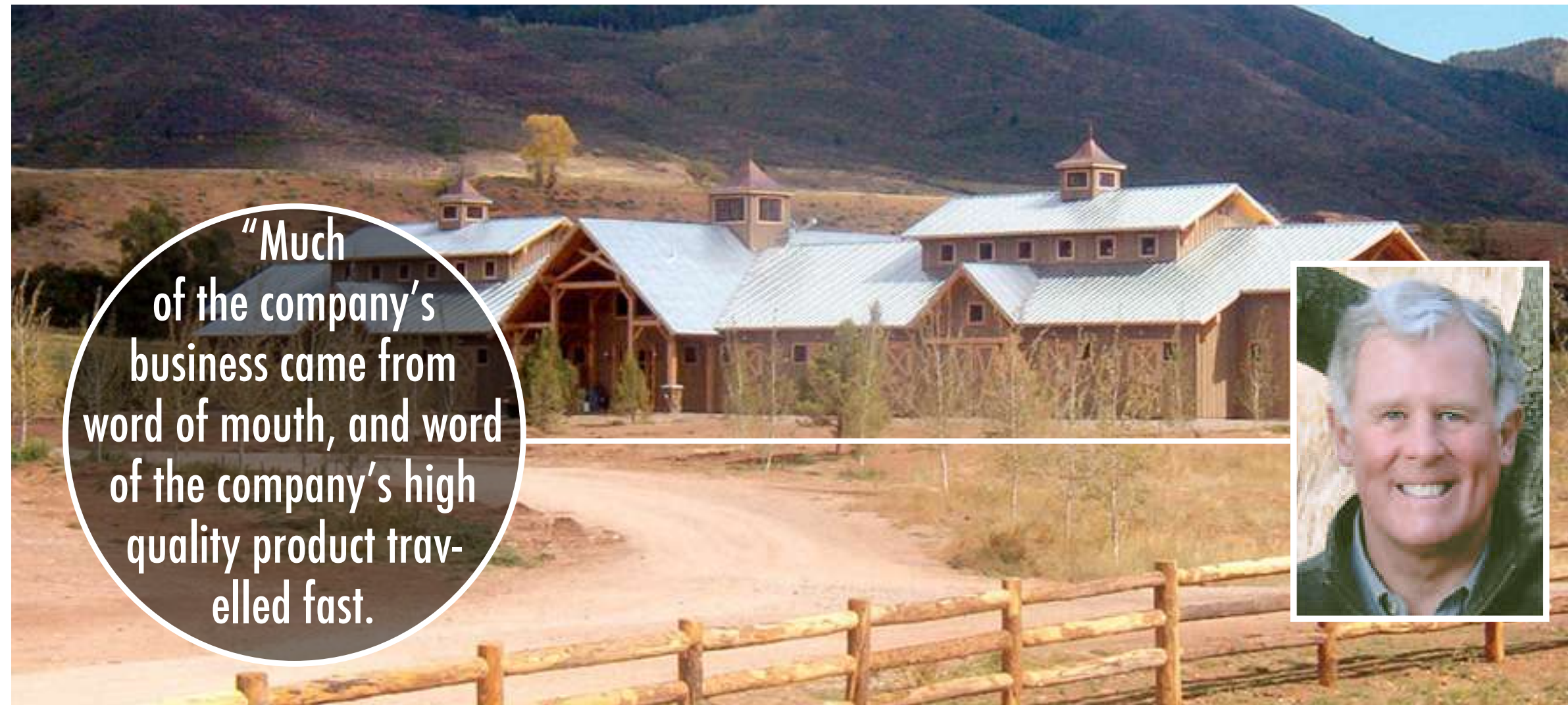
The Art of Creating a Custom Home



BUILDING A HOME is a tradition in Canada that has evolved into an art. Normerica, Canada's foremost timber frame structure builder has set the standard for these types of buildings, winning business around the world.

Started in 1979, Normerica was launched by current President David McFarlane. McFarlane had a passion for the building industry, coming out of post-secondary education with the drive to have his own business. "After working for a few larger home builders in Ontario, I set about creating a niche business manufacturing and building post and beam homes after seeing a gap in the market," McFarlane recalls. "There were no other companies in Ontario serving this niche at the time, meaning that Upper Canada Post and Beam [what we were known as at the time] had no competition locally." McFarlane had originally travelled to the U.S. to meet with a timber builder, to discuss the possibility of becoming a dealer in Canada for the company. But when the company declined his offer, the opportunity presented itself—and his company was born.

Normerica offers state-of-the-art design engineering along with traditional handcrafted quality—something discerning homebuyers appreciate in Canadian markets, as well as international markets. The company has completed thousands of projects, each



evoking its own individual owner's visions. In the first year of business, Normerica sold and built six homes. "It was uphill from there," McFarlane reflects. Much of the company's business came from word of mouth, and word of the company's high quality product travelled fast.

COMMERCIAL

The company considers residential building its "bread and butter" says McFarlane. However, Normerica has completed many commercial

buildings. The company's first commercial project was the architectural, structural design, manufacture and construction of the Mimico Yacht Club in Toronto. The 6,500 square foot timber frame yacht club was constructed in 1985. It overlooks Lake Ontario and offers a spectacular view of Toronto's cityscape including the CN Tower and Rogers Centre.

Normerica has built other notable and interesting commercial projects as well, including a funeral home, ranches in travel destinations across the globe, and even a recreation complex

in Buenos Aires Argentina. The Club de Campo Gran Bell is the showpiece and focal point of a residential community, and approximately 170,000 board feet of Eastern White Pine timber was used to complete the two-storey structure.

One of the most spectacular large projects Normerica completed in September 2008 is the 50,000 square foot Cypress Day Lodge in BC for the winter Olympics in 2010. The Lodge was used for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. Designed on three levels, the building was the central hub for all activities in



the park during both the summer and winter seasons.

"We have done a lot of commercial projects — for example we built most of the ski lodges in Collingwood and several Ontario golf courses. But we can't rely on commercial work, as it is not consistent year in and year out," McFarlane explains.

RESIDENTIAL

Normerica offers over 50 cottage plans and custom home designs on its website for residential customers, who are able to browse these selections on line. In addition, the company offers nearly one thousand more designs

on its design database. The company builds a vast array of residential buildings: "Sometimes its large homes, and sometimes its remote cabins," McFarlane comments.

Normerica begins the building process by exploring the customers' wants and needs, and setting budget parameters. "No two clients will ever be the same," McFarlane says, adding that some of his favourite projects overall have been smaller cabins that Normerica has built around in


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remote areas around the world.

The company has built custom homes and cabins, as well as great room additions — everything is open for discussion with a customer and plans run the gamut. Normerica has also adapted to the market demands of different demographics. McFarlane explains: "We cater to the baby boom generation who don't necessarily want bigger homes but instead smaller homes that are finished at higher quality standards. We also do a lot of

business with a younger clientele who might be more challenged financially but believe in the quality and energy efficiency of our homes. We're in the higher quality range for builders, but we can build our residential buildings within a reasonable budget."

Costs for residential homes and cottages run from \$180-300 per square foot. Elements that can change the cost of a home include complexity of the design, outdoor areas, finishing materials, geographic location and site conditions. However, Normerica can work with any customer's requirements and the company has prided itself on tailoring to each customer's individual needs.



"Our employees need to be people people, and be great listeners. If you're not a great listener, you're not going to be in this business for very long," McFarlane says, adding that the hiring process at Normerica often takes three or four months.









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CHANGING MARKETPLACES AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Normerica has gained a reputation internationally as well as in the Canadian market. The company began working in the United States in the late '80s, and between 1988 and 1997 spent thousands of hours working on projects in Japan. "Our Japanese clients wanted our quality, tailored to their style and needs," McFarlane comments.

The company has also done a significant amount of business in Turkey, and also has a presence in the

Caribbean. "We are experienced with working in different countries and environments, and have a proven track record of delivering in sometimes difficult building sites," he adds. In fact David cites the time that one of the timber frame buildings had to be paddled to a remote building site. The company has also become a leader in energy efficient design and construction. Normerica build

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the first green development project in Colorado in the mid-90s. "As a company we've always maintained a desire to build an energy efficient building. Over the years, we have increased our standards for insulation values and roof standards to something that greatly exceeds the current code requirements. Additionally, we buy timbers and pine from FNC certified mills," McFarlane says.

THE FUTURE

Company culture is very important to Normerica, as the company moves forward – staying flexible and adaptable and able to meet the shifts in the marketplace is critical. The company strives to hire people with an entrepreneurial spirit, and Normerica considers great listening skills on of the keys to its success. "Our employees need to be people people, and be great listeners. If you're not a great listener, you're not going to be in this business for very long," McFarlane says, adding that the hiring process at Normerica often takes three or four months to en



sure that they get the right person for the right job.

As far as future plans go, Normerica will continue to serve domestic and international markets with the same passion it has since 1979.

"As a business we are incredibly flexible, and constantly assessing how we can be a better company. We identify what a customer wants and needs and make it part of our process—everything we learn goes into building the future of the company," McFar-

lane explains. "At this stage of our business we have the years, experience, and quality behind us that means customers come to us first for the best quality heavy timber structure. Moving forward we will continue to grow in our own local domestic markets, in Ontario, also Quebec and the Eastern provinces. We are also actively developing rela-

"Our structures are uniquely designed to fit a client's needs, and are the of highest quality available—not to mention, they are environmentally-friendly."

tionships with dealers across the country." Additionally, the company is exploring dealer relationships in key markets in the US.

"Our structures are uniquely designed to fit a client's needs, and are of the highest quality available—not to mention, they are environmentally-friendly. We strive to offer the

highest level of value that we can, and are committed to constantly improving the product moving forward with the times," McFarlane concludes.

Normerica has proven to be the most flexible timber frame company in Canada—offering unparalleled flexibility—from large international projects to small cabins in remote Ontario. Judging by the company's proven track record and commitment to customers, Normerica will be creating custom timber-framed works of art for many years to come.

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