



Learning more from the International Builders' Show

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Last week I began to show you that spending time in Las Vegas in January is not only fun but also a lot of work. Several Home Builders Association Dayton members made the trip west and reaped the rewards from working hard.

I had the chance to begin to share with you an impressive survey conducted by Better Homes and Gardens and presented by Gayle Butler indicated that buyers are following three trends that reflect the current living environment with focus on economics, simplification and efficiency. The trends include being “right sized”, “organized” and “economized”.

Today's economic conditions have changed the focus of future home buyers. The seminar titled “Consumer Preferences 2009” was standing room only as builders were searching for the desired features of new buyers. There was also a speaker representing the research department from the National Association of Home Builders.

The trends start with ‘right sized’ and reflects a movement away from the larger floor plans that have been built over the last decade.

The trend of being “organized” relies on the theme of ample storage throughout the home. Mud rooms need to be organized as the importance of having a transition area from the outdoors to the indoors to shed outer clothes and keep the rest of the home a little cleaner.

Passageways are also being utilized for storage and even art galleries. Built in niches are finding their way back into floor plans.

An important component of being organized is the design and installation of “point of use” storage. Having the items you need in close proximity to where you use them is very

desirable. Having them orderly and hidden is even better. Think about the older CD or DVD collection and how visible and close they were to the equipment. Thankfully, technology will solve this with a single integrated system that will work on several displays (TVs) throughout the house.

The last trend is to “economize” meaning there will be less lux in the home. Losing importance is deluxe kitchens, upgraded landscaping, granite countertops, high end appliances and even 9'-0" ceilings.

Home buyers are looking for simpler exteriors yet they must be low maintenance which also means low cost.

Thoughts of remaining in the home longer are evident with 90% wanting more energy efficiency and a high 37% interested in geothermal. Something to keep in mind, the survey didn't ask the participants about their willingness to pay extra for those higher efficient technologies.

Each year, thousands of member companies from around the world gather for the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) International Builders' Show® (IBS), a showcase of the latest products and technologies available to builders. More than 60,000 building industry professionals visited this year's IBS, which brought together 1,600 companies exhibiting products in more than 300 different categories spread across 750,000 net square feet space.

Innovation and environmental awareness were once again the leading themes of the show, where exhibitors premiered new products that help make the homeowner's experience easier and more enjoyable. Besides the exciting products and trends that you and your family and friends will soon start enjoying, many attendees including many HBA of Dayton Registered Builders and suppliers took advantage of the 240 educational seminars offered at the show.