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# Professional Builder®



## Builder of the Year

**Jagoe Homes: Making All the Right Moves**

**Woodland,  
O'Brien  
& Scott**

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Bill and Scott Jagoe, partners in Jagoe Homes (PB's Builder of the Year), visit one of their communities in Owensboro, Ky.

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## The True Value of the NHQ Awards Feedback Report

By Denis Leonard, Business Excellence Consulting

**W**hen builders apply for Professional Builder's National Housing Quality Award they receive much more than the chance to win an award — they get a detailed feedback report from industry experts and consultants on their business operations and practices. To offer an idea of the value of the report, I've calculated the total time spent on its development.

As many as four judges evaluate each application, and each judge spends up to six hours on each submittal to complete the scoring and provide comments. Following this initial review process is a two-hour conference call with the four judges to discuss their evaluations and establish a consensus score and list of OFIs (opportunity for improvement) and strengths. That's 32 man-hours.

Next, a one-hour meeting takes place between the entire 11-person NHQA judges panel to discuss each application (11 man-hours), followed by site visits to the applicants that qualify. Each site visit takes at least two days and includes four judges that each put in about 12 hours of work per day, totaling 96 man-hours.

The lead judge completes the feedback report after the site visit (approximately six man-hours), and the reports are reviewed by NHQA leaders for accuracy (two man-hours per report). Finally, there's judges' conference call of approximately two man-hours to select the winners.

By applying a conservative hourly consulting fee of \$150, the total value for a company that does not qualify for a site visit is \$7,950 (53 man-hours) and \$22,350 for those with a site visit (149 man-hours). Depending on the number of homes you build each year, the application fee (which ranges from \$750 to \$2,000, depending on firm size) will provide a return of at least \$7,950 and up to \$22,350 in consulting value. So, with that sort of value, are you applying for the NHQA in 2011?

Read more posts by Denis Leonard at [www.HousingZone.com](http://www.HousingZone.com).

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## Want To Grow Market Share? Don't Delay Key Decisions

By Charlie Scott, Woodland, O'Brien & Scott

**W**hile making sales presentations to our four most-recent prospective clients, we were hired on the spot — three times! On the first two occasions, we didn't even have our start-up paperwork and consulting agreements on hand. We had become conditioned over the past three years to home builders requesting a proposal, mulling it over ad nauseam, and requesting more information. Even proven, time-tested, high-return investments were being delayed for "safety sake."

Many older-school builders are completely focused on reactive, survival strategies, opting to "see how the climate evolves" and making the decision to "make no decision." So, how do we explain the most recent "Let's go, now!" clients? It's easy once you know the details.

These three private builders are their state's largest, fastest-growing home building companies. On the average, they have grown their market share by over 50 percent in the past 24 months. How did they do it in this terrible business environment? Simple: by being decisive; by looking for good opportunities and acting fast; by taking little time to "mull things over" or send strategic decisions to a study group. If they believe something is good for their home building company's objectives, they want to get started right away.

Decisiveness has paid off handsomely for these home building companies. I'm ecstatic that these builders are focusing on both growing their operations and investing in "voice of the customer" and referral sales strategies to sustain this growth. Perhaps a new age of home building is upon us — while the meek may eventually inherit the earth, the fast and decisive home builders are growing market share, now. Growing market share with a broad base of satisfied customers is both a potent and defensible market position.

Perhaps the most applicable historical quote to this blog entry's point was by Admiral David Glasgow Farragut in 1870 during the Battle of Mobile Bay. While many of his fleet's ships were turning back from their objective due to dangerous conditions, Admiral Farragut shouted, "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!"

What decisions might you be mulling over at the expense of your market share growth?

Read more posts by Charlie Scott at [www.HousingZone.com](http://www.HousingZone.com).

