



Prominent Arizona Homebuilder Drastically Reduces Costs While Expanding Production with Autodesk Web-Based Collaboration Solutions

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Fulton Homes Uses Autodesk Buzzsaw to Automate Its Paper-Based Construction Bidding Process, Boosting Production by 500 Homes Per Year and Saving \$60,000 in Printing Costs Alone

Last year, Phoenix-based Fulton Homes built 1,400 homes, this year it is on track to build 1,500, and in 2004 the company plans to build 2,000. With this fast pace of growth, most developers would expect to see a concurrent rise in costs related to processes such as design review, project planning and bidding. Not so with Fulton Homes. By successfully implementing the Buzzsaw(R) web-based project collaboration service from Autodesk, Inc. (NASDAQ:ADSK), Fulton Homes has actually decreased its bidding costs even as it has expanded production.

Fulton Home's successful use of Autodesk Buzzsaw to better manage the bidding process and improve communication among extended team members represents a growing trend among large homebuilders that are looking to web technology for process improvement. In April, economists at the National Association of Builders' (NAHB's) construction forecast conference predicted that single-family homebuilding in 2003 will surpass last year's 1.7 million units--an increase largely fueled by low, long-term mortgage rates. In order to support the predicted growth, progressive homebuilders such as Fulton Homes turned to technology to automate and better manage the construction process. Autodesk collaboration and lifecycle solutions have played a central role in this trend, having now been adopted by a wide range of homebuilders, including KB Homes, Hacienda Builders, DR Horton, Centex Homes and Nicholas Homes.

Fulton Homes originally expected that the Buzzsaw service would enable it to cut the time spent managing the bid process in half. However, according to Chris Harrison, vice president and general manager of Fulton Homes, Buzzsaw has more than met those initial expectations: "We have reduced the time spent managing the bidding process by more than 70 percent, which will be especially beneficial as we boost production. In fact, our printing costs have been reduced by about \$5,000 per bid process. When we multiply that by the number of bid cycles we manage annually, generally ten to twelve, Buzzsaw is saving us almost \$60,000 per year--on printing alone," he added.

The process of soliciting bids from contractors is a notoriously inefficient and expensive. For Fulton Homes, a single bidding cycle can bring input from more than 60 different trades for items and materials including windows and trim, dry wall, siding and flooring. Prior to using the Buzzsaw service, Fulton Homes printed and sent appropriate plan sets to each bidder, and when plans changed, new sets had to be printed and faxed or delivered via courier. Now when bids are solicited, Fulton Homes posts all relevant plans on Buzzsaw and creates bid groups for each construction discipline. Each bid group is given access to the plans it needs and submits bids online through Buzzsaw. When contractors have questions, they can email the purchasing team for quick clarification. And bidders who need paper plans at any stage of the process can order and pay for them directly through Fulton Homes' reprographer using the Buzzsaw site. For Fulton Homes, and for many of its contractors, paper is entirely eliminated from the process, and there is no need to rely on expensive delivery services. Consequently, costs are reduced and time is saved.

"For builders, the bidding process has always been an administrative nightmare fraught with stacks of paper, deliveries and deadlines," said Amar Hanspal, senior director of Autodesk building collaboration services. "It's clear that homebuilders like Fulton are adopting services such as those offered by Autodesk because they are simply a better way to manage bids. Just as the web has brought cost and time savings to industries such as retail, banking and financial services, it is now benefiting the building industry as well."

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