

ProWatch Remodelers Speak Out

You're Still in Front, But Watch Your Back

Our latest Remodeler Survey finds these customers again favor their local independent supplier over big-box stores. But that doesn't mean they don't see room to improve. By Brendan Rimetz

What Remodelers Want In a Supplier

Percent of respondents who identified a particular criterion as valuable

Criterion	Percent of response
Lower prices	55%
Offer a broader range of products	26%
Facilitate online ordering	25%
Offer before- and after-hours pickup	19%
Deliver in smaller quantities	16%
Shorten lead times	16%
Offer higher-end product selection	14%
Make sales reps more available	11%
Provide consumer sales materials	9%
Improve the materials ordering process	9%
Offer more special-order capabilities	7%
Offer showroom and/or client meeting space	7%
Accept credit cards for payment of invoices	6%
Deliver more frequently	5%
Sell products on an installed basis	2%
Accept special orders	2%

NOTE: UP TO THREE ANSWERS ALLOWED
SOURCE: PROSALES REMODELER SURVEY, DECEMBER 2010-JANUARY 2011

What Remodelers Find Important in a Supplier

Average score on qualities/services, 10-point scale*

Timely delivery	8.98
Having products in stock	8.87
Knowledgeable sales reps	8.78
Product selection	8.58
Loyalty and/or past relationship	8.57
Price	8.44
Special-order capabilities	8.25
Return policy	8.19
After-sales support	7.92
Supplier delivers a nationally recognized brand	7.35
Credit policy	6.82
Ability to communicate electronically with dealer	6.68
Learning opportunities	6.47
E-commerce capabilities	5.77
Blueprint takeoffs	5.76
Rebates	5.74
Dealer can manage projects	5.56
Regular visits from sales reps	4.84

* ON THE 10-POINT SCALE, 10 WAS VERY IMPORTANT AND 1 WAS NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
SOURCE: PROSALES REMODELER SURVEY, DECEMBER 2010-JANUARY 2011

When PROSALES surveyed remodelers in 2007 on what dealers could do to better serve them, we headlined the results "Keep Your Promises." Three years later, in December, we asked many of the same questions again. The result? "Keep Your Promises" remains a fitting summary.

Our latest poll found remodelers still prefer their local building material dealer over the neighborhood big-box store. But it also indicated that dealers continue to run the risk of losing remodelers unless they treat them the way remodelers would like.

"In the heyday of home building prior to the recession, many LBM dealers

drove the remodeler away to the home improvement warehouses, by treating them like second-class customers," says Jim Robisch of the Indianapolis-based Farnsworth Group, whose Specpan unit collected the information for the survey. "Then and now, the remodeler wants the same respect and service afforded the home