

America's First Home Automates Purchasing for 1,100 Starts

With a Growth Path on Steroids, America's First Home Turns to BuilderMT

America's First Home is on a growth path that would be the envy of any corporation in America. One of Florida's largest home builders, and number 74 on the *Builder Magazine* **Builder 100** list, America's First Home will close 1,100 homes in 2006, but look back a few years and you would see 780 starts in 2004, and fewer than 100 in 2001. Few companies anywhere have grown at such a rate, in or out of the new home market.

The company's 200 employees and 35 superintendents manage the construction of 32 model homes, each one of which is offered with a minimum of two elevations. As if that is not enough to track, there are 75 options per model, and all the field workers are tied to back office software systems with aircards on their laptops to access high-speed data networks, so the "back office" software is truly a field-interactive data center, with real-time access offers to many authorized workers.

To power its many complicated operations, America's First Home uses Sage Timberline Office. Sage Timberline Office has been a powerful data repository and accounting system and as a production homebuilder, America's First Home required a process-driven (critical path-based) software program that gathers information from the field in a sophisticated manner. America's First Home first defined their building process and technology objectives by examining their core requirements as a production builder. Typically "production builders" are defined as builders who construct more than 100 single-family homes or 250 multi-family homes per year and have a need for integrating sales, bid solicitation, estimating, purchasing, scheduling, field management, accounting and warranty into a seamless process. For its process management, America's First Home runs BuilderMT's Workflow Management Suite in tandem with Sage Timberline Office. BuilderMT is the central data processing and process-management hub through which the majority of America's First Home runs its day-to-day operations. By processing budgets, purchase orders, cost, revenue, schedules, and warranty data into the Sage Timberline Office database, the Workflow Management Suite offers integrated modules for Sales Pricing, Bid Solicitation, Scheduling, Wireless Scheduling, Model Manager, and Purchasing, which met America's First Home requirements as a production homebuilder.

BuilderMT, Sage Timberline Office, and Purchasing

For Sage Timberline Office users, BuilderMT's award-winning software, offers high-fidelity "software wraps" that bring Sage Timberline Office production home building clients highly developed, yet easy-to-manage, workflow management software modules that can formalize, enforce, and drive multiple activities across any number of housing starts, and all affiliated trades. Moreover, BuilderMT can be linked to a wide variety of wireless devices that can—on a permission basis—draw upon / affect core Sage Timberline Office data, a remarkable



achievement in today's tangle of homebuilder solutions. (This is *real-time* wireless connectivity, not hot-synced at the end of the day or at the end of the week, so Sage Timberline Office is always processing the latest field data.)

America's First Home is particularly fond of the capabilities that BuilderMT brings to the purchasing process. As a production home builder, America's First Home quickly determined that they needed the BuilderMT portion to address America First Home needs for an integrated production solution. As soon as it was available, the staff at America's First Homes eagerly implemented BuilderMT Purchasing on top of their existing Sage Timberline Office, and they couldn't be happier with the results, as it fulfilled their needs.

"We implemented the BuilderMT Purchasing modules as part of the BuilderMT Workflow Management Suite," said Lisa Friesz, Vice President of Purchasing for America's First Home. "BuilderMT's Purchasing offered an immediate improvement over our previous method for our production homebuilding company." With 1,100 starts each year (that's an average of around *four starts each day*) Lisa Friesz and her purchasing coordinator, Mary Ann Spencer, have to manage an enormous amount of purchasing data, invariably spread among multiple communities, neighborhoods, superintendents, all drawing on an ever-changing list of vendors.

One major advantage of BuilderMT's Purchasing is price maintenance. With BuilderMT Purchasing, we can refresh and update pricing across all our starts with just five minutes work per day, compared to the laborious process required from our previous solution" said Lisa Friesz. "With BuilderMT Purchasing, the integration is all automated. There is no need to switch back and forth between software modules. BuilderMT Purchasing not only integrates with Job Cost seamlessly, but has the ability to approve PO's for payment – this is critical to the efficiencies required for Production Home Builders."

Purchasing coordinator, Mary Ann Spencer, agrees. "BuilderMT is intuitive software that automatically associates vendor information and associates vendors with communities. I save at least 40 minutes a day with BuilderMT Purchasing over our previous solution."

"With BuilderMT Purchasing, we have extreme control over the data in each individual records, yet we can, for instance, execute *multiple cancellations*, if need be," said Friesz. "Due to the number of job starts we have per day or week, this is something we would otherwise have to do record by record. For instance, to apply new pricing in our old purchasing environment, we would have to take the data—vendor by vendor—enter it, and then take all the data back to Sage Timberline Office Estimating, and then up to Sage Timberline Office Accounting. Very time-consuming."

"With BuilderMT Purchasing," added Mary Ann Spencer, "we can execute multiple actions across multiple software modules with the single click of a mouse. We do not have to switch multiple times between budgets and purchase orders. As a production homebuilder who depends on BuilderMT Purchasing, there is an ease to the data management that you cannot find in other purchasing systems."

"Exactly," explains Friesz. "Let's take an example of the pricing on a roof truss from a single vendor. We use to have to create an estimate with that item in Estimating, assign a price value of \$0, obtain the unit price, enter the price, select a vendor, and then send the populated vendor/price record back to Estimating so the records would match and merge. With BuilderMT's Purchasing all of that work is automated when the price is entered one time. There is no 'round-tripping,' no switching between multiple modules."



“With vendor pricing in BuilderMT’s Purchasing, you don’t need to manually send anything over to Sage Timberline Office Estimating,” said Mary Ann Spencer. “You can automatically generate an estimate and immediately see your vendor data. BuilderMT assigns the vendor to a job; vendors are associated with a community in the software, and the community is assigned a job number. It all takes 30 seconds as opposed to the hours it took previously.” “Also, the ability to have costs stored by community and date as well as by vendor is a big plus. In our previous system, we needed to have multiple databases to handle costs by community.”

BuilderMT’s Workflow Management Suite

With hundred of thousands of dollars to be won or lost with minor changes in a price or even small errors in purchase orders, America’s First Home does not take lightly its selection of software. It has fully implemented and added to their existing Sage Timberline Office, BuilderMT’s Workflow Management Suite and in doing so automates the workflow across its multiple divisions. BuilderMT’s Workflow Management Suite or otherwise known as Sage Timberline Office Production Management, includes applications to help builders control construction costs, pinpoint the reason for a variance, manage labor costs, handle contracts, and more. It works with popular front-end sales software, so your sales offices can communicate with purchasing and accounting. Modules include:

Purchasing. Purchasing streamlines workflow and optimizes business practices. Get control of the essential homebuilding functions by automating the flow of information. Coordinate accounting and estimating applications to better manage the entire production process.

Sales Pricing. Determine by community the models and options you want to make available. Establish the retail price of each plan or option, and mark up costs by a percentage or by setting a market value.

Scheduling. Actively manage projects on the job site, improve communications, and exchange information between your field supervisors and the office with Scheduling. Wireless Scheduling allows users of handheld to keep track of projects while in the field.

Wireless Scheduling. This remote application allows a builder to update a scheduled activity, approve purchase orders*, manage variances, maintain quality control walk-throughs, initiate vendor notifications and send text and email message to suppliers.

Model Manager. Model Manager solves the problem of creating new models based on existing models. This tool has been created with the specific goal of allowing Workflow Management Suite clients to easily copy base plans and options from one representative model to another new model.

Warranty. Coordinates communication between homeowners, builders and sub-contractors, making the home warranty process more efficient and removing the sources of many customer service headaches.

BuilderMT is the most-award-winning, best-selling home building software three years running.

BuilderMT’s long string of awards now includes:

- *ConstrucTech* Hottest Company of the Year 2006
- *ConstrucTech* Vision Awards for 2006 – Graham Hart Home Builder



- *ConstrucTech* Vision Awards for 2006 overall Team Award - Generation Homes
- *Home Builder Executive Magazine* 2006 Award for Scheduling Software
- *Home Builder Executive Magazine* 2006 Builder Technology Innovation Award
- Tom Gebes, President of BuilderMT, Ernest and Young Entrepreneur of the Year Finalists for 2006
- *ConstrucTech* Vision Awards for 2005 – Delcor Homes
- *ConstrucTech* Hottest Technology of the Year 2005
- *TechHomeBuilder* High Impact Products of the Year 2004

About BuilderMT

For large and medium-size homebuilders in the \$250 billion homebuilding industry, BuilderMT provides highly customizable building process management software that works in tandem with Sage Timberline Office accounting and estimating software, systems used by one in four of the Builder 100. BuilderMT has been purchased by over 635 corporations and 4,000 individuals to manage over 280,000 housing starts annually, more than 20% of the new home market. BuilderMT is widely recognized as a leader in process-driven, best-building practices for builders, as well as customer service, warranty applications, on-line training, and innovative wireless applications. Since its inception in 1999, BuilderMT has maintained its status as a debt-free, highly profitable company that puts its profits back into the infrastructure and software development. To learn more, visit www.BuilderMT.com, or call (888) 757-1991.