



Case Study

Bourbeau Custom Homes, Inc.

LATITUDE 40
CONSULTING

Based out of Vermont, Bourbeau Custom Homes, Inc. specializes in designing and building homes that are built with their customer's lifestyle in mind. This family-run business assists their customers realize their dreams with standardized construction practices that offer quality construction and a myriad of choices that help make the home-building process a pleasure and not a pain. "Custom does not have to mean expensive or high end," said Denis Bourbeau, president of BCH, Inc. "Our customers come from all walks of life and professions and we specialize in building custom homes in all price ranges. That is why it is so important that our customers can easily make design selections, instantly see the results and know exactly what they are investing in... and why we partnered with Latitude 40 Consulting, Inc."

Making the custom home construction process easy

"Build us a site that would allow our customers to develop all the details of their custom home," they said. "Make it easy to navigate and easy for us to add features," they said. "Oh, and above all, make it fun."

While BCH, Inc. had plenty of happy customers and many on-going projects – even during the darkest days of the economic downturn – they did not have a website that would easily and efficiently enable them to service their clientele and quickly add new design features. "Our existing system was just clunky," said Bourbeau. We made it work but clearly we needed a change. We believe in complete communication with our clients – even to our customers being able to see how their selected design choices may affect the overall

contract cost – so it was critical that we had an application that enabled the freedom to pick and choose and change, as needed."

Understanding your client is the first step toward a successful project

Latitude 40 began the task with first asking Bourbeau how clients typically select a floor plan and then customize their home. These meetings formed the foundation for the new website application "It was critical that we met with BCH, Inc. and completely understood their business requirements," said Andrew Anderson, president of Latitude 40 Consulting. "This is one of the major advantages of custom software development in that we can design and develop software solutions that exactly fit our client's needs with the room to grow and

Solution Highlights

- Complete redesign and application development for custom home builder
- Accurate financial calculations for home price and change orders
- Instantly view and approve designs and modifications to original home plan

change as their business grows and changes. We layer the architecture to make it easy to update or replace individual components as technologies improve. For example, if the next greatest database technology comes along, we can replace just that database layer with minimal disruption to the other parts of the system. Our clients know that what they did to get to where they are will not necessarily get them to where they want to be.”

For example, a vital component of the website is that BCH, Inc. clients have an allowance based on their general contract. With this, the client can view all of the options and prices that go with the particular contract. There are no hidden fees and, if the client wishes to change their selections or design of their home, they can do so and know the costs before they approve the change.

Clients can also pick items – such as specialty windows or doors – provide information to the agent and request a quote. Buyers will see the results of their selections with respect to how they may affect the overall contract and add, modify or delete as they desire. One client wanted a fireplace in their master bedroom rather than a bay window. With the new website application, she could instantly see the results both in the overall design and in the cost. This removes the uncertainty and perception that contractors hide changes and associated costs to their clients.

Another important requirement and feature that Latitude 40 designed and developed was the ability for BCH, Inc. customers to instantly view items that need action before the contractor proceeds. “We do not act unless our clients give us the green light,” said Bourbeau. “And while some may think this lengthens the design and build process, in fact, we have found that it actually shortens the overall construction time. Our clients like the fact that they are involved in the design and build process and are highly communicative to us.”

Results

And it shows. In the first three months since the new website application went live, BCH, Inc. has about seven new clients; the first of which was extremely happy with the process and the additional service the new website application provides. What’s more, Bourbeau demonstrated the new application at a recent home trade show. One potential client even signed up to meet and discuss building his home using the web application directly on the tradeshow floor.

“We couldn’t be happier,” stated Bourbeau. “And it’s all due to our partnership with the Latitude 40 team.”

“Our clients love the fact that they are involved in the design and build process. From being able to view their home design online to making changes on the fly and approving them before we begin - all of these items are critical to our relationship with our customers. And it’s all due to our partnership with the Latitude 40 team.”

Denis Bourbeau
President, Bourbeau Custom Homes, Inc.

For too long, you’ve been told what type of software you need for your business. Isn’t it about time someone listened to what you actually want?

Contact the Latitude 40 team today at info@latitude40.com to schedule a no-obligation consultation. We look forward to serving you.

