

Custom Home

A photograph of a modern, multi-level interior space. The ceiling features exposed wooden beams and a skylight. The floor is made of dark wood. There are large windows and glass doors providing a view of the outdoors. Several pieces of art are displayed on the walls. A staircase with a wooden handrail and metal balustrade is visible in the foreground. The overall atmosphere is warm and sophisticated.

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Tim Frost

When Tim Frost decided to shift his custom building and remodeling company to the design/build model, he had already been in business for some 13 years, long enough to see the drawbacks in the conventional architect/builder relationship. Frost had been frustrated with bidding projects only to see them stalled because the owners could not afford to build them. The process did more than waste his time and money, Frost says. In clients' eyes, "We were the bad guy, because we were forcing them to redesign something they'd already paid for." To make matters worse, in a strong building market, Frost was having difficulty interesting architects in his smaller remodeling jobs. Offering design services in-house solved both problems. But even Frost has been surprised by how well the transition has turned out. ■ "It's really allowed us to pre-qualify people up front, because we discuss

Peregrine Contracting
South Burlington, Vt.
Type of business: custom
builder/remodeler
Years in business: 18
Employees: 16
2006 volume: \$2.6 million
2006 starts: 24

the budget from the first meeting," Frost says. With continuous cost feedback from the field, he and his sales team can quickly identify any gap between means and ends. "That alone might save you a lot of time." Peregrine's 3 percent fee for design services requires clients to demonstrate some commitment to the process—and to Peregrine—before the company invests a significant amount of time in their project. Frost includes another 3 percent for construction administration in project overhead.

■ Designer Shawn Sweeney brings a fresh eye to traditional New England style, and he enjoys the advantage of knowing construction from the inside. He started with Peregrine as a project manager, Frost explains. That experience reflects the company's common-sense approach to design/build. "Design is half of it," Frost says, "but you have to design something that is practical and makes sense and that is not crazy, cost-wise." —*B.D.S.*

Peregrine Contracting is known for its professionally designed projects. The company's design/build capability makes the home building process equally attractive.

