

# Service, Incentives and Quality Boost Home Buyer Satisfaction

While the overall housing industry is experiencing a slump, new home buyer satisfaction spiked in 2008.

According to the “2008 New-Home Builder Customer Satisfaction Study<sup>SM</sup>” by J.D. Power and Associates, “many home builders are succeeding in significantly improving overall customer satisfaction in 2008, compared with 2007.”

Customers cited knowledgeable sales staffs and strong customer service as top reasons for their satisfaction with their home builder. Home buyers were also pleased with the quality of workmanship and materials, great values and on-time delivery dates.

“Home buyers today are able to take advantage of opportunities they might not see in a hyper-competitive market, such as free upgrades and more flexibility and choices in floor plans and design,” said HBA of West Michigan President Scott Stovall. “Combining these incentives with unparalleled service and a quality product, the customer feels that they received the best home for their money.”

Builders are also addressing the rising interest in green building by incorporating the top green features that home buyers feel belong in a new house, including energy-efficient heating and air-conditioning units; energy-saving appliances and lighting; water-conserving fixtures and temperature-controlling windows.

“Green building is the fastest-growing segment of the home building industry. We find that home buyers are willing to pay more to get a home that is not only built to be environmentally friendly, but can also save them money on energy costs down the road,” said Stovall. “When builders are able to meet these needs, their customers feel confident that they are working with a builder who is knowledgeable about the latest trends and will deliver a quality product.”

Another J.D. Power study on home design also shows that customer satisfaction has increased in the design and aesthetic aspects of new home construction as well. The design and layout features that customers place the most significance on in terms of builder performance include (in order of importance):

- Floor plan
- Master/primary bathroom
- Kitchen
- Ability to customize
- Interior comfort/environment
- Flooring
- Exterior architectural design
- Windows and exterior doors

“Customers are pleased to find that builders are more flexible and able to accommodate designs and floor plans that are non-traditional, which creates a positive home-buying experience,” said Stovall. “When home buyers are satisfied, it continues to strengthen the home building industry and challenges builders to improve not only the finished product, but the overall experience for the customer.”

To see how specific builders ranked in your area, visit [www.jdpower.com](http://www.jdpower.com) and click on the “Homes” tab.

To find a home builder near you, contact your local Home Builders Association at (231) 861-0618 or by email at: [hbawest@t-one.net](mailto:hbawest@t-one.net), or visit the National Association of Home Builders online at [www.nahb.org/forconsumers](http://www.nahb.org/forconsumers).