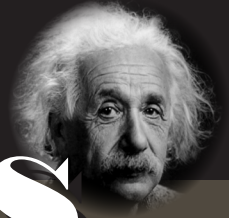


"Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler"- Albert Einstein



Blueprints

JUNE 2016

Occasional Musings of a New Jersey based architect

THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF A SIMPLE FACELIFT

Although architects love creating new buildings, the transformation of an existing home into something unique and suitable to the site and client's needs can be an equally satisfying endeavor. The restrictions and limitations of the existing become a springboard for a creative challenge.

The owners of this "ugly duckling" contemporary in Sparta, NJ approached us to update the look and functionality of the house and create a more inviting outdoor environment on their lakefront property. The goal was to keep within the existing envelope of the house in order to keep costs in check, and the only addition is the small deck at the upper level with the new spiral stair. We are also doing a full interior remodel with limited but well targeted spatial reorganization.

The courtyard formed by the extended wings of the house is a currently a dreary space that called out for better integration with the interior. The added glass on the first floor will enable one to see across the courtyard from the kitchen (on the right in the rendering) through to the living room space on the left. The glow of light and transparency wrapping around the patio will make this a lively dining spot overlooking the pool and lake. Corner windows at both levels will provide extended lake views, and the addition of an outdoor kitchen, sunken hot tub, and built-in firepit will provide new outdoor living and entertaining options.



The exterior is being re-clad with cement fiber panels, with cedar banding to add warmth to the courtyard while integrating the two wings. We decided to not follow the roofline with the cement fiber panels- the straight lines giving the house a more modern feel, and the dark recessed wall surface

above lets the roof hover above the linear base.

We use Sketchup renderings extensively during our design process to study options of form and combination of surface materials. Not only does this help us enormously in creating the design and quickly studying various options, but most importantly provides our clients a clear understanding of our design proposals. They can visualize the house before it's built, and helps them make informed decisions that would be more difficult with only plans and elevations. Construction on this project is currently underway, so look for updates as we make progress, then compare the finished photos to the renderings.

15 Stats That Should Change The Way We Do Business

Many of my clients are business owners or senior managers so when I found these startling statistics recently it made me re-look at how I was running my business and want to share them with you in this newsletter.

1 Price is not the main reason for customer churn, it is actually due to the overall poor quality of customer service – *Accenture Global Customer Satisfaction Report 2008.*

2 A customer is 4 times more likely to defect to a competitor if the problem is service-related than price- or product-related – *Bain & Company.*

3 The probability of selling to an existing customer is 60 – 70%. The probability of selling to a new prospect is 5-20% – *Marketing Metrics.*

4 For every customer complaint there are 26 other unhappy customers who have remained silent – *Lee Resource.*

5 A 2% increase in customer retention has the same effect as decreasing costs by 10% – *Leading on the Edge of Chaos, Emmet Murphy & Mark Murphy.*

6 96% of unhappy customers don't complain, however 91% of those will simply leave and never come back – *Financial Training Services.*

7 A dissatisfied customer will tell between 9-15 people about their experience. Around 13% of dissatisfied customers tell more than 20 people. – *White House Office of Consumer Affairs.*

8 Happy customers who get their issue resolved tell about 4-6 people about their experience. – *White House Office of Consumer Affairs.*

9 70% of buying experiences are based on how the customer feels they are being treated – *McKinsey.*

10 55% of customers would pay extra to guarantee a better service – *De-facto research.*

11 Customers who rate you 5 on a scale from 1 to 5 are six times more likely to buy from you again, compared to 'only' giving you a score of 4.8. – *TeleFaction Data Research.*

12 It takes 12 positive experiences to make up for one unresolved negative experience – *"Understanding Customers" by Ruby Newell-Legner.*

13 A 5% reduction in the customer defection rate can increase profits by 5-95% – *Bain & Company.*

14 It costs 6-7 times more to acquire a new customer than retain an existing one – *Bain & Company.*

15 eCommerce spending for new customers is on average \$24.50, compared to \$52.50 for repeat customers – *McKinsey.*

If we could put a plug in the bath we may not need to run so much hot water.

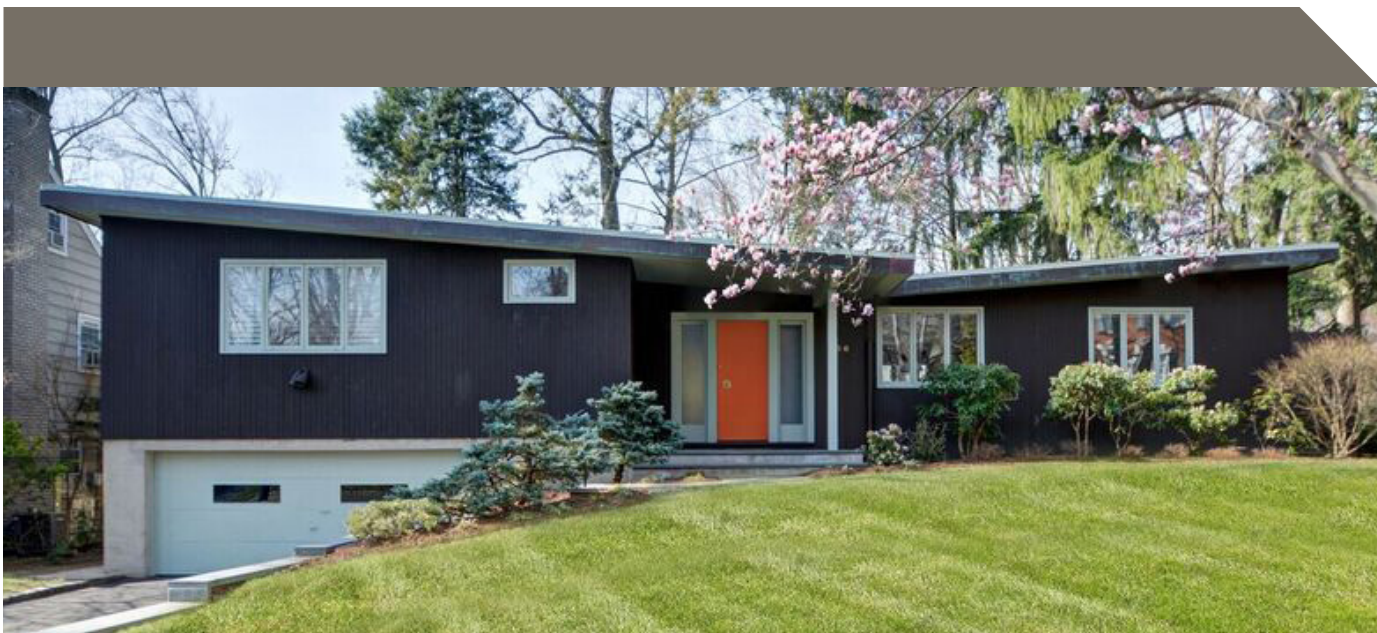
Based on this overwhelming research why do businesses spend some much time and money trying to win new clients and so little trying to retain, re-sell and get referrals from their existing clients?—*written by Richard Petrie*

Client Profile

Sam and Bonny built their new house to accommodate their extended family and frequent overseas visitors. Sam, a native of Salisbury, England, lived on every continent except Australia during his youth, as his father's business took them around the globe. Bonny grew up in Hong Kong and came to the US in 1985. Her mother lives with them during the week, providing care for their two children, Franna and Jude while Bonny and Sam are working in NY. Bonny and Sam met at the Landmark Forum- they credit their experience there for helping



them develop the honest and open communication tools that have strengthened their marriage. Both are sports enthusiasts- Sam was a billiards champion at Cornell, and plays paddle tennis regularly. Their basement hosts quite competitive ping pong games among friends and neighbors. Bonny is both a passionate biker and advocate for healthy food and nutrition. This interest led her to become an active board member of the Bubble Foundation, a non-profit at the forefront of a movement to transform the health lifestyles of children in NYC. The organization works to incorporate the health needs of kids into the classroom, cafeteria, and culture. (www.welcometobubble.org)



Local Modernism: **South Orange**

The towns along the Midtown Direct are known for their homes built in the early 20th century, and their character and charm are a big draw for homebuyers. But a few brave souls decided to build modernist homes, and for me, these stand out as gems to be discovered.

This classic mid-century modern ranch home was built in 1960 and features an unusual butterfly roof, a form more commonly found in West Coast homes of the period. Located on a street surrounded by 2 story colonial style homes, this house is eye-catching, and the simplicity of the lines and details are a contrast to the more traditional surrounding architecture. This design also shows a distinctly more modern interpretation of the style than most of the similar ranch houses built in the area around the same time, primarily due to the unusual rooflines.

The interior was lovingly maintained and highlights original wood panelling and built-in shelving and entertainment units. The generous use of woodwork creates a warmth and richness that might not be expected from the exterior view.

The current owner's deceased husband, furniture designer and architect Michael C.H. Graves (not the same Michael Graves) designed most of the furniture seen in these photos. The cohesive blend of architecture and interior decor make this a special home indeed.