



## 2010 Big50 Fact Sheet

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### What is the Big50?

Started by Hanley Wood's REMODELING Magazine in 1986, the Big50 were originally identified as the 50 remodelers running the biggest remodeling firms in the 50 metro areas with the most residential remodeling. The foundation of the award was that each company must have a stellar reputation, do quality work, and exhibit the professionalism needed to counter the industry's long-tarnished image. Key to success was customer satisfaction.

### How has the Big50 changed?

Although it's still focused on those same principles, in its second year, REMODELING'S Big50 began recognizing contractors who operated smaller, well-run businesses. The magazine's editors slotted recipients into categories of business and industry excellence, such as teamwork and industry impact. That's still the case today, as the magazine focuses on the owners of the best-run companies that have a tight control on costs, know how to target work, and do good, quality remodeling with honesty and integrity. By 1990, the awards program had become firmly established as the remodeling industry's Hall of Fame.

### What are the criteria today and how are they set?

REMODELING'S editorial staff sets the criteria, based on longevity, profitability, and firm commitment to customer service and best practice standards.

### How many people have been named to the Big50?

Some 1,729 individuals in 1,187 companies, in all states and the District of Columbia (except Mississippi and Wyoming) – and even Canada -- have been named to the Big50. This is a small percentage of the industry, which has more than 62,000 remodeling firms with payrolls. The reason these numbers aren't even multiples of 50 is because before standards were tightened, a few owners won more than once, as did accomplished non-owners from previously named companies. In addition, many companies have multiple owners. Today, all

individual owners get named to the award. With few exceptions, it's a once-in-a-lifetime honor. The state with the most Big50 companies is California (121), followed by Maryland (73) and Pennsylvania (60). [See "Big50 Remodelers by State" file in Big50 Marketing Tool Kit.]

### How are companies nominated?

REMODELING editors, columnists, and industry leaders – including those at the National Association of the Remodeling Industry and the National Association of Home Builders Remodelers – make the nominations. We also ask remodelers to nominate themselves or their peers by completing a form available at [www.remodelingmag.com](http://www.remodelingmag.com). Once individuals and their companies are in REMODELING Magazine's database, they remain there until a determination is made to name them to the Big50.

### How are companies selected for the honor?

Each year, REMODELING editors interview people at the nominated companies, and often talk to competitors, suppliers, and subcontractors. Also weighing into the decision are multiple nominations for a single company, geography, longevity, profitability, and best practice standards. After research is finished, REMODELING's editors select the owners of 50 companies who exemplify the very best of the industry that year, and who have something to offer other remodelers in proven practices. Winners are classified by the following categories:

- **Business Savvy:** Remodelers with especially effective, established business systems.
- **Fine Design:** Remodelers with high aesthetic standards for their projects.
- **Industry Impact:** Remodelers who have taken active leadership roles in industry-building activities.
- **Market Wise:** Remodelers who have built their businesses around a keen understanding of their markets.
- **Movers & Shakers:** Owners of larger remodeling companies that aggressively expand market share while maintaining service standards.
- **Niches:** Remodelers who have built successful companies serving an easily overlooked but profitable corner of the market.
- **Sales & Marketing:** Remodelers with effective systems for obtaining leads and closing sales.
- **Teamwork:** Owners of remodeling companies whose employees work together effectively to achieve more than the sum of their individual work.

### Is there a customer service component of the award?

The 2009 Big50 launched the debut of the Big50 Service Excellence Award. Created in partnership with [www.GuildQuality.com](http://www.GuildQuality.com), this award recognizes Big50s that deliver a consistently exceptional customer experience. GuildQuality surveyed more than 1,500 customers of Big50 candidates who elected to be considered for the 2010 Service Excellence Award. Virtually all of these who

were selected for Big50 scored high in customer surveys, but four in particular were singled out for delivering service of the highest standard.

### How does Big50 live on past the May issue of the magazine?

Winning individuals see Big50 as a graduation of sorts, and each spring many of them return to the Washington, D.C., area to celebrate and learn from incoming Big50s at the Remodeling Leadership Conference ([www.remodelingconf.com](http://www.remodelingconf.com)). The conference also helps Big50 contractors build strong relationships with national manufacturers. It's been called the highest level of remodeling education in the industry. Conference-goers appreciate how the gathering brings business perspectives from outside the industry and applies them to remodeling.

### How does Big50 help the companies selected?

Remodelers see their Big50 honor as an objective, third-party endorsement for their business. Their clients enjoy doing business with a notable firm. And the award helps to differentiate their company as the best in the business. The award also helps them recruit employees, as good people like to work with industry leaders. And remodelers frequently use the honor to help build an employee culture focused on quality and customer commitment. It's not uncommon to go on a jobsite of a Big50 contractor and find the Big50 logo on company shirts, jackets, and caps. Clearly, Big50 is a badge of honor and respect.

### How does the Big50 help the remodeling industry?

Big50 has become a community of top-notch remodelers who are always willing to learn to improve their systems, and ultimately, to better serve the public. REMODELING Magazine and [www.remodelingmag.com](http://www.remodelingmag.com) share their best practices with other remodelers seeking to reach the same benchmarks of performance and integrity. In the end, the name "Big50" is a misnomer, since the awards have little to do with company size. The award recognizes excellence and leadership, and the individuals who belong to this select group set the vision for the entire industry.

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