

# WINDOW AND DOOR PREFERENCES

Builders and architects share what matters for selecting doors and windows

By Mike Beirne, Senior Editor

One difference between the current *Professional Builder* Windows and Doors survey results and those from last year's survey is that more builders and architects who sell window upgrades reported that they sold better and best options to more than half of their customers, compared with just 17.4 percent of respondents last year who reported that the majority of their clients bought upgrades. That outcome may be a result of the 2018 poll being skewed toward custom builders, who were outnumbered last year by production home builders and diversified builders/remodelers.

More than a third of survey participants are specifying one to four more windows per project compared with three years ago, while 53.9 percent indicated that the number of windows per home stayed about the same. That number ranged from 10 to 15 windows for the largest group of respondents (27.2 percent), and 16 to 20 windows for almost a quarter of the survey. Nearly 40 percent stated that the average window unit size specified and installed for their homes today is larger than in the past three years, reflecting a homebuyer preference for letting in more natural light and maximizing outdoor views. The picture/fixed window is again the most popular type, followed by the double-hung.

When selecting doors, manufacturer reputation was the all-important consideration for 61 percent of survey participants. In contrast, less than 18 percent of respondents noted that manufacturer brand matters when selecting windows.

More findings about window and door selections are in the charts that follow.

**METHODOLOGY AND RESPONDENT INFORMATION:** This survey was distributed between March 10, 2018, and April 13, 2018, to a random sample of *Professional Builder's* print and digital readers and to members of Builder Partnerships. No incentive was offered. By closing date, a total of 162 eligible readers had returned surveys. Respondent breakdown by discipline: 33.1% custom home builder; 25.5% diversified builder/remodeler; 15.3% architect/designer engaged in home building; 12.1% production builder for move-up/move-down buyers; 2.6% production builder for first-time buyer; 1.9% luxury production builder; 1.9% multifamily builder; 1.9% manufactured, modular, log home, or systems builder, and 5.7% other. Approximately 50.6% sold one to five homes in 2017, and 8.9% sold more than 100 units.

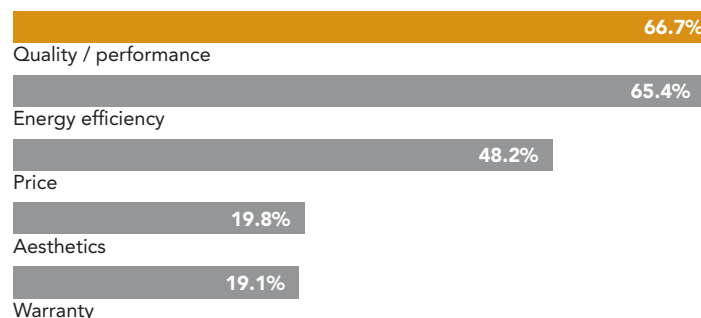
## WHAT TYPES OF WINDOWS DO YOU SPECIFY FOR YOUR HOMES?

	ALL PROJECTS	SOME PROJECTS	DO NOT USE
Picture / fixed	27.5%	67.6%	4.9%
Double-hung	26.0%	63.0%	11%
Single-hung	24.8%	44.5%	30.7%
Casement	21.5%	67.4%	11.1%
Transom	12.3%	80.4%	7.3%
Multi-slide glass door (window wall)	10.5%	60.5%	29%
Tilt and turn	8.5%	52.5%	39%
Skylight / clerestory	6.8%	66.7%	29%
Awning	6.7%	65.6%	27.7%
Arched	6.5%	74%	19.5%

BASE: 146; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2018 WINDOWS AND DOORS SURVEY

The influx of modern contemporary styling combined with the desire to bring the outdoors in and manufacturers offering products with large glass sizes explains why picture windows are once again the top window type and multi-slide glass doors have moved into the top six in this year's survey.

## WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE CONSIDERATIONS WHEN SPECIFYING WINDOWS FOR YOUR NEW HOMES?



BASE: 162; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2018 WINDOWS AND DOORS SURVEY

"Manufacturer's reputation" moved up to No. 6 after dropping last year from the top five to No. 9. Reliable windows that the manufacturer stands by was a top consideration for a Pennsylvania custom builder who wrote that the window maker "must be a well-known company that will be around in 10 years, in case there is a problem."

[EXCLUSIVE RESEARCH]

### WHAT TYPES OF WINDOW FRAME MATERIALS DO YOU SPECIFY FOR YOUR HOMES?

	ALL PROJECTS	SOME PROJECTS	DO NOT USE
Vinyl	29.4%	57.3%	13.3%
Wood	19.5%	65.6%	14.8%
Aluminum	9.0%	41.4%	49.6%
Composite	4.5%	51.4%	44.1%
Fiberglass	2.6%	53.1%	44.3%
Steel	0%	23%	77%

BASE: 143; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2018 WINDOWS AND DOORS SURVEY

Vinyl and wood are again the most used frame materials for windows, while aluminum—a metal once knocked for heat loss due to its thermal transfer properties—is getting some traction thanks to manufacturing innovations that integrate insulation into the frame.

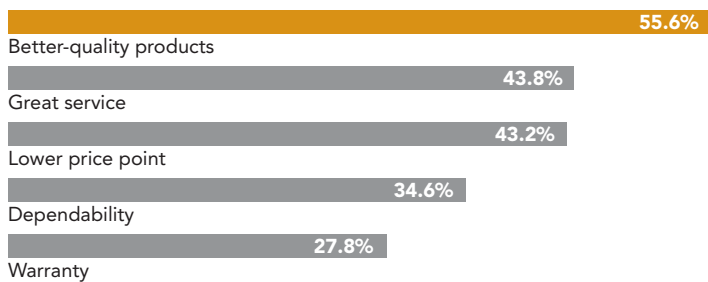
### WHY DO YOU BUY FROM YOUR CURRENT WINDOW SUPPLIER?



BASE: 157; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2018 WINDOWS AND DOORS SURVEY

“Range of products and options” returns to the top five after being pushed out last year by a combination of “Favorable service” and “Relationship.” A Colorado custom home builder who buys most windows direct from a manufacturer cites a 20-year history of happy homeowners.

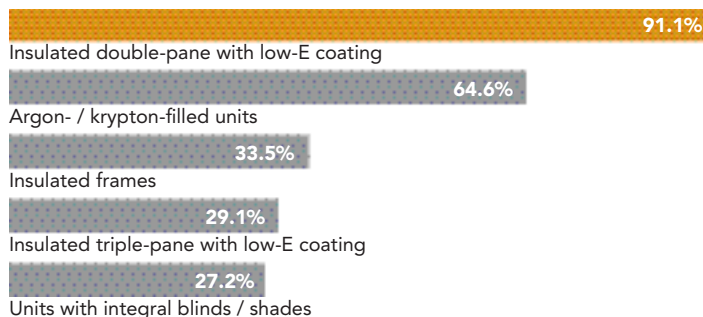
### WHAT IS THE BEST WAY FOR A WINDOW SUPPLIER TO GET YOU TO SWITCH YOUR BUSINESS?



BASE: 162; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2018 WINDOWS AND DOORS SURVEY

The top five compelling attributes that would persuade survey respondents to switch their window supplier remain the same as for last year’s survey.

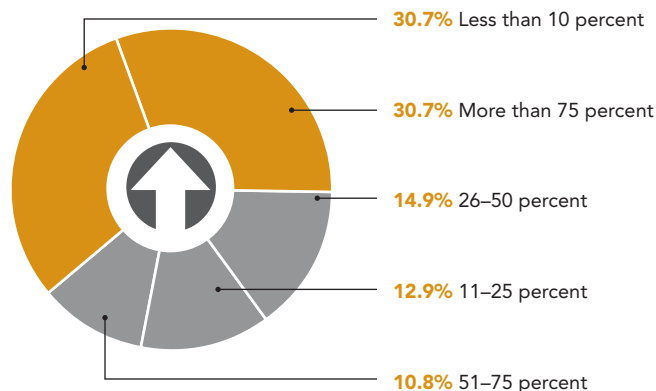
### WHICH TYPE OF ENERGY-EFFICIENT WINDOW TECHNOLOGIES HAVE YOU SPECIFIED IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?



BASE: 158; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2018 WINDOWS AND DOORS SURVEY

Tinted windows fell from the top five, as insulated frames and triple-pane windows gained ground among builders and architects compared with results from previous surveys. A Colorado custom builder noted that his company sold two window projects in the last six years with insulated frames. “Very costly and very long payback, if ever,” was his comment.

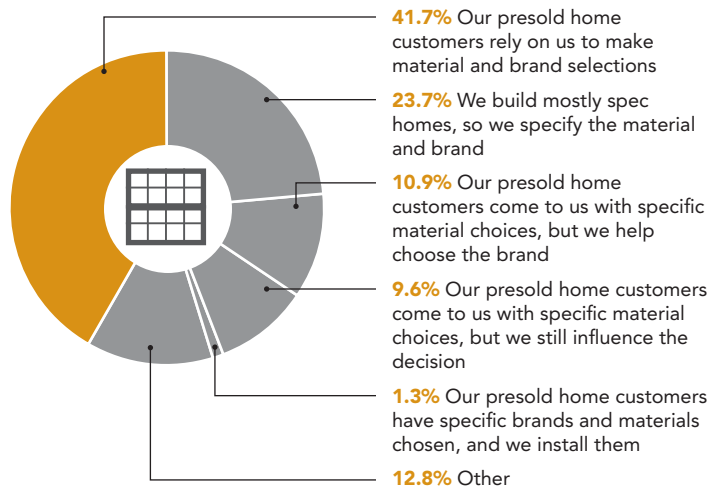
### IF YOU OFFER ENERGY-EFFICIENT WINDOWS AS AN OPTIONAL UPGRADE, APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR BUYERS CHOOSE TO UPGRADE THEIR WINDOWS?



BASE: 101; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2018 WINDOWS AND DOORS SURVEY

While 33 percent of builders and architects don’t offer energy-efficient windows as an optional upgrade at all, nearly 64 percent specify high-performance windows as standard, and slightly more than 30 percent indicated that they offer better and best upgrades. Over 40 percent of survey participants indicated that more than half of their customers pay more for their upgrades.

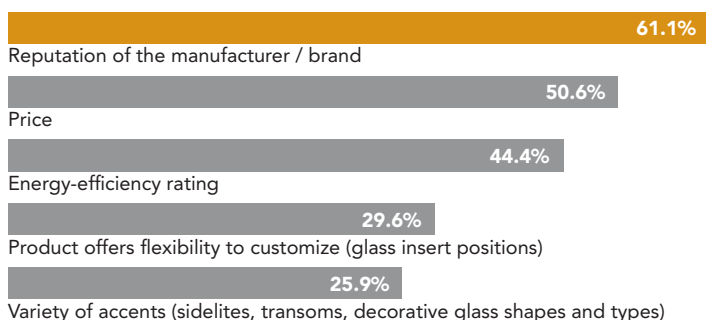
### WHAT BEST DESCRIBES THE WAY WINDOWS ARE SPECIFIED AND CHOSEN FOR MOST OF YOUR PROJECTS?



BASE: 156; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2018 WINDOWS AND DOORS SURVEY

Builders and architects typically pick the windows. An Indiana builder/remodeler wrote that his company specifies the best products across the board for its clients, and an Idaho architect stated that his firm helps clients with window selection by looking at the long-term effects that energy savings provide over the life of the home.

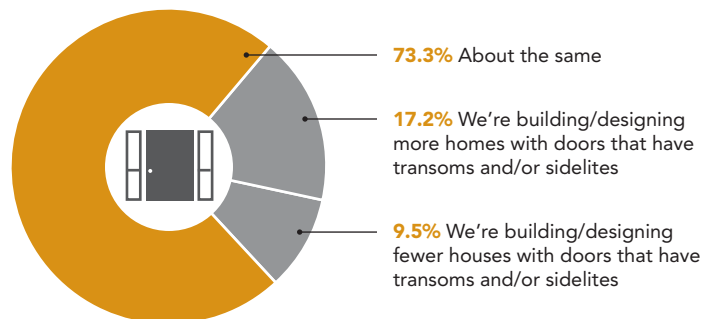
### WHAT ARE YOUR TOP CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHOOSING DOOR PRODUCTS?



BASE: 162; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2018 WINDOWS AND DOORS SURVEY

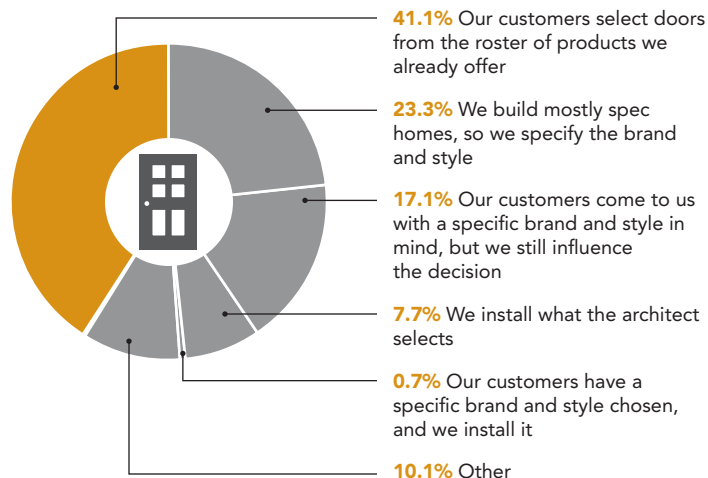
Marketing literature from one manufacturer says that doors are the "largest piece of art" most homeowners will ever own. And doors are now a more significant design element in the home, helping to tie the look of a house together. But aesthetics continue to trail far behind brand and price, which, since the 2014 survey, continue to be the top two considerations.

### COMPARED WITH THREE YEARS AGO, IS YOUR COMPANY BUILDING / DESIGNING MORE OR FEWER HOMES USING EXTERIOR DOORS WITH TRANSOMS AND SIDELITES?



BASE: 157; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2018 WINDOWS AND DOORS SURVEY

### WHAT BEST DESCRIBES THE WAY DOORS ARE SPECIFIED AND CHOSEN FOR MOST OF YOUR PROJECTS?



BASE: 158; PROFESSIONAL BUILDER 2018 WINDOWS AND DOORS SURVEY

Builders and architects typically hold the reins for influencing door selection, but design does factor in. An architect in Idaho wrote that interior and exterior door selections are made so these elements complement the overall design. We got a similar comment from a Florida architect whose firm custom designs doors based on the appropriate architectural style.