

# a season of GROWTH

## Change offers an opportunity to get even better

So much has changed in the past two years. While change can be uncomfortable, the end result can take you to something much more positive.

That has certainly been the experience of the team at Prycon Custom Building & Renovations Inc.

Brothers Steve and Matt Pryce have been designing and building homes for 28 years, growing from a small firm to a team of 20-plus permanent employees.

Over the years, they have developed a great many skills and techniques for building stunning custom homes and doing the projects efficiently. Or so they thought. But two years of turmoil and supply chain issues have led the Prycon team to reevaluate every aspect of their process. The net result has been builds that continue to be efficient, timely, and cost-effective.

“We’ve always prided ourselves on being a company that is always growing and assessing what we do,” says Steve. “But

it’s amazing how many things you do just because ‘we’ve always done it that way.’ The pandemic brought some of those things to light.”

### Clear communications

Something as simple as the way permits are issued has had a profound effect, Matt explains.

Pre-pandemic, the way to apply for a building permit was to go in person to the municipal planning department and submit the application. There would be a discussion with the planning official, and questions could be answered, and details defined.

When the pandemic began, in-person meetings were halted, and most planning departments switched to a virtual approach. Now, all communication and submissions are done digitally. The result is that all submissions need to be much more comprehensive than they used to be.

“You invest more time at the start of the project,” says Matt, “but that saves you time and avoids misunderstandings during the build.”

This approach eliminates any ambiguity. “The person in the planning office, the designers in our office, the municipal building inspector, the crews working on the site – everyone has a crystal-clear understanding of what needs to be done.” And that, he says, ends up saving time and money.

### Supply chain navigation

A similar level of clarity is required when it comes to obtaining materials.

Custom home construction always involves consultation between the homeowner and the designer. Most of those conversations take place long before construction begins, but in the pre-pandemic era it wasn’t unusual for the collaboration to continue throughout the build.

“It depended partly on the homeowner’s desires,” Steve explains. “If they weren’t sure what colour tile they wanted in the master bath, or what style of garage doors they wanted to have, it wasn’t a problem to make that decision midway through the build.”

Supply chain issues have changed all of that. “The delays – and the price volatility – are fluid,” Steve added.

“You can wait 16 weeks for windows, over six months for appliances and garage doors, and the list goes on.”

On the surface, that lack of flexibility may seem like a negative. “But if we are knowledgeable

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of the timelines, we can plan the build schedule more accurately. Although this forces homeowners to make decisions earlier in the process, it is a benefit to streamlining the project.”

### Retention counts

Of all the shortages that the pandemic has brought about, though, the most dramatic is people.

“Our industry was already facing a shortage of skilled labour, but the pandemic has made it even more challenging,” says Steve.

“Recruitment and retention are not just buzz words, they’re vital to surviving in construction.”

This is one area where Prycon has been well ahead

of the curve for a long time. “We’ve focused for years on building and retaining a loyal, enthusiastic team,” says Steve. “We build relationships, and we work hard to keep them.”

Having a reputation as an excellent place to work is an enormous advantage at any time, doubly so in a time of labour shortages.

“We can have the best processes in the world, the

most stunning designs, and amazing pricing. But none of that counts for anything if we don’t have the team to put our clients’ projects together.”

The changes over the past two years have been profound. But the goal at the end is the same: to build homes that exceed clients’ expectations, with a team of skilled, passionate people.

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Steve and Matt Pryce, Owners of Prycon Custom Building & Renovations Inc.



A tremendous amount of planning goes into crafting a stunning custom home like this.

