



Modernizing Customer Service Improves Productivity, Reduces Annual Warranty Expenses by 35%

Automatically keeping a detailed digital record of every notification, communication and work order holds both subcontractors and homeowners accountable, reduces costs, increases productivity and mitigates risk.



Founded in 2004, Edenbridge Homes is a leading builder of new homes in Northern California. The Edenbridge team represents multi-talented, seasoned veterans of the home building industry who have come together to provide quality built, efficiently planned new home designs for today's discerning home buyer. Every Edenbridge home features dramatic design, cutting edge technology, and thoughtful appointments blended for family-friendly environments.

THE CHALLENGE

Edenbridge worked diligently to manage their customer care obligations with a very organized but paper-intensive system. The process usually started with a call from a new homeowner to Edenbridge, a paper service request would be created, and a subcontractor would be called, faxed, or emailed to follow up. Eventually, work requests might be put into a spreadsheet, but it was difficult to hold trade partners accountable. Additional calls and emails were required to follow up and confirm that the work was completed and a final visit to the home, for owner signoff, ended the process.

"The entire process could take weeks and homeowners would have to call to get status updates," said Chris Gatley, principal at Edenbridge Homes. "We did our best to prevent issues from slipping through the cracks. Unfortunately, no tool, save expensive staff and managers, was available to guarantee success. We investigated an enterprise management system, but the IT requirements and investment made it an unattractive option. I wanted a customer care program that was user-friendly, nimble, risk-averse, and still allowed me to maintain a personal relationship with my homeowners."

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THE SOLUTION

During their very early years, Edenbridge's customer care processes and systems for service delivery were rudimentary. "We were growing a business, battling through the recession and focused more on building quality homes than the back end of the business. In 2012 we began climbing out of the recession, but it wasn't until 2013 that our service backlog generated enough of my attention to merit a full-time member of my field staff being assigned to manage customer care," said Gatley.

Their results began to improve but were often irregular, as they reacted to fluctuating numbers of escrow closings. Over time, they also learned that an experienced field superintendent might not be the best fit for managing customer care. Late in 2015, they brought in a young man with limited construction knowledge but excellent communication skills to take over. He was introduced to the SiteOne platform and began working with their support team to implement new processes for customer service. He acclimated to the system very quickly and began to leverage the information provided by SiteOne in a way Edenbridge never had prior.

"We are still a cyclical business, and as a result, our numbers swing up and down, but SiteOne now gives us the information always to know where we stand," added Gatley. "Instead of hiring new service technicians during robust sales periods, my field staff can now work cross-functionally by utilizing SiteOne. When times are slower, we diversify their roles while still maintaining the excellent service experience our homeowners expect."

SiteOne provides real-time dashboards and reports to track critical data points. Reports can also identify recurring, costly occurrences that can be corrected in future construction. The Edenbridge field staff is now able to service more homes in less time and exceed their service goals. Homeowners are kept up to date while service is being completed on their home with status updates and notifications every step of the way.

THE RESULTS

Most builders reserve one to two percent of their budget to cover future warranty expenses. Through careful analysis of their weekly reports from SiteOne and methodical time management, Edenbridge's warranty costs (including internal employees and overhead) over the last three years have averaged well below one percent.



"SiteOne has helped me facilitate the completion of nearly 5,000 unique items. Without SiteOne, I would have been buried beneath a giant pile of paperwork."

~Curtis Gatley, customer care manager at Edenbridge Homes

"SiteOne gets stronger as you use it. Snowflakes aren't powerful, but if you gather a few thousand of them together, you have an avalanche," said Curtis Gatley at Edenbridge Homes. "SiteOne is an external brain that I can share with other people — made only better by the fact that it doesn't forget. I convince my homeowners to use our owner portal by explaining that I can make mistakes. Emails can get buried; calls can be forgotten; faxes can get lost. But SiteOne can remind me that there is a pending item next door to my current appointment. SiteOne can save us money by holding our subcontractors and homeowners accountable. When the electrician says I forgot to call them, or my drywaller says the appointment was set for the afternoon instead of the morning, or my homeowner claims that I offered to do something I explicitly said I would not, I can reference my bonus memory and prove without a doubt that the call was made, the date was set, and the expectations were clear. I am fallible. SiteOne can make sure that I succeed."

"We now project up to a 35% saving in warranty cost which allows us to reinvest and improve our business year over year. We are pleased with our results and maintain a solid reserve, and when multiplied over ten years, that reserve adds up nicely. The increase in customer satisfaction and working in a paperless environment that connects owners, builders, and trades via the SiteOne portal is more than just a bonus,"

~ Chris Gatley, principal at Edenbridge Homes
