



CALIBER
PROJECTS

**Turning
Inspiration into
Opportunity**





Turning Inspiration into Opportunity



Committed to delivering quality, cost-effective homes on time and on budget, Caliber Projects is changing the construction process. Established and detailed, Caliber Projects focuses on all inclusive relationships to build homes that exceed expectation and enrich the home building and owning experience.

As a newly-minted graduate with a construction management degree, Justin Bontkes set out to start a brand and make a name for himself in the highly competitive Fraser Valley, British Columbia real estate market. While working with a developer, Bontkes purchased a series of lots for a substantially

reduced price, and soon after, Caliber Projects was born in 2008.

“I purchased three homes in Surrey and built three homes on them and sold them,” he said. “That was 2008/2009 and from there I continued to buy lots, build homes on them



and sell them and then I started doing custom homes as well.”

The road to entrepreneurship and company ownership wasn't conjured up overnight. It turns out, in fact, that Bontkes is no stranger to a construction site. During his time in the classroom, he honed his skills and worked as a project manager and carpenter. Harnessing the hands-on approach helped Bontkes turn his passion into opportunity and profit, but it also taught him the importance of finding

your own place in a crowded and competitive landscape.

“The inspiration was opportunity and just getting going with construction on my own and starting to build a brand,” Bontkes said. “There was profit in it as well and took advantage of the market that was down and went from there.”

After those three initial flips, Caliber's reputation across the region continued. Just two





years removed from his first foray into independent construction, Bontkes built a number of single family homes between 2008 and 2010. In 2011, Caliber’s growth exploded when Bontkes partnered with his brother and built 56 single family homes in Coquitlam.

“Ultimately you learn a trade and you learn the physical aspects of the trade,” Bontkes said. “You work for a number of companies as a subcontractor and you’re exposed to how different contractors operate and it gives you an idea of how you want to operate yourself while gaining an understanding of your identity as a company once you start on your own.”

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THREE FACTORS, ONE FOCUS

Operating on a small ship, Caliber's expertise in construction management is made up of eight people. Deeply rooted in the community, the company maintains strong morals and ethics while being fiercely dedicated to excellence, mentorship and growth opportunities. Family owned and operated their mission of accountability and responsibility for their work impacts and influences internal culture most.

"With commitment to delivering quality, cost effective homes with budget, schedule and quality in mind we're able to put

together a united front to completing our tasks," Bontkes said. "With respect to building homes, if we keep our quality policy in mind it provides us with the vision we need to complete the task."

Keeping it local and working within the Fraser Valley, Langley and Surrey, Caliber's geographic presence remains entrenched within a half an hour of the company's head office. Being centralized within the community has strengthened Caliber's brand recognition and their mission towards re-defining the status quo and re-establishing transparency, honesty and integrity for clients by providing the best quality product.



“The process we use is based on customer satisfaction,” Bontkes said. “We understand the construction and development industry as three factors: There is budget, price and schedule. We use those three factors in creating our core principles and in order to satisfy a customer you need to establish what’s key up front.”

“If somebody wants a home built quickly, we’ll do that,” he continued. “But we’ll make them aware that they may be spending more money or compromising on quality. We operate using those factors and we try to put

equal emphasis on all three. By doing this we’re able to maximize customer satisfaction.”

In an industry known for increasing costs and decreasing standards, Caliber ensures that the customer is involved and informed from pre-construction planning and the construction and post construction process. A crucial ally in helping Caliber maximize satisfaction as been the company’s awareness and commitment to using technology to its advantage and staying ahead of the always-evolving learning curves in construction



and home building.

“With respect to our customers and working with our developers, we use customer management software called ConAssist,” Bontkes said. “This portal gives the homeowners access to everything from specifications and service work to deficiencies and request for services from the developer. It’s automated, well established and it’s very customer friendly.”

THE QUALITY POLICY

Like every brand out there, individuality

and uniqueness is paramount in garnering exposure and notoriety. At Caliber, quality remains their brand and market differentiator. Marked as the basis for what the company does and how it goes about doing it, their very own quality process remains a pivotal parameter in every job, project and relationship – from home owners and suppliers down to Caliber’s own employees.

“Ultimately we realized that in order to achieve the goals set out by our mission statement we needed to bring along our key sub trades and suppliers alongside our customers and integrate all of the stakeholders in the process of building and developing to maximize satisfaction,” Bontkes said.

“We found that in order to obtain maximum quality, best pricing and meet timelines, we couldn’t do it by just demanding things from our sub trades,” Bontkes continued. “There’s a level of responsibility for the people we work with and we want to make sure they’re operating and doing their jobs in a safe manner. It’s a fully integrated process where trades and suppliers work together with Caliber to satisfy the needs of the customer.”

Implementing a successful quality policy is



a careful and cautious endeavor – and not just a fancy marketing ploy. Introduced and embraced since the outset, Bontkes finds a challenge in instilling and maintaining the Caliber quality policy to prospective team members.

“The biggest challenge we face is trying to find quality people to complete the work,” he said. “One of the things we do is pre-qualify everybody that gets involved in our projects. To pre-qualify you need to show confidence

in the work we’re looking for. You need to have references and there’s an interview process as well.”

The intimate and interactive interviews reflect Caliber’s maturity as a company. Not one to settle for less, Bontkes acknowledges the less-skilled shortcomings of the construction workforce and that success is relative to the relationships you forge with the suppliers and sub trades.



“We’re very keen on creating long lasting relationships and we find that we get the best value from our subcontractors and suppliers by continually showing loyalty and support for their operations,” Bontkes said.

“Part of the quality policy is establishing relationships on mutual bounds of respect,” Bontkes continued. “It’s about trying to be realistic in our approach when it comes to timeline and price. It’s about general respect, working ethically and doing what you say

you’re going to do.”

DIFFERENT THAN TYPICALLY DONE

They are not bound by hierarchical structure at Caliber Projects – Bontkes likes it and wants it that way.

“I don’t have positions,” Bontkes said. “On my business cards, there are no titles. We all operate as a team. Hierarchy is understood but not enforced. We all work for the good





of each other.” “As a smaller organization, with respect to Caliber itself, the environment isn’t super corporate,” he continued. “We’re able to make decisions easily. We’re able to communicate directly to our employees and sub contractors. Being family owned and operated allows us to ensure that the environment is controlled and that a high level of morals and ethics are continually strived for.”

Extending beyond just the ease of communication between all involved at Caliber, the hierarchical structure acts as a platform for motivation, career development and team work.

“Because there is no hierarchal structure, there are lots of opportunities for fellow employees to work together. We put plenty of emphasis on mentorship. Everyone who’s

been here has come up through the ranks and has learned their trade from someone else. Everybody enjoys seeing each other succeed.”

The exposure gained from personal experience has guided Caliber Projects over the last seven years. From apprentice to owner, Bontkes wants to continue to lead by example and build with craft, quality and camaraderie from within. Moving forward, Bontkes’ future plans are clear:

“To continue doing what we’re doing, but to do more of it,” he said. “I want to be able to increase my influence as an owner and take on more projects and increase the volume of work that we’re completing,” he said. “We’re not looking to expand our market at this point, but I could see us getting into larger scale projects.”

