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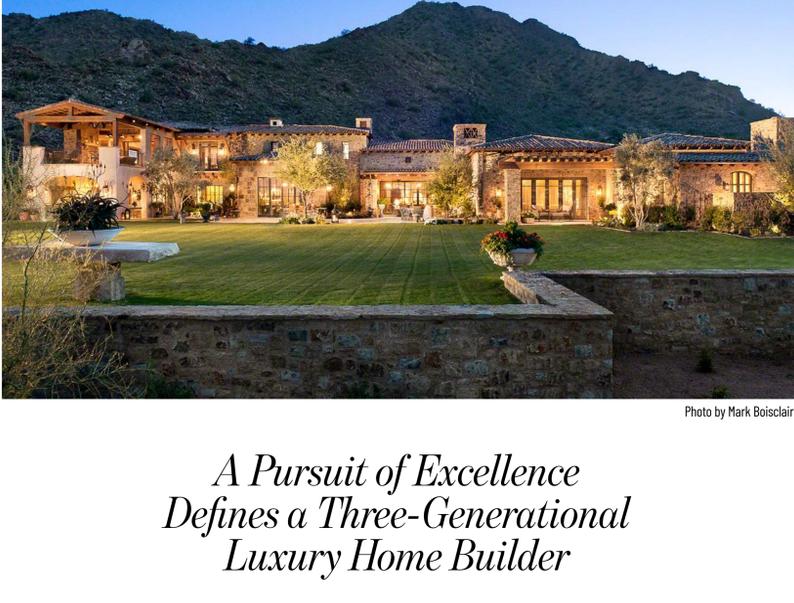


Photo by Mark Boisclair

A Pursuit of Excellence Defines a Three-Generational Luxury Home Builder

by NANCY ERDMANN

Humble beginnings can often inspire the very best in us to push through the tough times and drive us forward in a quest to make our dreams a reality.

For Jerry Meek, president of Scottsdale-based **Desert Star Construction** (DSC), he learned that from his father, and he's sharing that value with his son, Jeremy Meek. Striving to be the best at what he does, Jerry started at a very young age. When he was just five-years-old, he visited construction sites with his general contractor father and pounded nails into floors. "It was a great way to spend time with my dad," he remembers.



When he was 14 he bought a truck, started his own landscaping company, and hired someone to drive him from job to job to trim trees. When he was in junior high school, he became a carpenter's apprentice. "I just loved to get up every day and work," he says.

With his entrepreneurial spirit and high energy, Meek embarked on a carpentry business at the age of 18 with his father. "It wasn't easy at first," recalls Meek. "We took every job we could, including construction and remodeling work that no one else wanted." Encouraged by famed architect George Christensen, who provided them with small jobs that eventually turned into new home construction, he got his general contractor's license in 1978, and that was the start of DSC.

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For the past 40 years, the award-winning firm has made its name in Arizona's custom luxury home market and is one of the top builders in the nation. "We literally have the trademark on building Personal Resorts®," says Meek, whose company has also worked on several notable commercial projects, including the LEED Gold Certified remodel of the historic El Chorro in Paradise Valley.



Photo by Mark Boisclair

With more than 150 high-scale residential projects completed in Paradise Valley alone, the company has worked on some of the most prestigious homes in the state. "Our clients are heads of large, privately and publicly held companies who put high value on quality and aesthetics. They understand economics, communicate well, and have integrity. They want to work with someone who is going to bring value to the project in terms of experience and reliability."

"We tailor our architect, interior designers, consultants, and trade contractors based on what our clients need," Meek explains.

Meek says some of the company's favorite projects are those where the client comes to them first, allowing DSC to do what it does best: build the team from the bottom up. "We tailor our architect, interior designers, consultants, and trade contractors based on what our clients need," Meek explains. "We are in the people business and need to be good stewards of our clients' time and money. We have to be very organized and diligent in our work, honoring their schedules. We have never had a project come in late."

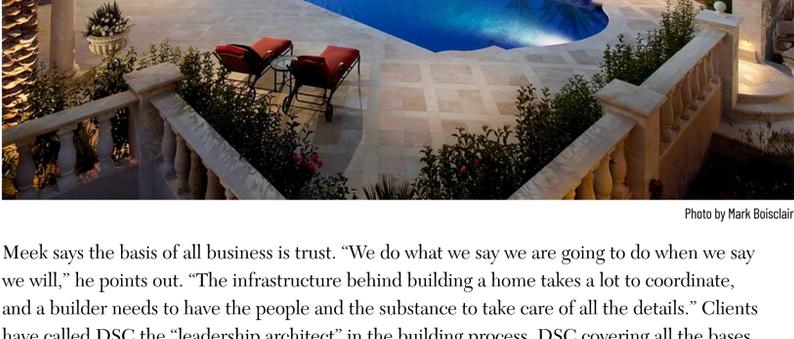


Photo by Mark Boisclair

Meek says the basis of all business is trust. "We do what we say we are going to do when we say we will," he points out. "The infrastructure behind building a home takes a lot to coordinate, and a builder needs to have the people and the substance to take care of all the details." Clients have called DSC the "leadership architect" in the building process. DSC covering all the bases, from program and construction management, to scheduling, budgeting and site development, to salvaging, green building certification and property management.



Photo by Mark Boisclair

Taking a proactive approach to caring for its clients' homes once they're built, Desert Star Concierge® offers specialized programs to care for the home and keep it operating at maximum efficiency. "The idea is to deliver preventative and restorative services to maximize a home's systems and equipment so that homeowners can go about their lives without having to worry about the details," says Meek. "We even carry an inventory of products if something goes wrong, such as gate motors, which can sometimes take a while to get replacement parts for."

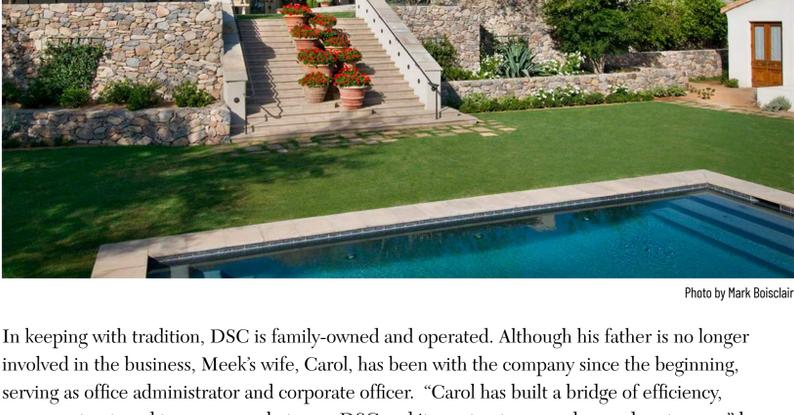


Photo by Mark Boisclair

In keeping with tradition, DSC is family-owned and operated. Although his father is no longer involved in the business, Meek's wife, Carol, has been with the company since the beginning, serving as office administrator and corporate officer. "Carol has built a bridge of efficiency, accuracy, trust, and transparency between DSC and its contractors, vendors and customers," her husband enthuses.



The couple's son, Jeremy, who is vice president and also an owner, has also played a key role in building the business and moving it forward since coming on board full time in 2010, especially in regards to technology. "Jeremy has automated every process we have," notes his father, who says this has saved the company time and money. "Technology cuts down on the lag time in getting changes out to team members in the field," says the younger Meek, who was the first in Arizona to achieve the LEED for Homes Accredited Professional designation. "Properly leveraging technology makes a big difference in speeding the process up." He is also heavily focused on green building certifications, building retrofits, and renewable energy.

So what does the future hold for this three-generation legacy? "More, bigger, and better!" says Jeremy. "Technology continues to drive the project delivery process. What we're dealing with right now is a shortage of skilled labor and management, and companies like ours need to reach out to the community and offer training programs." In 2017, DSC established two scholarships at Arizona State University for Construction Management students, including the Team DSC Excellence in Craftsmanship Scholarship endowment which has thus far raised more than \$100,000.



Photo by Mark Boisclair

"We have to remain adaptive, as change is the only constant," says Meek. "It's easier to adapt to change with technology, and it makes the process of building a home more fun for all involved because when executed properly, the technology platforms help make life less complicated." In a proactive move, DSC is preparing residences for technology that is not yet available by prewiring and roughing in for potential future upgrades, giving this multi-generational luxury custom home builder even greater opportunity to exceed client expectations in the future.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT CLIENT?

- Relationship is based upon mutual trust
- Understand it's a two-way interview
- Places a high value on aesthetics
- Understand and respect what we can do for them
- Communicates well
- Has integrity in all areas
- Knows that we can only succeed if they want us to succeed
- Wants us to have their back
- Appreciates that we are good stewards of their time and money

This post was produced in partnership with our friends at Desert Star Construction. For more information on luxury homes, go to iconiclif.com/a-pursuit-of-excellence-defines-a-three-generational-luxury-home-builder.

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