

Fujitsu: Optimize the Green Building Trend for Your HVAC Business

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It doesn't take a bank of windmills on the roof to create environmentally friendly construction these days. In fact, the little things that are often out of sight can have much more impact than many people realize. The structure's insulation is the public's top of mind green building material, but the truth is that HVAC systems can make a much bigger impact on the energy-efficiency and indoor health of a home or office.



Builders and remodelers are beginning to realize how much their little-seen climate control workhorses do for their green construction ratings, as evidenced by a recent National Association of Home Builders' report titled "Green and Healthier Homes: Engaging Consumers of all Ages in Sustainable Living." Among this population, having "highly efficient HVAC and/or water heating equipment" was rated second most important in the energy efficient products and practices category, second only to having properly sized and installed HVAC systems.

Builders Know HVAC is Key to Green Construction

A full 87 percent of builders and remodelers surveyed by NAHB consider energy efficient HVAC vital to green building. That's four percent higher than even "insulation exceeding code minimums," which ranked third with 83 percent weighing it a high (and obvious) priority for energy-efficiency. Even among builders who aren't particularly invested in green building, doing less than 16 percent of their yearly projects green, 80 percent have placed an emphasis on using a high efficient HVAC system or water heater. It also doesn't hurt that customer demand for green building is climbing as prices drop, with 68 percent of home buyers wanting greener homes in 2015.

The green building trend can spell increased success for your HVAC business. Not only do homeowners want to upgrade to more efficient systems that will ultimately give them more control over their indoor environments and save them money, builders are increasingly chasing LEED certification for structures ranging from single family homes to apartment buildings and offices. In fact, 31 percent of home builders are currently doing more than 60 percent of their projects using green methods; 51 percent expect to be at that level of green work or higher by 2020. There has never been a better time than now to take advantage of the green building trend.



HVAC continues to rank at the top of green practices for improving a home's performance among builders and remodelers. Ninety-seven percent of those home builders who have more than 90 percent of their projects certified green consider a highly efficient HVAC system or water heater a primary consideration. Although many builders are familiar with SEER ratings, many aren't aware of the energy loss caused by improperly protected ductwork. As much as 30 percent of energy consumption of an HVAC system can be attributed to ducts, even when properly installed.

Leveraging the Ductless Mini-Split for Green Construction

Although many North American builders are far more experienced with central heating and air units, if they're looking for true energy efficiency, the key is the ductless mini-split system. Wildly popular in the Asia Pacific region, with about 80 percent market share, mini-split systems can rate as high as 33 SEER — two and a half times more efficient than the 13 SEER of a typical central air unit. In addition, there are no long runs of ducts to foster energy loss, only directly delivered, highly efficient climate control. It's no wonder that ductless mini-splits are forecasted to see an annual growth rate of 14 percent worldwide each year through 2020.



A few prominent advantages of ductless mini-splits like those manufactured by Fujitsu include:

Individual Zone Control. Whether retrofitting an older home that has areas which are difficult to heat or cool, or starting from scratch and seeking to allow the future owner more flexibility in climate control, the individual zone control of a mini-split ductless system will be a welcome feature. With options to both save energy by turning systems off to rooms that aren't in use and heat specific rooms more than others to create the ideal environment for each space, zone control gives homeowners and tenants more ways to enjoy their indoor spaces.

Smart Technology. Remote access allows occupants to turn systems on or off, up or down, at their leisure. If a homeowner wants to leave the heat off until right before they came home to keep energy bills low, it's a simple matter of connecting to the system with a smartphone, tablet or PC and making the necessary changes. Did they forget to turn the air down in the bedroom before climbing into bed? No problem. They just need to grab their smartphone and dial it down.

High Energy Efficiency. No ducts means no energy loss from ductwork. This combined with the increased SEER ratings possible with mini-splits means they can take a big bite out of energy bills all year long. A homeowner could save as much as 25 percent of their utility costs by switching to a mini-split ductless system over a traditional central heating and air configuration.

Cleaner Air. Fujitsu mini-split systems are designed with cleaner interior air in mind. No ductwork means no dust or mold to blow around a home and the built-in ion deodorization filter absorbs odors for years. In addition, dust, mold spores and microorganisms are caught in the apple-catechin filter during the air-scrubbing process, providing allergen-free air so all occupants can breathe a little easier.

Low Environmental Impact. Green homeowners and tenants don't just want green construction methods, they want to know that their overall impact is easier on the environment. That's why ductless mini-split systems are designed with earth-friendly elements from the bottom up. Using a refrigerant called R410A, known for its potential for zero ozone depletion, ductless systems can greatly increase the green footprint of any structure by eliminating more harmful refrigerants.

Don't forget that super-efficient systems like ductless mini-splits from Fujitsu are often eligible for local and regional rebates from utility providers, as well. These incentives can often help make a greener purchase possible when a buyer is torn between their HVAC budget and their conscience.

As the green building trend gets hotter, there will be fierce demand for HVAC experts who are well-versed in the most environmentally friendly options available. Today's the day to investigate Fujitsu mini-split systems at <http://www.fujitsugeneral.com/>.

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