

Opportunity in Home Performance for the HVAC Contractor



There has never been more public attention given to home performance than in recent history. With this attention comes a tremendous amount of opportunity for those in the HVAC industry.

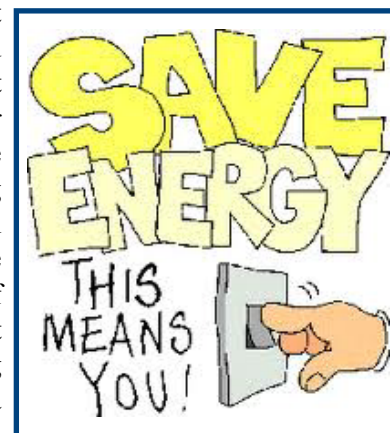
For many HVAC contractors, the home performance arena is an intimidating area to become involved with, due to the unknown. Many contractors question where they can make a difference and others ask how they can get involved. For years it has appeared that the only opportunity for HVAC contractors was in sealing ductwork and replacing old equipment with high efficiency equipment. Others believed that to make a difference they had to start a full blown home performance contracting division within their HVAC companies.

Regardless of the level of investment you make, there are areas of opportunity in home performance that are often overlooked. The biggest opportunity for HVAC contractors comes from the installed performance of HVAC systems. When you can deliver 90% or better of a properly sized HVAC system's rated capacity into your customer's homes, you have effectively delivered an important piece of energy efficiency that has been missing for decades.

This waste has caused many homeowners to overpay their utilities on a monthly basis for years. With the days of equipment oversizing slowly coming to an end, companies that operate on a price-per-ton basis will have to learn new ways to separate themselves from their competition. This is where forward-thinking HVAC companies can move ahead and position themselves for the future that home performance is bringing. As home performance and HVAC contracting move closer together, progressive HVAC contractors are finding that by performing better installations they can establish a firm role within the home performance industry.

For most HVAC contractors, replacing windows, adding insulation and light bulb upgrades doesn't seem very appealing. What is appealing though is the ability to reduce the heat load of the building by up to 50% by improving the duct system and then being able to prove efficiency to homeowners. This is only accomplished with proper design and verification that the design is actually doing what was promised. When your HVAC systems deliver 90% of their rated capacity many of the problems associated with home performance seem to go away.

On the flip side of this, problems that did not previously exist can also be created if a firm understanding of what is going on in the home does not exist. What may appear to be a simple duct sealing job could create the change that causes a gas water heater to become dangerous, causing it to spill carbon monoxide into the home. Be aware of the cause and effect that exists by making changes inside of a home.



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Member Spotlight

Lindsey K Grilec
Sales Representative
Southwest Town

What was your motivation to get into HVACR? My Dad. He is the President of Southwest Town. I had worked for him while growing up on spring/summer breaks, and started here full time five years ago. But, I am still not sure what I want to be when I grow up, but for now I am really enjoying myself!

How long have you been apart of the HVACR industry? All 29 years of my life, but as a fulltime profession for 5 years.

What would you say has been your greatest achievement in business, AND what has been your greatest obstacle?

My greatest achievement has been overcoming my greatest obstacle which is gaining the trust of customers my Dad has taken care of for 20+ years. I would call them, and they would call my Dad back. I would email them, and they would respond to my Dad. I love their loyalty to him, but I just couldn't show them how I could help them if they didn't give me a chance. So I started dropping in with donuts and coffee, talking about sports, weekends and kids, and I asked LOTS of questions to get them talking to me...and I just listened. After a few visits they started to find value in our relationship and now I can assist my Dad in managing many of his larger accounts with confidence.

How would you sum up your experience in the industry? I am constantly growing and learning because this industry demands it!

What benefits do you feel being Women in the HVACR industry has had for you? I really enjoy the relationships/ friendships I've made. It is refreshing to find women around the country to talk to and learn from each others experiences. We as a group have a lot of incredible knowledge and support to spread all around!

Tell me about your company and your role within the company, how has that changed over the years? Southwest Town Mechanical is an Industrial and Commercial mechanical contractor in the Chicago area. We are a family operated business and we have



approximately 40 employees. When I was first hired on full time I was strictly cold calling, then I started a little bit of outside sales with another more experienced sales person, and eventually I was out quoting maintenance contracts and small repairs on my own. In the past year or so I have changed gears. I just recently became our safety leader, I take care of service quoting and managing contracts, and I still try to do as much marketing as possible. My job responsibilities have varied from year to year. This year my focus and responsibilities are surrounding internal operations. My job is ever changing, I am learning something new about the business everyday and I love it!

What would be your advice to a female someone new to our industry?

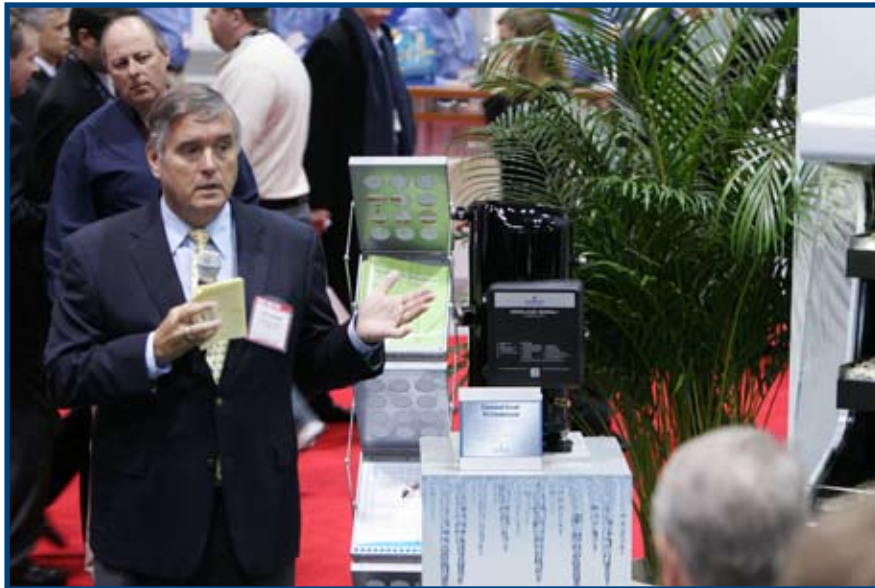
When you are new in a role or at a company, don't get frustrated if you get pulled away from your day to day role to help a co-worker with any particular task. I have learned so many parts of the business by filling in as a dispatcher, filling out the OSHA forms, lining up subs for a job or gathering unit information for a maintenance contract. You should be learning something new everyday, and if you are not, go on the internet and Google something you are interested in, be it energy efficiency, safety, controls, etc.

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Sponsor Spotlight

Emerson Climate Technologies – Driving HVACR technology innovation

Emerson Climate Technologies, a business segment of Emerson, is the world’s leading provider of heating, air conditioning and refrigeration solutions for residential, industrial and commercial applications. The group combines best-in-class technology with proven engineering, design, distribution, educational and monitoring services to provide customized, integrated climate-control solutions for customers worldwide. The innovative solutions of Emerson Climate Technologies,



which include industry-leading brands such as Copeland Scroll™ and White-Rodgers™, improve human comfort, safeguard food and protect the environment.

In February, at the AHR Expo, Emerson Climate Technologies celebrated the 25th anniversary of Copeland Scroll compressor technology and launched a new ultra-efficient refrigeration compressor that can save a grocery store up to ten percent on its refrigeration-related energy expenses.

Emerson Climate Technologies’ industry leadership extends beyond award-winning product innovations to serving as a resource in important

industry issues, including safety and environmental discussions around refrigerants.

Amid global environmental concerns and increased regulation in HVACR industry, a growing number of organizations are turning to both global as well as United States-based experts from Emerson Climate Technologies to address the sustainability, efficiency and safety issues surrounding refrigerant evaluation and selection. Emerson’s perspective on global refrigerant options is built on its years of experience in optimizing air conditioning and refrigeration systems, rigorous system testing and an internal network of experts around the world.

In 2011, Emerson employees presented papers and led refrigerant discussions at events like the Food Marketing Institute 2011 Energy & Store Development Conference in Atlanta, the International Congress of Refrigeration in Prague and the Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Manufacturers Association in India. Emerson representatives also took part in the United Nations conference on the Montreal Protocol on global warming.

The company plans to continue to lead the industry discussion on refrigerants as new regulatory changes emerge.

To learn more about Emerson Climate Technologies, visit EmersonClimate.com.



Energy Saving Tips

- Install a programmable thermostat to keep your house comfortably warm in the winter and comfortably cool in the summer. When properly installed and set, you could save about \$180 per year in energy costs.
- Use compact fluorescent light bulbs with the ENERGY STAR® label.
- Air dry dishes instead of using your dishwasher's drying cycle.
- Turn off your computer and monitor when not in use. Even when they're turned off, home electronics use energy to power features like clock displays and remote controls. U.S. households spend roughly \$100 per year to power devices while in this "standby" power mode.
- Plug home electronics, such as TVs and DVD players, into power strips; turn the power strips off when the equipment is not in use (TVs and DVDs in standby mode still use several watts of power).
- Lower the thermostat on your hot water heater to 120°F.
- Take short showers instead of baths. Showers use up to 30 percent of your household water - so shorten those showers to cut hot water costs.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes.
- Drive sensibly. Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes gasoline.
- Look for the ENERGY STAR label on home appliances and products. ENERGY STAR products meet strict efficiency guidelines set by the U.S. Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency.
- During winter time, you can still keep your energy bill stable. Set your thermostat to 68–70F during the day and 65–68F at night.
- Get the most comfort from your ceiling fan. In the summer, it should turn in a counter-clockwise direction.

In the winter, run it at low speed, but clockwise.

- High-performance windows, solar window screens, and qualified window films can eliminate "hot spots" in your home.
- Visit <http://www.energysavers.gov/> for more energy-saving ideas.



*9th Annual
Women In HVACR Conference
September 18th & 19th
Navigating Change
Held during
Mechanical Systems Week 2012
in Schaumburg, IL*

*Join us Tuesday evening
September 18th
for a Luau event
"Changes in Latitude"
As we kick off our conference
Wear your favorite Hawaiian style*

*Free for WHVACR
Paid Conference attendees
Non-Member and companion
Tickets \$30.00 ea.*

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With the typical home performance contractor having a lack of knowledge in regards to the HVAC system and the intricacies associated with it, they are looking for relationships with quality HVAC companies they can trust. These home performance contractors are not looking for the HVAC companies that are oversizing systems based on rule-of-thumb sizing methods. They are looking for the progressive HVAC contractors with the ability to improve and verify the performance of their systems. This ability will go a long way in helping to establish your company's place inside the home performance industry. Keep in mind, the overwhelming majority of home performance contractors and HVAC contractors do not measure live HVAC system performance. It is typically assumed based on tight duct systems and high efficiency equipment.

Home performance holds many new opportunities for forward-thinking contractors. It is also becoming more evident that the future belongs to those who can educate their customers on how to actually reduce utility costs and offer better performing, smaller and more efficient systems. Once you have the ability to provide properly sized systems that deliver 90% or better of their rated capacity, you are ready for the real HVAC opportunity in home performance.

The question is will you embrace these new opportunities and take advantage of them?

***Submitted by:
David Richardson***

David is a Curriculum Developer and Trainer focused on Home Performance with National Comfort Institute, Inc., a training and membership organization centered on helping contractors grow and become more profitable. They are also a proud sponsor of Women in HVACR. To find out more about National Comfort Institute, visit their website at www.nationalcomfortinstitute.com.



Member Spotlight

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Southwest Town Family Picnic 2011

Know what you DON'T know, and admit it. Don't dance around a question...pick up the phone and get the answer from someone who does know. Then write it down, and learn it!

And, carry a camera. It will save you lots of time and you won't have to rely on your memory so much!

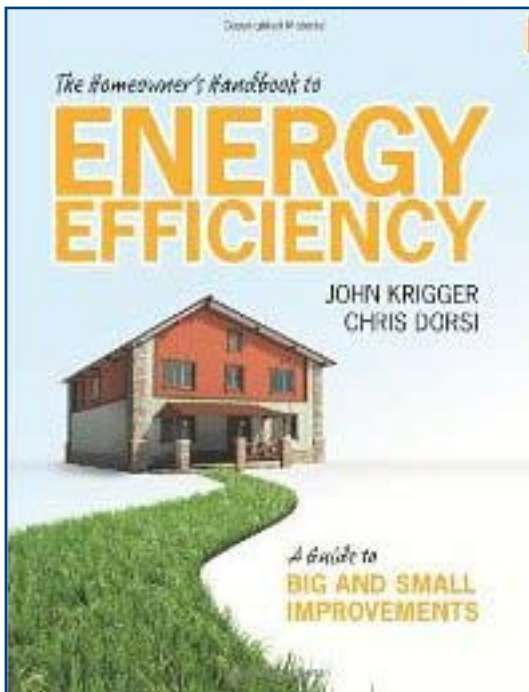
Tell me about yourself personally- Hobbies, Family, Sports, How do you stay grounded. I love sports, especially playing slow pitch softball. I spend my free time watching my nephew and my boyfriend's son playing football, basketball and baseball. On the weekends I love to get away to Lake Michigan or work on projects at my house.

Where did you go to school? Tech? College Degree? I attended Northern Illinois University for Interior Architecture for two years and then changed my mind, and switched to Columbia College Chicago. I graduated from Columbia with a Bachelors in Communications-Creative Sports Marketing.

April Book of the Month

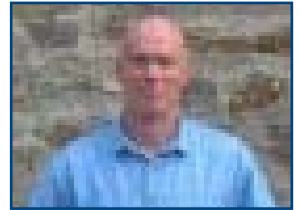
*The Homeowner's Handbook to Energy Efficiency:
A Guide to Big and Small Improvements*

In *The Homeowner's Guide to Energy Efficiency*, John Krigger and Chris Dorsi help homeowners set realistic personal goals for reducing their energy consumption. Their methods for making homes more energy efficient will also improve comfort, safety, durability, and resale value. They guide readers through the process of assessing current energy usage and predicting the benefits and estimating the costs of remodeling options. With projects ranging from simple fixes to large-scale renovations, this book offers solutions for the energy-conscious homeowner, regardless of budget, technical ability, or time.



About the Authors:

John Krigger is a highly respected authority in the field of energy conservation for buildings and the author of several books. He has been a passionate advocate of efficient construction technology for over thirty years. He is now working with other building scientists to develop the next generation of construction techniques for North America.



Chris Dorsi has spent the last thirty years fine-tuning homes across North America. He has founded construction companies, developed real estate projects, and audited thousands of residential buildings. He is a widely acclaimed author and speaker who has motivated and enabled both homeowners and trade professionals to improve the efficiency and minimize the environmental footprint of their buildings.



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