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HOW TO CROSS THE CULTURE BARRIER

New Home Company is one of a new breed of public builder, entrepreneurial and obsessed with culture

By [John McManus](#)

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Mike Cunningham

New Home Company Team: (from left), Fabienne Smolinski, VP, People, Larry Webb, CEO, Joan Marcus-Colvin, Senior VP Marketing & Design, and AJ Jarvis, President, Southern California.

For The New Home Company chief executive officer Larry Webb, two questions lie at the heart of his organization's culture. Who are we? and What do we want to be? Those two questions are there the day a company opens its doors; they're there each day when the last person leaves the office, and they're going to be there through every part of every housing cycle for as long as the company is a going concern.

Webb has seen a housing cycle or two, or five. Coming out of the last and worst downturn since the Great Depression, Larry and a few of his professional friends started a new company whose pulse all-day, every day beats those two questions

About the Author



JOHN MCMANUS

John McManus is an award-winning editor/director for the Residential Construction Group at Hanley Wood in Washington, DC. In addition to the *Builder* digital, print, and in-person editorial and programming portfolio, the group includes strategic content direction for *Affordable Housing Finance*, *Apartment Finance Today*, *Custom Home*, *Multifamily Executive*, and *Residential Architecture*.

through the entire system--hierarchical, geographical, by discipline, and by focus--who are we? What do we want to be?

The answer to the two questions, of course, is the same. We are how and where our customers want to live. And we want to continue to be that.

Those two questions go beyond the words. They're actions. They're challenges. They can be measured. They can be recognized in real, specific, clear, down-to-earth ways. Not just concepts. Culture as a concept may sound good, but rings false if it's not given action. Balanced and passion-fueled team work is the only tangible expression of an organization's culture. Culture is not anything. Culture does. Culture isn't simply a goal. Culture matters.

Larry Webb, will team up with Joan Marcus-Colvin, Senior Vice President Sales, Marketing & Design, AJ Jarvis, President, Southern California, and Fabienne Smolinski, VP, People, The New Home Company at the **Housing Leadership Summit**, May 11-13, in Miami, to present how they eat, sleep, and breathe the two questions--who are we? and what do we want to be?--as part of their way to activate trusting, entrepreneurial, innovative, and passionate work across the organization's ranks.

A recent reflection of their success, business title Inc. just honored the New Home Company team as part of its 2015 Founders 40, an "honor roll of publicly traded entrepreneurial companies. [Here's the story.](#)

Meanwhile, you can come to **HLS** and hear first-hand why culture matters when it comes to succeeding in home building.

How do you cultivate culture in your firm?



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	Net Orders			Settlements			Average Clos	
	Qtr. Ended:	3/15	3/14	% Chg	3/15	3/14	% Chg	3/15
D.R. Horton	11,135	8,669	29.9%	8,243	6,194	33.1%	\$281,305	271,100
PulteGroup	5,139	4,863	5.7%	3,365	3,436	-2.1%	\$323,000	317,100
NVR	3,926	3,325	18.1%	2,534	2,211	14.6%	\$371,000	351,100
Meritage Homes	1,979	1,525	29.8%	1,335	1,109	20.4%	\$387,000	366,100
M/I Homes	1,108	982	12.8%	717	732	-2.0%	\$325,000	299,100
Total	23,287	19,264	20.9%	16,194	13,682	18.4%	\$314,652	\$306,100

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