



A legacy of relationships

Photo: Luke Phillips at LSPPhoto

Facet Custom Builders is a custom home building and renovation company based in Cumberland, British Columbia. They are a company founded with the goal of providing clients with a premium product and an equally-premium experience. In pursuit of that goal, their talented team of managers and craftsmen works hard and collaborates closely and transparently with the client throughout every stage of the process, from concept and feasibility, to detailed budgeting and value engineering, all the way through to scheduling, execution and completion. That team is led by Silas Straathof, head of operations, and Drew Henderson, head of production – both of whom care deeply about bringing their clients' visions to life.

"If a client is looking for high quality and excellent value for their investment, that is what we deliver," says Drew. "We expect our homes and our client

relations to be our legacy, which sets the tone for how we operate and how we build."

Both Silas and Drew are journeyman carpenters with many years' experience building custom homes in the Comox Valley. Silas comes from a background building high-end homes in West Vancouver, and started Facet Custom Builders after moving to Cumberland in 2013. Drew comes from a background in reforestation, and joined the company early on. He started as an apprentice but ultimately bought in and became a partner three years ago.

"The company had already established a reputation as one of the top custom builders in the Comox Valley, and I was really excited to be a part of that," Drew recalls.

Today, Facet Custom Builders' projects typically



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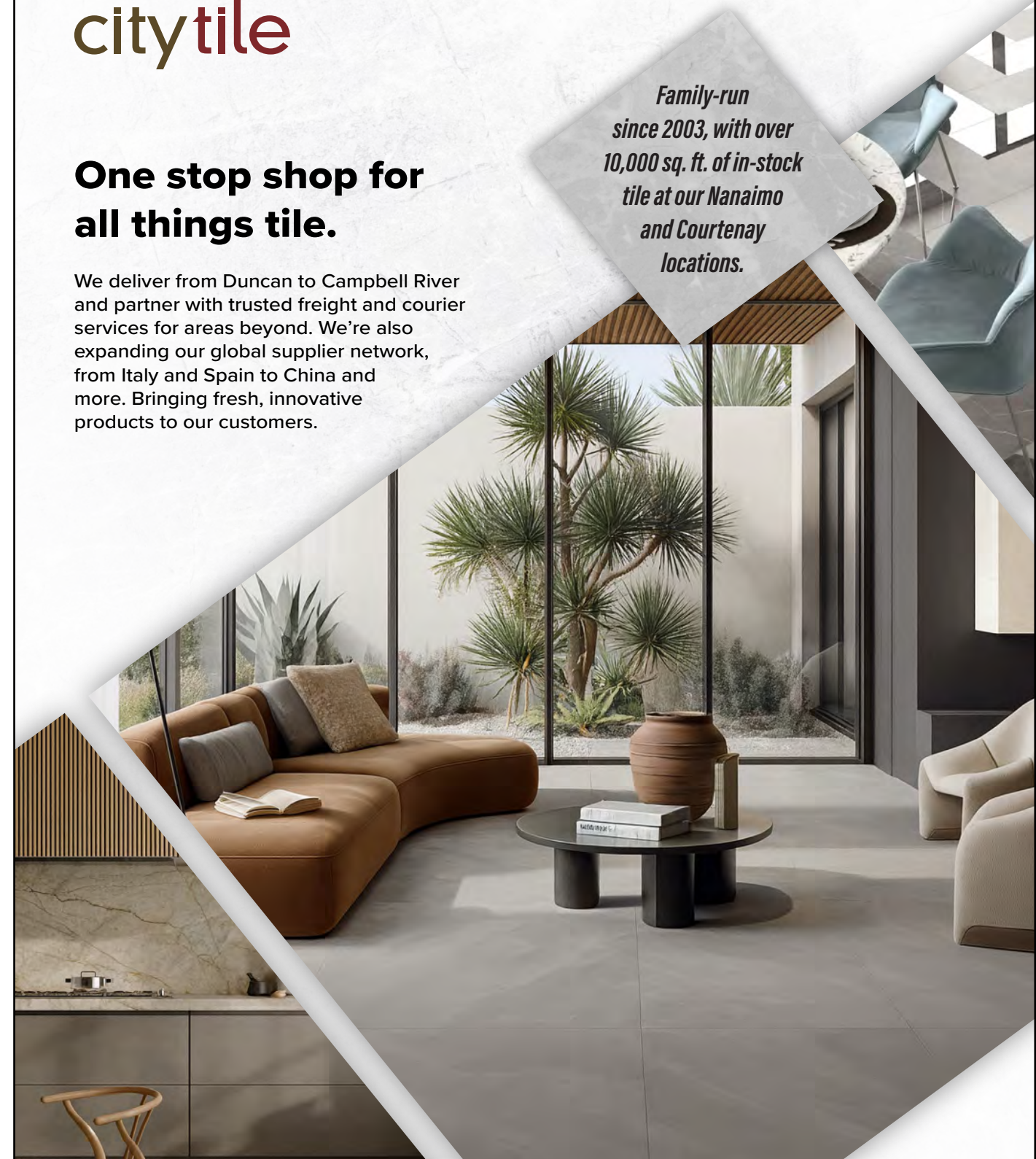
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range from major renovations to new custom homes. On the smaller side, they recently did an extensive interior renovation in Comox where they mainly focused on remodelling interior finishes to transform a fine home into the client's dream home. On the larger side, they recently completed a 4,000-square-foot chalet on Mount Washington valued at over \$2 million.

No matter the size or scope of the project, Drew believes their clients choose them for the same reasons – professionalism, passion and a commitment to quality. Those values are reflected in their rate of referrals from past clients and industry partners, and this, as well as their strong reputation in the community, accounts for the vast majority of the company's leads and success. "We strive to be quite professional and organized,"

Drew says. "Right off the bat, we work hard to set expectations and earn the client's trust. We want them to feel confident that we're not only going to produce a high quality home, but also provide a high quality construction experience in which their needs are listened to and responded to in a professional way."

When it comes to delivering both quality work and quality service, Drew says the key is having the right team in place.

"You can't provide a good product or a good service without a good team," he explains. "Over the years, we've been fortunate to have a really great team. To an extent, we've been lucky, but we've also worked really hard at it. We've put a lot of effort into recruiting and retaining a group

of people who are passionate about building and workmanship, and we've worked hard to create a culture where those people thrive.

The culture at Facet Custom Builders is very important to Drew, personally. When he became a partner, he says the important goal he gave himself was to make sure that the company always remained "a really good employer." He wanted it to be "a place where people want to work, where they're stoked to come in every day because they know the company values them and cares for them and shows them that."

Historically, Drew says Facet Custom Builders has always been fairly successful at cultivating that atmosphere, but over the last three years they have worked harder at it than ever. He believes

their hard work has paid off.

Facet's direct team includes Silas, Drew, two project managers who work in the office, a team of site supervisors, a crew of carpenters, and an office administrator who also does landscape design. On each and every project, they assign a project manager and site supervisor who coordinate with the clients, all the trades and suppliers and make sure everything is done properly – and Drew believes that's a key element of their quality control.

When it comes to subcontractors and suppliers, Facet Custom Builders consistently works with a roster of the same partners, with some relationships going back over a decade. Drew says the partners they are loyal to are the ones



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that provide a high standard of service from sales all the way through to delivery.

“There are a lot of companies out there, and the quality of customer service ranges greatly,” Drew explains. “The partners we like to work with are the partners who are reliable, who communicate well, who commit to schedules – who take care of their customers, basically. When we find a partner like that, we try to hold on to them.”

One example of a responsive and reliable partner would be City Tile – a BC-based company that distributes a wide selection of porcelain tile, ceramic tile, natural stone, glass, tools, materials, and accessories. They have locations in Nanaimo, Burnaby, Courtenay, Port Coquitlam, and Kelowna, and they import the best, most unique

and exclusive tiles from manufacturers all over the world. Much like Facet, they are a company that takes equal pride in their products in the quality of their product and the quality of their service – their showrooms include thousands of high quality products for clients to check out in person, and their staff is highly experienced in tile installation, with knowledge constantly bolstered by trade shows and research into the latest products and trends. The team at Facet highly values their industry expertise.



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Interesting and rewarding projects

About a year ago, Facet Custom Builders wrapped up work on their largest project to date, which was a major renovation on a waterfront property in the Comox Valley. Drew personally worked as the project manager on that job, which came with a lot of interesting challenges, as it was located on an archaeologically sensitive site right beside the ocean.

“There were a lot of challenges just in getting a plan together that could actually be built, but we didn’t just want any plan,” he explains. “It was a really unique property that warranted a special house on it. We all felt a responsibility to do something really amazing.”

Ultimately, Drew says they ended up removing the upper-storey of the house and then largely re-using the foundation with some minor additions, so they didn’t have to excavate in the archeologically



sensitive areas. They then rebuilt an upper-storey that was more accessible, better for entertaining, and took much better advantage of the property's amazing views than the previous home.

"The house that was on there was pretty old, and it was a fine house, but what was missing more than anything was a connection to the surrounding nature," Drew explains. "It didn't take advantage of the quite-stunning ocean views. So that was one of the major things we did – we really opened it up to that view-scape."

"The client also had a large extended family and wanted the home to be a gathering place for that family, which the existing house didn't really allow for," he continues. "So we added areas like a games room, and a really large inviting main kitchen area. We also added an elevator that wasn't there originally, which will help the owners to accommodate their elderly mother and to age in place."

Moving forward, Facet Custom Builders would love to be involved in more projects of similar size and scope to that one. According to Drew, they are more interested in doing interesting projects than growing and doing more projects.

"We're in that custom home niche of the market, and we don't really have an ambition to move out of that niche," he explains. "We've really found our happy place here. As long as there's enough interesting work in the area, we don't necessarily want to go anywhere else or get any bigger."

"We just want to keep improving on our ability to deliver these kinds of projects for the residents of this area," he adds. "We really want to cement our position as one of the premier custom home builders in the Valley, and we want to continue being considered for the most interesting and rewarding projects."



Photo: Kevin McKay @ True Elements Media



For more on Facet Custom Builders, their process, their values, and their past projects – and to contact Drew and the rest of their expert team – visit <https://facetbuilders.com>

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