

Sakiyama Construction

Written by Eric Slack



Founded in 1954, Sakiyama Construction has become an award-winning home renovator in Winnipeg thanks to its quality, craftsmanship and attention to detail. Sakiyama Construction excels on interior and exterior projects and has been the recipient of various awards, including numerous golds in the Manitoba Home Builders Association's (MHBA) Renovation of the Year Awards since their inception in 2000. Recently, the company was named a finalist in the 2013 Canadian Home Builders' Association's National Sam Awards.

"We consider ourselves a midsize renovation company," President Grant Sakiyama says. "We pretty much stay in the city of Winnipeg, as there are particular neighborhoods we concentrate on and find the bulk of our business."

When the company was founded, it focused on building custom homes. By the 1990s, it concentrated on residential and commercial remodeling. By 2000, its emphasis had turned to residential additions and remodeling, especially large, complex projects. That is where its focus remains today, although the company still works on select custom-designed homes.

Today, the company is a member of the New Home Warranty Program of Manitoba and a certified R2000 builder. It adheres to the code of ethics as outlined by the MHBA. The company is heavily involved in industry associations, as Grant Sakiyama was formerly on the Education and Training Committee of the MHBA. He is a past Chair of the MHBA Board of Directors and is also on the MHBA's Executive of the Renovators Council. In addition, he was the Manitoba representative to the Canadian Renovators Council and was on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Homebuilders Association.

STRONG FOCUS

It is in the Winnipeg home renovation market where Sakiyama Construction makes its mark. The company specializes in remodeling everything from traditional to ultra-contemporary homes, and it has performed a wide range of large additions and renovations.

The company's work involves a great degree of collaboration between Sakiyama Construction, the homeowner and their interior designer and/or architect. The company says it can help homeowners looking to upgrade a home's mechanical systems or redesign the layout of an existing floor plan, while always ensuring that all changes will complement the original home and bring it in line with modern tastes.

"The renovation market in Winnipeg has been very strong for a number of years," Sakiyama says. "There is an old housing stock here and people spend significant money to improve that stock. However, we have gotten back into new custom homes for a little change."

The company has tight partnerships with subcontractors, using the same electricians, plumbers, painters, flooring companies and suppliers. "They know what my expectations are and I know their delivery capabilities," Sakiyama says.

GETTING BETTER

Sakiyama Construction keeps current through professional development and education. The company's

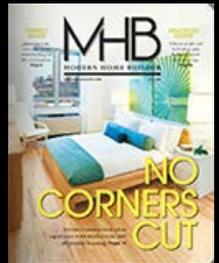
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relationships with the MHBA and Canadian Homebuilders Association help a great deal in that regard.

Sakiyama himself is also a big believer in technology. He is always looking for workshops and information sessions on topics such as energy efficiency and new mechanical systems that he can put to work in the company's projects.

"Today's clients are very well-educated and do a lot of research online," he says. "They insist that the people that work for them are at the cutting-edge of technology and energy efficiency."

In the years ahead, the company pledges to continue to invest in safety, buying equipment that will keep its jobsites safer. It will also invest in equipment that will keep the company up-to-date, such as laser-based equipment. In recent years, Sakiyama Construction has also been investing in communication tools and expanding its use of texting and email for constant communication.

"We have BlackBerrys for all of our key people so we can communicate and send pictures and drawings back and forth," Sakiyama says. "We've also developed extensive databases to keep track of orders and procedures we need to follow on each job."

Looking ahead, quality will continue to be the No. 1 concern for Sakiyama. The company believes in doing a project right the first time. It isn't focused on being the biggest. It is focused on being the best. "We're not focused on trying to grow bigger," Sakiyama says. "I am happy with our marketshare as we have a strong position in the high end-renovation and custom home market. We want to maintain our strengths."