



Mayer Dahan, CEO of [Prime Five Homes](#), a West Hollywood home-building team of designers, architects, a builders, says they provide their clients with “the most innovative designs and materials on the market.” But these products new? Not exactly. They use a lot of recycled and reclaimed wood for architectural details throughout their homes, such as giant doors. They also favor Duchateau’s new wood flooring with Old World styling, sourced from renewable forests.

One product, a home element that has been around for millennia and that they expect to use more of this coming year, are [mosaics](#) from Ann Sacks, which Dahan says they “believe [will] make waves in 2014...the green elements these products have can mix beautifully to form one single color and texture scheme. [Ann Sacks tiles](#) are able to provide a traditional and modern approach to their products and it’s something all home need.”

Another product they will continue using in 2014 is CaesarStone, an engineered countertop material that has been around for almost a decade. Made from 93% natural quartz with added pigments and polymer resins, CaesarStone’s [countertops](#), Dahan says are “classic and natural.” At Prime Five they “adore the environmental and aesthetic appeal [CaesarStone’s] products bring.”

## More Efficient Building Materials for Walls

If you are looking for something less about finishing touches and more about structure — and for something truly revolutionary and state-of-the-art — Laura Davis, Vice President and Director of Marketing for [HPD Architecture LLC in Dallas](#), says ThermaSteel™ is the product her company will be specifying for projects in 2014. The [ThermaSteel™ website](#) calls this building component the “final frontier of construction technology. Used as a replacement for traditional wood framing, it’s very durable and comprises, as Davis puts it, “the structure, sound and thermal insulation, sheathing, and vapor barrier in one light-weight product. It also installs quickly and saves money on materials and labor compared to conventional wood framing.”

While ThermaSteel™ is completely recyclable, it can still survive earthquakes and hurricanes and elude the ravages of termites, rot, and decay while remaining for decades in exactly the same condition as the day it was installed.

For your home’s exterior, Nashville architect [Ryan Thewes](#) is keen on [ZIP System® panels from Huber](#), an exterior cladding system for both the walls and roof that includes its own weather-resistant barrier, eliminating the need to install a separate layer of housewrap. It replaces the plywood and sheathing and installs in two steps: put up the panels and tape the seams. The installed product keeps moisture out and reduces air leak for a more energy-efficient home.

Zip System’s® newest product, the R-system, includes foam [insulation](#) that can increase a building’s R-value to meet the latest codes and reduce thermal bridging around wall studs for even more energy-efficiency. According to Thewes, the new Zip System™ R-product is meeting with some resistance because of its high price. “Unfortunately, the Zip Panel R is still very expensive, but hopefully once people start realizing its value, the price will come down making it a more affordable option.”

When you are talking about “new” in the building industry, change can be slow in coming and often takes place mostly in response to changes in building codes. Inventories need to be used up and, as may be the case with Thewes’ favorite insulated wall system, prices must come down a bit before new products are cost-effective enough to be embraced by builders, home buyers and homeowners.

Whatever the reason for slow acceptance of the latest home-building technology, the direction is clear. The products to beat for best new building and remodeling materials not just for 2014 but for years to come are going to be the ones that save you energy and money for as long as you own your home.

Are you building a home in 2014? Share your building approach with the readers below!

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