



Common Builder Concerns About Partnering with ENERGY STAR® and Solutions to Overcome Them

	Objections	Solutions	Useful Resources
Cost-related	Competition. I need to keep my prices down to compete with other builders in the area.	It's easy to focus on sales price alone, but it is important to remember that there are many components to any product, such as service, quality, and costs. Buyers rarely focus on price alone. By selling the quality advantage of an ENERGY STAR qualified home, including cost, durability, and comfort benefits, you can differentiate yourself from your competition and ensure buyers consider more than just price.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Benefits of Building ENERGY STAR Qualified Homes
	The extra cost will limit my homebuyers due to income qualifications. My homes will no longer be affordable.	Compared with standard homes, ENERGY STAR qualified homes use substantially less energy for heating, cooling, and water heating, saving consumers \$300 to \$400 each year. Over the average of seven to eight years a homeowner usually lives in a home, this adds up to thousands of dollars saved on utility bills. Additional savings on maintenance can be substantial as well. Homeowners also can consider Energy Efficient Mortgages (EEMs) if mortgage qualification is an issue. Overall, ENERGY STAR qualified homes are great for homeowners looking for an affordable home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Benefits for Homeowners of ENERGY STAR Qualified Homes o What is an EEM? o HomeCalc
	The market is slowing down and I can't afford to increase my costs.	During times when the market is slow, it is especially important for homebuilders to differentiate themselves from their competitors. ENERGY STAR is a great investment that gives builders an edge over the competition with quality, comfort, monthly savings, and lower maintenance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Benefits of ENERGY STAR
Value-related	I don't see the value in ENERGY STAR.	<p>Over 70% of American households recognize the ENERGY STAR logo. By associating your company with the ENERGY STAR, you can show that your homes are third-party verified to meet government-backed energy efficiency requirements. As a partner, you benefit from using ENERGY STAR marketing and technical resources, including the use of the ENERGY STAR logo in your promotions and advertising.</p> <p>Consumers also are increasingly interested in reducing their impact on the environment and in green building.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o ENERGY STAR Logo o Marketing Resources o Technical Resources o Brochures for Builders o Green Begins with ENERGY STAR Blue
	I am interested, but my manager does not see the value.	Builders who participate in the program see increased revenue and sales, better construction techniques, reduced number of callbacks, and happy homeowners. These are the type of benefits that company executives are looking for. We have information and testimonials on these benefits that you can bring back to your management team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Benefits of ENERGY STAR
	I already build energy-efficient homes.	ENERGY STAR will allow you to show that your homes were 3 rd party verified to be energy efficient with a government-backed label that is widely recognized by consumers. If you are already building efficiently, you will have a minimal investment and will be better positioned to differentiate yourself in the market with ENERGY STAR.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 3rd Party Verification o "Behind the Walls" Tour of an ENERGY STAR Qualified Home
	No one cares about energy efficiency and my homebuyers are not asking for it.	Often, homebuyers don't ask for energy efficiency because they assume new homes are energy efficient. Your homes will perform 20-30% better than typical homes by participating in ENERGY STAR. Ask your homebuyers if they are interested in quality, comfort, and monthly savings. Energy efficiency addresses many areas that are concerns for homebuyers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Benefits for Homeowners of ENERGY STAR Qualified Homes o Brochures

	Objections	Solutions	Useful Resources
Value-related	I am a production builder, not a green builder. Green building is for environmentalists or tree huggers.	Today, consumers are becoming interested in reducing their impact on the environment as energy prices continue to increase. Energy efficiency is the place to start for green building. That's because the energy used in homes often comes from the burning of fossil fuels at power plants, which contributes to smog, acid rain, and risks of global climate change. So, the less energy used, the less air pollution generated. In a recent study, nearly two thirds of consumers indicated that they would choose one house over another based on energy efficient performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Climate Change
	My homes are selling. I don't need anything to differentiate my company.	Over 10% of new homes in the U.S. in 2007 were ENERGY STAR qualified, and more builders are joining the program each month. In a market where consumers value quality construction, improved comfort, and lower maintenance costs, ENERGY STAR can be a valuable asset. ENERGY STAR can increase your market share even more.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Benefits of ENERGY STAR o Brochures for Builders
Other Objections	I don't want to work with the government.	ENERGY STAR is a voluntary program with over 5,000 builders participating. These builders are taking advantage of free technical and marketing resources that help differentiate their companies and increase revenues. If you join the program and change your mind later, you can stop participating at any time, for any reason, without penalty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Benefits of ENERGY STAR o Marketing Resources o Technical Resources
	I don't want to use CFLs in my homes. My homebuyers never choose them.	CFLs aren't a requirement of the program. One great aspect of the ENERGY STAR program is that it is flexible and you work with your home energy rater to determine what upgrades are necessary to build an ENERGY STAR qualified home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o ENERGY STAR Guidelines
	Why should I join ENERGY STAR when there are so many other "green building" programs around?	Green building means improving the way that homes and homebuilding sites use energy, water, and materials to reduce negative impacts on human health and the environment. There are nearly 50 regional and national green home labeling programs around the country. While each program approaches green building a little differently, each incorporates important elements such as energy-efficient construction techniques and products. Energy efficiency is a smart first step when contemplating green building programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Green Begins with ENERGY STAR Blue
	No one in my market has heard of ENERGY STAR for homes, only for appliances and computers.	If ENERGY STAR for Homes is new to your market, you can become the market leader, as many builders leading the way have done in the past. By fully integrating ENERGY STAR in your marketing materials and telling consumers your energy efficiency story, consumers see your company's name as synonymous with quality and energy-efficient construction. You can also team with other ENERGY STAR partners to participate in the annual ENERGY STAR Outreach Partnership, which helps to improve consumer awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Outreach Partnership o Marketing Toolkit
	I've heard that meeting the Thermal Bypass Checklist is too hard.	The items listed on the Thermal Bypass Checklist (TBC) can be considered part of a risk management strategy for a builder. Each item on the checklist helps ensure that the home is insulated and sealed correctly to reduce and eliminate comfort problems and high energy bills. As you know, improper insulation or air sealing can turn into warranty calls. Because most TBC requirements are already required by the latest IECC codes used in many jurisdictions around the country, you can reduce your exposure to defect litigation by having a third party ensure your homes meet the checklist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o ENERGY STAR Guidelines o "Behind the Walls" Tour of an ENERGY STAR Qualified Home