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Winning Windows

Deciding on windows for your home?

Robert Luntz, of Resolution: 4 Architecture in New York City and winner of the Dwell Home Design Invitational, designed the prefabricated house using Loewen windows. Don't underestimate the importance of windows, "one of the pure building blocks," Robert says. They can have a dramatic impact on the look and feel of your home. He shares with Dwell readers the strategies he and his partners use to find the best windows for the buildings they design.



COMFORT & VENTILATION

"Function is a very important issue for us. We like casement windows (which open from the side on hinges like a door), as they offer the largest, unobstructed glass area—and potentially the best views. Some people value visuals most; they never open their windows. Others want the breeze to blow through the house. For ventilation, we use awning-style windows with hinges on top that open up."

DESIGN

"We look at all the profiles, shapes, and materials available. Some manufacturers only offer specific sizes, but we seek out companies like Loewen that will customize their products. It saves us money if we can choose among a wide variety of types and sizes and get exactly what we need."

DAYLIGHT

"How much you want to see the light depends on your personality. Some people long to connect to daylight and the outside world. For others, light is more functional—it's a tool for them to see what they're doing. Your preference can help you determine what type of windows to use."

THERMAL PERFORMANCE

"We always select energy-efficient, insulated, and low E (to minimize ultraviolet radiation) windows. They do their job year-round, keeping your house warm in winter and cool in summer—and reducing your energy costs year in and year out."

SECURITY

"We choose windows that come with quality hardware and that operate smoothly. If we include a security system within the window, we want the system to be as discreet and unobtrusive as possible."

"In the end, budget is an issue, but since windows are so essential in creating design, I always put in the best ones I can afford."



Loewen Casement window with Craftsman style Simulated Divided Lite



"None of the modules were completely finished [at the factory]," explains architect Joseph Tanney. "But the proportions and sense of space were there even though you had to experience the house as a series of unrelated fragments."



At CBS's 17 work stations, everything from framing to plumbing, ceilings to weatherproofing, is undertaken. The vinyl siding station got the week off.



At left, Tanney inspects one of two roof modules; insulation and framing are installed at right. The exterior cladding, finished floors, doors, appliances, and fixtures will be installed onsite.

Dwell Home in Full Effect

On Tuesday, April 6, after months of arduous preparations, the home-building team at Carolina Building Solutions (CBS) began work on the Dwell Home at their factory in Salisbury, North Carolina.

On the CBS factory floor, there are 17 work stations. One hundred and twenty workers divide their tasks among these 17 stations so that there are approximately seven specialized workers per station. The work done on the five base modules and two roof modules of the Dwell Home was divided among three of these stations, with all three operating simultaneously.

In just under five workdays, CBS constructed the framing, and installed insulation, sheathing, rough plumbing and electrical, 80 to 90 percent of the Sheetrock, windows and trim, weatherproofing, cabinets, and stairs. By April 13, the factory work was complete. "It was quite a day, as if a huge weight had been lifted off our shoulders," says Dwell Home architect Joseph Tanney. "It was exhausting... a little like watching the birth of your baby, relieved yet primed for what's to come."

Seven flatbed trucks, each with its own police escort, delivered the modules on April 20, 21, and 22, from Salisbury to Pittsboro without incident. The modules were set onto the foundation on the 22nd, and the roof was put in place the next day.

Stepping into a finished module, explains Tanney, was "exhilarating. We made a series of calls to friends, family, and colleagues while in the boxes! We kept running in and out of one, then in and out of another. We were happy like little kids."

In our next issue, we'll share exciting photos documenting the transport and installation of the modules. In October, we will publish—drumroll, please—the finished Dwell Home. ■