

The winners were announced in March at the Master Builders Bankwest Housing Excellence Awards in the outstanding company of more than 800 guests celebrating the strength, skill and quality of WA's residential builders. Master Builder Magazine is pleased to profile these winning up-and-comers which qualify as having been registered building companies for five years or less and which exhibit qualities befitting a Master Builder. Their quality of workmanship, attention to detail, safety standards, innovation and ability to complete projects on time and on budget were taken into account and it just goes to show that family bonds can build successful businesses.



Vestra Personal Builders

- Tony & Audrey Princi

Tony Princi and his wife Audrey established Vestra Personal Builders in 2007 to build high quality, value for money, custom built homes.

Tony is particularly keen on the creative aspect of building homes, and he finds it immensely satisfying to see his projects completed successfully. Often home buyers prefer to deal directly with their builder, and as the first point of contact at Vestra, Tony provides his clients with reassuring attention to detail.

Tony grew up at a time when everyone chipped in to help family members build their new homes. Quite a few members of his extended Italian family are builders, but from the time he could walk Tony was 'Dad's apprentice'. Even now, Tony's father continues to be his biggest influence.

After he left high school, Tony undertook an auto electrician apprenticeship and was qualified by the time he was 18. He went on to try a number of occupations, from starting an earthmoving business, buying a franchise and even trying his hand at retail.

But his early life had cultivated an interest in the building industry and by 1994 Tony was supervising the building of residential homes for Joe Italiano of Premium Developments where his passion for building quality homes was really ignited.

He had finally found the right occupation that would support his family long term and make him happy. It was not a quick fix and to get started, practical experience was needed as well as academic knowledge, but Tony had the right amount of drive and ambition to take on the double challenge of building and running his own business.

Tony studied quantities, estimating and law through TAFE, and he completed other courses through Master Builders which kept him up-to-date in the ever-changing building business.

"There really is no way around it, you need to do the study - knowledge is power," Tony says. "Any business owner will tell you, you need a myriad of skills, administration, OHS, marketing, insurance, client relations and so on. It can be daunting but if you keep your goals in place and do your homework anything is achievable. We are proof of this."

Tony's business partner and wife, Audrey, is an accountant and Curtin University graduate with many years' experience in taxation. Audrey's accounting and office management skills are crucial in tracking the overall performance and financial position of Vestra.

With three children, Tony and Audrey work hard to achieve a comfortable balance of family, work, parenting and leisure, so that they can succeed with the business and still grow as a couple.

Vestra is still very much a 'new kid on the block' but the company has received early recognition from the industry as a finalist in the Master Builders Housing Excellence Awards contract homes \$650,000 - \$750,000 category this year as well as being Joint Winners with Sovereign Building Company for Best New Builder. One day the Princis hope to build the home of the year.

Tony is confident that a steady population growth and building activity in Perth over the next 10 years will ensure ongoing contracts for new building of all levels. His ambition is to get more involved with the industry and continue to build top quality homes and lead Perth's building industry by way of quality and innovation.

The next exciting project for Vestra is opening its first display home in Dianella. Tony regards it as important to reduce overall energy consumption at the home's design stage rather than adding product or upgrades to achieve better ratings.

The company's modern and elegant display home will be cost effective through design and smart product choice. Tony says he thoroughly enjoyed designing this latest project and is looking forward to bringing all his plans to fruition mid-way through next year.