



OVERVIEW

Signature Homes

e-signaturehomes.com

Hoover, Alabama

INDUSTRY

Homebuilders

SOLUTIONS

Insearch

How Insearch helped this homebuilder increase profits up to 15%

75% Change order reduction

25% Fewer variances

20% Sales increase

The Bottom Line

Signature Homes went from an in-person-only, time-consuming, static homebuilding sales process to an interactive one that has reduced change order, conversion times, and employee hours and increased sales, revenue, and profits.

THE CHALLENGES

- Sales had to rely on static paper drawings, leaving customers unable to visualize what the final home could look like.
- The company was experiencing long conversion times from customers' initial interest to closing.
- Customers didn't realize the add-on options available, leading to time-consuming and expensive change orders and lost add-on sales.
- Variances caused by building mistakes were costing the company time and money.

THE IMPACT



Increased sales and profits

Since implementing Insearch in 2020, the company's sales have risen 20%, and profits are up 10% to 15%.



Drastically reduced changeorders

Now that customers can see available options and costs ahead of time, the company enjoys 75% fewer change orders.



25% fewer variances

Builders' ability to see customers' orders instantly has reduced expensive construction errors by 25%.

SUCCESS STORY

Signature
Homes

Who is Signature Homes?

OVERVIEW

Signature Homes
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Hoover, Alabama

“Insearch has shortened our conversion time dramatically, reduced change orders by 75%, shortened our build times, and increased our sales by 20% and profits by 10% to 15%.”

Dwight Sandlin grew up doing construction but went for a career in banking. Yet by his mid-30s, he was ready to return to his first love, homebuilding. So, in 1988, he started a homebuilding company that he sold seven years later. In 1999, he partnered with Jonathan Belcher to open Signature Homes in Birmingham, Alabama. A quarter of a century later, Signature Homes builds primarily single-family homes in the \$300,000 to \$1.5 million range in the Birmingham and Nashville, Tennessee, areas. The company has 150 employees and an annual revenue of \$300 million.

According to Jonathan’s brother, Tyler Belcher, Signature Homes executive vice president, ECI’s Insearch software has been instrumental in helping them reach this impressive success.

The challenge

Signature Homes’ sales process was time-consuming and incomplete. “In the past, we had a website with just a static, frontal hand sketch of the home,” Tyler explains. “There was no interactive floor plan or website showing available options. If customers wanted to extend a patio or enlarge a shower, they didn’t know if the option was available or whether the cost would fit in their budget unless they traveled to Birmingham and sat down with a realtor. Even then, it was hard because we had so many options. Sales might be able to tell them about 20 of them, and the customers couldn’t view them without going to a



site where one existed. Also, because the drawings were static on paper, customers couldn't see all the outside elevations, like landscaping and driveways, which make homes look real and bring them to life."

According to Tyler, the company knew people liked to shop online to see what sites and options were available to decide if they wanted to physically visit a development. Top management agreed Signature needed a more interactive website. What they didn't realize, however, was just how much the current static site was costing them in terms of high conversion times, lost add-ons, change orders, variances, and overall fewer home sales.

The solution

The Signature Homes team researched several software programs, but Insearch caught its eye. "We saw a demonstration at the Homebuilder's show and did some research and liked what we saw," Tyler says. "The company brought Insearch onboard in 2020 when it was still owned by Ryan Thornton, who sold it to ECI in 2021.

"ECI has a great team, the cost is reasonable, and they are willing to work with us to do what we need," Tyler says. "It's not a take it or leave it; ECI is willing to innovate."

The impact

According to Tyler, Insearch has paid off in many ways, all of which point to increased sales, revenue, productivity, and profits.

"One of the main key areas where Insearch helped was its interactive floor plans," Tyler says. "Insearch allows customers to see the options. With a click, they can see what a covered porch is and looks like and usually the pricing. They can design their home within their budget in a near-infinite number of ways. If they have a house with a budget of \$500,000, they can decide if they want to spend \$5,000 for a porch or a bigger bathroom. They are getting more of what they want, and they can do all at their convenience and not have to meet with a realtor each time."



In addition to the homes themselves, Insearch's interactive site maps allow potential customers to see what the communities look like, which means faster conversions. The Insearch program also provides interactive renderings of front elevations, allowing customers to envision the home with exterior features like landscaping and driveways.

Insearch has also significantly reduced changeorders and customizations since customers can now view all the pre-existing add-ons and their pricing. Together, these Insearch features culminate in shorter build times.

"Let's say, hypothetically, that it takes 180 days to build a house, and a builder can handle 10 houses at a time," Tyler explains. "That means that a builder can build 20 houses in a year. But with these Insearch features, that builder can reduce the build time to 120 days—or four months instead of six. That means a builder can make three turns a year overseeing the same 10 houses. That's 30 houses a year instead of 20 [a 50% increase] with no increase in overhead."

Winning numbers

According to Tyler, the numbers of what the Insearch has brought to Signature Homes speak for themselves:

"Insearch has shortened our conversion time dramatically, reduced change orders by 75%, shortened our build times, and increased our sales by 20% and profits by 10% to 15%."

With figures like these, Signature Homes sees no reason to search beyond Insearch.

