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AMAZING TRANSFORMATIONS: EXTERIOR

With a smart exterior remodel, formerly drab homes can have traffic-stopping curb appeal.

BY CHRISTY SMITH



EDITOR'S NOTE:

This is the first in a two-part series on extensive home remodeling projects that result in a new-home appearance. Look for "Amazing Transformations: Interior" in our May issue.



After

If you own a home, sooner or later you will likely join the millions of people who remodel their homes each year.

The latest surge in home values has led to a skyrocketing of remodeling. Homeowners spent \$149.5 billion on remodeling their homes in 2005 in this country, according to the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University. Rising home values, a strong housing market and an increase in cash-out refinances have all contributed to remodeling's upswing.

"There's been a huge increase in the last five years," says Stephen Gidus, partner, PSG Construction. "House stock is getting older and older. To buy a new house, you have to go farther in the suburbs. Those who remodel want to stay in neighborhoods they're familiar with or stay closer to town. The rise in real estate has increased equity, giving homeowners a chance to refurbish."

Until recently, homeowners usually planned improvements that would add value to their homes or make them more marketable. Today, it's more about making the home a comfortable and functional place to live than simply recovering one's investment.

The reasons for remodeling are as varied as the projects undertaken. Some are looking for more room. Others want to give their homes more curb appeal. Still some want a new home—on their old lot.



After



Before



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Photo courtesy of PSG Construction Inc.

Other pool amenities can also be added with little fuss, says Norgerg. "You can also create a mini-resort by adding a waterfall. You don't have to get really elaborate. It's an easy way to dress up an old pool."

SEEING IS BELIEVING

It's easy to see that remodeling has become our area's newest hobby. A drive through Central Florida's most sought-after neighborhoods reveals a constantly changing facade. What's the motivation behind some of these spectacular transformations?

Among PSG Construction's most impressive transformations is a 1970s ranch-style home on Lake Sue that, in contrast to the homes around it, seemed out of place. The homeowners, who were happy with the basic floorplan of the home, wanted to bring char-

acter and charm to the exterior of the house. The flat roof was the first element addressed, since it had been leaking, had gone through multiple repairs and needed extensive work. A new pitched design was created, which also allowed for an additional room underneath. The change in the roofline dramatically altered the exterior look of the home by creating a two-story effect. A new portico with rough-sawn cedar beams and posts, new

paint and updated stone helped create an entirely new—and far more charming—look. The home's interior entry was also updated by adding a new pair of wood doors and removing a closet that blocked the view of the family room.

Keeping with the trend of whole-house



Before



After

Photo courtesy of PSG Construction Inc. Photo: © Everett & Soule