

THE Who's Who

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IN BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION

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WHERE LEADERS ARE LAUNCHED

Wyatt Management thrives on its people, practices



COVER STORY

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Tim Wyatt, Wyatt Management President, with CEO and Chief Marketing Officer Jeannette Wyatt. The company was No. 108 in the 2021 Inc. 5000 Regionals for the Top 250 Fastest-Growing Private Companies in Texas.

Cover: Wyatt Management President Tim Wyatt (from left); CEO and Chief Marketing Officer Jeannette Wyatt and Vice President of Operations (Dallas) Jason Tucker.

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WHERE **LEADERS** ARE LAUNCHED

Wyatt Management thrives on its people, practices

by Susan Shalhoub

General contracting company *Wyatt Management* (Wyatt) is in the business of helping commercial businesses make changes for the better. Part of being able to do that for others involves doing that for itself as a company, hiring those with leadership qualities and nurturing leaders from within company ranks, says President Tim Wyatt.

KEY PLAYERS

With a degree in construction management from University of Wisconsin-Stout and several years working for other general contractors, Tim decided to strike out on his own. In 1998, he founded Wyatt in Minneapolis. On the tails of the 2009 recession, Tim relocated to The Woodlands, Texas, where he met his future wife, Jeannette.

Jeannette's background was in marketing, having worked for a fledgling software technology company she calls a pioneer in e-learning programs. Beginning on floppy disc and evolving to CD-ROM, demand for the product grew exponentially. "The educational programs were for industries that needed to train thousands," says Jeannette, noting clients such as Citibank and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center on their roster.

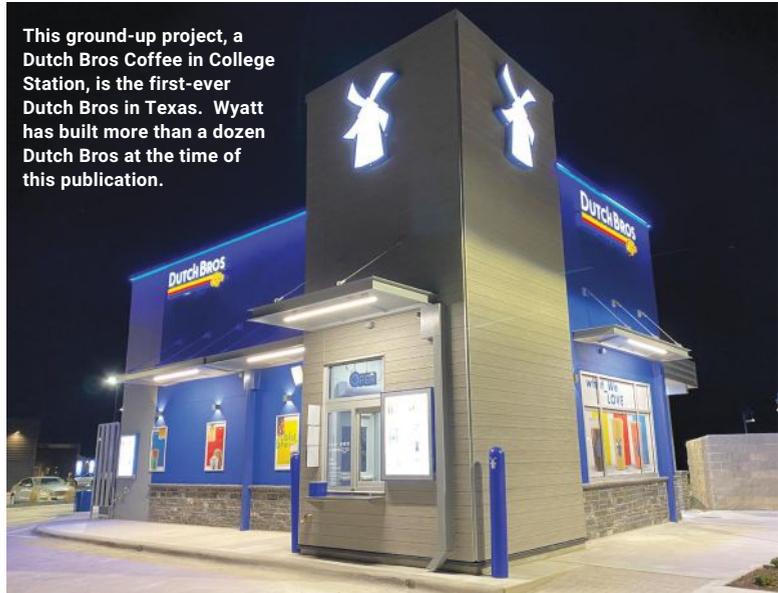
"That was where I learned all about branding and marketing," she says. "We would pitch our online solutions to new businesses, whether auto, medical or technology."

Those skills proved essential at Wyatt, where Jeannette's role as CEO and Chief Marketing Officer is to bring in new business. Jeannette decided that a turnaround operation needed to go into effect for the company.

In 2010, she and Tim were married. From there, Wyatt Management was seemingly reborn.

Today, with 34 employees and offices in the Houston, Dallas and Austin/San Antonio markets, Tim can do the work he loves, with Jeannette utilizing years' worth of knowledge in branding, marketing and business development to elevate the company to new levels of success.

Commercial remodeling jobs—generally done every five to seven years for clients such as quick-service restaurants—were a big source of Wyatt's business historically, Tim says. "While we still do major remodel rollouts, the lion's share of our work is now ground-up construction and tenant finishes."



This ground-up project, a Dutch Bros Coffee in College Station, is the first-ever Dutch Bros in Texas. Wyatt has built more than a dozen Dutch Bros at the time of this publication.



This Jiffy Lube in Grand Chute was one of two ground-up projects for the company built by Wyatt Management in Wisconsin in 2020.

Wyatt built the first Dutch Bros Coffee location in Texas and more than a dozen locations at the time of this publication. The company built the first Shake Shack in Houston at the Galleria, and five more since. Other projects have included construction of several major retail buildings for Victory Real Estate Group in Dallas, as well as more than a dozen Jiffy Lube locations in Texas and Wisconsin.

These projects have won Wyatt acclaim. The company's revenue growth between 2018 and 2019 ranked it 29th in the Houston Business Journal's Fast 100 Awards. This year, Wyatt was No. 108 in the 2021 Inc. 5000 Regionals for the Top 250 Fastest-Growing Private Companies in Texas, based on 112% year-over-year revenue growth, Jeannette says.

PROBLEM-SOLVING, FUTURE PLANNING

This success has involved keeping an eye on current problems while never losing focus on big-picture growth.

The pandemic presented challenges, as it did for many others in the industry, says Tim. Business slowed in April 2020. Then materials prices rose. Lumber is still costly, as is copper and wiring, he explains. Tim is now making security cameras mandatory at every job site, built into bids, with cases of theft reported.

While addressing more imminent problems related to COVID-19, lean building—which Wyatt adopted this year—has been an important step toward continuous improvement.

Committing to the practice of lean building, a continuous-improvement approach to the construction process has enabled Wyatt to attract more prospective clients, deliver more projects in less time and produce less waste, he says. "Together, our standard operations procedures known as 'The Wyatt Way' with lean building principles make up our BuildBETTER™ methodology, which enables us to deliver as stress-free of an owner experience as possible," Tim says.

"Lean building's purpose is to break down silos, so everyone is working together and not competing so much on scope," says Tim, detailing jobsite communication methods used, such as conflict boards, permit boards, delivery boards, three-day look-ahead meetings and clearly outlining a project's progress, with work crews leading the way.



Wyatt Management's fifth Shake Shack project since 2016 is a tenant finish that was built on a corner in downtown Houston in 2019.

The benefits of lean building, says Tim, are many. Better communication prevents having materials on-site too early, reduces theft and keeps the job site cleaner, improving safety. Lean building saves time and labor, he says. "Our teams don't wait until one phase is done before the next phase begins," he says. "You can follow the trade partner in front of you closer."

"Lean building is about putting more trust in people," Jeannette adds.

Just as Tim has trusted Jeannette to help with the company he founded—and she in his construction knowledge and expertise—the couple have together nurtured several standout employees, and those employees, in turn, coach the team they trust.

IDENTIFYING TEAM PLAYERS

Superintendent David Ramirez, for example, has excelled at lean building, says Tim, and has been one of the first to practice the methodology at Wyatt. "He has really caught

"Here, we're given all the tools needed to do the job right."

**Dustin Stanush,
San Antonio/Austin Project Manager,
Wyatt Management**

on and figured how to communicate with trade partners, with his skills getting better and better," he says.

In Dallas, Superintendent Mark Benton, who has more than 30 years' experience and excels at large, ground-up projects, was recently promoted to Senior Superintendent and helps mentor and guide superintendents who have less ground-up experience.

Dallas was a market that Wyatt tried to break into for five years, says Jeannette.

"We couldn't get any traction in Dallas," notes Tim. "Then—right as we were thinking we should give up—we found



Wyatt Management hosted a team-building event at Urban Axes, a facility that Wyatt built in Houston in 2019.

Jason Tucker. “We were successful from that day forward. In Jason, we found the right person who can work independently without having a boss. It’s tough to find self-motivated people. It’s a rare find. We look for those people who never want to stop learning, because if you stop learning, the industry is passing you by. That goes for everyone, and not only in construction.”

Tucker, who started as a Project Manager and who is now Vice President of Operations for the Dallas/Fort Worth area, says that being self-motivated is a necessity in his role, as the company’s corporate office is in Houston, and his work location is in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Logistically, the stakes are higher—prompting him to hold himself accountable to a higher standard and encouraging other team members to do the same.

“The success of Wyatt here in our market falls heavily on my shoulders, and I don’t take that responsibility lightly,” he says.

Dustin Stanush, a Wyatt San Antonio/Austin Project Manager, is another standout team member. He

previously worked for another general contractor, but was never given opportunity to advance, Tim says.

When Stanush came onboard with Wyatt earlier this year and was given more responsibility, he blossomed. The positive culture, or Wyatt Way, appealed to him.

“Here, we’re given all the tools needed to do the job right,” Stanush says.

“With Dustin, I don’t have to run down a list,” Tim says. “He knows what to

do; I don’t have to worry about it. But at the same time, he has the maturity to ask for help if he needs it, because that’s how we learn.”

Stanush goes into every day, every project, with a positive mindset. “I like working hand in hand and growing the company with Tim and Jeannette. I treat my jobs like they’re my own and treat this like it’s my own company, with a mentality of ‘let’s just make it happen.’ I try to instill that in other superintendents I work with. When they tell me why they can’t do something, I



Wyatt Management completed this tenant finish of a Mendocino Farms Sandwich Market in Dallas in 2019. Tenant finishes, changes to the inside shell of an existing structure, are one of Wyatt’s specialties.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF L. FREDERICK HINOJOSA (TOP);
WYATT MANAGEMENT (BOTTOM)

Developer Victory Real Estate Group utilized Wyatt Management's services for this ground-up project in Prosper, TX, a multi-use retail center.



say, 'Let's figure out how we can.' We don't have problems, we have solutions."

All top performers at Wyatt Management have a few things in common, Tim says. They are hungry for knowledge and advancement, have a natural love of the construction business and have experience in the field. That field experience for superintendents is crucial, he says.

"Superintendents are our front lines. Their work represents our work in the industry. They control our budget, whether the client is happy and whether we make money or not. As a business leader, you give employees like this the support they need."

CUTTING TIES, ADDING TERRITORY

As the company has grown over the years, so have Jeannette and Tim as leaders. In the past, they held on to employees who proved not to be a good cultural fit. They now recognize the importance of making a change earlier rather than later. "Parting ways with employees who just don't subscribe to the same value system that Wyatt Management does is better for the company, for the customers and, quite frankly, better for the employee," Tim says.

Fully ensconced in lean building practices with auspicious leaders coming up through the ranks, more work in other markets is in Wyatt's future.

"We look for those people who never want to stop learning, because if you stop learning, the industry is passing you by."

**Tim Wyatt, President,
Wyatt Management**

While most of Wyatt's work is in the Houston and Dallas/Fort Worth areas, more and more clients are asking Jeannette and Tim to build for them in Austin, San Antonio and Oklahoma. Recognizing the success of the Dallas team model, Jeannette and Tim committed to opening an Austin/San Antonio office. "We've learned we can be much more effective working in other geographies by replicating our business model there," Jeannette says.

With lean building, The Wyatt Way and strong leadership to guide the company, it's a formula that can succeed anywhere, serving its clients with a well-honed combination that works. 🔄

Business journalist Susan Shalhoub develops feature articles for companies in construction-related industries as well as blogs, website copy and media relations.