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April 2017



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*Elizabethtown Native,  
Dale Ressler*

**DreamMaker.  
Bath & Kitchen**

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# LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

## DREAMMAKER BATH AND KITCHEN



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**W**hen asked how he ended up in the construction and remodeling business, Dale Ressler says... "I was always interested in how things were built and worked, even as a child."

Growing up locally and graduating from Elizabethtown High School, Dale spent time and took courses at Mount Joy VoTech as part of his high school education. "I had two loves...carpentry and cars."

After high school graduation, Dale chose to pursue a career in construction and carpentry and made cars his hobby. Dale initially worked for Good Brothers Builders in Elizabethtown and then ventured back to school and earned his paramedic/EMT license. He was hired by Lancaster General Hospital as a paramedic.



"I usually worked 12 hour days, 14 days a month. So, I had another 14 days a month I could do something else. Over time, my co-workers and friends started hearing about my remodeling talents and asked me to help out with side projects. I realized eventually that it was time to make the remodeling business my full-time focus and reduce my paramedic responsibilities." In 1990, Dale transitioned and started D.E.R. Construction, Inc., but stayed with Lancaster General as a part-time paramedic until 1997.

In 2005, Dale was recognized nationally, receiving Remodeling Magazine's "Big 50 Award" as one of the best 50 full-service remodeling contractors in the country. After his award, DreamMaker Bath and Kitchen learned of Dale's talents and contacted him about becoming a DreamMaker franchisee. "A lot was going on during that time. I was having success with my business and could build most anything, but also realized there was a lot about running a business outside of the actual remodeling work. I did a lot of kitchen and bath remodeling for several years, but was recovering from shoulder surgery, so when they

called me to discuss, I said at the time...the only things that are working are my mouth and my ears, so I'm listening!"

*"I was most satisfied with the personal attention I received. I would like to recognize Dale for his exceptional service."*  
-- Jenn B.

The following year, after much consideration, Dale became a DreamMaker franchisee and set up a showroom to serve clients better. "It allowed me to continue with my passion and develop the franchise within a management role." And Dale found success in the business, as DreamMaker's "Rookie of the Year" Franchise in 2007, and Eastern Region Franchise of the Year in 2008. And in 2015, the Elizabethtown franchise was voted DreamMaker's National Franchise of the Year. "The award wasn't based on volume," Dale explains. "We're certainly not the biggest, but we were mainly recognized for mastering, implementing and following proven construction process systems that work and result in a high-level of customer satisfaction."

"We have a systematic approach that other remodelers don't. It helps our customers make educated decisions throughout the process, before the actual remodeling ever begins. We follow a written system, down to the smallest process and tie everything to customer service. We pride ourselves on following the DreamMaker Code of Values. It is important to us as owners, as a company and to our customers, who are treated and respected the best that they possibly can be."

"Our staff is a combination of employees and trade partners. We don't put anything out to bid. We work with specific partners, and we have agreed-upon set pricing and hourly rates for projects. At the start of the project, we have a pre-construction meeting with the client and Lead Carpenter on site, go over details and logistical issues and get the area ready to begin."



“Our remodelers and our customers go into each project with a clear understanding and direction, and with all of the materials already selected, ordered and delivered. We normally don’t start a project until we have all the materials in hand. When we begin, the project goes as smoothly as possible so there’s no waiting four weeks for cabinets or something else to come in. We complete tasks, we follow timelines as close as possible, we make sure the customer is taken care of and that they always get a call back when they have a question.”

“Ninety-five percent of the time, the worst thing we will ever do is call and delay a starting time, rather than leaving your house torn up. We truly work to minimize the time that we have a customer displaced from normal, everyday function. Many customers appreciate us taking that risk out of that equation. We have a lot of people come in after the fact and say...I wish I would have had you do this, because this, this and this happened.”

“For example, a major kitchen remodel where you’re replacing everything...lighting, flooring, cabinetry...we can do in 3 weeks, because we’re not starting until we have everything. We’ll have the electrician and the plumber scheduled on a specific date, so the project is smooth and you’re not complaining that it took 6 weeks, 2 months or 3 months to get your kitchen done. We’re being more efficient in our systems and in the long run that is beneficial to customers from a time and a money perspective.”

Some of Dale’s best referrals come from people that didn’t initially work with DreamMaker. “They worked with someone else, but when their neighbor asks them for a recommendation, they send them our way



Dale Ressler, Hector Cruz & Keith Greenawalt

and tell them we are the better choice. We had a customer who went with another contractor for a project ten years ago but he referred his daughter and her husband to us. They literally walked in the door of the showroom and handed me their house key before I ever gave them a price. The daughter said...you’re doing this one for us, since you didn’t do the one ten years ago.”

Dale tells customers that “I’m merely here as a GPS for their project highway. There are guardrails on either side. And we’re there to guide them through. It’s their project, not ours.”

His success within the “system” led the owner of DreamMaker to ask Dale to help coach other franchises. He started in 2014 with five franchises that he trains, then moved to ten franchises and starting this summer, Dale will be providing training for 20 different DreamMaker franchise locations. “It’s a big responsibility, but I love it!”

His wife, Bobbi, explains that “Dale was selected because he’s a perfectionist...for the franchise and for our customers. DreamMaker looks for excellence in everything and Dale strives to succeed in everything he does with honesty, transparency and making sure it’s done right.”

And Dale knows that the coaching role actually benefits his own customers as well. “I have to coach on all of the systems, so it makes me that much more refined in what we need to do to ensure successful projects and satisfied customers. Over time in your business, you develop blind spots. Then a coach comes in and sheds light on weaknesses you didn’t know you had. When I discover those for others, it also causes me to self-reflect and self-evaluate what we’re doing and make improvements.” Another significant benefit for customers is the DreamMaker Showroom. “People are impressed and surprised how much we can accomplish in our showroom,” Dale explains. “We can showcase a bathroom remodel, from a simple tub shower conversion to a full master

(Continued on next page)



Dale and Bobbi Ressler, Owners

“Dale Ressler at DreamMaker was extremely good at providing a budget and schedule and adhering to both. The work was done neatly and safely and I am very pleased with the outcome.” -- Jeff D.



suite with stone shower, designer tile, a sunken tub and complete wet room, where the entire bathroom is the shower. It's an excellent option for a handicapped person, where everything in the bathroom is tiled, making the floor completely waterproof and having a slope to drain. Our kitchens feature entry level cabinetry to a full custom line where we can match something that's already existing in your home."

"Most of our customers aren't looking to put the least expensive item in, but they aren't always looking high end either. Our showroom shows the full extent of both. We're seldom the cheapest overall if you're comparing to a big box store and while we do have some lower cost items, we won't carry certain products because they don't hold up or the manufacturer doesn't stand behind them. We stick with companies that honor their warranties and committed to replacing their products when they don't perform."

"Typically, we like you to visit the showroom first to learn what you're looking to accomplish and what products and surfaces you prefer. We have sample vignettes set up where you can see exactly what you'll get for a certain budget. We are able to educate clients on categories of products and the cost differences, so they can decide what they want to spend their money on, rather than just saying "go pick it up and we'll install it." Those occurrences happen every day in remodeling but they don't happen with us. They're reviewing with us, they're buying from us, we're responsible for the materials and we don't start the job until we have all the materials and fixtures. Once you determine you want to move forward, we go take some measurements at your home, review a basic design and then return to the showroom to discuss budget and the plan."

"Pricewise, we have buying power within the DreamMaker franchise. We have better quality products and are already cutting out one layer of middle men and markups, where product comes directly from the manufacturer to our Elizabethtown showroom. We're going to match up with similar companies that have a showroom and a designer and I am confident in the "experience side" of our business and our employees."

Dale says that DreamMaker prides itself on being one of the most trusted names in the kitchen, bathroom and interior remodeling industry today. "We pride ourselves on an incredible customer experience and following proven processes. Our customers will be satisfied, from start to finish, and any issue will be resolved and will speak well of our company."

**You can visit DreamMaker's show room at 244 South Market Street, Elizabethtown, or go online at [www.elizabethtownhomeremodeling.com](http://www.elizabethtownhomeremodeling.com) or call 717-367-9753.**

## Code of Values

### We Believe...

*...in superior service to our customers, our community and to each other as members of the DreamMaker team.*

*...in counting our blessings every day in every way.*

*...success is the result of clear, cooperative, positive thinking.*

*...that loyalty adds meaning to our lives.*

*...management should seek out and recognize what people are doing right, and treat every associate with respect.*

*...challenges should be used as learning experiences.*

*...our Creator put us on this earth to succeed. We will accept our daily successes humbly, knowing that a higher power is guiding us.*

*...in the untapped potential of every human being. Every person we help achieve their potential fulfills our mission.*

*...we must re-earn our positions every day in every way.*

*...in building our country through the free enterprise system. We demonstrate this belief by continually attracting strong people to the DreamMaker team.*

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### **DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen** *"Enhancing Lives. Improving Homes."*

**244 S. Market Street, Elizabethtown, PA 17022**  
**Showroom Hours: Weekdays 10AM-5PM and by appointment**

**717.367.9753**

**[www.elizabethtownhomeremodeling.com](http://www.elizabethtownhomeremodeling.com)**  
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