

Add Value And Appeal With A New Front Entryway

Are you looking to add value to your home without spending a lot of money?

Do you want to update the exterior look of your home without drastic construction or remodeling?

Then consider upgrading the curb appeal of your home with a new entry system.

"It's one of the best investments you can make right now," says Nancy Nagy, president of Chicago's Lakeshore Funding and an experienced real estate broker.

"Investing in housing continues to remain steady while other investments have been more uncertain. We're seeing many homeowners who are refinancing their mortgages and using the funds to update the exteriors of their homes."

Recent research from Therma-Tru, a door manufacturer, and NFO Worldwide found that an enhanced entryway can add as much as \$24,000 to a home's perceived value, approximately five times the cost of

the entry system.

There are few other upgrades to a home that deliver this kind of return on investment.

In addition, 60 percent of individuals who replaced their front entry doors did it to improve the appearance of their homes.

New fiberglass materials and design options are making the rich look of a wood door more affordable and easier to maintain.

Where many doors used to be wood or steel, today's best choice for style and performance is fiberglass.

Fiberglass won't rot, warp or peel like wood; requires minimal maintenance; provides thermal protection; and offers unlimited possibilities for styles and finish options.

Before you select a door, you need to determine what design possibilities are locked behind the walls of your home. First, check the opening of your doorway to see

what your home can accommodate structurally.

Next, measure the height and width of the frame to determine your current opening.

Most single doors are 3 feet wide and 6 feet 8 inches tall.

But some of today's most popular doors are now 3 feet 6 inches wide and 8 feet tall, so you may need to enlarge your door opening.

You can upgrade an existing door by adding sidelites with decorative glass, which provides curb appeal and new light for the home's interior.

You may need to work with a contractor to remove some of the drywall and create a new larger opening, which will need to be 3/4 inch wider and 1/2 inch taller than the size of your door and sidelite unit.

You can generally find the specific rough opening requirements in the manufacturer's catalog or Web site.

If you have a single door, you can replace it with a door like Therma-Tru's new Classic Craft® Mahogany Collection fiberglass door with a glass doorlite.

If you already have plain double doors, you can replace them with double doors with glass doorlites.

Or, you can install an extra-wide single door (3'6") with decorative sidelites and fill in the rough opening.

You can create a distinctive, grand look by expanding to double doors with glass sidelites and a transom, the glass piece above a door.

You'll need to work with a contractor or architect to determine whether you need to install a steel lintel above the door for extra support.

This requires a little more work, but the final results will be well worth it when they give your home a completely new look.

Lastly, remember that an entryway is a system of components, not just the door slab.

If you don't install quality hinges, sill plates, weatherstripping and locking systems, the door won't perform like you expect.

Therma-Tru produces a door system designed to work together with high-quality, durable components — from door hardware to beautiful glass sidelites and transoms — designed for its door systems.

The company also provides a door system warranty to ensure the performance of its system.

Therma-Tru offers homeowners design ideas, installation tips and a complete door selection on its Web site at www.thermatru.com.

The site features an interactive Door Designer where users can match door styles with glass sidelites, doorlites, transoms, and stain and paint colors to create the look they want.

Therma-Tru offers complete entry and patio door systems through a national network of building material distributors and lumberyards.

For more information on Therma-Tru Doors, visit its Web site or call (800) 537-8827.



Hot Outdoor Trends

Fireplaces: Make them the centerpiece to your outdoor living space. They also can provide some heat, if necessary.

Fountains and reflecting pools: They provide tranquility to a backyard. Add small fountains in your garden or even a small stream running throughout the yard - viewable from inside your home, too.

To get a spa feel, some homeowners are even installing outdoor showers near their pool areas.

Kitchens: Upscale gas grills or even brick pizza ovens are on the rise for fancy outdoor cooking. Some outdoor kitchens are even complete with sinks, ranges and refrigerators.

Gardens: The Garden Media Group predicts 2007 trends will

include gardens with colorful foliage plants, such as elephant ears, ornamental grasses and iresine.

Small gardens are also "in," according to GMG. Squeeze a small garden on your patio or rooftop, wherever there's plenty of sunlight.

Also, consider a trellis with vines to create a natural canopy for your backyard.

Whatever outdoor makeover you choose, create a seamless transition from indoor to outdoor by using architecture details, flooring, color schemes and window treatments similar to the inside of your home, suggests the American Society of Interior Designers. Then, when you head outdoors, you'll still feel right at home.

Before you begin your remodeling project contact the Pier & Beam specialists...

Eagle Lake House Leveling

Danny Matura
(979) 733-0508

Cell: (979) 732-1789

Sill Repair/Foundation Work
Pier & Beam Specialists
Commercial • Residential

A TOP GUN PEST CONTROL

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL
Effective. Efficient. Experienced
Free Estimates • Senior Citizen Discounts

LAWN & ORNAMENTAL

979-732-6638

or Toll Free 1-800-693-BUGS
314 WALNUT • COLUMBUS, TX.