

STONE CREEK SURFACES

The proof is in the pudding: satisfied customers' referrals feed locally-owned and operated countertop business

For the last seven years, Stone Creek Surfaces has lived off the referrals from satisfied customers. In fact, in all that time, Laura da Ponte, owner, has placed only one or two ads. Her small granite, marble & quartz business has thrived on word-of-mouth advertising. So, naturally, I wondered what had changed. Was it the economy? Was she changing her business? What was it?

The answer was simple. She was expanding her business by adding inventory — giant slabs of marble and granite — to help her customers even more, to make it easier for them to choose their countertop. If you've ever remodeled your kitchen or bath, you know that can be one of the hardest parts of the whole process.

"Because we are small and customer-focused, we walk our customers through the entire process from start to finish" Laura explained.

She means that literally. She and her experienced staff will help with design and layout if needed and then help with choosing the best product for the project. Once all the details are worked out, Stone Creek will make

the templates, cut, polish and install the finished product, including sinks and other accessories. And they stand behind what they do.

"We warranty our work. We want our customers to be happy and satisfied," Laura said.

Laura doesn't hesitate to guarantee her company's work because of her staff. When she says they are

experienced, she means it. Her sales associates Audrey Anderson and Shane Rose have over 15 years of experience in the business between them. That's why they are so knowledgeable. Then there's Laura herself. She brings a degree in engineering and more than 15 years in the manufacturing business to the table.

Typical of an engineer, every move Laura makes is calculated. First, there's the location of the business. It is strategically located in Louisville on Central Park Boulevard, right off Louisville Road. That location provides easy and quick access to Maryville and Knoxville.

Then there was her decision to focus primarily

on natural products, granite and marble. "I like that it's natural and unique, each piece like fascinating art coming out of the ground," she said. "It's a durable product I feel good about selling."

Finally, there was her decision to offer services to residential and

commercial customers, which provides the challenges her analytical mind needs to flourish, because "I never know what a day is going to hold," she said. "It could be anything from calling on my largest customer to working on the smallest detail for a residential customer. It's so varied. I love it and I love being a female in this business," she continued.

Stone Creek's success can be measured by her customers. In addition to working with interior design professionals, they fabricate countertops for seven Lowe's Home Improvement stores in this area, from Sevierville to Harriman, including Maryville, and that's no small feat. According to Laura, to become a fabricator for Lowe's, you have to pass a series of stringent requirements, guidelines and background checks.

If that's not enough to convince you that Stone Creek is the place to go, read on. A couple of local customers offer their praise and assessment.

When I decided to replace the laminate countertops that I've had in my kitchen since I first built my home eighteen years ago I began by doing my homework. I really wanted granite but wasn't sure if I could afford it. I began by researching the various types of materials that



Laura da Ponte (center), owner of Stone Creek Surfaces, is flanked by experienced sales associates Audrey Anderson and Shane Rose.

were being used for countertops and the pros and cons of each. Then I began to shop. I called a highly advertised company and had them come do a quote for me. It seemed reasonable until all of the "add ons" were put into the quote. Next, I looked at a Corian surface which was in my price range. Then I found Audrey Anderson at Stone Creek Surfaces. She encouraged me to look at granite even though I felt it was out of my price range. Well I was truly amazed when her price came back only two hundred dollars over the Corian I had first picked out. Needless to say, I went with the granite; it was beautiful! I absolutely loved working with Stone Creek. They were truly professional, were always on time for their appointments and the staff was a pleasure with which to do business. I am extremely happy with my new countertops and am glad I gave Audrey a call.

Carole Trammell
Louisville, TN

As interior design professionals, the customer service my colleagues and I receive from Audrey is consistently efficient, friendly and helpful. We are always equipped with a little more knowledge of the product we are inquiring about after we call on her expertise. It is obvious that Audrey takes pride in her work, and puts her customers first, taking great care of us at the same time. There is never a doubt that our customer's needs will be well provided for!

Kimberly McClellan
Just So Decorating, Inc.

Stone Creek Surfaces offers granite, marble and quartz for countertops, furniture and other applications. Located in Louisville less than a mile from Pellissippi Parkway (140), their staff can help you with any project, large or small. As Laura points out, "you don't have to gut your kitchen to make a huge difference." Give them a call and you'll understand the proof is in the pudding.

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