

A Margin of Excellence

Guy Loisi explains how Rowland Companies makes it so sweet to come home

Story by **DEBBIE ABBOTT** // Photography by **MARK PETERMAN**

After many years of braving the blustering cold of the Windy City, realtor Guy Loisi decided it was time to move his wife and three children to a warmer region of the country. Florida, California and Arizona were the frontrunners in their plans for exodus from Chicago, but the ever-pleasant weather and vast opportunity of the real estate market gave Arizona the upper hand. So Loisi sold his business and headed west, landing in the quaint little town of Fountain Hills.

Seeking to surround himself with successful and intelligent people who shared his Midwestern work ethic, Loisi lucked out when he met **Bill Rowland**, owner and operator of Rowland Companies. It didn't take long for him to find his place within this growing and dedicated company.

ITEM: At the time you joined Rowland Companies, their revenue from constructing luxury homes made up less than fifteen percent of the entire business. What made you think that this commercial construction company could actually succeed in the residential market?

Loisi: Their philosophy is right in line with mine. They believe that it is not one thing done 1,000 times better, but 1,000 things done just a little better that creates the margin of excellence that sets them apart. Previously, in my own business, I spent many

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long hours—including nights and weekends—talking with clients to make sure that they were comfortable with everything. Bill does business the same way, and he's always told me, “Remember, there's nothing we can't work out over a cup of coffee.”

ITEM: As confident as you were about your future with this company, things kind of got off to a rocky start.

Loisi: Yes. I began working as managing principal the day before 9/11; a lot of people were uncertain about what was going to happen with the economy. But we kept the faith and no one gave up. It was apparent that Rowland was not a bottom-line-driven company; they wanted to cement long-term relationships with clients. It's not unusual for us to spend up to two years building a luxury property; we become friends with our clients.

ITEM: How does Rowland go about ensuring that kind of relationship with their clients?

Loisi: The process is twofold really. Bill is a very dynamic person and he's instilled in me that there's nothing we can't solve. By always keeping the lines of communication open, our clients never reach levels of high anxiety. We try to put ourselves in their shoes rather than just thinking about how a situation affects us. Second, there has to

be a good match between us and the client. We must feel good about conversely, the customer needs to feel good about us before we ever bring those ingredients aren't there, then there is a possibility of failure.

ITEM: How does this level of commitment affect your personal life?

Loisi: Well, I am an admitted workaholic—but my wife and children understand what I do. They know that, ultimately, it's for them. I try to keep myself from being blocked out for my family; typically it's Sundays ... with the exception of when I spend nearly every Sunday morning on the phone with clients because I want to focus without the normal workday interruptions. As the business grows, I'm hoping to have the right people working for me, which will allow me to spend more time with my own family.

ITEM: Speaking of growing the business, how have things changed since you started working for Rowland five years ago?

Loisi: Since I came to the organization as a partner, we've grown from seven employees to around forty, and we've probably quadrupled our revenue.

ITEM: Those are impressive numbers. What do you think has been the biggest factor behind that kind of growth?

Loisi: We have a synergy among the teams in our organization in that we try to accomplish everything the best way possible. Rather than having an end result is always excellent because everyone pays attention to all of the details. Additionally, we guarantee the number of days to complete a project.

ITEM: How do you manage to guarantee a delivery date in a volatile construction market?

Loisi: We commit to liquidated damages—we will pay a certain fee to the owner if we don't finish on time. Money gives people an incentive to complete projects. Contractors don't like to lose money; consequently, their motivation to complete projects on time increases if there's a monetary penalty.

ITEM: What does the future hold for Rowland Luxury Homes?

Loisi: Our goal for the future is to continue to grow at a steady pace—but we'd like to continue expanding into custom home markets that are evolving in the Valley. Right now, we're working on the **Montelucia** project in Paradise Valley (La Posada Resort). Rowland will build thirty-four custom, luxury homes, ranging in size from 3,800 to 4,700 square feet and priced from \$2 to

