

We Will Develop It For You



Creating a Custom Lumber Solution



By Joe Zbicki
American Lumber Company

INTRODUCTION

For over a hundred years, companies in need of hardwood lumber have been purchasing materials based upon agreed industry grading standards. Truth be told, these grading standards have, and still do, treat us well. However, what was developed as a measurement for fairness and consistency for random width and length lumber, does not always properly measure the true amount of usable surface area a manufacturer would receive based on their specific production process and needs.

Many times, the industry's traditional grading practices do not depict the true value of a board based on a company's specific manufacturing needs. Color consistency, available clear cuttings, or the amount of usable surface area can be, and often are, unique to a specific company's production requirements. If a company could design and order only the lumber that worked best for them they could inevitably increase productivity, decrease waste, and reduce their overall cost to produce their finished products. That is why the ability to design a custom lumber solution for the hardwood lumber they purchase is so important to companies today.

WOULDN'T IT BE NICE

For example, wouldn't it be nice if a moulding manufacture could receive a load of 96" length boards with four faces clear with no end splits? Or what if a



furniture manufacturer could order lumber only in the widths they needed to produce the finished widths/lengths required? What would it be like for a cabinet manufacturer if they were guaranteed a specific yield on lumber ordered based on their products cut bill and color requirements? To us, these are all custom lumber solutions that can be developed specifically for your hardwood lumber needs.

Over the past forty years, American Lumber has worked with our customers to co-create customized hardwood lumber products that help their business succeed. These products are designed specifically with the customers manufacturing process in mind. They are lumber solutions that offer customers more usable lumber in each unit which maximizes their efficiency. These customized hardwood lumber solutions offer customers benefits ranging from guaranteed yields, color consistent as well as specific cut bill applications, all which have been jointly designed as a result of our five step Custom Lumber Solution process.

CUSTOM LUMBER SOLUTIONS

American Lumber has had the experience of co-creating over a hundred successful hardwood lumber solutions for specific customers. Our approach is a five step process we call our Custom Lumber Solutions program.

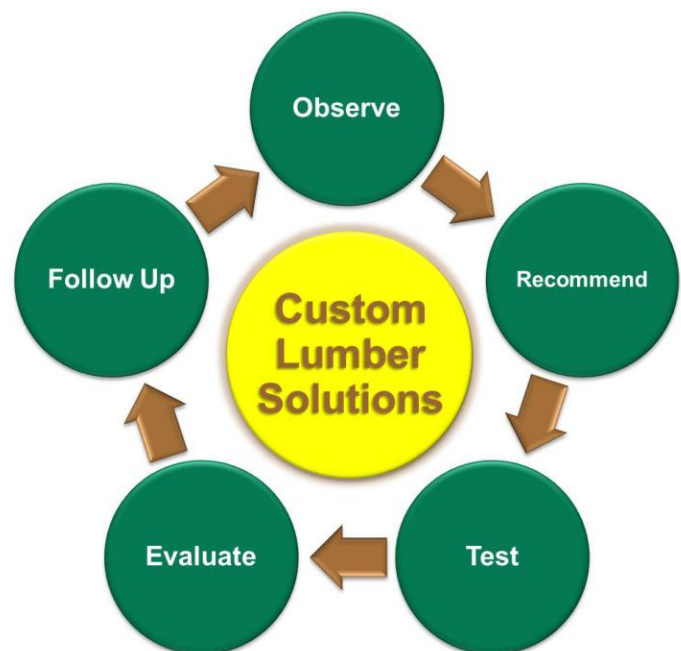
American Lumber's Custom Lumber Solution program is a free no obligation review of a company's production process. Our five step evaluation process is designed to work with our customers to co-create unique lumber solutions that meet their specific production needs. With each step, careful consideration and analysis is given to the customer's environment, their capabilities, expectations, and requirements.

THE STEPS

Step 1- Observation

The process starts with a period of observation. American Lumber's product development experts will visit your location and conduct a thorough onsite review of your existing manufacturing process. They will analyze the specific species being utilized, the volumes consumed per day, the desired finished product being created, the machinery and cutting techniques being used, along with any inventories parts and waste being created.

During this observation period the American representative will interact with all personnel including the mill manager, machine operators, plant managers, and lumber buyers to obtain the best overall picture of how and why things are done today and what opportunities may exist for improvement.



At the conclusion of the observation session all findings will be discussed and shared in an effort to jointly develop the best co-created and customized solution for the customer.

Step 2- Recommendation

It is in the recommendation stage in which we present a proposal outlining the specifics of the jointly created custom lumber solution. The proposed solution will include details on alternative lumber grades, board sizes, species substitutes, special width solutions, or color specifications as applicable. Each recommendation will focus on ways to improve a customer's specific production practices and may result in improved production flow.

Step 3- Test

This step is actually a hands on test of the agreed upon lumber solution in the customer's actual manufacturing process. A sampling of the designed lumber will be shipped to the customer's location for analysis. American Lumber representatives return to be onsite to actually observe the material being used in the customer's specific production process. Is it important that the test lumber be isolated in production and the results analyzed separately. This way proper measurement of the lumber's performance can be achieved for evaluation.

Step 4 – Evaluation

At the conclusion of the test period a detailed evaluation of the yields received will be conducted and compared to prior performance levels. The evaluation will take into consideration all aspects of the production process including any changes in inventory management, employee productivity, production efficiency, lumber yield metrics, and waste creation. We discuss with our customers any additional enhancements or adjustments that can be made to the lumber with the goal being to further improve the manufacturing process and the establishment of a schedule of future deliveries.

Step 5- Follow up

A critical step in the custom lumber solution process is ongoing communication and follow-up. Regular communication and discussions take place ensuring the yields expected are achieved. Many times, alterations to the manufacturing process, personnel operating the machines, finished product requirements specifications, or outside demands on the business result in changes to the production process. It is important that any issues which impact the performance of the lumber solution are accounted for and addressed to achieve the desired production results. If need be, further analysis or product enhancements can be made.

ACHIEVING RESULTS

The process has proven to work. Over the years, American has successfully created dozens of customer specific lumber solutions that have helped our customers succeed. Examples include:

- Providing a product with a guaranteed yield along with a percentage of five specific ripped widths that would be manufactured out of a traditional random width load that reduced the customer's unused ripped inventory by 100%, reduced their lead time, and increased productivity.



- The development of a customer specific proprietary grade for hard maple focusing on their specified color, wane, and side bend requirements enabling them to receive 3-5% more usable surface area per board for their cabinet making process.
- A customized sort in cherry, specifically selected based on desired knot placements and color which provided a furniture manufacturer the ability to increase usable surface area by 8-10%.

GETTING STARTED

Our approach is, and always has been, to find ways to help our customers succeed. Our willingness to go the extra mile, construct custom grades, develop specific units, and co-create individual solutions for our customers is what makes this process work. Designing a customer lumber solution for your business is not hard. Our team of hardwood lumber professionals would be happy to guide you through the process of co-creating a unique solution that works for your manufacturing process. Contact us today to receive more information or to schedule an onsite visit.

How to contact us



P.O. Box 9001

Hamburg, New York 14075

814-438-7888

inquiry@alumber.com

www.alumber.com

No part of this document, in whole or in part, may be reproduced or reused without the prior written permission of American Lumber Company. The information in this document is provided for informational purposes only.