









#### GHO Homes

Technology remains a hard sell with some buyers West Palm Beach, Fla.

For a little more than two years, GHO Homes has offered structured wiring packages as standard equipment in homes above \$200,000, and as an option in its lower-priced

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homes. The West Palm Beach, Fla., builder counts roughly so percent of its customers as empty-nesters, who are either retired or in semi-retirement. With the exception of alarm systems, selling technology to this demographic has proven tough. Only about 30 percent of all homes built by GHO in the past year had home networks.

"My opinion is that the average customer (in this droup! Just doesn't landerstand the benefits of home net-

works or other technologies," says Bill Handler, president. GIRO works relies on Brinks, a long-time player in the home socurity market, to handle all of its low-voltage sakes and installations and to sell the technology to its customers. The litinks rep contacts everyone who is huying from us," says Handler, Not surprisingly, Handler says that younger families huy at a rate higher than the company's bread-andbutter empty-nester elientele. "Where there are two or three computers and a couple of kids, this absolutely makes sense," he says, "But our customers who have only one computer don't really see the benefit to putting in a home network.

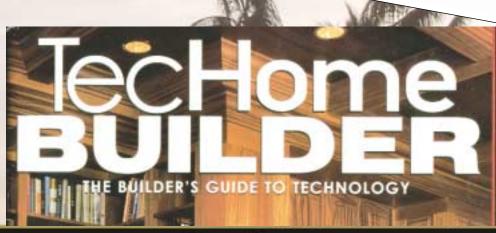
Despite the trouble selling technology packages to all [older] buyers, GHO is not about to ahandon the prostram. I think in my market we got ahead of what people really wanted," says Handler, "I see it pushed heavily for where we are going in the industry, but I don't think our market has followed through."

Of the systems GHO does have installed, Handler says the most popular feature is the prestring for smallite televisions. Local competitors also aren't having much look selling home networks, as far as Handler can tell, so there is no particular competitive pressure to continue.

Nonetheless, continue they will, "We're going to stick with it," Handler says, "I don't like to change decisions that I don't think are flawed. I don't think this one is flawed, I just don't think people have caught up with it yet." "

Cheria Anderson is a verticer based in Partiand, Maine.

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