



# Colorado fabricator enjoys consistent expansion

*In business since 2002, Stone Concepts of Brighton, CO, has seen steady growth over the years, and it has invested in a range of technology*

by Michael Reis



Stone Concepts of Brighton, CO, has grown steadily since its foundation in 2002. Two years ago, the company purchased its current facility, which has 700 square feet of office/showroom space and 5,600 square feet of space for fabrication. “We have two acres of land,” said company owner, Mike Martinez.

**W**ith a mix of commercial and residential work, Stone Concepts of Brighton, CO, has been able to maintain a pattern of growth and continued investment, including a move to a new facility two years ago.

The company was founded in May of 2002, and it has developed a solid repeat commercial client base along with many referrals in the private remodel market. Projects completed by the company include custom homes

— including 2002 and 2005 Parade of Homes properties, corporate offices, banks, hotels, condos and remodels. “Our focus is custom countertops. We do residential and small commercial, and we also do some large commercial projects,” explained Mike Martinez, owner of the company, who said that one such project was the Westin Riverfront Resort & Spa at Beaver Creek in Avon, CO. “For that project, we did stonework for the public areas, the lobby and the public restrooms. We

also did stonework for 90-plus units with full kitchens with multiple vanities, and 200-plus units where we did vanities and kitchenettes.”

For Martinez, the move into the stone industry marked a career change, although he relied on his professional background in developing Stone Concepts. “Our oldest son, Anthony, was in the stone industry for years,” he said. “I worked in high-tech as an engineer, and my background is in quality and reliability. I thought I could bring a



One of the shop's first investments was a FP 500 bridge saw from Simec of Italy.



In 2004, Stone Concepts added a Pro Edge III automated edging machine from Park Industries.



Water is recycled using an EnviroSystem from Water Treatment Technologies.



When Stone Concepts moved into its current facility, it also invested in a Park Destiny CNC stoneworking center.



level of efficiency to this industry.”

In order to maintain a high level of efficiency and quality, Stone Concepts has invested in a range of equipment over the years. “When we first started, we had a Simec bridge saw and hand grinders,” Martinez said. “In 2004, we added a Pro Edge III [automated edging

machine from Park Industries]. In 2008, we bought a new building, and we put in the Park Destiny CNC, and our efficiency increased big time. Everything happened at the right time — the new building, the CNC and the overhead crane — just as we started the Westin project, so we were able to

do the Westin as well as our regular work. My youngest son, Matthew, had studied engineering, and he went to Park for training on the CNC. He was ready for production in a week. We also added a water treatment system from Water Treatment Technologies in 2008, and we changed over to working



Stone Concepts processes a combination of residential and commercial projects.



"A typical kitchen is 55 square feet, but we generally do at least one vanity — often two or three — in a home," explained company owner Mike Martinez.

100% wet at that time." The machinery is equipped with tooling from Barranca Diamond.

Stone Concepts' new building has 700 square feet of office/showroom space and 5,600 square feet of space for fabrication. "We have two acres of land," Martinez said.

In terms of templating, Stone Concepts generally works with cardboard templates, and it has also invested in technology to assist in its installations. "We started using Gorilla

Grips in the field, and that has really made the quality go up in our seams," Martinez said. "My son, Michael, is out in the field as an installer, and he prides himself on his seams."

### Sales and marketing

Despite the recession, Stone Concepts has seen a level of consistency in its business over the past couple of years. "Last year wasn't so bad for us," Martinez said. "This year, we had a pretty good first few months, but

then it was dead in April. Now it has picked up again, but it is hard to say if it has completely improved."

Given the mix of work done by Stone Concepts, its production rate is not simply measured by the number of kitchens completed per week. "We like to get out 800 square feet per week," Martinez said. "A typical kitchen is 55 square feet, but we generally do at least one vanity — often two or three — in a home. Right now, most of our residential work is remodels. I'd say that 80 to



The company recently completed a range of stonework for the Westin Riverfront Resort & Spa at Beaver Creek in Avon, CO. The vanities in the guest rooms feature 2-cm Noir St. Laurent with eased and polished edging.



“We started using Gorilla Grips in the field, and that has really made the quality go up in our seams,” Martinez said. “My son, Michael, is out in the field as an installer, and he prides himself on his seams.”



Stone Concepts also processed stone for the public areas of the Westin Riverfront Resort & Spa at Beaver Creek. The lobby features tops of 2-cm Calacatta marble with a 4-inch quirkmitered drop aprons all the way around.

90% is residential remodel right now.”

In addition to natural stone products, Stone Concepts also processes a range of quartz surfacing. “We were the first in Colorado to do IceStone,” Martinez said. “We do all of the quartz surfacing — CaesarStone, HanStone, Radianz, Zodiaq, Silestone. I’d say 40% of our work now is quartz surfacing.”

In addition to Martinez and his sons, Stone Concepts has three other employees. “Our oldest son, Anthony, helped us manage the Westin project, and my wife Kathy works for us part-time,” he said. “All of my employees can do everything — install, template, etc. and are among the best in the industry. Matthew programs and operates the CNC, but everyone else can fabricate and cut. Our three employees have been with us for six years and are like part of the family.”

Speaking on challenges in the industry, Martinez said he strives to maintain throughput without adding people while keeping the same high level of quality and service. “I’ve never been late on a job,” he said. “We usually say less than two weeks. However, most of the time, we are seven days or less. We strive to be perfect in the details and to be good to our customers. It’s not just

talk; we go out and do it. Although rare, our guys will tell me if there is a problem, and we will take care of it.

The company’s client base is comprised of dealers, custom homebuilders and commercial contractors. “I don’t market to the public,” Martinez said. “We don’t even have a sign on our building, because we don’t want to compete with our customers.” □

### Stone Concepts Brighton, CO

*Type of work:* a mix of commercial and residential work

*Machinery:* FP 500 bridge saw from Simec of Italy; Pro Edge III automated edging machine and a Destiny CNC, both from Park Industries of St. Cloud, MN; EnviroSystem from Water Treatment Technologies of Hampton, NH; tooling from Barranca Diamond Products of Torrance, CO; Gorilla Grips from Monument Toolworks of Assonet, MA

*Number of Employees:* 7, including family