

Building in bad times was perfectly timed

LUCY ARDERN
ardernl@goldcoast.com.au

STARTING up his business when the property market was in a slump was an intentional move by Gold Coast builder Brad Fullin – and it appears to have paid off.

Three years ago the market had hit one of its lowest levels, which is when Mr Fullin launched his company, Palladio Homes.

“My philosophy was that if you can set a business up in the hard times and make it work, then you will do well in the good times,” he said. “We wanted to do it, so we went ahead despite the timing.”

Mr Fullin said he was able to take advantage of the over-supply of available tradesmen and the fact building supplies were competitively priced.

“I honestly don’t know if we would have been able to set up the business in the boom times and make it work,” he said.

Now Mr Fullin is creating jobs for 14 full-time staff and 80 sub-contractors.

“I am pretty much the only builder that these subbies have work with,” he said.

“We are keeping them going.”

The company has set a goal of building 50 homes this year and, with four contracts signed already, it looks

likely to reach the figure.

Mr Fullin said the two key points of difference between Palladio Homes and other builders was an intense focus on both customer service and flexibility of house design.

“We get a lot of feedback from customers that once they sign up with a builder they are just a number,” he said.

“But customer service is a big thing for us and it filters down to all levels of the company.”

Mr Fullin admitted Palladio Homes also had to offer exceptional value to get contracts over the line.

“It is a buyers’ market and the buyer knows that, so our margins are skinny,” he said.

Mr Fullin said marketing had been a big focus for the company right from the start but campaigns had not always hit the mark.

“When people are looking to build a house, they go and see several builders and then compare the bottom-line price,” he said.

“To begin with we were throwing in a whole lot of value-adds but unless you read the fine print, it looked like the house was more expensive than others and so did not work.”

Mr Fullin said the company now added promotions on top, which was more effective.



Brad Fullin had a strong vision – he started Palladio Homes when the market was in a slump, and hasn't looked back