

# BTJ CABINET DOOR COMPANY

## Prioritizing Family & Quality

 Curtis Grindstaff explains the manufacturing process on the NCFA's tour of BTJ Cabinet Door Company's facility.

By AMANDA MURPHY,  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

**W**hen you pull up to the parking lot at BTJ Cabinet Door Company, it would be easy to miss the place if you aren't paying close attention. Walking inside the 6,000-square-foot building that houses material, machinery, and more than 20 employees is another story. The operation is already efficient and well laid out, but old machinery is being replaced with new purchases, and significant growth in 2020 means an expansion is in the company's future.


Curtis Grindstaff, BTJ's owner, has been working with cabinets since he was a young boy with a strong work ethic. He believes that faith orchestrated his path and presented opportunities that led him to where he is today. Grindstaff started building cabinets with his uncle, Junior, and then moved on to cabinet installation, which resulted in spending more time on the road than Grindstaff wanted. After Grindstaff and his wife, Susan, had their third child, he got tired of traveling and

wanted to be home more with his family. It was at this time that Grindstaff began working for a cabinet distributor and his boss happened to open a cabinet door shop. During his time as a cabinet distributor, Grindstaff built up the confidence and clients to go out on his own.

Luckily, Grindstaff's uncle had switched to installing affordable kitchen and bathroom cabinets, and his cabinet-door manufacturing equipment was no longer being used. Grindstaff was able to rent his uncle's equipment per job and had purchased a large warehouse from his father within a year. Grindstaff jumped at the opportunities his family afforded him and, at the same time, made use of this unused equipment and land. Grindstaff and his wife started with two customers, making high-quality doors. Today, their daughter, Tara, is the office manager while Brett, their eldest son, works in the shop running top-quality, expensive equipment as well as being the Shop Foreman. Justin, the youngest child, is fearless and eats, breathes, and sleeps BTJ Cabinet Doors. He has pushed the organization into the 21st century with web design, catalogs, and IT services.

Grindstaff never pressured his children into coming to work for him, but they had ideas of their own. Working together as a



 Curtis Grindstaff and his wife, Susan, were written up in their local newspaper many years ago. Curtis proudly displays the article.

family can be challenging, but Grindstaff has made it a point that when the children walk through the door, he isn't Dad anymore. As a family, it has been agreed that he is now training the Grindstaff children to run the place once he is gone. He believes that the success of the business

in the future is directly tied to how well he passes along his knowledge to his children.

When it comes to leadership, Grindstaff recalls the hardest, most terrifying time in his successful career was during the economic downturn in 2008. The company went from 13 employees to three in a span of just six months. Being a leader during this time was a real challenge, even when BTJ was able to start hiring again, because the future was so uncertain. On a different note, since COVID-19, BTJ has seen a 40% growth in its business. Pre-COVID, the company was carrying 1,500 or so pieces on the books. Now, its inventory of doors is close to 3,000, and even hit an all-time high of 4,000 doors in September 2020. Like many in the NCFCA membership, BTJ finds that workforce is and always has been challenging. Grindstaff remarked that for every five employees you hire, only one or two will commit to the company.

### Quality Products

When Curtis Grindstaff and his wife first started the business 23 years ago, they were getting orders from cabinet shops, hand-picking the lumber, machining the wood, sanding, and delivering each cabinet door they manufactured. They take great pride in what they created, as well as the fact that they are family owned and can pass this well-oiled machine down to their children.

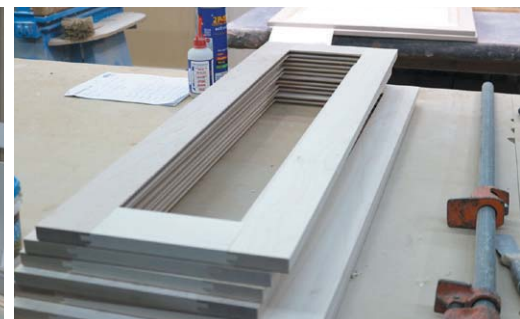
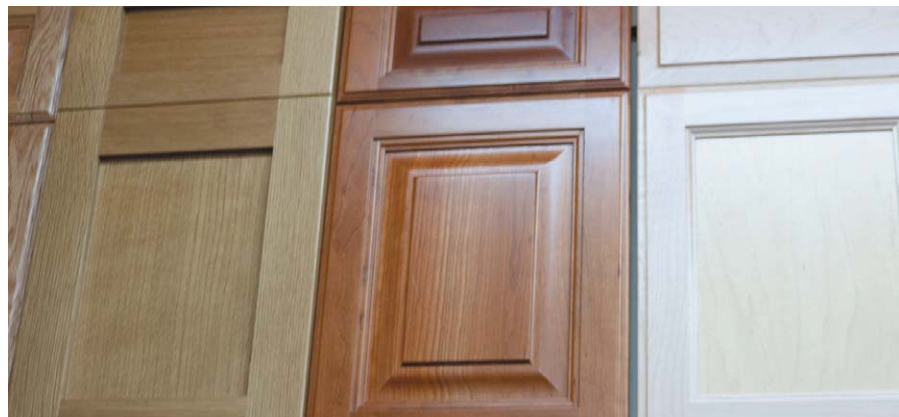
BTJ uses 4,000-5,000 board feet per week, and can create cabinet doors from any type of wood you can imagine. The most popular types include: red oak, maple, pine, cherry, oak, and walnut. BTJ recently signed a lease on 31,000 square feet of manufacturing space, and will be moving mid-summer into this new facility

Grindstaff described his father as a bit of a perfectionist, not ever wanting to give his customers less than they deserved. That is where Grindstaff got his strong work ethic and solid family values. His father did whatever it took to support his family, and Grindstaff plans to do the same.

When asked to look back over his career and wonder whether he would do anything differently, Grindstaff said he is happy with the way things have turned out and would not have changed anything along the way. He worked long hours, but was fortunate that he could always come to kids' ball games and school activities. Grindstaff is proud of the fact that he was able to keep his family and faith a priority while building a generational business. ■



**“Over the course of our 23+ years of crafting cabinet doors, we’ve discovered that the only way we can help our customers progress is to keep moving forward ourselves. That’s why we continually invest in cutting-edge equipment and tooling, commit to best-in-industry turnaround times, and are unwavering in our dedication to the quality of our doors... And we still subscribe to the ideals that made us successful over 20 years ago: pristine craftsmanship and impeccable customer service. That’s the family recipe; it always has been.”**



For more information on BTJ Cabinet Door Company, check out the company's website: [www.btjdoors.com](http://www.btjdoors.com).