



VIRTUAL TOUR IS THE PERFECT SHOW-AND-TELL

BY JEFF EASTERLING

WHEN CUSTOMERS walk into your store and want to know how a certain wood might look in their home, how do you illustrate the possibilities? Next time you're in need of a little eastern white pine show-and-tell tool, check out the NELMA Virtual Tour at www.nelma.org.

First launched in 2014, the Virtual Tour offering has now grown to include six different inspirational vignettes, and we hear there might be a new one launching soon. The Virtual Tour changed the way the industry looked at projects by employing interactive views and informational tags to tell the complete wood application story.

At the core of it, the Virtual Tours take the familiar realtor 360° home view and upgrade it with product specs indicating beautiful interior applications. Designed to spark imagination, the high-res digital photography is partnered with easy self-navigation in all directions, resulting in a fun, creative way to tour multiple rooms within a project, all controlled by the user. Colorful product information icons (that pop up on the wall, ceiling, or floor) are utilized within each room of each project to educate the user as to the actual grade, pattern, and finish used.

Over the years, retailer and consumer reaction to this unique, engaging tour of projects has grown exponentially. The Virtual Tours bring to life multiple wood projects and allows a peek into the beautiful reality of choosing authentic wood.

With the goal of exposing the varied uses of eastern white pine to as many retailers and consumers as possible, the Virtual Tour page on the NELMA website offers six project doors designed to inspire and educate:

- A *Modern Home* features clean lines, plentiful light, and an airy ambiance showcasing how easily eastern white pine fits into the modern aesthetic;
- The *Seaside Cottage* brings blues and whites and pops of yellow together to mingle effortlessly with the

décor of a beach home covered floor to ceiling in eastern white pine;

- Nothing says, "let's go camping!" more than the *Modern Cabin* filled with real, authentic wood illustrating the versatility of eastern white pine as the perfect building product for any style home;

- A *Horse Barn*? Absolutely! Commercial properties are among those made all the more beautiful with the inclusion of eastern white pine, and when it comes to a therapy horse barn in New Hampshire, the warm look of real wood is a flawless match with the outdoor vibe;

- A *Country Bar* offers up a side of natural beauty in a fun, honky-tonk establishment that needs building products high in durability and strength;

- The *Friends School in Maine* wanted to fully utilize the beautiful eastern white pines that came down to build a new structure, so they included them on the inside and outside of the new building—and even milled them on site.

With the popularity of eastern pine growing in both residential and commercial construction, it's important to take wood beyond the typical applications and share how it fits into any home, any project. The NELMA Virtual Tour is a slam-dunk easy tool for retailers to use to show their customers the reality of choosing beautiful, natural wood.



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