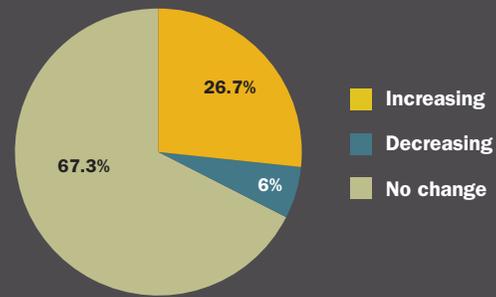


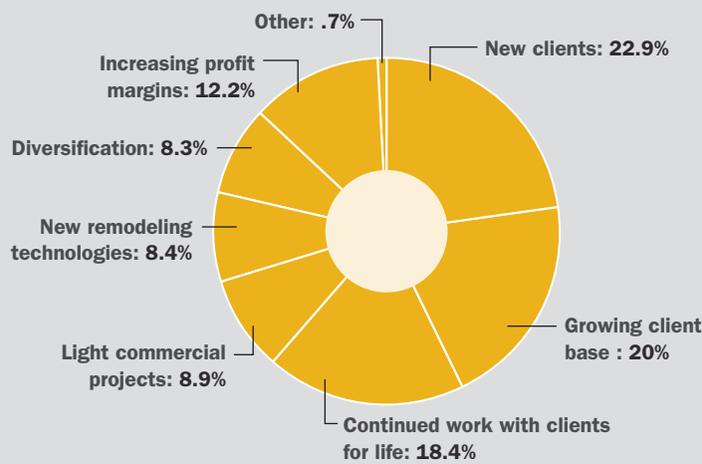
More than a quarter of those answering the survey plan to spend more on marketing in 2015. The majority, however, will either decrease or hold the line on marketing, continuing to rely mainly on repeat business word-of-mouth and referrals as well as a reported increasing number of online leads.

Is your marketing budget increasing or decreasing in 2015?



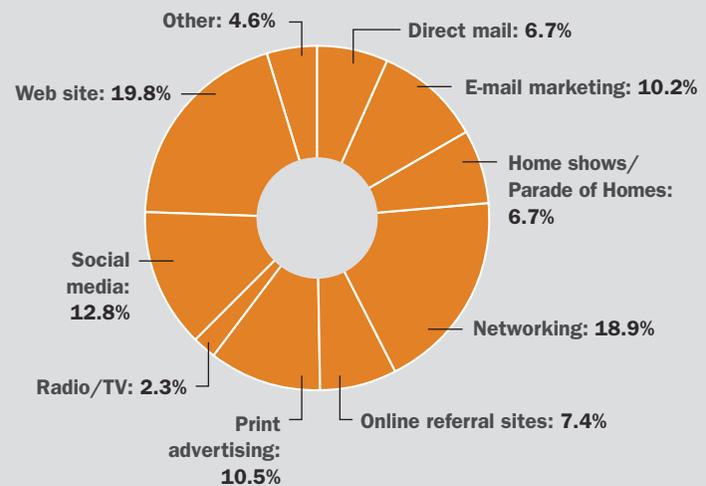
What types of opportunities do you expect to face in the 2015 remodeling marketing?

Participants selected up to three



Where are you spending more of your marketing money in 2015?

Participants checked all that applied



SOURCE: PROFESSIONAL REMODELER SURVEY

I'm making sure I take good care of the people I've got so no one will consider leaving and going elsewhere." Without good labor, remodelers won't be able to handle the increase in jobs. "No labor. No work. And it will affect your bottom line," Merrick says.

Supple points out that an additional labor challenge lies in the recruiting and hiring process. "Putting in the time it takes to get quality hires is difficult," he says. He plans to make organizational changes so his "office manager can focus on the books and to hire someone else to do human resources and marketing."

It's the Economy

Which brings us back to the economy itself, the other top challenge cited by respondents. Most (85%) anticipate a rise in mate-

rial costs and know that they will have to work hard to maintain their margins to be profitable. Some, like Merrick worry that "the people in Washington will do something [like encourage inflation] to screw up this steady growth." McAdams, too, is wary about possible "wage-price inflation."

For these remodelers, it's important to keep the memory of the recent recession in mind without letting it co-opt your thinking. There has to be some intelligent response to the past. "We're working on getting some money into savings and keeping in the back of our minds that things could fall apart," Rochman says. "The national financial market is just as precarious as it was in the middle of 2008. Nothing's different. It could happen again. We're being conscious of that and trying to capitalize on the work that is here." **PR**