

# Frequently Asked Questions

BY GARRY UPTON

*Over the course of 2006, this space will identify opportunities within customers' homes that you may not have observed in the past. The opportunities are based on a recent homeowner survey conducted by Decision Analyst, Inc.*

**This Month's FAQ:** *What does your company do to keep your good customers, and expand the seasonality of the business?*

Homeowners have a lot of choices when choosing an HVAC contractor. The good news for established contractors is that half of all the reasons customers give regarding their contractor selection has to do with the reputation you have established with them, their personal friends, and neighbors.

The most common reason why customers leave is that their contractor doesn't

stay in touch with them often enough to be remembered. Many contractors are taking action to change that. One fourth of all homeowners now claim to have a service contract. One in five of those with a service contract tell us their decision to hire a company to install new equipment is simple; they simply go to the company servicing their equipment.

Another reason customers leave

relates to the technician you laid off during the off-season, who starts his own company, and steals them away.

So, what are you doing to stretch your seasonality, and retain your best technicians?

The good news for all new contractors is, that there are many established businesses who fail to provide the essential steps mentioned above.

How well does your business model focus on these simple, yet hard to achieve customer demands? **GB**

Garry Upton of Decision Analyst, Inc. shares

*his interpretations of its American Home Comfort Study of 19,000 homeowners, and probes what customers look for in HVAC contractors. To learn more about this study, or purchase it, contact Garry at [gupton@decisionanalyst.com](mailto:gupton@decisionanalyst.com).*

## Q: What was the most important factor that helped you select your HVAC contractor?



Categories were given as "most important" or "important."  
Base = 1,461 replacement system buyers who hired an HVAC contractor.