

Who Are NAHB's Associate Members?

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Special Study for Housing Economics

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The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) has conducted an annual census of its members every year since 2008. NAHB's membership is divided into builder and associate members. Associate members are involved in a wide range of support industries and professions including, among others, trade contractors, manufacturers, retailers/distributors, designers, and architects. This article updates an [earlier study](#) on associate members with results from the latest NAHB census, conducted at the end of 2020. At that time there were roughly 75,000 associate members, accounting for two-thirds of NAHB's members (the remainder being builder members, who were covered in the [April Special Study](#)).

Characteristics of NAHB's associate members in 2020 include the following:

- Among the major categories of associates, the largest share (45 percent) are special trade contracts/subcontractors.
- Median gross revenue in 2020 was \$2.4 million.
- Median number of payroll employees is 11.
- Thirty-eight percent say they contribute in some way to the development of green/sustainable homes.

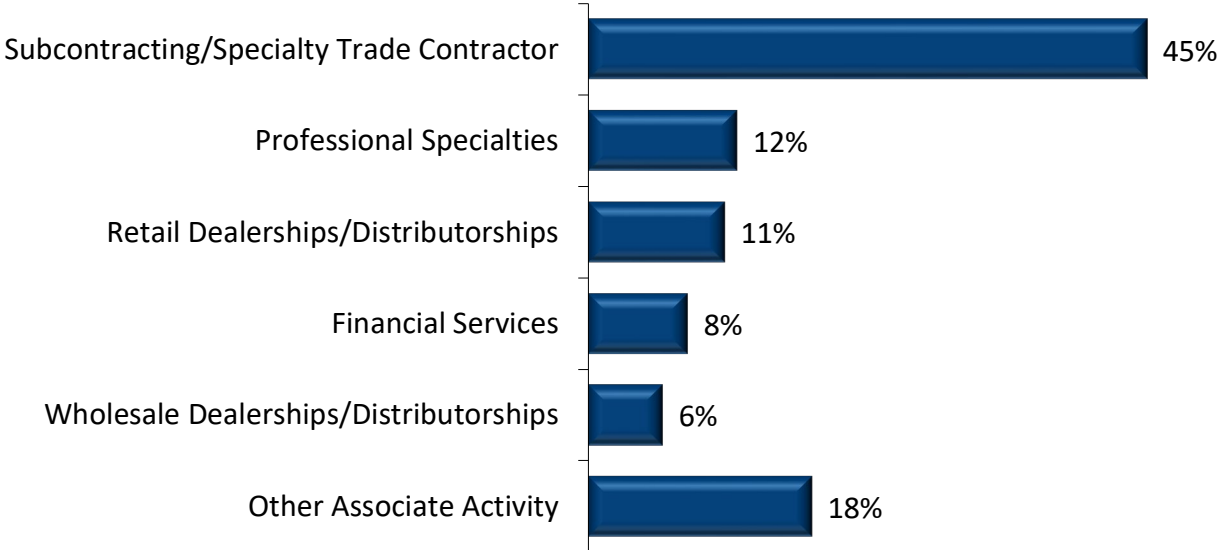
The next sections describe these results in more detail, including how they have evolved over time, as well as showing results on associate members' demographics and educational attainment. At the end of the exposition, there is a series of profiles showing basic statistics for each of the major categories of NAHB's associate members.

Associates' Business Activity

The NAHB census asks associate members to identify one of 42 specialties as the primary activity of their business. These detailed specialties are grouped into 6 broader categories. Among these broader categories, 45 percent of associate members identified themselves as

subcontractors/specialty trade contractors, 12 percent have a professional specialty business (architecture, engineering, marketing, accounting, legal, etc.), 11 percent are retail dealers/distributors, 8 percent provide financial services, and 6 percent are wholesale dealers/distributors. The remaining 18 percent listed some “other associate” activity as their primary business (fig 1.).

**Figure 1. Primary Business Activity During 2020
(Percent of Respondents)**

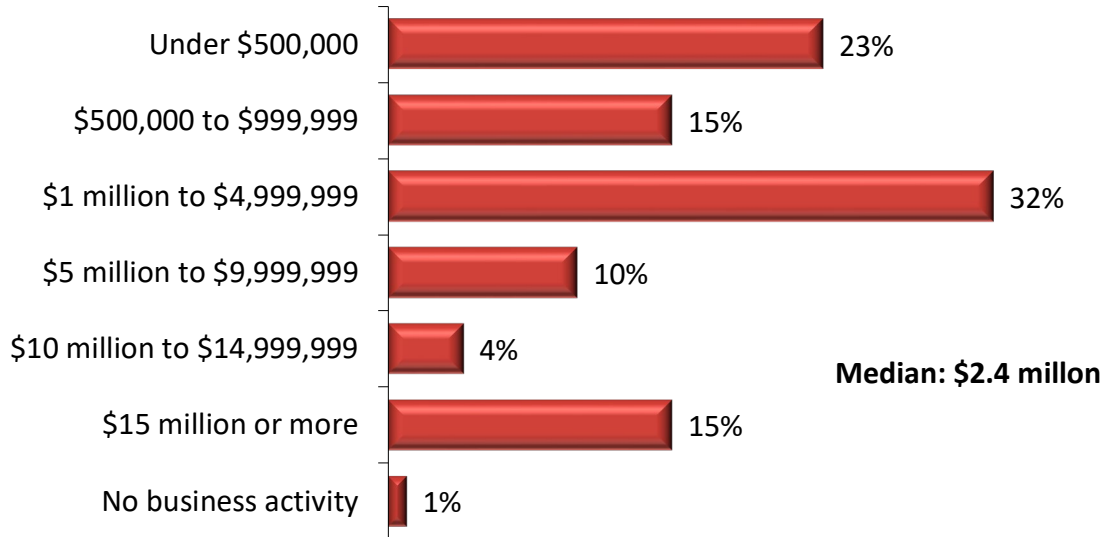


Between 2019 and 2020, the share of associates primarily involved in “other” associate activities (those not listed in the survey) declined by 3 percentage points, from 9 percent to 6 percent, while the distribution of associate members among the other primary activities did not change significantly.

Dollar Volume of Business

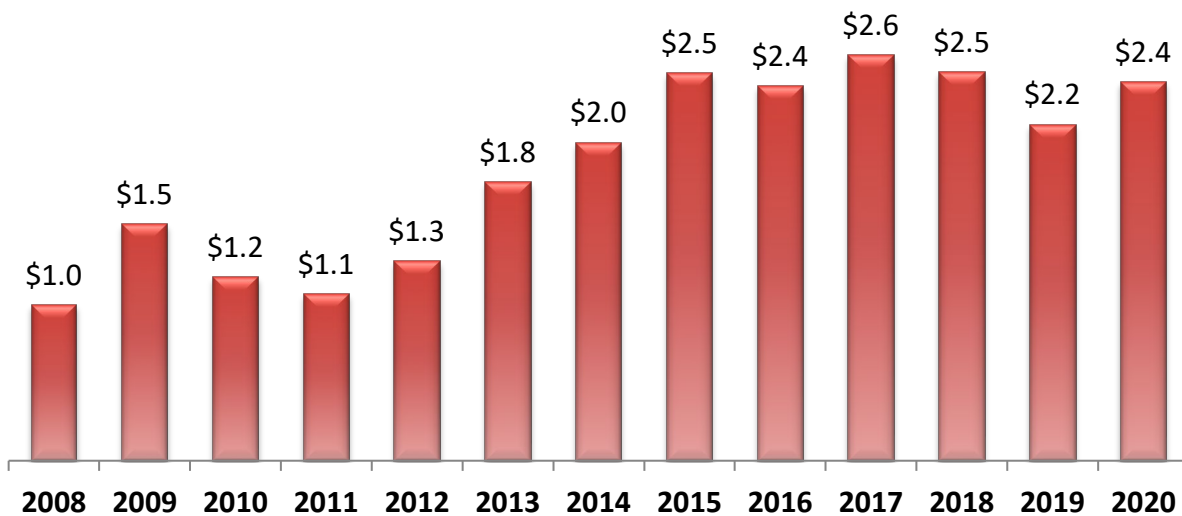
The median dollar volume for associate members rose between 2019 and 2020, going from \$2.2 million to \$2.4 million. Twenty-three percent of associate members reported a 2020 dollar volume of less than \$500,000, 15 percent reported between \$500,000 and \$999,999, 32 percent between \$1.0 million and \$4.9 million, 10 percent between \$5.0 million and \$9.9 million, 4 percent between \$10.0 million and \$14.9 million, and 15 percent reported their dollar volume in 2020 at \$15.0 million or more (fig. 2). One percent reported no business activity at all in 2020.

**Figure 2. Annual Revenue: 2020
(Percent of Respondents)**



After rising steadily following the housing recession, associate members’ median revenue has moved within a relatively narrow band over the past six years. The median was \$1.5 million a year or lower through 2012, then increased steadily to \$2.5 million in 2015. Since then associate members’ median annual revenue has remained in a range between \$2.2 and \$2.6 million (fig. 3).

**Figure 3. Median Annual Revenue: HISTORY
(Millions of dollars)**



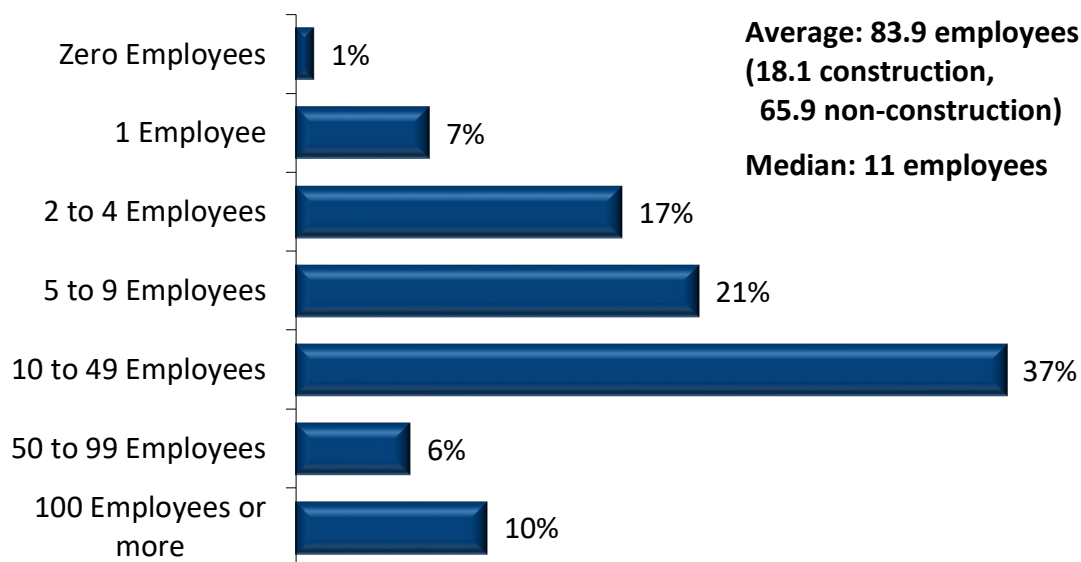
Median dollar volume of business also varies considerably across the primary activities. For example, associates in wholesale dealerships/distributorships reported a median of \$10.0 million in 2020 revenue, compared to \$0.9 million for professional specialty members, \$1.6

million for subcontractor/specialty trade contractor members, \$2.8 million for members involved in some other associate activity, \$4.1 million for retail dealership/distributorship members, and \$5.8 million for financial services members.

Employees

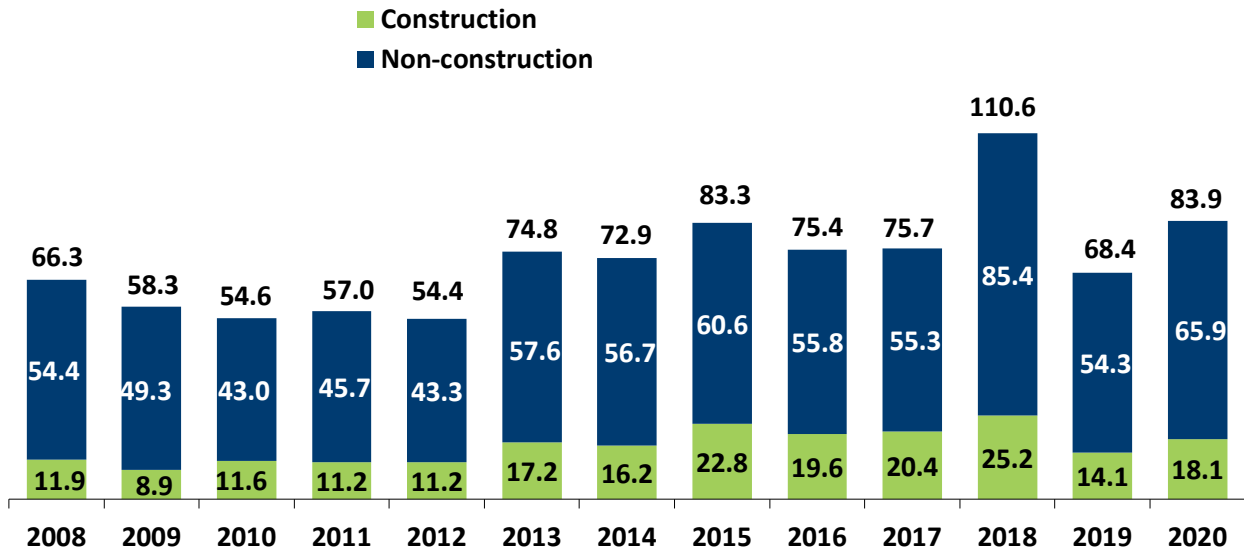
Associate members reported that their companies carried an average of 83.9 employees on their payrolls in 2020, of which 18.1 were construction employees and 65.9 were non-construction employees. The median number of employees on payroll was 11. While only 1 percent of associate members reported having no employees on payroll, 7 percent reported 1 employee, 17 percent reported 2 to 4 employees, 21 percent reported 5 to 9 employees, 37 percent reported 10 to 49, 6 percent reported 50 to 99, and 10 percent reported 100 or more employees on their payroll in 2020 (fig. 4).

Figure 4. Number of Employees on Payroll: 2020
(Percent of Respondents)



The average employee count remained steady in the mid-50s from 2009 to 2012, then rose to a range from the low-70s to the mid-80s from 2013 to 2017. Since then, volatility has increased, with the average employee count fluctuating from 110.6 in 2018, to 68.4 in 2019, and now to 83.9 in 2020. Although the coronavirus pandemic caused job losses across several associate-related industries, others, like retail and wholesale dealerships/distributorships, added employees to their payrolls in 2020, driving the overall average higher (fig. 5).

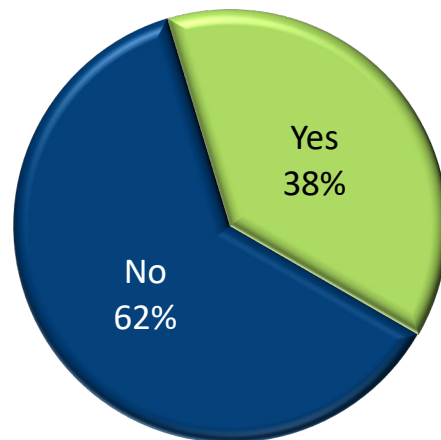
Figure 5. Average Number of Employees on Payroll: HISTORY



Contribution to the Development of Green/Sustainable Homes

The NAHB census asked associate members if their companies contribute in any way to the development of green/sustainable homes. Thirty-eight percent of associates report that their companies contribute, while the remaining 62 percent do not (fig. 6).

**Figure 6. Does Your Company in Any Way Contribute to the Development of Green/Sustainable Homes?
(Percent of Respondents)**



The share of associate members reporting that their companies contribute to the development of green/sustainable homes varies significantly by primary activity. For example, 65 percent of associates in wholesale dealerships/distributorships report their companies contribute, compared to 16 percent in financial services, 35 percent in subcontracting/specialty trade

contracting, 41 percent in other associate activities, and 44 percent each in the professional specialties and retail dealerships/distributorships.

The share of associate members who report their companies contribute to the development of sustainable/green homes is also positively related to the company's dollar volume of business. The share who contribute ranges from 29 percent of associates at companies with a dollar volume of less than \$500,000, to 56 percent among those with a dollar volume of \$15 million or more.

Age, Gender, Race and Ethnicity

The median age of NAHB associate members in 2020 was 57 years. Less than 0.5 percent were under 25, 4 percent were 25 to 34 years old, 14 percent were 35 to 44, 26 percent were 45 to 54, 36 percent were 55 to 64, and 20 percent were 65 or older (fig. 7). The median age of associate members has increased over time. It was 50 in 2008, 52 or 53 between 2009 and 2011, 54 between 2012 and 2015, 55 or 56 between 2015 and 2019, and rose to 57 in 2020 (fig. 8).

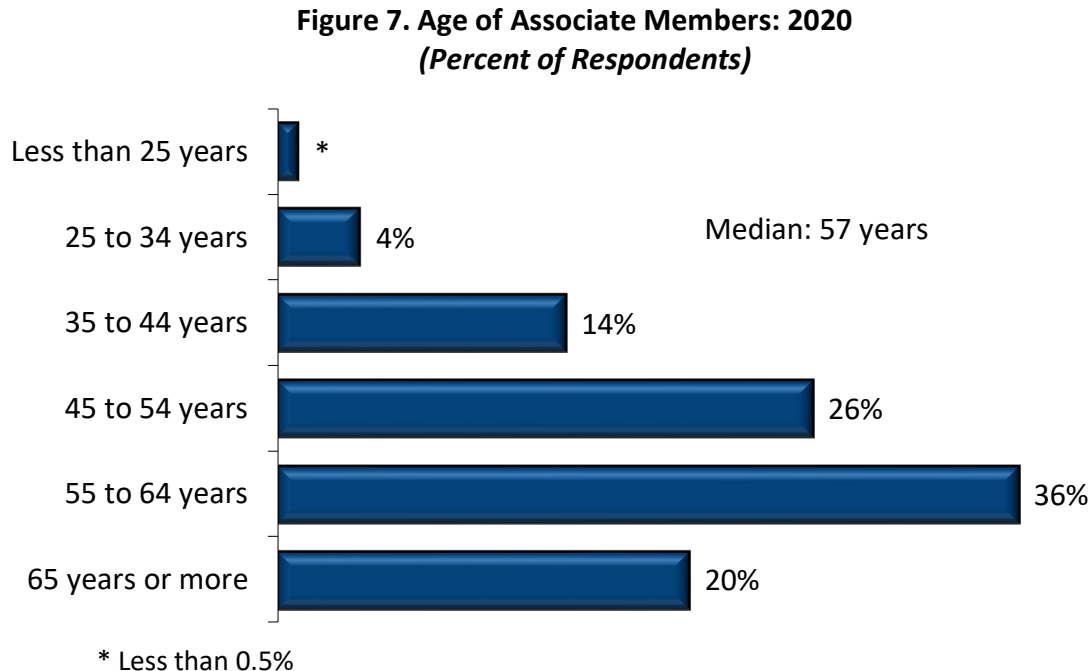
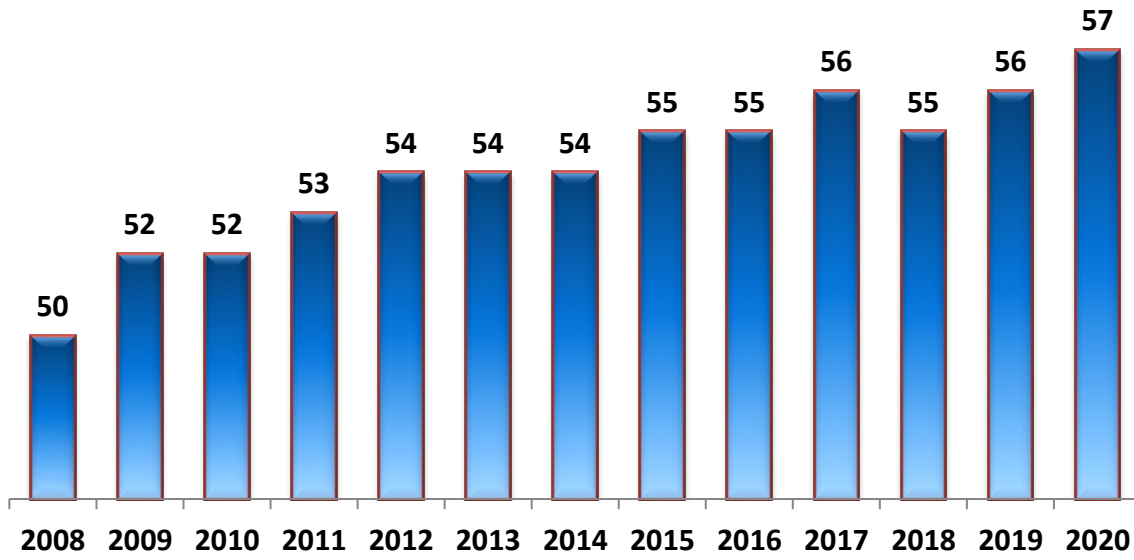
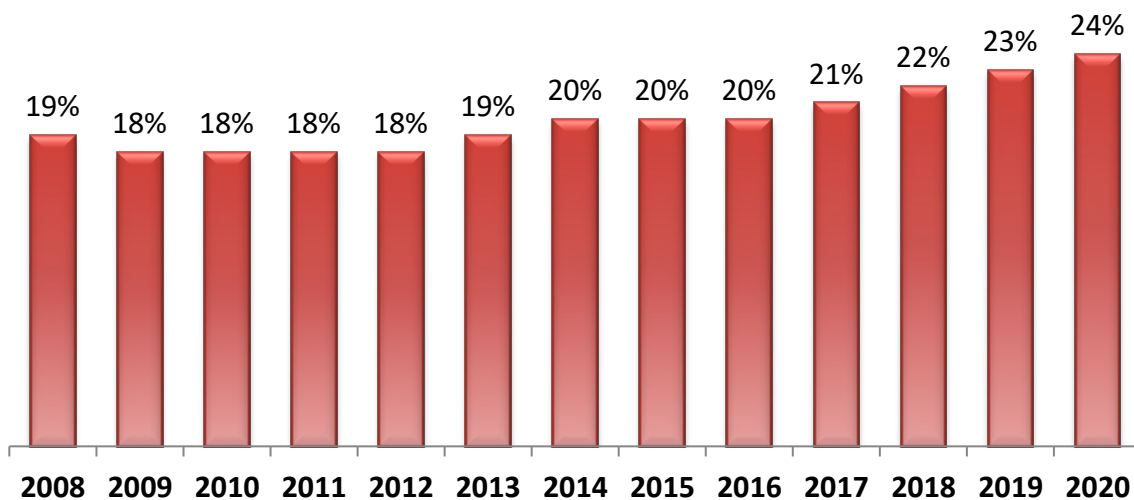


Figure 8. Median Age of Associate Members: HISTORY
(Percent of Respondents)



Twenty-four percent of NAHB's associate members are women, the highest female percentage since the revival of NAHB's Member Census in 2008. The female share stayed constant at 18 from 2009 through 2012, edged up to 19 percent in 2013, then to 20 percent from 2014 through 2016. It has since increased by one percentage point a year in each of the past four years (fig. 9).

Figure 9. Female Share of Associate Members: HISTORY
(Percent of Respondents)

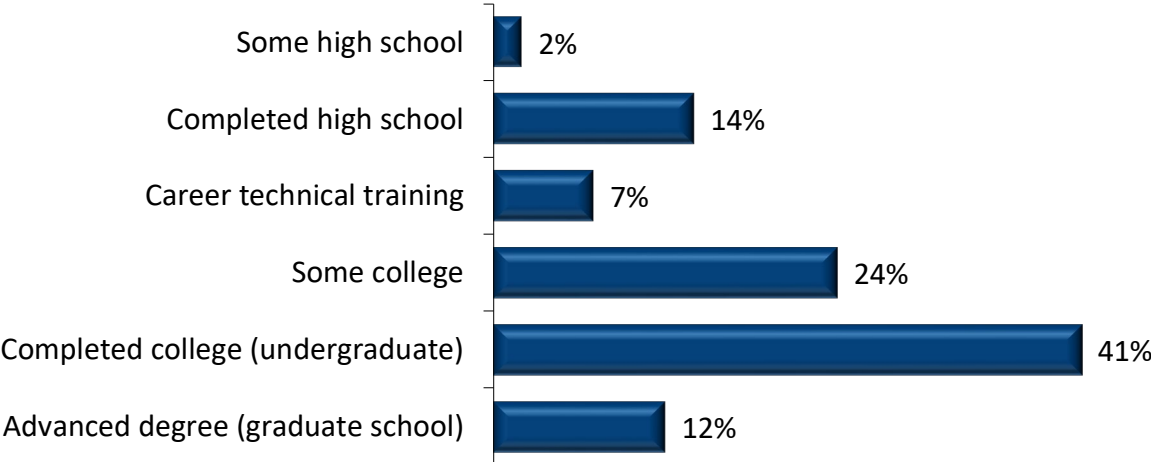


The vast majority of NAHB’s associate members are White. In the last Member Census, 96 percent identified themselves as White, alone; while only 1 percent each identified themselves as Black or African-American, alone; and as Asian, alone. Less than half a percent identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, alone; and as Pacific Islander, alone. Two percent of associates identified themselves as being part of some ‘other’ race and 1 percent identified as having two or more races. In terms of ethnicity, only 4 percent of associates identified themselves as being of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

Education

Twelve percent of NAHB’s associate members have an advanced degree (graduate school), while 41 percent have completed college, 24 percent have some college education, 7 percent have career technical training, 14 percent have completed high school, and 2 percent only have some high school education (fig. 10).

Figure 10. Education Level of Associate Members: 2020
(Percent of Respondents)



The educational background of NAHB associate members has not changed significantly over time. Since the inception of this Census in 2008, half or more of associate members have reported having a higher-education degree (either undergraduate or graduate).

Following is a series of profiles: one for each of the major categories of NAHB’s associate members.

SUBCONTRACTING/SPECIALTY TRADE CONTRACTORS IN 2020

Number of members	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	49,382	44,351	42,070	34,574	30,974	32,160	28,802	32,441	33,795	31,639
	2018	2019	2020							
	32,148	34,293	33,528							

Company Profile

1. Primary business activities covered are: Carpentry work, Electrical work, Masonry, Stone work, Tile setting and Plastering, Landscaping, Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning, Roofing, Siding and Sheet Metal Work, Painting and Paper Hanging, Floor laying and other Floor work, Concrete work, Excavation work, Insulation work, Drywall Installation, Security Systems, Home Technology, and Other Subcontracting.

2. No. of employees on payroll (Median):

Construction Employees:	6
Non-construction Employees:	2
Total:	10

(Five percent of the subcontracting/specialty trade contractors have 50 to 99 employees and 4 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. Dollar volume of company's business activity (Median): **\$1,631,066**

(Five percent of the subcontracting/specialty trade contractors had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

Member Profile

1. No. of years as a member of NAHB (Median): **10 years**

2. Age (Median): **56 years**

3. Gender: **Male: 84%**
Female: 16%

4. Race/Ethnicity: **White: 95%**
Hispanic: 6%

5. Education: **37% of subcontracting/special trade contractors have completed college or have an advanced degree and 27% have some college education.**

PROFESSIONAL SPECIALTY MEMBERS IN 2020

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of members	18,242	19,609	12,652	10,789	10,754	10,502	10,744	10,265	10,261	9,512
	2018	2019	2020							
	10,286	10,212	9,097							

Company Profile

1. Primary business activities covered are: Accounting, Architecture, Engineering, Planning or Designing, Legal Services, Computer Products and Services, Marketing, Advertising or Public Relations, and Land Surveyor.

2. No. of employees on payroll (Median):

Construction Employees:	<1
Non-construction Employees:	6
Total:	8

(Seven percent of the professional specialty members have 50 to 99 employees and 10 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. Dollar volume of company's business activity (Median): **\$943,591**

(Ten percent of the professional specialty members had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

Member Profile

1. No. of years as a member of NAHB (Median): **10 years**

2. Age (Median): **57 years**

3. Gender: **Male: 69%**
Female: 31%

4. Race/Ethnicity: **White: 96%**
Hispanic: 4%

5. Education: **79% of professional specialty members have completed college or have an advanced degree and 14% have some college education.**

RETAIL DEALERSHIP/DISTRIBUTORS IN 2020

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of members	18,776	13,009	11,014	9,182	8,939	9,090	8,719	9,782	8,790	8,308
	2018	2019	2020							
	8,721	8,485	8,160							

Company Profile

1. Primary business activities covered are: Retail Appliances, Retail Building Materials/Lumber, Retail Floor Coverings, Retail Paint/Wall Coverings and Other Retail Dealerships.

2. No. of employees on payroll (Median):

Construction Employees:	<1
Non-construction Employees:	9
Total:	14

(Nine percent of the retail dealerships/distributors have 50 to 99 employees and 12 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. Dollar volume of company's business activity (Median): **\$4,137,689**

(Twenty-four percent of retail dealerships/distributors had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

Member Profile

1. No. of years as a member of NAHB (Median): **10 years**

2. Age (Median): **57 years**

3. Gender: **Male: 74%**
Female: 26%

4. Race/Ethnicity: **White: 98%**
Hispanic: 2%

5. Education: **48% of retail dealerships/distributors have completed college or have an advanced degree and 29% have some college education.**

FINANCIAL SERVICES MEMBERS IN 2020

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of members	11,974	11,197	8,340	6,492	7,508	8,426	8,710	8,492	7,714	7,180
	2018	2019	2020							
	7,941	6,402	5,887							

Company Profile

1. Primary business activities covered are: Commercial Banking/Thrift Institution, Mortgage Banking and Insurance or Title Company.

2. No. of employees on payroll (Median):

Construction Employees:	<1
Non-construction Employees:	15
Total:	15

(Seven percent of financial services members have 50 to 99 employees and 22 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. Dollar volume of company's business activity (Median): **\$5,768,781**

(Thirty-six percent of financial services members had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

Member Profile

1. No. of years as a member of NAHB (Median): **10 years**

2. Age (Median): **57 years**

3. Gender: **Male: 68%**
Female: 32%

4. Race/Ethnicity: **White: 97%**
Hispanic: 2%

5. Education: **74% of financial services members have completed college or have an advanced degree and 20% have some college education.**

WHOLESALE DEALERSHIPS/DISTRIBUTORS IN 2020

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of members	5,676	6,734	5,453	4,300	4,759	4,384	4,644	4,466	3,889	3,685
	2018	2019	2020							
	3,828	3,467	4,298							

Company Profile

1. Primary business activities covered are: Wholesale Appliances, Wholesale Building Materials/Lumber, Wholesale Floor Coverings, Wholesale Paint/Wall Coverings and Other Wholesale Dealerships.

2. No. of employees on payroll (Median):

Construction Employees:	<1
Non-construction Employees:	16
Total:	22

(Twelve percent of the wholesale dealerships/distributors have 50 to 99 employees and 22 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. Dollar volume of company's business activity (Median): **\$9,998,344**

(Thirty-eight percent of wholesale dealerships/distributors had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

Member Profile

1. No. of years as a member of NAHB (Median): **11 years**

2. Age (Median): **54 years**

3. Gender: **Male: 80%**
Female: 20%

4. Race/Ethnicity: **White: 97%**
Hispanic: 1%

5. Education: **66% of wholesale dealerships/distributors have completed college or have an advanced degree and 23% have some college education.**

OTHER ASSOCIATE ACTIVITY MEMBERS IN 2020

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of members	40,153	16,980	18,353	14,410	17,240	18,011	19,054	15,591	16,115	16,295
	2018	2019	2020							
	16,146	16,290	13,103							

Company Profile

1. Primary business activities covered are: Manufacturing, Property Management, Real Estate, Utilities, Industry Consultant, Trade Association/Non-Profit, and Other Associate Activities

2. No. of employees on payroll (Median):

Construction Employees:	<1
Non-construction Employees:	5
Total:	9

(Five percent of other associate members have 50 to 99 employees and 17 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. Dollar volume of company's business activity (Median): **\$2,753,667**

(Twenty-six percent of other associate members had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

Member Profile

1. No. of years as a member of NAHB (Median): **9 years**

2. Age (Median): **58 years**

3. Gender: **Male: 67%**
Female: 33%

4. Race/Ethnicity: **White: 94%**
Hispanic: 3%

5. Education: **67% of other associate members have completed college or have an advanced degree and 21% have some college education.**