

Meritus Homes

PR Case Study

“You’re doing what? *Seriously?*” Brian Brunhofer laughed at our unbridled reaction when he called in the spring of 2010 to inform us that he and his wife Karen were starting a new homebuilding company. But as the facts unfurled, we knew we had a great story to tell.

During their early days at Pulte Homes, Brian and Karen met, fell in love, married, and had three children, all while climbing the corporate ladder...together. Each achieved the venerated position of Illinois Division President: Karen heading up the northern territory and Brian, the southern. For years they successfully grew Pulte’s market share and brand-name recognition in Illinois...together. But then, the recession hit and the new-home market crashed leaving room at the top for only one person. That’s when Brian and Karen decided to start their own homebuilding company...together.

“Who in their right mind would start a homebuilding company in this market?” was our pitch to the media. And the battered real estate media ate it up greedily. The Brunhofer’s story was trumpeted through various media outlets, including [Builder](#) magazine, the [Chicago Tribune](#), [WBEZ](#), and numerous real estate trade publications. The media-savvy husband-and-wife team changed hard-edged skeptics into believers through their hands-on experience at the nation’s largest homebuilding firm, their crucial market knowledge and insight, and their ability to secure strong financial backing.

Links

- [Chicago Tribune article](#)
- [Daily Herald article](#)

The initial media blitz helped build the credibility necessary to launch Meritus Homes. Soon after, when Meritus grand opened its first community, Creekside at Inverness Ridge, our PR goal was re-focused to promote the upscale single-family homes. Stories about the exclusive, established community within a coveted school district quickly followed.



Above: Karen Brunhofer interviewed on CBS Chicago

“TJ is a fantastic partner. They are creative, responsive and well connected.”

-- Brian Brunhofer, Meritus Homes