

7 HOT STOCK PICKERS reveal what they're buying now | 32

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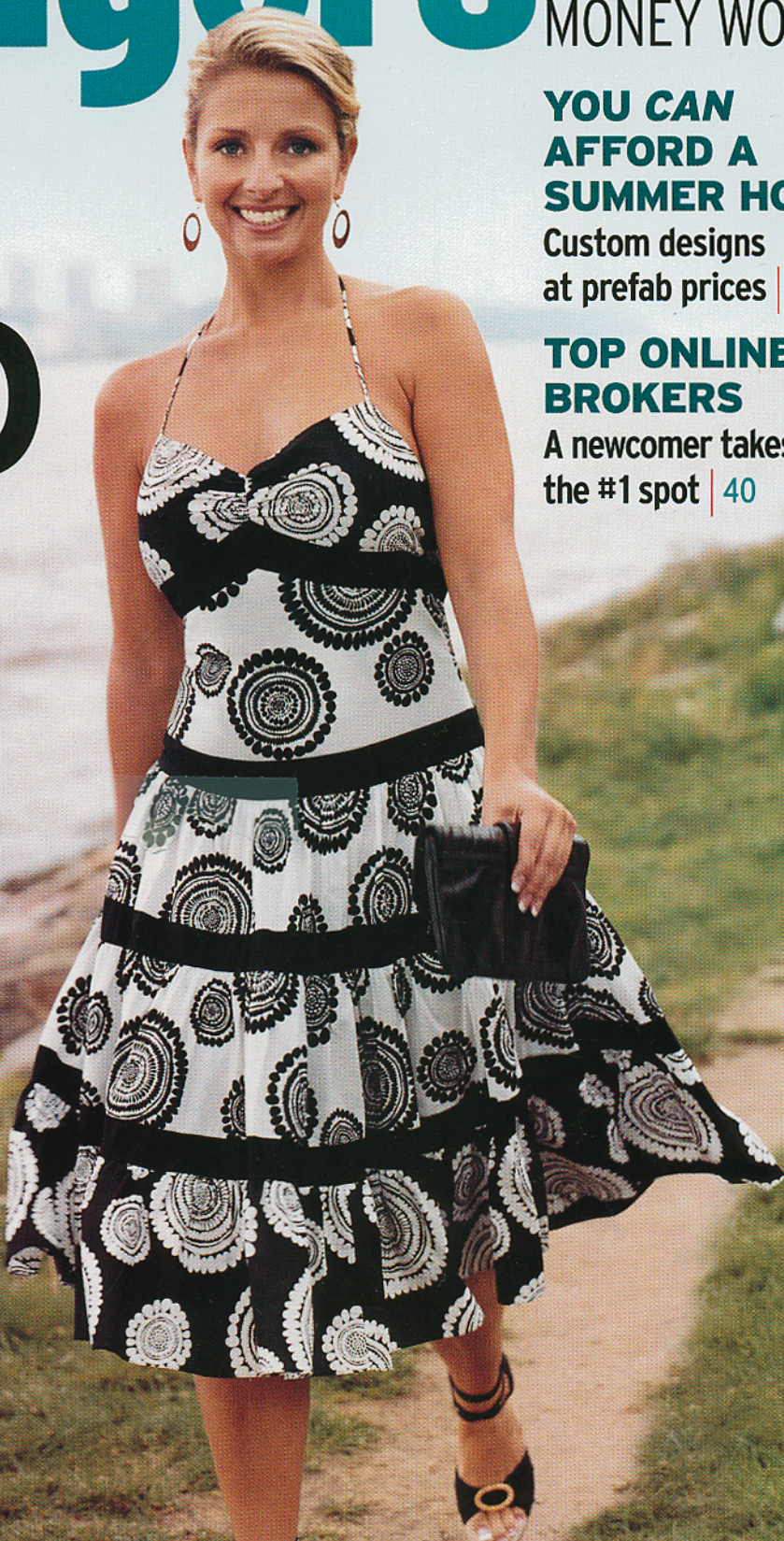
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TOP ONLINE BROKERS

A newcomer takes the #1 spot | 40



JULY 2006 | \$3.50



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DAYNA LANTRIP had a grand idea: She invested in a low-minimum fund that earned a 40% return in one year.

A PREFAB WHO'S WHO

Wrap it up and make it HOME

Below you'll find an alphabetical list of the architectural firms and builders that produce upscale prefabs, all of which sell modern-style homes. (Some companies sell other styles, too.)

Note that *total cost* refers to an estimate from design to completion and includes materials, on-site construction, labor and finishing work. Many of these firms do not sell in all 50 states; check with firms individually.

Alchemy Architects (Weehouses.com), in St. Paul, offers the WeeHouse line of modular houses. Floor plans range in size from studios to two-bedroom units. This firm doesn't offer total-cost estimates to the general public.

CleverHomes (Cleverhomes.net), in San Francisco, specializes in panelized houses. The firm's top model, the CH1, claims an edge in energy-efficiency—even though nearly half of its walls are glass. Total costs generally range from about \$175 to \$250 per square foot.

Empyrean International (Empyreanapf.com), in Acton, Mass., is the rare firm that has its own factory. The firm builds Lazor Office's FlatPak and some houses by Resolution: 4 Architecture, but it also offers its own modular floor plans, including NextHouse. Empyrean's specialty is to offer a local builder to oversee your home's construction. Total cost for the NextHouse generally runs between \$175 and \$275 per square foot.

Greg La Vardera

(Ecocontempo.com), an architect in Merchantville, N.J., has teamed with supplier Northern Steel to specialize in steel panel houses, called Eco-Contempo. Total costs are typically \$200 per square foot.

MORE HOMES ONLINE

To see additional prefabs, view the slide show at kiplinger.com/links/slideshows.

Lazor Office (Flatpakhouse.com), in Minneapolis, specializes in panelized houses. Its FlatPak houses are built of wood, metal and glass. The FlatPak model is part of a series of homes built by Empyrean and co-branded as one of the Dwell Homes. Total cost is roughly \$175 to \$250 per square foot.

Michelle Kaufmann Designs (Mkd-arc.com) has a niche in modular houses. Its models—the Glidehouse and the Sunset Breezhouse—have many environmentally friendly

features. Total cost is \$175 to \$240 per square foot for the Glidehouse and \$200 to \$250 per square foot for the Sunset Breezhouse.

Office of Mobile Design (Designmobile.com), in Venice, Cal., offers modular and panelized houses. Its top model, the Take Home, is modular and ranges from a one-bedroom (starting at \$152,000) to a four-bedroom (starting at \$519,000).

Resolution: 4 Architecture (Re4a.com), in New York City, designs panelized and other types of homes. Its Dwell Home,



● This Dwell Home was designed by Resolution: 4 Architecture.

Beach House and Suburban models, all panelized models, have total costs of about \$250 to \$300 per square foot, and they're manufactured by Empyrean. Its modular homes run from \$200 to \$250 per square foot.

Rocio Romero (Rocioromero.com), in Perryville, Mo., has a series of panelized houses, called the LV, which is a shell of lumber, steel and Galvalume (sheet steel coated with an aluminum-zinc alloy). They cost roughly \$120 a square foot.

Taalman Koch (Tkithouse.com), in Los Angeles, sells the glass-and-aluminum iT house, which uses insulated glass units, a variation on panels. The iT house is generally 1,100 square feet to 1,600 square feet and costs about \$175,000 to \$225,000, with additional finishing work adding \$100,000 to \$150,000 to the tab.