

December reached their highest pace in nearly a year. The gain coincided with other signs that the troubled housing market improved at the end of last year.

Analysts cautioned that sales remain historically low and that it will take years for the home market to return to full health.

Prices have declined. Mortgage rates have never been lower. Home builders are slightly more hopeful because more people are saying they might be open to buying this year. And home construction picked up in the final quarter of last year.

"There's no denying that home

adjusted annual rate of 4.61 million in December, the National Association of Realtors said Friday.

It's the best level since January 2011. For all of 2011, sales totaled only 4.26 million. That's up slightly from 4.19 million in the previous year. But it's far below the 6 million that economists equate with healthy housing

three years. The median sales price of a previously occupied home ticked up 0.3 percent from November to December to \$164,500. The supply of homes has declined, though it's still historically high at 2.38 million. At last month's sales pace, it would take nearly seven months to clear those homes.

Just their type

Anderson Business Technology celebrates 100 years

By Jim McConnell Staff Writer

PASADENA — One hundred years ago, the Anderson Typewriter Co. opened its doors on Colorado Boulevard.

A short time later, it landed its first major client, Citizens Bank. A short time after that, it landed the area's exclusive franchise for Royal typewriters. One hundred years later, things are still clicking. The company founder, Elmer Anderson, has passed away. His grandson, David, now runs the company. The name has changed slightly, to Anderson Business Technology. And the only Royal you'll find on the premises is for display purposes only.

Otherwise, the company's business model has pretty much remained the same. "We cater to businesses, we sell the best business machines on the market, and we stand behind what we sell," David Anderson said. "I'm sure my grandfather would be comfortable with how the company operates."

What has changed, of course, is the technology.

"By 1980, it was obvious we weren't going to survive selling typewriters and 10-key adding machines," Anderson said. "So we have been able to adjust to the technology explosion of the past 25 or 30 years.



James Carbone Correspondent

David Anderson, left, and his father Donald Anderson, with an Oliver typewriter from 1912, the year the Andersons' business, Anderson Business Technology in Pasadena, was started.

LADDER OF SUCCESS

David Anderson

TITLE: President and CEO,
Anderson Business Technology

LOCATION: 120 E. Colorado Blvd.,
Pasadena

CONTACT: 626-793-2166.
www.andersonbt.com

SECRET OF SUCCESS: Keep your
focus on the customer.

David Anderson, 54, has worked at the company since 1983.

"At that time Donald Anderson, my father, ran the company. My mother also worked here, as did my sister and my aunt. Me, I thought I wanted to be an engineer. I had worked part time at the company in the summers, doing janitorial chores, deliveries and maintenance on typewriters. But I just didn't see myself selling typewriters for a living."

However, Anderson's engineering

studies gradually lost their luster. Meanwhile, he became more intrigued about business, and the new wave of technology about to hit the business machine industry.

So he rejoined the company business, and eventually has taken over its day-to-day management from his father. Donald Anderson remains the chairman of the board, and Donald's daughter, Elin Henderson, is also still with the company.

"It's been an interesting ride," David Anderson said. "There was a time when electric typewriters were all the rage. And things like mimeograph machines, adding machines, dictation devices and the like.

"Then came the faxes and photocopiers. Now it's computers and cell-phones. You try to stay one jump ahead of the technology, while at the same time taking care of the customers who are still using the previous technology. We still do typewriter repairs, as an example. Not many places do anymore."

Currently, Anderson Technology's featured brands are Copystar and Xerox. Royal, once the Cadillac of typewriters, is long gone.

"We do customer consultations, to make sure to get the right product for your business," Anderson said. "But we also do the installation and training and maintenance. So the shopping experience at Anderson's is somewhat different than at those big-box stores."

Through all the changes in the merchandise, business remains good.

"We have had effective foresight, or maybe we've just been lucky," Anderson said. "Whatever the case, we have made good decisions and have been able to align ourselves with good manufacturers.

"Personally, I still enjoy every day at the store. That old technology has a certain mystique, but the reality is the new technology makes things a lot easier for businesses. It's gratifying to be a part of that."

jim.mcconnell@sgrv.com
626-962-8811, ext. 2306