For many building and remodeling professionals, advances in power fastening technology have turned the basic hammer into little more than a “nail puller.” Faster than a swinging hammer, the vast array of power fastener tools on the market are literally connecting with nearly every new construction and remodeling project.

Today, the question is not whether to use a power nailer, but which type to use—cordless or pneumatic.

Pneumatic technology was developed in the 1960s to help make construction faster, easier and more efficient. In the mid-1980s, Paslode introduced cordless technology as a complement to pneumatics and yet another option to hammers.

“Cordlessness” brought power fastening beyond the reach of cords, hoses and compressors, providing unrestricted mobility and access—conveniences that can easily tempt one to use it exclusively.

Just like remote control televisions, VCRs and electric garage door openers have revolutionized the home, cordless tools—from drills and sanders to saws and nailers—have changed the construction industry. Advances in battery chargers and internal combustion technologies have created a vast cordless offering.

THE BEST SOLUTION

But the most convenient solution is not always the best solution. Builders and remodelers often reach for a cordless nailer without thinking about what the tool is or is not designed to do. However, it’s important to remember that these tools were developed as an option to the hammer and a complement to pneumatic tools, not a replacement. Pneumatic nailers, like most corded tools, continue to play an important role in construction.

In deciding which to use, one should consider the nature of the task at hand, for cordless and pneumatic nailers each are suited to specific applications.

WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?

Pneumatic nailers can perform at high speeds for long periods
of time and are ideal for heavy framing and industrial jobs. They can fire 3,000-4,000 nails per day at a rate of up to six nails per second, compared to cordless nailers, which are designed to fire roughly 1,200-2,000 nails per day at three nails per second.

Pneumatic strip and coil nailers provide power and speed for decking, sheathing, sub-assembly and roofing applica-

Cordless nailers also are great for light framing such as joist and rafter work, bridging, sub-assemblies, soffits, stairs and pick-up and service work.

In short, while the development of cordless fastening technology has been a huge benefit to power fastening in the on-site remodeling and new construc-
tion industry, it is in no way a replacement for pneumatic technology.

About the Author
Bob Bellock is senior marketing manager at Paslode, a division of Illinois Tool Works. Paslode, located in Vernon Hills, Ill., manufacturers cordless and pneumatic nailers, staplers and trim tools.