

August 2001

"Marketing Roadmap for the Component Industry" by Ken Cloyd

It's hard to believe that a whole year has passed since the last time we focused an entire issue of *WOODWORDS* on marketing—and a busy year it has been, for our industry and for WTCA. Our Association has done a great job this year of developing even more materials that promote education, quality, safety and the economic value of building with components. Many of these new materials are the direct results of ideas and suggestions from members.

Since August 2000, the following products have been added to WTCA's roster of materials designed to help you market your company, educate your customers and minimize your risk:

- **Framing the American Dream® with Roof and Floor Trusses:** This brochure was developed by request of manufacturers who do not produce wall panels but want to educate their markets about the benefits of framing with roof and floor trusses.
- **New Hire Program Binder & Companion CD-ROM:** An on-the-job training program created by component manufacturers to act as a guide in training new employees, this program includes an outline of all the material needed to provide excellent grounding in the truss industry.
- **Standard Responsibilities in the Design Process Involving Metal Plate Connected Wood Trusses (Resp-D)** is now available on CD-ROM in MSWord 97® format to make it easier than ever for you to include all or part of this important industry publication in your company's documents. Pricing is based on annual usage of the document.
- **Additions and Revisions to the Truss Technology in Building Series:** New and revised topics include Toe-Nailing, Partition Separation, Temporary Bracing, Permanent Bracing, Fall Protection, Placement Plans and Wall Panels. TTBs on additional topics are in the works.
- **Truss Technician Recruiting Brochure—Is Building Component Design for You?:** Recognizing the need for more qualified labor in our industry, WTCA has created a brochure to market the exciting opportunities our industry offers in the field of truss design to students and others seeking new challenges. (See page 53 for specific ideas on how to put this brochure to work for your company.)
- **English/Spanish 11x17 Warning Poster:** The English version of this popular poster is printed on one side and the Spanish version is on the other side.
- **Warning Poster on a Roll:** If you print your plans on a plotter, now you can print them on paper that has the WTCA Warning Poster preprinted on the reverse side.
- **Videos available on CD-ROM:**
 - **Framing the American Dream (FAD):** This 34-minute video shows what we learned about craftsmanship, ease of use, and savings in component- versus stick-framing techniques. Side-by-side time-lapse footage highlights the advantages of framing with components in floor, wall and roof systems.
 - **Handling, Installing & Bracing of Metal Plate Connected Wood Trusses (BRACE):** A presentation on industry-recommended practices.
 - **MPC Trusses: Fire Performance, Tactics & Strategy (FIRE):** Educate the fire service about the truss industry; set the record straight on unfounded opinions that otherwise could lead

- to legislation banning the use of trusses.
- **Building with Floor Trusses (FLOOR):** Show builders how to efficiently construct buildings using floor trusses.
- **Keys to Quality Wood Truss Construction (KEYS):** Review the strategies used by manufacturers to produce a quality wood truss.
- **Safety in the Truss Plant I - Overview (ESAFE1):** This video provides an overview of the following truss plant safety considerations: attire, clean work area, plate handling, machinery, back injuries, lifting and drug/alcohol warning.
- **Safety in the Truss Plant II - Saw Safety (ESAFE2):** This video reviews five main saw types and demonstrates the means to enhance safety in: training, attire, cleanliness, maintenance/inspection, operation of circular saw, table saw, component saw, radial arm saw and drug/alcohol warning.
- **Safety in the Truss Plant III - Material Handling (ESAFE3):** Demonstrates material handling safety procedures from raw lumber to the job site. Covers: forklifts, unloading lumber, storage of material, lifting procedures, stacking, transporting and driver responsibility. (These eight videos are available in CD-ROM or video format either individually or as a video library collection.)
- **Temporary Bracing Model:** (Available in two sizes.) The 1/16 scale model of a 30'-8" single Howe truss with about a 3.5 on 12 pitch demonstrates the classic engineering principles to truss buckling and bracing. The 1/16 scale model of a 60'-0" Modified Queen-Post truss (8/6 panels) with a 4/5 on 12 pitch to replicate a large one-piece truss. It more descriptively shows the classic engineering principles to truss buckling and bracing.
- **Permanent Web Bracing Model:** The 1/8 scale model simulates 15'-0" 2x4 web instability under load. It actively presents the importance of correctly bracing webs by allowing the user to apply the force necessary to cause failure in the webs without destruction to the model.

Now, you know that I'll be the first one to tell you that I think all component manufacturers should be using WTCA's marketing, education and risk management materials on a regular basis. As I said in these pages last August, "The more the industry does in unison, the stronger the message will be." Reaching the marketplace with a unified message adds to the credibility and success of our industry across the board. This year's trend toward customizable products only enhances this idea—telling a common story, but in a personalized way. Everyone receives the same facts, but each has an individual company's name to connect to the information.

I'll also be the first to agree with those who claim that they do not use WTCA marketing materials to their fullest because they do not have enough room in their facility to keep an inventory of these products. I empathize with this problem, as it is something that we experience at California Truss. However, I will not allow this to continue to be an excuse that component manufacturers use. The longer we make excuses to do our own thing, the more fragmentation grows in this industry and the less unified our message becomes. Instead of making excuses, we need to create solutions to the problems that are barriers to our industry speaking in unison.

In order to do this, we need to embrace the technology that is available to us as we move forward in the twenty-first century. This especially includes utilizing WTCA's web site and other electronic methods of sharing information more fully than we have in the past. The New Hire Program's companion CD-ROM is a great example of this type of solution. The CD takes up very

little space, but includes a wealth of information that allows component manufacturers across the country to train their new employees in a consistent, unified way. The TTW programs on CD-ROM are another example of a large volume of information in a small package that is being used by component manufacturers and WTCA Chapters on a regular basis to provide architects, engineers, builders and building officials with consistent training. This tool helps to ensure that the same message is being used whenever these presentations are made so that our industry gains credibility from state to state. In the near future these programs will also be available on the WTCA web site. This is another example of a resource for information that does not require any storage space.

So what's the next step? For those companies that would prefer to purchase materials electronically, WTCA is currently working on creative ways to provide our industry with the marketing, educational and risk management materials it needs to speak with a unified voice, while cutting down on storage needs. In the meantime, keep in mind that working to decrease the fragmentation in our industry is more important than the inconvenience of an overcrowded storage closet. Take a fresh look at the tools our association has created to help you improve your business and reconsider your reasons for not putting them to use the way you should. We'll keep you posted on how we plan to expand our offerings in the future.

To view these documents online and for more information on these and other WTCA products and services, visit the WTCA web site at www.woodtruss.com.

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