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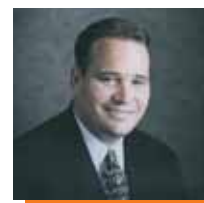
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**SBC Advertisers invest in the growth of the structural building components industry!**



## Editor's Message

Chapters—The Perfect Way to Get to Know (& Work With) Your Competitors

by Don Groom

"Besides winning, [the most fun thing is] getting out there and mixing it up with friends; it's the competition."  
—Al Unser, Jr., U.S. auto racer

**W**e're stronger together than we are apart." You've probably heard this saying before (or something similar). It lends itself well to our industry, especially in terms of the work component manufacturers can accomplish working together on the chapter level. This might sound odd considering that we're all in the same business and therefore competing for customers, but as an industry, we accomplish our most valuable work when component manufacturers work with their competitors.

Now there are two schools of thought on this. One school says, "Don't meet your competition and don't have anything to do with your competitors." The other school highly values getting to know one's competition. I strongly endorse the latter view. Competition in business is a lot like a basketball game. You give it your all and compete hard out on the court, but at the end of the game, everyone shakes hands. Win or lose, competing makes you a better player. Chapters offer the perfect venue to get to know your competition and even work together—to the benefit of your business, your competitors' businesses and the industry overall.

**Chapters offer the perfect venue to get to know your competition and even work together—to the benefit of your business, your competitors' businesses and the industry overall.**

One of my favorite friendly-competition stories started at a chapter board meeting. In 2002, I gave a presentation with Steve Yoder, Stark Truss President and WTCA Ohio Chapter President, on the just-released In-Plant WTCA QC program, and we encouraged members to get involved in it. A fellow Ohio chapter member jumped all over the program, and they were the first to be In-Plant WTCA QC certified in Ohio. The company sent out a flyer to many of our mutual customers promoting the fact that they were the first in the state to be certified. When the company hosted a chapter meeting at their plant later that year, all of their employees wore shirts proudly touting their certification. Stark had begun the WTCA QC certification process, but a competitor beat us to the punch at being the first certified, and that only challenged us at Stark to dedicate ourselves to move forward more aggressively with the certification process than we had before. I joked with the other company's management at the time about the "WTCA QC race," and it's still something we needle each other about to this day. It's all in good, clean fun. What's more, this kind of competition benefits both companies because each is striving and giving its all to be the best it can be by implementing an industry-based quality management program.

Local chapters offer an environment for these types of relationships and friendly rivalries to develop. WTCA provides the avenue to get to know your competition and work together for the common good. As chapter participants, component manufacturers facing similar challenges can address issues unique to their market such as building codes, insurance and risk management issues, and marketplace trends, to name a few.

### at a glance

- ❑ WTCA chapters offer an excellent venue to get to know your competition and even work together.
- ❑ Local chapters provide an environment where relationships and friendly rivalries develop.
- ❑ Working together and focusing on making the structural building components industry stronger increases its stature, and everyone reaps the benefits.

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## Editor's Message

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Chapters also play a critical role in how the engineering community views our industry. Last year when inspectors in northeast Ohio misinterpreted the code that applies to trusses over 32', the chapter, along with our WTCA staff, worked together to raise the issue with the county building department and resolve the misunderstanding. That united effort prevented some major headaches manufacturers might have faced if the issue hadn't been rectified. Similar situations are taking place across the country, with chapter members banding together to clarify code issues in their market and working with our staff to suggest new resources such as *Tech Notes*. Working together and focusing on making the structural building components industry the best it can be increases its stature, and everyone reaps the benefits. The industry's legitimacy in the eyes of builders and engineers increases because they can look at our industry and see that our design practices are based on sound structural engineering principles.

That same spirit of teamwork also applies at the WTCA Open Quarterly Meeting (OQM) level. Getting involved, attending these meetings and working for the growth and the common good of the industry can be very beneficial to individual component manufacturers. Where else can you go four times a year and meet with the leaders of the industry and share ideas that can readily make your company stronger? You get the chance to learn how companies in other markets handle challenges that, sooner or later, you will face in your market. It's a great way to get a head start on an issue. Gaining such perspective from a peer can save you time and money far surpassing the investment of traveling and participating in meetings.

At the end of the day, good competition doesn't just make you better—good competition makes everyone better. If you're not currently involved in a chapter, I strongly encourage you to do so. To learn how to get involved in your chapter's activities, visit [www.sbcindustry.com/chapters.php](http://www.sbcindustry.com/chapters.php). **SBC**

*SBC Magazine encourages the participation of its readers in developing content for future issues. Do you have an article idea for a future issue or a topic that you would like to see covered? Email your thoughts and ideas to [editor@sbcmag.info](mailto:editor@sbcmag.info).*



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**August 2-4 • San Diego, CA**

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# STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS™

THE FUTURE OF FRAMING

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The mission of *Structural Building Components Magazine (SBC)* is to increase the knowledge of and to promote the common interests of those engaged in manufacturing and distributing structural building components. Further, *SBC* strives to ensure growth, continuity and increased professionalism in our industry, and to be the information conduit by staying abreast of leading-edge issues. *SBC's* editorial focus is geared toward the entire structural building component industry, which includes the membership of WTCA – Representing the Structural Building Components Industry. The opinions expressed in *SBC* are those of the authors and those quoted, and are not necessarily the opinions of Truss Publications or WTCA.

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# STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS™

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