



Bcmc 2007

Destination BCMC: Plan Team Meetings to Achieve Maximum Value

by Ben Hershey & Emmy Thorson-Hanson

Get the most out of your BCMC experience!

Are you making the most out of your three days of information gathering, connection making and equipment shopping at BCMC? With the wealth of knowledge that is at your fingertips at BCMC, it might be difficult to retain all of the information you have acquired. By the time you and your staff get back to the office, you may have forgotten much of what you learned at the show.

One of the easiest ways to help preserve the information you gathered at BCMC is to hold company meetings during the week of the show. They can be as informal as holding a breakfast meeting each day to discuss a divide and conquer "the-knowledge-to-be-gained-at-BCMC" approach. Prepare for the day ahead by deciding who will attend specific educational sessions and which booths to make sure to hit on the show floor.

You can adopt this same approach for a daily "what-was-learned" debrief with your staff. Schedule a dinner with your employees and use the time to share information from educational sessions or interesting discussions that took place on the show floor. Ask employees to bring at least one new idea to this meeting, and start a list. This will help you jump start the implementation of ideas when you get back.

If you prefer a more formal approach, consider scheduling company meetings to discuss company issues such as past and future goals, strategic planning, production planning, company growth, and equipment purchases. Combining this with a recap of new ideas gathered at the show will allow you to maximize your attendance dollar. And depending on your company's needs, the BCMC Committee may be able to help you to reserve meeting space this year at one of the hotels or the Columbus Convention Center.

SBC recently polled BCMC attendees to share their thoughts on what they thought the benefits would be from holding meetings with their teams during the week of BCMC. We were pleased to hear their responses in favor of scheduling staff meetings to coincide with BCMC. From timing to atmosphere to location, here's why they think it would be worthwhile.

at a glance

- There is so much knowledge to absorb at BCMC that it can be a challenge to retain it all.
- BCMC is the ideal venue to regroup with your team, discuss future goals, and share new ideas learned during the show.
- Information learned at BCMC is most valuable when you are able to bring it back to your operation for immediate use.
- BCMC is a good environment for meetings because it is free of office distractions.

Timing Is Everything

What could be a better time to discuss ideas and share information than at the biggest show of the year? Often attendees are energized and excited by the abundance of information and ideas that they pick up at BCMC. But somewhere between leaving the show floor and walking back into their office much of that information and inspiration is lost. Think about holding meetings at the end of the day with your team to review the various ideas and concepts you learned throughout the day...before it is forgotten.

One attendee responded, "By [meeting at BCMC] we can get all our info out on the table for everyone to hear before we have time to lose it. This will help us be more reactive on what we have seen and how we can put it into play." And after all, isn't that why you go to the show? The information is most valuable when you are able to bring it back and put it to immediate use back at your plant.

Another manufacturer commented, "BCMC is a time when we have representa-

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Loyal Attendee*: Steve Guynes

Company: Honsador Lumber Corporation, Kapolei, HI

SBC: When was the first BCMC that you attended?

S.G.: The first BCMC I attended was in Louisville, KY in 2001. I try to attend every year.

SBC: What is the value of attending BCMC?

S.G.: We attend the show for two main reasons. The first reason we attend is for the exposure that BCMC gives us to new technology and new equipment. If you are in the market you can do all your shopping and browsing under one roof. The second major reason we attend is the seminars. I attend as many as possible, and encourage everyone I bring to the show to attend them as well. No matter what you will always pick up at least one or two fresh ideas, which is more than you came to BCMC with.

SBC: How do you prepare for the show?

S.G.: We prepare by reading about the speakers and topics and we try and get familiar with what is going on. I pre-plan what sessions I will attend and if there are any specific vendors that I want to spend time with I call them ahead of time and schedule an appointment to meet at the show.

SBC: What is your favorite part of BCMC?

S.G.: My favorite part overall is that it is the only time of the year that I get to network with people that I never get the chance to see otherwise.

SBC: Why do you make the trip all the way from Hawaii?

S.G.: One of the biggest benefits is that we get exposed to other market areas, which helps us to understand trends. It is interesting to talk about different markets while having a drink. You go, "Hmmm, they are slow in the Northeast or Midwest, how/when is this going to affect me?" and you can start to see trends as to where the market is going. This is especially informative to us, because being in Hawaii we are last in the food chain, and once the wave goes through the mainland then we can expect it, we are on the tail end when it comes to receiving the trends.

SBC: Why is the show a part of your annual planning? Why should other component manufacturers attend?

S.G.: We plan on attending the show every year because of the networking that goes on. But we also go because we see it as an educational investment; if it wasn't informative we wouldn't waste our time. We view attending BCMC as a perk for the employees who get to go. It is an opportunity to invest in our people and help give them that exposure to the industry, especially for us being from Hawaii. We are so isolated that they don't get the opportunity to see other truss plants and equipment. We feel our employees benefit from this exposure.

SBC: What would you want fellow CMs that have never attended BCMC to know about the show?

S.G.: When I talk to people who have never attended BCMC, I tell them that they should go at least one time to find out whether or not they feel it is valuable to them. Because if they don't go, they can't understand what it is. They think it is just another tradeshow, and they don't realize the magnitude of what is there.

*The BCMC Loyal Attendee Program rewards attendees and their companies for supporting the show. To qualify for the **Company Program**, your company has to have sent at least one person to BCMC for each of the last five years (2002 - 2006) and must be a component manufacturer member of WTCA. One pin will be given to the owner, president or other representative from your company. To qualify for the **Individual Program**, you must have attended BCMC five out of the last seven years (2000 - 2006) and BCMC 2006, and your company must be a component manufacturer member of WTCA. Companies and individuals who qualify as Loyal Attendees will receive perks at BCMC 2007 in Columbus. Perks include extra tickets for prize drawings, discounts on WTCA publications and a commemorative pin.



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tives from all our divisions in one place." Which reminds us that not only is it the perfect time to hold meetings, but the perfect place.

Location, Location, Location

It is often hard to find time at home when everyone is available to meet, and it's even harder to meet without distractions from customers, staff and the pressure of daily business. "[BCMC] is time away from the office and may be a good opportunity to discuss issues without interruption," was another response to the poll. Not only is it uninterrupted time, but it is also enjoyable, and many attendees think of it as a welcome getaway from the daily business pressures at home.

Although the show is centered around business, it is a social environment, where excitement and invigoration linger in the air. Without the typical stresses and distractions that are present at the plant, you can focus on absorbing as much information as possible while enjoying the more relaxed atmosphere.

If you are part of a larger company, you know about the challenge of gathering employees from multiple locations to collaborate. Often, staff from various locations attend BCMC, so it's the perfect time and place to get together. One poll respondent commented on this. "With all of the consolidating

going on in the industry, more companies have coverage in larger geographies. The show is an opportunity to get everyone together at one location. And it is a good forum because often the ideas gleaned from the show floor or educational sessions, can then be shared with a larger group."

Motivate

There are many other benefits to holding meetings at the show like invigorating your staff. "Attending the show would help stimulate employees by seeing the latest in technology and new manufacturing processes and techniques. It would motivate them and renew their passion for the industry, plus it may spark some new ideas on how to improve their existing company operations," commented an attendee.

With so much value to be gained simply from interacting with your staff at the show, it just makes sense to hold a meeting. One response summed it up, "[BCMC] provides a good environment, away from office distractions, with plenty of information to promote effective discussions. Having meetings at BCMC would help eliminate the situation where you see and learn lots of good stuff at the show and by the time you get back to the office and find time to gather everyone together, the excitement and importance of what you learned has faded, or has been forgotten entirely." Don't make this mistake; make room on your itinerary for a key team member meeting(s) and planning session(s) during BCMC week. **SBC**

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