

# Education & Convenience Just a Click Away

Part 3 of 3

by Emily Patterson

Online TTWs make it easy for industry professionals to choose when and where they take courses.

Educating construction industry professionals about component framing is key to increasing the use, proper handling and overall understanding of structural building components. While it's crucial to spread the word about components to all professionals—from architects and engineers to fire and building officials—education isn't one size fits all for these groups. Some audiences may want to attend a live presentation given by an industry professional, while other groups get the most value seeing the industry in action by visiting a truss plant. Still, other groups prefer having education brought directly to them, which fits into their busy and varying schedules. Enter online TTWs. The third in a series on WTCA's Truss Technology Workshops (TTWs), this article looks at how construction industry professionals are learning about component construction right at their own computers through online TTWs.

## Providing Online Convenience

There's no doubt that live educational events are a great opportunity for component manufacturers and construction industry professionals to meet face to face, but scheduling an event can be challenging. Live events require attendees to take time out of their workday to attend a presentation, along with travel expenses. "We've had some presentations inside and outside the office, but that takes a lot of coordination," said Mike Koehl with Gleason Architects in Sugar Grove, IL.

To address these issues, online TTWs are designed to offer professionals instant education on demand that fits their busy schedules. "The online format is more convenient because we can look at it at our own pace," said Koehl.

Koehl discovered TTWs while looking online for resources on wood components. "We design a lot of wood buildings with trusses. I was looking for information on wood trusses and [TTWs] came up," he said. After reviewing what the site had to offer, Koehl took the fire assemblies TTW and said he found the presentation useful. "I thought it was very good. It explained a lot of things and reinforced some of the things we already knew. It was sort of a double check," he said.

## Clarifying Industry Issues

Along with convenience, online TTWs also offer professionals the chance to quickly find answers to their questions about components. "I wanted to find courses related to what I do for a living," said Tom Jank, a professional engineer for Extencicare, a company that constructs nursing homes in the U.S. and Canada. When issues about permanent bracing requirements arose on a project, Jank checked out online TTWs after receiving an email that mentioned the TTW website.

Noting that the online TTWs answered his bracing questions for the project he was working on, Jank said he was intrigued to see all of the other topics available. "It just so happened you had other courses and I could learn more about trusses. I was a little weak on my truss design requirements and I wanted to get a little smarter on truss manufacturing and handling," he said.

After completing the courses, Jank chose to take the short quizzes and received certifi-

cates of completion from WTCA. Jank says he plans to continue using online TTWs: "Now that I'm set up, I plan on using that resource if I run into other situations."

## Professionals: View Online TTWs for Free

In late 2007, online TTWs were restructured to bring professionals greater convenience in taking online courses and using TTWs as an industry reference. Online TTWs are now available at no cost to the following audiences:

- Architects, Engineers, Specifiers and Designers
- Building Officials and Home Inspectors
- Members of the Fire Service
- Builders, Contractors and Framers

Professionals can visit [ttw.sbcindustry.com](http://ttw.sbcindustry.com) and access individual online courses at no charge. Each course includes a link to a quiz with the option to purchase certification for continuing education credit (CEUs/PDHs). Each quiz/certificate costs \$25. For unlimited access to courses and quizzes/certification, professionals can purchase a year-long TTW subscription (see chart). Architects and engineers gain access to additional information called "Basic Truss Knowledge," which offers courses on truss design and the structural building components industry. Courses include: *Design Responsibilities & Truss Design Drawings; Introduction & Terminology; Truss Design, Manufacturing & Installation Overview; Truss Materials; Design Principles; Truss Connections; and Truss Math.*

Number of Seats per Company or Organization	Price per Seat (includes access to all online courses & certification quizzes)
1	\$80.00
2-5	\$65.00
6-9	\$55.00
10-19	\$50.00
20+	\$48.00

ponent framing. "There's a lot of information that architects, contactors and code officials don't understand about trusses," said Koehl noting that his firm often has to educate professionals when issues arise on a project. "If more people were looking at these things, it would probably make our lives easier." **SBC**

For details about online TTWs, visit [ttw.sbcindustry.com](http://ttw.sbcindustry.com); pricing information can be found at [ttw.sbcindustry.com/pricing.php](http://ttw.sbcindustry.com/pricing.php). If you have questions about online TTWs, contact Melanie Birkeland at 608/310-6720 ([mbirkeland@qualtim.com](mailto:mbirkeland@qualtim.com)) or Trish Kutz at 608/310-6768 ([tkutz@qualtim.com](mailto:tkutz@qualtim.com)).

## Promoting TTWs in your Area

WTCA members and chapters are encouraged to promote the availability of free online TTWs. Your target audience receives pertinent information on the structural building components industry and you take credit for the educational programs provided by your association—it's a win-win! WTCA staff can help you with marketing materials. If you decide to sponsor CEU credit, we can supply TTW coupons to pass out. Just let us know how we can help you reach your marketplace with free TTWs.

## at a glance

- ☐ TTW online presentations offer affordability and convenience for professionals in the building community.
- ☐ Architect Mike Koehl found the TTW on fire assemblies very useful.
- ☐ Engineer Tom Jank said his bracing questions for a project he was working on were answered by the online TTWs he viewed.
- ☐ Professionals can view TTWs at no charge; quizzes for CEU credit cost \$25 per presentation.



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