



By Kirk Grundahl

WTCA Serving Members and Industry First: In the last few months I have heard that people in our industry have said: "WTCA is trying to take over and control everything in the truss industry"

"WTCA wants to take over the chapter checkbook so they can control all the chapters."

"WTCA is controlled by the large truss companies and they will not help the small truss manufacturer."

"WTCA has not provided its members with timely technical information on changes taking place in lumber design values and other areas."

"We don't need to belong to WTCA because we get all our needs met by (another trade association fills in this blank)."

"We do not see the value that WTCA provides."

And this is just the beginning of some negative rhetoric that has surfaced. The question is: Why is this happening and what is its purpose - to divide or to unite and strengthen?

One of the significant issues we face as a staff is that this kind of talk is never brought directly to our attention. Those who make such statements must have the facts confused or have brought forward myths. The fundamental question is: Does this help any of us make a proactive positive difference for our industry?

Given that there may be confused facts, maybe we should define exactly what WTCA is about and our association's mission statement is probably the best place to begin.

1. Provide the services our membership needs to continue expanding truss market share.
2. To promote the common interests of those engaged in manufacturing wood trusses and related components to ensure growth, continuity and increased professionalism in our industry.
3. To formulate policy that protects and advances the interests of member manufacturers.
4. To initiate and carry out projects that deal with membership concerns and promote industry market-place interests.
5. To be the information conduit for our membership by staying abreast of leading-edge issues and disseminating this information through educational seminars and our wood truss industry publication WOODWORDS.

6. To be the voice of the truss/engineered wood products industry to regulatory and standards-generating agencies.
7. To promote the safe, economic, and structurally sound use of trusses, thereby increasing the market penetration of wood truss products.
8. To support research, development and testing of trusses that place the truss industry on a sound engineering basis and improve the quality and efficiency of our products, for the purpose of obtaining greater product acceptance.
9. To attract all component manufacturers, material suppliers, and other industry professionals as members, to strengthen the component manufacturing industry's influence.
10. To provide membership services, including addressing technical questions, serving members through product and publication sales, and providing support to each WTCA committee.

To the extent that we are not working in these areas effectively then improvement is needed. But if we have been effective, and continue to be effective in these areas, then we are serving both members and nonmembers well. Further, WTCA firmly believes:

1. That united we stand, divided we fall is absolutely true. We have seen that if we unite on issues and do so based on fact and logic, we have a very powerful voice. Once we pull together and apply the needed resources, there is nothing we cannot accomplish together.
2. That we are the only association whose sole mission is to work on wood truss manufacturer issues.
3. That the wood truss industry must continue to grow and prosper. Infighting or industry politics robs too much of the time and energy that could be better used to advance our mission positively on behalf of all our members and our industry.
4. That WTCA's role is to serve our members and our industry first. If an improvement is needed, then we need to hear about it so that we can correct it.
5. We need to and will share all the information that we have through WTCA FAX NEWS, LEGISLATIVE ALERTS, WOODWORDS, BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE, FINE HOME-BUILDING, WOOD DESIGN & BUILDING and any other publication or forum available to us.
6. We are a support system for our members and all any member needs to do is choose to use it. We have a great deal of information here and would love to help you in anyway we can.
7. You will only get value out of your association with WTCA by getting involved. This means getting involved with your local chapter. Come to WTCA meetings and take away what ever you can to help your business. Call us when you have a question. WE CAN AND WANT TO HELP!

It is truly rewarding when new board members come to a meeting, like Michael Balliet of R&S Truss, Inc., Mac Bittle of Valley Bestway and Steve Batchelor of Tindels, Inc., who all wholeheartedly endorsed the statement, "After coming here and listening to what is going on, the only question I have is "What aren't you doing for me?" This comment makes all that we do worthwhile, and we hope that someday ALL of our members and nonmembers will feel this way, too.
