

STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE (FORMERLY WOODWORDS)

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"We Want You!" by Carl Schoening

I have been watching the progress in the truss industry in amazement. Due largely to a few people, the truss industry has thrived and understanding of the product is becoming widespread. I say a few people, because that has been the case for a number of years.

Until recently, the torch of the truss industry has been carried by a very few individuals who are considered pioneers or leaders in the industry. These talented people have now come to a stage in life where they expect the next generation to take the offered flame and lead the industry to the next level of technology, awareness and marketplace acceptance. Unfortunately, these new leaders are slow in emerging. Many manufacturers expect someone else to look after these interests. I have heard manufacturers exclaim that we have WTCA to do our bidding. Yikes! We expect our trade association to do all the work?

WTCA is a fantastic organization with a talented staff, which does a great deal of work on behalf of the truss industry. WTCA is not the truss industry. WTCA is a great support system that makes it easier for truss manufacturers to be involved. However, truss manufacturers are the truss industry. Each truss manufacturer has a responsibility to put forth the effort to improve our industry. If we are not willing to work to make our industry the innovative leader in the field of construction, no one else can or will.

I see the same faces at WTCA meetings and the same people attending the BCMC show. That is good, but we need everyone to participate. We need an influx of participants to take the new ideas that our industry is constantly generating and use them to help us grow.

When legislation is passed that may impair or restrict our industry, the complacent manufacturers ask, "How could this have happened?" It is due to the lack of participation in grass roots initiatives. WTCA's "Put a Human Face on the Truss Industry" program seeks to proactively handle such issues. When an issue is at the doorstep, WTCA does its best to inform manufacturers that sensitive legislation is pending, and tries to enlist all manufacturers in campaigns to contact their legislators. Unfortunately, many manufacturers don't respond to the call, and when they do it's too late or it's only to complain.

This is a call for all truss manufacturers to join their local chapters of WTCA and PARTICIPATE! In our industry I have met a lot of terrific business leaders who could add value to the industry and to WTCA. We must work together for the truss industry to take the next step. There are a lot of issues relating to the truss industry that need to be resolved and fire and safety issues are at the top of the list. The lack of understanding of our products is beginning to cast a shadow on the integrity that the pioneers of our industry worked hard to build. It is time for all of us to enthusiastically join in the fray, find out what WTCA has to offer for support, get involved in local markets and truly put a human face on our truss industry.

My hope is that the leaders, who have not as of yet become involved, will step forward. Step to the front and not just accept the torch being passed, but reach for it with passion. Stride confidently into the future and make our industry, the truss industry, the envy of all others. Become a part of our industry's future. Serve on committees, write articles, make presentations to code chapters and always passionately defend the principles set forth by our industry founders. It does not take much time or effort to be one of the human faces making a difference on behalf of our industry.

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